Høgskolen i Østfold

MASTER'S THESIS

Giving Reluctant Readers a Voice: Promoting Intercultural Competence through the Graphic Novel "When Stars are Scattered" (2020)

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Abstract

English

Graphic novels have become increasingly popular in the last 30-40 years and have also awoken considerable interest among academics and researchers, not least when it comes to their potential in the classroom. The value for reluctant readers has been given particular attention. In the last decades, there has been an increased development of reading reluctance, especially in lower secondary schools. Simultaneously, the importance of intercultural competence has been emphasized in the core curriculum. Even though this is a complex concept, the English subject curriculum specifies that developing this competence through reading literature is possible. My research question is, how can reluctant readers develop their intercultural competence when they actively choose not to read?

My thesis demonstrates that Jamieson and Mohamed's graphic novel *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) has the potential to develop intercultural competence among reluctant readers. The thesis focuses on reluctant readers' thoughts on reading, intercultural competence, and the graphic novel itself. The 10th grade at a lower secondary school in Norway was chosen for the present study. Furthermore, three reluctant readers participated in individual qualitative interviews, where they read excerpts from *When Stars are Scattered* (2020), and voiced their opinions about the novel, the reading process, and the possibility of developing intercultural knowledge and attitudes. The results suggest that *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) has considerable potential to promote intercultural competence, and more specifically knowledge and attitudes, among reluctant readers.

Keywords: *Intercultural competence, reluctant readers, reading reluctance, graphic novels, reading, literature, When Stars are Scattered*

Norwegian

Grafiske noveller har blitt stadig mer populære de siste 30-40 årene, og har vekket stor interesse blant akademikere og forskere, ikke minst når det gjelder grafiske novellers potensial i klasserommet. Verdien for motvillige lesere har blitt viet spesiell oppmerksomhet. I de siste tiårene har det vært en økt utvikling av lesemotvilje, spesielt i ungdomsskolen. Samtidig har viktigheten av interkulturell kompetanse blitt vektlagt den overordnede delen av læreplanen. Selv om dette er et komplekst konsept, spesifiserer engelskfagets læreplan at det er mulig å utvikle denne kompetansen gjennom å lese litteratur. Mitt forskningsspørsmål er, hvordan kan motvillige lesere utvikle sin interkulturelle kompetanse når de aktivt velger å ikke lese?

Avhandlingen min demonstrerer at Jamieson og Mohameds grafiske novelle *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) har potensial til å utvikle interkulturell kompetanse blant motvillige lesere. Oppgaven fokuserer på motvillige leseres tanker om lesing, interkulturell kompetanse, og den grafiske novellen. 10.trinn ved en ungdomsskole i Norge ble valgt til studien. Videre deltok tre motvillige lesere i individuelle kvalitative intervjuer, hvor de leste utdrag fra *When Stars are Scattered* (2020), utrykte sine meninger om novellen, leseprosessen og muligheten til å utvikle interkulturell kunnskap og holdninger. Resultatene tyder på at *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) har et betydelig potensial for å fremme interkulturell kompetanse, og mer spesifikt kunnskap og holdninger, blant motvillige lesere.

Nøkkelord: *Interkulturell kompetanse, motvillige lesere, lesemotvilje, grafiske noveller, lesing, litteratur, When Stars are Scattered*

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The need for intercultural competence (IC) has augmented over the years due to globalization throughout the 21st century. Michael Byram et al. define IC as "the ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality" (2002, p. 10). Technology has made it easier to communicate across the world, find information, become educated, travel abroad, and experience cultures. This has had a significant impact on the home society, which has become increasingly multicultural. As the world is changing at a faster pace than before (Hoff, 2020), it has become possible to communicate daily with people of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Classrooms have also become multicultural, both ethnically and culturally. This, in turn, has had a significant impact on schools and education in general, making IC an essential element of the Norwegian curriculum.

In the LK20 Core Curriculum - *Identity and cultural diversity*, the importance of diversity is emphasized: schools "shall give the pupils historical and cultural insight that will give them a good foundation in their lives […] develop her or his identity in an inclusive and diverse environment" (The Directorate of Education, 2017). Schools shall enable students to become intercultural communicators in a diverse environment built on openness, curiosity, and tolerance. This has also been reflected in the English subject curriculum, where *Communication* and *Working with texts in English* comprise two of three core elements. Thus, IC is an important part of education, as it enables pupils "to deal with different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns" (The Directorate of Education, 2020).

Despite an increased focus on IC, there is room for research that highlights different methods for developing IC among pupils. One such method is using different formats of literature in the classroom. Eva Burwitz-Melzer argues that literature "invite[s] readers to view subjectively a nation or an ethnic group by portraying specific values, prejudice and stereotypes" (2001, p. 29) while comparing and exchanging personal points of view with the hero or the narrator of the story. Thus, literature has a great potential to develop IC among pupils. However, the latest PISA study from 2018 shows that reading among Norwegian pupils has declined (OECD, 2019). Reluctant readers, referred to as alliterate pupils who can read but choose not to (Beers, 1998), are becoming increasingly common. This phenomenon may be linked to a lack of motivation, boredom, and an inability to connect with literature.

From personal experience, I have noticed that traditional books (identified here as printed books with text only) may negatively affect reluctant readers' motivation. However, their motivation has been shown to rise significantly when they were presented with multimodal books, e.g. picture books, graphic novels, and comics. According to Alissa Burger (2018, p. 1), these types of books have various benefits, including motivating and engaging reluctant readers.

Moreover, Marit Elise Lyngstad (2019) studied teachers' choices and beliefs about using literature in Norwegian classrooms. 110 teachers responded to a survey, while eight participated in interviews about what type of literature they used in the classroom. The study indicates that teachers use a variety of literary texts in the classroom. They use primarily novels, classic literature, and fiction. Multimodal literature is used the least. However, they are enthusiastic about using multimodal literature, especially graphic novels.

As there are various formats of multimodal literature, I have chosen to focus on the graphic novel – here defined as "a book-length work in the medium of comics" (Chute, 2008, p. 453). The graphic novel differs from comic books as it can be several hundred pages long. I have observed a growing interest among English teachers in incorporating graphic novels in the classroom.

Investigating the potential relationship between reluctant readers, graphic novels, and IC is interesting and valuable. This thesis will argue that using graphic novels is potentially a useful method to develop reluctant readers' IC. Therefore, a graphic novel was chosen for this study: *When Stars are Scattered* by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed (2020). This research area is somewhat neglected, i.e. there is little or no research on the combination of IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers[1].

1.2 Aim and Research Question

This thesis aims to investigate if the format 'graphic novel' is suitable for developing IC – specifically knowledge and attitudes – among reluctant readers, and if so, in what ways.
My research question is:

To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'When stars are scattered' (2020) promote intercultural competence among reluctant readers in 10th grade?

[1] A professional librarian at a university in Norway has carried out a search and confirms the lack of research on the mentioned research area. This is presented in section 2.1 Literary search

I will attempt to answer my research question with the aid of mixed method research using a quantitative questionnaire and qualitative interviews. The questionnaire establishes an overview of 10th graders' attitudes toward reading and investigates what literary genres they have encountered throughout their schooling. Furthermore, the questionnaire reveals how many pupils can be identified as 'reluctant readers'. Three reluctant readers agreed to participate in individual interviews where they will read excerpts from *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) (hereafter *WSaS*) and discuss the relationship between pictures and text, IC, and their thoughts on what they have read. The focus lies on whether reluctant readers believe that the graphic novel *WSaS* can be used to promote IC.

1.3 Outline of my Thesis

This thesis connects the fields of IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers. It is divided into five chapters, with subcategories for each chapter. Chapter one introduces the thesis. It focuses on the background to my study, the Norwegian Curriculum, and the research question. Chapter two will present the theoretical framework for the thesis, which examines IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers. In addition, the literary search and the graphic novel *WSaS* are presented. The third chapter includes an overview of the methods and materials which were used for this study. Chapter four will provide the results from the questionnaire and the interviews, which will be discussed in relation to the theoretical framework and research question. Finally, chapter five will provide a conclusion to this thesis, addressing whether or not the graphic novel *WSaS* may promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade. Furthermore, I will suggest possible fields for further research on graphic novels in the classroom.

2. Theoretical Framework

The following chapter will provide an overview of the theoretical framework for this thesis. First, the sources will be discussed. Thereafter, I explain why I have chosen the graphic novel *WSaS* (2020) by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed. Furthermore, this chapter will present the three central elements: IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers. IC and its subsections focus on the concept of IC, the Norwegian curriculum, and literature and theory regarding how to teach and learn IC. The section on graphic novels presents the characteristics of the format and its potential in the classroom. Lastly, the section on reluctant readers describes why reluctance develops, investigates PISA results on reading in general, and argues that graphic novels can encourage reluctant readers to read more and develop IC.

2.1 Literary Search

As aforementioned, the research field on the relationship between IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers is a neglected area. Separately, they are well-established fields, as will be demonstrated in the following sections. However, while examining the theory underlying this thesis, I discovered that there is a lack of research on the combination of the three components discussed here, namely IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers. A senior librarian at Høgskolen in Østfold was consulted. She was able to confirm, after considerable research, that the combination of IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers is a neglected area of research. Throughout the writing process, I checked to see if new publications on my area of research has been conducted. Such was not the case.

The documentation of the searches is provided in Appendix A. For each component, a list of search terms was developed by using synonyms provided by several Thesauruses in the relevant databases: Education Source, Eric, Academic Search Premier, EBSCO, JSTOR, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar. A combination of terms from each section was subsequently used in the advanced searches, documenting the date, number of hits, and filters. As shown in Appendix A, there is an extremely limited number of results on the combination of IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers, even when using synonyms provided by several Thesauruses. The majority focus on adults, recommendations of graphic novels, readability levels, and writing – which are not of relevance to this thesis. This thesis aims to address the research gap described above.

It was noticeable that the focus was solely on a combination of two components. Various authors and researchers write about the possibility of promoting IC through graphic

novels: Michelle Falter (2017), Julia Ludewig (2017), and Dirk Vanderbeke (2006). Falter (2017, p. 145) highlights that graphic novels are excellent tools to work with contemporary and social issues. Furthermore, in Ludewig's study (2017), she found that graphic novels have the potential to foster IC among pupils, as pictures, text, gestures, and postures can be cultural learning moments. Over a period of 14 years, graphic novels have been presented as an intriguing area with potential for further research. However, there is more research on the use of literature in general to promote IC.

Moreover, the area of graphic novels and reluctant readers has become a well-established research field, focusing as it does on encouraging reluctant readers with the aid of a visual medium (Cook, 2017; Felsenthal, 2019; Schwertner, 2008; Sloboda et al., 2014). Afton Schwertner highlights that graphic novels have an impact on reluctant readers; the medium stimulates motivation and confidence (2008, p. 71). Mike Cook found that pupils reacted strongly to graphic novels; "many students self-reported being engaged with the graphic novel, finding benefits from the pictures and preferring the graphic novel adaptation to more traditional texts" (2017, p. 42). Melissa Felsenthal (2019) studied student engagement with graphic novels in contrast with traditional novels. She found that the participants preferred graphic novels, which increased their reading engagement. Maureen Sloboda et al. focused on comprehension strategies by working with graphic novels in the classroom, where they found that "participants described as reluctant readers identified this work as fun" (2014, p. 19). Thus, the research on graphic novels and reluctant readers has become an established field.

A notable aspect of the investigation was that the articles about promoting IC among reluctant readers are few. There is hardly a mention of IC and reluctant readers, and its development (Downey, 2009; Lalita & Beck, 2021). Elizabeth Downey (2009) highlights the graphic novel as an adequate medium to develop IC among reluctant readers: "the education community has begun to embrace graphic novels as a way to reach reluctant readers" (p. 181); "they have a social use, introducing students to diverse peoples and cultures they might not encounter" (p. 183). Nonetheless, this was only mentioned, and no studies or examples are provided.

2.2 *When Stars are Scattered (2020)*

This thesis discusses whether the graphic novel *WSaS* can be used to promote IC among reluctant readers. The present section presents the reasons for the selection of this particular novel, while subsection 3.2.3 provides a close reading of the excerpts chosen for the study.

WSaS is a graphic novel by the *New York Times* Bestselling authors Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed. It follows Omar's life as a refugee and is split into three parts (the three periods in Omar's life), with seventeen chapters in total. *WSaS* has been well-received, with over 1500 five-star reviews on the largest site for book recommendations: Goodreads. Steven Engelfried writing for the *School Library Journal*, claims that "the writing is intriguing and easy to understand. The graphics are beautiful and really bring the characters to the page. Omar's story is important, relevant and relatable" (Engelfried, 2021). I sent an e-mail to Omar through his publisher (Appendix F), as I wanted to include his experience and thoughts on writing *WSaS*, its reception, and its potential uses in the classroom. Unfortunately, I did not receive an answer.

There are several reasons why *WSaS* was chosen for this thesis. Firstly, the graphic novel is a personal choice: it was an enjoyable read. I observed the use of *WSaS* during a practice placement and noted a strong reaction among the pupils who could be classified as reluctant readers (Beers, 1998). They were interested in the pictures as these portrayed visual cues to the text, making it easier to understand the story (Sullivan, 2002). As *WSaS* is relatively new, there is still little to no research on the potential value of using it in the classroom. I hope to fill this gap to some extent.

Secondly, *WSaS* is a new and exciting story. It is an authentic piece of literature – an autobiography – as it is based on the author Omar Mohamed's childhood. Throughout this thesis, Simensen's (1998) definition of authentic materials will be used – "materials which are produced to serve specific purposes outside the language classroom, but which can still be used for language learning" (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020, p. 65).

WSaS is set in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya in 1991, following eleven-year-old Omar and his non-verbal brother Hassan. They have been separated from their mother while fleeing from the war in Somalia. The graphic novel follows their life in the refugee camp for over eighteen years, waiting for resettlement in America. During this period, various challenges arise among the characters in the novel – mental disability, education, child marriage, hunger, and trauma. Omar is torn between "pursuing an education in the camp, […] and caring for his little brother" (Tyson, 2020). In an interview with Sarah Tyson (2020), Omar explains why he chose to present his story as a graphic novel rather than as a traditional novel – "in the refugee camp, because we didn't have TV or the internet, the pictures in books were something to look at. Also, because English was not our first language, it was helpful to have the pictures to follow along with". Victoria elaborates further on the value of pictures in another interview, stating that "seeing pictures of the tents, schools, and landscapes of Dadaab

can help bring these places to life for readers who have never experienced life in a refugee camp" (Eagleton, 2020).

Thirdly, *WSaS* has considerable educational potential. As it portrays an authentic refugee experience, the novel has the potential to promote IC, as will be discussed in subsection 3.2.3. Magne Dypedahl and Ragnhild Elisabeth Lund argue that "a stirring literary portrayal of the refugee experience can provide a magical mirror, drawing us into a different world where we encounter others with empathy" (2020, p. 69). Thus, the refugee experience is a cultural one that can be portrayed in novel form. *WSaS* can promote diversity through presenting a refugees' culture and way of life, especially as it is an autobiographical piece of literature with an insider perspective. These elements will be further discussed in sections 2.3, 2.4, and subsection 3.2.3. Thus, there are clear reasons why the graphic novel *WSaS* was chosen for this thesis and research. The graphic novel will be further discussed in the methodology chapter, where the textual examples will be presented. The following sections provide an overview of the components of this thesis: IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers.

2.3 Intercultural Competence

Given that my research question focuses on the potential of exploring intercultural knowledge and attitudes through the graphic novel *WSaS*, it is important to establish an overview of the concept of IC. As IC is considered to be a complex phenomenon (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020), there is a consensus among theorists and researchers that it is problematic to find one specific definition of the concept (Byram, 1997; Dervin, 2016; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). The influential theorist Michael Byram (1997, p. 7) argues that defining IC is complex, as it is determined by the individuals' societal context, which means that a perception of IC is subjective.

Nevertheless, various scholars have produced possible definitions of IC. Byram et al., for example, have defined IC as "the ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality" (2002, p. 10). Dypedahl supplements Byram's definition by stating that IC is "the ability to relate constructively to people who have mindsets and/or communication styles that are different from one's own" (2020, p. 19). The versatility of IC is evident in its ability to address a wide range of aspects of everyday life, including identity, social interactions, individuality, mindsets, and communication, based on the definitions of Byram et. al (2002) and Dypedahl (2020). Even though IC is a complex

matter and is defined in different ways, there is an emerging consensus regarding the components of IC: – "a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts" (Bennett, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, IC is well established in the educational framework, making it an essential element of the curriculum[2]. This will be further elaborated in subsection 2.3.2. In addition, UNESCO specifies that IC should be seen as an integrated part of the learning environment and the educational process through the inclusion of several perspectives (2006, p. 19). Thus, teachers need to actively include IC in various aspects of education. Research shows that IC is not a static competence or something that you learn just once: it is dynamic and fluid, and is developed throughout one's life (Porto, 2014). The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century summarized the aims of intercultural education as follows:

- **Learning to know**: general knowledge – brings a person into contact with other languages, areas of knowledge, makes communication possible
- **Learning to do**: acquire occupational skills and the competence to deal with many situations and to work in teams
- **Learning to live together**: acquire knowledge, skills, and values that contribute to a spirit of solidarity and co-operation among diverse individuals and groups in society
- **Learning to be**: develop one's personality and be able to act with autonomy, judgement, and personal responsibility

(UNESCO, 2006, pp. 19–20)

Byram et al. point out that the aim of language teaching should be to "develop learners as intercultural speakers", and prepare learners to "interact respectfully with people of different cultural backgrounds" (2002, p. 11). This may be done through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to IC (see 2.3.1), where one fosters intercultural components such as respect, reflexivity, decentering, and self-awareness when interacting with people, tolerating differences, and experiencing everyday situations. The development of the intercultural speaker has been described by Janet Bennett (2009, p. 125) as follows:

- Foster attitudes that motivate us
- Discover knowledge that informs us of our own and others' cultural positions
- Assess the challenge and support factors that affect our adaptation
- Develop skills that enable us to interact effectively and appropriately

[2] Dypedahl and Lund: "[studying culture has become] a central element in the development of IC in LK20" (2020, p. 67)

2.3.1 The Concept of Intercultural Competence

One of the most influential theoretical perspectives of IC is Byram's Model of IC (1997), which presents four factors that must be present to be considered interculturally competent: *knowledge, skills, attitudes,* and *critical cultural awareness.* Given that this thesis focuses on using graphic novels among reluctant readers as a means of promoting IC, and specifically knowledge and attitudes, Byram's model of IC gives a valuable overview of the concept. Even though intercultural knowledge and attitudes are investigated, it is important to be aware of 'skills' and 'critical cultural awareness', as the components should be integrated. The components of IC are presented in the table below, which is based on Byram et al. (2002, p. 12–13). The components under investigation are deemed crucial for the present study, with a particular focus on knowledge and attitudes, which serve as the primary subject matter of the interviews (see chapter 3 Methodology and material).

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Critical cultural awareness
"Of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction"	"Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" "Ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own"	"Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own"	"An ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries"

Table 1: Components of Intercultural Competence based on Byram et. al (2002)

A vital component of IC is intercultural attitudes. An intercultural speaker must be interested and curious about other cultures with an open mind (Byram et al., 2002). These attitudes should be fostered in a non-judgmental way, acknowledging that people have diverse cultural perspectives. According to Byram (1997), intercultural attitudes are important, as they can help combat prejudice and stereotypes. As contemporary society is multicultural, and we consistently encounter elements of culture that are foreign to us, it has become increasingly important to value and respect other cultures, as well as foster attitudes based on openness, respect, and curiosity. For the development of attitudes, one needs to be able to suspend assumptions and judgement and be open to multiple perspectives.

The intercultural attitudes are clearly visible in the graphic novel *WSaS*, as it portrays a foreign culture and sparks curiosity among the readers as they move between text and pictures

(Falter, 2017). This is, for instance, particularly prominent in the excerpts where school culture is in focus, where Omar is forced to experience the struggles that girls experience, child marriage, and the general difficulties of living in a refugee camp. These examples will be further elaborated on in subsection 3.2.2. Furthermore, the pictures (see Appendix J) enable the reader to identify with the characters, making them more realistic. This, in turn, gives the potential of working with acceptance, prejudice, and respect (Hecke, 2011).

The second component is intercultural knowledge. Byram (1997, p. 35) splits knowledge into two categories: (1) knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one's own country and the interlocutor's country, and (2) knowledge of the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels. The first category concentrates on knowledge about specific cultures, which should be related to our own culture and the culture of others. This knowledge stems from socialization, where we develop an understanding of cultures within the social context in which we grew up. Here we can often find elements of national culture, identities, meanings, beliefs, and behaviors. Byram et al. (2002, p. 12) specify that it is important to have knowledge about oneself and to be aware of how people might perceive us.

The second category of knowledge focuses on knowledge about individual and societal culture and is linked to interaction with people in an intercultural encounter. This type of knowledge specifies the importance of being aware of how we communicate, our identities, and how our communication may be affected by cultural differences. Both categories of knowledge are important, as an intercultural speaker must be familiar with both in order to interact successfully (Byram, 1997). Concerning the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***", *WSaS* has the potential to promote intercultural knowledge, as it portrays a foreign culture through text and pictures about which the pupils may have limited knowledge (Falter, 2017; Hecke, 2011; Vanderbeke, 2006).

The third intercultural component is intercultural skills, which may include empathy, perspective-taking, adapting, and gathering information. Byram (1997) splits skills into two categories: (1) skills of interpreting and relating, and (2) skills of discovery and/or interaction. Byram specifies that "the skills of interpreting and relating draws upon existing knowledge" (1997, p. 37). In other words, the knowledge one has will affect one's ability to interpret an intercultural encounter and relate it to one's own culture and life. The skill of 'discovery and interaction' is of importance, as nobody can anticipate all their knowledge needs, and therefore it is essential to obtain skills that make it possible to gain new knowledge through discovery and interaction (Byram et al., 2002).

The final component is ‘critical cultural awareness’. An intercultural speaker must foster the ability to be critical about how personal values can influence the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. This can challenge personal perceptions and beliefs concerning one’s own and others’ values and cultures. Furthermore, it is crucial to be aware of how the culture that we are brought up in can affect values and beliefs in intercultural encounters. Critical cultural awareness is important, as there are multiple cultures and values across the world, and we will almost inevitably communicate with people who are perceived as ‘different’.

2.3.2 Intercultural Competence in the Norwegian Curriculum

The curriculum is the foundation for teaching and training at all levels of education. It gives guidance on what education should consist of, and what the English subject must include. Given that the research question for the present thesis focuses on promoting IC among reluctant readers with the aid of a graphic novel, it is of interest to investigate how the curriculum integrates IC into the core curriculum and the English subject curriculum.

The core curriculum presents the values and principles for education in Norway and gives guidance for the teaching of subjects. It is important to emphasize that the term ‘intercultural competence’ is not used explicitly in the core curriculum. However, it is present through the descriptions of the values. For instance, the value of *human dignity* states that “all people are equal regardless of what makes us different” (The Directorate of Education, 2017). Diversity is a principal element within education, as the school shall present knowledge and attitudes which reflect the mindset of thinking, believing, and expressing oneself. The aspect of diversity is also presented as a uniting resource within the value of *identity and cultural thinking*. This section of the core curriculum states that we must be able to “live together with different perspectives, attitudes and views of life” (The Directorate of Education, 2017), which can be seen in relation to Byram et al.’s definition of IC (2002, p. 10).

The segment on *critical thinking and ethical awareness* highlights the importance of being a critical human acting with ethical awareness. To foster IC, one needs to be aware that social context affects one’s own cultural perception of the world, and that it will lead to various perceptions within a society. The Norwegian Directorate of Education (2017) specifies that in order to be a critical thinker, one needs to scrutinize and question established ideas with the aid of theories, experiences, evidence, methods, and arguments. In *the joy of creating, engagement, and the urge to explore*, curiosity and openness are pointed out. As Byram (1997) states, these are important attitudes to possess in order to be interculturally

competent. Finally, the value of *democracy and participation* argues that the school shall promote a belief in democratic values and attitudes, which in turn can "counteract prejudice and discrimination […] and learn to respect the fact that people are different and learn to solve conflicts peacefully" (The Directorate of Education, 2017).

IC is also a prominent part of the English subject curriculum and is present in the core elements of *Communication* and *Working with texts in English*. It is mentioned specifically in the latter: "The pupils will develop IC enabling them to deal with different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns" (The Directorate of Education, 2020). Literature is particularly well-suited to developing IC, as it fosters the ability to change perspectives by "entering different storyworlds, following different lives and discovering divergent histories through literary texts" (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020, p. 71). Furthermore, culture can be portrayed through the characters' ways of living, actions, thoughts, and feelings. Elements of IC are present in the English subject learning aims, specifically aims after 10th grade related to literature and reading, as this is of interest in this thesis. After 10th grade, pupils should be able to:

- Read, discuss, and present content from various types of texts, including self-chosen texts
- Read, interpret, and reflect on English language fiction, including young people's literature
- Explore and describe ways of living, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity in the English-speaking world

(The Directorate of Education, 2020)

Thus, pupils shall be able to read, discuss, reflect, and interpret texts. However, even though the relationship between literature and IC has a prominent role in the English subject curriculum, there are no explicit mentions of methods or selected texts when it comes to working with IC and reaching the competence aims (Hoff, 2020). Furthermore, Dypedahl and Lund highlight that there is a need for more research within this area, as "the use of different literary formats to support the educational goal of interculturality is not yet discussed widely" (2020, p. 70). In the present thesis, the focus lies on the graphic novel as a literary format to explore IC, and this will be further established in the following subsection and subsection 2.4.2. Overall, the curriculum contains various elements of IC – some are explicitly mentioned, and others are implicit and up for interpretation.

2.3.3 Teaching and Learning Intercultural Competence

Given that the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***" focuses on IC with 10th graders, it is sufficient to explore how IC can be taught and learned. According to The Council of Europe (2018, Volume 1), our perception of the world is affected by cultures: e.g. family, school, work, and hobbies. Living in a multicultural society leads to interacting with people who are perceived as different from oneself, and it may be difficult to accept these differences. In turn, this is reflected in the classroom, as the pupils will bring individual differences affected by their upbringing, values, and worldviews. Based on the prerequisites which the pupils bring to the classroom, it is important to be aware of different approaches to teach and learn IC, especially as the curriculum does not specify what methods are suitable.

Dypedahl proposes three educational aims of a culture-specific approach to teach IC in the classroom: diversity, cultural empathy, and in-depth studies (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020, p. 63). The first aim focuses on exposing pupils to diversity. Education shall give a multi-dimensional impression of a society, where pupils should differ between an outsider's and an insider's viewpoint. In its turn, it can raise awareness of one's cultural background, making it possible to decenter and view beliefs, values, and mindset in a new light.

Nevertheless, intercultural learning aims to foster the ability to decenter and make it possible to view culture from an insider's point of view. To work with diversity, one must have cultural empathy, the second aim of the culture-specific approach. Cultural empathy requires culture-specific knowledge and the ability to "put oneself in another social context" (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020, p. 63). The aim is to develop behavior, especially when it comes to interaction with people from different communities. Finally, Dypedahl explains the significance of in-depth studies of a cultural community, as it makes it possible to reveal the diversity within the community and work with cultural empathy. An in-depth study requires engagement with people who live in a specific community and are learning about attitudes as well as how to function in that community. A prominent medium where Dypedahl's educational aims are visible is literature. By reading literature, the pupils are exposed to diversity, especially when reading about different characters, cultures, lifestyles, and mindsets. Simultaneously, pupils can develop cultural empathy, and work in depth with a specific community or culture – in this case: the refugee experience in *WSaS*.

Furthermore, an adequate approach to teach IC is through authentic materials (Byram et al., 2002; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). These may consist of newspapers, songs, stories, and literature. Authentic materials have an exciting potential when it comes to developing IC, as

the learners will foster the ability to encounter and put themselves in situations that may be unfamiliar. This is of relevance for the present thesis, as the graphic novel *WSaS* is, by definition, authentic material.

To discuss the development of IC, an awareness of the process of intercultural learning is necessary. Anthony Liddicoat and Angela Scarino (2013) established four steps of intercultural learning: (1) noticing, (2) comparing, (3) reflecting, and (4) interacting (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020, p. 27). These steps relate to the research question, as they may be adequate among reluctant readers when presented with IC through *WSaS*. The first two steps, noticing and comparing, should be presented by a teacher. The learner must notice new information they are presented with, and compare it to prior knowledge or experiences. Comparison constructs the basis of reflection, where the learner shall form an awareness of what they have noticed and compared, and simultaneously form an understanding of others' perspectives. Reflection, the core element of intercultural learning, leads to interaction with others, where the learner "shape and communicate their own understandings, while taking in other perspectives" (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020, p. 27). Liddicoat and Scarino's (2013) steps of intercultural learning will be discussed in relation to pupils' understanding of the graphic novel (section 4.2).

2.4 Graphic Novels as a Tool to Explore Intercultural Competence

Since the material in the present thesis, *WSaS*, is a graphic novel, it is vital to explore the format and discuss why it is suitable for promoting IC among reluctant readers. As stated in section 1.1, although there are several definitions of 'graphic novel', the working definition in this thesis is "a book-length work in the medium of comics" (Chute, 2008, p. 453), with a focus on the narrative and visual aspects.

2.4.1 The Format 'Graphic Novel'

Given that my research question focuses on the use of the format 'graphic novel' with reluctant readers in 10th grade, it is necessary to understand the format when it comes to its characteristics – why read a graphic novel to understand IC? Subsequently, the value of the format in the classroom will be discussed in subsection 2.4.2.

There is a consensus among scholars, authors, and cartoonists within the field of comics and graphic novels, that the 'graphic novel' has a history dating back to the growth of comics in the 1950s and 1960s (Baetens & Frey, 2015; Weiner, 2012; Williams, 2020). The

terms ‘graphic novel’ and ‘comics’ are often used interchangeably (Baetens & Frey, 2015; Chute, 2008). The graphic novel originated from comics, in a time where they were subjected to criticism due to the visual aspect, in relation to claims of childishness, and that comics would “end improvements in literacy […], making a generation of illiterate youth” (Baetens & Frey, 2015, p. 30). Moreover, the focus of this thesis lies in using graphic novels to promote IC, which differs from comics in length and depth. Graphic novels were innovative, had original content, and extended the length of the narrative (Baetens & Frey, 2015, p. 60). Over the years, graphic novels split from comics, and were taken gradually seriously by readers. While both mediums focus on the relationship between text and pictures, comics “are produced monthly [and] progress the story line towards the next issue”, while graphic novels “are read like a book […] they develop deeper in the story line” (Turk, 2012). Thus, a graphic novel presents a story in a comic-strip format, but it has a deeper and complete storyline with complex characters.

In a graphic novel, several pictures are connected to each other and are an integral part of the story. According to Cecilie Brown and Jena Habegger-Conti, “pictures may activate our cultural imaginaries more quickly and easily than written text, as our markers of cultural difference are mainly visual: hair and skin colour, style of clothing, etc.” (2022, p. 52). Thus, a picture is a bearer of meaning, which can present cultural differences visually in contrast to written text. However, a singular picture does not portray the cause of the action, nor the aftermath. As a graphic novel presents a series of pictures that tell a story, the reader can become immersed in it. Nonetheless, a series of pictures need textual support for the reader to understand the context. The written text adds information to the picture, which may explain an action, or a series of events portrayed through the pictures. Pictures and text which represent markers of cultural evidence in a graphic novel may therefore promote IC.

As the format of the graphic novel is important for the research question (***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel ‘WSaS’ (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***), there is a need to establish the key terms – especially how the format differs from traditional books (identified here as books with text only). The terms will be used in the thesis when discussing the excerpts from *WSaS*. The features of the graphic novel are presented in the table below, based on George O’Connor (2012):

Panel	The frame in which each picture appears
Gutter	The space between panels. It indicates a moment of transition
Splash page	A full-page picture

Speech bubbles	Text that indicates what characters are saying, usually contained in a bubble-like shape
Thought balloons	Text that indicates what characters are thinking, usually contained in a balloon-like shape
Text box	A box that contains narration, not necessarily spoken by any character
Motion or radiation lines	Lines that indicate a character's movement
Sound effects	An onomatopoeic representation of a sound, often presented as part of the artwork

Table 2: Key features in a graphic novel (Rimmereide, 2021, p.201)

One of the most important features of the graphic novel, which distinguishes it from traditional books, is that the narrative is established through pictures (Rimmereide, 2021; Watts, 2015). While the narrative of a traditional book is usually written in a textual mode (Phelan, 2015), the graphic novel consists of an interplay between written text and pictures to convey information, which requires specific literacy strategies concerning multimodality (Watts, 2015). Kress (2010) defines a mode as a "socially shaped and culturally given semiotic resource for meaning making" (Skulstad, 2020). Examples of modes within a graphic novel are writing, pictures, layout, and color.

As already established, the graphic novel has been criticized for its use of pictures and the "simplicity" of reading (Baetens & Frey, 2015). According to the Norwegian Directorate of Education (2020), reading is defined as "understanding and reflecting on the content of various types of texts […] finding information in multimedia text". Thus, reading includes different texts, including multimodality. Still, there is a misperception that values a traditional novel higher than a graphic novel: reading pictures is easy and does not challenge the reader (Gonzales, 2016; Hansen, 2012; McBride, 2023). This is far from the truth. Doré Ripley argues that readers must engage with a literary text which employs textual and visual modes:

> Readers of comics must not only peruse speech bubbles, they must decode pictures, creating a rich interpretative source in a textually deficient medium. [They] must dig deep for responsive ideas, and they must become comfortable interpreting the visual/textual blend presented on the comic's page (2012, p. 99)

Thus, reading a graphic novel is a complex activity. The reader must possess the abilities and skills to analyze pictures with regard to the text while moving between panels and analyzing the gap which the gutter leaves (Wallner, 2019). In line with this thesis, the graphic novel *WSaS* portrays the relationship between the text and pictures. As Jan Baetens & Hugo Frey specify: "Good language and good drawings are never enough; it is the interplay between words and pictures that has to work" (2015, p. 149). The authors of *WSaS* present

Omar's story and his refugee experience through text and pictures, and the reader must make sense of the meaning through visual literacy, which Hege Rimmereide defines as "the ability to 'read' pictures and make a connection with the verbal text" (2021, p. 199).

Overall, the graphic novel as a format has a long history and it is still criticized for its use of pictures. Furthermore, the relationship between pictures and text distinguishes it from the traditional book, as the reading strategy is different and challenging. This is interesting in the following discussion of using the graphic novel to work with IC among reluctant readers.

2.4.2 Graphic Novels in the English Classroom

With an understanding of the format 'graphic novel', it is plausible to connect it to IC and reluctant readers. As stated in section 1.1, Lyngstad (2019) carried out a study that indicates that graphic novels are among the literary texts which are used the least in the classroom. The results are concerning, as scholars and researchers have stated that the graphic novel is a remarkable literary text (Bland, 2018; Rimmereide, 2021; Sullivan, 2002). As my research subject concerns graphic novels, IC, and reluctant readers, it is of interest to investigate the potential of the 'graphic novel'.

It has been found that graphic novels enhance multiliteracy skills, are fun and exciting, motivate reluctant readers, offer a variety of stories, and may develop IC (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020; Krashen, 2004; Rimmereide, 2021; Sullivan, 2002). Furthermore, the author Francisca Goldsmith consistently emphasized the educational value of graphic novels:

> A literary piece that calls on its readers to use both analyzing and synthesizing skills is asking more involvement on the part of the reader, not less. Graphic novels require active, critical participation by the reader, who must not only be able to decode text but also follow its flow and grasp the essentials of narrative, mood, character, or plot through pictures. The reader must then be able to meld parts into a unified whole. (Sullivan, 2002, p. 53)

As my research focuses on reluctant readers' responses to *WSaS* with regard to IC, it is important to consider how graphic novels can support responses to the story. As Aly Anwar Amer suggests, the reader-response theory views reading as a transaction between the reader and the text where "reading is a creative process where meaning is self-structured" (2003, p. 68). Thus, reader-response focuses on responding to the text and expressing ideas, feelings, and opinions. However, given that the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***" is concerned with responding to a multimodal text, it is vital to be aware of how pictures can support responses. In addition, graphic novels foster responses differently than conventional

novels, as the pictures support how we react and respond to the text, especially in terms of visualization. Theorists have classified responses into different categories based on literary formats (Amer, 2003; Arizpe & Morag, 2008; Beach, 1993). Within this thesis, Kiefer's (1993) categories, presented by Evelyn Arizpe and Styles Morag (2008), will be applied as they are suitable for responding to text and pictures:

- **Informative** – the content of pictures, storyline
- **Heuristic** – problem solving, interference, hypothetical language
- **Imaginative** – entering into the life of the book, using figurative language
- **Personal** – expressing feelings, opinions, relating to characters, evaluating pictures

As stated earlier, the development of IC can be facilitated through literature. However, further research is required to investigate the diverse range of literary forms, including graphic novels. Falter argues that the relationship between the visuals and text within a graphic novel can foster knowledge and skills, as "[graphic novels] can aid students in exploring important contemporary and historical social issues. They have the potential to generate a sense of empathy and human connectedness among students and for others" (2017, p. 145). Vanderbeke (2006) supplements this by stating that a graphic novel can develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes, especially if it focuses on a foreign culture or country of which the pupils have limited knowledge. It may facilitate the ability to take a new perspective through analyzing the visuals and text, which again will affect "their perspective and questions of cultural difference, identity, racial stereotyping, etc." (Hecke, 2011, p. 655). Hence, reading graphic novels can foster the ability to take a new perspective, which in turn will lead to the development of knowledge and respect, and learning in relation to different opinions and habits (Hecke, 2011).

The influential philosopher Emmanuel Levinas stated that coming 'face to face' with the Other awakens ethical responsibility, empathy, tolerance, and respect within us toward other people (Levinas, 1996). The theory of 'the face of the other' is valuable within this thesis, as it reflects the development of intercultural attitudes through being visually exposed to the 'Other'. According to The Ethics Centre (2020), Levinas' theory suggests that looking the Other in the face has a psychological impact, as the face exposes one common element: humanity. Furthermore, encountering the Other is problematic, as it:

> Challenges our way of doing things, demands our attention and holds us responsible for our actions. Their presence forces us to rethink our understanding of the way the world works. […] it encourages us to rethink our attitudes toward differences. (The Ethics Centre, 2020)

Thus, it is plausible to connect Levinas' ethical theory on 'the face of the other' to graphic novels and IC, specifically attitudes. Seeing the face of someone who can be perceived as different through pictures has the potential to awaken respect, responsibility, and tolerance (Crignon et al., 2004). As graphic novels tell a story through the special relationship between pictures and text, it is plausible to assume that readers can come 'face to face' with the Other through pictures. As already established, the graphic novel *WSaS* presents the story of Omar, a refugee, through pictures and text. It enables the reader to see Omar, his facial expressions, and follow his day-to-day life. Seeing Omar through pictures may influence intercultural attitudes, as it stimulates ethical responsibility, respect, and tolerance.

Moreover, Carola Hecke (2013) discovered that high school and university students in Germany gained new perspectives and learned about other cultures by reading the graphic novels *Persepolis* and *La Pérdida*. Thus, a graphic novel has a strong potential to develop IC among pupils. The following section will establish why the graphic novel is particularly useful for developing IC among reluctant readers.

2.5 Reluctant Readers

Given that the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***" focuses on reluctant readers, it is important to identify what a reluctant reader is, discuss why reluctance develops and why the 'graphic novel' is a suitable format for promoting IC among reluctant readers. As already established (section 1.1), this thesis uses Kylene Beers and Barbara Samuels' (1998) definition of reluctant readers: alliterate pupils who can read but choose not to. It is essential to highlight that reluctant readers are *not* struggling readers: those who possess a reading disability – e.g., dyslexia, and reading- and writing difficulties. Three categories of reluctant readers are of interest in this thesis. Beer (1996) defines them as:

- **Dormant readers** – pupils who like to read, but do not make time for it
- **Uncommitted readers** – pupils who have ambivalent feelings towards reading, and may read in the future
- **Unmotivated readers** – pupils who lack reading motivation, and cannot see themselves read in the future

Lance Gentile and Merna McMillan (1977) provided an overview of common factors which contribute to the development of reluctant readers. These factors remain applicable today, as evidenced by the fact that various researchers, such as Al-Saleem Basmah (2021),

Beers (1998), and Edward Sullivan (2002), have used Gentile and MacMillan's overview as a basis for discussing reluctant readers. This is important within the topic that the research question brings forth, as it may give an understanding of the development of reading reluctance. The present thesis is based on a selection of factors that can be of interest when discussing why reluctant readers do not read: (1) books are inadequate entertainment compared to other media – e.g., video games, social media, and the Internet, (2) reading is associated with ridicule, failure, and school-related tasks, (3) they may have grown up in non-reading homes, and (4) they simply find books boring, and cannot make connections between books and their world (Gentile & McMillan, 1977, rewritten by me).

As the factors in the previous paragraph indicate, reluctance to read does not have anything to do with an inability to read (Sullivan, 2002, p. 8). Reluctant readers can read, but they choose not to, and this may be affected by their surroundings, motivation, and upbringing. The first factor is particularly interesting, as it mentions entertainment and the Internet. It is no secret that the Internet and social media have become the main source of entertainment among the younger generation. As Gentile & McMillan (1977) have stated, the use of the Internet has developed a reluctance towards using literature as entertainment. Even though this was acknowledged 45 years ago, it is still a relevant observation as there has been a decrease in reading books and an increase in spending time on the Internet.

Jean Twenge points this out and highlights that "in the late 1970s, the clear majority of teens read a book or a magazine nearly every day, but by 2015, only 16% did" (2017, p. 51). These observations are incorporated in the PISA results. The anthology *Equal Opportunities for Good Reading Comprehension? 20 years of reading in PISA* (my translation) by Tove Stjern Frønes and Fredrik Jensen (2020) presents analyzes of Norwegian reading results in PISA 2018, comparing them to the results in the period 2000-2018, and other Nordic countries. Table 3 shows a notable increase in reading reluctance in the period 2000-2018. In 2018, 58% of Norwegian pupils read only if they had to, 40% expressed that reading is a waste of time, and 62% read only to get the information they need.

	2000	2009	2018
I read only if I must	43	44	58
To read is one of my favorite hobbies	24	22	20
I like to talk about books with others	22	28	24
Reading is a waste of time	30	30	40
I read only to get the information I need	48	50	62

Table 3: Percentage of Norwegian pupils who agree or strongly agree with five statements about reading in 2000, 2009, and 2018 (my translation) (Frønes, 2020, p. 118).

As stated earlier, the English subject curriculum stipulates that literature is a useful aid for developing pupils' IC (The Directorate of Education, 2020). However, how can this be employed when it has been shown that the youth read less (Frønes, 2020; OECD, 2019)?

Don Gallo and Teri Lesesne (2004) call for action, arguing that pupils have changed, while books have remained the same (this refers specifically to traditional books). Today's youth is raised in a visual world where they are exposed to multimodality through media, film, the Internet, and video games. The singular, textual mode of the traditional book may therefore seem appalling, hence increasing reading reluctance. There is a need for books of different types. The graphic novel, which has been discussed in section 2.3, may indeed be a suitable format for reluctant readers. It has been suggested that the relationship between the visual and textual aspects attracts reluctant readers (Hansen, 2012; Snowball, 2005), as "the nonlinear narrative format of the graphic novel appeals to a generation of teens who are more accustomed to reading hypertext on a computer screen than traditional linear text" (Sullivan, 2002, p. 54). This relationship enables a dynamic reading experience, which may make it easier to stay engaged and focused, especially as the pictures can provide visual cues and context. Furthermore, scholars, researchers, and teachers have acknowledged that pupils "who will read nothing else, will probably read comics and graphic novels" (Lapp et al., 2012; Sullivan, 2002, p. 53).

By establishing the suitability of graphic novels among reluctant readers, it is possible to discuss why the graphic novel can develop IC among reluctant readers. First, a graphic novel can foster IC by presenting a storyline that is set in a different culture (Hecke, 2011; Vanderbeke, 2006). The relationship between the textual and visual modes can help the reader understand cultures and viewpoints, as "the rich communicative modes of both pictures and verbal text need to be studied for their meaning making" (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020, p. 79). For instance, a graphic novel that is set in a different culture or country can help the reader understand unfamiliar customs, beliefs, and values with the aid of both the text and pictures.

Second, reluctant readers can develop their IC by reflecting on media literacy as they can "explore such questions as how color affects emotions, how pictures can stereotype people, how angles of viewing affect perception […]" (Downey, 2009, p. 182). Furthermore, a graphic novel can help reluctant readers understand the experiences and challenges that people from different cultures face. The visual cues which a graphic novel provides can facilitate reluctant readers' abilities to comprehend the challenges and experiences presented. This is especially true for multicultural graphic novels, as diverse texts can "draw upon the intercultural experiences, skills, attitudes and knowledge of learners themselves, encouraging

reflective thinking and individual development" (Lalita & Beck, 2021, p. 97). The graphic novel can also present people and cultures which the reluctant reader might otherwise not encounter (Downey, 2009, p. 183). Thus, the format 'graphic novel' can be a suitable format for promoting IC among reluctant readers.

2.6 Relevance for My Study

In this chapter, I have presented the relevant theory in order to answer the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***". The earlier mentioned literary search (Appendix A) shows that the combination of IC, reluctant readers, and graphic novels is unusual. The graphic novel *WSaS* has also been presented. Furthermore, Byram's (1997) model of IC has been presented, and as section 2.3 clarifies, the focus of this study lies on intercultural knowledge and intercultural attitudes. Theory on IC is important for my study, as it establishes the intercultural components and offers insight into teaching and learning IC, specifically through graphic novels. The format 'graphic novel' has been described, focusing on the distinguished features, the educational value, and why the graphic novel can be appropriate to use among reluctant readers, specifically when it comes to developing IC. Finally, this chapter has presented the 'reluctant reader', why reading reluctance develops, and why graphic novels can simultaneously reduce reluctance and promote IC.

The theories presented throughout this chapter are relevant to my study, as they give a broad overview of the elements of IC, reluctant readers, and the format 'graphic novel', in order to answer the research question presented above. It is important to understand the elements before conducting the research. In chapter 4, these theories will be used to elucidate my findings. As already mentioned, the focus of this study is to investigate reluctant readers' thoughts on whether the graphic novel *WSaS* can promote IC among reluctant readers. It is important to analyze the reluctant readers' thoughts in relation to the chosen theories. The following chapter presents the methodology and material used to answer my research question.

3. Methodology and Material

As explained in the introductory and theoretical background, the interest of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers. More specifically, the research aims to investigate the following question through a questionnaire and three interviews: "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***". In this chapter, I will discuss and rationalize the methodological choices and research design used to collect and analyze data. Moreover, this chapter will include a discussion of the chosen excerpts from the graphic novel *WSaS*. Finally, there will be a discussion of the ethical considerations of my research.

3.1 Methodological Details

3.1.1 Formalities

To conduct this research, a 10th grade with 148 pupils was selected at a lower secondary school in Norway where I have carried out my practice placement and have employment as a substitute teacher. However, the pupils were new to me, as I have not been involved with the 10th grade. After discussing my study with the principal, a letter (Appendix C) describing my project was sent by e-mail to formalize the approval of the research. The principal responded positively and connected me to three English teachers in 10th grade. As time was short, and I had no previous connection with the pupils, the teachers compiled a list of potential reluctant readers based on their knowledge and the criteria presented in Appendix C. I have followed Beers and Samuels' definition of reluctant readers (1996). The idea was to compare their list to the answers from the questionnaire and select pupils who were present on both lists. However, this did not work out as anticipated, as will be explained in subsection 3.1.2.

As I have collected personal data such as voice recordings, names, and IP addresses, Sikt had to be notified via a notification form. The project was approved (Appendix B), but they specified that parental consent had to be collected. Since my research consists of a questionnaire for the whole 10th grade and three individual interviews, I had to reduce the collection of personal data. Thus, I sent out two parental permission slips at separate times – one for the questionnaire which was for the whole class (Appendix D), and one for interviews that specific pupils received (Appendix E). The selection of the pupils will be described in detail in subsection 3.1.3. The legal guardians approved both permission slips, even though I had to do some minor adjustments which will be established in the following subsections.

3.1.2 Description of the Research

The data collection, which is both defined in a detailed letter describing the nature of my research (Appendix C) and in the letters of consent (Appendix D and E), is split into two parts that supplement each other: a questionnaire and three individual interviews (section 3.2). The data gathered is used to examine whether the graphic novel *WSaS* can promote IC among reluctant readers in a Norwegian 10th grade. The graphic novel has already been described in section 2.2, but the excerpts will be presented in subsection 3.2.3.

The questionnaire, which was sent to the whole 10th grade, collects quantitative data focusing on pupils' reading habits and literary genres. This questionnaire was intended to supplement the qualitative data that is collected through the interviews. The data is focused on reluctant readers' thoughts and experiences of reading *WSaS* in relation to IC.

Furthermore, as I write about IC within this short thesis, I was advised to interview pupils with a common first language, because a multicultural group of interviewees might produce conflicting responses based on their perceptions of culture, their upbringing, etc. This limited thesis cannot accommodate such differences. I, therefore, decided to focus on reluctant readers who were born and raised in Norway and have at least one Norwegian parent. The teachers were extremely helpful in the selection procedure, as they helped with the selection of Norwegian participants who fit the criterion 'reluctant reader'; (1) dormant readers, (2) uncommitted readers, and (3) unmotivated readers (Beers, 1996).

3.1.3 Participants

Of 148 pupils, 106 answered the questionnaire. One question was whether they wanted to participate in a potential interview, where 62 pupils answered positively. The questionnaire was anonymous, but the pupils had to write a code based on their initials and class. This is justified, as I wanted to limit the gathering of personal data but leave an open door to select reluctant readers for the interviews and compare them to the list provided by the teachers.

The idea was to conduct three individual interviews. Out of the 62 pupils who consented to fill in the questionnaire and to participate in an interview, 41 could be classified as reluctant readers based on their answers on reading habits and attitudes towards reading. The teachers sent me their list of pupils, i.e. those who fit the criteria of reluctance and nationality, and I managed to find eleven pupils that were present in both their and my list. With the help of the teachers, I sent the consent form to the parents (Appendix E). However, I only received two responses, which meant that I had to expand my group. Thus, I sent my list of 41 potential reluctant readers to the teachers and asked them to send the consent forms to

pupils and parents who are Norwegian and fit the criteria of 'reluctant reader'. As for making these changes, six candidates agreed to be interviewed. I interviewed two boys and one girl – chosen randomly. They are referred to as "Erik", "Ole", and "Ida" respectively.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Method

I chose the mixed method alternative, which is defined as "[research] which combines various elements of both quantitative and qualitative approaches" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Given that my research question focuses on three elements – IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers – a mixed method is suitable as it enables the connection of both quantitative and qualitative data which may be analyzed and interpreted together, complementing one another, and broadening the data to provide a clearer understanding.

As the research question is focused on pupils' responses, the study collected data using qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires. The focus relies primarily on data from the interviews, supplemented by the data from the questionnaire and my analysis of the responses. The quantitative data collected requires describing reality using numbers, as it "tests objective theories by examining the relationship among variables" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 4). As May Britt Postholm and Dag Ingvar Jacobsen (2018, p. 166) state, the logic behind quantitative data is to standardize the information and force it into predefined categories. This is important in my thesis as it gives a broad overview of 10th graders' experiences when reading as well as the occurrence of reading reluctance.

Furthermore, as the focus lies on reluctant readers' responses to excerpts from *WSaS*, it is of interest to gather their thoughts through a qualitative interview. According to John Creswell and David Creswell, qualitative research is "an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (2018, p. 4). While quantitative data describe reality through numbers, qualitative data is non-numerical, collected through audio, pictures, and text where the meaning must be interpreted. It is important to emphasize that the focus of this research is pupils' responses to the graphic novel in connection with IC. The results are strongly associated with qualitative research, although the analysis and conclusion are also affected by the quantitative results arising from the questionnaire.

3.2.2 Questionnaire

Before I had the opportunity to choose participants for the interviews, I wanted to collect some quantitative data concerning 10th graders' experiences of reading. This will be used as a supplement to the interviews, providing an overview of pupils' reading habits and what type of literary genres they have encountered, specifically investigating the use of the format 'graphic novel' and pictures in general. Furthermore, it allowed me to collect data on reluctant readers, which proved useful in selecting participants for the interviews.

Eighteen questions with a focus on 10th graders' reading habits and what type of literary formats they encountered throughout their schooling, were created. The pupils had to answer questions concerning their attitudes towards reading in English, how many books they have read, and what motivates them to read. Furthermore, they had to express their thoughts on reading literature with a combination of text and pictures.

To expand the data collection, four types of questions were chosen: the Likert scale ("how strongly do you agree"); alternative-answer ("yes or no"); open-ended ("explain why…"), and multiple-choice ("select those who fit you") (Cohen et al., 2018). A mixture of closed- and open-ended questions were chosen to gather data, as it will produce qualitative data which could be used to further support the numerical answers. The questionnaire was written in Norwegian, to make sure that the pupils understood the questions, regardless of their proficiency in English. They were also allowed to answer in Norwegian.

The questionnaire was developed with the aid of Nettskjema, a prominent website for conducting questionnaires, which was suitable in relation to the guidelines of Sikt. It was sent to the teachers, who presented it to the 10th grade during the second week of January 2023. As I was not present, the questionnaire included an informative section, which the teachers read with the class before answering. The questionnaire gave information about the research, the questionnaire, and potential interviews. Furthermore, Nettskjema automatically analyzed the data, generating various diagrams which will be presented in chapter 4.

3.2.3 *When Stars are Scattered* – Excerpts and Reasoning

The chosen excerpts from *WSaS* are the basis for the interviews. The excerpts were selected while keeping in mind (1) the text and pictures, (2) what a reader may learn, (3) the interviews, and (4) IC in relation to intercultural knowledge and attitudes. As already established (see section 2.2), the book is divided into three parts. As I wanted to focus on Omar's childhood, the excerpts (Appendix J) were selected from the first part of the book, as it provides aspects of intercultural knowledge and attitudes that are discussed in detail in this

subsection, and which are highly relevant to my research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***". Some of the pages have less text and more pictures, while others are more evenly distributed. These pages were chosen to accommodate the interviewees who preset to interpret pictures (Lesesne, 2004).

As clarified in section 2.3, intercultural knowledge is a component of IC that concentrates on in-depth learning about cultures in order to break cultural barriers and foster intercultural awareness (Byram, 1997). Intercultural knowledge can include knowledge about other cultures, one's own culture, day-to-day life, global issues, and perspectives. Intercultural attitudes are based on people of different cultures and are important if one is to become an intercultural speaker. According to Byram et al. (2002), an intercultural speaker must be curious, interested in other cultures, respectful, and tolerant. The elements of intercultural knowledge and attitudes are in focus when reading the excerpts from *WSaS*.

Pages 4 and 5 present a splash page, including a text box and speech bubbles. The picture shows a crowd of people behind a wired fence, with Omar and Hassan on the other side looking for their mother. The pages were chosen on the premise that a reader can acquire information by analyzing the relationship between the picture and the text. The selected pages present an opportunity for the cultivation of curiosity – where are the characters, where is Omar's mother, and what is happening in the picture? Furthermore, it allows the development of knowledge, focusing on what the reader may learn from the picture, e.g., why the characters are there, what prior knowledge the reader has, connections with global issues, and of course, what culture is portrayed by analyzing the crowd of people. The pages give an insight into a refugee camp, even though it does not specify this fact, which allows the reader to combine their reading skills with prior knowledge to make assumptions.

The next pages chosen, 14 to 18, provide a combination of pictures and text, as they supplement each other and the reader information on Omar's background, his physical environment, and what he does. At this point, Omar has lived in a refugee camp for seven years. His daily tasks involve fetching water, cleaning, and taking care of his disabled brother Hassan. Moreover, Omar does not attend school because of his obligations. Through reading the text and pictures, the reader acquires information about a refugee's experience, which can develop intercultural knowledge. The pages also provide information about gender norms. Even though the text describes that Omar fetches water, the pictures supplement this by illustrating that the line consists of primarily women. Furthermore, the pictures offer more information than the text: what the surroundings look like, attitudes, and facial expressions

which reveal feelings about school. Thus, the pages enable the reader to gain knowledge on refugees' day-to-day life, especially chores and not going to school. In addition, it fosters the possibility to develop respect and openness towards the characters, but also people who experience this today.

Not being able to attend school is discussed from page 29 to 33. Omar desires to attend school but feels apprehensive due to the fear of leaving his brother. Fatuma, his guardian, provides a quotation that summarizes the general feelings towards school: "I have told him (Salan) we have bigger problems in our life than school. Why bother with school when we barely have enough to eat?" (Jamieson & Mohamed, 2020, p. 30). On the contrary, the community leader, Salan, argues the importance of education in a refugee camp. Omar understands this but is unsure when it comes to Hassan, and he dreams of the possibility to go to America. This information is provided by the text. The pictures supplement this by illustrating the surroundings, body language, facial expressions, and attitudes. These pages enable the reader to develop knowledge of how people from other cultures value education, specifically in relation to other challenges they may encounter. Concurrently, there is a chance to connect this to one's own culture and perception of school. Pages 29 to 33 provide the possibility to become curious about these differences.

Page 45 provides an insight into the school culture, especially when boys and girls are separated. This page was chosen with the intention to only read the pictures and examine what reluctant readers understand without reading the written text. The pictures reveal information that is not given in the text itself, e.g., the building looks old, how the pupils dress, that there are many children in the classroom, and there are few girls. There is an opportunity to develop curiosity about school culture and values. Furthermore, the pupils might transfer this curiosity and respect to real life, as they might come across people who have had a similar education to that of Omar, and who value school differently. In addition, the pictures on page 45 give the reader a chance to reflect on the significance of education in foreign cultures, and how it might affect personal perspectives.

The last page chosen for discussion is page 59. It is centered on Omar sitting in the water queue with girls. While the pictures show a tired Omar, the girls are energetic and study while they wait. Thus, gender norms are highlighted once again. Moreover, the text adds new information: the girls are studying even though one of them is going to get married. Omar does not understand this: "Why was Maryam studying so hard if she was just going to get married soon anyway?" (Jamieson & Mohamed, 2020, p. 59). The text allows the reader to reflect on the issue of child marriage, which is still a prominent issue in various countries.

Furthermore, it allows for a discussion on gender norms, school, and child marriage, and working on prejudice, tolerance, and curiosity. As previously stated, these excerpts were carefully chosen based on (1) the text and pictures, (2) what a reader may learn, (3) the interviews, (4) and IC. The following subsection will further explain the implementation of the excerpts and interviews to collect data in the present study.

3.2.4 Qualitative Interviews

In addition to a quantitative questionnaire, a qualitative method consisting of individual interviews with reluctant readers was chosen. The aim is to investigate and gain insight into reluctant readers' thoughts on using *WSaS* to promote IC among reluctant readers. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2015, p. 20) specify, qualitative interviews try to understand the respondents' reality from their perspective.

The first step was to compile an interview guide (Appendix H). The semi-structured interview guide provides an overview of pre-defined categories and questions which can collect data to answer the research question (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). In addition, it allows adaptability based on the pupils' responses. The questions were open-ended (Cohen et al., 2018), giving opportunities for the interviewees to reflect and explain their thoughts regarding IC and the excerpts from *WSaS*. The interview guide was divided into five sections: pupils' experiences with reading; their understanding of the chosen excerpts; intercultural knowledge; intercultural attitudes; and final thoughts, i.e., covering the elements of IC, reading reluctance, and *WSaS*, which are of interest within this thesis.

While creating the questions, it was important to be mindful of the time limit (40 minutes) while covering all aspects – the graphic novel, IC, and reluctance. In its turn, it was crucial to establish well-planned questions to gather reliable data. Enough room was left to further investigate the interviewees' thoughts, and ask follow-up questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 170). Backup questions were also created, as there was a possibility that the participants would not be responsive. In total, fourteen questions were created for the interview (Appendix H). The individual interviews with "Ole", "Erik", and "Ida" were conducted during the first week of February 2023. They were held in Norwegian to avoid misunderstandings, because language should not be an obstruct when sharing thoughts, meanings, and experiences. I wanted to ensure that the pupils felt comfortable, especially as I was interviewing reluctant readers.

The interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes each and were recorded using 'Diktafon' provided by the University in Oslo. As the pupils expressed nervousness, I wanted

to provide a comfortable atmosphere and avoid misunderstandings. Thus, before the recording started, eight minutes were used to explain the research, why they were chosen, their rights, the interview, and what IC is. They were also given an overview of the excerpts they would read. As IC is a complex concept, I wanted to make it easier for the pupils to comprehend what IC is. Based on Byram's definition and model of IC (Byram, 1997; Byram et al., 2002), I made a simplified overview in Norwegian, which the pupils could use during the interview (Appendix I). After everything was established, the pupils were asked to read the excerpts from *WSaS* (Appendix J), as discussed in subsection 3.2.3.

An issue with recorded interviews is the loss of elements that cannot be included in an audio recording, – e.g. body language, facial expressions, and gestures (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018). Physical responses are emphasized as carriers of meaning, as they reinforce the data, providing information about the pupils' thoughts and attitudes towards the questions and *WSaS* (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). An active choice was to note down the interviewees' body language and gestures.

With the aid of transcription, conversations are "abstracted and fixed in written form" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 204). The interviews were transcribed verbatim in Norwegian the day after they were conducted (later translated into English). The reasoning behind this was to ensure that the statements and meanings were as clear as possible in written form (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 208). This included oral statements, but also pauses, sights and unsureness, and body language. The sign … illustrates where the informants took longer breaks. Thus, as I had all the data in writing – and as such could regard it as the empirical data in the research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 204) –, the process of analysis could begin.

With three transcribed and translated interviews (Appendix L, 17 pages in English), I needed a plan for structuring and analyzing the empirical data during analyzation (Befring, 2015, p. 114). According to Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann (2015, p. 226), a useful method for analyzing data is categorization, where categories that capture the experiences and actions are developed. It is possible to identify similarities and differences in the reluctant readers' answers. The categories used to structure the data correspond to the categories provided in the interview guide (Appendix H). Hence, in line with Edvard Befring (2015), a thematic analysis was conducted, where the data from all informants was simplified, compiled, and compared. The answers were compared and analyzed question by question, giving an overview of similarities and differences.

Furthermore, while comparing the interviewees' answers to each other, it was important to examine each interview isolated – one at a time. It gave the possibility to form an

overview of each informant's opinion concerning the possibility to use *WSaS* to promote IC among reluctant readers. In addition, the data from the interview was analyzed in relation to relevant theory, which can add new information and analysis concerning the topic of research. However, it is important to be careful of one's own pre-conceived ideas as these could affect the results (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). It is thus essential to distance oneself from personal interpretations and be as neutral as possible.

3.3 Research Ethics

When conducting research, it is essential to evaluate ethical considerations to protect the data and the respondents' rights. As Louis Cohen et al. declare: "educational researchers must take into account the effects of the research on participants; they have a responsibility to participants to act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings" (2018, p. 112). Thus, it is important to reflect on ethical concerns which may influence the research. Throughout the process, every part of the research raises ethical dilemmas which must be considered and carefully contemplated (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 111). In addition, it is important to recognize the type of research being conducted and collected. As established earlier, mixed method research was chosen to answer the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***", by collecting data through a questionnaire and three individual interviews. Thus, the data is presented (1) numerically, (2) through diagrams and tables, and (3) through transcriptions of audio recordings – which raises questions about the validity and reliability of the present research.

3.3.1 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important concepts in research (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). They are present in every type of research (here: mixed method) and should be considered in each phase to ensure reflections, wise choices, and reduce threats of invalidity and unreliability. As argued by Cohen et al., "validity is an important key to effective research. If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless" (2018, p. 245). Validity concerns whether the research question is answered adequately through the method and data. Moreover, reliability concerns the consistency and credibility of the research – can it be replicated by other researchers using the particular research design (Kvale & Brinkmann,

2015, p. 276)? To ensure the validity and reliability of mixed method research, it is crucial to reflect on each of the components, in this case, both the questionnaire and the interviews.

The reliability of the questionnaire can be assessed by recreating the research process. However, variables such as time and place must be considered, as they may affect the consistency of the answers and the completion. As the questionnaire was conducted in 10th grade at a specific lower secondary school, there is a strong possibility that 10th graders at other schools will not provide the same answers. Moreover, the anonymous questionnaire was conducted online to ensure reliability, as it may encourage greater honesty. However, it also provides an opportunity for dishonesty and falsification (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 277). Given that questions can be interpreted differently by individuals, ample time and resources (fellow students) were used to review the questions and reduce the threat. Furthermore, the questionnaire was written in Norwegian to reduce the chances of misunderstandings.

It is possible to argue that the questionnaire could be considered invalid, as it does not necessarily answer the research question on its own. However, it is vital to remember that the data from the questionnaire is a supplement to the study, where the focus is the data from the interviews. The validity of the questionnaire is affected since I, as a researcher, was not present during the implementation. Thus, I could not clarify possible misunderstandings. To counteract the effect of my absence, and ensure a smooth implementation, an instructional part was included in the questionnaire (Appendix G). The section provided information about the research, the questionnaire, and the interviews, which the teachers read with the class before answering the questionnaire.

The number of interviewees (three) does not allow one to generalize regarding all reluctant readers of English in 10th grade, especially since the interviewees were randomly selected from a list. Nevertheless, the interviewees do offer insight into reluctant readers' thoughts on using *WSaS* to work with IC. Interviews are difficult to replicate, as the "meeting between the researcher and the people who participate will manifest differently" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 223). There is no guarantee that the participants will come to the same conclusions, and have the same thoughts, and beliefs, especially as IC is a changing concern that can be interpreted differently (Byram, 1997), which will affect the reliability of the study. Thus, IC as a concept was explained before the interview, to ensure a shared understanding. Furthermore, Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) specify that a common threat to reliability is that the interviewees may adapt their answers to what they believe the researcher wants to hear. This cannot be assessed, but it is vital to be aware of the threat. Thus, reluctant readers will have different prerequisites and thoughts, and the process and results cannot be identical.

In addition, qualitative interviews may be difficult to validate. Overall, various sides of the interview should be considered: the interview itself, the interview guide, the transcriptions, and the empirical data. To ensure the validity of the study, the interview guide (Appendix H) was developed with questions regarding the form and content of *WSaS*, IC, and reading reluctance – covering the three central categories. Furthermore, the interviews were transcribed as quickly and accurately as possible, while avoiding personal interpretations.

3.3.2 Participants

A principal element of research ethics is to protect the participants during data collection. Minors have a special right to be protected as they are a vulnerable group (NESH, 2021). Since I must collect such personal data as IP addresses, names, and audio recordings, a notification form was sent to Sikt (Appendix B), who approved the research having deemed that the participants' rights have been protected. In addition to the pupils' consent, parental approval was collected (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 124). However, the participants have the last say and could withdraw their consent at any time during the research process.

Furthermore, it is important to make the participants as comfortable as possible, especially during the interviews. They were informed about their rights per Appendix E. They also received information about the consent, and the possibility to withdraw. The participants expressed concern about answering in English, and if this would count as an assessment. As a researcher, I made it clear that the interviews will be conducted in Norwegian, and that their answers will not have any impact on their grades. In addition, I explained that a) I am the only person who will have access to the audio recordings, and b) pseudonyms will be used in the thesis to protect their rights.

4. Results and Discussion

In this chapter, empirical findings from the questionnaire and the interviews will be presented and discussed in relation to the theory concerning IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers, to answer the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***". The data from the questionnaire will supplement the data from the interviews, where Erik, Ole, and Ida (pseudonyms) participated. First, 10th graders' experiences with reading will be presented and discussed, as it will give an overview of reading reluctance and thoughts on multimodality. Thereafter, reluctant readers' responses from the interviews in relation to *WSaS*, IC, and 'graphic novels' will be presented and discussed in relation to relevant theory in order to answer the research question.

To ensure clarity throughout this chapter, the participants in this study will be referred to differently. The participants in the questionnaire will be referred to as 'respondents', while the participants in the interviews will be referred to as 'interviewees' and 'reluctant readers'.

4.1 10th Graders' Experiences with Reading

The research question of the present thesis focuses on reluctant readers' thoughts on reading *WSaS* in relation to IC. It is also important to present and discuss reading reluctance among 10th graders. The questionnaire provides data regarding reading reluctance, the use of the format 'graphic novel', and pupils' thoughts about reading text and pictures. There were 106 respondents in total: 54 girls, 51 boys, and 1 non-binary. The answers from the questionnaire incorporate a spectrum of 10th graders' experiences with reading, ranging from positive to negative experiences. Two examples are shown below:

> "My relationship with books is quite bad, because I have never had a sense of accomplishment when I read"
>
> "I like to read. When I read, I have a lot of thoughts and questions. I can imagine myself in situations or daydream"

Thus, the pupils' reading experiences vary as they are affected by personality, interests, and motivation (Sullivan, 2002). This section presents the pupils' reading experiences in depth, investigates reading reluctance, and pupils' thoughts on reading text and pictures. Each subsection presents interesting results regarding 10th graders' experiences with reading: reading reluctance is present, and several pupils are positive towards reading text and pictures.

4.1.1 Reading Reluctance

I do NOT like reading because it is so boring. I haven't read a book voluntarily since 6th grade.

The quotation above is derived from the questionnaire, where a 10th grader expressed a negative relationship with books, to the question *Do you like to read books?* The pupil argues that boredom is the main reason for reading reluctance. It has been four years since they read books voluntarily. As Figure 1 demonstrates, 10th graders differ regarding their views on reading English books. 39% of the respondents express a positive relationship to reading in English; they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement *I like to read English books*. On the other hand, 31% 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the statement, while 30% experience their relationship as neutral; neither positive nor negative. It is clear that a significant amount of the 106 respondents do not like to read English books. As Beers (1996) states, there are three categories of reluctant readers: dormant readers, uncommitted readers, and unmotivated readers. Both the questionnaire and interviews discovered that most reluctant readers in that specific 10th grade can be identified as unmotivated readers: they lack reading motivation and often find reading to be boring. In the interview, Ole – a reluctant reader – reflected on his relationship with books:

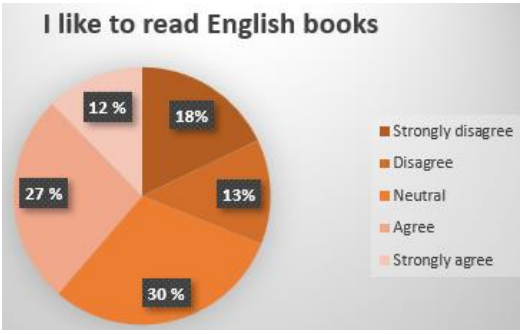

Figure 1: I like to read English books

> Uhm… I'm not very fond of reading. Never had any particular interest in it. I haven't found anything interesting either […] It has always been like that, eh since childhood […] I think it is boring to read at school […]. (Ole)

Thus, Ole explained that his relationship with books has been negative ever since he was a child. He suggested that this might be due to not finding anything interesting to read. He described reading as *boring* and *uninteresting*. With Beers' categories (1996), Ole is an unmotivated reader.

To answer the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***", it is vital to investigate reading reluctance by analyzing 10th graders' attitudes towards reading. Many pupils express a similar attitude: reading is boring. This attitude may be seen in relation to Gentile and McMillan (1977), who suggest that a factor that contributes to the development of reluctant readers is *boredom*. Terms such as *motivation* and *boring* are frequently used among the respondents who do not like to read. In the questionnaire, a pupil stated: "I don't really like to read books, especially thick books with many pages. I lose motivation to read the book, and I

get bored of it". This pupil specifically stated how reading *thick books with many pages* contributes to reading reluctance, boredom, and a lack of motivation. The pupil's statement regarding *thick books with many pages* lacks clarity, particularly concerning their understanding of the term *book*. In addition, it remains ambiguous as to how many pages they consider to constitute *many*. It is, however, possible to speculate that they think of traditional books as books with text only.

Figure 2 presents the statement *I think that reading in English is…*. The results present that 28% of the pupils believe that reading in English is "not fun", "boring", "difficult" or "ok/difficult", while the rest experience it as "fun" and "ok". For the present thesis, the answer options "not fun" and "boring" are of interest, as they can represent reading reluctance, especially in terms of *motivation* and *boredom* (Krashen, 2004). The option "difficult" was included to separate *boredom* and *difficulty*. As stated by both Beers (1996) and Sullivan (2002), reluctant readers shall not be confused with struggling readers. Ida, an interviewee, agreed with the 28%, and stated "I don't really read much to be honest, especially not English books […] It's kind of boring […] I lose my concentration very quickly […]". Once again, the term *boring* is used: Ida finds English books to be boring, which influences her ability to concentrate on the text. In hindsight, it is clear that Ida is an unmotivated reluctant reader (Beers, 1996).

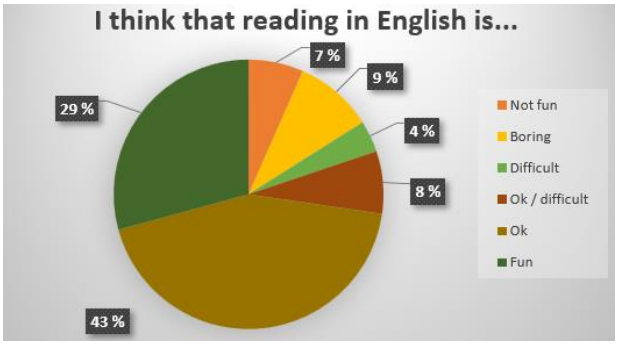

Figure 2: I think that reading in English is...

In terms of reading reluctance, the respondents in the questionnaire were asked to evaluate a statement regarding avoidance of reading English books (Figure 3). 28% (30 pupils) agreed with the statement: they try to avoid reading English books. Another way to investigate reading reluctance among the respondents was to ask about the number of books they read last year in 2022. Neither the length of the books nor the genre appeared to matter. As presented in Figure 4, 34 pupils expressed that they have read 4+ books in 2022. The remaining 72 pupils stated that they read 0-3 books. Since the school requires that the pupils

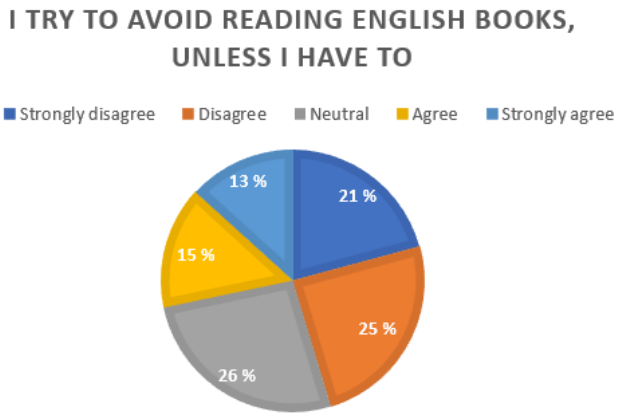

Figure 3: I try to avoid reading English books, unless I have to

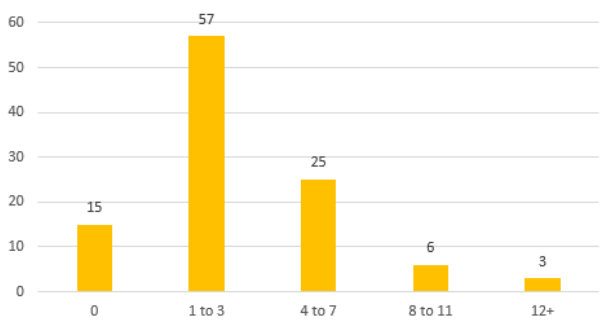

Figure 4: How many books did you read in 2022?

read a minimum of two English books each year, we can assume that most of these books were read at school. 15 pupils expressed that they read 0 books in 2022.

The presented results indicate that reading reluctance is present among 10th graders at the lower secondary school chosen for the present study. Several respondents stated that reading books in English is boring, and they try to avoid it. Most of the reluctant readers can be described as unmotivated readers: they lack reading motivation (Beers, 1996). Since the term *boring* was used by several respondents, it is of interest to investigate what the term may entail. In accordance with Gentile and McMillan (1977), reluctant readers may view books as inadequate entertainment when comparing with other media, such as films, social media, and the Internet. As stated earlier, the respondents may use the term *book* in relation to traditional books: books with written text only. In the questionnaire, a pupil stated that reading books is a waste of time: "It is a waste of time to read books when you could rather watch the film version". This response can be viewed in relation to Gentile and McMillan (1977), as the pupil views books as inadequate entertainment and would rather prefer watching movies. This opinion was also expressed in the interview, where Ole specified that he prefers to watch tv-shows instead of reading, and Erik prefers gaming. These answers have one thing in common: the interviewees prefer multimodality over books with text only.

As Gallo and Lesesne (2004) state, pupils have changed while books have remained the same. Typically, books still use only one mode: written text. In a world where technology has emerged, pupils have become accustomed to multimodality on various platforms: tv, the Internet, and social media (Twenge, 2017). When they experience multimodality daily, it becomes difficult to read unimodal books. It can be challenging for the pupils to make connections between books and their world, thus experiencing reading as boring (Gentile & McMillan, 1977). When establishing and discussing reading reluctance among the respondents in 10th grade, it is necessary to investigate their thoughts on reading text and pictures.

4.1.2 Text and Pictures

I have to be honest; it has become boring to read books that don't have any pictures.

Erik is behind the quotation above. He specified that he is honest; reading books without pictures has become boring. Once again, the term *boring* is used, and Erik's response can be seen in relation to multimodality and boredom, as discussed in subsection 4.1.1 (Gentile & McMillan, 1977). Boredom is something all three interviewees highlighted. To supplement these responses, the questionnaire asked what kind of texts 10th graders have read throughout

their schooling, including both primary and secondary school. They were asked to mark all relevant answers from a list of nine suggestions (see Figure 5). The pupils had the opportunity to choose more than one alternative, which resulted in 539 crossed answers. The results can be found in Figure 5, where they are presented as percentages to give an overview of the literary texts which the pupils have encountered throughout their schooling. This is of interest in this thesis as the research question focuses on graphic novels as literary texts. Novels (16%), short novels (15%), poems (15%), and traditional books (12%) are among the most common literary texts the 10th graders have encountered throughout their schooling. As elucidated in the questionnaire, the primary difference between a 'novel' and a 'traditional book' in the context of this thesis is the length of the text. While a novel is a text concentrated on a situation with few characters, a traditional book is longer and split into chapters.

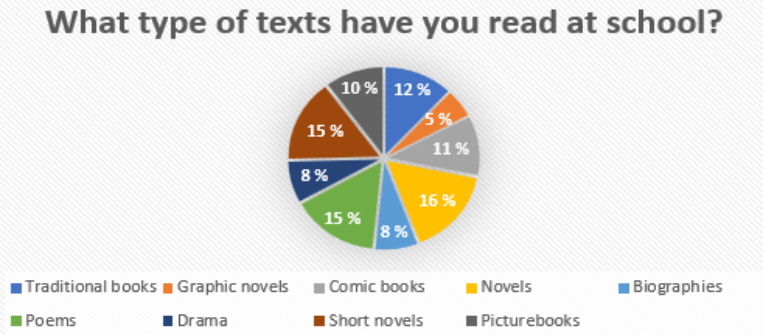

Figure 5: What type of texts have you read at school?

On the other hand, the literary texts which the pupils have encountered the least often, are biographies (8%), drama (8%), and graphic novels (5%). Thus, the pupils expressed that the majority of texts they have encountered in school are written texts. As discussed in subsection 4.1.1, reading reluctance may develop when pupils find it difficult to connect to books with only written text, which can further boredom. Given that the pupils expressed that they encounter unimodal texts the most, reading reluctance may flourish. The results are in line with Lyngstad (2019), who indicates that teachers mainly use traditional books and novels in the classroom, while multimodal books are used the least, especially graphic novels. This is concerning, as graphic novels have been regarded as particularly useful when working with reluctant readers, as they present both pictures and text to tell a story and create a dynamic reading experience (Hansen, 2012; Lesesne, 2004; Rimmereide, 2021; Sullivan, 2002). Furthermore, as today's youth are exposed to various modes through media, video games, and the Internet, it is important to develop multimodality. As Watts (2015) specifies, the graphic novel has the means to develop multimodality, as it requires specific literacy strategies.

Given that the graphic novel *WSaS* is the focus of attention in the present study, it is of interest to investigate 10th graders' thoughts on multimodality in books: text and pictures. When asked about reading pictures, 46% of the pupils specified that it is easier to read and understand a book when it includes pictures. 34% were neutral, while 20% disagreed with the

statement. The results are presented in Figure 6. In addition, 43% of the pupils declared that they would read more if more books had pictures (Figure 7). Thus, incorporating multimodality in books could perhaps lead to a decrease in reluctant readers, as they would possibly find it easier to connect to the books (Gentile & McMillan, 1977). These results may be seen in contrast to the results in Figure 5, where the pupils expressed that they normally read literary texts in school which do not usually portray pictures: novels, short novels, traditional books, and poems.

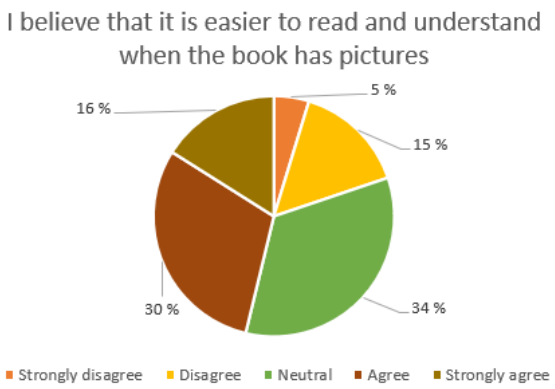

Figure 6: I believe that it is easier to read and understand when the book has pictures

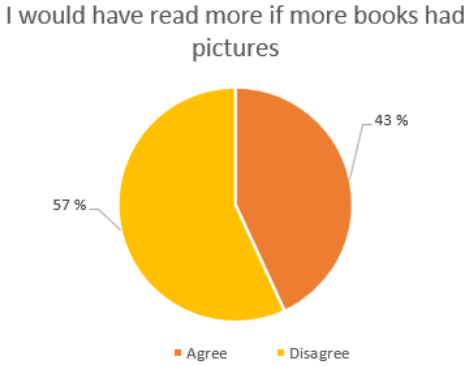

Figure 7: I would have read more if more books had pictures

By way of supplementing the percentages, the pupils were asked to elaborate upon their view on reading pictures. Those who viewed pictures in books as something positive, focused on multiple strengths. Some of the most frequent answers are presented below:

- I believe that it is easier to understand books if there are more pictures, because it is not as boring as when there are only books with just text and zero pictures. Then there is a less chance that I will put the book down.
- When I read a book that has pictures, it is easier to understand what the author means and what they are trying to convey.
- I think it is more interesting to read books with pictures, because you get a little break from the text, and it is easier to imagine what the author means.
- Pictures make reading easier, then I have more interest and motivation to read it.

Reading pictures is presented as something positive. The respondents highlighted that pictures are carriers of meaning and that they foster interest and motivation. It is possible to use the theoretical background of reluctant readers and graphic novels (sections 2.4 and 2.5) to argue for the use of pictures (Falter, 2017; Gentile & McMillan, 1977; Krashen, 2004; Lesesne, 2004; Sullivan, 2002, 2002; Watts, 2015). Krashen (2004) stresses that in order to foster interest in reading, it is important to enhance reading motivation. As the responses above demonstrate, reading motivation among pupils can be increased by incorporating pictures in

books. Hence, reading pictures can foster reading motivation and interest. As Figure 7 shows, 43% of the respondents in the 10th grade would have read more if books had pictures.

Furthermore, the respondents believe that pictures in books make the storyline easier to understand, and it reduces boredom. Once again, it is valuable to see these responses in relation to Gentile and McMillan (1977) and Gallo and Lesesne (2004). As Gentile and McMillan (1977) state, reluctant readers may not read due to finding books to be boring, and they cannot make connections between their world and books. Concurrently, Gallo and Lesesne (2004) express that unimodal books need to change in order to hold onto pupils' interest. Hence, as today's youth is raised in a visual world, books need to incorporate various modes, such as pictures. By seeing Gentile and McMillan (1977), Gallo and Lesesne (2004), and the respondents' replies in the questionnaire concerning the advantages of pictures: pictures in books reduce boredom, increase motivation, and make it easier to understand the plot and the underlying meaning of the story.

Even though this thesis focuses on the positive aspects of text and pictures in graphic novels, it is important to be aware that using pictures does not work for everyone. In Figure 6, 20% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. In addition, 57% would not have read more if pictures were an integral part of a book. A few pupils expressed this point of view in the questionnaire: (1) pictures can be distracting, (2) pictures can destroy imagination, and (3) the respondents can already picture the events mentally.

Thus, the 10th graders at the lower secondary school selected for the present study have different thoughts on the benefits of reading text and pictures as an integral part of a story. However, as the results from the questionnaire indicate, many respondents view the relationship between pictures and text as beneficial: it is easier to understand the plot, it is interesting, reduces boredom, and increases motivation. In its turn, it may potentially reduce reading reluctance among 10th graders, as discussed in subsection 4.1.1. Nevertheless, the results also indicate that the pupils are not as exposed to multimodal books, such as the graphic novel. Based on the questionnaire and previous research on graphic novels and reluctant readers (Cook, 2017; Felsenthal, 2019; Schwertner, 2008; Sloboda et al., 2014), it can be assumed that graphic novels can be appropriate literary texts for reluctant readers. Moreover, as the research question for the present thesis (***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***) focuses on three elements (reluctant readers, graphic novel, and IC), it is vital to discuss the results against developing IC.

As stated earlier, there is a consensus among authors and researchers that literature is a sufficient medium to work with IC (Byram et al., 2002; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). This view is expressed in the English subject curriculum, where it is stated that IC can be learned through working with texts (The Directorate of Education, 2020). However, the results from the questionnaire indicate that several pupils experience reading reluctance and that they are usually exposed to traditional books (Figure 5). So, how can reluctant readers learn IC if they experience reading reluctance? Several pupils express a positive attitude towards reading multimodal books, such as graphic novels. One pupil stated "There is a less chance that I will put the book down" when expressing their attitude towards reading text and pictures. It is possible to see these results in accordance with Brown and Habegger-Conti (2022), who state that pictures can activate cultural imaginaries faster than written text.

The findings regarding 10th graders' attitudes towards reading text and pictures are of interest in the present thesis, as *WSaS* is a multimodal book – a graphic novel – where the pictures and text are integral parts of the story. As many reluctant readers expressed that they are positive towards multimodal books, it is of interest to investigate whether the graphic novel *WSaS* can promote IC among reluctant readers. As Dypedahl and Lund (2020) state, a portrayal of the refugee experience can provide insight into a new world, and foster IC. Thus, it is suitable to proceed to the main data in the present study: the interviews with three reluctant readers, where they read excerpts from *WSaS*.

4.2 Reluctant Readers, *When Stars are Scattered*, and Intercultural Competence

The previous section indicates that several 10th graders can be identified as reluctant readers and that 'graphic novel' is the literary text which they have encountered the least. The majority experience reading as boring and unmotivating, especially as they usually read traditional books. Several pupils also explained that reading pictures and text can increase their interest in reading. As various theorists and the English subject curriculum specify that IC can be developed through literature, it is essential to investigate if graphic novels, in this case, *WSaS*, can be used with reluctant readers to promote IC. Against this backdrop, it is sufficient to present and discuss Ida, Erik, and Ole's thoughts on reading excerpts from *WSaS*, to answer the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***".

As mentioned earlier, the participants in the questionnaire are referred to as 'respondents', while the participants in the interviews are referred to as 'interviewees' and 'reluctant readers'. The interviewees were chosen based on the questionnaire, the criteria of nationality (Norwegian) and reading reluctance (Appendix C; Beers, 1998), their consent, and parental consent. They read the excerpts (Appendix J) first and were then interviewed. This section is split following the categories in the interview guide (Appendix H), which were also applied during my analysis: (1) reading *WSaS*, (2) intercultural knowledge, (3) intercultural attitudes, and (4) concluding thoughts on the possibility of using *WSaS* to promote IC.

4.2.1 Reading the Graphic Novel *When Stars are Scattered*

I actually like this a little better because there is something to look at as well. You can see who is saying what.

Before discussing the possibility of using *WSaS* with reluctant readers to promote IC, it is necessary to investigate their understanding of the excerpts provided. An understanding of the plot must be present before discussing intercultural knowledge and attitudes within *WSaS*. In addition, exploring the interviewees' views on reading graphic novels is important in order to ascertain whether this format is an effective means of engaging reluctant readers. After reading the excerpts from *WSaS*, the interviewees expressed that this is the first time they were exposed to this format. As Chute explained, a graphic novel is "a book-length work in the medium of comics" (2008, p. 459), where pictures and text are an integral part of the story. At this stage, following Kiefer (1993) in Arizpe and Morag (2008), the interviewees' responses were personal: they expressed their feelings and opinions.

The quotation presented above is attributed to Ida, whose viewpoint was also shared by Erik and Ole. The three interviewees enjoyed reading the graphic novel, as they found the format to be interesting. Their interest was awoken by the pictures. As discussed in section 4.1, the interviewees can be classified as unmotivated reluctant readers: they lack reading motivation (Beers, 1996). However, they expressed an interest in the graphic novel. These results are best understood when related to Hansen (2012) and Snowball (2005), who specify that the relationship between the textual and visual aspects can attract reluctant readers. As Ida said, she had 'something to look at'. Erik shared the same experience, stating "I also want to have a picture to look at, so I can understand the action better".

The interviewees acquired an understanding of the plot in *WSaS* by reading both the pictures and text. By discussing the plot, the reluctant readers showed that they decoded the

pictures, read the text, and used literary strategies in relation to multimodality to gather information (Ripley, 2012; Watts, 2015). Erik, Ole, and Ida provided a similar summary of the plot using informative and imaginative responses. Erik stated:

> It was about a boy called Omar I think, and his brother Hassan. And he (Omar) was very cautious to look after Hassan all the time because he (Hassan) [has seizures]. And he had to have someone who could be present, even if it was, eh Fatuma who also looked after him. But his brother (Omar) was there for him most of the time. They were very much attached to each other. He (Omar) started school and didn't want to leave his brother. He wanted someone to be there and look after him. I think they live in Dadaab, a huge refugee camp in Africa. (Erik)

As Erik explained, the graphic novel is centered on Omar's childhood and struggles in the refugee camp Dadaab. As the plot in a graphic novel is presented through pictures and text, the interviewees must incorporate visual literacy: the ability to "read" pictures and text (Rimmereide, 2021). The pictures are an integral part of the story, and they must be read in accordance with the text to understand the context. By discussing the plot, the three interviewees showed that they read and used information from the pictures and the written text to understand the plot. Thus, by reading the excerpts from *WSaS*, the interviewees gained an understanding of the plot through visual literacy.

To further investigate the interviewees' understanding of the plot and incorporation of visual literacy, they were asked to read and respond to pages 4 and 5: a splash page with a text box and two speech bubbles. Their abilities to read a splash page were of interest:

> Women and children sit under the tent to be shaded from the sun, and they… I think they are in a different camp because they (points at Omar and Hassan) are behind the barbed wire fence. Like, looking for their mother, I think. Uhm… it is also very colorful, and I see very detailed faces. They don't look happy […]. (Ida)

> It could be a place for newly arrived refugees. It looks like some sort of guard or solider is there (points). I see a lot of people, […] people from different cultures, but I don't know for sure. (Erik)

All interviewees shared the same understanding of the splash page: Omar and Hassan stand behind wired fences looking at a group of people in hopes of finding their mother. This information is acquired through the special relationship between pictures and text. Even though the interviewees were able to describe the picture, they gathered information about the mother throughout the text, which helped them understand the context. Once again, the interviewees used visual literacy to read the splash page. Reading a splash page can be challenging, as the reader must analyze and decode the picture and connect it to the written text (Sullivan, 2002). Furthermore, the terms *refugee* and *camp* were brought up, even though the splash page does not use them. Thus, the interviewees read the picture and connected it to their prior knowledge, concluding that the people in the picture are refugees. This will be discussed in the next subsection, as it deals with intercultural knowledge.

With a focus on investigating the reluctant readers' understanding of the excerpts from *WSaS*, they had to read and explain what they understood from page 59. As stated in subsection 3.2.3, page 59 addresses the issue of water shortage and child marriage. The interviewees focused on different elements when discussing page 59. Ole concentrated on the information conveyed by the pictures: Omar is the only boy in the water queue. By analyzing the pictures and noticing the surrounding details, Ole understood that what he was looking at was a queue for water. However, it was necessary to ask follow-up questions for him to supplement the pictures with the written text. Through reading the pictures, Ole was able to discuss how gender roles are portrayed on page 59:

> Omar is the only boy here, maybe hmmm no, I don't really know. Maybe something to do with gender roles? In such areas, it may be that girls shall look after the children, cook, fetch water. Maybe not go to school. You get some information indirectly about it, even if it isn't written there. (Ole)

Like Ole, Erik also focused on Omar. However, he was absorbed by the surroundings. Initially, Erik's body language expressed unsureness – a confused expression, fiddling with his hands, and avoiding eye contact. He did not understand where Omar is:

> I see some pupils (fiddling). I don't quite know if they are sitting and waiting, or they're going to study or what … (thinking) those (yellow boxes) … they're sitting on them… wait, they look like watering cans… (Erik)

However, after he incorporated the visual and textual aspects on the page, he understood that Omar is sitting in a queue for water. By analyzing Erik's body language, it is possible to assume that he experienced the reading process as difficult. He had to be active and focused to understand the narrative (Ripley, 2012). On the contrary, Ida focused on the girls in the queue for water: Nimo and Maryam. Like Omar, the girls are sitting in the queue for water. However, they are also studying. This is something Ida noticed immediately:

> The girls have already started to study, sort of, work with school, while they sit in the water queue […] Omar didn't understand why she (Nimo) was like studying when she was going to be married off anyway. (Ida)

Thus, Ida read the pictures and the text to gather information. As stated in subsection 3.2.3, to understand page 59, it is important to read the text and pictures as integrated elements. The pictures show the surroundings, which all interviewees noticed. However, the text describes the situation in the pictures: Omar does not understand why Nimo is studying, as she is going to get married either way. Ida noticed this and stated, "you don't get information about marriage through the picture but through the text". Furthermore, the interviewees expressed that the children in the pictures may be between 7 and 12 years old, and reflected on child marriage:

> But education is important. So yeah, maybe it shows us a challenge, the fact that girls are perhaps expected to marry and have children and families at a young age, versus getting an education. (Ole)

> It's quite a young age to get married, hmmm, maybe it's part of the culture they're in, we don't know that by just looking at the picture. (Erik)
>
> It is a realistic problem, the thing with child-marriage. Eh, so the girls sit there, and they work maybe with school because they know uhm that it is important to learn something before that one girl gets married. Mmm so there is a dilemma between getting married and get an education. (Ida)

As the presented results indicate, the reluctant readers gained an understanding of the plot in *WSaS* by utilizing visual literacy. However, by initially reading and discussing the pages presented above, an interesting discovery was made: the reluctant readers understood the pages differently. This can be seen in relation to Goldsmith's theory, that reading a graphic novel is demanding (Sullivan, 2002). The interviewees must be more involved as readers, as they had to read and combine the visual and textual aspects. As the interviewees focused on different information on page 59, it is possible to assume that they have different abilities to meld the visual and textual aspects in a unified whole to understand the context. Thus, reading a graphic novel is challenging, and requires the reader to "become comfortable interpreting the visual/textual blend" (Ripley, 2012, p. 99). As Gonzales (2016) and McBribe (2023) discuss, a common misperception of graphic novels is that they are simple and easy to read. However, the findings in the present study suggest that it is challenging to read graphic novels, as a lack of visual literacy skills may affect the interpretation of the narrative.

Moreover, through reading and discussing the excerpts, the interviewees concluded that the graphic novel *WSaS* addresses controversial topics, such as child marriage and not going to school. They used the term 'culture', which indicates that *WSaS* has the potential to discuss cultural aspects. This will be further examined in subsection 4.2.2. Furthermore, as the results imply, it is sufficient to assume that the interviewees acquired an understanding of the excerpts from the graphic novel *WSaS* by utilizing their visual literacy skills. Given that the reluctant readers found the format 'graphic novel' to be interesting and motivating, and they expressed an understanding of the plot, it is possible to discuss their thoughts on *WSaS*'s ability to promote IC among reluctant readers, specifically knowledge and attitudes.

4.2.2 Intercultural Knowledge

You can sort of "see" the culture visually, and not just read about it.

When the interviewees were asked about their thoughts on acquiring intercultural knowledge through reading pictures and text in the graphic novel *WSaS*, they provided interesting responses. Ole is responsible for the quotation above. He focused on culture and believed that *WSaS* provides an opportunity to *see* a culture visually. As explained in the preceding chapters, the focus on IC within this thesis lies on the components of intercultural knowledge

and intercultural attitudes to provide an answer to the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***". Thus, it is important to investigate reluctant readers' thoughts and ability to use visual literacy to gain knowledge. As already established, intercultural knowledge is split into two categories (Byram, 1997): (1) social groups and their cultures in one's own country and the interlocutor's country, and (2): the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels.

The three interviewees reflected on how the combination of pictures and text in the graphic novel may scaffold the process of acquiring intercultural knowledge. As Vanderbeke (2006) explains, graphic novels can have a unique potential for developing intercultural knowledge, especially if it focuses on a country or culture which the pupil has limited knowledge about. Furthermore, as explained in the methodology chapter (subsection 3.2.3), *WSaS* can allow for the development of intercultural knowledge as it is possible to read and analyze the pictures and the text to acquire information about a refugee's experience. In turn, it is possible to use this information and connect it to prior knowledge, global issues, and reflections on one's achieved knowledge. According to Downey (2009, p. 182), the media literacy of graphic novels can make pupils explore how angles of viewing affect perceptions. The interviewees were all positive to learn through analyzing the relationship between pictures and text. Ida, a reluctant reader, stated:

> I feel like it like sticks better in your head when you see it instead of just reading, because then you can sort of memorize the picture […]. (Ida)

She implied that reading pictures and text as an integral part of the story in *WSaS* made it easier to remember the storyline and acquire knowledge. She was specifically positive towards the use of pictures. The point made by Ida can be seen in relation to Brown and Habegger-Conti (2022), who explain that within a graphic novel, pictures can activate cultural imaginaries faster than written text, as cultural markers are usually visual. Within *WSaS* these cultural markers are, for instance, portrayed through the surroundings, the clothing, and the actions. Ole had a similar perception of how graphic novels can develop intercultural knowledge. However, he is focused on the importance of the written text:

> […] But without the text, it is perhaps a little difficult to see what is happening. There must be a good combination of text and pictures, and they must be connected and make sense. Maybe build each other up a bit, like 50/50. (Ole)

Ole claimed that to acquire intercultural knowledge through graphic novels, the interplay between pictures and text must work. This is confirmed by Baetens and Frey (2015). The pictures and text in a graphic novel are integral elements of the story, as they supplement each other and provide contextual information to the story. While a picture provides visual cues,

the written text can describe the surroundings, feelings, and elements which are not present in the picture. This is for instance present on the splash page in *WSaS* (pages 4 and 5), where the picture shows Omar and Hassan behind a wired fence, looking at a group of people. Moreover, the written text adds vital information: Omar and Hassan are looking for their mother. The picture and written text are connected and supplement each other, as they provide contextual support. Ole's statement is thus important: the interplay between pictures and text must work.

On the other hand, Erik highlighted the importance of pictures in a graphic novel. He, as a reluctant reader, specified how pictures caught his attention and that they made it possible for him to acquire intercultural knowledge:

> […] If I read the pages without pictures, I would simply have given up and would have thought it was boring. But with pictures, you sort of see what it's like. Notice small details. (Erik)

As the interviewees specified, the relationship between pictures and text in the graphic novel *WSaS* is important for acquiring intercultural knowledge. Given that the reluctant readers found the format interesting and motivating (subsection 4.2.1), it is intriguing to see their reflections on the possibilities to acquire intercultural knowledge through *WSaS*. As Dypedahl and Lund (2020) state, the visual and textual elements in a graphic novel can help the reader investigate cultures and perspectives through the modes of pictures and written text. The interviewees expressed this very viewpoint as they discussed the importance of pictures and text in various degrees to acquire intercultural knowledge: Ida focused on the value of pictures, Erik noted the importance of written text, and Ole highlighted the supplementing value of pictures and text. As explained in the theoretical chapter, pictures in graphic novels are presented in a series where the reader can get immersed. However, they need textual support to understand the context. This view is specifically shown in Ole's answers, where he reflects on the importance of pictures and text to acquire intercultural knowledge.

Given that the research question (***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***) focuses on whether *WSaS* may promote IC (in this subsection: intercultural knowledge) among reluctant readers, it is important to investigate what type of intercultural knowledge the interviewees focused on. An interesting result was that all three interviewees focused on *culture*, which *WSaS* fosters by portraying a foreign culture (Falter, 2017; Vanderbeke, 2006). Erik stated:

> You can get different perspectives about how other people live […] It's also a different culture there, that you get an insight into. For example, the view on family, or the view on school and education, and especially girls – marrying them off and such things. You can learn a lot through these excerpts and the book, maybe… maybe also reflect on how I have it in contrast to [Omar]. (Erik)

Erik introduced several interesting points. He specified that through the excerpts, it is possible to acquire different perspectives on how refugees live, and gain insight into their culture (family, school, education, and gender roles). Furthermore, he expressed that the graphic novel made him reflect on his own life. As described in section 2.3, an important element of acquiring intercultural knowledge is to be able to gain knowledge of other cultures, and new perspectives, and be able to view it in contrast to one's own culture (Byram, 1997; Byram et al., 2002). This is also specified in the English subject curriculum, as pupils shall be able to explore diversity and take upon new perspectives (The Directorate of Education, 2020).

Thus, Erik's responses show that the graphic novel *WSaS* made it possible for him, as a reluctant reader, to gain intercultural knowledge of a different culture through utilizing visual literacy skills (Falter, 2017; Rimmereide, 2021), especially as the graphic novel highlights various elements of culture, i.e. family, education, and gender roles that will be discussed further. Ole and Ida expressed similar thoughts as Erik. However, Ole brought up an interesting aspect: food. He highlighted that the excerpts provided an insight into how food may be valued by people in another culture, especially as there is a food shortage in a refugee camp. Thus, he reflected on this in relation to his own culture:

> For example, with food, they may have a completely different experience with food, perhaps the fact that they don't throw food away, save it, and place a value on it. Whereas here (Norway) we might not think as much about it since we haven't experienced anything like that. (Ole)

Moreover, the three interviewees agreed that school culture was presented through the excerpts and that the pictures and text provided insight into how education and schools may be valued in other cultures. They were asked to read pages 29 to 33, where Omar is faced with the opportunity to attend school. In addition, the interviewees read page 45, which provided insight into the classroom. Ole claimed that not going to school is a challenge in its own right:

> Omar has to take care of his brother, and he may also get a little pressure from the other adults that he should go to school. So he kind of has to choose, something we don't experience here (Norway). (Ole)

The statement is also shared by the other interviewees – Omar must choose between Hassan and education. Ida reflected on this issue and stated how the everyday life of a refugee affects their relationship with school. Given their situation, they value other things more highly than education, such as food, water, and family.

> I'm trying to say that everyday life is very different, and it affects their relationship with school. And you can learn that others have different relationships with school, especially that someone will value school more in different cultures than perhaps here (Norway). (Ida)

The interviewees described the classroom on page 45 in *WSaS* and noticed one common matter: boys and girls are separated. Ole guessed that it may have to do with the

culture. Furthermore, he used his visual literacy skills to gain additional knowledge about the classroom culture:

> And the room looks a bit old. Uhm (looks at the picture)… and back there (points), there are some feet, like if someone is standing there. And I think… it's so crowded there that there are no more seats, and they have to stand. Which is a bummer. (Ole)

Thus, Ole read the pictures as an integral part of the graphic novel. Through the text, he acquired information about the pupils, and that they are split by gender. However, through the pictures, he analyzed the details and acquired information about the classroom: it is old and crowded. Thus, by reading the pictures and the text, Ole started to hypothesize about why some pupils had to stand in the back. He drew upon his prior knowledge, and specified that he believes page 45 presents a realistic picture of the classroom in a refugee camp:

> I have like seen some videos about school in Africa. Uhm, and it looked like that picture (page 45). Many children, old building, and yeah, that they don't sit together, boys and girls. (Ole)

Ida also drew upon her prior knowledge when discussing the ratio of boys versus girls in the classroom. She stated that page 45 provides a realistic picture of a classroom in refugee camps, as she acknowledged that a common perception in refugee camps is that it is more important for boys to get an education. Few girls finish school.

In addition, Erik provided his thoughts on the gender split in the classroom, where he focused on culture and religion:

> Maybe because of culture or religion. […]. I know that there are a couple of countries that are very strict with boys and girls, that at a young age they are not allowed to be close to each other. Close friends because of religion or culture. (Erik)

In the same sense as Ole and Ida, Erik drew upon his prior knowledge. The interviewees expressed that an important element of discussing intercultural knowledge in the graphic novel *WSaS* is to draw upon prior knowledge while reflecting. However, before implementing reflection, they noticed cultural elements by utilizing visual literacy skills, and comparing them to prior knowledge, in accordance with Liddicoat and Scarino's steps of intercultural learning (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). The last step – interaction – occurred in the interview when reluctant readers communicated their understanding of the school culture. This suggests that *WSaS* may foster intercultural learning, in this case: intercultural knowledge.

An important aspect of intercultural knowledge is to be able to compare one's own culture to that of others (Byram, 1997; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). Therefore, one of the goals of the interview was to investigate the reluctant readers' ability to reflect on the challenges that Omar experienced, in contrast to themselves. A challenge that all interviewees brought up was the responsibilities eleven-year-old Omar has. Ida stated:

> Erm he has… I don't know where the mother is, but she's not there, so they kind of have another mother figure. [Omar must] look after his brother, they also have to fetch water… there is very little food. (Ida)

By reading the pictures and text, Ida – and the other interviewees – noticed that Omar must look after his brother, fetch water, and worry about food, especially as he and Hassan got separated from their mother. Both Ole and Erik reflected on the dilemma between education and family presented in the excerpts. As already stated, Omar must choose between attending school and taking care of his disabled brother. This reflection appears in Erik's answer:

> And yes, the fact that Omar does not go to school. Omar has to take care of his brother, and he may also get a little pressure from the other adults that he should go to school. So he kind of has to choose, something we don't experience here (Norway). (Erik)

Erik specified that there is a difference between himself and Omar. While Omar must choose between education and family, Erik does not have to do so. Thus, he compared himself to Omar, thereby increasing his intercultural knowledge (Byram, 1997; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). The discussion on school culture will be discussed further in subsection 4.2.3 Intercultural Attitudes.

Furthermore, by discussing the challenges presented in *WSaS*, the three interviewees stated that the challenges are realistic, as they portray challenges refugees experience daily. In other words, the interviewees once again drew upon their prior knowledge (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). Ida particularly stated "Yes, [they are realistic] because there are many people in the world who struggle in this way. They are in refugee camps and resources such as food and water are very scarce", while Ole specified that he was already somewhat familiar with Dadaab's situation as it was presented at school, and a graphic novel about the refugee experience made it sound more realistic. Thus, Ole emphasized that the visual cues in the graphic novel (Sullivan, 2002) make it possible for him to gain intercultural knowledge, and reflect and view it in contrast to contemporary society.

When comparing the cultural elements and challenges presented in *WSaS* to their own lives, the reluctant readers explained that there is a major difference between themselves and Omar. As already established, an element of intercultural knowledge is to be able to use prior and acquired knowledge to compare one's own culture to others' cultures. Ole stated his thoughts:

> Hmmm, there are most differences. I like, don't have to think about fetching water, my family, plus school and education. Maybe I take it a bit for granted… there is a very big difference between me and Omar. (Ole)

Ole's response indicates that *WSaS* makes it possible to compare oneself with the protagonist and reflect on one's cultural perceptions. Furthermore, it is possible to assume that *WSaS* made Ole reflect on his life, especially when he compared his life to Omar's. While Omar

must fetch water, take care of his family, and consider his education, Ole does not have to do that. As he said, reading about Omar's life made him more aware of his own life, and that he may take it for granted.

While discussing the potential of promoting intercultural knowledge among reluctant readers through *WSaS*, it is essential to refer back to the results presented in section 4.1: the interviewees expressed that they found the format 'graphic novel' to be motivating and interesting, as it incorporates pictures and text. Thus, the interviewees – who are unmotivated readers (Beers, 1996) – expressed an increase in reading motivation, as a graphic novel usually attracts reluctant readers (Lapp et al., 2012; Sullivan, 2002). For reluctant readers to acquire IC through literature, the text must be interesting and motivating to read it. As Ole stated, if the story in *WSaS* was presented through a traditional book, he would put it away as he perceives it as boring. Then, he would not have the opportunity to read the book or foster intercultural knowledge. Ida specifically expressed that she learns more through reading a graphic novel as opposed to a traditional book, as she would usually skim and skip sentences – missing vital information. On the other hand, as the interviewees found the graphic novel to be interesting and motivating, it allows for fostering intercultural learning and intercultural knowledge. This was apparent in the interview, as the reluctant readers read the excerpts, utilized visual literacy skills, noticed and reflected on various aspects of culture presented in the excerpts, and followed the steps of intercultural learning (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2022; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020; Lalita & Beck, 2021; Rimmereide, 2021).

4.2.3 Intercultural Attitudes

[…] I become a little more curious and gain a little more respect for those who experience it.

As mentioned earlier, the focus of IC within the research question (***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***) is intercultural knowledge and attitudes. The results related to reluctant readers' thoughts on developing intercultural knowledge through *WSaS* were discussed in subsection 4.2.2. Moreover, it is vital to dedicate a subsection to their thoughts on developing *intercultural attitudes* through *WSaS*. According to Byram et al., intercultural attitudes are defined as "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own" (2002, p. 12).

The above statement in italics is from Ida. When asked about what attitudes *WSaS* may develop among reluctant readers, she mentioned curiosity. In accordance with Byram (1997), curiosity is an important aspect of intercultural attitudes. Ida, like the other

interviewees, believed that the graphic novel awakens curiosity and that it makes it possible to gain respect for people who have been through Omar's experiences. Thus, it spills over into real life. Furthermore, the three interviewees reflected on their thoughts on developing intercultural attitudes through the relationship between pictures and text in the graphic novel *WSaS* by utilizing Kiefer's classifications of reader responses (1993):

> The pictures make it a little more personal and, of course, it can influence someone's attitudes. Maybe someone will gain a little more respect or tolerance for the main character, which in turn can be transferred to real life. […] Perhaps also work on your prejudices and be a little more open to the fact that others think a little differently than yourself, because it is influenced by the situation. (Erik)
>
> Also, it feels more realistic. I can put the experience to a face, not just a name. (Ida)
>
> You get to see how people feel. You get a little more empathy, and it looks more realistic. (Ole)

As Vanderbeke (2006) explains, graphic novels have tremendous educational potential in the classroom, especially if they portray foreign cultures. The excerpts from *WSaS* (Appendix J) present several cultural elements through Omar's everyday life in the refugee camp Dadaab, i.e., family, education, gender roles, and responsibilities. They are portrayed through the special relationship between pictures and text (Baetens & Frey, 2015).

As seen in the quotations above, the interviewees expressed how pictures and text in *WSaS* supplement each other, and that it brings forth the opportunity to develop attitudes such as respect, tolerance, curiosity, and working with prejudice. Erik specifically stated that pictures in *WSaS* made the story personal, while Ida specified that she could put the experiences to a face. Thus, as the pictures provide visual cues and context (Vanderbeke, 2006), the reluctant readers claimed that seeing Omar and how he lives makes the story more realistic, which in turn gives the opportunity to become more (1) curious about Omar, his experiences, and how the book will end, (2) respectful towards people with different cultures and those who have a similar experience as Omar, and (3) tolerant towards others' opinions or behaviors which are rooted in cultural views and experiences. As Falter (2017) argues, graphic novels which explore contemporary and social issues have the potential to generate human connectedness among pupils. The results suggest that it is plausible to assume that human connectedness in *WSaS* is generated through seeing Omar, his facial expressions, and his struggles, which affect the reluctant readers' emotions and development of attitudes.

Hecke (2014) points out that reading graphic novels about foreign cultures may facilitate the ability to gain new perspectives, as the pictures and text supplement each other. This point can be seen in relation to the reluctant readers' thoughts on how *WSaS* affects perspective-taking in relation to intercultural attitudes. All three interviewees believed that

reading *WSaS* and visually seeing the difficulties Omar experiences can affect their attitudes toward other people. Ida mentioned this twice in her interview:

> Also yeah, having empathy, because you meet people here (in Norway) who have been through it […] Yeah a new person – it can be a bit scary and different. They may think differently and have experienced different things, a different culture. Doesn't speak Norwegian or anything like that. But you really know nothing about their story. So this (book) may help us, yeah pupils that don't like to read, to […] develop more respect and tolerance. (Ida)

Ida explained how reading *WSaS* can affect reluctant readers' attitudes – such as respect and tolerance – towards people they encounter daily. Specifically, people who may be perceived as different from oneself. In a society that is becoming more and more diverse, it is important to encourage interaction with diverse people (Hoff, 2020). As Ida said, she can meet people who do not speak Norwegian or share the same culture as herself, and from her standpoint, they can be perceived as different and scary. However, she specified that these pre-existing assumptions are built up because she does not know them or their story. However, a graphic novel like *WSaS* – which presents the daily experiences and struggles of a refugee through pictures and text – may enhance attitudes such as respect and tolerance, which can be transferred to situations that Ida described. She mentioned that *WSaS* can foster the development of respect and tolerance among reluctant readers. This can be seen in relation to Downey (2009, p. 182), who explains that the media literacy of graphic novels can have a strong impact on developing IC, specifically attitudes, as it is possible to see the characters visually and connect to them, which affects emotions.

The refugee experience is a cultural experience that has been portrayed through the graphic novel *WSaS*. Ida's response can be seen in regard to Dypedahl and Lund (2020), who specified that a graphic novel about the refugee experience can draw us into a new world, which in its turn can affect personal attitudes towards people who have undergone similar experiences. This is portrayed through the special relationship between pictures and text. Thus, the format of *WSaS* gives the opportunity to see Omar's experiences visually, which has the potential to highlight respect, tolerance, and curiosity toward people we encounter daily.

Erik, Ole, and Ida share a similar view, but Erik and Ole focused specifically on how *WSaS* may foster respect toward schoolmates who have differing perspectives on school and education. Furthermore, both interviewees compared the attitudes toward education portrayed in *WSaS* with their own perceptions:

> (Develop) respect for the culture, especially that thing with school. After all, they have a completely different view on school than what my friends and I might have. We take it perhaps for granted, like "I can't stand school today". If I then meet a refugee or someone who couldn't go to school and see that he actually puts a lot of time and work into school, then I would have a whole new respect for that. (Ole)

> If I meet someone in the hallway, who is perhaps a refugee or from another culture, who has his own views, who is not the same as me, then this book can help me understand why that person may have

> other views of things. And that I can show a little more respect for it, even if it is not the same as my views. (Erik)

Ole reflected on his view of education. He emphasized that he takes school and education for granted and that *WSaS* may affect his perception of education in general. He underlined that reading about Omar's struggles and the school culture in a refugee camp may make it possible for him to develop respect for people – especially classmates – who have gone through a similar experience. Likewise, Erik stated that the graphic novel *WSaS* may affect his communication with classmates who have other cultural views than his own, as the graphic novel portrays a refugee experience which is highly realistic given that it is an autobiographical authentic piece of literature. He explained that *WSaS* can make him understand why people have different cultural views and that it is important to be respectful.

Ida, Erik, and Ole's responses suggest that the graphic novel *WSaS* has the potential to promote intercultural attitudes among reluctant readers, as they displayed thoughts on becoming more respectful and tolerant towards people that have different cultures. It is possible to assume that *WSaS* has the potential of developing intercultural attitudes among reluctant readers due to the plot and the format.

First, *WSaS* presents an exciting plot that enabled the interviewees to reflect. As the core curriculum specifies, schools shall enable pupils to become intercultural communicators in diverse environments which are built on openness, curiosity, and tolerance – which are intercultural attitudes (Byram, 1997; The Directorate of Education, 2017). Thus, intercultural attitudes are viewed as important in education, and an important method for developing attitudes is through literature. As the reluctant readers indicated, *WSaS* has a captivating plot that has the educational value and the potential to develop intercultural attitudes (curiosity, respect, tolerance) which are also present in the core curriculum.

Second, it is possible to assume that the format of the *WSaS* supplements the development of intercultural attitudes among reluctant readers. As already discussed, the format is enchanting as it tells the story through an intense relationship between text and pictures. Ida, Erik, and Ole reflected on the value of seeing Omar and the setting while using text as a supplement to understand the context. Through the pictures, it is possible to analyze the setting and Omar's body language, while simultaneously acquiring information through the text. As the interviewees specified, they appreciated the graphic format as it portrays the story realistically through both pictures and text. Concerning intercultural attitudes, Ole, Ida, and Erik suggested that the relationship between pictures and text provides the opportunity to develop respect towards other cultures, as it is possible to see the cultural markers visually.

As already explained, reading a graphic novel is a challenging task (Ripley, 2012; Sullivan, 2002) as the reader must cultivate visual literacy skills (Rimmereide, 2021). Thus, to possibly acquire intercultural attitudes through reading *WSaS*, visual literacy is important. The interviewees showed through their reflections that they utilized visual literacy skills to grasp the plot. In accordance with Liddicoat and Scarino's 'step of intercultural learning', the interviewees (1) noticed aspects of Omar's life and culture, (2) compared these aspects to themselves and their daily life, (3) reflected on attitudes that *WSaS* can foster, and (4) interacted with the interviewer, sharing their understanding and reflections.

It is useful to discuss the reluctant readers' responses to intercultural attitudes in *WSaS* in relation to Levinas' ethical view (Crignon et al., 2004; Levinas, 1996). As presented in the theoretical chapter, 'the face of the other' conceptualizes the significance of coming 'face to face' with the Other, as it fosters the ability to feel responsibility, empathy, tolerance, and respect. Levinas' ethical view falls under the ethics of proximity, as it is crucial to feel a connection. Thus, the Other needs to have a face for the brain to feel something for the person. Erik, Ida, and Ole stated how visually seeing Omar, his body language, facial expressions, and struggles, made it possible for them as reluctant readers to develop intercultural attitudes towards the main character and people who experience a similar life. Ida particularly stated, "I can put the experience to a *face*, not just a name", while Ole and Erik specified how it made it realistic. Thus, the graphic novel *WSaS* fosters intercultural attitudes (respect, curiosity, openness, and tolerance) through the pictures, as they make it possible to come 'face to face' with the characters, make a connection with them, see the culture from their perspective, and transfer the attitudes to real life.

4.2.4 Reluctant Readers' Concluding Thoughts

The previous subsections deal with reluctant readers' thoughts on (1) the graphic novel *WSaS*, (2) intercultural knowledge in *WSaS*, and (3) intercultural attitudes in *WSaS*. This chapter combines the three separate elements and gathers the interviewees' final thoughts with the goal of answering the research question "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***". It investigates their thoughts on positive and negative aspects of the format 'graphic novel', the relevance of *WSaS*, and if *WSaS* has the potential of promoting IC among reluctant readers.

As the focus of this thesis is the potential of using the graphic novel *WSaS* among reluctant readers to promote IC, it is necessary to examine what reluctant readers believe are the positive and negative aspects of the format. For reluctant readers to read and learn

something from a book (here, IC), they must find it interesting and valuable to read (Sullivan, 2002). The positive aspects which Ida, Ole, and Erik highlighted are listed below:

> There are probably more people than just me who don't like traditional books. That (graphic novel) might make more people interested. […] I would have chosen a book like this over traditional books any time. It's easier to keep my concentration, then I can actually read. (Ole)
>
> You can see from the other side of the world. It is also easier to understand the action when there are pictures and not just text, like I said earlier. […] I think it was actually more exciting, and I could sort of understand more things. I would also read something like that if I had the opportunity. (Erik)
>
> That… there are pictures and it's easier to be invested in what's happening. Because you really get a little absorbed. (Ida)

The interviewees' responses indicate that the graphic format of *WSaS* is in itself positive. As presented throughout the previous subsections, the reluctant readers mentioned the pictures and written text in *WSaS* numerous times. They were, however, particularly interested in the pictures. Ida specified that pictures make it easier to understand the plot, while Erik explained how pictures make the story more exciting and captivating.

Moreover, Erik stated that a graphic novel makes it possible to *see* from the other side of the world. As *WSaS* tells the story of Omar's childhood in a refugee camp in Kenya, the pictures make it possible to see his life and surroundings. From Erik's standpoint in Norway, the other side of the world can be Africa. Thus, the pictures in *WSaS* make it possible to view a refugee camp visually. As Erik conveyed, this makes the reading process exciting, and the pictures make it understandable. A well-known method to come in contact with intercultural knowledge and attitudes is by viewing a culture from an insider's point of view (Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). Erik's reflection indicates that the *WSaS* makes it possible, through the pictures, to view the culture of a refugee from Omar's point of view. The reader is exposed to Omar's daily life, feelings, upbringing, and challenges. Furthermore, the authenticity of the novel is strengthened by the author, as the story is autobiographical. This in turn strengthens the claim of being exposed to an insider's point of view, which can foster the ability to acquire IC.

The responses presented above also show that both Ole and Erik would have read more if they had had the opportunity to read graphic novels frequently. Ole said that he would have chosen a graphic novel before a traditional book, as it makes it easier for him to concentrate. These responses are extremely interesting as the reluctant readers stated at the beginning of the interviews (subsection 4.1.1) that they avoid reading as they find it *boring* and *unmotivating*, thus being categorized as unmotivated readers (Beers, 1996). However, after they reflected on their thoughts about reading *WSaS*, their perception of reading changed: they find reading graphic novels interesting. Thus, following Beers' categories of reluctant readers (1996), Ole and Erik can be classified as 'uncommitted readers', i.e. pupils who have ambivalent feelings towards reading. As various researchers have stated, the format

'graphic novel' attracts reluctant readers thanks to the visual and textual aspects (Hansen, 2012; Snowball, 2005; Sullivan, 2002). Thus, the results show that interest and motivation increase when reading graphic novels, thereby making it possible to work with developing IC.

Furthermore, it is important to compare the reluctant readers' reflections with Lyngstad's study (2019). The study discovered that teachers use traditional books the most in the classroom, i.e., books with text only, while they use graphic novels the least. Ole, Erik and Ida's responses indicate that they, as reluctant readers, would read more if they could read graphic novels. It is important to give pupils a voice when it comes to the selection of literature in the classroom. Moreover, these results support Lyngstad's findings (2019), as they advocate the use of multimodal literature in the classroom.

To supplement the reluctant readers' responses, the interviewees were asked why they view the relationship between pictures and text as a positive feature of the graphic novel *WSaS*. Erik and Ole specifically compared it to reading a traditional book.

> It is easier to get more information by looking at the pictures, than having to read 3-4 pages of text describing one picture. Then I only need to look at the picture for a couple of seconds, and get the same exact information, only faster. (Erik)

Erik indicated that a picture could provide the same information as a written text. While a text provides detailed information within a couple of pages, a picture can present the same details visually. As Erik emphasized, 'reading' a picture is faster and easier, and it is possible to acquire the same information as if it had been presented through written text. Ole shared the same reflections as Erik but emphasized that it is more interesting to read a graphic novel. He suggested that reading a few, detailed pages of text is more difficult and certainly less interesting than reading a picture that provides the same information but more compactly.

As Gentile and McMillan (1977) argue, reluctant readers may not read simply because they find books boring. It is helpful to view their findings in relation to Erik and Ole's statements, as the interviewees particularly expressed that the graphic format awakens interest due to the relationship between the visual and textual aspects. What they find to be boring and difficult is reading *several* pages of text, thereby increasing reading reluctance. Therefore, they expressed gratitude towards the use of pictures in *WSaS*, as it portrays information visually instead of describing a picture through several pages.

Even though the three reluctant readers were immensely positive towards reading pictures in *WSaS*, they were also critical and expressed appreciation towards the written text. Ida commented as follows in a consistent matter:

> I also like that there are speech bubbles and maybe a sentence here and there, which may give some information that you can't get through the picture. Like yeah, information about where someone is, or what Omar is feeling. It makes it a little easier […]. (Ida)

Although Ida previously stated that the pictures in *WSaS* made her more invested and interested in the story, she reflected on the importance of the textual aspect. The written text in *WSaS* is portrayed through speech- and thought bubbles, and text boxes, which add information to the pictures. Thus, as Ida conveyed, the written text in *WSaS* is as important as the pictures, as it adds contextual information. Erik and Ole hold similar views, and their reflections can be found in Appendix L.

This thesis aims to encourage the use of graphic novels (here: *WSaS*) in the classroom to promote IC among reluctant readers. Even though the focus is on the positive aspects, one must be aware of potential negative aspects of using the format 'graphic novel' with reluctant readers. During the interview, the interviewees were reluctant to answer the question. They expressed unsureness by crossing their arms, stuttering, taking pauses, and avoiding eye contact. Their responses are presented below:

> Ehmmm… maybe that there's not as much text. You have to read in a different way and analyze the pictures. So you have to think it through. (Ole)
>
> It can also be a bit unrealistic. It is not always that a book is 100% (true). And then people can become a little optimistic. That they sort of think that this is real, and then it's not really that realistic. (Erik)
>
> Something negative? (thinking) Hmmm maybe that some people feel that there is too little writing and too many pictures. Perhaps this form is not for everyone. (Ida)

A common element that the interviewees saw as a potentially negative aspect of graphic novels is the limited amount of text. As already mentioned, the interviewees already reflected on the issue of solely relying on the pictures in *WSaS*. However, this time it was seen in relation to suitability. Ole and Ida stated that the format 'graphic novel' may not be suitable for everyone, especially as it requires a different reading strategy, which Rimmereide (2021) suggests is visual literacy skills. As the graphic format may not be suitable for every reluctant reader, it may even hinder the acquisition of IC. To acquire IC through a graphic novel, in this case *WSaS*, it is important to bear in mind the pupils' reading strategy.

The cultural elements in *WSaS* are portrayed through the relationship between the visual and textual aspects. To acquire and reflect on intercultural knowledge and attitudes, the reader must utilize visual literacy skills. As Ole specified, reading a graphic novel is different as one must read *and* analyze the pictures and text in relation to one another. Thus, if the reader cannot read and combine the pictures and text, it is difficult to acquire IC, especially if the text is short. This was brought up in the interview: subsections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 show that Ida, Ole, and Erik utilized visual skills differently, and focused on different aspects of knowledge and attitudes presented in the excerpts they read.

Furthermore, Erik provided a particularly interesting response when asked about negative aspects of the format 'graphic novel'. He believes that a graphic novel may portray an unrealistic plot. It is unclear what Erik meant by the term *unrealistic*, but his response shows that he believes a negative aspect of graphic novels can be that they may provide a false story. Erik's response can be viewed correctly, as graphic novels can present a fictional story, which by definition, is not true. However, even though the question about the negative aspects of graphic novels lies on the *format*, it is possible to assume that Erik responded to the *plot* of *WSaS*, as he asked, 'You mean that book?' (Appendix L, p. 125) while pointing to *WSaS*. *WSaS* is a non-fictional graphic novel, since it is based on Omar's life, and is an autobiographical authentic piece of literature. Therefore, Erik's response can be viewed in accordance with recent research on attitudes toward graphic novels (Gonzales, 2016; Hansen, 2012; McBride, 2023). Graphic novels have been subjected to criticism from the very beginning, suggesting that they are childish (Baetens & Frey, 2015). As McBride (2023) states, the format is still criticized and is regarded as inferior to a traditional book. Erik's response shows that the criticism is still relevant, even though researchers such as Ripley (2012) argue that graphic novels are challenging to read due to the relationship between the visual and the textual aspects.

Given that the research question (***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***) is centered on using specifically the graphic novel *WSaS* among reluctant readers to promote IC, it is interesting to investigate the reluctant readers' thoughts on whether *WSaS* is relevant in the contemporary society, especially as the plot takes place in the 1990s. This is important as a relevant story that portrays reality has the potential of promoting IC. Dypedahl and Lund (2020) particularly mention that a method of learning IC is to expose pupils to different kinds of authentic literature which is focused on a specific country or culture.

The three interviewees all believe that *WSaS* is a graphic novel that is highly relevant today. Ida highlighted that *WSaS* has an educational value:

> Yes of course. Because there are so many refugee camps all over the world, and there are so many refugees and people who need help there. And we don't know the half of it. And a book like this can help teach us about these things. (Ida)

Ida pointed out that Omar's story is relevant, as many refugees across the world experience the same difficulties as Omar. She also believed that *WSaS* displays a realistic image of refugees' life in refugee camps. Furthermore, Ida thought that a graphic novel like *WSaS* has educational potential, as it helps the reader learn more about refugees, their life, and their culture. As with Ida, Ole pointed out that *WSaS* is relevant as it influences the reader:

> I would say that it is relevant. After all, it addresses things and problems that still exist today. And you can learn a lot by reading things like that. You get more knowledge about other cultures […] And that you can work on your attitudes, get a little more respect that you can take over in your life. (Ole)

Ole stated that *WSaS* addresses the daily struggles of refugees, which is still accurate. He particularly reflected on intercultural knowledge and attitudes, as he believes that *WSaS* can influence the reader. Ole specified that by reading *WSaS*, it is possible to gain respect for refugees and gain knowledge about the refugee's culture. As Dypedahl and Lund argue, "a literary portrayal of the refugee experience can provide a magical mirror" (2020, p. 69).

By discussing the relevance of the story in *WSaS* in relation to IC, the interviewees also brought forward the format. This was discussed in relation to their thoughts on why the authors Jamieson and Mohamed chose to tell the story through a graphic novel. The three interviewees all agreed that the format 'graphic novel' is an excellent format to "pass the story on" (Ida's words) and encourage reluctant readers visually. Erik stated that it "makes it look a little more real, and you might want to read it, and learn something new". Ida expressed the same thought but also stated that the authors may have chosen this format to "attract several younger readers and readers who are not fond of reading". Moreover, Ole explained that the graphic format of *WSaS* "shows the story much more than if it had only been text". Thus, the interviewees' responses indicate that they believe that the authors of *WSaS* chose the format carefully. They expressed that the authors may have chosen the 'graphic novel' as it is an excellent medium for telling a story, attracts readers, and shows the plot through pictures. In accordance with Jamieson and Mohamed's interviews (Eagleton, 2020; Tyson, 2020), the format was chosen due to the visual aspect which can bring the refugee camp to life. Discussing this in relation to Omar's response to my e-mail concerning this issue would have been particularly interesting (Appendix F). Unfortunately, he did not answer my mail.

Finally, the interviewees were asked about their thoughts on the possibility to use *WSaS* with reluctant readers to promote IC in terms of intercultural knowledge and attitudes. The reluctant readers Ida, Ole, and Erik provided in-depth answers to the question, which can be found in Appendix L. Ole pointed out that he would not have been interested in the novel if it had been a traditional book; Erik stated that *WSaS* can affect reading motivation; while Ida expressed that *WSaS* would be suitable to use in school. For the sake of simplicity, they shared the same fundamental opinion: they were immensely positive towards the possibility of using *WSaS* with reluctant readers to promote IC (here: knowledge and attitudes). All three reflected on the graphic format, the plot, and why it may be suitable reading for reluctant readers to promote IC. The reflections summarize their thoughts on intercultural knowledge

and attitudes, which were discussed in subsections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3. To illustrate this point, some quotes are presented below (full quotes in Appendix L):

> I would have gained much more knowledge about different cultures and perspectives, and maybe become a little more aware of my own culture […]. And yes, at the same time develop attitudes, I kind of get more respect and I'm more open and curious when I can see it through pictures. (Ole).

> And at the same time, it can contribute to developing knowledge and attitudes among them, as they start to read more. […] And then the pupils (who doesn't like to read) can learn more about culture and global problems, ways of thinking and perspectives by reading pictures and text. […] And develop respect and tolerance, I think, be a little more open as the book presents the situation more personally then. (Erik).

> It is also easier to gain more knowledge and develop attitudes, like by looking at pictures and having less text. We then get an insight into someone else's life in a more realistic way, and yeah, become more aware of what I actually know, and what attitudes I actually have. Maybe develop such things as respect and empathy then... and of course curiosity. (Ida).

Not only do the interviewees believe that *WSaS* can promote intercultural knowledge and attitudes among reluctant readers; they also believe that the graphic novel can reduce reading reluctance thanks to the format. As Byram et al. (2002) state, the aim of language teaching should be to develop intercultural speakers who interact respectfully and tolerantly with people of different cultural backgrounds. The graphic novel *WSaS* enables the reader to learn about a new culture from an insider's point of view and develop curiosity, openness, and respect toward the characters. Ida expressed that through reading *WSaS*, she started to question her attitudes toward people who are perceived as different from herself. This was also brought up earlier in Ole and Erik's reflections on how the novel affects their attitudes toward classmates, refugees, and education (subsection 4.2.3). Thus, *WSaS* has the potential to influence reluctant readers' intercultural attitudes, while simultaneously developing their knowledge about the presented culture (family, education, responsibilities, and marriage).

Per Bennett, an intercultural speaker can be developed through "fostering attitudes that motivate us" and "discover knowledge that informs us of our own and others' cultural position" (2009, p. 125). The interviewees reflected on *WSaS*'s possibility to foster intercultural attitudes and knowledge. This is presented and discussed in subsections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3. The interviewees once again specified that *WSaS* makes it easier to gain knowledge of a culture through the visual and textual aspects. As Erik stated, *WSaS* makes it possible for reluctant readers to learn more about different ways of thinking, perspectives, and global problems, while at the same time developing attitudes such as respect and tolerance. This view is also shared by Ida and Ole, who pointed out that the graphic format of *WSaS* makes the plot more realistic, which in its turn makes it easier to feel a connection to the characters, develop attitudes, and become aware of one's own cultural standpoint. Thus, *WSaS* can foster attitudes among the readers and discover knowledge about different cultural positions.

The curriculum is particularly important when discussing the interviewees' thoughts on whether *WSaS* has the potential to promote IC among reluctant readers. Throughout the interview, Ida, Ole, and Erik have emphasized that *WSaS* is a remarkable novel to use with reluctant readers to reduce reading reluctance and develop IC. As subsection 2.3.2 demonstrates, the core values and principles of education in Norway argue strongly for the inclusion of cultural diversity, human dignity, critical thinking, and democracy (The Directorate of Education, 2017). It is plausible to connect the reluctant readers' responses to these values. Throughout the interview, they have argued that *WSaS* fosters diversity, as it presents the daily life and culture of a refugee. This was connected to the fact that Norway has become a multicultural society, and the interviewees argued that they meet multicultural people every day, especially through school. It is thus important to be exposed to diversity, as the school shall present various attitudes and knowledge which shall foster the ability to accept diversity (The Directorate of Education, 2017). Furthermore, the interviewees have claimed that *WSaS* fosters intercultural attitudes and knowledge, which can be used to be aware of one's own cultural perception. As Ida stated, she became more aware of her attitudes through reading *WSaS*. In accordance with UNESCO's aims of intercultural education (2006), the graphic novel *WSaS* yields the possibility to work with "learning to know", "learning to live together", and "learning to be", where they focus on knowledge which contributes to solidarity and diversity, and attitudes which one can develop.

Not only did the reluctant readers reflect on the plot in *WSaS*. They also provided fascinating responses in terms of their perception of IC, and why *WSaS* can be a prominent novel to use with reluctant readers. The interviews yielded interesting results: the reluctant readers believe that the graphic novel *WSaS* can reduce reading reluctance, and promote IC (here: intercultural knowledge and attitudes) through the plot and the graphic format. In accordance with Liddicoat and Scarino's intercultural learning steps (2013), the interviewees have throughout the interview (1) noticed the cultural elements in *WSaS*, (2) compared the information with their prior knowledge and experiences, (3) reflected on the plot, the graphic format, and IC, and (4) interacted by expressing their understandings and reflections. *WSaS* has a clear potential for furthering intercultural learning. In accordance with Byram's (1997) components of IC, the reluctant readers have throughout the interview expressed that *WSaS* presents knowledge about a refugee culture and one's own perception, while simultaneously promoting attitudes such as curiosity, openness, tolerance, and respect. Thus, in terms of the research question, the reluctant readers chosen for this study believe that *WSaS* certainly has the potential to promote IC among reluctant readers in lower secondary school.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate reluctant readers' thoughts on whether the graphic novel *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) has the potential to promote IC, and more specifically knowledge and attitudes, among reluctant readers in 10th grade. As Dypedahl and Lund (2020, p. 70) argue, there is a need for more research within the area of using different literary formats to reach the educational goal of interculturality. By way of conclusion, I wish to refer back to my research question, "***To what extent may the non-fictional graphic novel 'WSaS' (2020) promote IC among reluctant readers in 10th grade?***". I shall also address the limitations of my study, and suggest possible fields for further research.

Throughout the research process, it was important to focus on the three elements IC, reluctant readers, and the graphic novel separately. As already established, there is little to no research on the combination of IC, graphic novels, and reluctant readers. This made my research question particularly interesting and challenging.

IC is a complex concept both for the teacher and the learner. Various researchers and authors have produced several theories of IC and methods of acquiring the competence (Byram, 1997; Byram et al., 2002; Dervin, 2016; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020). A prominent method is reading literature (Burwitz-Melzer, 2001; Dypedahl & Lund, 2020), which is a core element in the English subject curriculum (The Directorate of Education, 2020). As the results from my questionnaire suggest, a significant number of pupils in 10th grade can be classified as reluctant readers. As a result, the answer to the research question in the present thesis is split into two parts: selecting literature to reduce reading reluctance, and promoting IC.

It is important to give reluctant readers a voice when it comes to selecting literature. The results from the interviews indicate that the reluctant readers chosen for this study were immensely positive towards reading excerpts from the graphic novel *WSaS*. This is particularly interesting, as none of them had read a graphic novel before, and they stated that they were usually exposed to traditional books (here: books with text only). As Lyngstad (2019) claims, graphic novels are one of the least used genres in the classroom, while traditional books are used the most. Pupils often know their strengths and interests best. It is therefore important to listen to them and incorporate their thoughts in the selection of literature in order to reduce reading reluctance, and simultaneously develop IC.

The reluctant readers who participated in the interviews demonstrated that *WSaS* has tremendous potential to develop intercultural knowledge and attitudes among reluctant readers. Throughout the interviews, they emphasized two factors: the plot, and the

relationship between the visual and textual aspects. Their responses indicate that it is important to select literature that they find interesting, both when it comes to the plot and the reading process. They claimed that Omar's story is fascinating and valuable, as it is relevant for them and deals with an important topic: refugees, their daily life, and cultural differences. As Dypedahl and Lund (2020) argue, a portrayal of the refugee experience can develop IC, as it gives an insight into the prevailing culture. Furthermore, the reluctant readers expressed that they were intrigued by the format 'graphic novel' as it presents a different reading process where they had to utilize visual literacy skills. They were particularly interested in reading the pictures in conjunction with the written text as a means of contextual support.

In addition, the reluctant readers claimed that the relationship between the pictures and the text make it easier to acquire intercultural knowledge and attitudes. When discussing knowledge, they focused on how the refugee culture is presented through the graphic format, as well as discussing various elements of the culture, e.g., family, education, responsibility, and child marriage. Furthermore, on several occasions, the reluctant readers reflected on why and how the format and the plot in *WSaS* can promote intercultural attitudes such as respect, openness, and curiosity. Moreover, they discussed how the knowledge and the attitudes which can be acquired through *WSaS* can be transferred to their own lives.

The findings of this research are complex, and they imply that the graphic novel *WSaS* has a remarkable potential to promote IC among reluctant readers. The reluctant readers in this research responded positively towards the format, which demonstrates that they found it interesting and motivating. Furthermore, the plot is exciting and has the potential to view the refugee culture through Omar's eyes. As *WSaS* shows the plot through pictures, it is easier to *see* cultural elements, the characters, and their daily life, which in turn can affect the acquisition and understanding of IC.

5.1. Final Reflections and Further Research

This master thesis has, with the aid of a quantitative questionnaire, qualitative interviews, and analysis, endeavored to answer the research question presented above. It was challenging to focus on three separate elements at the same time: (1) IC, (2) the graphic novel *WSaS*, and (3) reluctant readers. However, it has been a steep learning curve that has affected my career as a teacher, particularly with respect to incorporating graphic novels in the classroom and keeping the pupils' best interests central. Before discussing possible subjects for further research, I shall briefly address a few of the limitations of my study.

The first is that the study collected data from only one lower secondary school in Norway. This is a limitation, as it is likely that pupils at other schools have differing experiences of reading graphic novels. Furthermore, as the interviews focused on reluctant readers with a common first language, Norwegian, it is possible – and perhaps even likely – that a multicultural group of interviewees might respond differently.

Another limitation is that I interviewed only three reluctant readers, who were chosen randomly based on their answers to the questionnaire. There is a possibility that other reluctant readers from the same school would have presented different results. However, there are also advantages of researching a limited number of interviewees, as it provides the opportunity to connect with the interviewees, ask follow-up questions, and go into depth in their responses to provide an answer to the phenomena under investigation (Morse, 2000; Sandelowski, 1995; Vasileiou et al., 2018). As presented in section 4.2, the three reluctant readers provided interesting and detailed results.

A third limitation could be that the interviewees – 10th graders – did not fully grasp the concept of IC, as it is complex. An active choice in this study was to focus solely on knowledge and attitudes, though this can also be considered a limitation as it only investigates one segment of IC.

It is important to give pupils a voice in their own learning process. This study can be used to broaden teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward graphic novels and incorporate them into their own classrooms. As the reluctant readers were keen to read the graphic novel *WSaS* and develop IC, teachers might be more willing to include graphic novels (specifically *WSaS*) in the classroom as a means of reducing reading reluctance and working with IC.

In terms of further research, it would be interesting to repeat the research with a multicultural group of reluctant readers. These were excluded from the present research due to potentially conflicting responses, which this limited thesis could not accommodate. Furthermore, as this thesis focuses solely on intercultural knowledge and intercultural attitudes in *WSaS*, there is scope to research on the other two elements of IC which Byram (1997) has presented: intercultural skills and critical cultural awareness. Finally, as the results in the present thesis focus on reluctant readers' thoughts of potentially using *WSaS* to promote IC among reluctant readers, it would be intriguing to do a longitudinal study on the practical use of *WSaS* in the classroom, investigating the development of IC and potential reduction of reading reluctance. I believe that my thesis can be a good foundation for further research, which might include different novels and different age groups.

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7. Appendices

Appendix A: Literary search

Search table – key terms and synonyms

Intercultural competence	Graphic novel	Reluctant reader
Multicultural education	Comic books, strips, etc. in education	Reading interests
Cultural competence	Literature	Engaged reading
Cultural awareness	Reading pictures	Books & reading
Intercultural communication – verbal and non-verbal	Novels	Reading (secondary/middle school)
Culturally relevant education	Cartoons	Reading comprehension
Cultural ethics	Books & reading	Reading motivation
	Visual education	Reading empathy

Documentation

DATABASE	DATE	SEARCH WORDS / COMBINATION	NUMBER OF HITS	COMMENTS
Education source, Academic Search Premier, ERIC	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence	11 443	
“	02.05.2023	Graphic novel	16 623	
“	02.05.2023	Reluctant reader	1 321	
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND graphic novel	1	
JSTOR	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND graphic novel	168	Filter: «Language & Literature», «Education», «American studies»
Education source, Academic Search Premier, ERIC	02.05.2023	Cultural competence AND graphic novel	2	
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND literature	1 336	
“	02.05.2023	Multicultural education AND cartoons	34	
“	02.05.2023	Multicultural education AND graphic novel	12	

Google Scholar	02.05.2023	Multicultural education AND literature	177	Filter: all in title
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural communication AND novel	12	Filter: all in title
Education source, Academic Search Premier, ERIC	02.05.2023	Intercultural communication AND pictures	194	
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND reading	213	
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND reluctant reader	1	Engaging disengaged readers through culturally relevant literature discussions
“	02.05.2023	Graphic novel AND reluctant reader	75	
“	02.05.2023	Graphic novel AND reading motivation	45	
“	02.05.2023	Graphic novel AND reading interest	157	
JSTOR	02.05.2023	Reading AND pictures	44 247	Filter: «Education»
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND graphic novel AND reluctant reader	7	Filter: «Education». Focus on argumentative writing, business
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND graphic novel AND reluctant reader	78	Focuses mostly on intercultural competence and literature
“	02.05.2023	Multicultural education AND comics AND reluctance	1	Filter: «Education». Author suggests books for reluctant readers
Education source, Academic Search Premier, ERIC	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND comic books AND reading interest	0	
“	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND graphic novel AND reluctant reader	0	

“	02.05.2023	Comic books, strips, etc. in education AND reading interest AND culture	2	Readability levels of comic strips. What adults get out of reading comic books.
“	02.05.2023	Multicultural education AND cartoons AND reading	7	Focus on reading conferences, literacy goals, peace education, and lesson plans
“	02.05.2023	Books & reading AND intercultural communication AND reluctance	0	
“	02.05.2023	Multicultural education AND novel AND reluctance	0	
“	02.05.2023	Cultural competence AND visual education AND reading interest	0	
“	02.05.2023	Cultural competence AND literature AND reading interest	3	Focus on Latino language, young readers, and university language courses
“	02.05.2023	Multicultural education AND comic books, strips, etc. in education AND books & reading	0	
“	02.05.2023	Cultural awareness AND comic books, strips, etc. in education AND reading motivation	0	
Google Scholar	02.05.2023	Intercultural competence AND graphic novel AND reluctant reader	0	Filter: all in title
“	02.05.2023	Cultural awareness, novel, motivation	0	Filter: all in title

Appendix B: Sikt approval

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

Skriv ut | 19.12.2022

Referansenummer
682292

Vurderingstype
Standard

Dato
19.12.2022

Prosjekttittel
Masteroppgave - utvikle motvillige leseres interkulturelle kompetanse gjennom grafiske romaner

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
Høgskolen i Østfold / Fakultet for lærerutdanninger og språk / Institutt for pedagogikk, IKT og læring

Prosjektansvarlig
Jane Mattisson Ekstam

Student
Amina Topic

Prosjektperiode
01.01.2023 - 16.05.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger
Alminnelige

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

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 16.05.2023.

Meldeskjema

Kommentar
Informasjonssikkerhet
Du må behandle personopplysningene i tråd med retningslinjene for informasjonssikkerhet og lagringsguider ved Høgskolen i Østfold. Institusjonen er ansvarlig for at vilkårene for personvernforordningen artikkel 5.1. d) riktighet, 5. 1. f) integritet og konfidensialitet, og 32 sikkerhet er oppfylt.

Appendix C: Informational letter to the school

Informasjon om masteroppgave til XX ungdomsskole

Jeg, Amina Topić, går på Høgskolen i Østfold, og skal skrive masteroppgave dette semesteret. Masteroppgaven går ut på hvorvidt den grafiske romanen *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) kan brukes til å øke motvillige leseres interkulturelle kompetanse. Dette innebærer at jeg ønsker å gjennomføre en generell spørreundersøkelse, samt 3 intervjuer med enkeltelever basert på spørreundersøkelsen og den grafiske romanen. Jeg tror at gjennomføringen av undersøkelsen vil ta ca. 5-10 minutter. Jeg ønsker informanter på 10.trinn, gjerne hele trinnet.

Ettersom jeg ikke kjenner elevene, så trenger jeg et par engelsklærere på 10.trinn som kjenner elevene godt, som kan lage en liste over elever som kan klassifiseres som «motvillige lesere» basert på disse kriteriene:

- De som er gode lesere, men unngår det
- De som ikke liker å lese
- Elever som er født og oppvokst i Norge, med minst én norsk foresatt
- **IKKE** elever med lærevansker (eks: lese- og skrivevansker, dysleksi…)

Den anonyme spørreundersøkelsen blir gjennomført gjennom nettskjema.no. Spørsmålene går ut på elevers opplevelse av lesing, samt deres erfaringer med å lese ulike litterære formater. I henhold til Sikt sine retningslinjer, kommer jeg til å samle inn kjønn, men hvilken skole undersøkelsen gjennomføres på vil være anonymisert. Intervjuene kommer til å tas opp, samt transkriberes og anonymiseres etter Sikt sine retningslinjer.

Ettersom spørreundersøkelsen skal gjennomføres på hele 10.trinn, ønsker jeg å vite ca. hvor mange elever dere kan stille med.

Ved å delta i undersøkelsen og intervjuprosessen, vil dere få tilgang til resultatene fra masteroppgaven, samt hjelpe meg med å utvikle forskningen min!

Jeg ønsker å gjennomføre spørreundersøkelsen digitalt i uke 2 eller 3. Intervjuene ønsker jeg å gjennomføre i uke 5 eller 6. Hvis dette ikke passer, kan dere komme med forslag til andre tidspunkter.

Jeg ser fram til et positivt svar!

Med vennlig hilsen, Amina Topić

Appendix D: Consent form - questionnaire

Lesevaner og litterære former – spørreundersøkelse

Jeg – Amina Topic – skal dette semesteret skrive en masteroppgave i engelsk ved Grunnskolelærerutdanningen 5-10 ved Høgskolen i Østfold. Formålet med oppgaven er å undersøke hvorvidt en grafisk roman kan brukes til å fremme interkulturell kompetanse blant elever som ikke er glad i å lese.

Innhentingen av data er todelt:

- Spørreundersøkelse
- Lese et utdrag fra en grafisk roman + intervju

Denne spørreundersøkelsen kommer til å fungere som en base for oppgaven, hvor jeg ønsker å undersøke deres (elever ved 10.trinn) leselyst, motivasjon og hvilke former for litteratur dere liker/ikke liker.

Dine personopplysninger kommer til å bli avidentifisert i henhold til personvernsreglementet. Undersøkelsen kommer til å spørre om kjønn og en kode for å avidentifisere deg. Din kode er basert på hvilken klasse du går i + dine initialer. For eksempel: hvis du går i 10A og heter Kari Moe Petterson, så er din kode 10A KMP. Med dette vil det ikke bli mulig for meg å identifisere deg basert på koden.

Samtykket er frivilling, og kan tilbaketrekkes når som helst både under og etter undersøkelsen, uten at det skal gå negativt utover deg. Dine personopplysninger og svar kommer til å bli slettet etter endt prosjekt i løpet av mai 2023.

Jeg samtykker til å delta på spørreundersøkelsen

- o Ja
- o Nei

Elev underskrift + klasse

_____

Foresatt underskrift

_____

Med vennlig hilsen, Amina Topić

Appendix E: Consent form - interview

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet *«Interkulturell kompetanse og grafiske romaner»?*

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke om elevers interkulturelle kompetanse kan utvikles gjennom å lese en grafisk roman. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg. Ettersom du går på ungdomsskolen, trengs det også samtykke fra foresatte.

Formål
Jeg, Amina Topić, skal skrive en masteroppgave i engelsk hvor jeg forsker på interkulturell kompetanse (IK), grafiske romaner og motvillige lesere. Problemstillingen min er **«I hvilken grad kan den grafiske romanen *When Stars are Scattered* (2020) utvikle interkulturell kompetanse blant motvillige lesere i 10.klasse?»**. IK dreier seg om kunnskap, ferdigheter og holdninger til ulike kulturer og mennesker, samt å forstå og beherske nye situasjoner. Hele 10.trinn har blitt spurt om å delta i en elektronisk spørreundersøkelse om leselyst og erfaringer. Basert på deres svar og engelsklærerne på trinnet, kommer 3 elever til å stille til et individuelt intervju 3.februar, hvor dere skal lese et utdrag fra boken. Deretter vil vi snakke om hva dere har lest, tanker, og hva dere syns om det å lese en grafisk roman.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?
Ansvarlig for prosjektet er Høgskolen i Østfold, fakultet for lærerutdanninger og språk ved professor Jane Ekstam.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?
Du er valgt ut til å få denne forespørselen fordi du går på 10.trinn ved XX ungdomsskole, du har sagt ja til å kunne delta på et intervju, svarene på spørreundersøkelsen var interessante, samt at engelsklæreren informerte om at du ville vært en god kandidat. 3 av dere som får denne forespørselen vil bli plukket ut tilfeldig til å delta på intervjuet, basert samtykke.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?
- Metoden jeg ønsker å bruke er et intervju (på norsk)
- Du til å lese et utdrag fra den grafiske romanen *When Stars are Scattered*, for så å gjennomføre et intervju basert på utdraget. Vi følger en intervjuguide
- Intervjuet blir gjennomført i skoletiden og kommer til å vare i ca. 40 minutter
- Opplysningene som samles handler om dine erfaringer rundt utdraget vi kommer til å lese, hva du tenker og mener, samt forståelse av den grafiske romanen
- Opplysningene samles inn ved lydopptak (Diktafon appen) av hele intervjuet. Dette blir avidentifisert og slettet etter levert oppgave i mai 2023
- Foreldre/foresatte kan få se intervjuguide på forhånd om det er ønskelig

Det er frivillig å delta
Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi grunn. Alle personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger
Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Det er

Amina Topić og veileder Jane Ekstam som har tilgang til prosjektet. Navnet og kontaktopplysningene dine vil jeg erstatte med en kode som lagres på egen, adskilt liste. Din deltagelse vil avidentifiseres i min masteroppgave og ved eventuell publikasjon eller muntlig formidling av data vil det ikke bli brukt personidentifiserende opplysninger og ingen vil kunne identifisere deg.

Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?
Prosjektet vil etter planen avsluttes 15.mai 2023. Dataene vil lagres anonymt i henhold til Høgskolen i Østfold sine retningslinjer for lagring av forskningsdata.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?
Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke. På oppdrag fra Høgskolen i Østfold har Personverntjenester vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

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

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

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

- Amina Topić, amina.topic@hiof.no, +47 98 87 27 36
- Høgskolen i Østfold ved Jane Ekstam, jane.m.ekstam@hiof.no, +47 69 60 81 75
- Vårt personvernombud, personvern@hiof.no, +47 95 06 19 30
- Personverntjenester på epost (personverntjenester@sikt.no), + 47 53 21 15 00

Med vennlig hilsen,

Prosjektansvarlig, Jane Ekstam, +47 69 60 81 75 Mail: jane.m.ekstam@hiof.no	Lærerstudent, Amina Topić, +47 98 87 27 36 Mail: amina.topic@hiof.no

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Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet ***«Interkulturell kompetanse og grafisk roman»*** og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

☐ å delta i et intervju

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

Elev:

(Signert av /elev, klasse, dato)

Foresatt:

(Signert av foresatt, dato)

Appendix F: E-mail to Omar Mohamed

Dear Omar,

My name is Amina Topić from Norway. I am writing you this e-mail as I am using the graphic novel *When Stars are Scattered* to write my master's thesis in education – with a focus point on the subject English. Your graphic novel has had a tremendous impact on me, and I have been quite curious about the potential of using it with pupils. More specifically, I am writing about the potential of using *When Stars are Scattered* to promote intercultural competence among reluctant readers in lower secondary in Norway.

Therefore, I would appreciate if you could answer a few questions about the graphic novel. Your answers will be of interest in my thesis, as it would be interesting to include some personal comments from you – the co-author – on this subject.

1. Why did you choose to use the format 'graphic novel' to share your story?
2. How was the reception of *When Stars are Scattered*?
3. Could you think of any positive aspects of a graphic novel in contrast to a traditional novel (text only)?
4. What do you think about using the graphic novel in a classroom?
5. What do you hope pupils can learn from reading your story?
6. Can you think of any reasons as to whether a graphic novel can attract reluctant readers?

I hope for a positive answer from you

Kind regards,

Amina Topić

Appendix G: Questionnaire

Lesevaner og litterære former

Obligatoriske felt er merket med en stjerne

LES FØR GJENNOMFØRING

Svarene i denne spørreundersøkelsen kommer til å brukes til en masteroppgave i engelsk ved Grunnskolelærerutdanningen 5-10 ved Høgskolen i Østfold.

Formålet med oppgaven min er å undersøke hvorvidt en grafisk novelle kan brukes til å fremme interkulturell kompetanse blant elever som ikke er glad i å lese.

Innhentingen av data er todelt:

- Spørreundersøkelse
- Lese et utdrag + intervju

Denne undersøkelsen kommer til å fungere som en base for oppgaven, hvor jeg ønsker å undersøke deres (elever ved 10.trinn) leselyst, motivasjon og hvilke former for litteratur dere liker/ikke liker.
Les NØYE gjennom spørsmålene før du svarer, og vær så ærlig som mulig.
Neste steg kommer til å være intervjuer **fredag 3. februar** med **3 tilfeldige elever** som har gitt samtykke til å være med. Dersom dere er under 15 år gamle, kommer samtykket også til å innhentes fra foresatte gjennom et brev. Under intervjuet kommer vi til å lese et utdrag fra en grafisk novelle, for så å snakke sammen om hva vi har lest, opplevelser, hva dere syns om utdraget, se på bilder og tekst, samt om dere liker denne formen for litteratur. Dette kommer til å vare i **ca. 40 minutter i skoletiden**.

Jeg samtykker til å delta på spørreundersøkelsen*

Samtykket er frivillig, og kan tilbaketrekkes når som helst både under og etter undersøkelsen. Ta kontakt med din engelsklærer for dette. Da blir dine svar slettet.

- ○ Ja
- ○ Nei

Jeg samtykker til å delta i et mulig intervju*

Samtykket er frivillig, og kan tilbaketrekkes uten grunn når som helst i prosessen. Samtykket blir også hentet inn fra dine foresatte.

Du blir informert i dybden om prosjektet og dine rettigheter før intervjuet, hvis du blir valgt til å være med.

Intervjuet kommer til å bli tatt opp ved lydopptak. De muntlige svarene blir transkribert og anonymisert, uten at noen andre enn jeg og min veileder har tilgang til det.

Lydopptaket og transkripsjonen blir slettet etter prosjektets slutt (mai 2023).

- ○ Ja
- ○ Nei

Skriv inn din kode*

Din kode er basert på hvilken klasse du går i + dine initialer.

For eksempel: Hvis du går i 10A og heter Kari Moe Petterson, så er koden din 10A KMP. Snakk med læreren dersom det er flere i klassen som har samme initialer, og bli enige om tall. For eksempel: 10A KMP1 og 10A KMP2.

Grunnen til at du har en kode, er for å anonymisere deg dersom du ha trykket "ja" på å være med i intervjuet.

Jeg identifiserer meg som*

- Mann
- Kvinne
- Annet

Jeg liker å lese engelske bøker*

- Veldig enig
- Enig
- Nøytral
- Uenig
- Veldig uenig

Jeg mener at å lese på engelsk er...*

- Gøy
- Ok
- Ok / vanskelig
- Vanskelig
- Kjedelig
- Ikke gøy

Liker du å lese bøker? Hvorfor / hvorfor ikke? Skriv et par setninger*

Hvordan er ditt forhold til bøker?*

På hvilke måter kan du bli motivert til å lese mer?*

Hvilke typer tekster har du lest på skolen? (flervalg)*

Tenk over din skolegang - både ungdomsskolen og barneskolen. Hvilke typer tekster har du vært borti før?

- [ ] Tradisjonelle bøker (fiksjon og sakprosa)
- [ ] Grafiske noveller
- [ ] Tegneserier
- [ ] Noveller (kort bok, én hendelse, få personer)
- [ ] Biografier
- [ ] Dikt
- [ ] Drama
- [ ] Korte fortellinger
- [ ] Bildebøker

Jeg prøver å unngå å lese bøker på engelsk hvis jeg absolutt ikke må*

- ○ Veldig enig
- ○ Enig
- ○ Nøytral
- ○ Uenig
- ○ Veldig uenig

Ca. hvor mange bøker har du lest i 2022?*

- ○ 0
- ○ 1-3
- ○ 4-7
- ○ 8-11
- ○ 12+

Hva skal til for at du skal lese en bok?* (flervalg)

- [ ] Lettlest, ikke mange ukjent ord
- [ ] Historien må være interessant
- [ ] Boken må inkludere temaer som jeg kan relatere til
- [ ] Boken må inkludere realistiske problemer
- [ ] Boken må ha mindre tekst og flere bilder
- [ ] Boken må ha mye action

Hva skal til for at du skal like en bok?* (flervalg)

- [ ] Lettlest, ikke mange ukjente ord
- [ ] Historien må være interessant

- [ ] Boken må inkludere temaer som jeg kan relatere til
- [ ] Boken må inkludere realistiske problemer
- [ ] Boken må ha mindre tekst og flere bilder
- [ ] Boken må ha mye action

Jeg mener at det er enklere å lese og forstå når boken har bilder*

- ○ Veldig enig
- ○ Enig
- ○ Nøytral
- ○ Uenig
- ○ Veldig uenig

Hvis du valgte "Veldig enig", "Enig" eller " Nøytral", vennligst forklar

Hvis du valgte "Uenig" eller "Veldig uenig", vennligst forklar

Jeg ville ha lest mer hvis flere bøker hadde flere bilder*

- ○ Enig
- ○ Uenig

Appendix H: Semi-structured interview guide

- Introduction before turning the recorder on
    - Thank you for participating + why you are chosen
    - What the information will be used for
    - Information about their rights as participants, time and the interview form
    - Information about the project, intercultural competence, and the interview
    - Any questions?
- Pupils read the excerpts from *When Stars are Scattered* (2020)

Introduction – pupils' experience with reading

1. Tell me a little bit about your relationship with books and reading
   Fortell litt om ditt forhold til bøker og lesing
2. What do you think about the format 'graphic novels' in general?
   Hva tenker du generelt om formatet 'grafiske noveller'?

Their understanding and experience of the excerpts

3. Briefly retell what you have read.
   Back-up: Themes? What happens in the story?
   Gjenfortell kort hva du har lest.
   Oppfølging: Temaer? Hva handler utdragene om?
4. What type of information do you get from these pictures (4-5 + 59)?
   Hvilken informasjon får du fra disse bildene (4-5 + 59)?
5. What do you think about presenting a story about the refugee experience through text and pictures, versus just text?
   Follow-up: What do you think about reading pictures?
   Hva tenker du om det å framstille flyktningsopplevelsen gjennom tekst og bilder, kontra kun tekst?
   Oppfølging: Hva tenker du om det å lese bilder?

Intercultural competence – knowledge – in the graphic novel

6. What challenges does Omar experience in his everyday life?
   Follow-up/extra: Are these realistic? If so, why? In relation to your life?
   Hvilke utfordringer opplever Omar i hverdagen sin?
   Oppfølging/ekstra: Er de realistiske? Hvis ja, hvorfor? I forhold til ditt liv?
7. What can you learn from these excerpts?
   Hva kan man lære fra disse utdragene?
8. Some of the pages you have read have little text, and many pictures – what do you think about gathering information through pictures, rather than just text?

Noen av sidene du har lest har lite tekst og mange bilder – hva tenker du om å få informasjon gjennom bilder, enn kun tekst?

Intercultural competence – attitudes – in the graphic novel

9. What attitudes can this book develop among readers? Elaborate

   Follow-up/extra: School? Refugees? Otherness?

   Hvilke holdninger kan denne boken utvikle hos lesere? Utdyp

   Oppfølging/ekstra: Skole? Flyktninger? Annenhet?

10. Can the pictures affect our attitudes? If so, in what ways?

    Kan bildene påvirke våre holdninger? Hvis ja, hvordan?

11. Can you picture why the authors chose to use 'graphic novel' to tell this story?

    Follow-up: Message of the story?

    Kan du tenke deg hvorfor forfatterne valgte å bruke 'grafisk novelle' til å fortelle historien?

    Oppfølging: budskapet i historien?

Wrapping up

12. Is the book relevant today? Why/why not?

    Er boken relevant i dag? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?

13. What would you say is something positive / negative with a graphic novel?

    Extra: how was it to read a graphic novel instead of a traditional novel?

    Hva vil du si er noe positivt / negativt med en grafisk novelle?

    Ekstra: hvordan var det å lese en grafisk novelle, i stedet for en tradisjonell novelle?

14. A focus point in the English subject is to develop IC through reading literature. However, more and more pupils read less, especially traditional books (only text). What do you think about using this graphic novel to develop intercultural knowledge and attitudes among pupils who do not like to read?

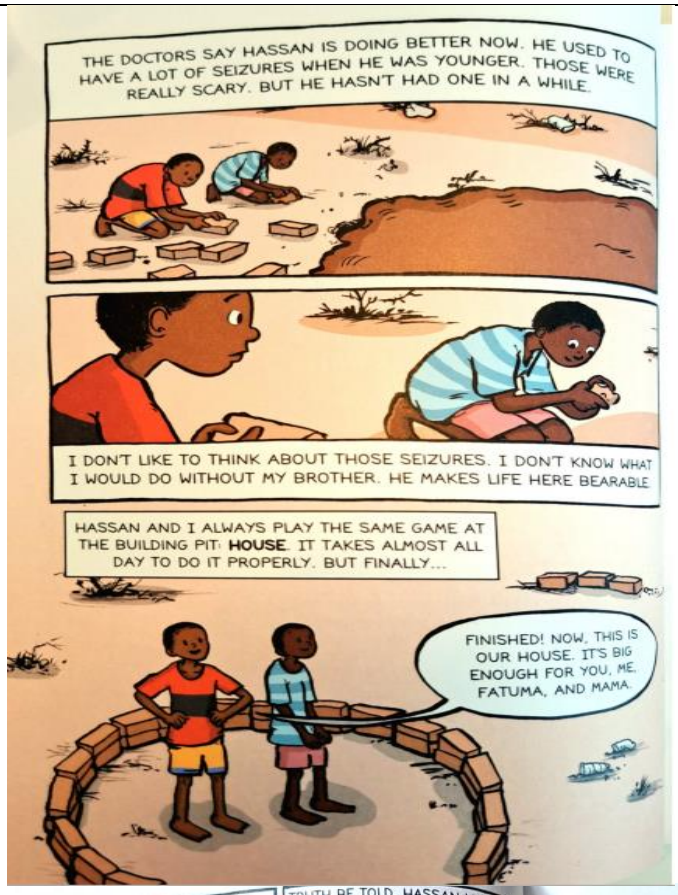
    Et fokus i faget engelsk er å utvikle IC gjennom å lese litteratur. Men, flere og flere elever leser mindre, spesielt tradisjonelle bøker (kun tekst). Hva tenker du om å bruke denne grafiske novellen til å utvikle kunnskap og holdninger blant elever som ikke liker å lese?

Appendix I: Overview of IC during the interviews

Interkulturell kompetanse: evnen til å forstå og beherske situasjoner når ulike kulturer/mennesker møtes. Mange måter å utvikle dette på, blant annet gjennom å lese litteratur. 4 hovedkomponenter:

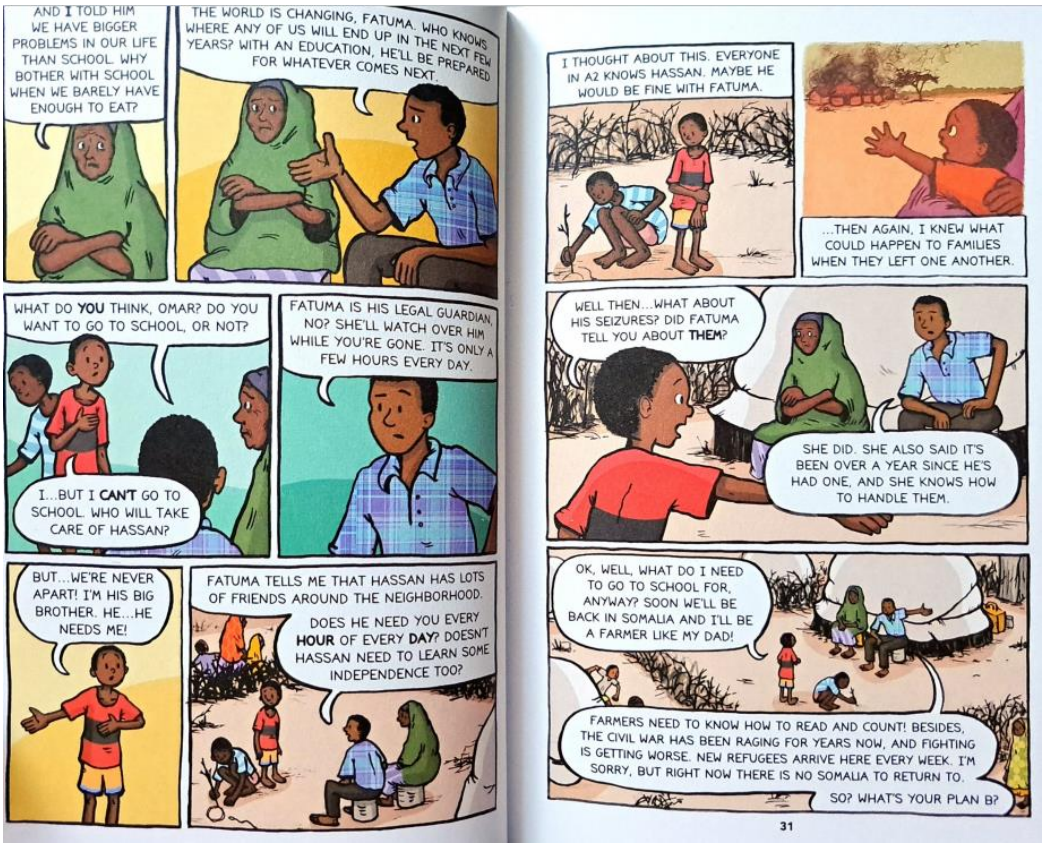
KUNNSKAP	HOLDNINGER	FERDIGHETER	KRITISK KULTURELL BEVISSTHET
- Ulike kulturer - Egen kultur - Globale problemer - Perspektiver - Kommunikasjon - Hverdagslivet	- Nysgjerrighet - Åpenhet - Respekt - Toleranse - Selvbevissthet - Fordomsfrihet - Empati	- Empati - Observere - Analysere - Relatere - Kritisk tenkning - Tålmodighet - Ta andres perspektiver	- Kritisk til egen og andres kultur, basert på kunnskap, holdninger og ferdigheter - Likheter og ulikheter

Appendix J: Excerpts from *When Stars are Scattered* (2020)


THE DOCTORS SAY HASSAN IS DOING BETTER NOW. HE USED TO HAVE A LOT OF SEIZURES WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER. THOSE WERE REALLY SCARY. BUT HE HASN'T HAD ONE IN A WHILE.
I DON'T LIKE TO THINK ABOUT THOSE SEIZURES. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD DO WITHOUT MY BROTHER. HE MAKES LIFE HERE BEARABLE.
HASSAN AND I ALWAYS PLAY THE SAME GAME AT THE BUILDING PIT: HOUSE. IT TAKES ALMOST ALL DAY TO DO IT PROPERLY. BUT FINALLY...
FINISHED! NOW, THIS IS OUR HOUSE. IT'S BIG ENOUGH FOR YOU, ME, FATUMA, AND MAMA.

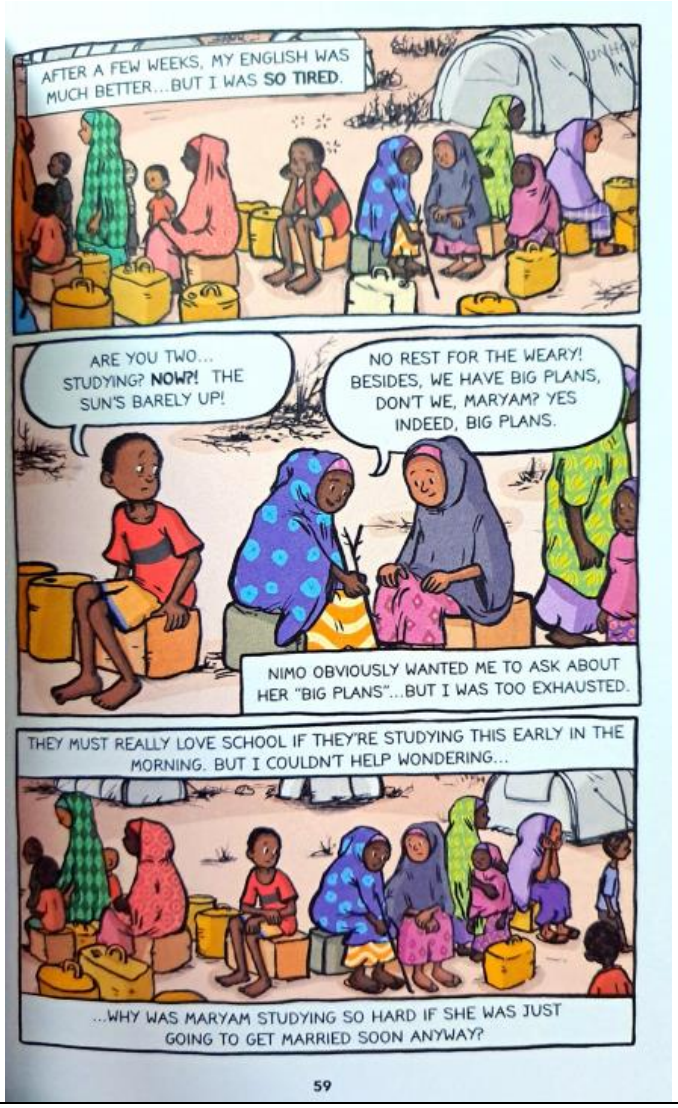
I ASKED AROUND AND I FOUND ANOTHER PAIR OF PANTS FOR YOU AND HASSAN. I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR SHOES.
WOW, THANKS, FATUMA!
TRUTH BE TOLD, HASSAN WOULD RATHER BE PANTS-LESS.
PUT. THEM. ON!
NNNN!
HI, OMAR!
OH, HEY, JERI.
THAT'S MY BEST FRIEND, JERI. I'VE KNOWN HIM PRACTICALLY MY WHOLE LIFE.
SOCCER AFTER SCHOOL, RIGHT?
YEAH, FOR SURE!
JERI USED TO STAY HOME LIKE ME, BECAUSE HE WAS SICK. THAT'S HOW HE GOT HIS NICKNAME. "JERI" IS A NAME FOR SOMEONE WHO LIMPS. BUT NOW HE GOES TO SCHOOL WITH A LOT OF OTHER KIDS FROM OUR BLOCK.
I'VE NEVER GONE TO SCHOOL. I'VE ALWAYS STAYED HOME TO TAKE CARE OF HASSAN. I'M THE OLDEST, SO IT'S MY JOB TO PROTECT HIM.
BUT I WONDER WHAT SCHOOL WOULD BE LIKE.
C'MON, LET'S GO TO THE BUILDING PIT.
16
"BUILDING PIT" IS A NICE WAY TO DESCRIBE THIS PLACE. IT'S REALLY JUST A PUDDLE WHERE WE PLAY IN THE MUD. YOU HAVE TO BE CREATIVE IN A REFUGEE CAMP.
YOU MAKE THE BRICKS, HASSAN, AND I'LL BUILD THE HOUSE.
ONE...TWO...
EVEN THOUGH I'VE NEVER GONE TO AN ACTUAL SCHOOL, MY MOM TAUGHT ME ALL MY NUMBERS WHEN I WAS SMALL. I KEEP PRACTICING SO I WON'T FORGET.
2 BRICKS PLUS 2 BRICKS EQUALS...4 BRICKS!
HE CAN'T SAY SO, BUT I CAN TELL HASSAN IS IMPRESSED BY MY AMAZING MATH SKILLS.
HASSAN CAN'T TALK. EVER SINCE HE WAS A BABY, HE'S ONLY EVER SAID ONE WORD.
HOOYO!
BUT HE MAKES A LOT OF NOISES, AND WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.
17

I STARTED SEEING TALL SALAN PRETTY OFTEN AFTER THAT. HE WAS ALWAYS VISITING WITH NEIGHBORS, GETTING TO KNOW THEM AND LISTENING TO THEIR COMPLAINTS. I LIKED TO PRACTICE NEW ENGLISH PHRASES WITH HIM.
‹LOVELY WEATHER TODAY!›
‹EXCUSE ME, DO YOU HAVE THE TIME?›
‹WOULD YOU LIKE A CUP OF TEA?›
ONE DAY I FOUND HIM TALKING WITH FATUMA.
OMAR, WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT YOU. COME, HAVE A SEAT.
FATUMA LOOKED WORRIED.
IS EVERYTHING OK, FATUMA?
SALAN WAS JUST TELLING ME HIS THOUGHTS ABOUT YOU.
I DIDN'T DO IT!
NO, NO. YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
SALAN THINKS YOU SHOULD GO TO SCHOOL.
29

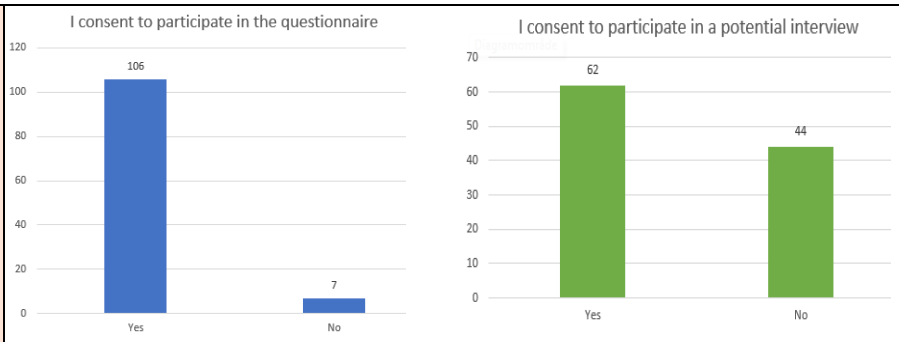
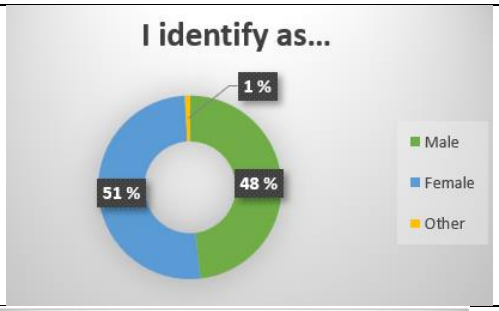
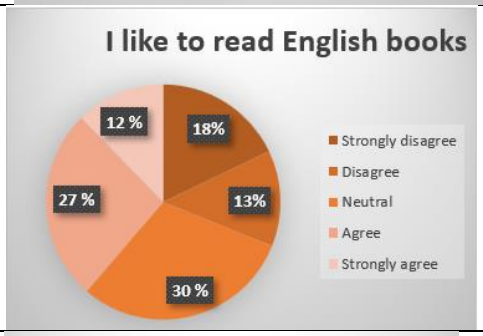
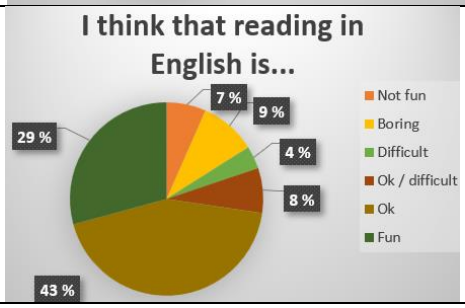

AND I TOLD HIM WE HAVE BIGGER PROBLEMS IN OUR LIFE THAN SCHOOL. WHY BOTHER WITH SCHOOL WHEN WE BARELY HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT?
THE WORLD IS CHANGING, FATUMA. WHO KNOWS WHERE ANY OF US WILL END UP IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS? WITH AN EDUCATION, HE'LL BE PREPARED FOR WHATEVER COMES NEXT.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, OMAR? DO YOU WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL, OR NOT?
I...BUT I CAN'T GO TO SCHOOL. WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF HASSAN?
FATUMA IS HIS LEGAL GUARDIAN, NO? SHE'LL WATCH OVER HIM WHILE YOU'RE GONE. IT'S ONLY A FEW HOURS EVERY DAY.
BUT...WE'RE NEVER APART! I'M HIS BIG BROTHER. HE...HE NEEDS ME!
FATUMA TELLS ME THAT HASSAN HAS LOTS OF FRIENDS AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD.
DOES HE NEED YOU EVERY HOUR OF EVERY DAY? DOESN'T HASSAN NEED TO LEARN SOME INDEPENDENCE TOO?
I THOUGHT ABOUT THIS. EVERYONE IN A2 KNOWS HASSAN. MAYBE HE WOULD BE FINE WITH FATUMA.
...THEN AGAIN, I KNEW WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO FAMILIES WHEN THEY LEFT ONE ANOTHER.
WELL THEN...WHAT ABOUT HIS SEIZURES? DID FATUMA TELL YOU ABOUT THEM?
SHE DID. SHE ALSO SAID IT'S BEEN OVER A YEAR SINCE HE'S HAD ONE, AND SHE KNOWS HOW TO HANDLE THEM.
OK, WELL, WHAT DO I NEED TO GO TO SCHOOL FOR, ANYWAY? SOON WE'LL BE BACK IN SOMALIA AND I'LL BE A FARMER LIKE MY DAD!
FARMERS NEED TO KNOW HOW TO READ AND COUNT! BESIDES, THE CIVIL WAR HAS BEEN RAGING FOR YEARS NOW, AND FIGHTING IS GETTING WORSE. NEW REFUGEES ARRIVE HERE EVERY WEEK. I'M SORRY, BUT RIGHT NOW THERE IS NO SOMALIA TO RETURN TO.
SO? WHAT'S YOUR PLAN B?
31

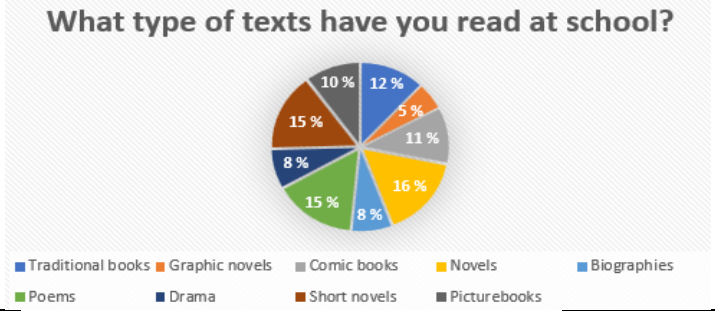
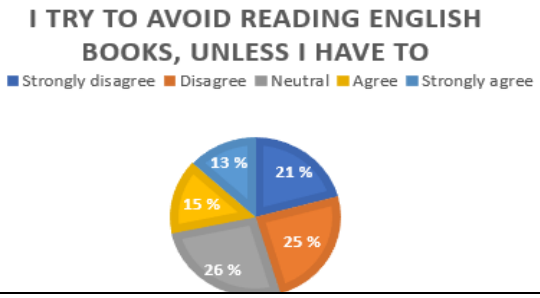
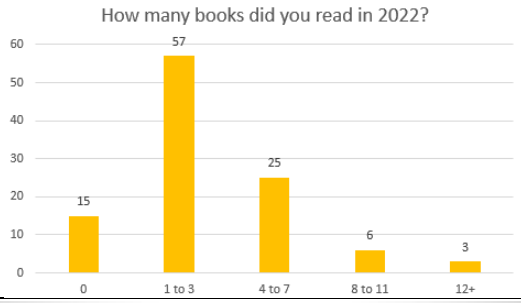
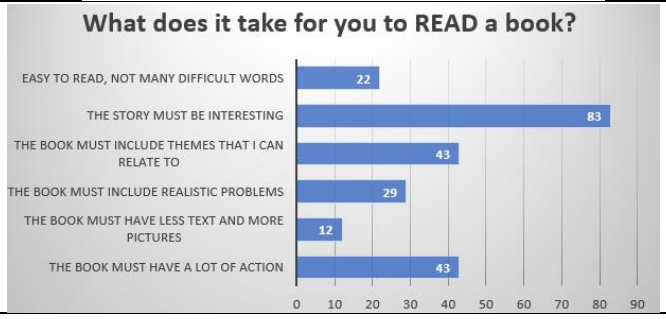
MAYBE WE'LL BE SENT TO AMERICA!
OH? AND HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU KNOW WHO HAVE BEEN RESETTLED TO AMERICA?
WELL...NONE. BUT JERI'S DAD'S FRIEND'S COUSIN...
COME WITH ME.
OMAR. LOOK AT THIS GRAIN OF SAND. THIS IS YOU.
FLING
YOU ARE ONE OF THOUSANDS—OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES HERE IN DADAAB. YOU'RE ABOUT AS LIKELY TO GET CHOSEN TO GO TO AMERICA AS I AM TO FIND THAT GRAIN OF SAND AGAIN.
BUT WE MIGHT GET CHOSEN...
YES. OR YOU MIGHT NOT GET CHOSEN. YOU AND HASSAN COULD SPEND YOUR ENTIRE LIVES IN THIS REFUGEE CAMP. THEN WHAT?
SPEND MY WHOLE LIFE HERE? THAT THOUGHT WAS...DEPRESSING.
OMAR, ONLY GOD KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE. BUT IF YOU GET AN EDUCATION, YOU'LL BE PREPARED. YOU COULD GET A JOB. YOU COULD START A SCHOOL, LIKE I DID. YOU COULD PROVIDE FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY.
YOU HAVE A GIFT, OMAR. YOU'RE SMART. AND WHEN GOD GIVES YOU A GIFT, IT IS YOUR JOB TO USE IT.
BUT...BUT I CAN'T. I CAN'T GO TO SCHOOL! I JUST CAN'T!
?
33

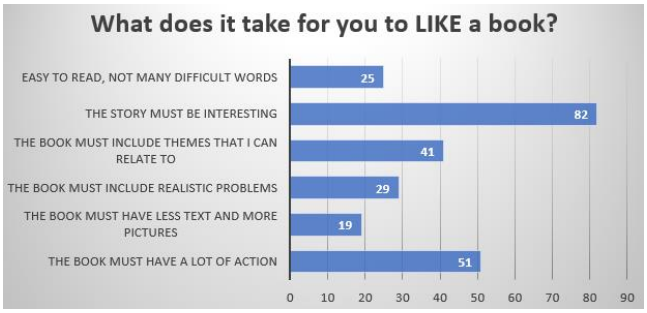
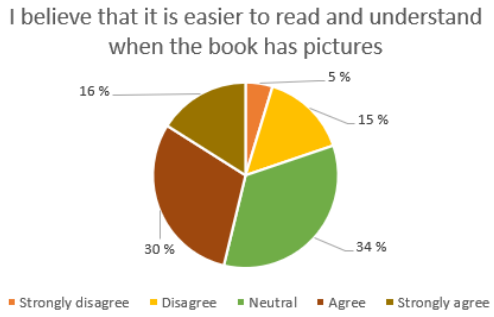
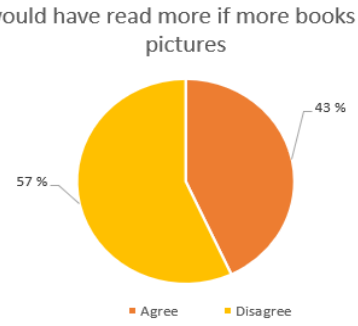
SOME OF THE STUDENTS HERE ARE OLDER, MAYBE FIFTEEN OR SIXTEEN YEARS OLD. KIDS HERE GO TO SCHOOL WHEN THEY CAN, SO SOMETIMES THEY GET A LATE START. ALL THE GIRLS ARE SITTING ON ONE SIDE OF THE ROOM, AND BOYS ON THE OTHER. THERE AREN'T AS MANY GIRLS AS THERE ARE BOYS.
IT SEEMS LIKE HALF THE GIRLS IN CLASS ARE HANGING AROUND NIMO'S DESK, SINGING A SONG. I'M NOT SURPRISED—SHE SINGS ALL THE TIME.
R-R-RING!
AAAAAAAAAGH!
RELAX, THAT'S JUST THE BELL! IT'S TIME FOR ENGLISH CLASS.
‹GOOD MORNING, CLASS.›
‹GOOD MORNING, SIR.›
45


AFTER A FEW WEEKS, MY ENGLISH WAS MUCH BETTER...BUT I WAS SO TIRED.
ARE YOU TWO... STUDYING? NOW?! THE SUN'S BARELY UP!
NO REST FOR THE WEARY! BESIDES, WE HAVE BIG PLANS, DON'T WE, MARYAM? YES INDEED, BIG PLANS.
NIMO OBVIOUSLY WANTED ME TO ASK ABOUT HER "BIG PLANS"...BUT I WAS TOO EXHAUSTED.
THEY MUST REALLY LOVE SCHOOL IF THEY'RE STUDYING THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING. BUT I COULDN'T HELP WONDERING...
...WHY WAS MARYAM STUDYING SO HARD IF SHE WAS JUST GOING TO GET MARRIED SOON ANYWAY?
59

Appendix K: Questionnaire responses *(This appendix presents some of the 106 answers. All transcripts are available on request)*

Jeg samtykker til å delta på spørreundersøkelsen / i et potensielt intervju	
Jeg identifiserer meg som	
Jeg liker å lese engelske bøker	
Jeg mener at å lese på engelsk er…	
Liker du å lese bøker? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? Skriv et par setninger som dette	- Jeg liker å lese. Mye tanker og spørsmål kommer opp når jeg leser. Jeg kan innbilte meg selv i situasjoner eller drømme meg vekk - Jeg er ikke glad i å lese bøker, fordi jeg mener at det er bedre ting å gjøre, enn å lese - Jeg liker ikke så godt å lese bøker, spesielt ikke tykke bøker med mange sider. Da mister jeg motivasjonen til å lese hele boka og blir lei av den - Jeg liker å lese bøker som interesserer meg - Jeg liker ikke å lese så mye bøker men syns det er helt greit, liksom jeg kan lese om jeg gidder. Fordi noen ganger når jeg starter på en bok og ser den er kjedelig, så legger jeg den fra meg - Jeg liker IKKE å lese fordi det er så kjedelig. Jeg har ikke lest en bok frivillig siden 6.klasse - Jeg liker å lese bøker innimellom, syntes det er helt greit. Det er gøy!
Hvordan er ditt forhold til bøker?	- Forholdet mitt til bøker er svakt - Jeg har lest mye bøker men stoppet litt med det på ungdomsskolen - Liker mest kanskje bøker med bilder i som man kan se på

	- Når jeg tenker på bøker, tenker jeg på det som noe positivt. Hadde du stilt meg det samme spørsmålet for 3 år siden hadde svaret vært det motsatte. Nå syntes jeg å lese er veldig beroligende og behagelig - Jeg ville trodd at mitt forhold til bøker ikke er så bra fordi jeg er ikke veldig glad i å lese
På hvilke måter kan du bli motivert til å lese mer?	- Jeg kan bli motivert til å lese mer hvis boken er spennende - Vet ikke. Hvis boken virker gøy å lese, som sjeldent skjer. Jeg syns det er kjedelig å sitte i ro og stirre på ord. Så boken må være veldig, veldig bra for å få meg til å lese den - Hvis det er spennende - Jeg er allerede motivert fra før av, men kanskje hvis vi fikk et litt bredere utvalg av bøker på skolen, hadde sikkert flere elever begynt å lese - Når jeg leser en bok der jeg forstår alt og er ikke kjedelig
Hvilke typer tekster har du lest på skolen?	
Jeg prøver å unngå å lese bøker på engelsk hvis jeg absolutt ikke må	
Ca. hvor mange bøker har du lest i 2022?	
Hva skal til for at du skal lese en bok?	

Hva skal til for at du skal like en bok?	
Jeg mener at det er enklere å lese og forstå når boken har bilder	
Hvis du valgte «veldig enig», «enig» eller «nøytral», vennligst forklar	- Når jeg leser en bok som har bilder er det enklere å forstå hva forfatteren mener og hva de prøver å få fram i boka - Tok veldig enig for «et bilde kan fortelle mer enn et tusen ord» - Da får jeg se hvordan forfatteren har sett for seg hvordan hovedpersonene skal se ut, og da får jeg en pustepause på en måte når det er bilder - Jeg mener at det er enklere å forstå bøker hvis det er flere bilder der fordi det er ikke like kjedelig som når det bare er bøker med full tekst og null bilder. Det må være noe interessant i boka hvis ikke har jeg ikke lyst og lese den boka - Når boken har bilder, da er det lettere å se for seg bilder og handlingen - Fordi jeg glemmer ting når jeg leser, men bilder hjelper med å forklare lettere så jeg ikke glemmer
Hvis du valgte «uenig» eller «veldig uenig», vennligst forklar	- Jeg syntes ikke bilder har noe påvirkning fordi jeg kan forestille meg bildene i hodet når jeg leser - Jeg valgte uenig fordi jeg mener ikke at det er enklere å lese og forstå en bok når den inkluderer bilder, fordi jeg får samme forståelse om boka og jeg synes det blir mer kjedelig når boken inneholder bilder - Jeg valgte veldig uenig fordi jeg personlig ikke trenger bilder for å forstå bøkene. Jeg skaper bilder inni hodet som får meg til å være i egen verden - Jeg har lest noen bøker uten bilder og finner dem like 'vanskelige' som bøker med bilder
Jeg ville ha lest mer hvis flere bøker hadde flere bilder	

Appendix L: Transcriptions from interviews (English and Norwegian)

Interview with Ole – English

Interviewer: Can you explain your relationship with books and reading?

Ole: Uhm… I'm not very fond of reading. Never had any particular interest in it. I haven't found anything interesting either. Maybe there is something with that… It has always been like that, eh since childhood. I only read if I must, at school. But not in my spare time. And yeah, that applies to both reading in English and Norwegian. I mostly watch tv-shows.

Interviewer: What about reading at school then?

Ole: Oh no, I think it is boring. I can't manage to provoke any interest at all

Interviewer: What do you think about reading a graphic novel?

Ole: I feel that this form is much more interesting than a regular novel. Ehm what can I say… you kinda get the images in your head, it's realistic. Also, I don't have to speculate what and how something looks like, or anything like that. The picture is there (gestures with both hands), and that makes it much easier. It also keeps the concentration much longer. I personally get demotivated if I open a book, and there is a lot of text there.

Interviewer: How about a traditional novel with text only?

Ole: Yeah no, then I can't concentrate. I'd rather put it away. It just gets too boring

Interviewer: Can you retell the extracts you have read?

Ole: There was Omar and his brother who, it was (pause) Omar used to look after his brother. Ehhh in that refugee camp, Dadaab. And one day they (adults) start talking about him starting school. But he will, he (Omar) would rather look after his brother. He's thinking, isn't it like seizures? As his brother has them sometimes. But then they say they will look after him, so then he (Omar) tries school. Also, it is about Omar and his life in the refugee camp.

Interviewer: We can look at a couple of pages/pictures. Here (pages 4-5) there is only one sentence and two speech bubbles, with two pages of pictures. What kind of information do you get from these pictures?

Ole: No, you see, it doesn't really look that nice. In relation to the fact that they have to be on the other side, and they are also looking for someone. I think. Hmmm… there are also barbed wire fences there. It looks unpleasant. Uhm it looks pretty dry, lots of people. It looks like there are both children and older people there. Many older people …in a way. And mostly women, eh maybe because if it's a camp then they look more after women and children.

Interviewer: What do you think about getting that information here through pictures?

Ole: Pictures make it much more interesting, compared to just text. You kind of get the pictures in your head, what it looks like. Instead of having to think about it. If you must read 3 pages to get that picture, then it becomes more difficult and boring. Here (nods to the pages) there is a bit more to look at, it is a bit more interesting, and I think I would have lasted much

longer with a book like this than a normal traditional book. It sort of keeps my concentration, and it goes faster, which I think is good

Interviewer: How about this page (turns to page 59) – what do you see?

Ole: I see some pupils. I don't quite know if they're sitting and waiting, if they're going to study or what... (thinking) those (yellow boxes)... they're sitting on them... wait, they look like watering cans... Yes, then it is a completely different thing. No, then maybe they are there to fetch water then! Or they have already done that

Interviewer: How old do you think they are?

Ole: Hmmm it looks like there are a lot of children. Or at least some children. Maybe… it seems like they might be 12 years old.

Interviewer: What do you think about this sentence then (last sentence - marriage)?

Ole: No, it sounds... she looks quite young, so it sounds very early then, to get married. But education is important. So yeah, maybe it shows us a challenge, the fact that girls are perhaps expected to marry and have children and families at a young age, versus getting an education. That might tell us something about the culture then. There are many who are married away in such cultures. And Omar doesn't understand that. Why she bothers to struggle through education at the same time as she is waiting for water and such

Interviewer: What about gender?

Ole: Yeah… It looks like it's mostly girls, plus Omar. After all, Omar only has Fatuma and his brother. And Omar may be given responsibility for doing such tasks, which may be seen as "girl tasks" in that culture. So he experiences balancing the tasks and the education, and thinks it is terribly tiring. And yes, he might ask himself the question how the other girls manage it.

Interviewer: What do you think about presenting such a story through pictures?

Ole: I feel it can show much more. Especially how things actually are. It looks more realistic. But it's still a cartoon, so it can kind of give the impression that it's not actually true, for some people. But I still feel that it gives you a better picture of how things can be there, or how things are.

Interviewer: Do you think it is easier to learn about such a story through text and pictures versus just text? Why?

Ole: Yes, definitely. I'm able to concentrate more, see how things look like. Maybe things that I can be a little more curious about.

Interviewer: What do you think about reading pictures?

Ole: It's much more interesting to me. But it can be like difficult, since there is a lot of information that you have to pay attention to. Yeah everything from facial expressions, colors, angle, yes everything. Small details like that. So, it's nice to have a couple of sentences here

and there that you can lean on. It is also faster to read pictures and get information than to only read text

Interviewer: What challenges does Omar experience in his everyday life?

Ole: There is uhm talk about fetching water, which can take a long time. Also, ehhh, it's, what am I thinking (looks away)... maybe the thing about school. It's a bit difficult because he's actually used to looking after his brother. Then he must make a choice. And yes, looking after him when he has disabilities. He is really afraid of losing him. And it can be extra difficult in such situations and environments.

Interviewer: Are they realistic?

Ole: … Yes, I think so. There is sometimes talk of people being in such camps. We've had an assignment where I learned a bit about Dadaab, so a book like this makes it sound a bit more realistic

Interviewer: How about in relation to your own life?

Ole: Hmmm, there are most differences. I feel like I'm doing pretty well. I like don't have to think about fetching water, my family, plus school and education. Maybe I take it a bit for granted… There is a very big difference between me and Omar, especially in these challenges

Interviewer: What can be learned from these extracts?

Ole: You can get different perspectives about how other people live. Ehhh and yes, global problems, it's real. Especially the lack of water, food and education in such camps. It's also a completely different culture there, that you get an insight into. For example, the view on family, or the view on school and education, and especially girls – marrying them off and such things. You can learn a lot through these excerpts and the book, maybe... maybe also reflect on how I actually have it in contrast to him (Omar), and appreciate it a little more.

Interviewer: Interesting. What about this page (turns to page 45)? What do you see here?

Ole: Well… there are a lot of children der, and one adult. And I have already read, so they are at school. Eh… boys and girls are separated; they don't sit together. Maybe it has to do with the culture there, that boys and girls must sit at their own side. But they look happy. And the room look a bit old. Uhm (looks at the picture)… and back there (points), there are some feet, like if someone is standing there. And I think… it's so crowded there that there are no more seats, and they have to stand. Which is a bummer.

Interviewer: Is it realistic?

Ole: The thing with the school? Hmmm yeah maybe. I have like seen some videos about school in Africa. Uhm, and it looked like that picture (page 45). Many children, old building, and yeah, that they don't sit together, boys and girls

Interviewer: Some of the pages have little text and many pictures, what do you think about gaining knowledge through pictures?

Ole: You get... what can I say... I got more information. If I read the pages without pictures, I would simply have given up and would have thought it was boring. But with pictures, you sort of see what it's like. Notice small details. The way of thinking perhaps... And you can sort of "see" the culture visually, and not just read about it.

Interviewer: What attitudes can this book develop in the reader?

Ole: Ehhh it could be (thinking), maybe some... become curious about this reality then, maybe also the culture. That I actually want to learn more and think about it. Also have a little more… respect for people going through it. Also respect for the culture, especially that with school. After all, they have a completely different view on school than what my friends and I might have. We take it perhaps for granted, like I can't stand school today. And if I then meet a refugee or someone who couldn't go to school, and see that he actually puts a lot of time and work into school, then I would have a whole new respect for that, since his situation is different from mine. And perhaps that you become a little more aware of why you have the attitudes you have, and consider that other people have fewer opportunities. And maybe work with your own prejudices and be a little more open to differences.

Interviewer: Can images influence attitudes?

Ole: Ehhh... yes, you get to see how people feel. You get a little more empathy, and it looks more realistic. It can actually awaken some attitudes, or perhaps change the way of thinking one has, and change your own attitudes. Be yeah... more open, have a little more respect when you see it visually

Interviewer: Can you imagine why the authors chose to present the story through a graphic novel?

Ole: Maybe they would try to show it (visually), not just through words. Show how it is. That the reader gets a stronger relationship with the characters. I feel that it does something to my brain when I actually see it, I get much more empathy and connection. (thinking) Maybe also attract readers. And I feel that they get to show the story much more than if it had only been text. You can show pictures that the text does not show. I got a lot more out of it than if it was only text.

Interviewer: Do you think this book is relevant today?

Ole: Ehhh, I would say that it is relevant. After all, it addresses things and problems that still exist today. And you can learn a lot by reading things like that. You get more knowledge about other cultures, especially in refugee camps, through this graphic novel. And that you can work on your attitudes then, get a little more respect that you can take over in your life

Interviewer: What would you say is something positive about a graphic novel?

Ole: It can make people… there are probably more people than just me who don't like such traditional books. That might make people more interested. Then you like have something for everyone - those who like to read ordinary books, also those who want more pictures. I would have chosen a book like this over traditional books any time. It's easier to keep my concentration, then I can actually read. I don't like that there are so many words

Interviewer: How about something negative?

Ole: Ehmmm… maybe not as much text. You have to read in a different way and analyze pictures. So you have to think it through

Interviewer: A focus in the subject English is to develop intercultural competence through reading literature. But it turns out that more and more students read less. What do you think about using this graphic novel to develop knowledge and attitudes in students who do not like to read?

Ole: I think it would have worked better. At least for me it had... if we were to read normal books - no interest. But if we get a graphic novel, then I think it can be something completely different, then it will actually be easier to learn. I would have gained much more like knowledge about different cultures and perspectives, and maybe become a little more aware of my own situation and culture, especially when I meet people who, yeah... have a different background than me then. And yes, at the same time developing attitudes, I kind of get more respect and I'm more open and curious when I can see it through pictures. So yes, I think this graphic novel would have worked for those of us who don't like to read.

Interviewer: Do you want to add something?

Ole: No, I don't think so

Interviewer: Then I thank you for the interview

Intervju med Ole – Norwegian

Bakgrunnsinformasjon: vet ikke hva en grafisk novelle er, aldri vært borti det

Intervjuer: Kan du fortelle litt om ditt forhold til bøker og lesing?

Ole: Uhm… jeg er ikke så glad i å lese. Har liksom aldri hatt noe spesiell interesse for det. Har liksom ikke funnet noe spennende heller da. Kan hende at det er noe med det... Det har alltid vært sånn, siden barndommen. Jeg leser kun hvis jeg må, på skolen. Men ikke på fritiden. Og ja, det gjelder jo både det å lese på engelsk og norsk. Det går mest i tv-serier da.

Intervjuer: Hva med lesing på skolen da?

Ole: Å nei, jeg syns det er kjedelige. Klarer liksom ikke å vekke noe interesse da

Intervjuer: Hva syns du om det å lese en grafisk novelle?

Ole: Jeg føler at denne formen er mye mer interessant enn en vanlig novelle da. Ehm hva skal jeg si… man får bildene i hodet, det er mer ekte. Også trenger jeg liksom ikke å spekulere hva og hvordan det ser ut eller noe sånt. Bildet er bare der (gestikulerer med begge hender), og det gjør det mye enklere. Det holder også mye mer på konsentrasjonen. Jeg blir personlig demotivert hvis jeg åpner en bok, også er det masse tekst der.

Intervjuer: Hva med en tradisjonell novelle med kun tekst?

Ole: Ja nei, da klarer jeg ikke å konsentrere meg. Den vil jeg helst legge vekk. Det blir for kjedelig rett og slett

Intervjuer: Kan du gjenfortelle utdragene du har lest?

Ole: Det var jo Omar og broren hans som, det var jo (pause) Omar pleide å passe på broren sin. Ehhh i den flyktningsleiren, Dadaab. Også en dag så begynner de (voksne) å snakke om at han skal begynne på skole. Men det vil jo, han (Omar) vil jo heller passe på broren sin da. Han tenker jo på, er det ikke sånn seizures? Da broren hans har det noen ganger. Men så sier de jo at de skal passe på han, så da prøver han (Omar) skole da. Også, ja det er jo om Omar og hans liv i flyktningleiren.

Intervjuer: Vi kan jo se på et par sider/bilder. Her er det jo kun en setning og to snakkebobler, med to sider med bilder. Hva slags informasjon får du fra disse bildene?

Ole: Nei ser jo, det ser ikke egentlig så hyggelig ut. I forhold til at det er, de må jo stå på den andre siden, også leter de etter noen da. Tror jeg. Hmmm… det er også piggtrådgjerder der. Det ser uhyggelig ut. Uhm det ser ganske tørt ut der, mye folk. Det ser ut som at det er både barn og eldre folk egentlig. Mye eldre folk… på en måte. Mest kvinner også, kanskje fordi hvis det er en sånn leir så tar de på en måte, og passer mer på kvinner og barn da

Intervjuer: Hva syns du om å få den informasjonen her gjennom bilder?

Ole: Bilder gjør det jo mye mer interessant da, kontra kun tekst. Du får på en måte bildene i hodet, hvordan det ser ut. Istedenfor at man må tenke seg fram til det da. Hvis man må lese 3 sider for å få det bildet på en måte, så blir det mye vanskeligere og mye kjedeligere da. Her (nikker til siden) er det litt mer å se på da, det er litt mer interessant, og da tror jeg at jeg hadde holdt ut mye lenger med en sånn her bok enn en sånn vanlig tradisjonell bok. Det holder liksom konsentrasjonen min, og det går mye fortere og da, noe jeg syns er bra

Intervjuer: Hva med denne siden (blar opp til side 59) – hva er det du ser?

Ole: Jeg ser noen elever. Jeg vet ikke helt om de sitter og venter om de skal studere eller hva… (tenker) det der (gule bokser)… de sitter jo på dem… vent det ser jo ut som vannkanner... Ja, da er det jo en helt annen ting. Nei da er de kanskje der for å hente vann da! Eller så har de vært og henta vann allerede

Intervjuer: Hvor gamle tror du de er?

Ole: Hmmm det ser ut som om det er mange barn. Eller noen barn hvert fall. Kanskje… det virker som om de kanskje er 12 år gamle.

Intervjuer: Hva tenker du om denne setningen om bildet da (siste setning - giftemål)?

Ole: Nei assa det høres… ho ser jo ganske ung ut, så det hørtes jo veldig tidlig ut da, å gifte seg. Men det er jo viktig med utdanning da. Så ja, kanskje det viser oss en utfordring, det med at jenter kanskje er forventet å gifte seg og få barn og familie i en ung alder, kontra det å få en utdanning da. Det forteller oss kanskje noe om kulturen da. Det er mange som blir gifta bort i slike kulturer. Og Omar skjønner liksom ikke det da. Hvorfor ho gidder å slite seg gjennom utdanning samtidig som ho venter vann og sånn

Intervjuer: Hva med kjønn?

Ole: Jaaa… Det ser ut som om det er flest jenter, pluss Omar. Omar har jo kun Fatuma og broren sin. Og Omar får jo kanskje ansvar for å gjøre slike oppgaver, som kanskje i den kulturen blir sett på som «jenteoppgaver». Så han opplever jo dette med å balansere oppgavene og utdanningen, og syns det er fryktelig slitsomt. Og ja, kanskje stiller seg selv spørsmålet hvordan de andre jentene klarer det da.

Intervjuer: hva tenker du om å framstille en slik historie gjennom bilder da?

Ole: Jeg føler det kan vise mye mer. Spesielt hvordan ting faktisk er. Det ser jo mer ekte ut. Men, det er jo fortsatt tegneserie da, så det kan liksom gi et inntrykk at det faktisk ikke stemmer da, for noen folk. Men jeg føler likevel at det gir deg et bedre bilde av hvordan ting kan være der, eller hvordan ting er.

Intervjuer: Syns du det er enklere å lære om en slik historie/bakgrunn gjennom tekst og bilder kontra kun tekst? Hvorfor?

Ole: Ja, definitivt. Jeg klarer liksom å konsentrere meg mer, se hvordan ting ser ut. Kanskje ting som jeg kan være litt mer nysgjerrig på da.

Intervjuer: Hva tenker du om det å lese bilder?

Ole: Det er jo for meg, mye mer interessant. Men det kan jo liksom være vanskelig og, siden det er mye informasjon man må legge merke til da. Ja alt fra ansiktsuttrykk, farger, vinkel, ja alt. Sånne smådetaljer. Så det er jo fint å ha et par setninger her og der som man kan lene seg på da. Også går det fortere å lese bilder og få info, enn å kun lese tekst da

Intervjuer: Hvilke utfordringer er det Omar opplever i hverdagens sin?

Ole: Det er jo uhm snakk om å hente vann, som kan ta lang tid. Også ehhh det er jo, hva tenker jeg (ser bort)… kanskje det med skole. Det er litt vanskelig, fordi han egentlig er vant til å passe på broren sin da. Da må han jo velge liksom. Og ja, det å passe på han når han har disabilities. Han er jo skikkelig redd for å miste han. Og det kan jo være ekstra vanskelig i slike situasjoner og miljø da.

Intervjuer: Er de realistiske?

Ole: … Ja det tror jeg. Det er noen ganger snakk om det at folk er på slike leirer. Vi har hatt en oppgave hvor jeg lærte litt om Dadaab, så en slik bok gjør at det høres litt mer ekte ut.

Intervjuer: Hva med i forhold til ditt eget liv?

Ole: Hmmm det er jo flest ulikheter. Jeg føler jeg har det ganske godt. Jeg må liksom ikke tenke på det å hente vann, familien, pluss skole og utdanning. Tar det kanskje litt for gitt da... Det er veldig stor forskjell mellom meg og Omar da, spesielt i disse utfordringene

Intervjuer: Hva kan man lære fra disse utdragene?

Ole: Man kan jo få andre perspektiver for hvordan andre folk har det da. Ehhh og ja, det med globale problemer, det er jo ekte da. Spesielt mangel på vann, mat og utdanning i slik leirer da. Også er det en helt annen kultur da, som man får et innblikk i. For eksempel familiesynet da, eller synet på skole og utdanning, og spesielt det med jenter – å gifte dem bort og sånt. Man kan jo lære veldig mye gjennom disse utdragene og boka kanskje… kanskje også reflektere hvordan er det jeg faktisk har det i kontrast til han (Omar), og sette litt mer pris på det da.

Intervjuer: Interessant. Hva med denne siden (blar til side 45)? Hva ser du her?

Ole: Vel… Det er veldig mange barn der, og en voksen. Og jeg har jo lest, så de er jo på en skole da. Eh… gutten og jentene er adskilt, de sitter ikke sammen. Kanskje det har noe med kulturen der liksom, at gutter og jenter må sitte på hver sin side. Men de ser glade ut da. Og rommet ser litt gammelt ut. Uhm (ser på bildet)… og bak der (peker) så er det noen føtter, som om noen står liksom. Også tenker jeg… det er så fullt der at det kanskje ikke er sitteplass, så man må jo stå, som ja, er kjipt.

Intervjuer: Er det realistisk?

Ole: Det med skolen? Hmmm ja kanskje det. Jeg har jo liksom sett noen videoer om skolen i Afrika. Uhm, og det så ut som på det bildet (side 45). Mange barn, litt gammelt bygg, og ja, det at de ikke sitter sammen, guttene og jentene.

Intervjuer: Noen av sidene har lite tekst og mange bilder, hva tenker du om å få kunnskap gjennom bilder?

Ole: Du får jo… hva skal jeg si… jeg fikk jo mer informasjon nå. Hvis jeg leste sidene uten bilder, så hadde jeg gitt opp rett og slett, og ville ha syns at det er kjedelig. Men med bilder så ser man liksom hvordan det er da. Legger merke til små detaljer. Tankegangen kanskje… Og man kan jo liksom «se» kulturen da visuelt, og ikke bare lese om det.

Intervjuer: Hvilke holdninger kan denne boken utvikle hos leseren?

Ole: Ehhh det kan jo være (tenker), kan jo få… bli nysgjerrig på denne realiteten da, kanskje også kulturen. At jeg faktisk har lyst til å lære mer, og tenke over det da. Også ha litt mer… respekt for mennesker som går gjennom det. Også respekt for kulturen da, kanskje spesielt det med skole. De har jo et helt annet syn på skole enn det jeg og mine venner kanskje har. Vi tar det for gitt kanskje, orker ikke skole i dag liksom. Og hvis jeg møter da en flyktning eller noen som ikke kunne gå på skolen, og ser at han faktisk legger mye tid og arbeid i skole, så ville jeg ha hatt en helt ny respekt for det da, siden situasjonen hans er annerledes enn min. Og kanskje at man bli litt mer bevisst på hvorfor man har de holdningene man har da, og tenke over at andre har færre muligheter da. Og kanskje jobbe med sine egne fordommer da, og være litt mer åpen for ulikheter.

Intervjuer: Kan bilder påvirke holdninger?

Ole: Ehhh… ja man får jo se hvordan folk har det. Man får litt mer empati da, og det ser mer ekte ut. Det kan jo faktisk vekke noen holdninger, eller kanskje endre tankegangen man har, og endre sine egne holdninger. Være ja… mer åpen, ha litt mer respekt når man ser det visuelt da

Intervjuer: Kan du tenke deg hvorfor forfatterne valgte å fremstille historien gjennom en grafisk novelle?

Ole: Kanskje de ville prøve å vise det fram faktisk (visuelt), ikke bare gjennom ord. Vise hvordan det er. At leseren får et sterkere forhold til karakterene. Jeg føler jo at det gjør noe med hjernen min når jeg faktisk ser det, får mye mer empati og tilknytning. (tenker) Kanskje også tiltrekke lesere. Og jeg føler jo at de får vist historien fram mye mer, enn hvis det kun hadde vært tekst. Man kan jo vise bilder som teksten ikke viser da. Jeg fikk jo mye mer ut fra det her, enn hvis det kun var tekst da.

Intervjuer: Tror du denne boken er relevant i dag?

Ole: Ehhh jeg vil jo si at det er relevant. Det tar jo opp ting og problemer som fortsatt finnes i dag. Og man kan jo lære en del ved å lese sånne ting da. Man får jo liksom mer kunnskap om andre kulturer, spesielt i flyktningleir, gjennom denne grafiske novellen. Og at man kan jobbe med sine holdninger da, få litt mer respekt som man kan ta over i sitt liv

Intervjuer: Hva vil du si er noe positivt med en sånn grafisk novelle?

Ole: Det kan jo gjøre folk…det er nok flere enn bare meg som ikke liker sånne tradisjonelle bøker. Det kan jo gjøre folk mer interesserte da. Da har man liksom noe for alle – de som liker å lese vanlige bøker, også de som har lyst på litt mer bilder da. Jeg hadde jo valgt en slik bok over tradisjonelle bøker når som helst. Det er lettere å holde konsentrasjonen da, da kan jeg faktisk lese liksom. Jeg liker ikke at det er så mange ord liksom

Intervjuer: Hva med noe negativt?

Ole: Ehmmm… kanskje ikke like mye tekst. Man må jo lese på en annen måte og analysere bilder. Så man må tenke seg fram til det meste da.

Intervjuer: Et fokus i faget engelsk er å utvikle interkulturell kompetanse gjennom å lese litteratur. Men det viser seg at flere og flere elever leser mindre. Hva tenker du om å bruke denne grafiske novellen til å utvikle kunnskap og holdninger hos elever som ikke liker å lese?

Ole: Jeg tror det hadde fungert bedre. Hvert fall for meg så hadde det… hvis vi skulle lest vanlige bøker – ingen interesse. Men hvis vi får en grafisk novelle, da tror jeg det kan bli noe helt annet, da blir det lettere å lære faktisk. Jeg ville ha fått mye mer sånn kunnskap om ulike kulturer og perspektiver da, og blitt kanskje litt mer bevisst på min egen situasjon og kultur, spesielt når jeg møter folk som ja… har en annen bakgrunn enn meg da. Og ja, samtidig utvikle holdninger da, jeg får jo liksom mer respekt og er mer åpen og nysgjerrig når jeg kan se det gjennom bilder da. Så ja, denne grafiske novellen tror jeg hadde funket for oss som ikke liker å lese.

Intervjuer: Er det noe mer du har lyst til å legge til?

Ole: Nei tror ikke det

Intervjuer: Da takker jeg for intervjuet

Interview with Ida - English

Background information: knows what a graphic novel is, but haven't read anything like that before

Interviewer: Can you explain your relationship with books and reading?

Ida: Erm, I don't really read much to be honest, especially not English books. I read a little more Norwegian and audio books.

Interviewer: Is there a reason for that?

Ida: I lose my concentration very quickly, so I end up reading and re-reading the same thing over and over again. For me, it is much better to listen to audiobooks where I can do other things in the meantime

Interviewer: What do you think in general about books like (pointing to the graphic novel) this versus traditional books with lots of text and zero pictures?

Ida: I actually like books like this a little better because there is something to look at as well and you can see who is saying what - she said that, and he said that

Interviewer: Do you feel that it might be a little easier to get a little more information by just looking at the pictures and not just read?

Ida: Yes, of course. It is easier to deal with it, and you get the information faster

Interviewer: Can you briefly retell what you have read about in these excerpts?

Ida: Ehm that Omar and his little brother live in a refugee camp and that his little brother cannot speak. He has only said one word and that he sort of... he has seizures, I don't know what it is in Norwegian, I don't remember... “anfall”. And that he has been offered to start at school, but he is afraid to leave his little brother because he has no one else.

Interviewer: What about the pages where you only had to look at the pictures?

Ida: When they were at school?

Interviewer: Yes, what kind of information did you get from just looking at the pictures?

Ida: That the girls sat on one side and the boys sat on the other. There are a lot of children, and the girls sit and talk to the girls, the boys sit and talk to the boys. There are also many boys, and very few girls

Interviewer: Do you think this is something that is realistic in such situations?

Ida: Yes, I think so. Because in such places they believe that it is more important for boys to get an education than for girls. There are also very few girls who finish school.

Interviewer: (flips to page 59) what about this page then? What do you see here?

Ida: That the girls have already started to study, sort of, work with school, while they sit in the water queue. There are almost only girls there, except for Omar and some little boys.

Interviewer: Is there any other information you get from here, as you skimmed through the text a bit?

Ida: Yes, Omar didn't understand why she (Nimo) was like studying when she was going to be married off anyway. They are probably around 12 (years old). Uhh... and it's very early, to get married when she is 12… she is only a child

Interviewer: What do you think about the last sentence (marriage)?

Ida: The girls are quite young, uhm (thinking) but on the pictures they look happy. Like, you don't get the information about marriage through the picture, but through the text. Maybe it is a part of the culture… But it is a realistic problem, the thing with child-marriage. Eh, so the girls sit there (in the water queue), and they work maybe with school because they know uhm that it is important to learn something before that one girl gets married. Mmm so there is a dilemma between getting married and get an education

Interviewer: What about these pages here (page 4 and 5) - at the start I asked you to just look at them - what kind of information can you get from the pictures?

Ida: That... women and children sit under the tent to be shaded from the sun, and they... I think they are in a different camp because they (Omar and Hassan) are behind the barbed wire fence. Like looking for their mother, I think. Uhm… it is also very colorful, and I see very detailed faces. They don't look happy. And yeah, it look like it is hot… a lot of sun. And the people there wear a lot of clothes, even though there's sun. Maybe because of religion, or culture.

Interviewer: What do you think about presenting a story about the refugee experience through text and images, versus just text?

Ida: It is clearer. Then you can imagine it more in your head, and not just sit and read a lot of text. It's sometimes nice to just see it, instead of reading the text. Eh… and it feels kind of personal, as a refugee story is quite vulnerable, and actually seeing it makes an impact

Interviewer: What do you think about reading pictures?

Ida: I like it better - to read pictures, and not have to read text. There are lots of colors and you can study the pictures and notice small details that I might not have noticed if these pictures were described through text only. Then I would rather skim and skip sentences. This way (through pictures) I learn a lot more, and it's more graphic. Eh… I also like that there are speech bubbles and maybe a sentence here and there, which may give some information that you can't get through the picture. Like, yeah, information about where someone is, or what Omar is feeling. It makes it a little easier to use text as support if I sort of look at his (Omar) facial expression.

Interviewer: What challenges does Omar experience in his everyday life?

Ida: Erm he has, I don't know where the mother is, but she's not there, so they kind of have another mother figure, who is their guardian. (*Interviewer: other things?)* Look after his brother, also they always have to fetch water… there is very little food. If they don't have any food, they don't get to eat

Interviewer: Other things you remember from the text and from the pictures?

Ida: The water faucet. They have to stand there for a few hours a day, so yeah, they have to stand in a long queue to get some water

Interviewer: Do you think these problems here are realistic?

Ida: Yes because there are many people in the world who struggle in this way. They are in refugee camps and resources such as food and water are very scarce. And, of course, the thing with school, not everyone has opportunities for education

Interviewer: How about in relation to your life, are there any similarities or differences in these issues?

Ida: We have a house and yeah, electricity, we have a lot. Also, they (Omar and co) do not have access to water all the time or food all the time. And they live alone

Interviewer: What can you learn from these extracts?

Ida: That we are lucky we live the way that we do. And that not everyone is as lucky. You can also learn a bit about other cultures, especially in a refugee camp. And the view on school, it is seen as something different here (Norway) and there. And it is not surprising that it is different, as they have other things that affect it, yeah their situation. School is seen as something less important than, yeah, having food and finding water, looking after the family. After all, they don't have access to everything which we have access to. Very few children are allowed to go to school. Like, I'm trying to say that everyday life is very different, and it affects their relationship with yeah, school. And you can then learn that others have different relationships with school, especially that someone will value school more in different cultures than perhaps here.

Interviewer: Some of these pages, as you have read, have very little text and a lot of pictures, what do you think about getting a lot of information and that kind of knowledge through pictures rather than just reading a text?

Ida: I feel like it like sticks better in your head when you see it instead of just reading, because then you can sort of memorize the image and keep it in your head. It's much easier than reading it as just text.

Interviewer: What attitudes do you think this book can develop in the reader?

Ida: A bit like… that they sort of realize that not everyone has it so easy, like think about how well they (the reader) have it. You become very curious about how it ends, and you also gain respect for how difficult it really is for them. And respect for the fact that you think differently because of the situation you are in, like yeah, values and not taking anything for

granted. Also yeah, having empathy, because you meet people here who have been through it, here (in Norway). Hmmm... perhaps also the thing about prejudice, that the reader can work with it, and that one thinks more and becomes aware of one's own situation. Perhaps people don't think much about it (Omar's situation) because we have it so good here.

Interviewer: Do you think images can influence attitudes?

Ida: Yes, I think so. (*Interviewer: why?)* Because ehm, when you look at the picture, it might be a bit more graphic than when you read it. And it feels a little more real, and yeah, I become a little more curious and gain a little more respect for those who experience it. It feels close.

Interviewer: Can you imagine why the authors have used a graphic novel versus a traditional book without pictures?

Ida: Because it will perhaps interest several younger readers, and more readers who are not so fond of reading. And yes, pass the story on. Also perhaps that they know that it is easier to read pictures.

Interviewer: Do you think that this can also help to develop the knowledge and attitudes among readers who are not fond of reading?

Ida: Yes, maybe they think a little more about it, and become a little more aware of it. I learn more by looking at the pictures, as I keep my concentration better then. Also it feels more realistic, I can put the experience to a face, not just a name. And yes, then I can become more aware that this is real, that it is not just a fake story, but that this is happening. As well as becoming more aware of my own situation here (in Norway), and that I have it great, but knowing that not everyone else is like that, and learning more then.

Interviewer: What do you think the message of the story is?

Ida: Oh, that might be a bit difficult

Interviewer: Yes, I am interested in what you think and mean, not a correct answer.

Ida: hmmm (thinking) tell about, perhaps, how he and other children live like when they are in a displacement camp, and that it is not so easy, there is a lot of job and concerns

Interviewer: How about meeting someone who has just arrived from another country. Can this (the book) contribute to and perhaps develop attitudes and knowledge?

Ida: Yes, because you can think… maybe think, yeah a new person - it is a bit scary, and different. They think differently and have experienced different things, a different culture. Doesn't speak Norwegian or anything like that. But you really know nothing about their story. So this (book) may help us, yeah students that don't like to read, to learn more that background, challenges, and yeah... the culture. Perhaps also develop more respect and tolerance. Through pictures, not just text, as I said earlier it feels more realistic.

Interviewer: Would you say that this book is relevant today?

Ida: Yes, of course *(Interviewer: why do you think that?)* Because there are so many refugee camps all over the world, and there are so many refugees and people who need help there. And we don't know the half of it. And a book like this can help teach us about these things.

Interviewer: What would you say is something positive about graphic novels?

Ida: (thinking) That… there are pictures and it's easier to be invested in what's happening. Because you really get a little absorbed. There are lots of pictures and such

Interviewer: How about something negative then?

Ida: Something negative? (thinking) hmmm maybe that some people feel that there is too little writing and too many pictures. Perhaps this form is not for everyone

Interviewer: What was it like to read or watch these excerpts from a graphic novel versus from a traditional book?

Ida: Very positive. I became more curious; I want to find out how it ends. It caught my attention a lot more... I also think that I wouldn't have bothered to read it if it was a regular (traditional) book with a lot of text. Then I would have rather left it alone. It (graphic novel) made me actually want to read this story. I wish we (at school) could read more books like this... then I'd be more involved.

Interviewer: A focus in the subject English is to develop intercultural competence through reading literature. But it turns out that there are more and more students who read much less than before. What do you think about using this graphic novel to develop knowledge and attitudes among students who do not like to read?

Ida: I think it would have been very good because we spend a lot of time on the computer and watch videos and such, also at school. We don't read that much anymore, because everything is digital, and it gets tiring to look at a screen all day. I think this book could be very nice to use in school. I think that if it had only been text, then it would have been like "ah, I have to read all this", but there are colors and speech bubbles and everything. Perhaps more people would have read it, it is much more exciting. It is also easier to gain more knowledge and develop attitudes, like by looking at pictures and having less text. We then get an insight into someone else's life in a more realistic way, and yeah, become more aware of what I actually know, and what attitudes I actually have. Maybe develop such things as respect and empathy then... and of course curiosity. Especially since we meet different people every day.

Interviewer: Anything you would like to add?

Ida: No, not that I can think of

Interviewer: Then I would like to thank you for the interview

Intervju med Ida - Norwegian

Bakgrunnsopplysninger: vet hva en grafisk novelle er, men har ikke lest noe sånt før

Intervjuer: Kan du fortelle litt om ditt forhold til bøker og lesing?

Ida: Ehm, jeg leser egentlig ikke så mye for å være helt ærlig, spesielt ikke engelsk bøker. Jeg leser litt mer norsk og lydbøker.

Intervjuer: Er det grunn til det?

Ida: Mister veldig fort konsentrasjonen, så det blir sånn at jeg leser og leser den samme lille om og om igjen. For meg er det mye bedre å høre på lydbøker hvor jeg kan gjøre andre ting imens

Intervjuer: Hva tenker du generelt om slike bøker (peker til den grafiske novellen) kontra sånne tradisjonelle bøker med masse tekst og null bilder?

Ida: Jeg liker egentlig sånne bøker litt bedre for det er noe å se på i tillegg og man kan se hvem som sier hva – ho sa det og han sa det

Intervjuer: Føler du at det kanskje er også litt lettere å få litt mer informasjon ved å bare se på bildene og ikke bare lese

Ida: Ja, helt klart. Det er lettere å forholde seg til det, og fortere å få informasjonen

Intervjuer: Kan du gjenfortelle kort hva du hva du har lest om i disse ulike utdragene?

Ida: Ehm at Omar og lillebroren hans bor i en flyktningeleir og at lillebroren hans ikke kan snakke. Han har bare sagt ett ord og at han liksom… han har sånne seizures, jeg vet ikke hva det er på norsk jeg husker ikke… anfall. Og at han har fått tilbud om å starte på skolen, men han er redd for å dra fra lillebroren sin fordi han har ingen andre.

Intervjuer: Hva med de sidene hvor jeg ba om å kun se på bildene?

Ida: Da de var på skolen?

Intervjuer: Ja hva slags informasjon fikk du fra å kun se på bildene?

Ida: At jentene satt på den ene siden og guttene satt på den andre siden. Det er veldig mange barn og at liksom jentene sitter og snakker med jentene, guttene sitter og snakker med guttene. Det er også flest gutter, og veldig få jenter

Intervjuer: Tror du det her er noe som er realistisk i sånne situasjoner?

Ida: Ja, det tror jeg. Fordi på sånne steder mener de at det er viktigere for gutter å få utdanning enn jenter. Det er også veldig få jenter som fullfører skolen.

Intervjuer: (blar til side 59) hva med på den her siden da? Hva ser du her?

Ida: At jentene har allerede begynt å studere liksom, jobbe med skolen da, mens de sitter i vannkøen. Det er nesten bare jenter der, unntatt Omar og noen smågutter.

Intervjuer: Er det noe annen informasjon du får herfra, siden du skumma litt gjennom teksten?

Ida: Ja, Omar skjønte ikke hvorfor ho (Nimo) liksom studerte når ho skulle bli gifta bort uansett. De er jo kanskje rundt 12 (år gamle). Uhh… og det er jo liksom veldig tidlig, det med å gifte seg når man er 12… hun er jo bare et barn.

Intervjuer: Hva tenker du om den siste setningen (giftemål)?

Ida: Jentene der er jo veldig unge, uhm (tenker) men på bildene ser de jo glade ut. Liksom, man får ikke den informasjonen om at hun skal gifte seg gjennom bildet, men gjennom teksten. Kanskje det er en del av kulturen… Men det er jo et ekte problem, det med barneekteskap. Eh, så jentene sitter der (i vannkøen) og kanskje jobber med skole siden de vet uhm at det er viktig å lære seg noe før hun ene gifter seg. Mmm så man er jo det dilemmaet mellom det å gifte seg og det å få en utdanning.

Intervjuer: Hva med disse sidene her (side 4 og 5) – på starten ba jeg deg bare titte litt på dem – hva slags informasjon kan du få fra bildene?

Ida: At… kvinner og barn sitter under teltet for å liksom bli skygget bort fra sola, og de… jeg tror de er i en annen camp fordi de (Omar og Hassan) står bak piggtrådgjerdet. Liksom ser etter moren sin, tror jeg da. Uhm… det er også veldig fargerikt, og veldig detaljerte ansikt. De ser ikke lykkelige ut. Og ja, det ser litt varmt ut… veldig mye sol. Og menneskene har på seg mye klær, selv om det er sol. Kanskje på grunn av religion, eller kultur

Intervjuer: Hva med det å få informasjon gjennom bare å se på bildene, kontra masse tekst?

Ida: Det er jo mer oversiktlig. Da kan man jo se det mer for deg i hodet ditt

Intervjuer: Hva tenker du om å lese bilder?

Ida: Jeg liker det mye bedre å lese bilder, og ikke måtte lese tekst. Det er masse farger, og man kan studere bilder og legge merke til små detaljer, som jeg kanskje ikke hadde lagt merke til hvis disse bildene var beskrevet gjennom kun tekst. Da hadde jeg heller skummet og hoppet over setninger. Sånn her (gjennom bilder) får jeg med meg mye mer, og det er jo mer grafisk. Eh… jeg liker også at det er snakkebobler og kanskje en setning her og der, som kanskje gir litt informasjon som man ikke kan få gjennom bildet. Liksom, ja, informasjon om hvor man er, eller hva Omar føler. Det gjør det litt enklere å bruke tekst som støtte, hvis jeg liksom ser på ansiktsuttrykket hans (Omar).

Intervjuer: Hvilke utfordringer opplever Omar i hverdagen sin?

Ida: Ehm han har, jeg vet ikke hvor moren er, men hun er jo ikke der, så de har jo på en måte en annen morsfigur da, som er deres foresatte. *(Intervjuer: andre ting?)* Passe på broren sin, også må de alltid hente vann… det er veldig lite mat. Hvis de ikke har noe mat så får de ikke spist

Intervjuer: Andre ting du husker fra teksten, og fra bildene?

Ida: Vannkranen. De må jo stå der noen timer per dag, så ja, de må stå i lang kø for å få litt vann

Intervjuer: Synes du disse problemene her er realistiske?

Ida: Ja, fordi det er veldig mange i verden som sliter på den her måten da. De er på flyktningleirer og så er det veldig dårlig med ressurser som mat og vann. Og det med skole selvfølgelig, ikke alle har muligheter til utdanning

Intervjuer: Hva med i forhold til ditt liv, er det noen likheter eller ulikheter i disse problemene?

Ida: Vi har jo hus og ja, elektrisitet, vi har masse. Også har jo de (Omar og co) ikke tilgang til vann hele tiden eller mat hele tida. Også bor de alene

Intervjuer: Hva kan man lære fra disse utdragene?

Ida: At vi er heldige som har det sånn som vi har det. Og at ikke alle er like heldige. Også kan man lære litt om andres kulturer, spesielt i en flyktningleir. Og synet på skole da, det blir jo sett på som noe annerledes her (Norge) og der. Og det er ikke så rart at det er annerledes, da de har andre ting som påvirker det, ja situasjonen deres. Skole blir da sett på som noe mindre viktig, enn ja, det å ha mat og finne vann, passe på familie. De har jo ikke tilgang til alt det vi har tilgang til. Det er veldig få barn som får gå på skole. Liksom, jeg prøver å si at hverdagslivet er veldig annerledes, og det påvirker deres forhold til ja, skole da. Og man kan jo da lære at andre har ulike forhold til skole, spesielt at noen vil sette mer pris på skole i ulike kulturer, enn kanskje her da.

Intervjuer: Noen av disse sidene har jo som du har lest har jo veldig lite tekst og veldig mange bilder, hva tenker du om å få masse informasjon og sånn kunnskap gjennom bilder enn å kun lese en tekst?

Ida: Jeg føler at det liksom setter seg bedre i hodet når du ser det i stedet for å bare lese, for da kan du liksom memorisere bildet og ha det i hodet. Det er mye lettere enn å lese det som kun tekst.

Intervjuer: Hvilke holdninger tror du denne boka kan utvikle hos leseren?

Ida: Litt sånn… at de liksom på en måte skjønner at ikke alle har det så lett, liksom tenker over litt over hvor bra de har det. Man blir jo veldig nysgjerrig på hvordan det ender da, også at man får respekt for hvor vanskelig de egentlig har det. Og respekt for at man tenker ulikt pga situasjonen man er i, som ja, verdier og det å ikke ta noe for gitt. Også ja, det å ha empati, fordi man møter jo mennesker som har vært gjennom det her, her og (i Norge). Hmmm… kanskje også det med fordommer, at leseren kan jobbe med det, og at man tenker mer og blir bevisst på sin egen situasjon. Folk tenker da kanskje ikke så mye på det (situasjonen til Omar), fordi man har det så bra her.

Intervjuer: tror du bilder kan påvirke holdninger?

Ida: Ja, jeg tror det. *(Intervjuer: hvorfor?)* Fordi ehm når du ser på bildet så kan det være kanskje litt mer grafisk enn når du leser det. Og det føles litt mer ekte ut, og ja, jeg blir jo da litt mer nysgjerrig og får litt mer respekt for de som opplever det. Det føles nært ut.

Intervjuer: Kan du tenke deg hvorfor forfatterne har brukt en grafisk novelle kontra en tradisjonell bok uten bilder?

Ida: Fordi det vil kanskje interessere flere yngre lesere, og flere lesere som ikke er så glad i å lese. Og ja, fortelle historien sin videre. Også kanskje at de vet at det er lettere å lese bilder.

Intervjuer: Tror du at dette også kan være med på å utvikle da disse kunnskapene og holdningene hos lesere som ikke er glad i å lese?

Ida: Ja, kanskje de tenker litt mer over det, og bli litt mer bevisst på det. Jeg lærer jo mer ved å se på bildene, siden jeg holder konsentrasjonen mer da. Også føles det mer ekte ut, jeg kan sette opplevelsen til et ansikt, ikke bare et navn. Og ja, liksom da kan jeg bli mer bevisst på at dette er ekte da, at det ikke bare er en fake historie, men at dette skjer. Liksom også det å bli mer bevisst på min egen situasjon her (i Norge), og at jeg har det bra, men vite at ikke alle andre har det sånt, og lære mer da.

Intervjuer: Hva tror du budskapet i historien er?

Ida: Oi, det er kanskje litt vanskelig

Intervjuer: Ja, jeg er da interessert i hva du tenker og mener, ikke et fasitsvar.

Ida: Hmmm (tenker) fortelle om, kanskje hvordan han og andre barn har det når de er i flyktningleir, og at det ikke er så lett, det er mye jobb og bekymringer

Intervjuer: Hva med det å møte noen som nettopp har kommet fra et annet land. Kan dette her (boken) være med på og kanskje utvikle holdninger og kunnskap?

Ida: Ja, fordi du kan tenke… kanskje tenke, ja ny person - det er litt skummelt, og annerledes. Tenker ulikt og har opplevd ulike ting, ulik kultur. Snakker ikke Norsk eller noe sånt. Men du vet jo egentlig ingenting om historien deres. Så denne (boken) kan vært med på å hjelpe oss, ja elever som kanskje ikke liker å lese, å lære mer om en slik bakgrunn, utfordringer, og ja… kulturen. Kanskje også utvikle mer respekt og toleranse kanskje. Gjennom bilder da, ikke bare tekst, som jeg sa i stad føles det mer ekte ut.

Intervjuer: Vil du si at denne boka er relevant i dag?

Ida: Ja, helt klart (*Intervjuer: hvorfor tenker du det?)* Fordi det er så mange flyktningleirer over hele verden, og det er så mange flyktninger og folk som trenger hjelp da. Og vi vet jo ikke halvparten av det. Og en slik bok kan være med på å lære oss da, om sånne ting.

Intervjuer: Hva vil du si er noe positivt om grafiske noveller?

Ida: (tenker) At… det er jo bilder og lettere å bli investert da, i hva som skjer. For man blir jo veldig sånn litt sånn oppslukt føler jeg. Det er masse bilder og sånn

Intervjuer: Hva med noe negativt da?

Ida: Noe negativt? (tenker) hmmm kanskje at noen folk føler at det er for lite skrift og for mange bilder. Kanskje at denne formen ikke er for alle

Intervjuer: Hvordan var det da å lese eller se på disse utdragene fra en grafisk novelle kontra fra en tradisjonell bok?

Ida: Veldig positivt. Jeg ble mer nysgjerrig, jeg har lyst til å finne ut hvordan det ender. Det fanget oppmerksomheten min mye mer… jeg tenker også at jeg ikke hadde giddet å lese den hvis det var en vanlig (tradisjonell) bok med masse tekst. Da hadde jeg heller latt det være. Den (grafisk novelle) gjorde at jeg faktisk har lyst til å lese denne historien da. Jeg skulle ønske at vi (på skolen) kunne lese flere slike bøker… da henger jeg mer med.

Intervjuer: Et fokus i faget engelsk er jo det å utvikle interkulturell kompetanse gjennom å lese litteratur. Men det viser seg at det er flere og flere elever som leser mye mindre enn før. Hva tenker du om å bruke denne grafiske novellen til å utvikle kunnskap og holdninger blant elever som ikke liker å lese?

Ida: Jeg tror det hadde vært veldig bra fordi vi tilbringer jo veldig mye tid på pcen og ser på videoer og sånt, også på skolen. Vi leser jo ikke så mye lenger, for alt er jo digitalt, og det blir jo slitsomt å se på en skjerm hele dagen. Jeg tror denne boken kunne vært veldig fin å bruke på skolen. Jeg tror at hvis det hadde bare vært skrift, da hadde det vært sånn «ah må jeg lese alt det her», men det der er jo farger og snakkebobler og alt mulig. Kanskje mange flere hadde lest, det er jo mye mer spennende. Også er det jo lettere å få mer kunnskap og utvikle holdningene, liksom ved å se på bilder og ha mindre tekst. Vi får jo da et innblikk i noen andres liv på en mer realistisk måte, og ja, bli mer bevisst på hva er det jeg faktisk kan, og hvilke holdninger er det jeg faktisk har. Kanskje utvikle sånne ting som respekt og empati da… nysgjerrighet og selvfølgelig. Spesielt siden vi møter ulike personer hver dag.

Intervjuer: Noe du har lyst å tilføre?

Ida: Nei, ikke som jeg kommer på

Intervjuer: Da vil jeg takke for intervjuet

Interview with Erik

Background information: knows what a graphic novel is, haven't read anything like that

Interviewer: Can you explain in your relationship with books and reading?

Erik: Well (pause), I don't read books very often, but a bit like every now and then, especially at school. We usually have some books to read, so I do read sometimes. I have history books at home that I tend to read from time to time and I find it quite interesting

Interviewer: What do you think about books that you get in school?

Erik: No uhm, they can be quite exciting yeah. At least the last ones we have read in Norwegian.

Interviewer: What about English?

Erik: English… yes… ehhh I don't read English books that much. But I do read a lot of English outside of books, yeah both English at school and at home, especially when I play and stuff like that, through gaming.

Interviewer: Now you have read a section of a book, it's called a graphic novel which looks a bit like a comic book. You have pictures, you have text – what do you think of this type of book?

Erik: No, it seemed exciting, at least that one (nods to the book). Erm yeah, I have to be honest, it has become boring to read books that doesn't have any pictures. When I read, it's like... I also want to have a picture to look at, so I can understand the action better. Kind of like that (nods to the book). I think it was positive to read this book (the excerpts)

Interviewer: Can you briefly retell what you have read?

Erik: It was about a boy called Omar I think, and his brother Hassan. And he (Omar) was very cautious to watch out all the time because he (Hassan)... I think he sometimes had … that he could have seizures. And he had to have someone who could be present, even if it was, eh Fatuma who also looks after him. (pause – thinking) But his brother (Omar) was there for him most of the time. They were very much attracted to each other. *(Interviewer: other things you remember?).* He (Omar) started school and he didn't want to leave his brother. He wanted someone to be there for him, and look after him. I think they live in Dadaab, a huge refugee camp in Africa.

Interviewer: This is based on a true story...

Erik: I think we actually discussed it in Norwegian (the subject), I think. Then we had about Dadaab, if I remember correctly.

Interviewer: Exciting! We can look at some of the pages you have read, especially this one which only has one sentence and 2 speech bubbles, but is a big picture (pointing to page 4 and 5). What kind of information do you get from just looking at the picture?

Erik: Eh... (thinking) It looks like a, …yes…, I don't know exactly, not exactly a prison, but it's like a barbed wire fence. It could be a place for newly arrived refugees. It looks like some sort of guard or soldier is there (pointing). (thinking) I see a lot of people, I think they are people from different cultures, but I don't know for sure. It looks like there are mostly children, many young people… mostly women. Perhaps because the men are in, in the countries from which they flee from, to fight or protect.

Interviewer: How about this page then (shows page 59)? What kind of information can you get from these pictures?

Erik: Eh… it looks like he, Omar, is sitting very alone. Maybe struggling a bit to find friends, or maybe he doesn't want to go up to someone and talk to them. Maybe afraid that they won't talk to him.

Interviewer: When you look at the pictures, do you have any idea where they are, where they are standing?

Erik: Hmmm (thinking) It looks like those kind of water jugs maybe. Omar is the only boy here, maybe hmmm no, I don't really know. Maybe something to do with gender roles? In such areas, it may be that girls shall look after the children, cook, fetch water. Maybe not go to school. You get some information indirectly about it, even if it isn't written there. And you can learn something about this culture through it.

Interviewer: What about the last sentence (marriage)?

Erik: The two girls sitting there (in the water queue) continue to work with school, even if they have to do other tasks. And he (Omar) is probably unsure why she bothers to continue working with school, as she is getting married soon anyway. It's quite a young age to get married, hmmm, maybe it's part of the culture they're in, we don't know that by just looking at the picture. But one can assume, maybe it will come out later in the book. And we learn something from it.

Interviewer: How old do you think these people in the picture are?

Erik: Erm between 7 and 9 years maybe

Interviewer: This is, after all, a refugee story. And there are more pictures than text, what do you think about presenting such a story through that combination - text and pictures?

Erik: It might have been a bit difficult for me to imagine how they have it if this was only text. And that it's like, what happens, instead of just reading lots of text, you kind of don't see the reality. It is easier to get more information by looking at the pictures, than having to read 3-4 pages of text describing one picture. Then I only need to look at the image for a couple of seconds, and get exactly the same information, only faster.

Interviewer: What do you think about reading pictures?

Erik: No… it can actually be both exciting and sad, like here, for example (points to the book). It is very sad that people have to flee their country because it might be too full in their country or because there is a war. It also looks a little more realistic to read pictures, rather than just text.

Interviewer: What challenges do you think the protagonist experiences in his everyday life?

Erik: Hmmm from those excerpts, there are quite a few girls, then he (Omar) might struggle to find some boy friends that he can be with, and that might be because only girls fetch the water, so it could be that they don't really want to be with him then. It could also be that they (different people) are from different countries perhaps. That they don't speak the same language. And yes, the fact that Omar does not go to school. Omar has to take care of his brother, and he may also get a little pressure from the other adults that he should go to school. So he kind of has to choose, something we don't experience here (Norway). He is very keen to look after his brother, but he also wants to learn... he is in a dilemma then. So yes, it can be a bit difficult for him. (thinking) Perhaps another challenge could be that Omar, who is so young, must also think about having enough food and water. It is like a challenge that many refugees can experience.

Interviewer: What do you think about getting all this information through pictures?

Erik: Well, you have to analyze the pictures. It's not enough to just look at pictures, and suddenly you have this information. You have to spend a little more time, yeah, think a little. (thinking) I also think it's nice that there is some text there, because you can use it to support the pictures, so that you get even more information like that.

Interviewer: Would you say that these challenges are realistic?

Erik: Yes because there are tens of millions who are on the run. And we saw yesterday, I think (at school), then we saw a video of people accepting refugees and delivering them to refugee camps. And they weren't doing well either. They got the help they needed, they got food, they got new clothes, and they got water. But maybe down in Africa, for example, it might be particularly difficult to find food and water and things like that. Yeah, that's what I've heard.

Interviewer: How about in contrast to your own life? Are there any similarities or differences when it comes to challenges?

Erik: There are most differences. We live, or I have access to water and food at any time, and I don't have to worry about it. I don't have to go very far then to get water and stuff.

Interviewer: What do you think one can learn from the excerpts you have read?

Erik: You can learn about how refugees have it realistically and, or at least the similarity. And how they, at least many of them, are taken away from their families. That they have to live on their own. You can also learn a bit about different cultures, perhaps. For example, with food, they may have a completely different experience of food, perhaps the fact that they don't throw away food, save it and place a value on it. Whereas here (Norway) we might not think as much about it since we haven't experienced anything like that then. So the situation may have a lot to say about what a culture is like, and how people act. And you can learn more about such global problems, especially with refugees and stuff, and how we relate to it.

Interviewer: What about schools and girls?

Erik: You learn a bit about the culture of the school, who attends and how the school is actually structured. And how they value the school. In a refugee camp, there are many people from different countries. And you can learn a little more about different perspectives then, how they live their lives.

Interviewer: If you look at these pictures (page 45), what do you see?

Erik: Looks like boys and girls are separated. Maybe that they are not allowed to sit with each other. Maybe because of culture or religion. I would perhaps say that this is a realistic picture of the school there. I know that there are a couple of countries that are very strict with boys and girls, that at a young age they are not allowed to be close to each other, close friends because of religion or culture. In the picture, it looks like there are mostly boys and (quiet).

Interviewer: Do you think the picture says something about the culture there in terms of school and gender?

Erik: It may be that those who have daughters, that they do not want to send them to school. Perhaps because they want to keep them at home to help, or to send them to an all-girls school. That you don't mix the genders if there are strict cultures and such things. Or that you value school more, in another way. The pictures don't say anything about it, but you can imagine different things just by looking at it, that kind of background information.

Interviewer: Some of the pages you have read have very little text and more pictures. What do you think about getting information through images rather than just text?

Erik: You can, in a way, understand the actions. But without the text, it is perhaps a little difficult to see what is happening. There has to be a good combination of text and images, and they have to be connected and make sense. Maybe build each other up a bit. Like 50/50.

Interviewer: What attitudes do you think this book (extracts) can develop in a reader?

Erik: Hmmm maybe curiosity and respect. Maybe empathy

Interviewer: Can you explain?

Erik: You can become more curious about what refugees are like and what happens to them. A bit curious about the culture and, of course, you want to learn a bit more. And respect... if you know more people who go to the school (here) who are from other cultures and like, or refugees, then you can, in a way, show more respect. If I meet someone in the hallway, who is perhaps a refugee or from another culture, who has his own views, who is not the same as me, then this book can help me understand why that person may have other views of things. And that I can show a little more respect for it, even if it is not the same as my views.

Interviewer: Do you think that images can influence our attitudes?

Erik: There might be a little more awareness of what is happening, and maybe you want to do something about it and help. Maybe donate clothes, money, food and things like that. The pictures make it a little more personal and, of course, it can influence someone's attitudes. Maybe someone will gain a little more respect or tolerance for the main character (Omar), which in turn can be transferred to real life. Perhaps also work on your prejudices, and be a little more open to the fact that others think a little differently than yourself, because it is influenced by the situation. I believe so.

Interviewer: Can you imagine why the authors chose to show this story through a graphic novel rather than a traditional novelle?

Erik: Perhaps for people to become, as I said earlier, more aware of what is happening and why they are there. And yeah, different cultures. And actually show, and not just write, how people behave, what they value and how, values, and yes, school and food. Through a traditional novelle, it might be a little difficult to see this. A graphic novel makes it look a little more real, and you might want to read it then. And learn something new. Maybe get a connection to the main character.

Interviewer: Mhm. What do you think the message of the story is?

Erik: Well, it's probably to show people how refugees live and what's happening. That you should also get different perspectives. And that you see it through the "the good world". Maybe also don't take school, food, water and such things for granted, and work with our values. And perhaps that we should be a little more respectful and open-minded towards migrants who come to our country. I have read negative comments on Facebook about Norway accepting too many refugees. But maybe reading a story like this, with pictures that make it more real, you want to learn more about how they actually feel. And then people won't comment on things like that.

Interviewer: Good reflections. Is the book relevant today?

Erik: Yes, I would say so. There are probably many millions of refugees and many of them end up in refugee camps, and there are some who do not manage to get there, or die at sea. I have seen many videos of refugees, in many different refugee camps both in Europe and Africa. The excerpts represent something that is real today.

Interviewer: What would you say is something positive about a graphic novel?

Erik: It's really about looking at reality. What actually happens than just around where you live. You can see from the other side of the world. It is also easier to understand the action when there are only pictures and not just text, as I said earlier.

Interviewer: How about something negative?

Erik: You mean that book? It can also be a bit unrealistic. It is not always that a book is 100% (correct). And then people can become a little optimistic. That they sort of think that this is real, and then it's not really that realistic. But I can't find anything negative when it comes to pictures and books, as I actually see a bit more value in it. It catches my attention, you actually get to see it, and don't spend energy imagining it.

Interviewer: How do you personally think it was to read a graphic novel?

Erik: I think it was actually more exciting, and I could sort of understand more things. I would also read something like that if I had the opportunity.

Interviewer: Last question - A focus in the English subject is to develop intercultural competence through reading. But it turns out that over the years there are more and more pupils who read less, especially traditional books. What do you think about using this graphic novel to develop knowledge and attitudes among students who do not like to read?

Erik: I think it is positive. Perhaps you can get a little more motivation to read. You can look at the pictures and the cover and think "oh it looks exciting", and that you actually read it then. And after reading it through, you might want to read more. Then eh more and more pupils become more interested in reading. And at the same time, it can contribute to, yes, developing such knowledge and attitudes among them, as they start to read more. And this book deals with the topic well and presents it well through pictures. And then the pupils (who doesn't like to read) can learn more about culture and global problems, ways of thinking and perspectives by reading pictures and text. And of course, become more aware of yourself, your culture and situation. And yes, develop respect and tolerance, I think, be a little more

open as the book presents the situation more personally then. You get a connection to the main character, and then you can transfer that to real life.

Interviewer: Would you like to add anything else?

Erik: No, I don't think so

Interviewer: Then I want to thank you for the interview

Intervju med Erik – Norsk

Bakgrunnsopplysninger: vet hva en grafisk novelle er, har ikke lest noe sånt

Intervjuer: Kan du forklare ditt forhold til bøker og lesing?

Erik: Vel (pause), jeg leser ikke bøker veldig ofte, men det er litt sånn innimellom, spesielt på skolen da. Vi pleier å ha noen bøker å lese, så det er noen gang jeg leser. Jeg har sånne historiebøker hjemme som jeg pleier å lese innimellom og jeg synes det er ganske interesserende

Intervjuer: Hva tenker du om bøker som du får på skolen da?

Erik: Nei uhm, de kan være ganske spennende ja. Hvert fall de siste vi har lest i norsken.

Intervjuer: Hva med engelsk?

Erik: Engelsk… ja… ehhh jeg leser ikke så mye engelskbøker. Men jeg leser mye engelsk sånn utenom bøker, ja både engelsk på skolen og hjemme da spesielt når jeg spiller og sånt, gjennom gaming

Intervjuer: Nå har du lest litt i en bok, det heter jo en grafisk novelle som minner litt om en tegneserie. Du har bilder, du har tekst – hva tenker du om en sånn type bok?

Erik: Nei den virket spennende da, hvert fall den der (nikker til boka). Ehm ja, jeg må være ærlig, det har blitt kjedelig å lese bøker som ikke har noen bilder da. Når jeg leser da, så er det liksom… jeg vil også ha liksom et bilde å se på, så jeg kan forstå handlingen bedre. Sånn som det der (nikker til boka). Jeg syns det var positivt å lese denne boken (utdragene)

Intervjuer: Kan du gjenfortelle kort det du har lest?

Erik: Det var om en gutt som het Omar tror jeg, også var det broren hans Hassan. Og han (Omar) var veldig på at han skal passe på hele tiden da, fordi han (Hassan)… tror han hadde sånn innimellom… at han kunne få sånn anfall og sånt. Og han måtte ha en som kunne vært til stede, selv om det var, eh Fatuma som også passer på han. (pause – tenker) Men broren hans (Omar) var der mer for han. De var veldig på en måte tiltrukket sammen. *(Intervjuer: andre ting du husker?).* Han (Omar) begynte på skole, og han ville ikke gå fra broren sin da. Han ville at noen skulle være der for han, og passe på han. Tror de bor i Dadaab, en svær flyktningleir i Afrika.

Intervjuer: Det her er basert på en sann historie…

Erik: Jeg tror vi faktisk hadde om det i norsk (faget) tror jeg. Da hadde vi om Dadaab, hvis jeg husker riktig.

Intervjuer: Spennende! Vi kan jo titte på noen av sidene du har lest, spesielt den her som har kun en setning og 2 snakkebobler, men er et stort bilde (peker til side 4 og 5). Hva slags informasjon får du fra å bare se på bildet?

Erik: Eh… (tenker) Det ser ut som en sånn, …ja…, vet ikke helt, ikke akkurat fengsel, men det er jo sånn piggtrådgjerder. Det kan jo være et sånt sted for nyankomne flyktninger. Det ser ut som en sånn vakt eller soldat som er der da (peker). (tenker) Jeg ser jo masse folk, tror det er folk fra forskjellige kulturer, men jeg vet ikke helt. Det ser ut som det er flest barn, mange unge folk… mest kvinner. Kanskje fordi mennene er liksom i, i de landene som de flykter fra, for å slåss eller beskytte.

Intervjuer: Hva med denne siden da (viser side 59)? Hva slags informasjon kan du få fra disse bildene?

Erik: Eh… det ser ut som han, Omar, sitter veldig alene. Sliter kanskje litt med å finne venner, eller kanskje han ikke har lyst til å gå bort til noen og snakke med dem. Kanskje redd for at de ikke vil snakke med han.

Intervjuer: Når du ser da på bildene, kan du få noen inntrykk av hvor er det de er, hvor er det de står?

Erik: Hmmm (tenker) Det ser ut som sånne vannkanner kanskje. Omar er jo den eneste gutten her, kanskje hmmm nei vet ikke egentlig. Kanskje noe med kjønnsroller? I slike områder så kan det jo kanskje være at jenter skal passe på barna, lage mat, hente vann. Kanskje ikke gå på skolen. Man får jo litt informasjon indirekte om det da, selv om det ikke står der. Og man kan jo lære noe om denne kulturen gjennom det

Intervjuer: Hva med den siste setningen (giftemål)?

Erik: De to jentene som sitter der (i vannkøen) fortsetter jo å jobbe med skole, selv om de må gjøre andre oppgaver. Og han (Omar) er vel usikker hvorfor ho ene gidder å fortsette å jobbe med skole, da hun skal gifte seg snart uansett. Det er jo ganske ung alder å bli gifta, hmmm, kanskje det er en del av den kulturen dem er i, det vet vi ikke gjennom å bare se på bildet. Men man kan jo anta, kanskje det kommer frem senere i boka. Og vi lærer jo noe av det.

Intervjuer: Hvor gammel tror du at disse personene på bildet er da?

Erik: Ehm mellom 7 og 9 år kanskje

Intervjuer: Dette er jo en flyktningshistorie. Og det er jo mer bilder enn tekst, hva tenker du om å framstille en slik historie gjennom den kombinasjonen – tekst og bilder?

Erik: Det hadde kanskje vært litt vanskelig for meg å se for meg hvordan de hadde hatt det hvis det her kun var tekst. Og at det er liksom, hva som skjer da, istedenfor å bare lese masse tekst, så ser man liksom ikke virkeligheten. Det er lettere å få mer informasjon gjennom å se

på bildene, enn å måtte lese 3-4 med tekst som beskriver ett bilde. Da trenger jeg bare å se på bildet i et par sekunder, og få akkurat samme informasjon, bare fortere liksom.

Intervjuer: Hva tenker du om det å lese bilder?

Erik: Nei… det kan jo både være spennende og trist egentlig, sånn for eksempel her da (peker på boka). Det er jo veldig trist at folk må flykte fra landet sitt på grunn av at det kanskje blir for fullt i landet dems eller at det er krig. Det ser også litt mer ekte ut å lese bilder, enn bare tekst.

Intervjuer: Hvilke utfordringer tror du hovedpersonen opplever i hverdagen sin?

Erik: Hmmm ut fra de utdragene, så er det ganske mange jenter da, da sliter han (Omar) kanskje med å finne noen guttevenner som han kan være med da, og det er kanskje siden det bare er jenter som henter vannet, så kan det jo være at de ikke har så lyst til å være med han da. Det kan også være at dem (ulike personer) er fra forskjellige land kanskje. At dem ikke snakker samme språk. Og jo, det at Omar ikke går på skole. Omar må jo ta vare på broren sin, også får han kanskje litt press fra de andre voksne om at han bør gå på skolen. Så han må jo liksom velge, noe vi her (Norge) ikke opplever da. Han er veldig gira på å passe på broren sin, men han vil jo også lære… han er i et dilemma da. Så ja, det kan jo være litt vanskelig for han. (tenker) Kanskje også en utfordring kan være at Omar, som er så ung, må også tenke på det å ha nok mat og vann da. Det er liksom en utfordring som mange flyktninger kan oppleve.

Intervjuer: Hva syns du om å få all denne informasjonen gjennom bilder?

Erik: Vel, man må jo analysere bildene. Det holder liksom ikke å bare se på bilder, og vipps så har du denne informasjonen. Man må jo bruke litt mer tid, ja tenke litt. (tenker) også syns jeg det er fint at det er litt tekst der da, fordi man kan jo bruke det til å støtte bildene på det liksom, at man får enda mer info sånn der.

Intervjuer: Vil du si at disse utfordringene er realistiske?

Erik: Ja, fordi det er jo mange titalls millioner som er på flukt. Og vi så i går tror jeg (på skolen), så så vi på en sånn video av folk som tok imot flyktninger og leverte dem inn på flyktningsleirer. Og dem hadde det ikke bra liksom. De fikk jo den hjelpen de trengte, de fikk jo mat, de fikk nye klær, og de fikk jo vann. Men kanskje for eksempel nede i Afrika da, så der er det kanskje spesielt vanskelig å finne mat og vann og sånt. Ja, sånn jeg har hørt.

Intervjuer: Hva med i kontrast til ditt eget liv? Er det noen likheter eller ulikheter når det gjelder utfordringer?

Erik: Det er flest ulikheter. Vi bor jo, eller jeg har jo tilgang til vann og mat når som helst, og jeg trenger ikke å bekymre meg for det liksom. Jeg må ikke gå veldig langt da for å få tak i vann og sånt.

Intervjuer: Hva tror du man kan lære fra utdragene du har lest?

Erik: Man kan jo lære om hvordan flyktninger har det realistisk sett og, eller hvert fall likheten da. Og hvordan de, hvert fall mange blir dratt ifra familien sin. At de må leve på egenhånd. Man kan jo også lære litt om ulike kulturer kanskje. For eksempel det med mat, de

har jo kanskje en helt annen opplevelse av mat, kanskje det at de ikke kaster maten, sparer den og setter en verdi på det. Mens her (Norge) så tenker vi kanskje ikke like mye på det, siden vi har jo ikke opplevd noe sånt da. Så situasjonen har kanskje mye å si for hvordan en kultur er, og hvordan mennesker handler da. Og man kan jo lære mer om sånne globale problemer, spesielt liksom med flyktninger og sånt, og hvordan vi forholder oss til det da.

Intervjuer: Hva med skoler og jenter da?

Erik: Man lærer jo litt om kulturen for skolen da, hvem som går der og hvordan skolen faktisk er bygd opp. Og hvordan de verdsetter skolen da. I en flyktningleir er det jo mange mennesker fra forskjellige land. Og man kan jo lære litt mer om ulike perspektiver da, hvordan de lever livet sitt.

Intervjuer: Hvis du ser på dette bilder her (side 45), hva ser du?

Erik: Ser ut som at gutter og jenter er skilt fra hverandre. Kanskje at de ikke får lov til å sitte med hverandre. Kanskje på grunn av kultur eller religion. Jeg vil jo kanskje si at dette er et realistisk bilde av skolen der. Jeg vet hvert fall at det er et par land som er veldig strenge med gutter og jenter, at i ung alder så får dem liksom ikke være nære hverandre, nære venner på grunn av religion eller kultur. På bildet så ser det ut som at det er flest gutter og (stille).

Intervjuer: Tror du bildet sier noe om kulturen der når det gjelder skole og kjønn?

Erik: Det kan jo hende at de som har døtre da, at de ikke har lyst til å sende dem på skolen. På grunn av kanskje at de har lyst til å holde dem hjemme for å hjelpe, eller å sende dem på skole der det bare er jenter. At man ikke blander kjønn da, hvis det er strenge kulturer og sånt. Eller at man setter pris på skolen mer da, på en annen måte. Bildene sier jo ikke noe om det, men man kan jo tenke seg fram til ulike ting ved å bare se på det, sånn bakgrunnsinformasjon.

Intervjuer: Noen av sidene du har lest har jo veldig lite tekst og mer bilder. Hva tenker du om å få informasjon gjennom bilder enn kun tekst?

Erik: Du kan jo på en måte forstår handlingen da. Men uten teksten så er det kanskje litt vanskelig å se liksom hva som skjer, på en måte. Det må liksom være en god kombinasjon av tekst og bilder, og de må jo henge sammen og gi mening. Kanskje bygge hverandre opp litt da. Sånn 50/50 liksom.

Intervjuer: Hvilke holdninger tror du denne boken (utdragene) kan utvikle hos en leser?

Erik: Hmmm kanskje nysgjerrighet og respekt. Kanskje empati

Intervjuer: Kan du begrunne?

Erik: Man kan jo bli mer nysgjerrig på hvordan flyktninger er og hva som skjer med de liksom. Litt nysgjerrig på kulturen og, man vil jo lære litt mer da. Og respekt… hvis du kjenner til flere folk som går på skolen (her) da som er fra andre kulturer og sånt da, eller flyktninger, da kan jo du litt sånn på en måte viser mer respekt. Hvis jeg møter noen i gangen da, som er kanskje flyktning eller fra en annen kultur, som har sine egne syn da, som ikke er lik som meg da, så kan jo denne boka hjelpe meg med å forstå hvorfor den personen har

kanskje andre syn på ting da. Og at jeg kan vise litt mer respekt for det, selv om det ikke er likt som mine syn da.

Intervjuer: Tror du at bilder kan påvirke holdningene våre?

Erik: Det kan jo kanskje bli litt mer bevisst på hva som skjer, og kanskje man har lyst til å gjøre noe med det og hjelpe. Kanskje donere klær, penger, mat og sånne ting. Bildene gjør jo det litt mer personlig og, og det kan jo påvirke noens holdninger. Kanskje noen får litt mer respekt eller toleranse for hovedpersonen (Omar), som igjen man kan ta det over i det virkelige liv da. Kanskje også jobbe med fordommene sine, og være litt mer åpen for at andre tenker litt ulikt en seg selv da, fordi det er påvirket av situasjonen. Det tror jeg.

Intervjuer: Kan du tenke deg hvorfor forfatterne valgte å ha vise den her historien gjennom en grafisk novelle enn en tradisjonell novellene?

Erik: Kanskje for at folk skal bli, som jeg sa i stad, mer bevisst på hva som skjer liksom, og hvorfor dem er der. Og ja, ulike kulturer. Og faktisk vise, og ikke bare skrive, hvordan folk oppfører seg, hva de verdsetter og hvordan, verdier, og ja, det med skole og mat da. Gjennom en tradisjonell novelle kan det kanskje være litt vanskelig å se dette. En grafisk novelle gjør sånn at det ser litt mer ekte ut, og man har jo da kanskje lyst til å lese den da. Og lære noe nytt. Kanskje få en tilknytning til hovedpersonen og.

Intervjuer: Mhm. Hva tror du budskapet er i historien?

Erik: Tja, det er vel å vise folk hvordan flyktninger har det, og hva som skjer. At man skal liksom få ulike perspektiver og. Og at man ser litt fra «den gode verden» da. Kanskje også ikke ta skole, mat, vann og sånt for gitt, og jobbe med våre verdier. Og kanskje det at vi skal være litt mer respektfulle og fordomsfrie for flyktninger som kommer til vårt land. Jeg har jo lest på Facebook sånne negative kommentarer om at Norge tar imot så mange flyktninger. Men å lese kanskje en slik historie, med bilder som gjør det mer ekte, så vil man jo lære mer om hvordan de faktisk har det. Og da vil ikke folk kommentere slike ting da.

Intervjuer: Gode refleksjoner. Er boken relevant i dag?

Erik: Ja jeg vil si det. Det er vel mange millioner flyktninger og mange av dem ender på flyktningleir, og det er noe som ikke klarer å komme dit, eller dør til sjøs. Jeg har jo sett mange videoer av flyktninger da, i mange forskjellige flyktningleir både i Europa og Afrika og sånt. Utdragene representer jo noe som er ekte i dag.

Intervjuer: Hva vil du si er noe positivt med en slik grafisk novelle?

Erik: Det er jo egentlig å se virkeligheten på. Hva som faktisk skjer enn bare rundt der du bor da. Man kan jo se fra den andre siden av verden. Det er jo også lettere å forstå handlingen når det er bare bilder og ikke bare tekst, som jeg sa i stad.

Intervjuer: Hva med noe negativt?

Erik: Du mener den boka? Det kan jo også være litt urealistisk. Det er ikke alltid at en bok er 100% (korrekt). Og da kan jo folk bli litt optimistiske. At de liksom tror at det her er virkelig, og så er det egentlig ikke så realistisk da. Men jeg klarer ikke å finne noe negativt om det med

bilder og bøker, da jeg egentlig ser litt mer verdi i det da. Det fanger jo oppmerksomheten min da, man får jo faktisk se det, og ikke bruk energi på å innbilde seg det da.

Intervjuer: Hvordan syns du personlig det var å lese en grafisk novelle?

Erik: Jeg synes det var mer spennende egentlig, og da kunne jeg liksom få på meg mer ting da. Jeg hadde også lest noe sånt hvis jeg hadde muligheten til det.

Intervjuer: Siste spørsmål - Et fokus i engelskfaget er jo det å utvikle interkulturell kompetanse gjennom å lese. Men det viser seg jo at gjennom årene så er det flere og flere elever som leser mindre, spesielt tradisjonelle bøker. Hva tenker du om å bruke denne grafiske novellen til å utvikle kunnskap og holdninger blant elever som ikke liker å lese?

Erik: Jeg tenker jo at det er positivt. Man kan jo kanskje få litt mer motivasjon til å lese. Man kan jo se på bildene og forsiden, og tenke «oi den ser spennende ut», og at man faktisk leser den da. Og etter å ha lest den gjennom, så får man kanskje lyst til å lese mer. Da blir jo flere og flere elever mer interessert i å lese. Og samtidig kan det jo være med på, ja, å utvikle sånn kunnskap og holdninger blant dem, da de begynner å lese mer da. Og denne boken tar jo for seg temaet bra og presenterer det bra gjennom bilder og. Og da kan jo eleven (som ikke liker å lese) lære mer om kultur og globale problemer, tenkemåter og perspektiver gjennom å lese bilder og tekst da. Og bli selvfølgelig mer bevisst på seg selv, sin kultur og situasjon. Og ja, utvikle respekt og toleranse tenker jeg da, være litt mer åpen da boken presenterer situasjonen mer personlig da. Man får jo en tilknytning til hovedpersonen, og da kan man jo overføre det til det ekte liv.

Intervjuer: Ønsker du å legge til noe mer?

Erik: Nei, tror ikke det

Intervjuer: Da takker jeg deg for intervjuet