



Research paper

Intercultural approaches to second and foreign language instruction: A longitudinal video study

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ABSTRACT

Despite international recommendations, there is little evidence of teachers' intercultural approaches to language instruction. Combining video recordings and teacher interviews in Norway, this study found that intercultural approaches to teaching were more prominent in English instruction than in French instruction. We observed teaching practices prioritising intercultural *knowledge and critical understanding* over *skills, attitudes and values*. These findings provide critical insight into intercultural language instruction. One aspect that makes this study unique is the duration of data collection over seven years. It is also a strength that the study followed the same two teachers over this long period of time.

1. Introduction

In the past three decades, developing intercultural competence has become a primary objective of language education (Byram, 1997, 2020; Dearsorff, 2006; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Risager, 2007). Intercultural competence is crucial to developing the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding necessary for the globalised world. We interact with people of different personal and social identities who “belong simultaneously to and identify with many different groups and their associated cultures” (Council of Europe, 2018a, p. 30). This view suggests that cultural affiliations are fluid and dynamic as people move from one situation to another and change their cultural affiliations over time as a result of personal, political and historical developments. The Council of Europe (2018a) argued that intercultural situations arise not only when we meet people from other (national) cultures, but also when we meet people who have different cultural affiliations from ourselves. As intercultural competence is not acquired automatically, it needs to be learnt and practised.

Teaching practices that aim to develop students' intercultural competence are essential in making young people reflect on contemporary social challenges. Therefore, examining how teachers address intercultural competence in language classrooms is crucial. However, prior research has found little evidence about the teaching of intercultural competence in language instruction, possibly because culture and intercultural topics are overshadowed by an emphasis on linguistic skills (Asay et al., 2019; Tolosa et al., 2018; Vold, 2014). Furthermore, few

such studies have conducted empirical observations of intercultural approaches in naturally occurring language instruction; this is opposed to researcher-manipulated implementation, which prompts certain aspects of instruction (Hassan et al., 2005), making it difficult to identify whether intercultural competence is actually addressed in classrooms.

This article responds to the need to study whether and how patterns in evidence of intercultural approaches to language instruction are observed in the classroom. We examined how two language teachers teach English and French respectively and the role of intercultural approaches in their teaching. We also interviewed them retrospectively about their teaching. By systematically filming and investigating naturally occurring English and French instruction in a lower secondary school in Norway (students aged 13–15 years) over a period of seven years, the main aim was to gain new knowledge about how instructional approaches to intercultural competence was addressed in real classroom settings in two language subjects.

1.1. Unpacking intercultural competence

According to the Council of Europe, intercultural situations “arise when an individual perceives another person (or group of people) as being culturally different from themselves” (CoE, 2018a, p. 31). Intercultural competence is subsequently defined as “the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant psychological resources in order to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands, challenges and opportunities presented by intercultural situations” (CoE, 2018a, p. 32). In

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addition, central definitions within the field of intercultural language education have insisted on the ability to question one's own opinions, beliefs and behaviours by comparing them with others' opinions, beliefs and behaviours (Byram, 2021) and on intercultural speakers' understanding of themselves as world citizens (Risager, 2007). The complexity of intercultural competence has also been presented as a "multidirectional" relationship between awareness and knowing, "in which knowing contributes to expanded awareness and awareness contributes to expanded knowing" (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 50). In this article, we follow this line of thought and emphasise the importance of reflecting both on one's own cultural background and on that of others, in a multidirectional perspective. We also consider that for language learners, cultural knowledge about the target language areas is essential for the development of their intercultural competence. In the context of language instruction, the teacher's approaches to developing such knowledge in the classroom is therefore necessarily intercultural, and not merely cultural.

Recent studies on intercultural approaches to second and foreign language subjects have been characterised by a variety of methodological approaches. One research strand has used document analysis to map references to intercultural competence in national curricula; for example, in modern foreign language subjects in England (Peiser & Jones, 2012) and the English subject in Norway (Heggernes, 2022). Document analyses of teaching materials have also been conducted regarding the English subject and other language subjects (Auger, 2007; Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017; De Bartolo & Mancuso, 2021; Eide, 2012, 2013; Lund, 2007, 2012, 2019; Risager, 2021, 2023; Vajta, 2012). Studies have suggested that cultural content presented in textbooks often consists of superficial facts or stereotypical views of a target country or that readers are primarily placed in the position of observers (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017; Eide, 2013; Lund, 2007, 2012, 2019; Vajta, 2012).

An important strand of research over the past decades addressed different ways to assess learners' intercultural competence. From insisting on the importance of formulating objectives for the learning processes (Byram, 1997), research has moved towards more multifaceted ways of assessing intercultural competence; including learners in the assessment process and eliciting learners' understanding of their own and others' cultures, as well as their meta-awareness of this relationship (Kohler, 2020; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010, 2013; Scarino, 2010).

Other research strands have studied intercultural competence in language subjects by using professional self-study or self-reports, specifically student and teacher surveys or interviews. Studies have shown that although most teachers were comfortable teaching culture, they addressed cultural perspectives less frequently than language skills and tended to do so in the first language rather than in the target language. Even teachers who reported being favourably disposed towards cultural or intercultural language teaching often did not practise these approaches in their classrooms (Asay et al., 2019; Oranje & Smith, 2018). These studies provided important contextual information for student perspectives on language lessons, which emphasised the crucial role of the teacher in recognising task and text potential and creating opportunities for students' participation in intercultural dialogues in a classroom (Heggernes, 2019; Hoff, 2017) as well as the importance of teacher support in influencing students' interest in intercultural topics (Kohler, 2020; Vieluf & Göbel, 2019).

In sum, these findings indicate the need to compare reported intercultural practices with actual teacher practices in language classrooms. Some observation studies have been concerned with addressing intercultural approaches to language teaching in primary school (Tolosa et al., 2018), secondary school (Göbel & Helmke, 2010; Heggernes, 2019; Hoff, 2017; Kennedy, 2020; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010; Rindal et al., 2020) and in higher education (Kohler, 2020; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Su, 2011; Truong & Tran, 2014). *In situ* studies on different educational levels emphasised the language teacher's crucial role in

intercultural education and argued it is essential to strengthen intercultural elements in teacher education and provide directives when teachers address intercultural topics (Göbel & Helmke, 2010; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Tolosa et al., 2018). Rindal et al. (2020) found that when working with cultural topics, two Norwegian English teachers focused mainly on Kramsch's (2006) notion of "big C" culture (e.g., history, national institutions, literature and the arts) and argued for the benefits of drawing on students' cultural affiliations and using authentic texts to develop students' intercultural competence.

Other observation studies focused on students by trying out strategies relevant to developing intercultural competence in the language classroom, such as films (Truong & Tran, 2014), cultural portfolio projects (Su, 2011), or studying how to counter stereotypes through "explicit intercultural comparison and reflection" (Kennedy, 2020, p. 441). Some studies were concerned with the use of literature to foster intercultural competence among students, arguing that working with fictional texts (Hoff, 2017) or picture books (Heggernes, 2019) enabled students to reflect critically on the complexities and ambiguities of intercultural encounters. However, these studies did not address teachers' intercultural approaches in the classrooms.

Although intercultural approaches have been studied in different subjects, most observation studies concerned English as a second or additional language (Göbel & Helmke, 2010; Heggernes, 2019; Hoff, 2017; Truong & Tran, 2014; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Rindal et al., 2020; Su, 2011), with fewer studies on other foreign languages (Kennedy, 2020; Kohler, 2020; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010; Tolosa et al., 2018). Observation studies conducted *in situ* infrequently involved video recording (Göbel & Helmke, 2010; Hoff, 2017; Truong & Tran, 2014; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010; Tolosa et al., 2018). With the exception of Kennedy (2020) and Rindal et al. (2020), studies were mostly interventional or experimental and did not observe naturally occurring instruction. Examining teacher practices through video recordings enables a more accurate collection of information, giving researchers the possibility to go back in time and systematically study these practices (Brevik, 2019b; Klette, 2009, 2020).

In summary, there is still much more to learn about the actual approaches to intercultural language instruction in language classrooms. Moreover, it is valuable to follow the same teachers to examine whether and how their intercultural approaches to language instruction changed over time. In this longitudinal study, we compared English as a second language and French as a foreign language teaching at a Norwegian lower secondary school. We observed the classrooms of one English teacher and one French teacher at three data collection points over seven years, involving 91 students. Based on the identified research gap, our research questions are as follows.

- RQ1: How do two language teachers, one in English and one in French at the same school, use intercultural approaches in naturally occurring language instruction over seven years?
- RQ2: Which similarities and differences in intercultural teaching practices can be identified across the two language subjects?

To answer both RQs, we used video observations as the primary data source and teacher interviews as a secondary data source to capture teachers' voices and perspectives on intercultural approaches to language instruction.

1.2. Theoretical framework

In this article, intercultural approaches to language teaching are related to a sociocultural view of learning as a social process embedded in broader contextual practices. Using Kramsch's (2006) notion of culture, Byram's (1997) and Deardorff's (2006) models of intercultural competence, and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) (CoE, 2018a) as complementary theoretical lenses, this article considers how language teachers use intercultural

approaches in the classroom. Kramsch's (2006) notion was that culture should be an integrated part of language teaching, conveying knowledge about aspects of "big C" culture and "small c" culture (e.g., customs, beliefs, ways of behaving and food). Although this distinction is not absolute, it is useful when studying teachers' intercultural practices in the classroom.

Byram's (1997) seminal model of intercultural competence still holds a prominent place within the field of educational research, on which later models have been built and extended. Byram's (1997) model comprises five dimensions; specifically, knowledge of our own culture and the culture of others (*savoirs*), skills of interpreting aspects of cultures and relating them to each other (*savoir comprendre*), skills of discovery and interaction to acquire new knowledge of cultures independently (*savoir apprendre/faire*), attitudes of relativising oneself by understanding that one's own culture is not a neutral one and of valuing people who are different from oneself (*savoir être*), and education, which emphasises the development of critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*).

Byram's (1997) model has also been criticised. Notably, Dervin (2010) argued that it is impossible to assess Byram's (1997) concept of *savoir-être* summatively because we cannot "prove or test (or trust) if somebody genuinely believes" in values such as openness to others and critical self-awareness (p. 163, original emphasis). In line with Dervin (2010), Hoff (2014) criticised Byram's (1997) conception of *savoir-être*, which she considered to be somewhat naïve, stating that "Byram's description of 'savoir-être' could [...] benefit from a more nuanced choice of words, allowing for the recognition that openness towards the Other is not the same as self-effacement" (p. 515). She asserted that focusing primarily on tolerance and acceptance of other cultures can be counterproductive to the development of intercultural competence.

Conversely, Deardorff (2006) argued that most definitions of intercultural competence remain "too general" (p. 253). To counter this weakness, she developed two models, partly based on Byram's (1997) model, that provide a more complex understanding of intercultural competence. Her models encompass the four categories of attitudes; knowledge, comprehension, and skills; internal outcome; and external outcome. While the first model was designed as a pyramid, where a learner starts at the bottom with the category 'attitudes' and moves towards the top category of 'external outcome', the second model is designed as a circle representing an ongoing process of intercultural competence development, also starting with attitudes, which indicates that developing intercultural competence is a lifelong process (Deardorff, 2006, pp. 254, 256).

In 2018, the CoE (2018a, 2018b, 2018c) published the RFCDC, in which 13 international experts presented a new model "of the competences required for democratic culture and intercultural dialogue" (2018a, p. 37). According to Byram (2020), "political events in Europe [...] led to the new framework becoming the flagship project of the Council of Europe demonstrating the commitment of member states to education for intercultural and democratic competences" (p. 181). This statement highlights the relevance of acquiring intercultural competence in today's global and unsteady world. The authors insisted on the multilayeredness of culture, asserting that "all people belong simultaneously to and identify with many different groups and their associated cultures" (CoE, 2018a, p. 30).

The RFCDC has also received some criticism. Simpson and Dervin (2019) expressed concern about what they considered Eurocentric discourses and their stigmatisation of 'the other'. This criticism was addressed by Barrett and Byram (2020), who advised that people should read the RFCDC's original volumes to acquire their own interpretations of the text. Other researchers have argued that the RFCDC is opaque and context-independent (Joris et al., 2022; Ryan & Jøsok, 2021; Telling & Serapioni, 2019; Willbergh, 2015). While rehashing this debate is beyond the scope of the present article, we aim to offer an empirical contribution to the RFCDC by making the framework's dimensions tangible in naturally occurring intercultural language instruction.

In the RFCDC, Byram's (1997) aspects of *skills* and *attitudes* were maintained, whereas the aspect of *knowledge* was extended by *critical understanding*. In addition, the new aspect of *values* was added, which mirrored the ideals of the Council of Europe and its member states (Byram, 2020). Fig. 1 illustrates the competences in the RFCDC model that have been deemed necessary for successful intercultural encounters (CoE, 2022). The framework is divided into four main areas: *values*, *attitudes*, *skills* and *knowledge and critical understanding* (CoE, 2018a; 2022). This model was designed to help educators address these competences in the classroom. *Values* comprises beliefs and guiding principles for human action; characterised by its "normative prescriptive quality" (CoE, 2018a, p. 38), indicating what individuals are expected to value in society. *Attitudes*, on the other hand, is understood as a self-determined cognitive ability, addressing the "mental orientation which an individual adopts towards someone or something" (CoE, 2018a, p. 41). Thus, attitudes are considered a state of mind. This view differentiates *attitudes* from *skills*, which is considered the capacity to do something and adapt to a situation as needed to "achieve a particular end or goal" (CoE, 2018a, p. 46), which makes skills more easily observable. Finally, *knowledge and critical understanding* are presented, respectively as "the body of information that is possessed by a person" (knowledge) and "the comprehension and appreciation of meanings [that] involve active reflection on and critical evaluation of that which is being understood and interpreted" (critical understanding) (CoE, 2018a, p. 52).

The RFCDC framework serves as the analytical lens for the study to identify whether and how teachers used intercultural approaches to English and French instruction. Specifically, we identified if they addressed the four intercultural areas (*knowledge and critical understanding*, *skills*, *attitudes* and *values*) in the classroom and whether their practices changed over time.

1.3. Education in Norway

In Norway, all children have a statutory right to 10 years of compulsory education, with an additional three years of voluntary education, regardless of where they live or their social or cultural background (Eurýdice, 2022). Students begin primary school (years 1–7) at age 6, followed by lower secondary school (years 8–10) and upper secondary school (years 11–13). In compulsory education, English is a mandatory subject in grades 1–11 and optional in years 12–13, while French is an optional subject in grades 8–13. Students usually stay in the same class throughout lower secondary school, where they have English lessons. For French learning, groups of students from different classes are mixed, and these foreign language groups remain more or less the same throughout the three years of lower secondary school.

Since its conception, the RFCDC has had a manifest influence on the Norwegian school curriculum (Heggernes, 2022). It was revised in 2020, at which time a new emphasis was placed on intercultural competence in language teaching. As in other countries (e.g., New Zealand, see Oranje & Smith, 2018), intercultural aspects were largely implicit in the former national curriculum (hereafter; LK06), whereas the current curriculum (hereafter; LK20) explicitly addressed intercultural competence, both in English and foreign language curricula. In LK06, the term "intercultural" did not appear in the English curriculum, instead emphasising cultural understanding and expressions in English-speaking countries, and in the foreign language curriculum, intercultural competence was mentioned only once. In LK20, intercultural understanding and competence were explicitly mentioned in both subjects and also emphasised in the core curriculum (Table 1).

With a national curriculum, expectations concerning students' development of intercultural competence in language subjects are the same for all schools, levels and classrooms. However, both the LK06 and LK20 curricula allow methodological freedom for teachers; meaning they can choose *how* to teach and *how* to address culture or intercultural topics in the classroom depending on professional judgement and

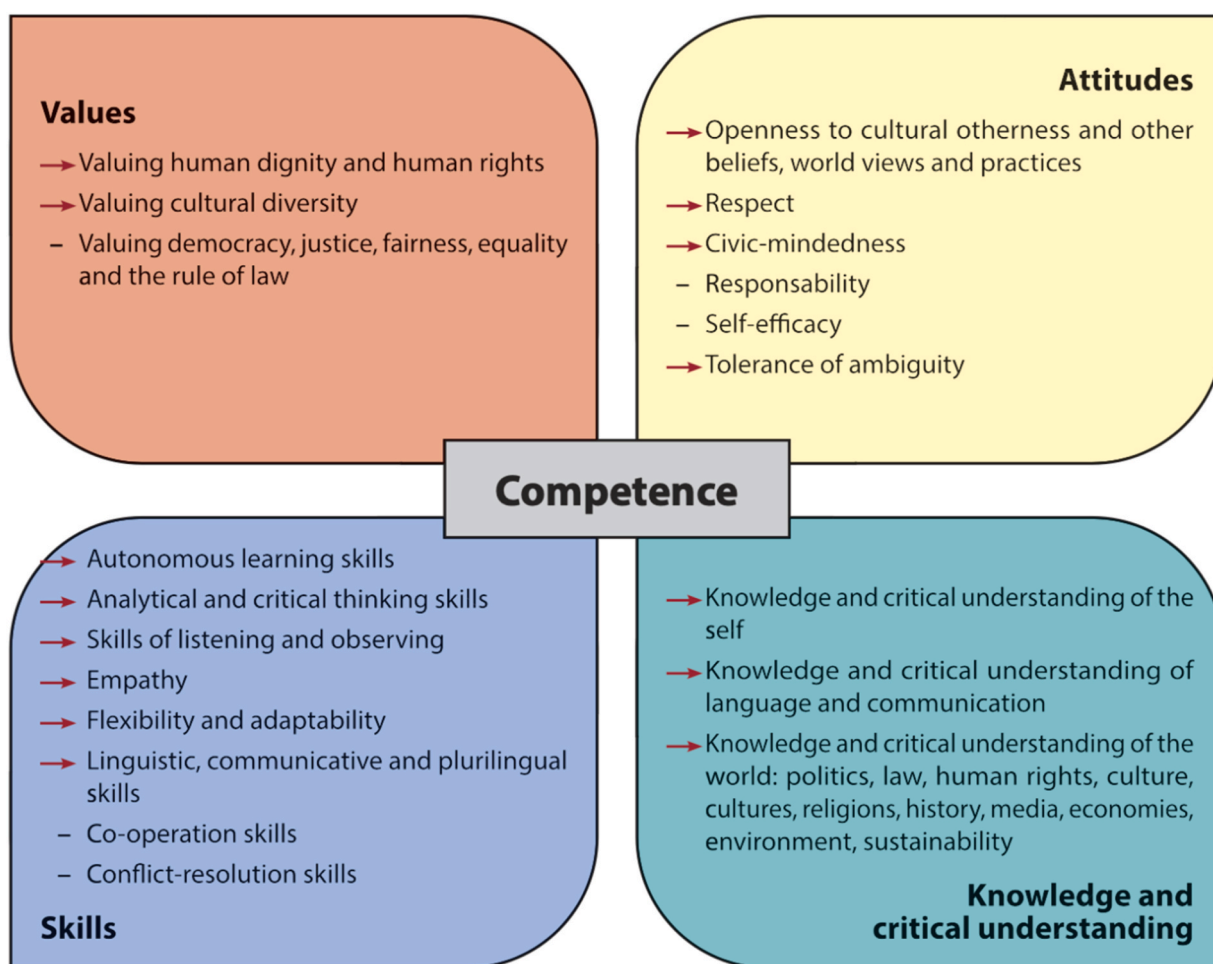


Fig. 1. The RFCDC framework with four main areas and 15 competences relevant for *intercultural encounters* indicated by arrows (CoE, 2022, p. 39, reprinted with permission).

Table 1
(Inter)cultural competence in subject curricula in Norway (our emphasis).

	LK06	LK20
English	The main subject area Culture, society and literature focuses on <i>cultural understanding</i> in a broad sense. It is based on the English-speaking countries and covers key topics connected to social issues, literature and other <i>cultural expressions</i> .	English shall help the pupils to develop an <i>intercultural understanding</i> of different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns. [...] Thus the pupils will develop <i>intercultural competence</i> enabling them to deal with different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns.
French/foreign languages	In a world with increasing mobility and digital interaction, competence in several languages and <i>intercultural competence</i> are prerequisites for successful communication and participation in many areas.	The subject can help pupils to develop their <i>intercultural understanding</i> [...] <i>Intercultural competence</i> means developing curiosity about, insight into and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity, both locally and globally, to interact with others.

experience, and student needs. This is of relevance, as Norwegian students have easy and unlimited access to English-speaking culture (in line with both “big C” and “small c” culture; Kramsch, 2006) on TV, streaming platforms and the internet (Brevik, 2019a; Brevik & Holm, 2022), whereas they have limited access to French-speaking culture outside school (Vold & Brkan, 2020). These differences in language status are in turn reflected in students’ proficiency in English and French, as well as in how teachers approach both subjects (Vold, 2022). French is considered a foreign language in Norway, while English, despite having no official legal status, is considered in transition from a foreign language towards a second language (Rindal & Brevik, 2020; Rindal, 2014; Simensen, 2014); the students are novices in French (Vold & Brkan, 2020), while they are among the most proficient users of English as a second or foreign language in Europe (Brevik et al., 2016).

2. Methods

This study is part of the large-scale video project LISE (*Linking Instruction and Student Experiences*). During 2015–2023, the research team collected data in seven lower secondary schools in Norway (grades 9–10, ages 13–15). This study drew on longitudinal data from one of the schools, following two language teachers over a period of seven years. The aim was to observe patterns in evidence of how the teachers used intercultural approaches in the classroom.

2.1. Sample

For this study, we strategically sampled a large lower secondary school in a multicultural city located in a suburban area characterised by medium to high socioeconomic status. We sampled this school based on

two criteria; first, this was the only school where both language teachers were the same across all years of data collection, and second, in the first two years of the project, interculturality was observed more often among teachers and students than in the other schools (Casoli-Uvsløkk & Vold, in review). We followed the two teachers over seven years (2015–22) with two student cohorts, involving 91 students. The teachers represented different genders, ages, teaching experiences and experiences from the target language area but had the same level of education in their respective language subjects (see Table 2).

2.2. Research Design

This was a case study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2017), analysing patterns in evidence of intercultural approaches in English and French instruction at one school. The advantage of using a case study was the ability to analyse teacher practices in detail and thus give an in-depth picture (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). In line with Nassaji (2015), the datasets were collected “in their naturally occurring settings without any intervention or manipulation of variables” (p. 129). As part of a large project, teachers and students were informed that we were interested in observing everyday teaching in the subjects. In preparation for the observation, teachers were requested to simply follow their original plan for the four lessons. We did not influence their teaching, inform them about our perspectives on intercultural practices or remind them of the emphasis of the national curricula and had no information about the teachers’ beliefs about intercultural approaches prior to data collection.

The case comprised three chronological phases: 2015–16, 2016–17 and 2021–22, covering two national curricula (LK06 and LK20), see Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 illustrates how we first collected data across two school years (2015–17) during the LK06 reform; comprising phase 1. Four years later (2021–22), when the new school reform (LK20) was in force, we collected data among the same two language teachers in phase 2, aiming to see whether their intercultural approaches to language teaching had changed with the renewed emphasis on intercultural competence in LK20. Whereas Author2 collected phase 1 data, Author1 collected phase 2 data. After the final recording, Author1 conducted three teacher interviews: two in-depth interviews with each teacher and one focus group with both; comprising phase 3. Table 3 provides an overview of the themes taught across phases.

Table 3 shows that, in the observed English lessons, both cohorts studied “big C” culture, such as the history of Ireland and England and the US presidential election, in line with the LK06 emphasis on English-speaking countries and the LK20 emphasis on intercultural understanding. In French, both cohorts studied “small c” culture, such as food and drinks, spare time and holidays and French-speaking countries worldwide, *la francophonie*, in line with increased mobility (LK06) and insight into cultural diversity to interact with others (LK20). Table 3 shows that we video-recorded four consecutive lessons in each language classroom during each school year. The frequency of observations was designed to maximise the likelihood of reliable estimates of teacher

Table 2
Overview of sample: school and teachers.

Subject	School				Teachers				
	Cohort	Year	Grade	No. of students	Gender	Age	ECTS in subject	RTLA (years)	Teaching experience (years)
English	1	2015–16	9	27	Male	20–29	90	0	5–15
		2016–17	10						
French	1	2021–22	9	30	Female	30+	90	1	25+
		2015–16	9	20		50–59			
	2016–17	10							
Total	2	2021–22	9	14		60+			
					91				

Note: ECTS: European credit transfer and accumulation system; RTLA: residence in the target language area.

practice based on earlier studies (Cohen et al., 2016). In sum, this case study comprised 24 video-recorded lessons (12 English lessons and 12 French lessons) collected at three points in time over seven years and three teacher interviews collected after the final recording.

2.3. Video-recorded lessons

Video material offers a unique opportunity to observe authentic language teaching in real classroom settings over time. It is a strength that the study followed the same two teachers over seven years and two curricular reforms. Using longitudinal video-recorded material supports detailed and systematic observation of intercultural practices, enabling data to be described in such a way that their accuracy can be confirmed by others through an audit trail available for further evaluation and confirmation (Klette, 2020; Nassaji, 2015). In the video design, two palm-sized cameras and two microphones simultaneously recorded the lessons. One wall-mounted camera placed at the back of the classroom faced the teacher, and the other one at the front faced the students. One microphone was on the teacher, and the other one fixed in the middle of the room to capture the students’ voices. Thus, the researchers could simultaneously study the teacher’s and the students’ actions and reactions. This design provided reasonably good video and audio recordings of teacher discourse, whole-class discourse, and student interactions (Brevik, 2019b; Hjeltnes et al., 2017).

2.4. Teacher interviews

In the semi-structured interviews, we encouraged the teachers to reflect on their practices. Interviews were chosen because of the affordances of an in-person conversation with teachers about their views on intercultural approaches to language instruction over time. Combining individual interviews and a focus group (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) offered the opportunity to capture their views on intercultural practices within and across the two language subjects, concerning both the recorded lessons and their intercultural practices in general. We designed two semi-structured interview guides (see Table 4). The interviews were conducted in Norwegian, audio recorded and transcribed in full by Author1.

2.5. Analytical instrument: the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC)

Sharing Deardorff’s (2006) view concerning the pertinence of using models when studying how teachers approach intercultural competence, we decided to use the RFCDC model developed by the CoE (2018a, 2018b, 2018c) as our main analytical lens. There are clear advantages to using established observation protocols to analyse classroom practices, such as the possibility of conducting comparative and cumulative research that draws on validated observation systems of naturally occurring classroom practices (Bell et al., 2019; Kure, Brevik, & Blikstad-Balas, 2022). However, as no common coding manual existed for the observation of patterns in evidence of intercultural competence,

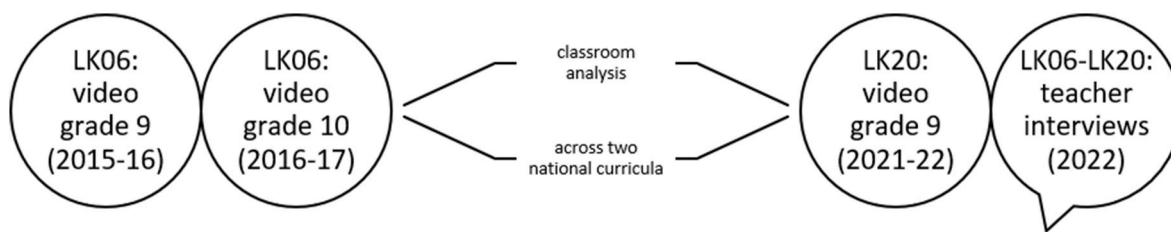


Fig. 2. Exploratory case study design across the LK06 educational reform in force from 2006 to 2020, and the LK20 educational reform in force from autumn 2020.

Table 3
Overview of themes in the English and French lessons across seven years.

School				Language Instruction	Data	
	Subject	Cohort	Year		Grade	Theme
English	1	2015–16	9	History of England and Ireland	4	
		2016–17	10	US presidential election	4	
French	2	2021–22	9	History of England and Ireland	4	1+1
		2015–16	9	Food and drinks	4	
		2016–17	10	French-speaking countries around the world, <i>la francophonie</i>	4	
	2	2021–22	9	Spare time and holidays	4	1+1
					24	3^a

^a 3 = three interviews in total: two one-on-one interviews plus one focus group comprising both teachers.

Table 4
Semi-structured interview guides.

Individual interviews	Focus group
Introduction	Introduction
Part 1: English/French instruction in general	Part 1: Similarities and differences between English and French instruction
Part 2: Teaching of English-/French-speaking cultures	Part 2: Intercultural competence in the LK20 curricula
Part 3: Addressing intercultural competence	Part 3: Collaboration across language subjects
Part 4: The differences between LK06 and LK20	

we adapted the RFCDC (CoE, 2018a) as an observation protocol in our analysis because developing its competences are a matter of classroom teaching (CoE, 2018a). To our knowledge, this study is the second to use this framework to systematically observe patterns in evidence of teachers' intercultural approaches, building on and extending Yulita's (2018) study, which used a preliminary version of the RFCDC.

2.6. Data analysis

Both authors analysed the videos to identify patterns in evidence of intercultural practices. To conduct a detailed analysis, we scored all videos using the *InterAct* program, which offers synchronised viewing and coding of video-recorded data (see Table 5).

Following the RFCDC framework for intercultural encounters, each segment was analysed for patterns in evidence of approaches to *knowledge and critical understanding, skills, attitudes and values*. We analysed the data in four phases.

Phase 1: Identifying lessons and segments in evidence of intercultural approaches. Across English lessons, we identified all lessons involving intercultural approaches. This initial identification consisted of Author1

systematically observing lessons to determine whether they contained patterns in evidence of intercultural approaches to any of the four intercultural areas. Rare borderline cases were discussed with Author2. Language lessons in lower secondary school cover many themes, meaning lessons are not solely dedicated to intercultural approaches. Therefore, many activities in video-recorded lessons are not relevant to this study. To systematically analyse relevant teaching practice, we divided English and French lessons into 15-min segments and identified all segments with intercultural approaches. We excluded segments involving students' intercultural competence, without teachers using intercultural approaches. This procedure identified 82 relevant segments across 23 English and French lessons.

Phase 2: Coding of RFCDC framework. After identifying all relevant segments containing intercultural approaches, we coded the video recordings in two parallel processes. First, Author1 coded segments based on the RFCDC Framework (CoE, 2022). Second, because each 15-min segment was scored for four areas (see Fig. 1), each segment was analysed to ensure a systematic overview of all intercultural areas demonstrated within each segment. For example, in only one segment, a teacher may have addressed both *knowledge and critical understanding and skills*. Whereas the framework describes intercultural skills by operationalising six competences, we needed to ensure we captured all relevant occurrences, even when these co-occurred in a segment, for a more complete overview of the intercultural areas addressed.

Phase 3: Double coding. To ensure reliability and transparency, Author1 coded all 24 lessons, comprising 112 segments for teaching approaches to all four RFCDC areas. Author2 double-coded 25% of the material. Double-coded segments were selected to ensure a spread across subjects, teachers and years. This procedure resulted in a total inter-rater agreement of 90.5% of segments, with high consistency across segments and time. For the 9.5% with an identified disagreement, the authors discussed each segment and reviewed the intercultural episodes together until full agreement was reached (see justification in

Table 5
Overview of segments for each video-recorded language lesson across seven years.

	2015–16		2016–17		2021–22		Total	
	lessons	segments	lessons	segments	lessons	segments	lessons	segments
English	4	19	4	20	4	16	12	55
French	4	19	4	20	4	18	12	57

Table 6
The four competence areas in the RFCDC model.

Definition (CoE, 2018a)	Operationalisation	Example	Justification
<p>Values are general beliefs that individuals hold about the desirable goals that should be striven for in life. They motivate action and they also serve as guiding principles for deciding how to act. Values transcend specific actions and contexts, and they have a normative prescriptive quality about what ought to be done or thought across many different situations. Values offer standards or criteria for: evaluating actions, both one's own and those of other people; justifying opinions, attitudes and behaviours; deciding between alternatives; planning behaviour; and attempting to influence others. (CoE, 2018a, p. 38). Two sets of values are relevant for intercultural encounters (CoE, 2022, p. 39): valuing human dignity and human rights; valuing cultural diversity</p>	<p>Teacher prompts students to express or reflect upon the values of human dignity and human rights or the value of cultural diversity in an intercultural situation in the classroom, to act or reflect on how they or others could act, based on an expressed value, to justify opinions, attitudes, and behaviours.</p>	<p>Student: De er veldig forskjellige [fra hverandre] [They are very different [from each other]] Teacher: Ja, men likevel – <i>quand même</i> [...] hva betyr <i>quand même</i>? [...] Likevel, likevel er de supervenninner, begge to. Og <i>partager</i>, hva betyr det, <i>partager</i>? <i>Partager</i> er å ... ? [Yes, but still– <i>quand même</i> [...] what does <i>quand même</i> mean? [...]] Still, still, they are the best of friends. And <i>partager</i>, what does <i>partager</i> mean? <i>Partager</i>, it means to?) Student: Dele. [Share] Teacher: Dele, ja! De deler alt, <i>on partage tout</i>. [Share, yes ! They share everything] (see Transcript 14: French lesson, 9th grade, 2021–22).</p>	<p><i>Cultural diversity</i>: The French teacher prompted the students to reflect upon the values expressed by certain words in a text about a girl from France and a girl from Algeria who were best friends. These words, “<i>quand même</i> [still]” and “<i>partager</i> [share]”, highlight the valuing of cultural diversity; indicating that <i>although</i> the girls are different, they <i>share</i> everything.</p>
<p>An attitude is the overall mental orientation which an individual adopts towards someone or something (for example a person, a group, an institution, an issue, an event, a symbol). Attitudes usually consist of four components: a belief or opinion about the object of the attitude, an emotion or feeling towards the object, an evaluation (either positive or negative) of the object, and a tendency to behave in a particular way towards that object. (CoE, 2018a, p. 41). Four attitudes are important for intercultural encounters (CoE, 2022, p. 39): openness to cultural otherness and other beliefs, world views and practices; respect; civic-mindedness; tolerance of ambiguity</p>	<p>Teacher prompts students to express or reflect on any of the four attitudes in an intercultural situation in the classroom, inviting them to articulate beliefs, opinions, emotions, feelings or evaluations of their own attitudes, or that of others, towards a person, an event or a situation.</p>	<p>Teacher: When hearing about this [The events on Bloody Sunday], what do you feel? [...] Student: Well, I don't really know what to feel about that [...]] because I don't care, to be honest. Teacher: OK, do you want to rethink that answer? [...]] Because “I don't care” is not an acceptable answer here. [...]] I think I know what you mean, but I want you to be more precise. Saying that you don't care that 14 people are killed [...]] that's not what you mean, right? Student: I care about the 14 people being killed, of course. But I don't really care about the event itself. (see Transcript 9: English lesson, 9th grade, 2015–16) Student: The KKK came out and said that they supported Donald Trump. [...]] Many of the racist organisations too [...]]. Teacher: Right, so they're supporting Donald Trump, but that does not mean that he is doing what they want him to do, so you'll need to be careful here. (see Transcript 1: English lesson, 10th grade, 2016–17)</p>	<p><i>Cultural openness</i>: The English teacher first prompts the student to express emotions about the death of 14 people during Bloody Sunday. When the student expresses a lack of openness to cultural otherness and practices during the civil war, he prompts the student to reflect on his opinion about the deaths and in how to express his attitude. The teacher's prompting the student to express his feeling is a way of encouraging an attitude of openness towards cultural otherness in terms of what the civil war did to the people and how it influenced their practices in another country at another time, from their own, personal view.</p>
<p>A skill is the capacity for carrying out complex, well-organised patterns of either thinking or behaviour in an adaptive manner in order to achieve a particular end or goal. (CoE, 2018a, p. 46). Six sets of skills are important for intercultural encounters (CoE, 2022, p. 39): autonomous learning skills; analytical and critical thinking skills; skills of listening and observing; empathy; flexibility and adaptability; linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills</p>	<p>Teacher prompts or provides opportunities for students to express, modify or demonstrate any of the six skills important for intercultural encounters in an intercultural situation in the classroom.</p>	<p>Student: I have learnt where they speak French in the world. Teacher: Yes, were you surprised by some of the countries or were there any that you were not aware of [...]]? Student: Lebanon, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. (see Transcript 3: French lesson, 10th grade, 2016–17)</p>	<p><i>Analytical and critical thinking skills</i>: The English teacher prompts the student to use evidence to support their opinion, suggesting they need to demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills to reflect about whether the information they use is correct, and thus understand the difference between the claim that racist organisations supported Donald Trump and the claim that Donald Trump is supporting racist organisations.</p>
<p>Knowledge is the body of information that is possessed by a person, while understanding is the comprehension and appreciation of meanings. The term “critical understanding” is used to emphasise the need for the comprehension and appreciation of meanings in the context of democratic processes and intercultural dialogue to involve active reflection on and critical evaluation of that which is being understood and interpreted (as opposed to automatic, habitual and unreflective interpretation). (CoE, 2018a, p. 52). Three forms of knowledge and critical understanding are important for intercultural encounters (CoE, 2022, p. 39): knowledge and critical understanding of the self; knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication; knowledge and critical understanding of the world (including politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, the environment and sustainability)</p>	<p>Teacher prompts or provides opportunities for students to demonstrate intercultural knowledge or critical understanding in intercultural situations in the classroom.</p>	<p>Student: I have learnt where they speak French in the world. Teacher: Yes, were you surprised by some of the countries or were there any that you were not aware of [...]]? Student: Lebanon, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. (see Transcript 3: French lesson, 10th grade, 2016–17)</p>	<p><i>Knowledge of the world</i>: The French teacher does not only ask in which countries French is spoken, but if the student was surprised by any of them, or unaware of any of them, hence inviting the student to express intercultural knowledge <i>and</i> critical understanding of why one speaks French in these countries. The teacher's choice of words is essential in this situation. Although the student does not explain why they were surprised or unaware that one speaks French in these countries, the teacher provided an opportunity for the student to demonstrate critical understanding.</p>

Table 6).

Phase 4: Thematic analysis of teacher interviews. Finally, Author1 analysed the interviews to capture the teachers' understanding of approaches to develop intercultural competence in planning and conducting their lessons. The interviews were transcribed in full and analysed using thematic analysis based on the RFCDC model's four competence areas. Table 6 provides the definition and operationalisation of the four RFCDC areas relevant for intercultural encounters, along with supportive examples from the data material and justification of how the framework was used as analytical lens.

2.7. Research credibility and ethics

The project received approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, and teachers, students and parents provided voluntary written informed consent. Students who did not wish to be filmed were seated out of the camera's view and blurred if they accidentally appeared in a recording (NESH, 2021). To ensure research credibility, we aimed to corroborate the video data by conducting a detailed analysis of all segments based on the RFCDC framework. Second, we aimed for completion, by comparing the video analysis for both language subjects across the seven years. Third, we aimed for explanation, by analysing the teacher interviews to identify teacher perspectives on intercultural approaches in their language instruction. These credibility strategies have theoretical implications for capturing various voices and perspectives in the data material (Greene, 2007) and by providing triangulation across data sources (Poht, 2018); i.e. video and interview data.

3. Findings

The findings of this study indicate two main patterns. First, we observed patterns in evidence of intercultural practices across the seven years, although both teachers emphasised that they seldom planned for intercultural approaches in their lessons. Second, we observed intercultural approaches being used more often and in more complex configurations during English lessons than during French lessons. Differences between the two subjects showed that while the English teacher provided opportunities for students to express intercultural knowledge and critical understanding as well as skills, values, and attitudes during his lessons, the French teacher mainly prompted students to express intercultural knowledge. The following sections offer descriptions of how teachers used intercultural approaches within and across these language subjects over time, with representative excerpts.

3.1. Key features of intercultural approaches in language lessons over time

Of this study's 24 video-recorded English and French lessons, we observed intercultural practices in both language subjects all school years and in all lessons except one (Table 7). The remaining 23 language lessons contained examples of intercultural approaches to language teaching; totalling 73% of the lesson segments.

As shown in Table 7, we observed intercultural approaches more frequently during segments of English lessons (89%) than French lessons (58%). Fig. 3 illustrates how the approaches mainly focused on knowledge and critical understanding in English (48/55; 87%) and in French (33/57; 58%). The second most frequently observed intercultural approach in both subjects concerned skills; however, whereas skills was

prompted regularly during English lessons (28/55; 51%), it was addressed infrequently during French lessons (5/57; 9%). The least frequently observed teaching practices were linked to attitudes and values. However, each teacher addressed these two intercultural areas equally often in their language subject; notably, around 20% in English lessons (attitudes: 12/55; 22% and values: 10/55; 18%), and around 3% in French lessons (attitudes: 2/57; 4% and values: 1/57; 2%).

Fig. 3 illustrates two patterns. First, the four intercultural areas are unevenly distributed. In English lessons they are approached in the teacher's practice at all three data collection points, whereas in French lessons the four areas are addressed at the final data collection point only. Second, there seems to be a decrease in the use of intercultural approaches in English and an increase in French over time. This is of particular interest as the theme approached in the English lessons was the same in the first and third data collection points (Table 3).

In English, there was an increase between first and second data collection, which mainly concerned skills, but also to some extent attitudes and values. The observations suggested that for the US presidential election theme, the teacher provided more opportunities for the students to express values and attitudes towards the presidential candidates, in addition to prompting the students to use autonomous learning skills and critical thinking skills while following the development of the election in real time. In contrast, there was a decrease in intercultural approaches in English lessons at the third data collection point. One reason might be the real time aspect of the US presidential election, whereas the instruction at the other two data collection points addressed a historical theme. Still, it is notable that while observing the teaching of the same historical theme, we identified fewer occurrences in evidence of intercultural approaches. However, this was mainly because the teacher spent longer time addressing historical aspects unrelated to intercultural areas. In French, we see the opposite. The teacher's intercultural approaches concerning skills, values and attitudes increased over time, while knowledge and critical understanding mainly remained the same. Here, the observations suggested more opportunities to express values and attitudes, initiated by the theme of spare time and holidays.

3.2. Similarities and differences across language subjects

Comparing English and French lessons, we observed in the videos that the teachers addressed knowledge and critical understanding most often, although there were clear differences between the subjects. We also found patterns in evidence of intercultural approaches to skills, attitudes and values in both subjects (see Fig. 3). We detail these findings below in light of the teachers' utterances during the interviews.

3.2.1. Knowledge and critical understanding

The videos indicated that the main difference between the subjects was that in English instruction, both the competences of knowledge and critical understanding were addressed, whereas mainly the knowledge part was addressed in French instruction. Based on the video recordings, teachers prompted students to express intercultural knowledge of French customs without addressing students' critical understanding of this knowledge. In English, addressing intercultural knowledge was closely linked to critical understanding and was even associated with prompting other intercultural practices (i.e., skills, attitudes and values). Conversely, in the French lessons, prompting intercultural knowledge mostly occurred separately from other intercultural areas.

In Transcript 1, the English teacher initiated a discussion of the 2016

Table 7 Distribution of lessons and segments involving intercultural (IC) approaches to language instruction.

	Total lessons	Total segments	IC lessons	IC segments	Percentage of segments with IC
English	12	55	12	49	89%
French	12	57	11	33	58%
	24	112	23	82	73%

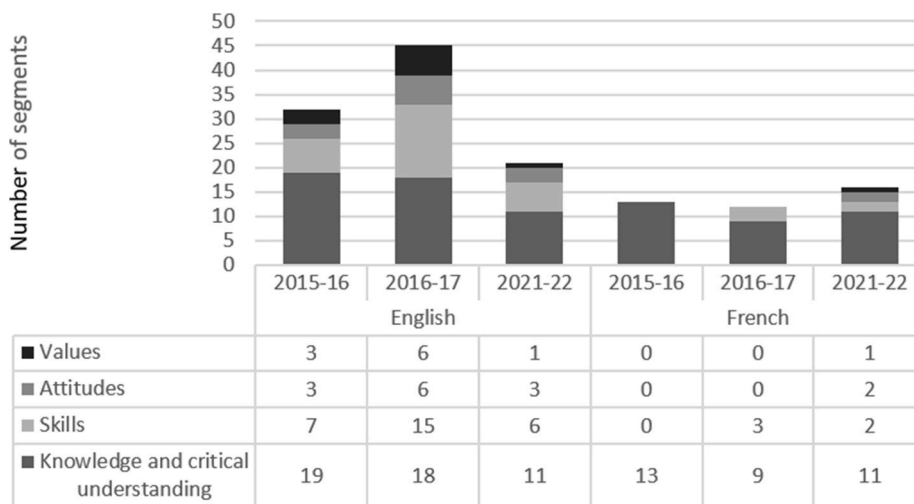


Fig. 3. Overview of the number of segments for each language subject and school year. Note: Total number of segments is higher than 112 because each of the four competence areas may have been observed in each segment.

US presidential candidates; simultaneously addressing intercultural *knowledge and critical understanding* and analytical and critical thinking skills:

Teacher: What is he [Donald Trump] planning to do according to his speeches?

Student 1: [...] He wants to repeal same-sex marriage, he wants to ... he has a vice president who supports conversion therapy, he ... you can see from his speeches, he's incredibly racist and he wants ... deportation of foreigners and, etc.

Teacher: Right, but what will be exciting is to see: Will he be able to do all this? Will Congress support him? That's the big issue here. [...] Final comments? [...]

Student 2: The KKK came out and said that they supported Donald Trump.

Teacher: Right, so ...

Student 2: Many of the racist organisations too [...]

Teacher: Right, so they're supporting Donald Trump, but that does not mean that he is doing what they want him to do, so you'll need to be careful here.

Transcript 1: Knowledge and critical understanding and skills. Topic: US presidential election. (English lesson, cohort 1, original in English)

Transcript 1 shows how the teacher prompted students to express intercultural knowledge of Trump's speeches. In response, Student 1 justified their claim about Trump being racist and against same-sex marriage. The teacher then invited the students to link this knowledge to a wider context on the functioning of the Congress. When Student 2 offered reflections concerning racist organisations that supported Trump, the teacher encouraged them to reflect more critically to develop their understanding of this knowledge. The English teacher stated connecting knowledge and skills was a deliberate strategy (Transcript 2):

English teacher: When we study the US presidential election, students must acquire the necessary knowledge about how the political system works, what is specific for the main political parties [...] the skills are about critically assessing the information coming from both political sides, even if they [the students] like one candidate better than the other. For example, concerning the 2016 election, one must still be able to [...] think critically. "Ok ... you think that Donald Trump is ... You've heard this and that about him, but what is actually said here? OK?" Then, we take a closer look and analyse. So,

in my opinion, critical thinking skills are very relevant in this case, but based on the knowledge they have acquired – they [skills and knowledge] are closely interconnected, I think.

Transcript 2: Knowledge and critical understanding and skills. Topic: US presidential election. (focus group, our translation from Norwegian)

Here, the English teacher explicitly connected *skills to knowledge and critical understanding*, emphasising the importance of students being able to connect these two intercultural areas. Based on the knowledge the students had acquired about the US presidential election, the teacher encouraged them explicitly to do more with their knowledge than merely recite it; prompting them to think critically and see beyond factual information.

In French instruction, cohort 1 worked on French-speaking countries outside of France (*la francophonie*). Here, we also observed a situation in which intercultural *knowledge* was addressed. However, this knowledge was not explicitly combined with any other intercultural area, nor was the knowledge aspect explicitly connected to critical understanding. Transcript 3 illustrates how the teacher prompted students to express intercultural *knowledge and critical understanding* about the French-speaking world:

Student: I have learnt where they speak French in the world.

Teacher: Yes, were you surprised by some of the countries or were there any that you were not aware of [...]

Student: Lebanon, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Transcript 3: Knowledge and critical understanding. Topic: *La francophonie*. (French lesson, cohort 1; our translation from Norwegian)

Here, the French teacher not only asked the student where French was spoken in the world, but also if the student was surprised by any country. Hence, the teacher provided an opportunity for the student to demonstrate critical understanding of the fact that French was spoken in countries such as Lebanon, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. However, although the teacher did not prompt the students to reflect on *why* French was spoken in these countries, she explained in the focus group that she often addressed *francophone* countries in more detail in her French lessons (e.g., Morocco), referring to France's colonial past. This indicates that she addressed knowledge and critical understanding in some French lessons, although we did not record such practices (Transcript 4):

French teacher: For example, Morocco [...] that it is very different from France and [I ask the students:] "Why do they speak French there?" Then, I can address that it used to be a French colony, and

then one can ... then a little history can be included, right, I mean, that France used to be a colonial power.

Transcript 4: Knowledge and critical understanding. Topic: *La francophonie*. (French teacher, focus group, our translation from Norwegian)

Whereas the English teacher characterised *knowledge and critical understanding* as “necessary” (Transcript 2), the French teacher explained that she rather addressed it in small amounts over time (Transcript 5), prompting students to compare another culture to their own:

French teacher: I feel like I give them small amounts of input over time in different contexts. [...] for instance, Belleville is maybe a different neighbourhood compared to more privileged districts in Paris [...] and they are very concerned with multiculturalism, so then they can compare it with Tøyen, or maybe Grünerløkka [multicultural neighbourhoods in Oslo].

Transcript 5: Knowledge and critical understanding (French teacher, focus group, our translation from Norwegian)

3.2.2. Skills

The English teacher considered *skills* and *knowledge and critical understanding* to be interrelated (Transcript 2), while the French teacher stated that she seldom addressed intercultural *skills* at the same time as other intercultural areas. In the focus group, the French teacher explained this by the challenges of teaching intercultural skills to French students at this level, referring to their lack of ability to state opinions in French:

French teacher: To be able to express one’s opinion [...], I have taught them, for example, “À mon avis ...” [“in my opinion”], “Je pense ...” [“I think”]. Once, I used a song as a departure point to discuss one’s opinion [...], and I felt that they did not have what it took to answer the task [...], that the topic was too difficult.

Transcript 6: Skills. Topic: stating one’s opinion (French teacher, focus group, our translation from Norwegian)

Transcript 6 illustrates how the French teacher provided her students with model expressions that could help them develop skills to state their minds. We also identified examples of such prompting of intercultural skills in French lessons; notably, a passage where the students listened to a Canadian girl from the Quebec region and – partly in French, partly in Norwegian – answered questions related to everyday cultural aspects. Although the students’ answers were brief, the teacher’s choice of theme and questions provided students opportunity to use intercultural skills in paying attention to a person with a different cultural background from their own.

In addition, when the French teacher was asked about whether a situation where she encouraged students to work with internet safety, could be considered promoting of analytical and critical thinking skills, she agreed, although admitting she had not thought about it:

French teacher: Yes, that was actually something ... when you mention it ... There are many things one gets used to ... without thinking about it ...

Transcript 7: Skills. Topic: internet safety. (French teacher, focus group, our translation from Norwegian)

Transcript 7 indicates that although we seldom observed intercultural *skills* in the French lessons (9%), they were addressed in small amounts over time. Nonetheless, it was done less deliberately than in the English lessons, where the English teacher intentionally linked the competence area of *skills* to *knowledge and critical understanding*. The French teacher explained that she considered it difficult for French students at this level to develop intercultural skills because of low proficiency in French and that many intercultural themes would be too complicated for them language wise (Transcript 6).

In Transcript 8, the French teacher stated that she prioritised

linguistic skills over intercultural skills, whereas the English teacher explained that he seldom addressed linguistic skills in his English lessons.

French teacher: I would definitely say that I work mostly on linguistic skills.

English teacher: I have moved away from the explicit teaching of linguistic skills.

Transcript 8: Skills. Topic: Linguistic skills (French and English teachers, focus group, our translation from Norwegian)

Both teachers explained this difference between the subjects by the fact that most students in foreign language classes in lower secondary schools in Norway were novices in the language, whereas students of English had extensive experience using the English language both inside and outside school. The English teacher observed that, because of the need to teach language skills in French lessons, it might be more difficult to use intercultural approaches than in English lessons.

3.2.3. Attitudes

Attitudes was less frequently observed than *skills*, *knowledge and critical understanding*, both in English and French lessons. In situations where we observed *attitudes* in these classrooms, the teachers played a prominent role. In Transcript 9 from a discussion about Bloody Sunday, Northern Ireland in 1972, the English teacher urged a student to reconsider how he expressed his attitudes towards the death of 14 people:

Teacher: When hearing about this, what do you feel?

Student 1: That the Catholics are treated badly.

Teacher: Right, so you start supporting the Catholics? [...] Well, I have no problems with that. [Name of Student 2], what do you feel?

Student 2: Well, I don’t really know what to feel about that.

Teacher: Why not? That’s an interesting answer.

Student 2: Well, really because I don’t care, to be honest.

Teacher: OK, do you want to rethink that answer? [...] Because “I don’t care” is not an acceptable answer here. [...] I think I know what you mean, but I want you to be more precise. Saying that you don’t care that 14 people are killed [...] that’s not what you mean, right?

Student 2: I care about the 14 people being killed, of course. But I don’t really care about the event itself. So [...] I feel it was wrong, but ...

Teacher: Yeah, because you believe in justice, right? I know you do. We’ve discussed justice before.

Transcript 9: Attitudes. Topic: Northern Ireland. (English lesson, cohort 1, original in English)

Transcript 9 illustrates how the English teacher could have moved the interaction on, but instead prompted the student to be as precise as possible in his answer and thus to reflect upon his attitude towards the killing of 14 unarmed protesters. The student was given the opportunity to specify that although he was not interested in the historical event, he did care about the fact that people died. This intercultural situation demonstrated the importance of the teacher prompting students to consider how to express their attitudes, even when they did not ask for help to do so, and even when these attitudes were not necessarily in line with most students’ reactions. In addition, the teacher’s choice of words in this situation is important: he asked the students what they *felt* when hearing about the events of Bloody Sunday. Thus, he made them reflect on their own, subjective, emotional reaction to a situation that occurred half a century ago in another country. In the focus group, the English teacher stated that although he seldom thought intentionally about addressing intercultural *attitudes* or *values* in his lessons, he encouraged

his students to reflect on such issues by asking open-ended questions that challenged them:

English teacher: It is quite rare for me to think explicitly about ... We do occasionally use concepts like *attitudes* and *values*, but they are present more implicitly when I ask questions such as, “How do you react to the situation?” [...], “What would you do if you were this person?”, “What do you think it means for this person or this person?” So, with the students’ attitudes and values as a starting point, we can discuss different situations [...]. It [attitudes and values] is the core of what we do, and in my opinion, there is a lot of room for that in English instruction.

Transcript 10: *Attitudes* and *values* (English teacher, focus group, our translation from Norwegian)

Transcript 10 suggests that although the English teacher did not ask these questions with the intention of making students reflect on their attitudes or values, he considered these two intercultural areas fundamental in his English teaching. Although he did not use the verb “feel” in this comment, his wording was important: “What would you do if you were this person?”; indicating how he encouraged students to put themselves in other people’s situations, and try to understand the world based on their own personal experiences and feelings. While we found few signs of intercultural *attitudes* in the French lessons, we observed some interesting examples when the class worked with “friendship”. The class listened to a text about Julie from France and Aisha from Algeria, who despite different cultural backgrounds, were best friends. Transcript 11 shows how the teacher encouraged a student to express his opinion on qualities to be found in a best friend in such a scenario:

Teacher: Qu’est-ce qu’un meilleur ami pour toi ? [*What is a best friend for you?*]

Student 1: Tu peux dire il de tout, et il ne vais pas juger toi. [*You can tell him everything, and he will not judge you.*]

Teacher: Ah oui, il ne va pas te juger. C’est très important. [*Yes, he will not judge you [corrects some grammar mistakes]. That is very important.*]

Teacher: Hva betyr det? “Ne pas juger”? “Juger”, hva er “juger”? [*What does this mean? “Ne pas juger”? “Juger”, what is “juger”?*]

Student 2: Dømme [to judge]

Transcript 11: *Attitudes*. Topic: friendship (French lesson, video, cohort 2, our translation from French and Norwegian). Differences from standard French are not marked or corrected.

Transcript 11 suggests that the student not only stated his conviction that best friends should share everything, but also without judgement. The episode indicated how the teacher encouraged the student to express an attitude of openness, and how in his answer he built on Julie’s and Aisha’s willingness to relate despite different cultural backgrounds. The French teacher seemed satisfied with the answer, repeated relevant vocabulary and asked students for translation. In the focus group, she explained the importance of providing vocabulary they can use to talk about intercultural encounters:

French teacher: [If I manage] to teach them these things, and talk about easier topics, then [...] it is in a way a vocabulary they can use [...], they are able to hear things, and maybe later, they will be able to interpret the world in a [...] more open way, and not have prejudices.

Transcript 12: *Attitudes*. (French teacher, focus group, our translation from Norwegian).

Transcript 12 indicates an important aspect of intercultural practices. The French teacher emphasised that if the students understood enough words, they would first be able to understand others (*knowledge*), then interpret the world more openly (*skill*), and finally, avoid prejudice (*attitude*). Of course, speaking about best friends in French

lessons might not be considered equally challenging as, for example, discussing respect for human lives in English lessons (Transcript 9), but both are ways of expressing intercultural *attitudes*.

3.2.4. Values

Finally, we identified *values* even more seldom than *attitudes*, although we found some examples both in English and French lessons. When the English teacher asked the students if they thought Trump would do everything he promised and if Congress would support him, one student expressed *values*:

Student: One thing a lot of people forget about the president, especially Donald Trump, is that he’s not a king. I mean, if he tries to make gay marriage illegal, people will probably react to that very strictly, so nobody will like him.

Teacher: Good point.

Student: Maybe even most Republicans.

Teacher: Good point! [...]

Student: [...] the problem about homophobia and knowing how many people are homophobic is that we highlight these events of people being openly homophobic and then assume it’s the whole, you know, population of America

Transcript 13: *Values*. Topic: US presidential election. (English lesson, cohort 1, original in English)

Transcript 13 is part of the discussion mentioned above on what Donald Trump stood for (Transcript 1) and illustrates how the teacher invited the students to express their opinions on central topics in Donald Trump’s speeches. This opportunity resulted in the student demonstrating an ability to reflect on intercultural *values*, taking a stance against homophobia and, valuing sexual diversity. Using this intercultural approach, the teacher provided an opportunity for the student to warn against interpreting the events of people being openly homophobic as a general tendency in the United States, thus acknowledging that many Americans are, as this student, against homophobia.

In contrast, intercultural values were seldom observed in French lessons. However, in the situation mentioned above, about Julie from France and Aisha from Algeria who were best friends despite different cultural backgrounds, the teacher prompted the students to elaborate on the relationship:

Teacher: Er det noe dere forstår her? [What do you understand here?]

Student: De er veldig forskjellige [They are very different from each other]

Teacher: Ja, men likevel – *quand même* [...] hva betyr *quand même*? [Yes, but still – *quand même* [...] what does *quand même* mean?]

Student: Selv om? [Even if?]

Teacher: Likevel, likevel er de supervenninner, begge to. Og *partager*, hva betyr det, *partager*? *Partager* er å ... ? [Still, still, they are the best of friends. And *partager*, what does *partager* mean? *Partager*, it means to ...]

Student: Dele. [Share]

Teacher: Dele, ja! De deler alt, *on partage tout*. [Share, yes! They share everything.]

Transcript 14: *Values*. Topic: Friendship. (French lesson, cohort 2, our translation from French and Norwegian).

Transcript 14 illustrates how the French teacher used the same strategy as in previous examples (e.g. Transcript 6), insisting on relevant words and expressions to help students understand intercultural differences in the text. In the in-depth interview, the French teacher reflected on this situation. Transcript 15 shows that although the French teacher

had not planned to address *values* in this classroom situation, she considered it a natural issue when working on the topic of friendship.

French teacher: I'm not sure how aware I am of that [values – related to the excerpt on Friendship], I don't necessarily plan for this [...] but we study these themes, they come quite naturally ...

Transcript 15: *values*. Topic: friendship. (French teacher, interview, our translation from Norwegian).

In sum, over time the English teacher regularly prompted the students to reflect on intercultural issues, whereas the French teacher infrequently focused on pertinent vocabulary to help students understand intercultural issues. Thus, transcriptions from the video recordings and the teacher interviews indicated that both teachers consciously used strategies to involve the students at different levels in intercultural reflections in their language lessons. However, the teachers seldom prompted students to express *attitudes* and *values*, and these areas were reported by both teachers to be the most challenging areas to address in their language teaching.

4. Discussion

Research since the 1980s has argued the importance of addressing intercultural encounters in language teaching (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Dervin, 2010; Hoff, 2014; Lund, 2012, 2019; Risager, 2007), influencing decision-makers to include intercultural competence in national curricula (Heggernes, 2022; Peiser & Jones, 2012). Still, few studies have investigated occurrences of intercultural approaches in naturally occurring language instruction (Rindal & Brevik, 2020; Kennedy, 2020; Rindal et al., 2020) and even fewer have followed the same teachers longitudinally, as we have done in this study. This is an issue of concern because observing actual teaching practices outside intervention and experimental contexts provides insight into how teachers work and, more specifically, into the possibilities they provide and the challenges they experience when using intercultural approaches in their classrooms, whether they teach second or foreign languages.

Our study identified how two language teachers addressed various aspects of interculturality over time in English as a second language and French as a foreign language classrooms in Norway, in line with the main areas of the RFCDC model (CoE, 2018a). Our first observation was that *knowledge and critical understanding* was the most prominent intercultural area in both language subjects. This finding partly challenges Deardorff's (2006) consideration of attitudes as a fundamental intercultural competence. According to her, one will not acquire intercultural knowledge or skills without intercultural attitudes.

The fact that we observed fewer occurrences of *attitudes* than both *skills* and *knowledge and critical understanding* could be explained by the difficulty in actually observing *attitudes* as a competence area in a classroom setting and by the challenge of reflecting on *attitudes* without the necessary *knowledge* or *skills* to build *attitudes*. Our findings indicate that when using intercultural approaches to language instruction, it might be helpful to provide knowledge or build on students' prior knowledge to support them in developing intercultural *attitudes* (Transcripts 9, 10, 11 and 12). Although intercultural attitudes may be the starting point for a teacher, this is not necessarily the case for students.

Our analysis indicates more varied teacher practices using intercultural approaches in English lessons, including *values*, *attitudes*, *skills* and *knowledge and critical understanding*, compared to French lessons where teacher practices mostly addressed *knowledge*. This trend was prominent across the seven years, both in grades 9 and 10 and for both student cohorts; highlighting an imbalance between second language instruction and foreign language instruction. It also raises new questions regarding the use of intercultural approaches to language teaching.

A key finding of this study is that we identified differences between intercultural teaching practices across the two subjects. There was more focus on *knowledge and critical understanding* in the English classrooms and the teacher often combined this area with *skills*. Although there were

few observations of *skills*, *attitudes* and *values* in French lessons, the teacher occasionally provided students with vocabulary to enable them to express such attitudes and values in the daily-life context of "small c" culture (Kramersch, 2006), such as when students discussed friendship among youth with different cultural backgrounds (see Transcripts 11, 12 and 14).

The English teacher regularly prompted students to reflect on and express attitudes and values when working on political and historical topics (Transcripts 9 and 10). Hence, differences regarding intercultural approaches to language teaching are a matter of complexity (addressing multiple areas in English lessons versus mainly addressing intercultural *knowledge* in French lessons) and context ("big C" topics in English lessons versus "small c" topics in French lessons; Kramersch, 2006). In addition, when the teachers provided opportunities to discuss *attitudes* (Transcripts 9, 10, 11, 12), the discussion in the French classroom was characterised by acceptance of friendship across cultures, while the responses in the English classroom made the teacher encourage students to both voice and reconsider their *attitudes*. The latter point aligns with Hoff's (2014) criticism of Byram's (2007) model, arguing that "disagreement and conflict may often lead to meaningful communicative situations" (p. 514).

The interviews concurred with these observations. Both teachers noted that although there was increased emphasis on intercultural competence in LK20, the additions to the LK20 curriculum did not change their teaching, because they included many of the new elements already in LK06. They argued that the main reason behind their different practices was that lower secondary students in Norway are novices of French while being more experienced learners of English (Transcripts 6 and 8). Although the French teacher had intercultural experience from in-service training in France, most French lessons were dedicated to developing students' language skills; whereas the English teacher prompted students to focus on more complex intercultural aspects in the English-speaking world. These findings align with Vold (2022), who observed that English instruction in Norway is more generally "meaning-and-fluency" oriented, whereas French instruction is more oriented towards "form-and-accuracy" (p. 26).

The two teachers in our study explained these differences by emphasising that Norwegian students are more proficient in the English language and that they get more input from the English-speaking world in their everyday lives. This observation aligns with studies that have shown how English students in Norway have ample access to cultural resources in English outside of school (Brevik, 2019a; Rindal & Brevik, 2020) and even that there are "few options for out-of-school learning" of French in Norway (Vold & Brkan, 2020, p. 2).

Intercultural topics could be more widely discussed in foreign language lessons, for example, by using a student's first language. In line with Tolosa et al. (2018), who stated that in a French-as-a-foreign-language classroom in New Zealand, "the balance between language and culture [is] a delicate one to achieve" (p. 232), the two teachers we followed longitudinally described the balance of approaching language skills and intercultural skills as more difficult in French lessons than in English lessons. Still, although intercultural approaches were clearly used by both teachers across the seven years of our study, this was seldom planned or explicitly thematised. Instead, intercultural areas were addressed in connection with other topics, such as "big C" and "small c" culture (Kramersch, 2006).

A main contribution of this study is the duration of data collection over seven years and that it follows the same teachers over this long period of data collection, providing systematic and detailed exploration of how the teachers used intercultural approaches to English and French teaching. An important implication of our study is that, despite differences in students' language proficiency, it is possible to address intercultural *knowledge and critical understanding*, *skills*, *attitudes* and *values* in second and additional language lessons. This study provided powerful examples of how to do so.

4.1. Limitations and future research

As mentioned, we did not share our views of intercultural approaches to language learning with the teachers and did not inform them beforehand that this was of particular interest in this study. To counter this potential limitation, we conducted the interviews to give voice to the teachers concerning their understanding and beliefs of intercultural approaches both in the new curriculum (LK20) and in the former (LK06). The teachers' responses indicated that they seldom planned to use intercultural approaches in their teaching, which suggests it could be of relevance to future research to design an intervention and investigate whether teachers would address such aspects more or differently in their teaching. Another avenue for future research could be using student data to investigate whether teachers' intercultural practices are beneficial to students' learning, for example by identifying student utterances in new video data about changing views on intercultural issues.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data availability

The data that has been used is confidential.

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