MASTEROPPGAVE

Teaching intercultural competence through movies:

Using film clips of dreams in different cultural contexts

Taina Bjerkholt

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Fakultet for lærerutdanninger og språk

Institutt for språk, litteratur og kultur

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to show how carefully selected film clips in the English language teaching classroom can be used to teach students about factors that can influence people's possibilities for fulfilling their dreams. This thesis will present theory and previous research on which factors influence a person's life choices and show that choices people make are influenced by their culture. Since there has been relatively scarce research on the use of still images and film clips to promote intercultural competence in the English classroom in Norway, films are the chosen material.

The material consists of film excerpts from films that are produced in four countries spread over three continents – Germany in Europe, South Africa in Africa, and India and Israel in Asia. The common feature in the four coming-of-age stories is that the protagonist is a teenage girl who is faced with a difficult choice about whether she can choose her own path or if she must be loyal to her family's wishes. She faces support and obstacles when she wants to fulfill her dreams.

The method used is that the teacher carefully selects film clips in advance in which the protagonist's dreams come to light. By showing the students film clips from four different countries, but with similar situations, it is made possible for the students to discuss and compare the content - both the films themselves, but it also enables one to compare the protagonists' life situation with their own. If one objectively discusses other people's dreams in life, and what kind of support and obstacles they encounter, an intercultural dialogue can be promoted.

The findings of the analysis are that one's opportunities for self-realization and making one's own choices are influenced by social and cultural aspects that depend on the society in which one live. By increasing a person's intercultural competence, one can more easily understand the influence culture has on people. Understanding other people's choices will increase the likelihood of mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect, and thus inclusion can be promoted, and stereotypes prevented.

Finally, a suggested teaching plan based on research will be presented with examples on how an English teacher can increase secondary students' intercultural competence by discussing e.g. gender norms and expectations which leads to an intercultural dialogue. The students will then be given varied written tasks which they will do individually.

Foreword

In this master's thesis I am combining my interests in languages, culture, and film. I studied media and communication in high school and did my teacher training at Oslo University College, now known as OsloMET, and majored in English. I did part of my teaching practice in China where I taught English at a secondary school for three weeks, then I held workshops for Chinese English teachers for a week. In my last year at Oslo University College, I studied development studies and researched the life situation of fisherwomen in India for several weeks. Since intercultural competence has always fascinated me, I have taught English and Norwegian as a Second Language for thirteen years and have studied second language didactics at Inland Norway University of Applied Science.

I started my master studies in English didactics at Østfold University College in the fall of 2019 and have combined family life, full-time work, and these studies for several years. This has been made possible thanks to my dear husband, Rikard, who at times has managed the house and kids alone. Throughout my further education, my brother, Boye, and mother, Liv, have helped me with all my assignments and submissions. Boye with the English language and correcting any mistakes and my mum, a retired teacher, with the content and didactics. Thanks for putting up with my nagging when I have asked you to read through drafts and provide feedback by deadline. Thank you very much for all the help I have received from the three of you, my nearest and dearest. Now you will finally be able to relax again, and I look forward to spending even more time with you.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The world has undergone a technological revolution in recent decades which has led to increased contact between people. In 2020, a global pandemic broke out that accelerated the use of technology. In a digital age with smartboards in classrooms and films easily accessible through streaming platforms, e.g. Netflix, many teachers find it natural to implement technology in their teaching. Films in the English language teaching (ELT) classroom enable students to learn the target language and learn about other cultures, as well as to compare their own culture with the target culture. Using films in the classroom can be an effective method of teaching intercultural competence which is useful in a diverse and globalized world. Films can, by using visual means, help students to better understand other people's customs, values, and beliefs. Films can increase awareness and foster empathy by helping the student to see the world through someone else's lens and thus more easily take someone else's perspective. By improving awareness and empathy, films can be used as a starting point to initiate discussions about cultural differences and similarities that students observe in the film. In addition, films can be an excellent way to practice a foreign language since students are provided with authentic spoken material and can learn about the culture of the people who speak that language. Many films depict stereotypes of different cultures, and such films can be used to gain an understanding of the influence of stereotypes and how it can be harmful. It is therefore important that students receive training in their intercultural competence and learn about different cultures. The cultural aspect is emphasized in the new curriculum in Norway, which was introduced in 2020, and the core curriculum states that every student should be able to develop their identity in an inclusive and diverse community (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022b).

Since culture is an important term that recurs many times in this master's thesis an explanation is needed. However, defining the term "culture" can be difficult since culture is used in several different contexts with different meanings. According to Mironenko and Sorokin (2018), there is a multitude of interpretations of what the term "culture" is, and various definitions can be contradictory. They explain that culture can be material objects, such as

clothes and jewelry, but it can also be non-material, such as language, literature, art, and science. They go on stating that culture is external processes which cover social norms, customs and traditions, and internal processes where the individual's plans, desires, and visions are highlighted. Culture can be seen as a view of life, family, society, school, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings. It is most common to talk about culture in the context of people's thoughts, communication, and behavioral patterns (Schackt, 2019). Blell and Doff (in Marks & Merse, 2018, p. 161) argue that the real cultural complexity lies in "the cultural practices of individuals and social groups" and Lütge (in Marks & Merse, 2018, p. 161) suggests moving towards categories such as gender and social class to show a more nuanced aspect on cultures and identity constructions.

Interactions with people from different cultures happen everywhere; when travelling abroad, and when remaining in one's own country, due to more mobility and technological progress. We encounter people from different cultures on the internet, at school, at work, in social media, when gaming online, and in society in general. Most recently, the war in Ukraine has brought many refugees to Norwegian classrooms, which makes the classrooms even more culturally diverse. When meeting people with different cultural backgrounds, it is important to understand their cultures to avoid misunderstandings. By learning about other people's cultures, it may be possible to build a good relationship with mutual understanding and respect.

Ali et al. (2015) stress the importance of culture in second and foreign language learning and recommend integration of cultural awareness in the language classroom. Cultural awareness involves "becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions" and is central when interacting with people from other cultures since people see, interpret, and evaluate things differently depending on their experiences, attitudes, and beliefs (Quappe & Cantatore, 2005, p. 1). Culturally aware people are conscious of that both similarities and differences are equally important and that there are "multiple ways to reach the same goal and to live life" (Quappe & Cantatore, 2005, p. 3).

When students are to become culturally aware and increase their intercultural competence, they must be given a combination of cultural insight and communicative skills. Since English is used as a lingua franca internationally beyond those countries that have it as a first language, and interlocutors are most likely non-native speakers of English, the English curriculum in Norway has made it clear that the students' intercultural competence must be

strengthened, and the students need to be equipped with skills needed in an increasingly digitalized and globalized world. The curriculum states that English is important for cultural understanding, communication, education, and identity development and that the English subject should contribute to the development of the students' intercultural understanding of different lifestyles, mindsets, and communication patterns (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022e). It continues stating that the English subject shall help students develop an understanding of their view of the world being culturally dependent, and that this understanding can lead to "new ways to interpret the world, promote curiosity and engagement and help to prevent prejudice" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022e). So, an important aspect of working with intercultural competence is that students learn about prejudices and stereotypes in order to avoid the pitfalls they create when it comes to intercultural encounters. Prejudice can be defined as "injury or damage resulting from some judgment or action of another in disregard of one's rights" ("Prejudice", 2022), while stereotypes can be explained as "an often unfair and untrue belief that many people have about all people or things with a particular characteristic" ("Stereotypes", 2022). Some stereotypes are roughly accurate, e.g., "the Dutch are tall" because many Dutch actually are, while other stereotypes are less so, e.g. "the Irish are red-headed" since only 10 % are (Bordalo et al., 2016, p. 1753). A stereotype is a generalized notion of what a certain group of people are like. Bordalo et al. (2016) list several areas that stereotypes cover, and the examples are mine; ethnic groups ("African American women must take on more than one job to financially support their families"), political groups ("Women have more compassionate values and tend to vote in a social democratic direction"), gender ("Women cry more often than men when they are stressed and/or frustrated"), demographic groups ("All people from Northern Norway have children earlier than the rest of the population"), and situations ("It is better to grow up in a home that consists of a nuclear family with married parents").

This thesis draws on a project outline and literature review submitted as part of an obligatory master course in *Methods and project* at the University of Gothenburg (Bjerkholt, 2021).

1.2 Aim

The aim of this master's thesis is to look into how to increase students' intercultural competence by using film in the English language teaching (ELT) classroom. Young learners, at the brink of their adult lives, have dreams and plans for their future, dreams that may be realized or not- depending both on their own efforts and skills, and on other circumstances. Youthful dreams for the future constitute a theme that runs across cultures, but hindrances and support may look different depending on the values of each specific culture. Therefore, an exploration of dreams vis-à-vis cultural context may prove a fruitful arena for promoting cultural insights and intercultural competence. The research question is therefore:

To what extent may an exploration of dreams for the future, through film clips, promote intercultural competence in the English classroom?

The aim is to increase the students' intercultural competence and teach them about factors that can affect people's self-realization plans. This can be done by presenting the students with film clips based on topics that may interest them, as they are both relatable and universal. The protagonist in each film is a teenage girl who first has a good relationship with her parents, then a problem arises, and, in the end, they find a solution. Many secondary school students can probably identify with a teenager arguing with her parents and have opinions about a teenager who has problems within the family and struggles between choosing to follow her own path or to obey the head of the family and be loyal. In order to understand the problem in the families portrayed in the selected films, one has to look at what dreams and plans the daughter has for herself and also what future plans the parents have for their daughter. Here it will be interesting to take a closer look at societal structures and cultural differences. When looking for explanations for why the family members react the way they do, it will be natural to look at what kind of society the film characters live in. The protagonists' opportunities for self-realization are affected by whether society is pulled in a more individualistic or collectivistic direction and society's view of women, gender roles and gender equality. The four main characters face various obstacles such as financial challenges, traditions, arranged marriages and conflicting values. Some of the obstacles they share, while other obstacles apply only to one of them. That is why the sub-questions to the research question are:

- What are the dreams of each respective protagonist?

- What obstacles do the protagonists face and what support might they receive?

Since the curriculum makes it clear that it is the teachers' responsibility to teach the students about culture and make them interculturally competent, the four selected movies are produced in the countries they present. The selected films are *Into the Beat* (Westerwelle, 2020) from Germany, *Mia and the White Lion* (de Maistre, 2018) from South Africa, *Sand Storm* (Zexer, 2016) from Israel and *Skater Girl* (Makijany, 2021) from India.

1.3 Overview

This subchapter will give a brief overview of all the upcoming chapters. In chapter 2, the theoretical framework for this thesis will be presented, and terms such as "intercultural competence", "inclusion", "intercultural dialogue", and "individualism" and "collectivism" will be explained. There will also be an elaboration on family structures and stereotypes, the link between gender roles and cultures, and an explanation of why film is a good educational tool in ELT. In chapter 3, materials and methods, the criteria for the selected films will be explained first. Next, the film-based method will be presented, where it is explained that the teaching material consists of carefully selected still images and film fragments linked together by the same topic. In chapter 4, didactic framework, there will be an analysis of the still images and the film clips and the link between the films will be clarified. In chapter 5, the didactic implementation in a secondary school will be described. Finally, in the last chapter, the research questions will be answered, and there will be a conclusion to this thesis.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 The concept of intercultural competence

Intercultural competence is the ability to function appropriately with people from different backgrounds and cultures, nations, religions, beliefs, and world views (Leung et al., 2014). When encountering people from different cultures, and possibly with different first languages, it is important to be interculturally competent to avoid misreading, miscommunication, and misunderstandings. One must be open, adaptable, and accepting to develop as an interculturally competent person. According to Pegrum (2008, p. 137), intercultural competence may lead to "fulfilment on a personal level, [and] awareness and empowerment on a social and political level". Intercultural competence consists of three interconnected competences; attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Byram et al., 2002, pp. 11-13). Intercultural attitude involves openness and the ability to decenter to see how one might look from an outsider's perspective. Intercultural knowledge is the recognition that one cannot know everything about a particular culture, but one can have general knowledge about social processes, groups, and interactions. Intercultural skills consist of two parts; one is the ability to interpret and relate and deals with the ability to explain and relate to another culture, while the other part is discovery and interaction which is the ability to acquire new knowledge and to be able to use this knowledge in real-time communication and interaction. The three components are closely linked to, and complemented by, the critical cultural awareness component, which deals with valuing the attitudes and beliefs of others and being aware of, and sensitive to, similarities and differences between two or more cultures.

Intercultural competence can be developed through education, training, and experience. One of the teacher's duties is to make students interculturally competent, since ELT is responsible for intercultural learning (Bland, 2018, p. 3). Of course, other subjects may also be used to promote intercultural learning, such as social sciences, political science, and other foreign languages, so it is not exclusively ELT's responsibility, but intercultural learning is an important aspect of the English subject. The goal of intercultural teaching is to foster mutual understanding and respect among students from different cultural backgrounds, and to prepare students to be successful in a globalized world.

The acquisition of intercultural competence is never complete and perfect as it is impossible to acquire and anticipate all the knowledge one might need to interact with people from other cultures (Byram et al., 2002). This is because cultures are not constant, but rather changing. However, "[t]he ability to recognise and understand your own cultural context is a prerequisite to understanding and interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds" (Jones et al., 2019, p. 1).

2.2 Inclusion

At school there are children with different cultures, religions, genders, and sexualities. They come from different families, living conditions, social classes and some may have disability or behavioral problems. When so many different people meet every day, it is very important that everyone feels seen and included. Inclusion may be defined as "the idea that everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities, and enjoy the same experiences" ("inclusion", 2023). It is important to work with inclusion in school since the classrooms are diverse and it must be normal to be different so that the students understand that differences are acceptable and natural. Inclusion is an important educational policy principle which has been given more attention in recent years, for instance in *Early intervention and inclusive education in kindergartens, schools and out-of-school-hours care* (Ministry of Education and Research, 2020) where the Norwegian parliament states that schools must provide opportunities for all children and young people- regardless of social, cultural, and linguistic background, gender, cognitive and physical differences.

Inclusion should be an aspect of teaching which is based on three different dimensions, each of which separately describes important aspects of meeting diversity with inclusion (Nilsen, 2017 in Statped, 2022). The physical dimension deals with how the teaching is organized and thus the individual's physical opportunity to participate in the learning community. The social dimension concerns whether everyone has a real opportunity to be part of the social community where they can develop friendships with their classmates. The cultural dimension is related to whether everyone is given access to professional learning and development in ways that make sense to the individual. Mitchell (2015) has made an analysis of what is needed to realize inclusive teaching in the classroom and has developed a formula: IE = V+P+5A+S+R+L. This formula may look difficult and advanced at first glance, but the letters are only abbreviations where Mitchell states that for inclusive education (IE) to happen, one needs to consider vision (V), placement (P), adapted curriculum (A), adapted assessment (A),

adapted teaching (A), acceptance (A), access (A), support (S), resources (R), and leadership (L). He taps into the intercultural competence part when describing exercising leadership in the classroom as developing a strong commitment to accepting and celebrating diversity, developing a sensitivity to cultural issues, setting high, but realistic, standards, and achieving positive outcomes for the most disadvantaged (Mitchell, 2015, p. 26).

2.3 The concept of intercultural dialogue

The term "intercultural dialogue" is still only loosely defined in a political context, according to the Council of Europe. However, they define intercultural dialogue as "an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's global perception" (Council of Europe, s.a.). The aim of intercultural dialogue is to promote equality, respect, and peaceful coexistence, so that it can lead to cross-cultural learning, self-reflection, and mutual understanding (Mansouri & Elias, 2021, pp. 411-413). The Council of Europe states in the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* that for intercultural dialogue to take place "democratic citizenship and participation should be strengthened; intercultural competences should be taught and learned; spaces for intercultural dialogue should be created and widened; and intercultural dialogue should be taken to the international level" (2008, p. 4). This quote is relevant to this master's thesis since it expresses that intercultural competence should be taught and learned and that intercultural dialogue should be taken to the international level. One way to promote intercultural dialogue at an international level is to incorporate it into teaching. This is because students' intercultural competence can be strengthened by using intercultural dialogue in the classroom where communication requires interactions and the exchange of ideas. For an intercultural dialogue to happen, the teacher must create a space for the students where it is made possible. Lazar (2013) expresses that one should use texts in the classroom to elicit a discussion and critical analysis, instead of looking for a definitive interpretation of a text. She argues that dialogue is an important tool when dealing with text in the classroom. When students engage in discussions to seek meaning, they develop a further understanding of the text, and possibly themselves, and thus support each other's development. The teacher must be aware of it potentially being particularly difficult for minorities to express their opinions and talk about their own personal experiences and perspectives (Stokke & Lybæk, 2018). However, an intercultural dialogue can also make it easier for minorities to feel heard and included.

The intercultural dialogue is both the tool and the goal in the didactics, since a good dialogue with openness and respect may lead to a positive contact between the parties involved. An intercultural dialogue is the exchange of ideas, information and values between individuals or groups from different cultures. By having dialogues and discussions, the purpose is for the students to better understand other people's perspectives, values, and foundations in life, and it is argued that "[t]o enter a dialogue means to enter a connection or negotiation, often in the hope of achieving reconciliation or clarification" ("dialog", 2021).

2.4 Individualism and collectivism

Whether a society is drawn towards a more individualistic or collectivistic direction is shown in whether a person's self-image is defined by "I" or "we" (Hofstede Insights, 2022). A collectivistic society often consists of stable and long-lasting relationships because family members are valued more than personal choices of friends. A collectivistic culture emphasizes the importance of family, group loyalty, and being helpful and supportive of others. An individualistic culture emphasizes independence and an individual identity. A society's culture can have a tendency towards a more individualistic or collectivistic view of values. If a society has an individualistic tendency, the individual is at the center and aspects such as independence and uniqueness are valued. A collectivistic society sees an individual as part of a whole with connections to other people. In societies which are characterized by collectivism, family ties and obedience become emphasized. Individualism and collectivism can therefore explain people's choices, perspectives, views, values, and actions (Santos et al., 2017). Family structures and gender roles are influenced by society, so whether a society is more individualistic or collectivistic will be an important element in understanding the kind of demands and room to maneuver one has in a family.

Individualism has been strengthened in most societies in recent decades. Already 20 years ago, research showed a tendency for individual values to increase in modern society (Kemmelmeier et al., 2003). Kemmelmeier et al. found that there were more recognition of individual human rights and individual self-determination in modern societies than earlier, and thus a limitation of the control of others over the individual. Their results also reveal that better personal finances shift people's priorities from concerns about survival and financial security to a goal of self-realization.

Cultural differences are still present, according to a study by Santos et al. (2017). They have based their studies on 77 countries over 51 years. In this study, Germany, Israel, India, and South Africa are represented, which are the countries that are relevant for this master's thesis. The study shows that these four countries are moving in a more individualistic direction and that the main reasons for this are a change from an agricultural economy to an industrial one, urbanization, an increase in prestigious professions, and a greater emphasis on education and higher income. In fewer words, the main reason for this development is an improvement in economic development. Higher personal income leads to less dependence on other people, personal freedom, and the opportunity to prioritize oneself and one's own goals in life. Although Santos et al. observed increased individualism in the four countries, it still does not mean that the position of the individual is equally strong in all societies. There are still noticeable cultural differences even though there is a global trend towards individualism, especially in developed countries which can be described as countries with a well-developed economy where the citizens have good welfare and prosperity.

2.5 Gender roles

Culture defines how one understands gender roles and what kind of expectations lie in that role. Gender roles are closely linked to culture, as "gender rituals are produced over time within cultural norms" (Nodelman & Reimer, 2003, p. 242). "Gender stereotypes are beliefs concerning the abilities, attitudes, preferences and behaviors of a 'typical' man or a 'typical' woman" (Mealey, 2000 in Wühr et al., 2017, p. 429). For example, some people have the impression that men are better drivers than women, and that women are better suited than men in caring professions. Stereotypes can be rooted in reality, but they are often inaccurate and lack nuance. When Hill and Lynch proposed their gender intensification hypothesis in 1983 (in Priess et al., 2009), their studies suggested that parents had distinct developmental goals for their children depending on gender. These expectations may have influenced the children's gender role identities. More recently, Sani and Quaranta (2017) presented a study which aimed to show adolescents' attitudes towards gender roles in society. The study was carried out in 36 countries world-wide, and they found that in societies where there is higher gender equality and educated mothers, both young women and young men have a more gender-equal attitude. However, in all the 36 countries young women had more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles than young men. This does not mean that educated mothers will raise sons who are not necessarily in favor of equality, but it does mean that daughters of educated

mothers are more likely to be influenced by the idea of equality than sons. Overall, the findings suggest that young people in various contexts are influenced by society's dominant view of gender roles, and that young women are more open to external signals and a change in the gender role structure than young men. These results suggest that it will take time to achieve equality between genders. Xu et al. (2019) have researched many thousand films and books and describe a phenomenon they call the "Cinderella Complex" which deals with women's emotional dependence to men. They explain that the "Cinderella Complex" shows how strongly rooted the idea of the stereotypical gender role pattern is in certain societies. Their research shows that the male character often has adventurous experiences, while the female character is often shown in a romantic relationship. They argue that films and books that reflect the society's morals and values are the ones to most likely stand the test of time. In addition, it is usually the films and books with stereotypic gender features that receive the best criticism and reviews. Because of this, the typical and stereotypical gender role pattern can persist in cultures over time. Traditionally, fathers have often taken the role of disciplinarians and breadwinners in the family. However, a contemporary, engaged, and responsible fatherhood will include factors such as physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual care for children, according to Marsiglio and Roy (in Perry, 2013). When reading this, it is important to be aware that such a view of a modern father's role is not universal and equal in all cultures. Expectations, obligations, and values linked to the father's role are influenced by time and culture, so that a father's role plays out differently in different countries and societies and it changes and develops over time. In some societies, men are expected to take care of the family financially, while women are expected to take care of the house and children, whereas in other societies, both genders are expected to contribute equally – both financially and in the home. In some societies divorce is unheard of, while in other societies it is relatively common to end the marriage and often involve new partners in family life, and thus new family constellations are created. A composition where both adults have children from an earlier relationship, in addition to having one or more children together, is often called "mine, yours, ours" and refers to "my children, your children and our children" and shows a modern, composite family, seen from a Norwegian point of view. An important factor that also affects people's view of the new family composition is whether one comes from a society with features from a more individualistic or collectivistic direction.

In societies where men have the main power and make a majority of the decisions, women can be marginalized and oppressed. This can lead to an unfair distribution of resources. An example of an extremely gender-based society is the patriarchy, which is a male-dominated society where men - often older men - rule. In a patriarchy, it is the father who has authority over the family members and makes all decisions in the household. According to Björk and Eschenbach (2021, p. 161) "[t]here is no denying that patriarchal cultures are unfair to women" and that the power structures of patriarchy limit women's lives and opportunities.

2.6 Film and intercultural learning

There are many reasons why a teacher should consider using films to increase students' intercultural competence and their understanding of family structures and gender roles, as films may be motivating, authentic, increase vocabulary and give cultural insight. We do not only communicate with words – there are other aspects to consider; gestures, facial expressions, beliefs and culture, and intercultural competence enables us to communicate and understand each other better. Movies are a unique media for becoming interculturally competent, according to Björk et al. (2014), who state that through movies, the students can immerse themselves in, and empathize with, other people's lives and cultures, which may lead to new perspectives. There are advantages and disadvantages to choosing to show an entire feature film versus choosing to only show film clips. Therefore, the teacher must make a conscious choice based on the desired learning objectives and by assessing the time allotted. Showing an entire feature film can be beneficial for students to gain a better and deeper understanding of the main roles and the theme. At the same time, an entire feature film will take a lot of time and it can be challenging to keep the students engaged all the time. Hamel (2012) claims that an entire film is usually required for meaning to develop while Marcus et al. (2010) state that showing selected short clips instead of a full feature film requires the teacher to carefully watch the film in advance to be able to select the appropriate excerpts.

Many language learners watch films for entertainment in their spare time, whether in their first, second, third or fourth language, "[a]nd what happens outside our teaching contexts, out there in the real world, will inevitably – at least some of it – end up having an impact on what we do inside our classrooms" (Hockly & Dudeney, 2018, p. 165). Today, films are often used for didactic purposes in the classroom, and many teachers assume that films appeal to students and thus also increase their interest, motivation, and learning (Butler et al., 2009). Children and teenagers encounter films in the classroom - for both educational reasons and for pure

entertainment. Teachers may want to bring movies into the classroom to tap into popular youth culture and hence increase the students' attention and motivation (Marcus et al., 2010). This is supported by Sturm (2012, p. 247) who, when writing about second language, states that "film is a useful way to promote language learning, increase exposure to L2 [second language] cultures, and interest students in L2 and its cultures". She continues stating that films in the target language are an effective link to the target culture as they are visual, authentic, easily accessible, and attractive to students who are used to a multimedia environment (Sturm, 2012).

Discussions of culture often risk becoming too abstract but by utilizing films the abstract topic is made more manageable with concrete examples and situations. However, since many films depict stereotypes of different cultures, the teacher must be aware of this pitfall. If used wisely, films can be used to gain an understanding of the influence of stereotypes and how it can be harmful. Marcus et al. (2010, p. 7) state that "[j]ust because the 'vocabulary' of a film is audio-visual rather than print-based doesn't make movies less of a human statement of meaning with social, cultural, and political messages open to interpretation and interrogation". They go on saying that messages in movies are neither neutral nor random, and since movies affect viewers, they need to be analyzed, questioned, and debated. Films can give insight into different cultural aspects and can present the students to a variation of people, countries, and cultures. The films help students recognize other people's life stories and can help students imagine other people's situations and take other people's perspectives. Empathy is a powerful tool to understand people's behavior, decisions, and struggles. Films can help develop students' empathy since they require perspective-taking because viewers need to understand the actions, experiences and decisions made by the characters in films (Marcus et al., 2010).

3. Material and method

3.1 Material

The selected film clips include situations from four countries located on three continents: Europe, Africa, and Asia. The selected films are *Into the Beat* (Westerwelle, 2020) from Germany, *Mia and the White Lion* (de Maistre, 2018) from South Africa, *Sand Storm* (Zexer, 2016) from Israel and *Skater Girl* (Makijany, 2021) from India. When choosing the movies, one criterion was that the films had to be modern and a maximum of ten years old. The oldest one, the Israeli film *Sand Storm*, is from 2016 while the newest, *Skater Girl,* was released in 2021. The second criterion was that the films had to be produced by companies from the same country as they are representing, as it was assumed that this could lead to a better representation of an authentic culture. Hence, all the films are produced and filmed in the countries they represent, and they are produced and released during the last decade.

A third criterion was that the material chosen would deal with topics that would engage and interest the students, in this case dreams for the future. To avoid students becoming frustrated and unmotivated, it is, according to Lazar (2013), important that the teacher chooses texts that are relevant and interesting to them. The specific topic is what dreams the daughter has for her own future, what dreams and expectations the parents have for their daughter's future and what kind of obstacles they face, especially from society. There were specific criteria for the main character in the films, so all the films had to have a teenage female protagonist. It was essential to select films the students could relate to, so that was why a teenager was chosen as the main character. Many young people are curious about how others their age manage their lives. The films are meant for a teenage audience and hence the protagonist is a teenager. It was also significant to have a female lead role play the protagonist to bring out gender roles as an intercultural aspect. All four films present a family story with disrupted families where the parents and the female teenager have a conflict. There are various reasons, and it can be due to lies and mistrust, striving for independence and society's expectations of gender roles, or a combination of these. Grenby describes a type of storytelling that he calls "The family story" that ironically actually includes more family disruption than family coherence (Grenby, 2014, p. 118). He claims that the absence of whole, happy families provides an opportunity for adventurous stories, but also emphasizes the importance of family (Grenby, 2014, p. 119). This is the case in the four carefully selected films that will be shown to the students where there are family feuds, conflicts, and drama. The reason was that the students could then relate

better to the main character. The other topics which are displayed in the four movies which the students may find relatable and interesting are parent-child relationships, gender roles, love, identity, freedom, and loyalty.

A fourth criterion was that the films had to portray similar situations for them to be possible to compare and discuss in the classroom.

3.2 Method

The overall aim is to shed light on how to increase students' intercultural competence by using films in the classroom, and the research question concerns to what extent an exploration of dreams for the future, through film clips, may promote intercultural competence in the English classroom.

The method used in this master thesis is inspired by Björk and Eschenbach's *Reel Life* project (2014) where carefully selected film fragments- both stills and sequences- are linked together by the same topic. The common topic in the *Reel Life* project is weddings while in this master thesis it is a female teenager's journey towards self-realization. Even though the topic in the four films is the same, the protagonists act differently depending on many factors, such as economic status, traditions, and to what extent they have opportunities for gender equality in the society they are part of.

Using film clips in the classroom affects the order in which the film scenes are to be shown, since one can choose to break with the chronological order and rather emphasize similar situations. In this setting, all the first film fragments shown will be of the four daughters who initially have a good relationship with their parents, but then they encounter a problem that destroys this good relationship for a period. In the end, the daughter and the parents find their way back to each other and rebuild their relationship. By showing similar scenes from four films with the same topics, the film clips lead to a non-linear experience of the films. The students are not passive receivers of a linear showing of the films, as the teacher has made an active choice when selecting the film clips. The chosen film fragments are full of cultural information and the first step in intercultural learning is to notice and understand similarities and differences to one's own cultural surrounding in order to develop cultural literacy (Ellis, 2018). When detaching fragments from the context one creates blanks which the watchers need to fill by using their imagination. Iser describes blanks as something that is not explicitly expressed in the text, but which are nevertheless connected to each other through imagination

to create meaning and a common thread (in Møller et al., 2017). It is the reader, or viewer in this case, who perceives and creates that connection.

The method that will be used to analyze the films is to emphasize the protagonist's dreams for the future and what kind of support and obstacles she encounters - with an emphasis on what kind of expectations her parents have for her and their plans for her future. Then it is obvious to choose to analyze why their family quarrel occurs and how they choose to resolve the situation to achieve family peace and comfort again. In addition, there will be a focus on other factors that can stand in the way of the protagonist's future prospects and dreams, e.g. financial situation, to what extent there is gender equality, and whether it is a society that places emphasis mostly on individualism or collectivism.

4. Didactic framework

An important aspect in the didactics is that the films have three layers – the universal transition from child to adult, the cultural impact, and the individual solutions for each protagonist. The topic where the teenage protagonist wants to fulfill her dreams are, to some extent, a universal experience, which is why it is desirable to create a platform to enable an intercultural dialogue in the classroom. All the protagonists must make a choice, and one question is what they will possibly lose in the process of fulfilling their dreams.

A systematic, character-based approach to film analysis has developed since the 1980s (Tseng, 2013), and the actions of the characters and their interactions are important for the narrative understanding. The protagonists in the selected films all try to find their voice and their place in their family, society, and the world. They are strong female characters who fight for their rights and want to decide their own future. Their rebelliousness and decisions to follow their dreams affect their lives. The still images are similar in that they exhibit a friendly atmosphere, while in the film excerpts there first is a conflict and confrontation between the teenager and her parent(s) and afterwards a resolution and solution. Since all the protagonists are girls, one topic is women's rights and society's expectations of women. Patriarchy with its adherent values and gender roles permeate *Sand Storm* and *Skater Girl,* and the power relations between children and parents is an issue in all four films.

Analysis of still images from films is an essential aspect of film studies. Still images can reveal the film's topic and aesthetic and hence require careful attention to the setting and environment for clues about cultural background, time period, and the relationship between the characters. It is not easy to transfer the content of moving images to a static format and therefore it can be challenging to choose a suitable frame.

Below, the still images will be presented with the image itself, a concrete description of the visuals and an explanation of the situation in the film. This is information only given to the readers of this master thesis, the students will not be given more context than the topic father-daughter or there would be little left for free interpretations. The stills chosen are widely different and will need a contextual framing. The idea behind showing stills that portray a situation from different perspectives is that the students will recognize the situation and interpret it from their own points of view, and cultural backgrounds.

Fig. 1. *Into the Beat.* Time frame 7:42.

The still image in *Into the Beat* shows a man in his forties smiling while embracing a girl or woman of whom we can only see her back head and her hand holding the man's shoulder. They have a friendly atmosphere, but it is difficult to know what their relationship is - whether they are e.g., lovers, friends, or relatives. The time period is difficult to determine since he wears relatively classic clothes, but at first glance it could be between 1990-2023. The characters probably have a western cultural background due to the man's physical appearance, clothing, and hairstyle. The environment around them is not visible in this still, but it is not an important factor in bringing out a discussion about their relationship. The background story is that the father has been in an accident and the daughter hugs him when he returns home from the hospital.

Fig. 2. *Mia and the White Lion*. Time frame 33:55.

In *Mia and the White Lion*, the still image depicts four people sitting in a car. The characters look western and modern due to their clothing and physical characteristics. The action is set in a car where the father is driving while the mother and teenage daughter look happily at him, and the son looks straight ahead. It seems like they are in a warm place because the mother is wearing a singlet. The story behind the picture is that the family is in the car on their way home from a restaurant where they have had a nice and cozy family meal.
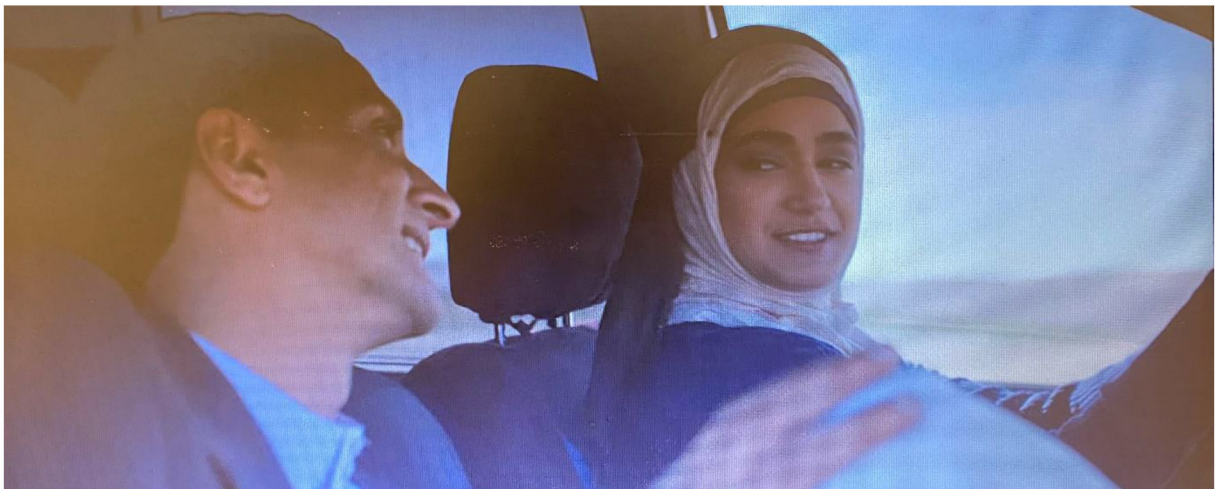

Fig. 3. *Sand Storm*. Time frame 2:25.

Sand Storm is presented with a still image of a middle aged man wearing a shirt and a woman wearing a hijab, making it likely that she, or both of them, has a Muslim background. The

students will be told that the woman actually is the man's teenage daughter. The teenager is driving while her father looks at her and smiles. The background story of this picture is that the man is teaching his daughter to drive, and while she is practicing driving, they are talking about her school grades.

Fig. 4. *Skater Girl*. Time frame 1.40:26.

The still image from *Skater Girl* presents three people: a man smiling, a woman looking at him sternly and a teenage girl crying. Several visual elements signal that the story is set in India, such as the characters' appearance in terms of ethnicity and clothing. It is difficult to precisely date when the action takes place, but the man's shirt may bear the mark of a modern style from the last 30 years and the girl's helmet may lead us to believe that the story takes place in the 21st century. The situation this still image is taken from is right after the girl has won a skateboard competition that her parents did not allow her to enter. This is not information that the teacher will tell the class because the students' free imagination should not be limited by this fact.

Further in this chapter references will be made to film clips using numbers. These numbers refer to two appendices with an overview of which film clips are shown during the lessons. They are numbered in the chronological order in which they will be shown to the students during lessons.

There are different reasons for the conflicts between the parents and their daughter in the films. The protagonist in the first film, *Into the Beat,* is Katya who lives in Germany with her ballet-loving father and her little brother. Katya begins to question her future when feeling suffocated by her father's high expectations of her, while her dream is to become a professional hip-hop dancer. He had envisioned her future as a ballet-dancer, and when she does not live up to his expectations, his dream is shattered. He is injured and can no longer dance, but should his daughter continue his legacy he would still be able to live out his dream through her. The obstacle is that her father wants her to follow in his footsteps while she wants to follow her own dreams. The confrontation happens when her father finds out she has been skipping ballet lessons to practice hip-hop instead. Katya must choose between following her father's career expectations or follow her desires and newfound passion for hip-hop. In the first film clip, film clip 1 (time frame 50-53.00), from *Into the Beat*, her father says "Ballet is your family. You have nothing else". When she tries to reason with him, he refuses to listen and just keeps claiming that she is so close to her goal and everything she has ever wanted, so he will not let her throw it all away. In the second film clip, film clip 2 (time frame approx. 1.19.00-1.21.00), Katya dances hip-hop in her bedroom, while her father plays loud classical music in the living room. She dances aggressively and mutely, and the viewers follow Katya's and her father's heated symbolic and silent argument. In the third film clip, film clip 7 (time frame approx. 1.30.00-1.34.00), the father and daughter find their way back together when her father shows up at Katya's audition for the hip-hop group. The first thing her father says when he meets his daughter and her boyfriend, is the word "respect". By saying this small word, her father shows that he accepts her choice. These clips show Katya having to choose between her loyalty to her father or following her heart. She ends up following her own dream which her father eventually accepts and supports.

The second movie*, Mia and the White Lion* is a film about trust, love, and courage, and a family with a complex family dynamic- partly because the teenage daughter is in opposition to her parents, partly because the family has moved abroad. Mia grows up in London with her older brother, a South African father, and a French mother. They have recently moved to rural South Africa to take over her late grandfather's lion reserve. Mia receives a rare white lion cub as a gift from her parents and forms a strong friendship with the lion, that she calls Charlie. As time goes by, Charlie triples in size and his primal instincts become more apparent, so her father wants to sell Charlie to keep the family safe. Mia's father says that the lion farm earns money by selling lions to parks. But Mia discovers his secret. Her father is in

a difficult financial situation and decides to make money by selling lions to be shot by trophy hunters. To save her pet lion from this cruel practice, Mia runs away determined to get Charlie to a sanctuary for white lions. The rest of the film is about Mia's journey to get Charlie to safety. Mia is a fearless and adventurous girl who ends up in difficult situations where she must hitchhike, steal a car, and shoot her father with an anesthetic dart. In film clip 3 (time frame approx. 1.01.00-1.04.00), she has run away from home and her father is coming after her. She confronts him and says she knows the lions are killed. Her father says he cannot control what the buyers do with the lions after he has sold them, since this kind of hunting practice is allowed in South Africa. He shirks all responsibility and says that she cannot change the world, but Mia disagrees. She shoots him in the leg with a stun dart and drives off in his jeep with Charlie. In clip 8 (time frame approx. 1.26.00-1.31.00), Mia has almost gotten Charlie to safety. Eventually, her father actually helps her get Charlie into the nature reserve, using his body as a human shield between the lion and the police who are ready to shoot the lion. When her father helps her in the end, they find their way back to each other. Her father shows that when life is experienced as difficult and is at its darkest, she can get support and help from him, even though they have their conflicts. The reason for the conflicts in this film is that Mia has a strong sense of justice and wants to save Charlie the lion. She believes her father prioritizes money and profit over the responsibility of doing the right thing.

In *Mia and the White Lion*, Mia's dream is to fight for what she believes in, do the right thing, and save her lion from being sold to trophy hunters. The father's dream is to take over his late father's lion farm and have enough money to live happily there with his family. The obstacles are the poor financial and moral choices of her father. Her father's choices have been kept secret, but when Mia discovers the truth, she feels compelled to act and fight for what she believes in and thus save her pet lion. In the film clips shown to the students, Mia appears as a brave girl who fights alone for what she believes in, and her actions lead her on an inner journey towards becoming a grown woman. Mia experiences support when her father realizes that Mia has been right all along, and he chooses to help her get Charlie to safety.

The third movie, *Sand Storm*, explores love, marriage, and family in a patriarchal society. Israeli Layla is the oldest daughter in a traditional Bedouin family. Layla dreams of living her own independent life with her boyfriend whom she has met at school, while her father's dream is to fit into society and have friends and a happy family. When Layla's father weds a second wife, her life changes drastically. It seems that her father feels an expectation from his friends and other men in the village to marry another wife, even if he does not necessarily want to. It

seems that he feels obliged to do as society demands and that he feels that he has no choice in the matter. This is partly because of a collectivist society where people try to adapt to the unwritten rules, so the obstacles for both father and daughter are living up to other people's norms and standards. On the one hand, Layla's father seems progressive since he teaches his daughter to drive and wants her to get an education, but on the other hand he seems bound by tradition. At home he practices polygamy, and he wants to decide whom his daughter will marry. The father is bound by his cultural values and feels obligated to punish his wife and daughter for their disobedience when they express opinions that differ from his. A successful man must rule with a firm hand to show that he has control over his family. It seems that her father thinks that he is forced to make difficult choices because of society's demands and expectations, and he feels powerless to go against these provisions. In clip 4 (time frame approx. 40.00-42.00), Layla introduces her boyfriend to her father. This is not a successful meeting; her father sends her boyfriend away and is angry with his daughter. In film clip 5 (time frame approx. 1.57.00-1.58.30), Layla begs her father to talk to her, but he only says that she must marry another man. In clip 9 (time frame approx. 1.13.00-1.17.00), Layla tries to run away from home with her boyfriend but changes her mind at the last second. Instead of meeting her boyfriend, she meets her father and agrees to marry the man he has chosen for her, but also demands that her father drives home to her mother to mend the situation and the bad feelings they have had after he wed his second wife. Layla's demands may be due to multiple reasons, e.g. she wants her parents to reconcile so that the family peace will be restored, or she wants to help the father maintain the façade or for her mother to be able to keep her home and her daughters. Or perhaps the reason for her claim may be composed of a combination of all these reasons. In clip 10 (time frame approx. 1.20.00-1.21.30), Layla has just gotten married. She is in a bad mood and complains about many things, such as the color of the wall. Her new husband says he can paint it the color she wants, and it seems that he is a man who wants her to be happy and to be involved in decision-making processes.

A central aspect of *Sand Storm* is the relationship between Layla and her father, and to understand her father's actions one must explore why he acts the way he does. The father's behavior may be due to the fact that he was raised with patriarchal values and knows what is expected of him as the head of the family. The father is shaped by the traditional gender roles and norms, while the mother was raised to obey her parents and eventually to obey her husband as well. The mother was raised to obey those higher up in the family hierarchy while the father was raised to be the head of the family, and the patriarchy's power structures which

limit women's lives and opportunities are a challenge in a changing world. This is the main conflict in *Sand Storm*: Layla's struggle to decide her own future and destiny.

The fourth movie, *Skater Girl,* is a film that takes a critical look at societies with a patriarchal rule. Keywords to describe the film are liberation, freedom, gender inequality, discrimination, and injustice. The film shows the teenage girl Prerna who comes from a low caste in rural India where she lives with her parents and a younger brother. Prerna's dreams are limited by her social and financial status and affected by her gender. Prerna is a quiet and calm girl who has no plans for the future until she meets a woman who was raised in England but visits the village to see the place where her father was raised. Prerna and the other children are introduced to skateboarding by this woman and Prerna discovers a life-changing passion for riding skateboard, but her father opposes it and sets her skateboard on fire. He accepts that his son skateboards, but he does not want his daughter to do it, so when he discovers that his daughter will be participating in an international skateboarding competition, he arranges a wedding between Prerna and a man she has never met. In film clip 6 (time frame approx. 1.25.30-1.27.00), Prerna is to be married the same day as the International Skateboarding Competition, which she wants to attend. She sits in her bedroom waiting for her wedding to start. Her mother states that a family is not complete without a boy and that everyone wants a son. She continues by saying that everyone has their own destiny, and that personal choice has nothing to do with it. Prerna feels suffocated because she must give up on her dream and get married instead, so she makes a choice that can interrupt the balance of a patriarchal society. In this society, many people's view of gender roles influences how parents raise their sons and daughters differently. Prerna's dream is to decide her own destiny while her father's duty is to take care of his family and be the breadwinner. He wants to take care of his family financially because he, and many in their culture, see that as a sign of a successful man. Her father's intention is to make good choices for his daughter and keep her away from an activity he believes is meant for boys. He wants to keep his daughter away from skateboarding and decides to marry her off to protect her and his own reputation by preventing her from, in his eyes, making rash choices. The obstacle in *Skater Girl* is a patriarchal society with clearly defined expectations depending on gender. In this film, boys and girls are raised differently, and a son is most valued. Her mother is also influenced by growing up in a patriarchal society where men and women have clearly defined roles and women are expected to obey men. One is expected to submit to the given gender roles, and if one does not, one can be seen as disobedient and be ostracized from the community. The men can often be perceived as being

on the privileged side, but nevertheless they are also influenced by their upbringing, in the same way as the women. In film clip 11 (time frame approx. 1.28.45-1.34.15), Prerna wants to skate one last time and she escapes through a hole in the ceiling to take part in the skating competition. When she skates away, she displays a huge smile, and it can appear that she feels real joy. In film clip 12 (time frame approx. 1.37.00-1.42.00), Prerna takes part in the skating competition and just before it is her turn, her parents arrive. Their original plan is to stop her from competing, but her mother gives her father a look that says they should wait, watch what happens, and give Prerna a chance. This is evidence that her mother is not without power here. Her parents stand in the audience for the first time to watch their daughter skate. Afterwards, a rich landowner gives a speech about the need to give children the opportunity to develop themselves. Prerna approaches her father and asks for forgiveness. He does not answer, but when Prerna is called up to receive a prize, he gives her an appreciative nod and lets her go. The whole crowd and her parents applaud her and smile, and in this way, they show their acceptance and approval.

The solution to the various conflicts varies depending on the people who are involved as they are products of their cultural background. In three of the films, it is the protagonists' wishes that are heard; when Mia's father helps her and says that she has been right all along and when Katya's and Prerna's parents accept that they have a free will and choose hip-hop and skateboarding respectively. However, in one film, *Sand Storm*, a patriarchal view and society's demands dominate when Layla obeys her father's wishes and plans for her future and Layla agrees to the arranged marriage.

In the films, there are various dreams, ranging from choosing the dance style one wants in *Into the Beat* and fighting for justice in *Mia and the White Lion* to deciding one's future husband oneself in *Sand Storm* and *Skater Girl*. Students must understand that the solutions in the films are neither completely right nor completely wrong. In life there are many gray areas and there can be complex situations and reasons why people make their choices. Students need to learn that people's choices are a product of their time and their culture- but also that people still are individuals. The protagonists' upbringing is influenced by the external framework in society with set norms and gender roles.

5. Didactic implementation and discussion

The English curriculum makes it clear that it is the teachers' responsibility to teach the students about culture and increase their intercultural competence. The English curriculum contains two interdisciplinary topics- Health and life skills and Democracy and citizenship. The interdisciplinary topic Health and life skills states that students should be able to express themselves both orally and in writing. If students can express their feelings, thoughts, experiences and opinions, this can lead to new perspectives on other people's lives as well as their own. This can lead to a positive self-image and a secure sense of identity (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022d). The interdisciplinary topic Democracy and citizenship involves teaching students that the world is culturally dependent and making them aware of new ways to interpret the world. The aim is for the students to become curious and engaged and thus prevent prejudice (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022d). In order to engage and inspire students to put themselves in other people's situations and thus better understand the choices people make, it has been important for the didactic implementation to choose topics that students can relate to.

With an aim to increase students' intercultural competence by using films, I have chosen the following research question and sub-questions:

To what extent may an exploration of dreams for the future, through film clips, promote intercultural competence in the English classroom?

- What are the dreams of each respective protagonist?
- What obstacles do the protagonists face and what support might they receive?

By discussing both the daughters' dreams in the films, students can give each other new perspectives to understand why the characters act the way they do. When triggering the students' curiosity and emotions, the students will engage in conversations with topics provided for them by their teacher. The topics are coming of age, dreams and desires, free will, gender roles, and family loyalty. One overarching question will be e.g. *Is there a universal dream which is the same for all people?* This question will make students think about what they value the most, whether it is an individualistic view of life where they can follow their heart and live out their dreams or whether they regard a collectivistic view with loyalty to their family's wishes and plans for them as the most important aspect. It is desirable

that the students can understand that people make choices in life based on their backgrounds, life experiences, and values.

One of the tasks of the ESL teacher is for the students to learn about other cultures so their intercultural competence can increase. This can be done through a teaching plan based on the didactic relationship model which is a model that is widely used to plan teaching and it exists in several versions. The term "the didactical relationship model" was coined by Bjørndal and Lieberg in 1978. The model consists of six elements that are equally important to consider when planning the teaching in terms of learning objectives, content, learning material, methods and justifications.
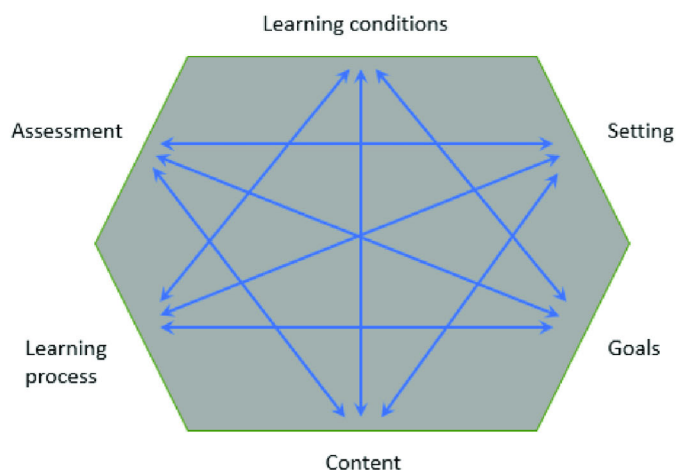

Fig. 5. The didactical relationship model by Bjørndal and Lieberg (in Hiim & Hippe, 1998), translated into English by Timoshenko et al. (2021).

The model consists of six elements that a teacher should keep in mind when planning the teaching. One element is *learning conditions*, the target group itself, and indicates that consideration must be given to the students' age, language, motivation, and cultural background. In this teaching plan, the students are an imaginary group of secondary school students in grades 8-10 in Norway and the age range is therefore 13-16 years. The majority of the students have Norwegian as a first or second language and English as a foreign language. Most of the students are born in Norway, although some have a different background. The two elements of *content* and *teaching goals* in the model are closely linked because the

content deals with which topics should be taught so that the students may achieve their learning goals and which knowledge and skills the students should be left with. In this teaching plan, the students will watch and discuss still images and film clips and the learning objective is for the students to gain knowledge of other cultures and hence increase their intercultural competence. The content is influenced by another element in the model, namely the *setting*. The setting includes how much time there is to plan, implement and evaluate the teaching, how many teachers are present and what digital tools are available. In this case, there are four weeks available to carry out the teaching plan and there is one teacher present who has access to a smartboard and the streaming service Netflix to show the film clips. Another element is *the learning process* which deals with the pedagogical approach the teacher chooses. This is related, among other things, to different student constellations, such as the students sometimes working individually, sometimes in pairs and other times in plenary. Finally, one of the elements is *assessment* which deals with evaluation of the lesson plan. The purpose of which is to improve its quality.

By working with still images and film clips from the four films, the aim is for the students to be informed, entertained, and influenced to be open and have an inclusive approach to other people, primarily when it comes to the other students in the classroom at this time. However, a long-term aim is that the pupils will eventually be able to meet every person with an open-minded and inclusive attitude in the future, but then more continuous work with intercultural learning is required in the future as well. There are several learning objectives for the students during this project, and one of them is that the students should come to understand their own culture better by exploring that of others. By acquiring new knowledge about their own culture and that of others, they will be better equipped to understand people's choices and actions, and thus improve their ability to interact with people from a different cultural background. An important factor within intercultural competence is cultural awareness, which deals with a self-reflection of one's own culture (Kaihlanen et al., 2019). By seeing things from different perspectives, the students will increase their cultural awareness and thus also their intercultural competence. This is in line with what is described in the curriculum in English in Norway where it is stated that the students "shall acquire language and knowledge of culture and society [b]y reflecting on, interpreting and critically assessing different types of texts in English" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022c). After this project is finished, the students are expected to have an insight into the fact that gender plays a role in society and that people are often treated differently depending on their gender. They

should be able to name some factors that can limit one's choice and free will and understand that people have different opportunities and limitations depending on their culture which forms people's expectation, traditions, norms, and values. It is expected that the students will be able to reflect on the choices and actions of others and better relate and understand the power dynamics in their own and others' societies. The students should also be able to name certain characteristics of individualistic societies, and to name some similarities and differences between the main characters' life situation and their own. To summarize, it is expected that the students' intercultural competence will increase and that they will gain a better understanding of people's decisions, behavior and actions, which can lead to them becoming more understanding and inclusive. In addition, one of the learning objectives is for them to get to know themselves and their own culture better.

In the teaching plan, there is a focus on the teenage girls' dreams to bring about a discussion on a topic that many teenagers can identify with, namely the desire to fulfill their own plans and dreams. The recognition factor should engage the students and hopefully make them open about their own opinions and experiences. This allows for a good discussion and an intercultural dialogue since desired outcomes of the protagonists' conflicts are culturally bound.

The upcoming teaching plan has a duration of four weeks, and the students have three English lessons a week, each lasting 45 minutes. Therefore, the teaching project will last for 12 lessons. The following teaching plan can also be found in a concise and clear table as an appendix (appendix 1).

Lesson one

In the first lesson, as a preliminary activity before the students watch the film clips, they will be presented with still images from the films (appendix 2). One learning objective is for the students to understand that every father-daughter relationship is unique, even if many also share the same characteristics, e.g. mutual love. To learn this, the students will be presented with still images from four films and practice expressing themselves with fluency when discussing these pictures. The students will not be told in advance that the common factor is a coming-of-age story where the protagonist is a teenage girl who seeks to fulfill her dreams. Very little context will be provided to prevent their free imagination from being stifled. The students will be asked questions about what they think is happening in the pictures and should

not only discuss exactly what they see in the picture, but also the relationships, the facial expressions, the feelings, and the situation.

Lesson two

In the second lesson, the learning objectives are for the students to be able to present the film clips and discuss the content, and hence explore and describe the protagonist's dreams for her future and whether her parents share the same vision. By putting oneself into the mindset of others and thus reflecting on and discussing why the protagonists act as they do, one can more easily put oneself into another's point of view. More concretely, it will be discussed why the protagonists find it necessary to defy their parents' wishes in order to follow their own dreams. In this lesson, the students are shown film clips where the father and daughter are arguing (appendix 3). This argument can make students interested in whether a parent should interfere in their child's plans for the future. Six film clips will be shown, one or two from each film, and there will be a discussion for each of the four films. After each film, the students will be asked questions which they will discuss in groups of four (appendix 5). In the first scene shown from *Into the Beat* (2020), film clip 1, Katya's father is angry with her since he has discovered that she wants to quit ballet. In the second scene, film clip 2, Katya and her father argue about what kind of dance style Katya should choose. By gaining an insight into other people's conflicts and solutions, one can learn to see situations from different points of view. If the students learn about conflicts that others may face in a detachment process from their parents on their way to adulthood, it can help them prepare for possible support and obstacles they may experience themselves one day.

Before the students will be shown the first film clip from *Mia and the White Lion* (2018), they need to be told some of the background story: Mia has run away from home with her lion, Charlie, because she has found out that her father sells lions to hunters. This first film clip, number 3, contains the biggest argument where Mia has run away from home. After this film clip, the students are asked questions where the aim is to take a deep dive into why Mia has run away from home to try to understand her choice. It is not necessary to agree with her choice, but it is desirable that the students understand and respect why she acts the way she does.

In *Sand Storm*, the argument between the daughter and the father will be shown through two film clips. The background story the students need to know is that Layla lives with her mother

and her little sister because her father has just married a second wife and lives with another woman, even though he is also still married to Layla's mother. In the first clip, clip 4, Layla introduces her father and boyfriend to each other, but her father does not approve of her choice. In the next clip, movie clip 5, her father has found a man he wants her to marry, but Layla disagrees with him. The topic of discussion will be how one should choose a life partner - whether it is entirely up to the individual or whether one should listen to other wishes and opinions or whether it is simply the parents who should decide everything.

Before the students are shown the clip from *Skater Girl*, they need to know some of the back story which is that her father has arranged a marriage for Prerna to prevent her from participating in a skateboarding competition. The excerpt of *Skater Girl*, film clip 6, shows Prerna telling her mother about her passion for skateboarding and dreams for the future, while her mother explains that duty and destiny trumps dreams. After watching the film clip, the students will discuss gender roles and gender equality. The teacher can initiate and lead such a discussion by asking open questions (appendix 5)

Lessons three and four

During these two lessons, the competence aim is for the students to develop abilities to see things from different perspectives and thus try to identify and sympathize with other people. The learning objective is that by the end of the fourth lesson, the students should be able to list positive and negative elements of an arranged marriage. This objective is in accordance with the English curriculum, which states that the English subject should contribute to the students' development of an intercultural understanding of different ways of living and ways of thinking (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022e).

In the third and fourth lessons, there will be shown film clips where the father and daughter come to an agreement and find a solution (appendix 4). Film clips number 7-10, with a total duration of 15 minutes, will be shown and discussed in the third lesson while the two film clips from *Skater Girl* will be presented in the fourth lesson. Suggestions for concrete questions to ask the students about the films are attached as appendix 5.

In the third scene selected from *Into the Beat*, film clip 7, Katya auditions for the hip-hop dance group even though her father has not permitted it. Her father shows up at the audition and gives her a nod of agreement, shedding a tear as he looks at her. Then the students will discuss what they think about Katya defying her father's will and choosing to follow her heart.

In the excerpt where Mia and her father find their way back to each other, film clip 8, the father admits that he had made a mistake and Mia had been right all along. The students will therefore discuss why her father changed his mind and why it was so important for Mia to save the lion.

Two film clips from *Sand Storm* will be shown. In the first one, film clip 9, Layla elopes and plans to start a new life with her boyfriend but changes her mind at the last second. Instead , she chooses to accept her father's plans for an arranged marriage to a man unknown to her. In the other film clip, film clip 10, Layla's little sister looks through a window and sees Layla dressed as a bride. After watching both clips, the students should discuss why the father wants to marry Layla off and why Layla accepts the arranged marriage instead of following her heart. In addition, the students will discuss the positive and negative aspects of an arranged marriage.

In film clip 11 from *Skater Girl*, Prerna is about to be married and she decides to sneak out through the roof to skate one final time. In the next clip, clip 12, it is the first time Prerna's parents observe her skate and they are amazed by her good skateboarding skills where she ends up winning the national skateboarding competition. After watching the film clips, the students will discuss whether all individuals should have equal opportunities regardless of their gender or whether there are certain aspects that should be gender-specific. They will also discuss whether it is understandable that Prerna's father does not like his daughter skating even though he has no objection to his son doing it. It could perhaps be difficult for the students to identify with all the characters in the films, and e.g. understand Prerna's father's actions, so the teachers should encourage the students to empathize with the main characters, according to Bland (2018, p. 9). To teach the students sympathy and empathy there are four practices which could be integrated into the teaching, which are perspective taking, putting aside judgment, trying to understand what others feel, and communicating that one understands (Morin, s.a.). When trying to take another person's perspective, the students must try to forget their own feelings and put themselves in someone else's shoes. When trying to put aside judgement, instead of jumping to conclusions, the students can be asked "What more do I need to know about the situation to understand it better?". When the students are asked to try to understand what others feel, they should be encouraged to draw understanding from their previous experiences. The teacher should be a good role model and communicate that she/he understands and start sentences with "I hear that you", "It sounds like you", and "I understand that you". Sympathy is described by Murray Smith (in Tseng, 2013, p. 589) as

consisting of three elements: *Recognition*, which deals with the viewers recognizing the characters' identities, *alignment*, which is a process where the viewer gains access to the characters' actions and thus what they know and feel, and *allegiance* where the spectator is both cognitively and emotionally stimulated by the characters. Therefore, the viewer's allegiance to the characters is influenced by several factors, such as the characters' actions and behavior and information gathered through adjustments during the movie.

At the end of this lesson, students are asked to write a list of the pros and cons of an arranged marriage. They must first do this individually, then discuss it in their group. Then those who wish to speak in plenary can say something to the class if they have something they would like to share.

Lesson five

In the fifth lesson, the students will compare the film characters and find similarities and differences, and the learning objectives is for the students to express their opinions. Expressing their opinions and having a dialogue with fellow students can lead to an exchange and development of opinions that can enrich their thinking and hopefully prevent prejudice by developing an understanding of that their perception is culturally dependent (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022e).

When some of the characters in the film clips are to be compared, the Venn diagram will be used. A Venn diagram is a visual representation of the relationship between at least two elements, developed by John Venn in the 19th century. The Venn diagram consists of at least two overlapping circles where you can write what is common in the middle and what is unique on the sides. The diagram is used to bring out similarities and differences, so the teacher must choose texts that are suitable for comparison when working with this diagram, for example topics such as the view of gender roles in different cultures. This chart is useful as a post-reading activity to structure new information gained from studying the still images and watching the film clips.
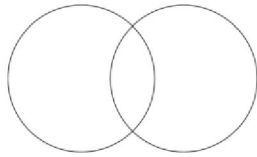
Fig. 6. An example of a Venn diagram

Students are asked to create a Venn diagram individually to find overlapping elements and focus on similarities between people rather than differences. In the first circle they are going to write the name "Layla" and write some facts they know about her, e.g. Israel, village, household, her father decides who she will marry, patriarchal society, etc. In the second circle they write the name "Mia" and facts about her, e.g. South Africa, lions, adventurous, runs away from home, individualistic society, etc. In the middle and overlapping circle, they are going to write what they have in common, e.g. teenagers, girls, family, school, has a conflict with her father, has plans and dreams for her future, etc. The reason why the students should compare Layla and Mia, is that Layla lives in a patriarchal society where the man decides the most and the father is the head of the family, while Mia is used to living in a society where women's voices must be heard and listened to. Layla may have limited potential for dream fulfillment compared to Mia due to the culture they are born and raised in, since a factor that can influence their dreams is to what extent there is gender equality in their culture. The Venn diagram can be a great opportunity for a small discussion about similarities and differences which may increase the students understanding of other people's actions and make it easier to respect their decisions.

Lessons six, seven, and eight

In lessons 6, 8 and 8, the students must write a reflective text in which they express what their dreams are and how it is possible to fulfill them. The text should contain their personal experiences, ideas, and plans for the future. Learning about how to fulfill one's dreams can be a useful experience for the students as it can help them develop skills they will need to follow their dreams and achieve their goals.

Prior to the written task, the students must reflect on the differences and similarities between the protagonists in the film clips to gain a better insight into the choices these teenage girls make to achieve their dreams. The students will discuss cultural factors that can influence people's actions such as gender roles and norms in society. The English curriculum in Norway points out that students must be equipped with enough linguistic and intercultural competence to be able to express themselves, which can lead to new perspectives and new ways of thinking about other people's lifestyles as well as their own (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022d). Additionally, it is stated in the curriculum that "English is an important subject when it comes to cultural understanding, communication, all-round education and identity development" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022e). After these lessons it is expected that the students will be able to discuss the film clips and to write a formal text "with structure and coherence that describe, narrate and reflect, and are adapted to the purpose, recipient and situation" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022a).

When students are given a writing assignment, they need to know *what* to write, *how* to write it and *why*. Hence, a good starting point will be the writing triangle. The writing triangle is a concise and visual representation of what the teacher must consider when handing out assignments and will therefore be used in the introduction part to the students. Furthermore, it is important that the teacher conveys this to the students so that they experience the task as meaningful and motivational (The Writing Centre at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2022).
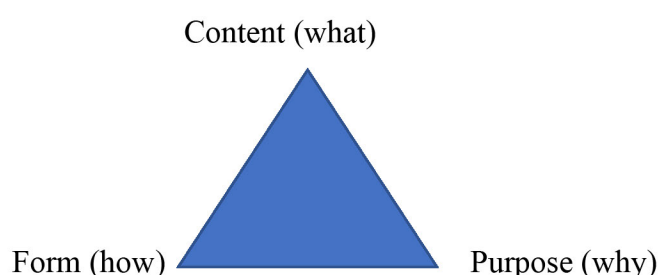

Fig. 7. Modified model of The Writing Triangle (The Writing Centre at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2022).

The content is a reflective text about a topic the teacher has chosen for them, and the topic is dream fulfillment. It is not enough to simply tell what the topic is, but the students also need help to get started. To start a thought process with them, they can be asked whether they have any role models or any celebrities they admire, and if so, ask them to explain why. By the teacher providing real-life examples of people who have achieved their dreams, the students can be inspired and motivated to think about what their own dreams are. The importance of the students' own efforts and hard work can be displayed by emphasizing the obstacles and hindrances that the real-life people faced on their way to success.

One real-life person who can be used as an example is Malala Yousafzai. Malala is a Pakistani political activist who is internationally known for her work for girls' right to education. When she was only 12 years old, she wrote an anonymous blog for the BBC's Urdu edition where she wrote what it was like to live under Taliban control. As a 15-year-old, she was shot in the head and neck by the Taliban while on a school bus. After this, she won the Nobel Peace Prize and several other prizes for her work against the Taliban and for girls' right to education where she promotes non-violence and mutual respect (Nyborg, 2023).

After discussing their own dreams and that of others, the students need an explanation of what a reflective text contains. That is the form and the *how* in the writing triangle. It is important to explain the genre features of a reflective text to the students and tell them that reflective writing is written in the first person, and is subjective, analytical, free flowing and a time investment (Bassot in University of Cambridge, 2023). A reflective text should not focus on describing what has happened in the past but rather look to the future. In addition, the reflective text should contain the students' personal feelings and thoughts, which may lead the students to learn more about themselves. Getting to know oneself better is identity-building and can lead to more self-confidence.

The written task the students will be given is to imagine what they want their life to look like when they turn thirty. They must fantasize about what kind of job they will have in the future, where in the world they live, what kind of life situation they are in and whether they have children. The teacher should inspire the students to be creative and consider whether there are any unconventional choices they can make to fulfill their dreams. By exploring different opportunities and interests, they can discover new areas they are passionate about.

Once the students have envisioned what their lives will look like by the time they turn thirty, they must consider how to achieve that goal. To reach their long-term goals, they need to

break down their goals into smaller, achievable goals to focus on what small steps they need to take to achieve their dreams and plans They should reflect on what obstacles they may encounter and explore how their dream fulfillment can affect the society around them. The students should be made aware that missteps are a natural part of the learning process and that they need to focus on their goals and the positive learning outcome during their journey, even though they may encounter challenges. The teacher can help in this process by encouraging the students to see mistakes as an opportunity for new learning and personal growth.

The purpose, and the *why* of the writing triangle, is that students learn about the world around them and the people in it- and more about themselves too. This assignment covers many of the objectives in the curriculum in English, such as exploring and describing other people's lifestyles, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity. A way to make the students understand the purpose and to feel that the assignment is worth writing, and not just another assignment that has to be written and is then forgotten, is to make them aware of the final product and who the recipient is, since creating a meaningful writing situation and having an authentic recipient can be motivating (The Writing Centre at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2022). When presenting the reflective text to real recipients, it helps to create motivation to complete the product. For the students, it is important that errors and mistakes are corrected, so they will use Word and get an explanation of what the red, blue, and green lines under the words mean and be instructed in how to correct them. The real recipient can be several people such as another student in the class, a school newspaper, or to preserve the text in a time capsule not to be opened until a class reunion the year they turn thirty. As homework, the students must complete the text by the end of the week and hand it in to their teacher.

Lessons nine and ten

In the ninth and tenth lessons, the students will receive written feedback on their submitted reflective text, and they will then be asked to revise their texts and correct their content to the extent that it is necessary for each individual student. In the English curriculum, revision is explicitly mentioned, and it says that the students should be able to revise their own texts based on feedback (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2022a).

Lessons eleven and twelve

The last two lessons in the project, lessons 11 and 12, will be used to refine, practice on, and present their product by reading it to their class. By presenting the texts orally, the students will practice giving a presentation, expressing themselves and listening to others. In addition, hearing about other people's future dreams will make the students get to know each other better and it can be a positive contribution to the class environment.

6. Conclusion

In this master's thesis, the following research questions and sub-questions have been examined:

To what extent may an exploration of dreams for the future, through film clips, promote intercultural competence in the English classroom?

- What are the dreams of each respective protagonist?
- What obstacles do the protagonists face and what support might they receive?

Through a close analysis of the protagonists' dreams, it has been shown what obstacles and support the four teenage girls have encountered on their journey towards their dream fulfillment. By highlighting the protagonists' dreams, it has been made possible to compare the various challenges they face and analyze which cultural aspects influence their choices and opportunities. By discussing the protagonists' dreams, the students can be inspired to express their own thoughts about the future, where they voice their own, their family's, and their society's expectations of them and thus enter an intercultural dialogue when comparing their own situations to the protagonists'.

An intercultural dialogue may be useful since we live in a diverse world with many cultures which affect most aspects of people's lives, such as their mindsets, lifestyles, relationships, upbringing conditions, norms, and expectations. The cultural aspects may affect an individual's life by either limiting or expanding a person's options since the culture we grow up with - and in - shapes us and shows us what is acceptable behavior and forms our expectations. A cultural aspect that affects people's lives and opportunities to fulfill their dreams is what kind of cultural values a society has. Societies can tend towards either an individualistic or a more collectivistic view of humanity and these societies have different value bases. The individual's freedom to make one's own choices in life is highly valued in an individualistic society, while in a collectivistic society it is most desirable to be part of something bigger than themselves, e.g. a family or a community. Another cultural aspect that can influence a person's potential for dream fulfillment may be the society's gender norms since a teenage girl's development opportunities depend on to what extent there is gender equality in the society in which she lives. Since people have different views on life and value individual freedom and loyalty differently, they will also shape their lives differently. This

difference can lead to some people finding it difficult to grasp other people's dreams and life choices, but an intercultural dialogue can increase people's intercultural competence and thus enable people to understand each other better and avoid misunderstandings and miscommunication. When learning about, and becoming aware of, other people's worldviews and cultures, one can learn to interpret other people's cultural codes and become more equipped for communicating when meeting people with a different cultural background. This leads to understanding, tolerance, acceptance, and inclusion.

The suggested teaching in the classroom aims to promote intercultural competence in the English classroom. The students' cultural awareness may be strengthened by exploring the dreams of the film clips' protagonists and discussing what obstacles they face and the support they might receive. One can increase students' intercultural competence by showing them still images and film clips, discussing people's choices in life and thus facilitate an intercultural dialogue. Showing film clips in the ELT classroom has been chosen as a means to increase the students' intercultural competence since films can give cultural insight and raise awareness of similarities and differences between one's own life and that of others. By adding a written individual assignment, students can immerse themselves in intercultural aspects like gender roles, family bonds, and growing up. By increasing the students' intercultural competence, they will gain more knowledge of the fact that other people's outlook on life can differ from their own and that being different is not something negative, but simply something else. If students receive intercultural education, their tolerance increase, and their lives can be enriched. By participating in an intercultural dialogue and discussing other people's choices and behavior, one can also have one eyes opened to one's own choices in life, because by understanding other people's life perspective, one can gain insight into one's own life and get to know oneself.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Teaching plan

Lesson number	Content
1	Show the students four still images (fig. 1-4) and discuss them.
2	Show six film clips from the four films (film clip 1-6, running time 13 minutes). The common feature for the clips is an argument between the parent and the daughter. The students are asked questions after each film, and they are to discuss them in groups of four people.
3-4	Show six film clips where the father and the daughter come to an agreement (film clip 7-12). A total running time of 25 minutes, so the film clips are divided into two lessons. Lesson 3: Show film clip 7-10 (running time 15 minutes). Lesson 4: Show film clip 11-12 (running time 10 minutes) + writing advantages / disadvantages of an arranged marriage.
5	The students will write a Venn diagram (fig. 6). One with Layla and Mia and the other with Katya and Katya's father.
6-8	The students will write a reflective text about their plans and dreams for the future. The students will be presented with the reflective text's genre features, the writing triangle (fig.7), and information about celebrities' dream fulfillment.
9-10	The students will receive feedback from the teacher on their reflective text. The students will revise their drafts and finalize their assignment.
11-12	Finishing touches and the students will present their reflective text to the class.

Lesson 1- Still images

Still images in the first lesson

Still image	Time	Film	Content/Scenes
Fig. 1	7.42	*Into the Beat*	A man and a woman hugging each other. It is the father, Victor, and the daughter, Katya.
Fig. 2	35.55	*Mia and the White Lion*	Four people sitting in a car laughing. It is a father, mother, older brother and the little sister, Mia.
Fig. 3	2.25	*Sand Storm*	Two people sitting in a car. The woman is driving. It is a father and his daughter Layla.
Fig. 4	1.40.26	*Skater Girl*	Three people appear in the picture – a father, a mother and their teenage daughter, Prerna, who has just won a skateboarding competition.

Lesson 2 – Film clips with an argument

The order of the film clips in the second lesson when there is an argument.

Film clip	Running time	Film	Content/Scenes
1	Approx. 50.00-53.00.	*Into the Beat*	Katya's father discovers that she has not been to ballet lessons and confronts her.
2	Approx. 1.19.00-1.21.00.	*Into the Beat*	Katya dances hip-hop in her bedroom, while her father plays loud classical music in the living room.
3	Approx. 1.01.00-1.04.00.	*Mia and the White Lion*	Mia has run off with Charlie and her father comes after her.
4	Approx. 40.00-42.00.	*Sand Storm*	Layla convinces her father to meet her boyfriend. Layla and her father end up having an argument.
5	Approx. 1.57.00-1.58.30.	*Sand Storm*	Layla begs her father to talk to her, but he is furious and says she must marry another man.
6	Approx. 1.25.30-1.27.00.	*Skater Girl*	Prerna is to be married on the same day as the international skateboarding competition. She does

			not want to marry but her mother tries to convince her that marrying is her destiny.

Lessons 3 and 4- Film clips with redemption

The order of the film clips in the third and fourth lesson where the parents and the daughter come to an agreement.

Film clip	Running time	Film	Content/Scenes
7	Approx. 1.30.00-1.34.00	*Into the Beat*	Reconciliation between Katya and her father when her father shows up to her audition for the hip-hop dance group.
8	Approx. 1.26.00-1.31.00	*Mia and the White Lion*	Mia is totally exhausted after a wild adventure where she has fought to save her lion and get him to safety. At the end, her father helps her to protect the lion and brings him to safety.
9	Approx. 1.13.00-1.17.00	*Sand Storm*	Layla elopes and are about to meet her boyfriend, but changes her mind in the last second. Instead of meeting him, she meets her father and agrees to marry the man he has chosen for her. Her only conditioning is that her father drives home to her mother.
10	Approx. 1.20.00-1.21.30	*Sand Storm*	Layla is dressed as a bride and is in a bad mood. Her

			new husband wants to please her.
11	Approx. 1.28.45- 1.34.15	*Skater Girl*	Prerna is just about to get married, but escapes through the roof and skates off to the skating competition.
12	Approx. 1.37.00- 1.42.00	*Skater Girl*	Prerna takes part in the skating competition. She wins and everyone applaud her- also her parents.

Examples of questions

Films	Questions
Into the Beat	After film clip 1 and 2: What do you think Katya feels? Why do you think she broke the family picture? What do you think she dreams about? How do you think Katya's father feels? Why do you think he reacts the way he does? What do you think her father wants Katya to do with her life? Who do you think should get to decide what Katya should do with her life? After film clip 7: Why do you think Katya went to the audition even though her father did not want her to? What do you think Katya felt when she saw her father? Why do you think the father shed a tear? Could they have come to an agreement in another way? Do you agree or disagree with Katya's choice? What would you have done if you were in her situation? What consequences can there be if one chooses to defy one's parents' decisions?
Mia and the White Lion	After film clip 3: Why has Mia run away from home? What do you think about Mia running away from home - is it understandable or not? What do you think her father is thinking when he is looking for his daughter? Why do you think Mia shot her father with the anesthetic dart? What do you think Mia felt after she shot him? Was it right or wrong for her to shoot her father? Are there times when it is right to run away from home? After film clip 8:

	Why do you think it meant so much to Mia to save the lion? What do you think her father meant by Mia being right and able to change the world? Do you think it is okay that the police have been allowed to shoot the lion- why / why not? Why do you think the father changed his mind and joined in saving the lion? What do you think will happen to Mia and her father afterwards?
Sand Storm	After film clip 4 and 5: What would you feel if you were to introduce your boyfriend/girlfriend to your father for the first time? What do you think Layla feels when she discovers that her boyfriend's and father's first meeting did not end well? Why do you think her father feels embarrassed? Why do you think her father is angry? Why do you think her father wants her to marry another man? Do you think that people should be allowed to decide their own boyfriend/girlfriend? How would you describe Layla's relationship with her mother? After film clip 9 and 10: Why do you think Layla wanted to run away from home to be with her boyfriend? Why do you think Layla changed her mind and instead went to meet her father? Why do you think her father wants to decide who will be his daughter's partner? Why do you think Layla says it is okay to marry whoever her father has decided? Why do you think she is in a bad mood on her wedding day? What is your impression of Munir? Why do you think Layla and her little sister look at each other in silence? What do you think awaits her little sister in the future? What do you think about arranged marriages? What can be positive about arranged marriages and what can be negative?
Skater Girl	After film clip 6: Why do you think Prerna does not want to marry the man her parents have found for her? What do you think her mother means when she says that no family is complete without a boy? Do you think that boys and girls have equal value in a family? What do you think Prerna wants out of life? Why do you think her mother stops smiling when Prerna asks if skating might be

	her destiny? How do you think the relationship between Prerna and her mother is? After film clip 11 and 12: Why do you think Prerna wants to skate one last time before she gets married? Why do you think she is smiling as she skates off towards the competition? What do you think Prerna felt when she won the competition? And what do you think her parents thought? What do you think will happen after this scene is finished - will she get married? What do you think about girls skating? Are there any activities that you think only girls or only boys should do? Why do you think her father does not like it? How do you think things are going with the family? Do I believe her father is doing the best he can for his daughter? What more do I need to know about the situation to understand it better?