

The Significance of Foreign Language Teaching in European Schools:

A Case Study of Foreign Language Politics in Berlin and Oslo

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“Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen.“

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

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Abstract

This study examines foreign language politics (FLP) in Europe. The aim was to get insight into the dynamics of the processes in policy-making. Oslo and Berlin were the chosen cases, but it is also argued that their ways of making politics are applicable to other European countries. The data collection took place in Berlin and Oslo using a Critical Discourse Analysis of official documents as well as semi-structured interviews with key respondents. A policy change in Norway is used as a background for a discussion of how shifts in language policies are explained by changing contextual factors. This is in particular related to the strategy document *Languages Open Doors* and the proposition of making a second foreign language (2FL) compulsory from lower secondary school in Norway. The proposition was reversed due to a change in government. The study is partly based on this event and aims to reach an understanding of what actually happened and why it was reversed.

It is suggested that the politics is guided by a variety of interests, such as economic development and competition. Both countries seem to pay attention to economic dimensions. However, it is suggested that Norway focuses more on inclusion than Germany, something that is also reflected in the ideology and the education systems. It may seem that it is more legitimate to argue economically for FLP in Berlin than in Oslo, at least in the public debate.

Key Words: Foreign language politics; Berlin; Oslo; policy-making; second foreign language; foreign language teaching

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Abbreviations

AP	The Labour Party (<i>Arbeiderpartiet</i>)
BE	Bilingual Education
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CFL	Culture for Learning
EC	European Commission
EU	The European Union
FP	Foreign Policy
H	The Conservatives (<i>Høyre</i>)
KMK	<i>Konferenz der Kulturminister</i>
KRF	The Christian Democrats (<i>Kristelig folkeparti</i>)
LOP	Languages Open Doors
MOE	Minister of Education
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NHO	The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
1FL	First Foreign Language
2FL	Second Foreign Language
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching
2FLP	Second Foreign Language Policy
PA	Pedagogic Action
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SFBF	<i>Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung</i>
SP	The Center Party (<i>Senterpartiet</i>).
SV	The Socialist Left Party (<i>Sosialistisk Venstreparti</i>)
V	The Liberal Party (<i>Venstre</i>)

1 Introduction

In the first weeks of 2011, there has been a discussion in Germany about whether or not education was better in the past, a discussion that started with schoolteacher Ursula Sarrazin complaining that students knew more twenty years ago than they do today. Methodological problems make it difficult to confirm differences between the past and present, but the leader of the German PISA centre, Manfred Prenzel, explains to *Der Spiegel* (4/2011) that teachers have always said that things were better off before and that the students were more concentrated and focused “back in the old days”. Nonetheless, when it comes to knowledge in foreign languages, there is no doubt that students today are far better than their parents and grandparents. It is not unusual for a 16-year-old boy to manage two foreign languages in addition to his mother tongue - something that is a goal for the EU and the European Commission. Many children also have experience in the practical usage of foreign languages through travelling and the media.

However, not all children master foreign languages or have the motivation to learn them. In Norway, studies have shown that most children understand the importance of learning English, but lack motivation to learn other foreign languages. It was therefore a concern that the position of foreign languages in Norway did not match the increased needs for foreign language competence in society (Languages Open Doors 2009:9): “Since 2001 there has been a decline in pupils choosing foreign language studies in lower secondary and upper secondary education and training, as well as a considerable decline in the number of students in lower secondary school who chooses in-depth studies in other languages than English“ (ibid). This resulted in the strategy document “Languages Open Doors” which aimed at strengthening the position of foreign languages in Norway. A part of the strategy was to make second foreign language (2FL) compulsory from lower secondary school. In 2005 however, there was a change in Government and “Languages Open Doors” was revised. A 2FL was not made compulsory after all. Following this, there was a great deal of media discussion in which parents, teachers, researchers and politicians participated.

This study is based on this particular event and aims to reach an understanding of what actually happened and why the decision was reversed.

The study will also compare the foreign language politics (FLP) in Oslo with the FLP in Berlin. Berlin has been chosen because of their great focus on foreign languages and the fact that all children have to learn two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue. Germany is also comparable to Norway since they share much of the same history and culture. However, the educational structure is very different. In the Federal Republic of Germany, responsibility for the education system is conditioned by the federal structure of the State. According to the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), educational legislation and administration are primarily the responsibility of the *Länder* and the lower-level school supervisory authorities (*Schulamt*) (Eurydice 2010:1-2), while the administrative control in Norway is more centrally governed. The Directorate for Education and Training (the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research) has the responsibility for the production of national curricula, assessment/examination, supervision/control, national statistics, research, and development of primary and secondary education (Eurydice 2010:3). Because of this it would be difficult to compare Norway with all of the *Länder* in Germany. Oslo and Berlin were chosen since they are both capitals.

1.1 Rationale for the Research

The language policy in a city or country gives us an indication of how important the various languages are. For instance, if foreign languages are not a priority and not taught in schools, this could indicate that the status of foreign language is low or that there is no need for it, or that the national language(s) have high status. It has already been mentioned that English is looked upon as highly important in Norway. It is taught as a foreign language from the first grade and is compulsory for all children. In Berlin they start with a first foreign language (1FL) at a later stage (the third grade) but the children can choose between French and English. If they choose French, they have to choose English as 2FL. If English is the 1FL, they can choose between the languages the school offers, since English is mandatory for all, and a 2FL compulsory. In Berlin and Germany as a whole, all children have to learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue. A 2FL is also offered to all school children in Norway from the eighth grade, but this is not compulsory as in Germany¹. It is, in other

¹ Since the latest reform in the compulsory school and upper secondary education, the Knowledge Promotion, introduced in 2006, pupils can choose between several languages also at lower secondary school, however not obligatory.

words, possible to graduate from Norwegian schools with the knowledge of only 1FL. This is not possible in Germany. The stress on FL is hence greater in Germany than in Norway and one rationale for the research was simply to understand why.

1.2 The Research Questions and hypotheses

The policy itself may be a result of compromise and be unclear as a result. It is therefore important to trace changes of discourse in the political climate as well as noting that there are differences between policy as text and policy as discourse. National language policy is translated and interpreted differently. The purpose for the study was to get an understanding of the significance of foreign language politics in Europe. Berlin and Oslo were the chosen case studies, but it will also be discussed whether their way of making policies is applicable to other countries.

Although a specific event in Oslo was the starting point and also partly a motivational factor, the research aims at gaining insights into the dynamics of the processes in policy-making and not just the specifics of foreign languages. Still, the situation in Oslo is used as a background for a discussion of how shifts in language policies are explained by changing contextual factors. In this way, the foreign language politics in Oslo and Berlin were used as examples in order to get insight into the policy-making processes and the dynamics that drives the policy in a certain direction.

The research was guided by these questions:

1. *What is the significance of foreign language teaching in European schools?*
2. *What informs the actual formulation of foreign language politics?*
3. *To what extent can shifts in language politics be explained by changing contextual factors?*

The first question will be answered by looking at Berlin and Oslo. It will be discussed later whether the findings are unique or if they can be generalised to other European countries. The comparison is partly guided by the hypothesis that foreign language politics in Berlin is guided to a greater extent by economic growth and competition than is the case in Oslo.

During my studies in Oslo, I noticed that a large number of students were positive to the unity school in Norway. Only a few were critical. Later, when I came to Berlin to study, I noticed that the opinions were quite different when it came to differentiation; it was looked upon as more positive than in Oslo. Since the school system in Berlin is more differentiated², I thought that the different opinions and the different school systems might reflect two different ideologies³. It will be discussed later whether the changes that were made in “Languages Open Doors” was a result of a policy change that came into conflict with the socio-democratic ideology in Norway. I also believe that competition amongst students is more accepted in Berlin than in Oslo, and that this is a reflection of the ideology and the school system in Berlin as well.

My hypothesis is therefore that an argument of more competition in schools would be more welcomed in Berlin than in Oslo. In order to find this out, I will take a closer look at the education systems and ideologies. This will be an important part of the theory chapter and will be used to support the data that are revealed in chapter 5.

The second question will be answered partly by looking at the purpose behind the foreign language politics which reflect the dynamics of these processes. The reason for this is a belief that the policy *per se* is not reflecting the ideals since different parties and different opinions within parties result in compromises. The third question will be answered by looking particularly at the decision by the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) not to make a 2FL compulsory, although the strategy was already made by the former Government.

² The school systems will be described into more detail in Chapter 4.

³ The ideologies are presented in Chapter 3.

1.3 Motivation and limitations of the study

A personal interest in language made it clear at an early stage that language should be the topic of my research. It was especially the cognitive aspect of language learning that triggered my attention. I have written previously about the principle of linguistic relativity⁴ and the idea that variances in the way languages encode cultural cognitive categories affect the way people think. In this way, speakers of different languages will tend to think and behave differently depending on the language they use. There are different versions of this theory, but the strongest claim is that language determines thoughts.

The theory has of course been widely debated and highly criticised, and although I disagree that language determines thinking, language may improve thinking. This was the point where I started to see a connection with foreign language knowledge; if one knows several languages; would the cognitive capacity also be improved? The cognitive aspect of language learning is not a topic in this thesis, although it was an important motivational factor for the selection of the theme. The cognitive aspect of learning would have been relevant when it came to cognitive capacity and the argument that a 2FL would be too difficult for students that already struggle. This is, however, one aspect of an argument in the political discussion. It is the argument which is of primary interest here, not the cognitive one, but it should still be included in a larger work in order to obtain a broader perspective of the issues involved.

An overview of the school systems in Berlin and Oslo is included in the literature review which set the stage for a discussion of equality and inequality. This is relevant since Berlin has school choice after *Grundschule* and since the schools offer different foreign languages. One challenge, however, is that Berlin was going through a restructuring of the school system at the point when this thesis was written. These changes are mentioned, but are only used in order to illustrate the changes in attitudes and traditions that have long prevailed. There is therefore an urgent need for research on how the new system is working and whether it succeeds in reducing differences in socio-economic backgrounds. Research on changes in attitudes is also urged. Through the media I have noticed a disagreement amongst people towards this new reform, although the introduction to “*Bildungsfahrplan*” - which is a

⁴ Often referred to as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis or Whorfianism

brochure that introduces us to the new school system – gives the impression of a consensus that the new system is superior to the old one. A systematic review of media articles and discussion forums on the internet is required in order to get a more realistic picture of possible attitude change, – and whether changes in attitudes follow the changes in politics.

Although it will be emphasised that policy-makers have the last decision in the policy-making processes, this does not mean that other stakeholders such as parents and the media have little power. These stakeholders could influence the policy-makers in a certain direction or change their philosophical vision completely. These stakeholders are given little attention in this research and are therefore causing a limitation to the research. In a larger study, these groups should also be included in the analysis in order to get a better understanding of why policies change.

One category in the data presentation is the minority students and their mother tongue. This group receives some attention, mostly because of the relevance to the discussion of inclusiveness in the different educational systems. However, when we include this group, new issues are raised. One problem is for example that the minority students are not identified, but it is obvious that these students have a variety of backgrounds, not only when it comes to the mother tongue; the socio-economic background also varies.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The thesis is divided into 8 chapters. Whereas this chapter has presented the study, the succeeding one goes into the methodological approaches. Chapter 3 clarifies relevant concepts. Chapter 4 frames the research using relevant literature and background information and Chapter 5 presents the data. Chapter 6 compares the data from Oslo and Berlin while Chapter 7 makes sense of the data presented in the foregoing chapter. Chapter 7 will also discuss the relevance of the findings to other European countries. The last chapter summarises the main points.

2 Methodological approaches

The data collection consists of a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of official documents and interviews with key respondents. The main data comes from official documents and the CDA. A CDA is chosen because it gives a critical look at the documents rather than simply describing them. It is obvious to start with documents from governments before going into greater depth with the interviews. In this way the data from the interviews is building on the data from the CDA. Additional data from primary literature is used as the fieldwork revealed one interesting book about what happened on the inside during the Second Bondevik Government. “The fight against the knowledge school” (*Kampen Om Kunnskapsskolen*) is former state secretary Helge Ole Bergesen's reflections about the reactions during this period. These reflections were used as a background for some of the questions in the interview guide. Together, this data set the stage for the analyses and the findings deduced from them.

The following section is divided in two consisting of: 1) A presentation of the methods being used, and 2) A discussion of the validity of the study.

2.1 Data collection and the comparative design

As Besley and Case (2000) state, policy change is purposeful action and can rarely be treated as experimental data. Since one aim of the research is to get an understanding of a particular change that took place, a qualitative approach is regarded to be the most suitable. The study is comparative using a cross-national or cross-cultural form. Hantrais and Mangen (1998) has suggested that such research occurs

“when individuals or teams set out to examine particular issues or phenomena in two or more countries with the express intention of comparing their manifestations in different socio-cultural settings (institutions, customs, traditions, value systems, life styles, language, thought patterns), using the same research instruments either to carry out secondary analysis or national data or to conduct new empirical work. The aim may be to seek explanations for similarities and differences or to gain a greater awareness and a deeper understanding of social reality in different national contexts” (Bryman 2004:56).

The data collection naturally took place in Oslo and Berlin since those were the sites of the case studies. When conducting a cross-national research, it is important to ensure that existing data such as official statistics or survey evidence are submitted to a secondary analysis. It is also important to ensure that the data are comparable in terms of categories and data-collection methods, and that the samples of respondents or organisations are equivalent (Bryman 2004:58). If the translation is carried out competently, there is still the potential problem of insensitivity to specific national and cultural contexts. In the following section the sampling approach will be outlined, including choice of categories and problems related to it.

2.2 Sampling approach

The official documents were chosen through various levels. Europe was selected in the first step, then Germany and Norway. Because of the federal system in Germany with great variances within the country, it was decided to focus on Berlin and Oslo in order to make the research as comparable as possible. For the same reason it was decided to use only official documents and data from public schools. The same procedure was used for the selection of respondents to the interviews.

A purposive sampling is used for all of the interviews. The interviewees are chosen on the basis of their knowledge and position and the belief that were relevant to the research questions. Hence, the interviewees are not chosen on a random basis. The goal of purposive sampling is to sample cases and participants in a strategic way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions posed (Bryman 2004:415). A theoretical sampling approach was employed, which is one form of purpose sampling (Bryman 2004:414). Seven interviews were conducted before we had a theoretical saturation⁵. Since a purposive sample is not a probability sampling approach, it is not possible to generalise to a population, but it will still be discussed whether the findings are unique to Berlin and Oslo. Although the sample is purposive, it is not convenience. A convenience sample is simply available by chance to the researcher, whereas in purposive sampling the researcher samples with certain research goals in mind (Bryman 2004:415).

⁵ The idea with theoretical saturation is that you carry on sampling theoretically until a category has been saturated with data (Bryman 2004:416).

2.2.1 Sampling categories

The interviewees are chosen on the basis of categories. Since the study is comparative, two obvious categories/sites are Oslo and Berlin. In the analysis, category 1 will be contrasted with category 2 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. List of categories.

Category 1	Category 2
Oslo	Berlin
People working with language policy at macro-level (politicians and policy-makers)	People working with language policy at macro-level (politicians and policy-makers)
Language teachers and principals	Language teachers and principals

As mentioned elsewhere, it is important to ensure that samples of respondents are equivalent. When it comes to language teachers, this was not a problem; however the people involved in the policy-making processes were at a higher level in Oslo than in Berlin since they were easier to reach. This may cause errors to the final results. Nonetheless, since the comparison is qualitative in nature with an emphasis on understanding the background of the foreign language policies, I still regard it as valid. Of most importance is that the questions that guided the research were more or less the same. As Bryman states, it helps to reduce the risk of failing to appreciate that social science findings are often, if not invariably, culturally specific (Bryman 2004:59). Since this research is contrasting policies by looking at context, I hope to avoid this kind of failure. The following section will give a description of the data collecting methods being used: Critical Discourse Analysis of official documents and semi-structured interviews.

2.3 Discourse Analyses

Discourse is a fuzzy concept with many definitions and approaches. Norman Fairclough divides them into “non-critical” and “critical” approaches (Fairclough 1992:12). The division

is not fixed, but the critical approach differ from the non-critical approach in the way that they are not only describing discursive practices, but also shows how discourse is formed by relations of power and ideologies (ibid). A description of the various approaches is not seen as necessary for the understanding of the chosen approach, the critical, which will here focus on Norman Fairclough's approach since it is the most developed within the critical discourse movement. However, a general and preliminary definition of a discourse gives us a certain grasp of what a discourse is telling us, that is, the way we talk about and understand the world (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:1). Our understanding of the world is dependent of the socio-cultural and historical context of which we are part. How we use language is in other words not neutral reflections of our world and social relations, but rather a result of our previous experiences and attitudes. Discourse analysis involves a *relativistic* ontology, which means that the world is not fixed, but flexible and constantly changing. When we want to understand something about the world, we must therefore get this information through language and social practice (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:9). Discourse is relevant as soon as you give meaning to an event. A flood is not a discourse before people try to explain it. In this way we can also say that language is not only communicating facts, it also generates the social world. It is important to remember that our understanding is only one way of several interpretations. How we understand a text is therefore not the answer to how reality looks like. The concluding remarks from this study are hence only one interpretation, namely the interpretation by the researcher.

2.3.1 Challenges

The analysis can give tremendous insight about what is explicit or implicit written in a text, but what is absent is often just as essential as to what is actually said (Fairclough 1995:5). Analysis of implicit content can provide valuable insights into what is taken as common sense (Fairclough 1995:6). These implicit assumptions may also lead way to the ideology of the text since ideologies often are implicit assumptions (ibid). The CDA aims at locating these assumptions by asking which elements are included and excluded.

2.3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

A Critical Discourse Analysis, normally abbreviated as CDA, is a theory and a method analysing the way that individuals and institutions use language (Richardson 2007:1). It provides a way of moving between close analysis of texts and interactions, and social analyses of various types (Fairclough 2001:229). It is critical in the sense that it aims to show non-obvious ways in which language is involved in social relations of power and domination and in ideology (ibid). CDA starts with a social issue or problem. When asking who 2FL aims at, this implicates some inequality aspects that may or may not be increased. Since the socio-economic background varies between students both in Berlin and Oslo, this is not without importance. The issue is whether language choice increase differences that already exist between students.

The following presents the theoretical framework which serve as a background for the Critical Discourse Analysis. It provides a necessarily skeletal description of social class, political power and the state in modern society. The next part is methodological and outlines' the multidimensional critical approach to discourse analysis based on the theoretical points in the first segment.

2.3.3 Discourse and Hegemony

In the range of language as in other domains, the nature of policy formation and implementation differs according to the political and organisational structures within which it takes place (Fairclough 1995:92). Simple models of policies radiating outwards and downwards from central government do not match the complexities of modern states in developed capitalist societies, such as Germany and Norway. In the case of technologisation of discourse⁶, there are clear trends at national and even transnational levels which can be linked to state and dominant class (including capitalist multinational) interests without too much struggle; yet it is not possible to trace them to one or even several particular moments of locations of central policy formation (Fairclough 1995:92). The policies and planning

⁶ The technologisation of discourse is a contemporary form of top-down intervention to change discursive practices and culture (Fairclough 1995:87).

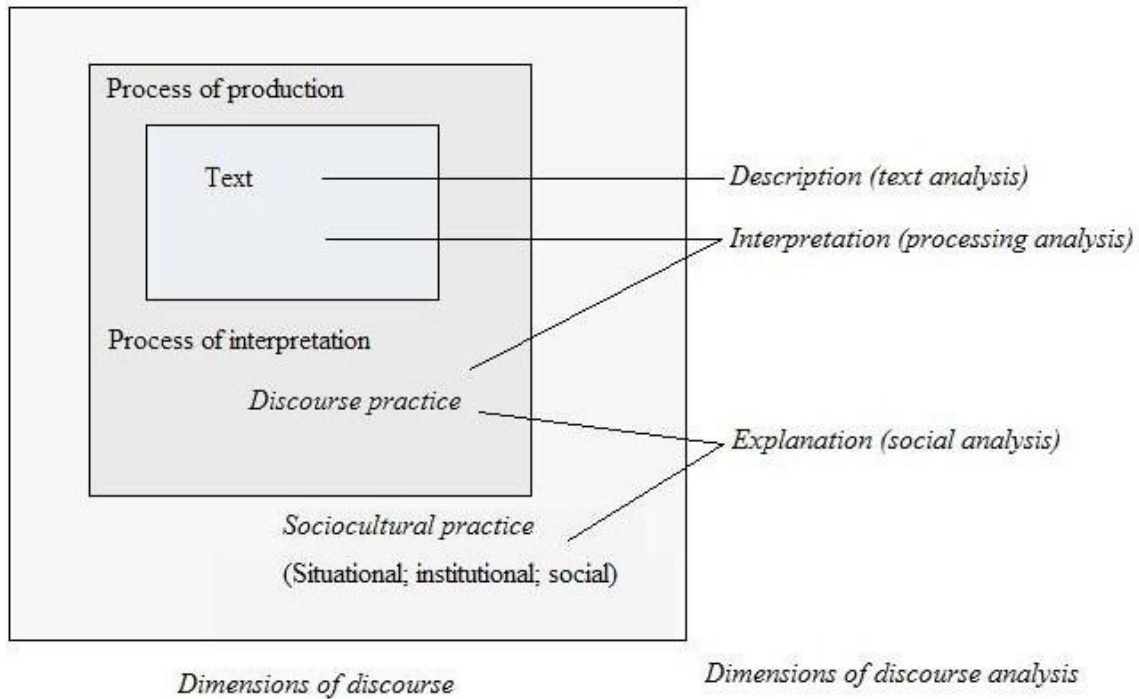
which underlie processes of discourse technologisation have been determined at different levels and different times, in many different institutions and organisations, within the private sphere as well as within the public sphere (ibid). These instances are linked together in various ways (e.g. through common relationship to the social scientific expertise which discourse technologisation depends upon), but the decision-making and implementation practices are autonomous.

2.3.4 Fairclough's three-dimensional model

Fairclough use the concept of discourse in three ways, 1) language use as social practice, 2) where discourse is understood as the kind of language used within a specific field (e.g. political or scientific discourse) and 3) as a count noun (a discourse, the dis-course, the discourses, discourses) refers to a way of speaking which gives meaning to experiences from a particular perspective (Fairclough 1995:135 and Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:66-67). The last understanding, which will be of most relevance for our analyses, refers to any discourse that can be distinguished from other discourses, such as, for example, a neoliberal discourse, a Marxist discourse or a consumer discourse (Fairclough 1993:138; reprinted in Fairclough 1995a:135). The aim of the analysis is however not to uncover the objective reality, but to explore how we create this reality so that it appears objective and natural (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:33).

The approach is based on a three-dimensional conception of discourse, and correspondingly a three-dimensional method of discourse analysis (Fairclough 1995:97).

Figure 3. Fairclough's three analytical levels



The method of discourse analysis includes linguistic *description* of the language text, *interpretation* of the relationship between the (productive and interpretative) discursive processes and the text, and *explanation* of the relationship between the discursive processes and the social processes (ibid). How the text is formed or interpreted is determined by the nature of the sociocultural practice which the discourse is part of. The nature of the discourse practice of text production forms the text, and leaves traces in shallow features of the text; and the nature of the discourse practice of text interpretation determines how the surface features of a text will be interpreted.

2.3.5 Problems and limitations with text analysis

“By itself, a textual analysis is limited” (Fairclough 2003:15). It should therefore be used in a combination with other methods of analysis. Although this study includes interviews, the reliability would have increased if it was done together with other types of analyses. A combination of other methods of analyses is therefore recommended for further research. The aim of this study is to understand what drives the politics, but in order to research meaning-making, we need to look at interpretations of texts as well as texts themselves, and more

generally at how texts practically figure in particular areas of social life, and as Fairclough suggests, that textual analysis is best framed within ethnography (ibid). A textual analysis is in other words a supplement rather than a replacement to social research. It may also be suggested that a text analysis is not objective; however the rationale for the study is not to deliver facts, although it aims at avoiding personal biases.

2.4 Semi-structured interviews

All interviews are semi-structured and guided by questions that have been prepared beforehand. The reason why semi-structured interviews were chosen was that there were fairly specific topics that should be covered. These questions directed the interview to some extent and showed to be helpful when it came to covering the topics that needed to be covered. The first interview conducted was more structured than the following. This was partly because of the interviewee and partly because of lack of training. The four last interviews were more conversational. This could also be a result of language problems.

For some of the interviews there was a time limit. The shortest interview lasted only fifteen minutes and was conducted over phone. This interview was also semi-structured, however less flexible than the others. The reason for this was mainly that it was based on an interview conducted the day before with former minister of education Kristin Clemet. The phone interview was with her state secretary Helge Ole Bergesen. In addition, Bergesen wrote a book about the period of interest which covered the policy-making process from *the inside*. Therefore, many of the questions were guided by quotes and comments that should be either confirmed, elaborated or discussed. Despite the time limit and that the interview was conducted over phone, it showed to be one of the most interesting because of the insight that was given. Both interviewer and interviewee were very engaged in the topic and spoke in a much faster manner compared to the other interviews. This does not mean that the other interviewees were less engaged in the topic. The time limit could be one explanation, but one ingredient that might seem less relevant, but which I regard significant, was the fact that we both spoke more or less the same dialect. The other extreme were the interviews conducted in German, where I had to search for some of the words, especially when it came to the follow

up questions not included or prepared in the interview guide. In this case, a fifteen minute phone interview would be far less successful.

The interview guide was a good tool in all of the interviews. During the interviews, I marked a star when a certain topic was covered. At the end of each interview, a short look would tell me if I had covered the topics I intended to even though we had spoken about many topics that were not covered in the guide. The idea with the stars came up when I practiced interviewing with a friend before I started on with the real interviews. When going through this interview, I discovered that I had forgotten some questions. The stars were especially helpful when it came to the interviews that were more conversational, and when the questions from the guide were given in a very different order that was on the paper. This was especially the case with one female interviewee where I barely looked down at my papers. It was difficult to follow the guide while interviewing her, because she had a very intense way of talking and I felt that I interrupted her if I looked down on my papers. This was different from the other interviewees that had more breaks while talking and where the interviewees stopped after a while and waited for the next question.

The semi-structured interview is more flexible than a structured interview used in quantitative methods and has the advantage that it gives a great deal of leeway for the interviewees in how to reply (Bryman 2004:438). The perhaps greatest challenge with interviewing was to avoid leading questions. This was easier to avoid when my knowledge about the area was limited. My experience was that the follow up questions were much easier to keep open. Common follow up questions could be: “what do you mean by...” and “could you please elaborate...” which are fairly open.

Although the interview guide was much of the same for many of the interviews, the questions were not always asked in the same manner. The reason for this was the different contexts, especially between interviews conducted in Berlin and interviews conducted in Oslo. All the interviews had questions not included in the interview guide. These questions were more guided by what the interviewee said, which made the interview more conversational.

2.4.1 Reliability and validity

In the following section there will be a discussion regarding the quality of the research. Some writers do not consider the question of reliability and validity to be important for qualitative research since *measurement* is often associated with quantitative research (Bryman, 2004:376). However, quality is not only connected with measurements. The quality will here be discussed on the basis of trustworthiness and authenticity.

2.4.2 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is made up of four criteria: 1) Credibility, 2) Transferability, 3) Dependability, and 4) Confirmability.

2.4.3 Credibility

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994) there are no absolute truths about the social world. It can be several possible accounts of social reality. It is therefore important for the quality of the study that the researcher is trained or experienced (Bryman 2004:377). Although some training was done before the field work, this is by far sufficient since I had never conducted interviews in this context before. Lack of training is therefore making a threat to the credibility in the study. One aspect that could increase the credibility is to contact the interviewees after the analysis and ask them to confirm what they said. This is called *respondent validation* (ibid) and was done for some of the interviews.

2.4.4 Transferability

Since qualitative research mostly entails the intensive study of a small group, or individuals sharing certain characteristics, qualitative findings tend to be oriented to the contextual uniqueness and significance of the aspect of the social world being studied (Bryman 2004:378) something that is also applicable to this study. It is language policies in a given time at certain places that create this uniqueness. Hence, it is not possible to generalise the

results from this study to other contexts, even though they are similar in nature, but some results are likely to be transferable, and this is why the factors impacting on decision-making are discussed in a wider context in Chapter 7.

2.4.5 Dependability

Dependability is important in qualitative research since it generates a large data set (Bryman 2004:379). Although this study was not very large, all of the phases of the research process were kept in an accessible manner. This was especially important with the fieldwork notes and the interview transcripts in order to avoid a mixing of the data.

2.4.6 Confirmability

Since a complete objectivity is impossible in social research and especially when using a qualitative approach, the researcher should act in good faith. This means that it should be apparent that he or she has not overly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings deriving from it (Bryman 2004:379).

2.4.7 Recording of the data

A good tape recorder was used for all of the interviews in order to make the interpretation and analysis as precise as possible. Since tape recorders do not “tune out” conversations, false interpretations are less likely (Bryman 2004:380). For the phone interview I had the speaker on and could therefore use the recorder also for this interview. There were no problems with the tape recorder and nothing was accidentally deleted. All of the interviews were done in quiet surroundings and since most of the interviewees spoke clearly, it was no problems connected to the transcribing of the interviews. After the interviews I listened to the start, middle, and end of the tape as is suggested by Patton (Patton 2002:382).

Notes were also taken during the interviews. The notes were mostly used as a help during the interviews in order to remember questions I came up with while the interviewee was talking. Important names, recommendations for literature, organisations, and people were also noted carefully down. I also noted down when the interviewee had a pause or showed a mood that would not be hearable on the tape recorder. I then noted down the time on the recorder at the given time.

2.4.8 Challenges

The interviews that were conducted in Berlin had an extra challenge since they were conducted in either English or German. If there were words or meanings that I was not sure of, I referred to them in both German and English and used examples if necessary. The respondents were asked beforehand if they spoke English, and they were told that they could switch between the languages if they felt it would be better expressed in German and vice versa. Since the study is cross-cultural it could also cause misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Hopefully, an attention to language differences cross-nationally can make us more sensitive to barriers to understanding that can arise even among those who speak the same language (Bryman 2004:393).

Since the study is cross-cultural some criticisms of this methodology should also be included. Although Hantrais and Mangen (1998) offer a clear sense of direction as we can see from the quote earlier in this paper, there are several problems connected to this kind of research. This is especially related to concepts that are not universal or familiar. One term might have another meaning in Berlin than in Oslo which could cause a biased conclusion. One example is the term 'cultural competence' which is used in one German document and 'cultural understanding' used in an interview in Oslo. These terms are similarly interpreted, but could have different meanings. Unfortunately not much time was used to discuss concepts in the interviews, but examples were used who covered the meanings of the terms to various degrees. Terms that were regarded as especially important (see CF), were said both in English and German in Berlin, and in Norwegian and English in Oslo. Since the comparison is within Europe and Germany and Norway share much of their history, I regard this problem to be less challenging than it would if the comparison were done across continents.

Another challenge relates to the use of cross-national data. Internet pages such as Eurydice offer access to statistics from a variety of sources. Although the information from these pages is regarded as valid, it should be taken into consideration that the data might be secondary collected from a various type of sources. However, this is regarded to be a greater problem in quantitative methods than in qualitative where the methodology rests on generating primary data (Redmond 2003).

2.5 Ethics

One point that may seem obvious, albeit important, is that we are interviewing people (Fontana and Frey 1994). It should be more of a dialog than an interview since interviews are rarely that formal. Often, interviewing is unnatural and researchers may be recommended to keep a distance. Since I am trying to get beyond what is written in the policy documents, I consider it crucial that the respondent/informant feels comfortable with the situation. Most likely it is easier to get more insight with a dialog than a rather stiff interview. This showed to be easier after some training. I regard especially the first part of my first interview in Berlin to be rather stiff, but after a while, it loosened up and became more conversational in nature. The interviews in Oslo were very conversational and the interviewees seemed to be engaged and interested in the research.

3 Conceptual clarifications

The research questions used in the interview guide were approached through a conceptual framework prepared beforehand. This served as guidance to the favourable approaches connected to the topic. Significant concepts were: (1) Macro mechanisms on a country level, such as the influence of globalisation and economy on FL politics and (2) Micro mechanisms on a city- and school level such as social capital. The concepts of language policy, globalisation and the nation state are also discussed.

The conceptual framework did not change much if one compares the framework before and after the field work, although some concepts may seem less important now than in the early beginning. One example is *nationalism*. None of the respondents used nationalism as one reason why Norway lags behind when it comes to the teaching of 2FL. In the preparation for the research, it was suggested that nationalism and the fear of globalisation⁷ could be one reason why the New Norwegian government decided not to make 2FL mandatory as earlier suggested. Ideologies however, were widely used and became hence a key concept. Especially the previous state secretary Ole Helge Bergesen used only ideologies to explain why it was so difficult to make a policy change.

This chapter will also describe some of the concepts and systems that the interviewees referred to. There were also some concepts in the documents that we need to look at in order to understand the arguments in chapter five and six. Examples are the grading system in Berlin and issues of foreign language teaching in relation to minority students. The Soria-Moria declaration is a Norwegian political platform forming the basis the first and the second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) and will also be explained in this chapter. This political statement is referred to in the data presentation as well as in the analysis. A foreign language as cultural competence is another term that will be addressed here.

⁷A fear that the processes of globalisation would result in a loss of cultural identity.

3.1 The Soria-Moria Declaration

“*The Soria-Moria Declaration*” is the political platform from the Norwegian Government and is a result of the political negotiations of the first and the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) composed of the Labour Party (Norwegian: *Arbeiderpartiet, AP*), the Center Party, (Norwegian: *Senterpartiet, SP*) and the Socialistic Left Party (Norwegian: *Sosialistisk Venstreparti, SV*). (Regjeringen 2011). “*The Soria-Moria Declaration*” contains a description of the politics that the Second Stoltenberg Government will lead, including international politics, health politics and education politics.

Chapter 10, “Children, Education and Research”, covers some areas that are of particular interest for this thesis, such as “the Knowledge Promotion”. It is for instance stated that “*Regjeringen vil videreføre og forsterke hovedlinjene i Kunnskapsløftet*” (Regjeringen 2011:46). (English: The Government will continue and strengthen the most essential aspects of the Knowledge Promotion). It is also stated that the Second Stoltenberg Government considers primary and secondary education as a comprehensive basic education to ensure that all children and young people are given the best opportunities. The 13-year basic education gives the students a broad competence and includes everyone. Also of relevance is their focus on the school as a tool for social cohesion:

“Alle skal ha rett til å gjennomføre en 13-årig grunnopplæring som gir dem en bred basiskompetanse, slik at de er godt rustet til videre studier eller arbeid. Fullført videregående opplæring skal gjøre at elevene oppnår generell studiekompetanse, uavhengig av studieprogram. Skolens rolle som verktøy for sosial utjamning må styrkes. Derfor vil vi arbeide for at alle elever skal gis leksehjelp” (Regjeringen 2011:44).

Everyone has the right to complete 13 years of basic training which gives them a broad basic competence so that they are well trained for further studies or work. Completed upper secondary education shall give the students generell studiekompetanse, independent of study program. The schools role as a tool for social cohesion must be strengthened. We will therefore work to give all of the students help with their home work” (Regjeringen 2011:44).

This will be of relevance for the discussion of the education systems and the issues of equality and inequality.

3.1 Equality and inequality

Differences in socio-economical background are already mentioned in connection to the school systems in Norway - and in Germany. The differentiated system in Germany has been criticised for increasing differences between students (Gorard and Smith 2004). In the case of Oslo and Norway it is mentioned that the so called 'unity school' is not as homogenous as intended. Equity and inequality are aspects of education that should be mentioned also in this context, since they are telling us something about states priorities. Although Germany has been criticised for the tracking system - which has led to some changes, the early selection is still there. One reason why Germany is not adapting to this reform idea of Comenius as in Norway and many other European countries could be the history, traditions, and ideology. Economical considerations and development are other reasons which are connected to the idea that early selection is efficient (Williams & Cummings 2005:13).

Bernstein suggests that there is likely to be a distribution of images, knowledge's, opportunities and resources which will affect the right of participation, inclusion and individual enhancement of groups of students (Bernstein 2000: xxii). This raises the question of how the schools deal with the correspondence between the hierarchy of social groups and their differential power external to the school and the hierarchies of knowledge, possibility and value within the school (Bernstein 2000: xxii). The question is in other words how the school attempts to deal with these external issues of social order, justice and conflict. According to the French sociologist, anthropologist, and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu, the schools are ignoring these differences by appearing neutral, by pretending that the hierarchy within the school is a result of hierarchies outside of school, in the society (Bourdieu 1991:233). In this way they are legitimising inequalities that exist.

Pierre Bourdieu uses the concept of cultural capital, which was intended to account for otherwise inexplicable differences in the academic performance of children with unequal

patrimonies and, more generally, in all kinds of cultural or economical practices (Bourdieu 2005:2). In “Cultural capital and pedagogic communication” (2000) Bourdieu and Passeron claim that “all pedagogic action (PA) is, objectively, symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power” (Bourdieu and Passeron 2000:5). PA, including all the educated members of a social formation or group (diffuse education), family education and institutionalised education, reproduce class differences in society (ibid). PA is in other words increasing differences that already exist. Since PA includes institutionalised education, which is education run by the state, one could ask whether it is an aim for the state to maintain these differences. This leads to the question of what the real purpose of schooling is.

3.2 Purposes of schooling

In order to understand the real policy behind the foreign language policies, it is necessary to look at the real purpose of schooling. The real purpose could be different from the official explanation, or the official version may not include aspects that show the real purposes of schooling. If we understand the real purpose of schooling, we also get a better understanding of how schools are interpreted.

Patricia K. Kubow and Paul R. Fossum ask an important question when it comes to the purposes of schooling: How do schools, through their policies and practices, sort and select students for work in a differentiated labour market? To answer this question it is not enough to refer to the unity school in Norway and the federalist and tracking system in Germany, because we need to take into consideration that there are multiple and often competing purposes of schooling within any society (Kubow & Fossum 2007:73).

Although the opportunities for formal education have been extended to more people, this does not mean that all students have the same opportunities. As indicated by several studies (see for instance Hong Kong and Israel study by Kubow and Fossum), some knowledge is more valued than others, and this knowledge suits some students more than others. Kubow and Fossums experience from Hong Kong and Israel is that those who benefit the most from

schooling are those whose values, views, language, and attitudes match those of the dominant culture (Kubow and Fossum 2007:117).

Knowledge that is more valued is often the knowledge that is measured, claims one of the respondents in this research. This is also relating to the status of foreign languages that will be discussed later on. There are many ways to evaluate students. The next section will describe the grading system in primary education in Berlin. This is necessary in order to make sense of some of the data that are presented in Chapter 5.

3.3 The evaluation forms

In Brandenburg and Berlin the teachers evaluate their students mostly through grades (*Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Sport, 2004:12*). It will be referred to this grading system when the interviews from Berlin are presented. It should be noted that the evaluations in the first grade are mostly verbal (*ibid*).

Figure 4. The grading system in Berlin in *Sekundarstufe 1*.

Grade	Description of Grades	Meaning
1	Very good (German: <i>sehr gut</i>)	The performance meets the requirements
2	Good (German: <i>gut</i>)	The performance is generally consistent with the requirements.
3	Satisfying (German: <i>befriedigend</i>)	There are some shortcomings, but it still meets the requirements on the whole.
4	Adequate (German: <i>ausreichend</i>)	The performance does not meet the requirements, but it is still shows that the necessary basic skills are in place and the problem will be resolved in the foreseeable future.
5	Inadequate (German: <i>mangelhaft</i>)	The performance does not meet the requirements and even the basic knowledge is incomplete, but they could be resolved in the foreseeable future.
6	Insufficient (German: <i>ungenügend</i>)	The performance does not meet the requirements and even the basic knowledge is incomplete.

Grades are not used as a form of evaluation in Norwegian primary schools (*Regjeringen* 2011) and are therefore not given attention here.

3.4 Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is an important term in the German document “*Bildung und Schule in Berlin und Brandenburg –Herausforderungen und gemeinsame Entwicklungsperspektiven*“ (*Bildungskommision* 2003). According to this document, cultural competence includes certain skills and if you manage these skills, you get an open access to cultural goods. Two of these skills are related to foreign languages: 1) To master the lingua franca, 2) To master foreign languages (*ibid*).

This means that if you know foreign languages, you will get access to cultural goods. You will also get a broader perspective in the sense that you get new horizons and ways of understanding and interpret the world (*Bildungskommision* 2003:80). To have a broader understanding of the world and be able to view it from different perspectives could also indicate that the tolerance would be better, which again means that prejudices would decrease.

One of the respondents in Oslo, Minister Clemet, is pointing this out in the interview. However, she is using the corresponding term ‘cultural understanding’. Both versions of “Languages Open Doors” use ‘*tverrkulturell*’ (English: cross-cultural) and ‘*kulturell bevissthet*’ (English: cultural awareness). These terms differ to some extent, but they are all used as an argument for the teaching of FL; that foreign languages are important also because they give you cultural competence, in addition to knowledge of the foreign language itself.

Cultural understanding is in other words an important term for both the data from Oslo and from Berlin. In the comparison of the two cities, it will be discussed how important the argument of cultural competence is, compared to for example economical concerns.

3.5 Foreign language and minority students

Although this thesis focuses on foreign language teaching and in particular the teaching of 2FL, the data from the interviews suggest that the foreign language teaching of minority students is relevant, and we will see that this is connected to the status of foreign languages and for the economic development of the countries.

Since the minority students have a different mother tongue than what is taught in the classrooms, this raises the question on whether these students should learn 2FL in addition to English or whether the national language (Norwegian or German) should be their 2FL. It also raises the question on whether these students should receive teaching in their mother tongue and whether the mother tongue teaching should be in addition to 2FL or replace 2FL.

In section 3.1 we saw that the Second Stoltenberg Government would maintain and reinforce the main lines of the Knowledge Promotion and one focus is the language teaching of minority students. It is emphasised that language learning is important for minority students to succeed in education and on the labour market (*Regjeringen* 2005:46). It is emphasised also that good knowledge of the mother tongue is important in order to learn other languages (*ibid*).

In this thesis, the mother tongue teaching is most relevant when talking about inclusion of minority students. Since good knowledge of the mother tongue is helpful in order to learn other foreign languages, this is an important reason to why one should focus on mother tongue teaching also and not only second foreign language teaching (2FLT). This point is also one reason why we cannot talk about 2FLT and not mention mother tongue teaching.

3.5.1 A minority person's second language

The Ministry has proposed the following definition of a minority person's second language:

“En minoritetspersons andrespråk er et språk som primært tilegnes gjennom direkte kontakt med det samfunnet der språket tales, som oftest av majoriteten i samfunnet. Sekundært læres andre-språket gjennom undervisning i skolen. Andrespråket læres i utgangspunktet fordi det brukes i personens omgivelser og derfor er nødvendig i hverdagen. I skolen undervises andrespråket fordi det er nødvendig for at personen skal kunne kvalifisere seg for arbeids- og samfunnslivet i majoritetssamfunnet” (Ministry of education and research 1995).

“A minority person’s second language is a language which is primarily acquired through direct contact with the society where the language is spoken, usually by the majority in society. The second language is learned in the first place because it is used in the person's surroundings and is therefore necessary in everyday life. The school teaches the second language because it is necessary in order to prepare the person for the labour market as well as to function in social-life and society” (Ministry of education and research 1995).

One problem with this definition is that the minority students represent the majority in many schools in Oslo. It is therefore not given that the surroundings speak the language that is spoken in the rest of the society. Another problem is that the labour market is not limited to Norway. To teach 2FL is therefore not necessarily preparing minority students’ for the labour market better than the teaching of the mother tongue.

3.6 Globalisation

It is not possible to talk about change in attitudes, in politics and in education without mentioning globalisation. Globalisation can be understood as “the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependencies that characterise modern life and is a part of the context which politicians and policy-makers work within” (Tomlinson, 1999:2). It affects regional and international economies and these in turn influence economic growth potential and the role of the state. This has a major impact on the development of education systems. (Carnoy 1999:7).

Historic changes are transforming the lives of people in the developed countries and most developed ones. National economies and even national cultures are globalising. Globalisation means more competition, not only with companies in the same region, but across borders

(Carnoy 1999:13). Today's massive movements of capital rest on information, communication and knowledge and because knowledge is portable, it lends itself easily to globalisation (Carnoy 1999:13). This logic implicates that globalisation is also influencing the transmission of knowledge: "With globalisation, governments seem to pay much more attention to how well their students are doing, compared to students in other countries. The increased economic competition has been transposed into competition for indicators of high productivity, student test scores among them" (Carnoy 1999:66-67).

The definitions of globalisation above may fit the economic perspective of globalisation. However, when it comes to politics and education, it is more debatable. To what degree the state and the policy-makers are influenced by globalisation when it comes to education and politics, will be further explored in Chapter 4 under "globalisation theory".

3.7 Language policy

Language policy represents the decision-making process, formally stated or implicit, used to decide which languages will be taught to (or learned by) whom for what purposes (Cooper 1989:31). The professor of language education Elena Shohamy adds a critical voice to the definition of language itself and to language policy: "While language is dynamic, personal, free and energetic, with no defined boundaries, there have always been those groups and individuals who want to control and manipulate it in order to promote political, social, economic and personal ideologies" (Shohamy 2006:1). According to Shohamy, language is used as a form of control, by imposing the use of certain languages in certain ways. This could for instance be the style the document is written in.

The style of a text may also be ideologically significant (Fairclough 1995:75). When public bodies such as government ministries generate public information on the schemes and activities, they choose a style of writing. This is done partly on the basis of the image they build for themselves. Shohamy believes that governments manipulate people through the language they use in public documents. Since we are interested in the changes that took place

between the The Second Kjell Magne Bondevik Government (2001-2005) and Jens Stoltenberg's Second Government (2005-present) it would be necessary to go through the revised strategy document "Languages Open Doors" from the current Norwegian government and compare it with the previous. Then, it should be possible to see if the language use varies. This is interesting since the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) changed the second foreign language policy. In this way, policies are not only compared between Berlin and Oslo, but also between two governments in Norway: The Second Kjell Magne Bondevik Government (2001-2005) and Jens Stoltenberg's Second Government (2005-present).

3.8 Language and Power

Andrea Mayr and others claim that institutions are shaped by discourse and that they have the capacity to create and impose discourses which again means that they have the power to shape our routine experiences of the world and influence the way we classify that world. In that way, they have power to foster particular kinds of identities to suit their own purposes (Mayr 2005:1). In order to understand the background of a policy one should therefore look at various interests that the government may have. Even though official and declared documents are often used for representation and recognition, it is not sufficient to read these in order to understand the "real policy" (Shohamy 2006:3). There are in other words various policy devices or mechanisms that are not declared in the political documents that we need to understand in order to get a grasp of the real policy. One of these mechanisms can be ideologies. If policies are made through ideologies, we need to understand these ideologies in order to understand the policy.

3.9 Language and Ideologies

An ideology can be understood as a common frame of reference (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998:191). Van Dijk offers a similar definition, stating that ideologies are a "*system of ideas*" that is socio-cognitively defined as shared representations of social groups (Van Dijk 2006:115). Different "types" of ideologies are defined by the kind of groups that have an ideology (Van Dijk 2006:116). For our case this could then be the ideology of the country as a

whole, or the political parties. It will later be argued that differences in ideologies cause differences in politics. We could also call it the implicit frame of reference since this frame is not always communicated in an explicit way, mostly because the authors are unable to communicate them. The reason for this, as stated by Blommaert and Verschueren, is that the authors (in this case the politicians), assume that the readers share their ideology. It may therefore seem possible to understand the ideology behind a policy by analysing the documents carefully.

Language ideologies are important because they give us a certain idea of what the country thinks language policy should be all about. According to Spolsky both Germany and Norway have the same ideology if we look at history: “one nation, one territory, one language” (Spolsky 2009:153). In Germany, Bismarck tried to unite individual German speaking states. In Norway, they struggled to create a new national language out of the multiplicity of Norwegian dialects which led to the strange compromise of having two distinct varieties of the same language. Because of the fact that Norway has these two versions of the same language, this could be one explanation to why a 2FL was not made compulsory in Norway; both countries used the national language to unite the people in the state.

According to Fairclough, one can “locate” an ideology in texts (Fairclough 1995:70). However, it is not possible to simply “read off” ideologies from texts since meanings are created through interpretations of texts (ibid). Since texts are open to various interpretations and because ideological processes appertain to discourses as whole social events – they are processes between people – not to the texts which are created, distributed and interpreted as moments of such events (ibid). However, Fairclough also claims that language is a material form of ideology, and language is invested by ideology (Fairclough 1995:73). It should therefore be possible to locate some ideologies in the texts. They should however not be used alone to get an understanding the background of the policies. It is therefore necessary to use other approaches in addition, which in this case means interviews with policy-makers and people affected by the policy⁸.

⁸ This is discussed under “problems and limitations with text analyses”.

3.10 Ideological polarisation

It will later be argued that ideology was one possible reason why it was difficult to introduce a 2FL in Norway, or to change policies in general. It is therefore also relevant to mention ideological polarisation, which could simply be explained by in-groups and out-groups. This means that people typically emphasise their own good actions and properties and the bad ones of the out-group, and ease or reject their own bad ones and the fine ones of the out-group (Van Dijk 2006:115). Ideologies do in other words direct the “biased” personal mental models that trigger the production of ideological discourse (Van Dijk 2006:138).

Ideologies are belief systems. They control and organise other socially shared beliefs. A racist ideology could for instance control attitudes about immigration, and a social ideology may favour a more important role of the State in public affairs (Van Dijk 2006:138). Hence, ideologies are foundational social beliefs of a rather general and abstract nature. Furthermore, ideologies are gradually acquired which needs to be relatively constant. One does not turn into a pacifist overnight. This is also the case for decision-makers. It would be difficult and time-consuming to persuade people of a different ideology to accept a policy change that is in conflict with their own ideology. Another social function of ideologies is that they allow members to organise and coordinate their (joint) actions and interactions in view of the goals and interests of the group as a whole (Van Dijk 2006:117). This may however be a problem as when two ideologies clash. This could be the case in political decisions. I will discuss this later on in relation to the resistance the right wing (*høyre*) met when trying to initiate an obligatory 2FL in Norway.

3.10.1 Social Democracy

Social Democracy is a political ideology that advocates a peaceful, evolutionary transition of society from capitalism to socialism (Encyclopædia Britannica 2011). It is based on 19th century socialism and the doctrines of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Social democracy shares common ideological roots with communism, but eschews its militancy and totalitarianism (ibid). The social-democratic position was especially strong in Norway between 1940 and 1970, a period which has been called “*Sosialdemokratiets lykkelige*

øyeblikk” (English: the happy moment of the social-democracy) (Sejerstad 2005). The Labour Party became active in the school politics after World War I and their fight for the unity school continued after World War II (Tønnessen 2004). Other political parties followed as part of the collective goal to build up the welfare state (Tønnessen 2004 :61). The politics in the 1950s and 1960s was characterised by an agreement between the political parties in Norway and the period has been called “*the social-democratic compromise*” because all political parties gave and took (ibid). The Labour party put aside the class struggle, and the right wing took more responsibility for the weak (ibid).

Since the unity school in Norway is based on social-democratic values, this can be one explanation to why policy change was difficult in Norway; if the change was capitalistic rather than social democratic, this may have come in conflict with the ideology of the unity school. This will be further explored in Chapter 7.

4 Theoretical frameworks

Before we move on to the presentation of data, it is necessary with some background information relevant to the research. Some knowledge about the history of education in Europe is for instance needed in order to get an understanding of the ideologies and educational systems today and to understand the particular educational structure and its relations to society. It will often be referred to ideologies, and knowledge about the education history will help us to get a better understanding of the similarities and differences in the educational structure and the ideology. Globalisation theory and a voluntary policy convergence will also be outlined in this chapter. Followed is a broader description of the educational systems in Germany and Norway. As we will see, these systems are two extremes within modern compulsory education. They set the stage for a discussion of equity and equality in relation to foreign language teaching and choice.

4.1 Educational roots, reform and present trends

In the seventeenth century, many thinkers saw the advantages of educating the entire population, regardless of gender or class. From now on the importance of national concerns was given priority over religious ones (Rust & Wells 2011:1).

The major incentive for change was the call for mass literacy. The revolution had however other correlates, including an expansion of the values in the education curriculum. The objective was to place at least as much emphasis on love and nation as reverence for God and an increase in the emphasis on nonspiritual subjects such as mathematics and science (Cummings 2003:13). Since most of the political entities lacked sufficient resources to build up a popular educational system, two centuries went before it was made possible and this was mainly because of technological developments that boosted the national economies. The unfolding of these economical and ideological changes differed from place to place, but common for all was the unique confluence of administrative practice, tradition, utopian ideology and revolutionary energy that created a new ideal for education and related set of structures and procedures that are considered “modern” (Cummings 2003:13-14). These new

“modern” school systems tended to receive some support from the modern state and strove to provide basic education to a substantial proportion of the population in moral laws and several cognitively complex subjects (Cummings 2003:14). The education was arranged in a series of levels from the lowest elementary grade through intermediate grades to an advanced grade; corresponding to each grade was a class of students who were periodically tested to determine their readiness for advancement (Cummings 2003:15).

Another similarity was the bureaucratisation of the educational personnel and the standardisation of educational material (ibid). Although many thinkers saw the advantages of this “modern” school, there were some variances. The first steps towards this “modern” system were probably taken by the Nordic countries (Cummings 2003:15). One consequence was the increasing literacy rate. However, the improvement was mostly due to home education and not an elaborated educational system (ibid). This is most likely the reason why the recognition was not the same here as the reforms in Germany and France. As in the Nordic countries, the Reformation initiated profound changes in the various German states (Cummings 2003:16). In Prussia, popular education was feared among clergy and political leaders (ibid). Melton (1988) who wrote about the pietistic movement in education means that the movement was one reason for this scepticism. The scepticism turned slowly into government regulations that had an impact on Prussia and many German states as it was later imitated (ibid).

4.1.1 Streaming in the German system

Germany created different educational tracks (or streaming) where future state leaders went to other schools than the rest of the population. The establishment of Berlin University in 1810 by Wilhelm von Humboldt was a part of this system. In the early nineteenth century, the *Gymnasium*, with its stress on Latin and a broad humanistic education, was singled out to be the academic bridge between the various local schools and state-controlled advanced education (Cummings 2003:17). With the expansion of the *Gymnasium*, additional institutions such as the Latin secondary schools focused on more “realistic” curricula to train young people for clerical and technical positions in commerce and industry (ibid). Some of the institutions of this second track evolved into the vocational preparations schools that are

currently respected in other industrial nations, at least according to Cummings, but as we will see later on, the system is also criticised. Many countries followed until the French Revolution in 1789 made universal popular education widely favoured. Education in all of the European countries was now run by the state, however, the importance of the private sector was still appreciated in Germany among others. In Norway, which had a more homogeneous population, the state almost monopolised schooling (Rust & Wells 2011:1). Toward the end of the twentieth century, the emphasis on social justice moved toward individual choice and economic advantage. The social-democrat position had attempted to be more inclusive, but conservative efforts of the 1980s and early 1990s focused more on market-oriented policies, which emphasised school choice, privatisation, and other economic imperatives (Rust & Wells 2011:2).

4.1.2 The unity school in Norway

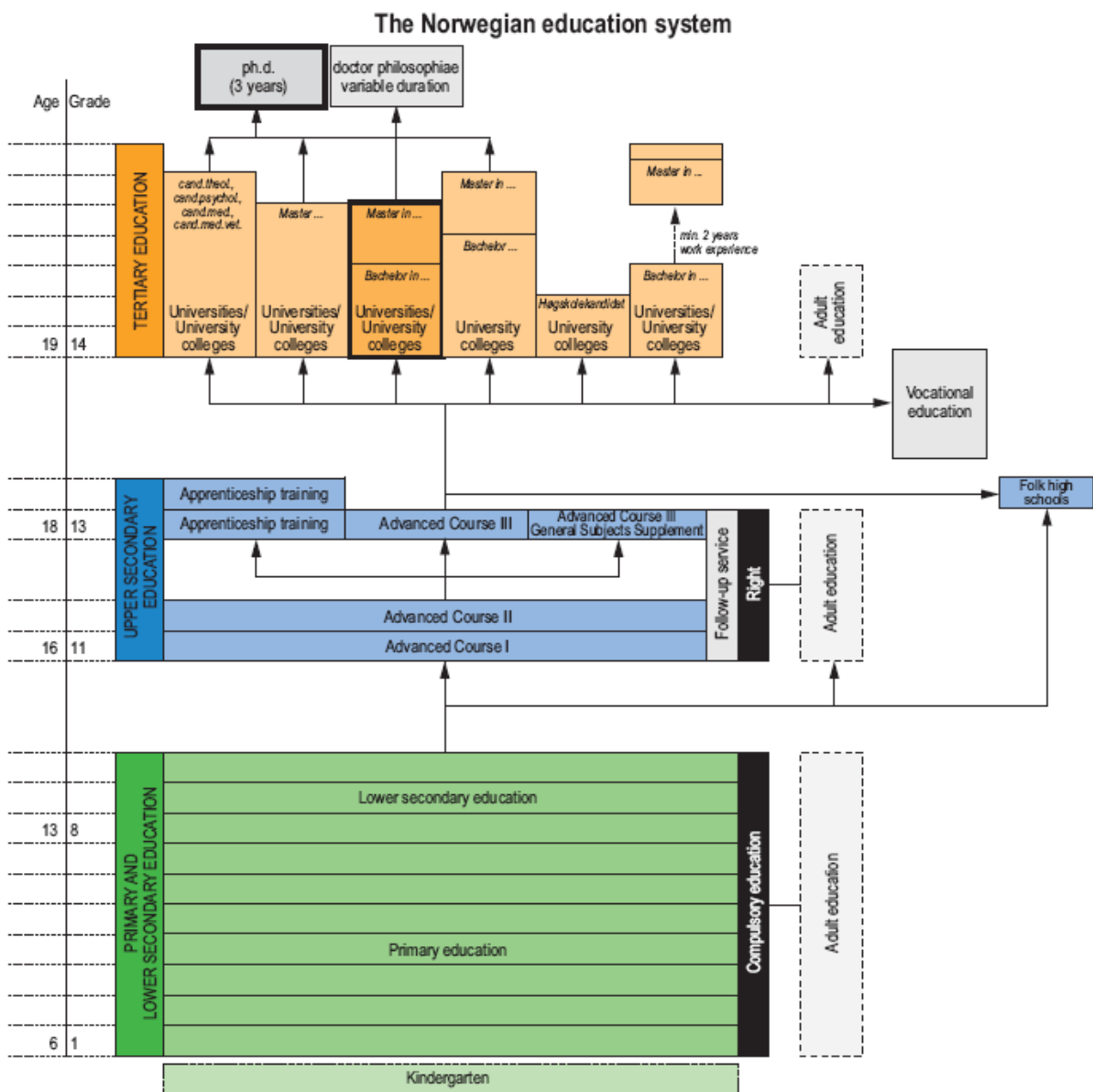
The unity school started to take shape at the end of the 1800s. The public school gradually replaced the old private schools through several reforms in the 1900s (Bergesen 2006:19). The background for the unity school in Norway is the pedagogical reform idea of the school system as an organised unity that integrates theoretical and practical training to all students, independent of social- and ethnical background, gender, intelligence, and geographical affiliation (*Store norske leksikon* 2011).

The unity school has, however, been criticised for ignoring the quality of teaching and results. Both national and international testing has stressed the quality aspects, especially since Norway had results under the average in key subjects on international tests like PISA (OECD 2000). International competition and quality are key terms on this matter. Critical voices claim that the unity school increases differences among students instead of decreasing them: *“Årsaken til at enhetsskolen svikter er enkel: Mennesker er forskjellige. Vi har ulike evner og talenter. Hvis alle behandles likt, blir vi i virkeligheten behandlet ulikt, fordi vi er forskjellige”*. (English: “The reason for the failure of the unity school is simple: people are

different. We have different capabilities and talents. If everyone is treated equally, we are treated differently in reality, because we are different”⁹ (Kristin Clemet 2007).

The figure below illustrates the educational system in Norway up to tertiary level. As illustrated on the figure, all education up to upper secondary education is the same for everyone. On the upper secondary level, there are some variances, but all learning pathways can lead to tertiary education, something that is different from the German system.

Figure 5. The Norwegian Educational System.



⁹ Translated from Norwegian by the undersigned.

4.1.3 The Knowledge Promotion

The Knowledge Promotion¹⁰ (*Kunnskapsløftet*) is the latest reform in the 10-year compulsory school and in upper secondary teaching and training. It introduces certain changes in substance, structure and organisation from the the first grade in the 10-year compulsory school to the last grade in upper secondary teaching and training (The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2006). The reform was implemented in autumn 2006 for pupils in grades 1-9 in 10-year compulsory school and for pupils in their first year of upper secondary education and training.

“The goal of Knowledge Promotion is to help all pupils to develop fundamental skills that will enable them to participate actively in our society of knowledge. The Norwegian school system is inclusive; there must be room for all. Everyone is to be given the same opportunities to develop their abilities. The Knowledge Promotion, with its special emphasis on learning, is meant to help ensure that all pupils receive a differentiated education” (The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2006).

This reform puts a greater focus on learning, but the inclusive aspect is still important. The increased focus on learning is present also in Germany, but is not as holistic as the Norwegian system. Another difference is the emphasis on inclusion. However, some researchers have claimed that the Knowledge Promotion made a fundamental change in relation to the previous direction in education policy (Backmann & Haug 2006). Such a change is the movement from building activities in schools around communion to be most concerned about the individual. Another change is the management of schooling. While the focus was earlier on the pedagogical process, the interest today is more on the result of these processes (ibid). This could result from the increased focus on international testing, and the Knowledge Promotion should be partly seen as a result of this.

¹⁰ The name of the reform is translated into English by the Ministry of Education and Research in Norway.

4.1.4 The differentiated system in Germany

The greatest difference between the German and the Norwegian school system is Germany's tracking system. Tracking occurs when different curricula are offered to young people based on some form of testing of their motivation and/or ability. Occurring as early as the primary grades, students are placed into parallel tracks or streams that are more or less difficult (Williams & Cummings 2005:12) Tracking is explained as a strategy for optimising human resource development. With limited resources, the state asserts a responsibility to prepare sufficient number of students in the different spheres of the modern workplace (ibid). According to Cummings, the education system is a reflection of what the society looks upon as an ideal person - the person preferred by society (Cummings 2003:36). Notions of who should be taught, and what they should be taught follow from societies notion of this ideal person (Cummings 2003:37).

Institutions are built with a concern for internal consistency, and the underpinning of this stress for consistency is the values and goals the institutions seek to realise. (Cummings 2003:37). Where the ideal is elite, the educational system is likely to be more restricted, and where the ideal is expected to have diverse functions, the curriculum is often more holistic. In Germany, the emphasis has been more on elitism than in Norway and the ideal person is therefore also reflected in the educational system.

Most systems abandoned tracking in the early modern period, because it was too difficult to evaluate aptitude at such an early stage as well as putting too much pressure on students (Williams & Cummings 2005:13), but Germany continued to stream students. At primary level, children undergoing compulsory schooling enter a local primary school, which is the same for all of them (Eurydice 2010). When the children start lower secondary school however, the division begins (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. The German Education System (Dailyneeds.com).

GRADE				AGE	
				19	
13			University and college preparatory classes in Gymnasium and some Gesamtschulen	18	Secondary School (Second Phase)
12	Berufsschule <i>(Apprenticeship - combines work and classes)</i>	Berufsfachschule <i>(Vocational Training)</i>		17	
11				Fachoberschule	
10	Vocational Training <i>(full or part-time classes)</i>				
	Hauptschule students usually graduate after 9 years. Realschule students graduate after 10 years.			16	
10	(Some schools have a 10th year)	Realschule	Gymnasium	15	Secondary School (First Phase)
9	Hauptschule			Gesamtschule <i>Comprehensive School</i> <i>(may combine elements of other 3 schools)</i>	
8			13		
7			12		
6	Orientation Stage			11	
5				10	
4	Grundschule <i>Elementary School</i>				9
3					8
2					7
1	Kindergarten				6
					5
					4
				3	Pre-school

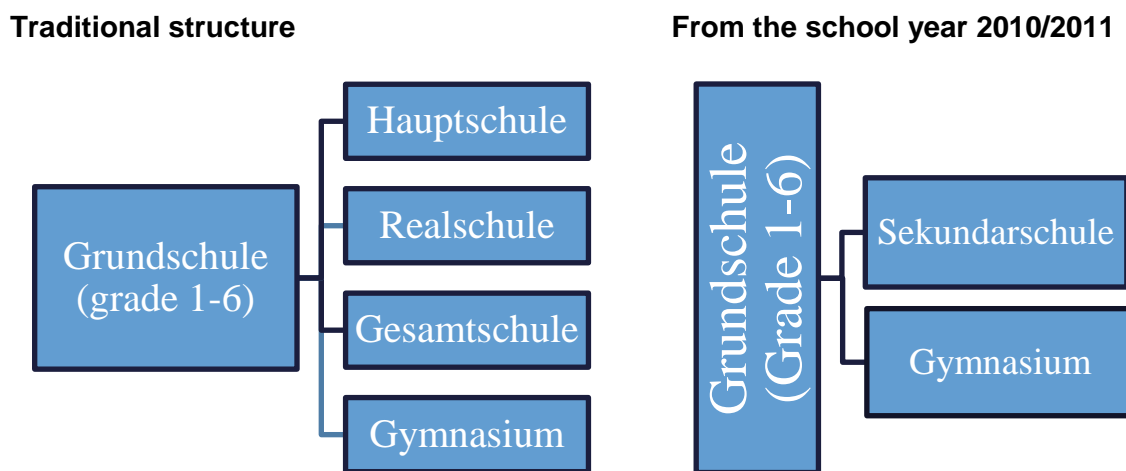
Transition from primary school to one of the school types at secondary level is subject to different regulations depending on legislation in the *Land* concerned. The decision on the type of school attended at lower secondary level is either taken by the parents, the school, or school supervisory authority on the basis of an assessment made by the primary school. Admission to the various types of secondary schools may be subject to pupils fulfilling certain performance criteria and/or a decision by the education authority (Eurydice 2010)¹¹. Secondary education is also referred to as *Oberschule* in this thesis.

Until now, the children could choose between four school types after primary education, but this is changing due to a reform. Now, the *Hauptschule* and *Realschule*, are being integrated

¹¹ A complete overview over the different school types in Germany can be found at Eurydice.

into new school types. (Schmitz n.d:4). The new system integrates the *Gesamt-, Real-* and *Hauptschulen* into *die neue Integrierte Sekundarschule* (see figure 7). The aim of the reform is to decrease differences between socio-economical differences between students (Berliner Schule 2010-2011). This is a very new reform that was implemented in 2010 and will therefore not have a great focus here since the tracking (or streaming) system still remains. The tracks start at the same point as earlier, around the age of twelve; however both school types can lead to Abitur¹², but not necessarily¹³.

Figure 7. Comparison of the new and old German Education System.



Political parties have strongly disagreed on this point, and strong voices have claimed that there is a need for elitism (*Welt online* 2010). It is however a signal that the ideology of tracks that has been present in the last 200 years are about to change.

As a female senior official stated (SFBW, personal communication, Oct, 10, 2010) this system has led to some sortation: “*die guten ins Töpfchen und die schlechten ins Kröpfchen*” which means that the good students go to *Gymnasium*. The rest of the students are encouraged to choose some of the other school types. An English teacher in Berlin has been involved in these processes of guiding parents to where they should send their children. Both the senior official and the English teacher admit that the system could increase differences that already exist in the children’s socio-economical background. In fact, when I was interviewing the

¹² Abitur is the final exams at the end of secondary education which lead to University studies.

¹³ See Berlin *Bildungsahrplan* for a comparison of *Gymnasium* and the New Integrated *Sekundarschule*.

English teacher, she asked one of the students (some girls were allowed to sit in the classroom while the interview was conducted) what school she was going to, and she answered *Gymnasium* (university preparatory school), although it was not recommended by the school due to her results and performances so far. The reason for this was that this girl's father wanted his daughter to go to *Gymnasium*.

The female senior official confirms that some parents are more interested in their child's education than others, and that this may influence the outcome of what school type they apply for. The parents who are more interested in their child's education come typically from a higher socio-economical background. They are more educated and have a higher income than parents that are less engaged in their children's education. Hence, it is not only children's results in school that terminate what direction their education should take.

This is typical for tracking systems according to Cummings. The academically proficient students were typically tracked to the academic schools, and the less proficient were tracked to the vocational schools (Williams & Cummings 2005:13). This form of tracking at secondary level has been determined by the prominence of the business class in operations of the state. In Germany and in France where business classes were most prominent, the diversity of vocational/technical tracks seems to have been more extensive (ibid).

It was not obvious that Germany should choose this tracking system. In fact, it was the ideas of reform pedagogy - the trend towards uniformity that dominated the attitude also in Germany after the collapse of the German Reich in 1920 (Schmitz: n.d:1). On the other hand, tradition and the offer of the humanities *Gymnasium* which prepared the students for university studies, together with the more recent forms of *Gymnasium* in modern languages and the natural sciences, were already fixed (ibid). The compromise was the first step to what is now a common primary school in the first four years of schooling. Later, discussions of the educational developments anticipated the reformist pedagogic approach, but were interrupted by National Socialism. Hence, the idea was distorted into its opposite: education as the means for implementing absolute subservience to the 'Führer' and 'Reich' and as the foundation for ambitious expansion politics. The States (*Länder*) and their educational systems were "synchronised" - ideologically and organisationally (ibid).

4.2 A comparison of the educational systems

The overview of the educational systems in Germany and Norway has already touched upon some differences. The greatest difference is the early selection of students. Norway is seen as the other extreme where students follow each other more or less through the whole basic education. With the reform in Berlin which has led to less tracks, and the discussion in Norway on whether the unity school is actually leading to inequality rather than equality, it may however seem like the two cities are not that far from each other when we look at the general opinion about how basic education should be structured.

One similarity is that both countries have had their systems for a longer period and that it is more recently that it has been seriously questioned. Both cities have recently gone through a reform. This is likely to be a result of the international testing that was a shock in Berlin - and in Oslo. Both cities scored lower than what was expected on the PISA tests and a discussion about the educational structure is hence a natural consequence. The structural change in Berlin is only one indication that peoples attitudes towards education have changed. Qualities have not necessarily followed the economical development and the expansion of school systems that we have seen after the World War II. The changes in people's attitudes towards education can be seen in relation to the modernisation theory and the American belief in unstoppable progress (Cummings 2003:29). In combination with the economical growth, it might have been taken for granted that the quality of education is also improving. The economical growth after the Second World War is to a great extent a result of globalisation, a process that has changed the relationship between countries and given the term *connection* a new content. The educational reforms in Europe should therefore be seen in relationship to the processes of globalisation. This is also relevant for foreign language politics if one believes that globalisation has caused changes in attitudes among people. The international testing is one consequence of these processes.

4.3 Globalisation theory

According to Reich (1991) and Waters (1995), globalisation theory predicts the end of the national economy (as cited in Green 1995:55). The potential effects on education would be revolutionary according to Usher and Edwards (1994):

“National education systems could no longer perform their historic functions of promoting national cultures and identities and generating the human capital for national economies. Governments would lose control over their education systems and these would increasingly converge on global or regional norms” (as cited in Green 1995:55).

However, Green claims that there is little evidence that nation states are losing control over their education systems (Green 1995:56). Governments may lose control over various levers on their national economies, but they frequently turn to education and training when they give examples of areas where they still maintain control. “The argument in relation to educational convergence is, however, more complex, for whilst education systems remain essentially national, they may nevertheless be experiencing a degree of convergence under the impact of international forces” (Green 1995:56).

4.3.1 Voluntary policy convergence

“Policy convergence, occurs when the policy discourse and objectives in a variety of countries becomes increasingly similar over time” (Bieber et al 2011:56). The theory of policy convergence that is outlined in this section, builds on the convergence theory. The convergence theory is, for short, based on the principle of convergence, which states that: “if two or more individuals share information with one another, then over time they will tend to converge toward one another, leading to a state of greater uniformity” (Kincaid 1988:282). This section will only focus on convergence in relation to policy.

In the article “The OECD PISA Study as a Soft Power in Education?” Tonia Bieber & Kerstin Martens Bieber analyse how OECD impacts on national education policy by making it

converge. Their theory is that organisations like the OECD makes education in Europe more similar to each other. My understanding of “policy convergence” is that it refers to aspects of education that are policy driven. There may be several explanations to why policies converge. One reason could be that governments face the same problems and therefore look to other countries in order to find the solution there. This is also called borrowing, or imitation of politics.

Imitation of politics: “*Das Internationale Argument*”

If globalisation has made the educational goals more similar to each other, it is tempting to say that borrowing is a direct result of globalisation. However, according to David Phillips, policy-borrowing is not a new phenomenon in education:

“The notion of policy 'borrowing' in education has been a consistent theme in comparative inquiry in education from the early decades of the 19th century. Comparativists from the time of Marc-Antoine Jullien (1775-1848) onwards have been concerned with the transferability of ideas from one country to another, while attitudes to the feasibility of educational policy borrowing have ranged from scornful dismissal to enthusiastic advocacy” (Phillips 2006:2).

It is, nonetheless reasons to believe that globalisation influences policies in education. In this thesis, the foreign language politics (FLP) in Berlin is compared to the FLP in Oslo. We have seen that a second foreign language (2FL) is compulsory in Berlin, but not in Oslo. The concern that Norway did not match the increased needs for FL competence in society is already mentioned. One reason for this concern, is that Norway too looks to other countries. As mentioned elsewhere, globalisation has led to more competition. Within education, this is visible through international testing. The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), for example, compares test results of 15-year-olds in the principal industrialised countries (OECD 2011). To support participating countries in improving their education systems, OECD derived recommendations from best practice examples provided by the PISA results. National implementation of its recommendations, however, remains voluntary (OECD 2009 as cited in Bieber et al, 2011:102). Since it is voluntary to follow the

recommendations from the OECD, we call it a “voluntary policy convergence” (Bieber et al 2011:102). There are several mechanisms of voluntary policy convergence, and the most relevant mechanisms for this research, are listed in the figure below:

Figure 8. Mechanisms of voluntary policy convergence

Mechanism	Incentive	Response
Policy emulation	Desire for conformity	Copying of widely used Model
International policy promotion	Pressure for legitimacy	Adoption of recommended model

“Policy emulation pertains to situations of high uncertainty in which policy-makers aim to increase their decisions’ legitimacy (Gonon 1998: 23). Hence, they copy policies that are perceived to be successful or legitimate from states or international organisations with a positive reputation in the issue at stake (Bennett 1991:223, Barnett & Finnemore 2004, Mahon & McBride 2009). “International policy promotion refers to international organisations or countries that act as mediators” (Bieber et al 2011:103). Two examples of such mediators are the OECD, and the EU. According to Knill and Tosun, “they spread best practice models via benchmarking and by evaluating domestic policy performance. Countries that rank low in international comparisons or do not follow the recommended models are under normative pressure to either legitimate their domestic models or adapt to these models” (as cited in Bieber et al 2011:103).

When the EU recommended that *all* students in the European countries should learn two FLs, this was an international policy promotion that put pressure on Norway to follow their recommendation. The pressure from the EU and the European commission was an external pressure to the government. If this recommendation had resulted in a change in the FLP in Norway, namely that a 2FL was made compulsory because of pressure from abroad, this would have been one example of a policy that converged. However, the Second Stoltenberg Government decided not to follow these recommendations. As we will see later on, this may have been a result of a greater internal pressure from Norway.

One example of such an internal pressure in Norway, could be the fact that there are two versions of Norwegian; *bokmål* and *nynorsk*. The students have to learn both versions in the two last years of basic education (Lovdata 1998). Students use mainly one of these versions, but have to learn the other as well. It has been discussed whether *nynorsk* should remain obligatoric or not in Oslo. The Conservatives, *Høyre*, decided in June, 2011 that they want to make *nynorsk* voluntary in upper secondary school (Høyre 2011). I will not discuss whether *nynorsk* should be compulsory or not since *nynorsk* is not a FL, but rather a dialect. It is, however, relevant when it comes to the discussion on whether Norway is less influenced by the external pressure than other European countries since *nynorsk* is representing important culture and history in Norway. It is mentioned earlier that external pressure may win over the internal pressure more often. If *nynorsk* is compulsory, and not a 2FL, this is one example of the opposite.

4.4 Who decides?

A policy is a result of what “people in power” have decided. Who these people are may not always be clear. The state and its policy-makers are one instance, however not the only one. The state remains the central arbiter for educational policy-making, bringing to bear its own ideologies and power on a field that is considered of crucial importance for pursuing national economic and political interests (Bernstein 2000:60). However, other stakeholder groups can also be involved. In addition, a degree of decentralisation and privatisation often enables local organisations and institutions to take on a more recognised role in the “contextualisation”, whereby policy ideas are constructed into new discourses and practices (ibid). Parents, teacher organisations, donors, OECD and the media are other examples of instances that may influence the policy. However, it is often the policy-makers that make the last decision (Hoppers 2009).

5 Data Presentation

The following chapter presents the data obtained from the documents and interviews. The data from Oslo is presented first, starting with the official documents. The data from Berlin is presented second, in the same manner. The data from the official documents will be presented by using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the presentation of the four documents is guided by the same questions. The next part takes a closer look at the questions that guided the CDA, before moving on to the presentation of the four official documents, one by one.

5.1 The documents

There are several approaches one can take when analysing a text. The chosen approach is determined by the nature of questions being asked by the researcher. Norman Fairclough has made a useful checklist where he summarises the central questions covering the main issues in a CDA (see Fairclough 2003:191-194). The CDA in this thesis is guided by four questions (see Figure 9). These questions are built from Fairclough's list and are chosen on the basis of their relevance for the research questions. The questions will be answered separately for each text and then compared.

Figure 9. Question scheme.

Main issue	Questions
Genre	What genre are the texts written in?
Speech functions	Which statements and facts are included?
Assumptions	What assumptions are being made?
Representation of social events	What elements of social events are included or excluded, and which of the included elements are most salient?

The CDA of the official documents is based on these same four questions. Since the documents employ different genres, the data is valued differently. A white paper, for instance, says more than a report because it also says something about the author's opinions. A white paper is a government response to a proposition and is usually preceded by recommendations, proposals, and a variety of document reviews. On the other hand, a report, such as the "Report on education in Berlin and Brandenburg", says less about the author's beliefs, although some recommendations are presented. Since we are trying to go deeper into the politics, a white paper has greater value for the research here.

The questions used are intended as a tool to get the most out of the data. Although some documents are more valuable than others, it is useful to use the same questions since we are comparing politics. When using the same questions, the documents are still comparable even though they are valued differently. In this way, it is easier to compare the two cases and to get a sense of what the data is actually telling us. This is taken into consideration when the data is interpreted.

It should also be mentioned that the authorship of these texts is collective. There are, in other words, various hands that have contributed to the texts. However, it should be noted that the background for the revised version of "Languages Open Doors" is a contribution to the "realisation of the political objectives of the Government's Soria-Moria Declaration" (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2007-2009:7). In Norway, there is a majority government represented by Labour Party, the Socialist Left Party, and the Centre Party (The Government 2011).

The *genre* of the text will not be analysed, but is included in order to make it clear that the texts differ to some extent. CFL is a white paper from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. LOD is a strategy document and a policy plan from the same ministry. In addition there are two documents from Berlin, a so called report (*Bericht*) that includes a description of the background for the policy, goals, and the language situation today. It differs from LOD in that the former is more a policy plan than a report and, as we have seen, also valued differently.

The speech function includes statements and facts in the text. These are statements about what is, was, and has been the case (Fairclough 2003:109). *Assumptions* are the implicit meanings of texts (Fairclough 2003:212). Implicit meanings are significant since texts depend upon meanings that are shared and taken as “common ground” (Fairclough 2003:56). Therefore, assumptions also tell us something about the discourse.

The final issue that will be explored are the texts’ *representation of social events*. The elements included in a text tell us something about the perspectives that are valued as most important. We should, however, also pay attention to the elements that are not included since they also say something about the focus of the text (Fairclough 2009:96). In order to get an understanding of the authors’ opinions, it is therefore necessary to look at both the included and the excluded elements.

Talking about the authors’ opinions in relation to the representation of social events could also be connected to the relations of power. As noted in the literature review, Bernstein states that a policy is a result of what “people in power” have decided and that it is not always clear who those people are (Bernstein 2000:60). As stated by Hoppers, it is often the policy-makers that make the final decision (Hoppers 2009). In this way, the representations in the text not only say something about the value of the document, but also about power relations. As mentioned previously, a white paper is a government response to a proposition that is usually preceded by recommendations, proposals, and various forms of document reviews. The recommendations, proposals, and reviews that are included or excluded therefore indicate not only what the government regards as most important, but also indicate something about whom the people in power actually are. This could also be seen in relation to the genre (the first question) in the way that the genre is telling us something about how much the document is valued and hence how much power is represented in it.

While this section presented the questions that guided the Critical Discourse Analysis, the next part will first shortly describe the nature of the documents before each document is presented in greater depth.

5.1.1 The Norwegian Documents

The first text is a white paper from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and is entitled “Culture for Learning” (2003–2004), abbreviated as CFL. In this white paper, two pages specifically involve foreign languages (page 46-48) and these are given most attention here. “Languages Open Doors” (LOD) builds on CFL. There are two LOD versions. The first builds directly on CFL and the second is the revised version from the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present). The first consists of 48 pages and the second consists of 61. The foci in these documents are the goals and measures that are compared in this thesis.

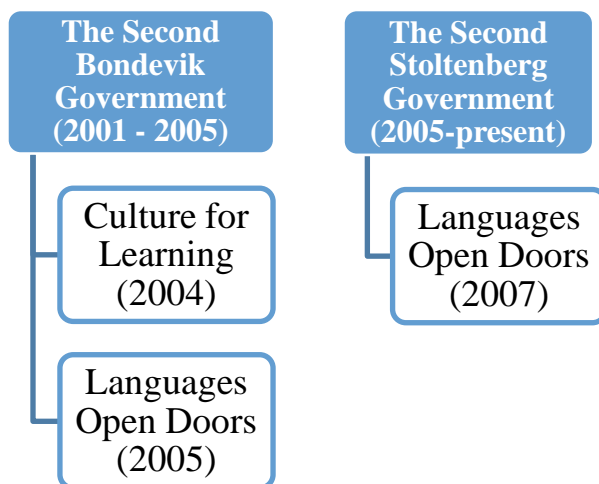
5.1.2 The German Documents

The third and the fourth documents are from Berlin. The first is the “*Schulgesetz für das Land Berlin*” (school law in Berlin) of 2004, which was updated in June 2010. The second is a *Bericht*, or a report of the situation today, and it also includes recommendations. All four documents will be referred to as texts. Before these questions are approached in a critical manner, an uncritical description of the text is needed (see Figure 3 of Fairclough’s CDA on page 13). The analysis and comparison will be made after all of the texts have been described and analysed in accordance with the questions asked.

5.2 Culture for Learning

This section presents the first document from Oslo - the white paper entitled “Culture for Learning” (2003–2004), which is born out of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and is concerned with the politics of foreign language in Norway. The figure below shows the documents from Norway and their relation to cabinets.

Figure 10. The Norwegian Cabinets and associated documents.



In June 2004, the Second Bondevik Government sent out a white paper called “Culture for Learning” (CFL). In this paper, they recommended that 2FL should be made compulsory in lower secondary school in Norway. The recommendation was approved by a majority in parliament the same day. As a result, a new national curriculum was developed, along with national programmes for in-service training of language teachers and a national strategy for strengthening foreign languages (Gauden 2010:8). The prelude for CFL was the Quality Committee’s (*Kvalitetsutvalget*) suggested framework for a national quality assessment system of Norwegian basic training (*grunnopplæring*), where the goal was a reinforced quality in basic education (Ministry of Education, 2004). With the Second Bondevik government and Mrs. Clemet as a Minister of Education, greater focus was placed on learning and the measurement of learning. Quality and assessment are key terms in this white paper, something that goes along with the changes in many other European countries following the so called “testing regime” subsequent to the international assessment programmes like PISA. Parts of CFL apply to foreign languages and the introduction of a compulsory 2FL in lower secondary school, which had so far been voluntary.

5.2.1 Facts and statements

“Culture for Learning” is full of facts and statements about how the situation has been and still is today, especially the first parts. These facts are then used to support the arguments for all of the suggested changes. In what follows are some examples of facts that are used to

argue for making a 2FL compulsory in lower secondary school¹⁴. The comments under the quotes are personal interpretations based on the questions guided by the CDA. The quote is first written in Norwegian and then translated into English.

“2. fremmedspråk har vært valgfag i grunnskolen siden 1974. 2. fremmedspråk tilbys fra 8. årstrinn” (Culture for Learning 2004:46).

“2FL has been voluntary in basic education since 1974 and offered from the the eighth grade” (Culture for Learning 2004:46).

This is a neutral statement and it is not a comment on why the voluntary part should be changed or if it should be changed at all. This is simply how the situation has been.

“Vurdering med karakter i faget er valgfritt, og det er ingen avgangsprøve” (Culture for Learning 2004:46).

“Assessment with grading is voluntary and there is no final examination” (Culture for Learning 2004:46).

“Faget teller ikke ved inntak til videregående opplæring, og det er mulig for elevene å starte på nytt med samme fremmedspråk i videregående opplæring” (Culture for Learning 2004:46).

“The subject [2FL] does not count when applying to a school at the upper secondary level and it is possible to start with the same FL at beginner level from upper secondary education” (Culture for Learning 2004:46).

These two last quotes also comment on the current situation and they do not indicate whether it is good or bad in itself. It is still interesting how this included information tells us that this is a point of utmost importance for the 2FL case, at least when using Fairclough’s framework. That the 2FL does not count when applying for a school at upper secondary level is not alarming, but the fact that you could choose to start with the same FL at the beginner level

¹⁴ All quotes are translated from Norwegian to English by the undersigned.

once again is information that indicates a need for change. This could be seen as an implicit assumption, and in Fairclough's words, the implicitness in a text is significant since it depends upon meanings that are shared and taken as "common ground".

"Som alternativ til tilvalgsspråk skal elevene få tilbud om fordypning i språk de allerede har et grunnlag i, eller praktisk prosjektarbeid" (Culture for Learning 2004:47).

"The pupils shall, as an alternative to a 2FL be offered a specialisation in a language they already know, or practical project work (*Praktisk prosjektarbeid*)" (Culture for Learning 2004:47).

"En undersøkelse om 2. fremmedspråk utført av Telemarkforskning og rapportert i 2002⁷, viser at svært mange skoler tilbyr bare ett språk, som regel tysk. Mange skoler betegner faget som et fag for de skoleflinke og teoretisk interesserte elevene. Rundt 70 prosent av elevkullet velger 2. fremmedspråk, men det er store regionale forskjeller. I gjennomsnitt faller omlag 30 prosent av elevene i faget fra i løpet av 8. og 9. årstrinn (Culture for Learning 2004:47).

"Research done by Telemark Research and reported in 2002 show that several schools offer only one language in addition to English, which is most often German. Many schools describe 2FL as a subject for the strong and theory interested pupils. Around 70% of the peer groups choose a 2FL, but there are great regional differences. Around 30% of the pupils drop out during the eighth and ninth grade" (Culture for Learning 2004:47).

"Ifølge EUs informasjonsnettverk for utdanning, Eurydice, har mange land et større antall år med opplæring i to fremmedspråk enn det Norge har. EUs handlingsplan for språk 2004-2006 har satt som mål at alle skal lære to fremmedspråk i tillegg til morsmål, og at dette blant annet skal oppnås ved at språkopplæringen starter tidlig" (Culture for Learning 2004:47).

"According to the EU's informational network for education, Eurydice, many countries offer more years of teaching in two foreign languages than Norway. The EU's action plan for language 2004-2006 has the goal that everyone should learn two foreign languages in addition to the mother tongue, something that should be achieved with an early introduction to FL" (Culture for Learning 2004:47).

The last quote indicates a fear of lagging behind other countries. If this concern is real, one should once again ask whom the policy is aimed at. Is it, as Bernstein claims, the state that remains as the central arbiter for making educational – one that brings its own ideologies and power to bear on a field that is considered of crucial importance for pursuing national economic and political interests (Bernstein 2000:60)

It is not discussed whether it is necessary to keep up with the other countries and for what reasons. Therefore, it is simply taken for granted that Norway should keep up with other countries. After it is said that Norway lags behind other countries, the reader is reminded of the recommendations from the EU. Most likely, this is done in order to give strength to the argument. In this way, the last quote tries to convince the reader that their suggestion is the best solution if one should keep up with the competition. The term competition is not used, but it is obviously a concern that Norway would end up with less knowledgeable inhabitants.

Together, these statements build a case for a compulsory 2FL. The first statements simply inform about how the situation has been, while the last statement indicates that the increased competition and pressure from abroad has resulted in a changing context with new demands. These changes should therefore lead to changes in the 2FL politics. This means that a 2FL should be compulsory for everyone in Norway.

After the facts had been presented, the Quality Assessment group suggested that a 2FL should be made compulsory for the last three years of lower secondary education (grades 8-10) and that the results should count for the admission to upper secondary schools (Culture for Learning 2004:47). It is, however, not said explicitly that this suggestion is based on the facts presented; instead it is assumed since it is said directly after the listing of the facts. To build arguments on facts and research makes them more trustable; however, the facts and research included are not randomly chosen. For instance, it is hardly mentioned that “those who are sceptical argue that secondary education could get too theoretical”, an argument clearly set apart from the fact section, and prior to the presentation of suggestions for a compulsory 2FL (Culture for Learning 2004:47). This argument differs from the fact section not only because of the location in the text, but also because of the reference to “those”, which also makes a division between us, the fact, and them.

This section has presented some statements and facts found in “Culture for Learning”. It is argued that the statements build a case for a compulsory 2FL and that competition and changing demands should lead to changes in the foreign language politics in Norway, and therefore a 2FL should be made compulsory for all students in lower secondary school.

5.2.2 Assumptions

The whole document includes mostly facts and the arguments are, for the most part, built around research. Suggestions that are not built on research are accompanied by highlights about the need for a testing period, and that the results from this data will decide whether the policy will be more permanent. One example is the part on early language teaching, which builds on the Ministry's assumption that early language teaching is positive: "The ministry believes that early language teaching is positive" (...). "The ministry will, on the basis of collected experiences, consider how such early language learning works, and eventually consider whether it can be made more permanent" (Culture for Learning 2004:48). Apart from this, there are few assumptions regarding the language policy. However, to trust the facts and the research is also an assumption that facts are trustworthy and that one can build a policy on them.

The Ministry's assumption that early language teaching is positive, is also a fallacy. The authors of this document try to persuade the reader that early language is positive based on weak or incomplete arguments (Walton 2008:35).

5.2.3 Representations

This section will take a closer look at the content in "Culture for Learning", that is, which elements are included or excluded. "Culture for Learning" is a policy plan and the aim is therefore acceptance and the implementation of the policy. As a result, policy plans are often written in a persuasive manner and "Culture for Learning" is no exception (Effective Document Design 2011). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the arguments supporting the policy are given the most attention. Although the criticism of making a compulsory 2FL appears in the text, there is actually no real debate about the policy's positive and negative aspects. It is said that the proposition is consistently supported in the consultation round, but that the positive instances presuppose more practical learning methods (Culture for Learning 2004:47). In addition, an effort to develop teacher competence is needed. It is further mentioned that those who are sceptical about the policy argue that lower secondary school may become too theoretical (ibid).

It is also mentioned that the *Sami* parliament has shown some scepticism given that the policy could make four languages compulsory for the *Sami* pupils and that these students should have three languages, including *Sami*. It is also said that minority speaking pupils should have the possibility to develop their own language background. This concern is presented by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development; however, the argument is also presented by some of the respondents in the interviews, something that illustrates the real concern of minority groups (Culture for Learning 2004:47).

The comment to this, which also closes the argumentation, is that a 2FL should not be only French and German, followed by a repetition that a 2FL has a weak position in Norwegian basic education, especially in comparison to the other Scandinavian countries and the rest of Europe (ibid). This is followed by the statement that Norway interacts and cooperates more and more with other countries. In this way, the criticism is met by repeating a totally different argument – on based on the idea of competition. In terms of Bernstein, one could say that the importance for pursuing national economic and political interests is given more attention and is hence the most salient argument.

As said in the beginning of the previous section, the policy plan lacks a real debate about the positive and negative aspects of the policy. This might also be one reason why it was not implemented, as the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) changed exactly the part of the document containing the 2FL. The criticism is given little attention, something that gives the reader a sense of an agreement. From reading only the policy plan, it appears there was to a large extent an agreement, and this is also explicitly stated when referring to the consultation round when the policy was reversed with the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present). This tells us that the consensus was not as strong as the policy plan implies. It could, however, be the case that the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) changed their opinion, or that their philosophical vision changed, but this is not possible to determine from reading this policy plan.

5.2.4 The power of other stakeholders

If the philosophical vision changed, this could be a result of influence from other stakeholder, for example the media or parents. If these stakeholders were negative, this could have led to a change in the government's opinions. This is one interesting point that shows the limitations of this study in the way that other stakeholders, such as the media and the parents, are not given much attention. It should, however, be noted that although it is the policy-makers that implement the policy and have the last word, it could also be that other stakeholders hold power in a way that allows them to influence the vision of the policy-makers.

While this section has looked at the included and excluded elements in "Culture for Learning", the next document is the revised strategy document from the Second Stoltenberg Government, namely "Languages Open Doors".

5.3 Languages Open Doors

"Languages Open Doors" (LOD) is the second document from Oslo and builds on "Culture for Learning". In the early introduction of this thesis, a concern was mentioned that Norway did not match the increased needs for FL competence in society. LOD is a strategy for promoting foreign languages in primary and secondary education and was part of the school reform efforts called "Knowledge Promotion". The strategy gives a situational background of the need for FL in Norway.

The measures that will be implemented are categorised under six main objectives. The goals and measures are listed clearly in a table. Since this thesis in part focuses on the change in foreign language politics, it is necessary to look at both the original and revised versions. As we will see, there are some changes in the measures, but the six objectives remain the same. Since this is a strategy document, it contains fewer facts and more strategies than CFL. It is therefore the representations, or the perspective used, that receive most of the attention here. The measures are given most of the attention since they tell us something about the perspectives in the original and the revised versions. By comparing the documents, we could also find differences and similarities in the representations.

When looking at the layout, the two documents look almost the same. Both contain many pictures, and the figures seem to be the same. There are some changes in the colours, and the preface is written by two different ministers from two different governments. The revised version is also slightly longer than the former. The revised version contains 61 pages compared to 48 in the original. Apart from that, they appear very similar. The figure below lists the most important differences between the first and the revised version and is mostly based on the introductory parts. The figure lists the differences, but it should be emphasised that both versions have the intention of strengthening the position of foreign languages in Norway.

Figure 11. A comparison of the original and the revised version of “*Languages Open Doors*”.

	“Languages Open Doors” (2005). The Second Bondevik Government	“Languages Open Doors”. Revised Version (2007). The Second Stoltenberg Government
Language	The language is slightly more academic.	
Pronoun and reference	“LOD will promote...”, “The foreign language centre will be important in the realisation of the strategy...”	Use of first person singular four times: “I will work to promote FL...”
Facts	Often refers to research and facts.	Does not refer to research, but uses “new statistics show” once.
Argumentation (what is included and excluded?)	Refers explicitly to the EU, the European commission (EC) and business. Refers to language as an important competition factor.	Does not refer to the EU, the EC or business. Emphasise special needs.
Orientation and focus	Compares Norway explicitly with other European countries (putting Norway in a more negative light)	Does not compare Norway internationally, but compares earlier negative results in Norway with positive results today: “more students choose a 2FL than previously”.

Norway is referred to as a small language society in both versions. The Second Bondevik Government develops this notion in reference to the business relationships that Norway is dependent on. The government also refers to language and cultural understanding as factors that are important for competition. Moreover, they argue that knowledge in a 2FL would give an individual advantages, namely that knowledge of FL increases an individual's quality of life. Cultural exchange and mutual understanding are also brought up. The Second Bondevik Government also mentions that knowledge of a foreign language can decrease intolerance and prejudice. These last arguments would be advantageous for everyone, and although some disagree that knowledge of a 2FL is important for everyone, it would be of interest for all if negative attitudes towards minorities would decrease. The Second Stoltenberg Government, on the other hand, does not explain why knowledge in FL is important, except from stating that Norway is a small language society that needs "many people with good knowledge of FL" (Languages Open Doors 2007:5).

In the original version from the Second Bondevik Government, the arguments are developed around research: "The most important motivation to learn FL must be a wish and a need to communicate with people across culture and borders. A new survey of the EU commission shows that all pupils can enjoy and have an advantage of being taught in several FLs" (Languages Open Doors 2005:5). This is an important argument for this government in the way that it supports their belief that a 2FL should be taught to everyone.

The revised version gives a more positive picture about the foreign language situation in Norway than the first version. For instance, the revised version points out that the development has been positive and that more students choose a 2FL today. The need for good language teachers is something both governments will work for, but the revised version focuses more on special requirements for the pupils who struggle.

5.3.1 Goals and measures

This section will look at the main objectives in both versions of “Languages Open Doors”. The main objectives are the same in the revised version. These are:

Figure 12. Goals and measures in “Languages Open Doors”.

1	Greater diversity and breadth in foreign language
2	Improved quality in foreign language teaching
3	Increased recruitment and improved competence for foreign language teachers
4	Increased knowledge about the demand for foreign language competence
5	Strengthened internationalisation in foreign language teaching
6	Increased research and development work in foreign languages

The measures or the actions that will be carried out in order to reach the goals are changed to some extent. Some measures are removed and others are added. In the introduction, we can read that some of the measures from the 2005 version are already completed by the time work on the revised version began. Below is an examination of the changes in the measures. Only those measures that were changed will be elaborated on in greater detail, since these are the changes we are interested in. Two measures are added to the first goal in the revised version.

The first new measure is to start experiments with the mother tongue as a second language. The measure on starting experiments with the mother tongue is elaborated with a reference to the Soria-Moria Declaration of the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) and also urges more information through research:

“Soria-Moria erklæringen vektlegger skolens rolle som verktøy for sosial utjevning. Fullført videregående opplæring vil gi elevene en bred basiskompetanse, slik at de er godt rustet til videre studier eller arbeid. Det er klart samsvar mellom karakterer til eksamen og/eller standpunkt i 10. klasse og elevers og lærlingers generelle karakternivå på yrkesfaglige utdanningsprogrammer i videregående opplæring. Det vil derfor kunne virke sosialt utjevnende å sikre god kompetanse hos lærere som underviser i yrkesrettet engelsk, blant annet for å øke gjennomføringen i yrkesfaglige utdanningsprogrammer i videregående opplæring. Det foretas en kvalitativ undersøkelse av korrelasjon mellom elevers karakter i engelsk ved avgangsprøven i 10. klasse og årsaker til frafall i yrkesfaglige utdanningsprogrammer. Undersøkelsen publiseres i en egen rapport med forslag til tiltak for å bedre lærernes kompetanse i yrkesrettet engelsk” (Languages Open Doors 2007:39).

“The Soria-Moria Declaration emphasises the role of schools as instruments for social equalisation. Completed upper secondary education and training will give the pupils a broad and basic competence that makes them well equipped for further studies or work. There is a clear correlation between examination results and/or overall achievement grades in the tenth grade and the average grade for pupils’ and apprentices’ in vocational education programmes in upper secondary education and training. A socially equalising factor could therefore ensure that teachers of vocational English are competent and so, among other things, increase the completion rate in vocational education programmes in upper secondary education and training. A qualitative survey is to be made of the correlation between pupils’ English grades at the school exit examination after the tenth grade and the reasons for dropping out of vocational educational programmes” (Languages Open Doors 2007:39).

“The schools as instruments for social equalisation” refers to the Norwegian unity school. In this way, the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) says that it is not going to change the system, although pressures from abroad question it.

“I Soria-Moria erklæringen er det lagt vekt på at det skal foretas en bred gjennomgang av språkopplæringen for minoritetsspråklige barn. Blant annet skal det utarbeides en oversikt over hvordan morsmålsopplæringen ivaretas. For elever fra språklige minoriteter settes det i gang forsøk med morsmål som andrespråk fra skoleåret 2007-2008”. (Languages Open Doors 2007:37).

“In the Soria-Moria Declaration it is emphasised that it will be carried out a broad review of language education for immigrant children will be carried out. Amongst other things, a survey will be made of how mother tongue instruction is ensured. Experiments with the mother tongue as second language for pupils from minority language backgrounds will be started in the school year of 2007-2008” (Languages Open Doors 2007:37).

This change is inclusive in the sense that it embraces minority students' competence in languages, which have a lower status in society, instead of only focusing on foreign languages. The second added measure is to start experiments with non-European languages as foreign languages (Languages Open Doors 2007:39).

The second goal also has some changes that need to be examined. In the 2005 version, one measure is to map students' skills and motivation in 2FL:

“The purpose of the reform - the Knowledge Promotion - and the introduction of a compulsory 2FL in lower secondary school is to raise the student's language skills. Testing is an important tool in order to assess the development of the student's skills and motivations over time. Tests are developed in the form of sample surveys of individual skills in German, French, Spanish, and Russian” (Languages Open Doors 2005:32).

LOD builds on Culture for Learning and the consistency between the white paper and the first version of LOD are therefore clear. It should be noted that the goal, which is improved quality in foreign language teaching, remains the same. The next measure that is removed from goal two refers to the initiation of experiments with the development of component skills in 2FL in primary education:

“White Paper. Nr. 30 (2003-2004) “Culture for Learning” states that 2FL should be compulsory from the the eighth grade. The challenge will be to include all students in the training. Training in component skills, such as listening and talking can contribute to a custom training of each pupil and hence prevent dropout through exemptions”¹⁵ (Languages Open Doors 2005:32).

The following measures are also removed from goal two: 1) Stipulate that the pupils see the opportunity to specialise over time in a 2FL; 2) Publish a collection of good practice descriptions in order to secure a professional dividend in international cooperation programmes; and 3) Introduce a price for teaching aids that contributes to a practical approach in the training.

¹⁵ It is here referred to the report Special Educational Needs in Europe published by the European Commission in 2005.

Instead of the above measures, two new ones are added in the revised version: 1) Mapping the pupil's choice of foreign language in lower secondary school; and 2) Mapping the connection between English skills in primary school and the dropout rate in vocational education. The purpose of mapping pupil's choice of FL is described as follows:

“Det er en målsetting at flest mulig elever skal velge fremmedspråk på ungdomstrinnet. Det er derfor viktig å få kunnskap om elevenes valg på ungdomstrinnet og årsakene til valg og eventuelt omvalg. Med utgangspunkt i tilgjengelig statistikk over elevenes valg og omvalg mellom fremmedspråk og språklig fordypning, kartlegges elevenes motivasjon for valg og grunner til evt. omvalg” (Languages Open Doors 2007:39).

“It is an objective that as many pupils as possible choose foreign languages at lower secondary school. It is therefore important to gain knowledge about what pupils choose at lower secondary school and the reasons for their choices, and for any altered choices. Taking as a starting point the available statistics of how pupils choose (and make new choices) between foreign languages and in-depth language studies, the pupils' motivation for choice and reasons for altered choices will be surveyed” (Languages Open Doors 2007:39).

The compulsory part is removed, but the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) still has the same goal of improving quality in foreign language teaching. They want more knowledge about choice of language as well as information on why some pupils choose to change the FL. The second measure that is added in the revised version is of particular interest and has received surprisingly little attention, namely to start experiments with the mother tongue as a second language. The focus in the media and also in this thesis has been that a compulsory 2FL was removed in the revised version. A point that has received less attention, however, is that a new measure is added in the revised version. This puts a greater emphasis on minority students and the mother tongue. This was also an important point made by one of the respondents in Oslo and will later be seen as a challenge to the compulsory 2FL. No measures are added in the three last goals.

We have seen that there have been some changes in the measures. Some are taken away and others are added. The change that caused most attention was the change of the compulsory 2FL. However, both strategies aim to strengthen the FL position, but whereas the former version focuses on 2FL, the revised version emphasises minority students' mother tongue.

5.4 School law in Berlin

The next document is the updated version of the “*Schulgesetz für das Land Berlin*” (English: School Law in Berlin) of 2004, which was updated in June, 2010. There are not many changes in the 2010 version and the few that do exist are shown below in a short summary of the changes. Similar to the documents from Oslo, the German document includes foreign language teaching in primary and secondary education. Since it is the school law in Berlin and includes some comments on FL teaching, it should be included, but will not be looked at in great detail.

5.4.1 Facts and statements

Since this document is the school law in Berlin, it contains mostly facts. For example, one fact is that the 1FL is taught from the first grade and could either be English or French (SFBV 2010:31). Earlier, it was taught from the fifth grade (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010). Another fact of particular interest is the situation of the FL after the pupils have moved on to *Sekundarstufe 1*: “*Die Schülerinnen und Schüler werden unter Beachtung der Aufnahmekapazität in eine Schule aufgenommen, in der sie ihre erste Fremdsprache fortsetzen können*” (*Schulgesetz für das Land Berlin* 2010:56). This is new in the 2010 version. The pupils should start at a school that offers the same language as they started with. This means that if the pupil had French in *Grundschule*, they should move on to a school that offers French as 1FL so they can continue to a higher level in French. The *Sekundarstufe I* ends with *Abschlüssen*. The *Abschluss* includes an exam in at least German, mathematics, and the 1FL (SFBV 2010:32).

5.5 Report on Education in Berlin and Brandenburg

The next document is a report from Berlin and Brandenburg about the common challenges and prospects in the two *Länder*, and is called “*Bildung und Schule in Berlin und Brandenburg – Herausforderungen und gemeinsame Entwicklungsperspektiven*” (*Bildungskommision* 2003). Berlin and Brandenburg cooperate on education and this is the reason why Brandenburg is also included. The data’s focus will mostly be on the Berlin

report. It is the FL issues presented in this document that are given the most attention, as well as the structure of the school system and some thoughts on unity aspects and differentiation.

In Berlin, approximately four per cent of an age group within the primary school do not choose English as their 1FL. A differentiation in curricula is important for structure formation within the primary school and the choice of the 1FL in the fifth grade (which is now the third grade). Despite this differentiation, total uniformity characterises the appearance of the institutional design of the six-year elementary school. Desirable individualisation is intended only in the beginning. This requires special flexibility by teachers and is not practical for the common educational repertoire of primary school.

5.5.1 School structure and differentiation

Six-year primary school in Germany in general, along with those in Berlin and Brandenburg in particular, are characterised by those features that typify this school type: namely breadth of study and availability. The question of the pedagogical policy of the new school is always overshadowed by the discussion of the basic principles of the structure of general education (*Bildungskommision* 2003:59). Depending on the *Land*, there are two to five types of schools. The timing and extent of differentiation are not without consequences. Nevertheless, standardisation trends were clear within the differentiated school system itself, at least until the 1990s. The curriculum with the introduction of compulsory foreign languages was one example of standardisation, and the performance evaluation standards are another (*Bildungskommision* 2003:64).

In the classical educational theories, the “historical”, “mathematical”, “linguistic”, and “aesthetic” knowledge were arched through the expectation that teaching was not only didactic (learn to live your own life), but also philosophical (*Bildungskommision* 2003:59). This is also visible in modern school systems, especially in the subjects mentioned above. For the “linguistic” dimension, this means that you should not only understand the formalities of the language, but also understand other cultures and gain an insight into the ‘foreign’ and the ‘others’ (*das Fremde und Andere*). In this connection, it is written that it is not enough to understand the culture of the mother tongue. One should also understand the culture of obligatory foreign languages (*ibid*).

5.5.2 Focus on cultural competence

In this document from Berlin, cultural competence is described as basic skills which give access to cultural goods (*Bildungskommision 2003:80*) (German: *Basiskompetenzen als Voraussetzung des Zugangs zu Kulturgütern*). “*Bildung und Schule in Berlin und Brandenburg*” has a particular focus on the cultural competence that follow from learning FL. Competence in foreign languages is also mentioned in Chapter 5 under “*Kulturelle Basiskompetenzen*” (*Bildungskommision 2003:80*). It is important to have access to these basic skills because they give access to cultural goods and the different perspectives that help to open up the world (*ibid*). Just because language is symbolically mediated and dependent on long-term effort and sustained motivation does not mean that it is without preconditions. Depending on the area, foreign languages require the mastery of basic cultural skills. These basic cultural skills include:

- Mastering the lingua franca
- Self-regulation of learning
- Foreign language competence

These basic skills are not the only ones, but are important and partly necessary conditions for the universal premises and the sharing of communication, and thus for learning (*Bildungskommision 2003:80*).

The document states that FL teaching has become a part of universal education: “*In einer kleiner werdenden Welt hat das Erlernen einer Fremdsprache nicht nur die Funktion, die bildende Begegnung mit einer fremden Kultur im Medium der jeweils anderen Verkehrssprache zu ermöglichen. In dieser Funktion ist der Fremdsprachenunterricht Bestandteil der Allgemeinbildung*“ (*Bildungskommision 2003:81*). Learning a FL allows visual contact with a foreign culture through the medium of the other language. It provides cultural contingency – that things could be different than they are at home, and also an idea of the opportunity to universalise communication.

To what extent these experiences are or can be expanded in teaching depends on the specific courses. For in-depth universal education (*Allgemeinbildung*) in grammar schools, there are

different expectations than for the securing of full-time compulsory education. One need in basic education is the teaching of 1FL, which is most often English, and the introduction of 1FL has become more important as English has become the lingua franca of a global educational and scientific society.

In many professions and walks of life, sufficient mastery of English has become a basic part of a cultural competence (*Bildungskommision* 2003:81). It is also stressed that the acquisition of the basic skills is a cognitive tool that helps you deal with cultural goods. The point is that FL competence gives one access to more than the language itself. The basic skills have also quite different lures to the various forms of world development (*Bildungskommision* 2003:81-82). To master the foreign language is directly apparent, but together, these basic skills provide one with the whole picture (*ibid*).

5.5.3 Minority students

Another problem area is how the schools handle students with a mother tongue other than German. International studies indicate that the promotion of early childhood bilingualism for cognitive, emotional, and social development can be quite beneficial, but the clinical findings of international research are far from clear. Moreover, it is unclear to what extent findings can be transferred from other countries to Germany. The glaring lack of reliable quasi-experimental and experimental research in Germany is not only an indictment of science education, but it also demonstrates how the previous education policy was devoid of real clarifications about the facts (*Bildungskommision* 2003:146-147).

The immigrant languages can be integrated into the schools in two ways: 1) Teaching the heritage language as a more or less integrated add-on offer within the mainstream monolingual offering, or 2) Bilingual education. The second variant, however, requires a deep, structural and curricular reform of the monolingual school (*ibid*). Both variants are found in the Berlin School. The second option is only offered at seven elementary schools for a total of 800 Turkish-speaking pupils (*Bildungskommision* 2003:50). Models of bilingual education are not capable of generalisation and they cannot be realised for all of the occurring native languages in Berlin.

Another way to improve the status of teaching in the native language is the inclusion of the offer of foreign language teaching. It seems to be very attractive option that students can choose, but they tend to choose the common foreign languages, usually English (*Bildungskommision* 2003:150).

Another key area that is affected by the ethnic-cultural heterogeneity of students is the curriculum itself. In particular, the subjects that play a cultural and historical importance, such as history, language, and literature still have a very Euro-centric focus. The curricula of these subjects should be designed so that they more thoroughly compare different cultures and histories so that these differences are easier to identify (*ibid*).

5.5.4 Recommendations by the educational commission

Both *Länder* now have a similar closing procedure for the middle school certificate at the end of the tenth grade. In Berlin, students are tested in German, mathematics, and the 1FL. In Brandenburg, students are tested only in the two first subjects (*Bildungskommision* 2003:227). In both *Länder*, the schools are faced with the challenge of securing key learning areas and ensuring that compliance with minimum standards is better than before, without resorting to increasingly selective agents, such as children's retention or cross-promotion. The school, similar to the overall system, has the task of securing the key learning areas by promoting individual academic minimum standards and promoting employment through demands on individual excellence. To promote excellence is a constant requirement of the school, and this has not been achieved through increased selectivity (*Bildungskommision* 2003:142).

5.6 The Interviews in Oslo

Four interviews were conducted in Norway. Three of these interviewees were central to the decision to change the proposition of making a 2FL compulsory in Norwegian secondary schools. Two interviewees who were clearly important to talk to were the former ministers of education, Ms. Kristin Clemet and Mr. Øystein Djupedal. Ms. Clemet was Minister of Education and Research from 2001 to 2005 when the second Bondevik government held office. She is a politician for the Conservative Party (*Høyre*) and holds a master's degree in

Business Economics from the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration as well as language studies from France (*Stortinget* 2011).

Mr. Djupedal is a politician for the Socialist Party and was Minister of Education and Research in the Second Stoltenberg Government from 2005 to 2007 (*Stortinget* 2011). He resigned after two years in the cabinet due to massive criticism. One reason for this criticism was the huge budget cut in higher education in 2006 (Universitas.no 2009). Minister Djupedal is now working in *Aust-Agder* and was interviewed by phone.

The next parts include many quotes from these respondents. If the interview language was not English, the quote will first be written in the original language and then in English. The statements are mostly made by the respondents and when the author's personal opinions are explained, this will be stated.

The first interview was with Ms. Kristin Clemet. In particular, we discussed the knowledge promotion. The main aim of this conversation was to obtain insight into what actually happened during the implementation of the reform and the changes that were made. Although there were some years since the event took place, Minister Clemet still seemed to have a genuine interest in the topic, and it was obvious that she had not changed her opinion that all students should learn 2FL.

5.6.1 Political compromises and the power of minority parties

According to Minister Clemet, the issue of making a 2FL compulsory was not an important one for the Labour Party (*Arbeiderpartiet*), which was in coalition with two smaller parties, namely the Socialist Left Party (*Sosialistisk Venstreparti*, SV) and the Center Party (*Senterpartiet*, SP). The Labour Party therefore gave this case to SV “*slik at de også skulle få noe, eller vise at de fikk noe*” (English: “so that they should also get something, or show that they got something”) (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010). According to her, this approach is very typical for small political parties:

“Mitt forslag som utdanningsminister var at vi skulle ha to obligatoriske fremmedspråk i likhet med alle andre europeiske land” (...). Den regjeringen jeg satt i foreslo at det skulle være obligatorisk for alle og det var jo flertall på Stortinget for det og det er det nok fortsatt og det har det vært hele tiden, men SV som var i mindretall greide på en måte å få det igjennom i forhandlingene i den rødgrønne regjeringen, så du kan si at det er et reelt mindretallsstandpunkt i Norge at vi ikke skal ha to obligatoriske fremmedspråk, men dette rejelle mindretallsstandpunktet er nå altså gjeldende politikk fordi SV har greid å få det gjennom i forhandlingene. Jeg spår at det blir en forandring på det fordi det er en reell mindretallsposisjon. Dette hadde støtte fra Fremskrittspartiet, Venstre, Kristelig Folkeparti, Høyre og Arbeiderpartiet og jeg vet at det var delte meninger i Senterpartiet og Sosialistisk Venstreparti også den gangen, så det er et lite standpunkt som har vunnet frem i norsk skole” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

“My proposal as a Minister of Education was that we should have two compulsory foreign languages, like all other European countries” (...). The government that I was a part of suggested that it should be compulsory for everyone and it was a majority in parliament for this. There is probably still a majority for this as it always has been, but SV who was in the minority managed in a way to get it through in the negotiations in the coalition government. You can say that it is a minority position in Norway that we should not have two compulsory foreign languages. This minority position is now, however, the current policy since SV managed to get it through in the negotiations. I predict that this will change since it is a minority position. This had support from the Progress Party, The Liberal Party, the Christian Democrats, the Conservatives and the Labour Party and I know that there were divided opinions in the Centre Party and Socialist Left Party as well at the time, so it is a small stand that has won through in the Norwegian school” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

These statements can be summarised as follows. When the Second Bondevik government proposed making 2FL compulsory in Norwegian secondary schools, there was, according to Minister Clemet, a majority in parliament behind this position. It was, moreover, not only the majority in the Second Bondevik government, but also in the Second Stoltenberg Government. SV is a small political party in Norway whereas AP is the largest.

Therefore, the policy change was a result of a minority position. As mentioned elsewhere, a policy is a result of compromises, and if Minister Clemet is right on this point, it is a good example of how a minority party can manage to get their politics through in a coalition with a larger political party.

I asked Minister Clemet why the proposition was changed when the majority in parliament was positive towards introducing a compulsory second foreign language, and she answers by elaborating her points:

“Fordi SV, SP og AP skulle forhandle om en regjeringsplattform, altså hvilken politikk den flertallsregjeringen skulle føre og da kommer Arbeiderpartiet (AP) med sin politikk om skattene skal gå opp eller ned og så kommer SV med sine ønsker og dette ga de i forhandlingene. Slik får små partier mer innflytelse enn det er grunnlag for når de forhandler og det er slik alle små partier holder på” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

“Because SV, SP and AP were to negotiate a joint governmental platform, meaning the politics they should lead. Then the Labour party (AP) presented their wishes; whether the taxes should go up or down, and then SV presented their wishes and this is what they got in the negotiations. This is how small parties have more influence than there is a basis for and this is how all the small parties are doing it” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

Apart from the compulsory 2FL part, few changes were made in the revised version. We saw this in the comparison of “Languages Open Doors” and Minister Clemet states the same. Minister Clemet believes that this was an issue that was not particularly important to SV, but it became important because they understood that this was a case they could win in the negotiations. Since this was not an important case for AP, compared to tax policies for instance, SV realised that this was their chance to show that they too had influence. This last point is my interpretation of Minister Clemet’s statement that AP gave SV this victory at the expense of more important political matters.

However, when talking to Minister Djupedal, who was the MoE in the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present), we discussed the same thing. He strongly disagreed with what Minister Clemet said: *“AP var alltid imot et obligatorisk andre fremmedspråk og vi var enige om dette fra begynnelsen av. Vi hadde deres fulle støtte. Det var AP’s egne skolefolk som ba SV om å jobbe for å fjerne den obligatoriske komponenten”* (personal communication, Jan. 20, 2011). (English: “AP was always against a compulsory 2FL and we agreed on this from the very beginning. We had their full support. It was AP’s own school expert that told SV to work to remove the compulsory part”). Minister Djupedal seemed to be very provoked by

Minister Clemet's statements that it was actually a majority in parliament that was for the compulsory part, but SV won in the negotiations.

The day after the interview with Minister Clemet, I talked to her former state secretary Mr. Helge Ole Bergesen. He said that the case of removing the compulsory 2FL part became a symbolic case for SV. If SV was against the focus on knowledge in Norwegian schools, and they associated a 2FL with another theoretical subject, then the removal of the compulsory component could have become symbolic since this was their chance to influence the direction the school politics have taken and steer away from the focus on knowledge. In this way, the removal of a compulsory 2FL would help students who struggle by giving them an alternative to all of the theoretical subjects.

This last point is the author's own interpretation of the interview with Mr. Bergesen and compliments the unity school mindset that the school should give room for everyone, regardless of talents or background. In the presentation of the unity school in Norway, we saw that the unity school is important to ensure that the entire population has the same basic qualifications, but as this discussion shows, there is no agreement on whether a 2FL should be a part of those "basic qualifications".

When interviewing Minister Djupedal, I told him that Mr. Bergesen said that the removal of the compulsory 2FL became a symbolic case for SV. According to Minister Djupedal, this is "typisk høyreretorikk" (English: "typical right wing rhetoric") (personal communication, Jan. 20, 2011). Minister Djupedal claimed that it became a symbolic case for the right wing, not the left wing. In fact, when I introduced the case to Minister Djupedal by saying that it was a disputed case, he interrupted me and said: "*Det var ikke omstridt, det var enighet*" (English: "it was not disputed, it was an agreement"). He continued by saying: "*Mange elever og også skolene var enige*" (English: "many pupils and also the schools agreed") (personal communication, Jan. 20, 2011). In this way, he refuses to recognise any disagreement over removing the compulsory part and, by saying that pupils and schools agreed, he indicates that the disagreement was more between the two governments.

While interviewing, I noted that Minister Djupedal seemed especially very emotive about this case, although it was some years ago. However, the interview was conducted over phone and his irritation could have been the result of other issues¹⁶. At the same time, these emotions could indicate that this was not a small case for SV, nor was it symbolic, as indicated by Mr. Bergesen. Instead, it was a case that they had worked hard for. It could have been a small case in the early stages, but the engagement from both parties tells us that although it was not as “important” as tax politics, it was still a case that both parties wanted to win. However, this was not a point made by any of the respondents, but the emotions that were shown could still say something about the case’s importance.

Mr. Helge Ole Bergesen writes in *“Kampen om Kunnskapsskolen”* (English: “the struggle for the knowledge school”) that he was surprised about the resistance that the Second Bondevik government met when they tried to make a 2FL compulsory. Since there were no discussions about this in Berlin, I wondered why the debate was so intense in Norway. Minister Clemet believes that SV’s fight against a compulsory 2FL is a result of the party’s position on school politics. According to her, SV changed a lot, but the decision to remove a compulsory 2FL was a result of a fear of knowledge that SV had. *“De ser på fremmedspråk som noe veldig teoretisk og vanskelig når det egentlig er usedvanlig praktisk”* (English: They look at FL as something very theoretical and difficult instead of something unusually practical) (personal communication, November 20, 2010). *“Dette er essensen av SV’s værste periode. Det er ufattelig at man skal beskytte eleven fra å lære fremmedspråk”* (English: “This is the essence of SV’s worst period. It is inconceivable that one should protect the pupils from learning a FL”) (Personal communication, November 20, 2010).

In this last part, I have tried to understand why the Second Bondevik Government’s proposal of making a 2FL compulsory was removed by the new government. Minister Clemet stated that the majority in parliament was for the compulsory part, and that SV won this case in the negotiations at the expense of more important cases. Minister Djupedal disagreed, claiming that AP and SV agreed that 2FL should be voluntary.

¹⁶ One example of such an issue could be that Minister Djupedal left office already after two years as a MoE (*Regjeringen.no*, 2007) due to massive criticism, see for example Dagsavisen (2007).

5.6.2 Alternatives to 2FL in Norway

The Second Bondevik Government suggested that the teaching of FL should be more practically oriented and SV has now introduced a more practical oriented subject (*Arbeidslivsfag*) as an alternative to foreign languages. The motivation behind this new subject was to decrease the drop-out rate in upper secondary education. This is also an economic argument since it, for obvious reasons, is economically beneficial for pupils stay in school. I therefore asked Minister Clemet what she thought about this subject from an economic perspective. I asked her this question since she had earlier stated that a 2FL is positive for the economy of the country, but if the "*Arbeidslivsfag*" could also be positive for the economy, then her argument loses some strength.

"Det gjenstår å se, jeg vil ikke si at alt SV har gjort er negativt, det har jeg ikke grunnlag for å si, men jeg synes uansett at det er veldig dumt og jeg tror ikke det er noe å vinne på å fjerne disse fremmedspråkene. Jeg ville heller jobbet i motsatt retning. Det vi ønsket oss var for eksempel at vi skulle begynne enda tidligere, gjerne fra 1. klasse, men vi kunne ikke foreslå det fordi det ikke var lærere, men jeg ville heller jobbet med det og gått andre veien (...), men hadde jeg vært SV som var redd for det forslaget som vi fremmet, fremfor å ta det vekk, ville jeg jobbet med å få til mer av det slik at det ble enda lettere. Hadde du introdusert det fra 1. klasse hadde det vart mindre redsel for teori som SV er redde for" (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

"It remains to be seen, I would not say that everything SV has done is negative, I have no reason to say that, but I think it is very stupid and I do not think there's anything to be gained from removing these foreign languages. I would rather work in the opposite direction. What we wanted was, for example, that we should begin even earlier, from the first grade, but we could not suggest it because there were no teachers, but I would rather work with that and go in the opposite direction (...). If I were a member of SV, who was afraid of the proposal that we put forward, I would work to get more of it rather than taking it away. In that way it would become easier. If it was introduced from the first grade, there would have been less fear of theory as SV fears" (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

This last point that SV should go in a different direction and introduce 2FL from the first grade, is perhaps not the best example since the revised version states that they will start with early language teaching in some test schools in 2005 (Languages Open Doors 2007:37).

When talking about policy-making and implementation, Minister Clemet explains that much is prevented by the fact that we do not have enough teachers because there are not enough teachers in small communities:

“Mange forslag stoppes fordi det ikke er mulig å gjøre alt perfekt overalt. Kanskje vi skulle være litt frimodige å begynne der vi greier å begynne (...) Her [Oslo] er det masse innvandrere å ta av for eksempel, som kan hjelpe til i skolen, så her er det mulig å få til masse selv om man ikke får det til i Målselv. Kanskje man skulle være litt mer frimodige å sette i gang slike tiltak her for å vise frem eksemplene” (...). “Vi foreslo å likestille språk som Urdu og Spansk med Fransk og så videre. Dette ville øke statusen til disse språkene også og de ville telle ved opptak til videregående skoler” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

“Many suggestions stop because one cannot make everything perfect everywhere. Perhaps we should do something where it is possible to do something. In Oslo for instance, there are many immigrants that could assist in the FL teaching. Although it is not possible in the small communities, it would be possible here (...). We proposed that languages such as Urdu and Spanish should be equated with French and so on. This would increase the status of these languages too and they should count when applying for upper secondary schools” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

5.6.3 Foreign languages and business

As stated earlier, it has been a concern that Norway would lag behind other countries. Minister Clemet’s response to this is that the need for FL competence goes together with the economy and business, but this is not her main argument. Her focus is rather on the opportunities, she claims:

“Forskjellen på mine barns livsutsikter med eller uten språkkunnskaper er enormt stor. Mange spør om man skal gi råd om utdanning eller ikke for man vet ikke hvor verden går likevel. Jeg har vært forsiktig med å gi råd, men et råd som er bombesikkert og helt ufarlig å gi, er at de skal lære seg fremmedspråk”.

“The difference between my children's life prospects with or without language skills is huge. Many people ask whether one should give advice on education or not because you do not know what direction the world takes anyway. I have been careful with giving advice, but you can be sure that it is good to advise them to learn foreign languages” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

To my question on why some people still disagree on whether a 2FL should be taught to all students, she answered: *“de har ikke forstått det enda”* (English: “because they have not understood it yet”) (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010). I then asked her why this is not so prevalent in Germany, she repeated the argument that FL is theoretical. My comment to this was that English is not easier to learn for German speaking pupils, and she replied: *“Dette henger sammen med at vi har hatt en skole som har vært helt på viddene i 30 år som følge av venstresidens angst for kunnskap, og noe av dette sitter igjen”* (English: “But that hangs together with the fact that we have had a school that has been misguided for many years as a result of the left wing fear of knowledge, and this is the remnants of this politic”) (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

I also asked Minister Clemet explicitly why Norway did not follow the recommendations from the EU. Her answer was that Norway normally cooperates, and that the 2FL case stands out as an exception. Norway is, on the one hand, open and globalised, but has become self-sufficient after coming into a great deal of wealth. This self-sufficiency has influenced the view of how we should relate to others. The EU is not a supranational area, but an area for national politics. She elaborates this point here:

“Norge er på en måte et veldig utadvent land hvis du tenker på åpen økonomi og sjøfartsnasjon og alt dette her, men vi er jo også blitt et veldig selvopptatt land som syns vi greier oss best selv, at vi ikke har så mye bruk for andre, men en sånn oppfatning er jo helt feil etter min mening. Det er en sånn oppfatning her at vi har den rikdommen vi trenger, at vi behøver ikke bry oss så mye. Det er et litt preg av stormannsgalskap når vi reiser ut, vi forventer at ting blir lagt til rette for oss” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

“Norway is, in a way, a very extroverted country if you think of the open economy and the maritime nation and all that, but we're also a very self-centred country that thinks we manage ourselves best, that we do not have much use for others, but such a perception is totally wrong in my opinion. It is such a perception here that we have the wealth we need, and that we do not need not bother so much. It's a little touch of megalomania when we go abroad in the way that we expect that things are facilitated for us” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

When I ask Minister Clemet about how politicians are met when they argue economically for a policy, she answers:

“I andre land er det veldig legitimt å argumentere økonomisk for en handling fordi det er bra for landets økonomi. I Norge, er det mindre legitimt å argumentere på denne måten, i hvertfall i den offentlige debatten har det blitt slik at en ikke skal argumentere økonomisk for utdanning. NHO kan gjøre det”. (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

“In other countries, it is very legitimate to argue that we should act in a certain way for the sake of the national economy. In Norway, it is less legitimate to argue in this way. It is, however, not totally illegitimate, but in public debate it has become the case that one should not talk this way about education. The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) can do that”. (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

In the interview, Minister Clemet told me that she was accused of being interested in only NHO subjects when she started to work as a minister of education, but as she says: “*Vi vant den debatten. Det har vært et paradigmeskift i den skolepolitiske debatten. Nå er alle på kunnskapssiden*”. (English: “We won that debate. We have seen a paradigm shift in the political school debate. Now, everyone is on the side of knowledge” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

5.6.4 Free school choice and social segregation

In the interview with Minister Clemet, we also discussed free school choice. She thinks it is a misunderstanding that a free school choice will increase differences between students:

“Fritt skolevalg gjør at du kan søke deg til skoler som har en profil som har det tilbudet du er på jakt etter (...) og jeg tror også det kan bidra til mindre sosial segregering. Det er veldig interessant å se på de friskolene som vi har i Oslo, for eksempel Kristelig Gymnas og St. Sunniva, så er elevsammensetning mye mer mangfoldig enn i den offentlige skolen. Dette er fordi segregeringen i skolen ikke et resultat av skolepolitikk, men av bostedssegregering som er i alle store byer. Du kan sikkert motvirke noe av det gjennom politikk, men det er ikke noe historisk eksempel på at du fullt ut får til en komplett spredning av alle typer mennesker i en by, de klumper seg ofte litt sammen (...) Derfor blir skolesegregeringen bare et resultat av bostedssegregeringen hvis alle skal gå på den nærmeste skolen. Men hvis du har mulighet til å gå på en annen skole, kan du myke opp i dette. Mange tenker at fritt skolevalg fører til at de hvite og rike og flinke løper dit og de svarte og dumme blir sittende igjen der. Dette er et skremmebilde, men i Oslo ser vi det motsatte av dette” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

“Free school choice means that you can apply to schools that have a profile with the services you are looking for (...) and I also think that it could contribute to less social segregation. It is very interesting to look at the private schools that we have in Oslo, the Christian High School and St. Sunniva, for example, where the student composition is much more diverse than in the public schools. This is because segregation in schools is not a result of school policy but of residential segregation, which you can see in all of the large cities. Perhaps you could counteract some of it through politics, but there is no historical example that you fully get to a complete spread of all types of people in a city because they often lump together a bit. Because of this, the school segregation is simply a result of residential segregation when everyone goes to the nearest school. But if you have the opportunity to go to another school, you can soften this. Many people think that a free school choice results in the white, rich, and good students running in this direction and that the black and stupid are left there. This is a picture drawn to scare, but in Oslo, we see the opposite of this” (K. Clemet, personal communication, November 20, 2010).

5.6.5 Foreign languages and minority students

One interview was with a female principal in a primary school on the east side of Oslo. At this school, 40% of the pupils have a different mother tongue than Norwegian. She was concerned that their mother tongue would vanish during the schooling since the students are not taught in their mother tongue: “When we do not offer teaching in these mother tongues, we lose a lot of competence when we should take care for it”, she says. For her it makes more sense to focus on mother tongue teaching for these children instead of teaching Arabic to Norwegians from lower secondary level.

At this school they have a project with bilingual education. She thinks that bilingualism can replace English. Many of the minority students master several FLs when they arrive; however, the problem is that the status of this knowledge decreases when it is not taught:

“Kommer du på skolen og er kjempegod i fotball, får du status og du blir flink i gymtimene. Det samme gjelder data; du få vist frem kunnskapene dine. Er du god i andre språk enn engelsk og norsk får du ikke vist det frem. Det er kanskje nyttig i arbeidslivet, men mye kan ha skjedd før det med 13 års skolegang når status er lav. Det har jo noe med hva vi voksne løfter opp også, hva vi tester og gir tilbakemeldinger i. Lærerne fokuserer på fagene man blir målt i bevisst eller ubevisst, noe elevene merker” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

“If you are good in football, you get status and you improve your skills in the gym classes. The same applies to computer knowledge: you get to show off your knowledge. If you are good in languages other than English and Norwegian, you cannot show it off. It is perhaps useful in the workplace, but much could have happened before that with 13 years of schooling when the status is low. The status of a language is connected to what grown-ups uphold, what we test them in, and give feedback on” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

If her statement is true, that students focus less on subjects they are not measured in, then students would focus less on 2FL since 2FL does not count when applying for upper secondary education. If they choose to specialise in English or Norwegian instead, they could also improve their grade in these subjects. Therefore students could be tactical and not choose a 2FL in lower secondary schools and focus only on those subjects they are measured in.

This is an important point in the way that it says something about the status of foreign languages in Norway. In this way, the politics of removing the compulsory part results in a lower status for FL. This last point is not stated by the respondent and the point will be further discussed in the analysis.

According to the principal in Oslo, they often see that the minority students' skills in their mother tongue decrease. Students do not become functional in their mother tongue because they do not learn terminologies. They master it to some extent, but struggle when they should specialise in the subject. In the Norwegian schools, most subjects are taught in Norwegian. If

you do not master Norwegian, you will struggle in school since the books are written in Norwegian. As long as the students see the usefulness of the subject, they remain motivated. They have to see the usefulness of it now, since the labour market is not the main concern for a twelve-year-old student. Although some students do think in terms of the labour market, this is often in connection to what they are taught at home (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010). If one wants to motivate students to learn foreign languages, one should not use job opportunities as the main argument.

“Det er de teoretiske fagene som gir statusfag. Det er ikke mye fokus på kunst og håndverk for eksempel. Tilbake til før Kunnskapsløftet var det jo stort fokus på det at alle elevene skulle mestre noe på et eller annet område. Kunst og håndverk var et viktig fag for de elevene som ikke mestret teoretiske fag. Siden introduksjonen av Kunnskapsløftet har fokuset vært mer på måling og testing. Man fokuserer på fagene som gir karakter. Vi sitter hele tiden og gjør rasjonelle valg; hvilken kunnskap blir verdsatt? Dette henger også sammen med mestringsfølelse. Opplever du at du mestrer noe du ikke føler er til nytte, gir det ikke samme mestringsfølelse” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

“It is the theoretical subjects that give status. There is not much focus on arts and crafts, for example. Prior to the Knowledge Promotion it was stressed that all students should master something in one or another area. Arts and crafts were an important subject for those students that did not master the theoretical subjects. Since the introduction of the Knowledge Promotion, however, the focus has been on testing and measuring. We focus on the subjects with grades. We make rational choices all the time; what knowledge is appreciated? This is also connected to the feeling of attainment. If we master a subject that is not appreciated [not measured], the students will not get the same feeling of attainment as if it were a subject where the knowledge was appreciated” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

In this connection we also discussed the more practical *“Arbeidslivsfag”* introduced by SV and intended as a replacement of 2FL. However, the female principal meant that a subject like this could be better for some students:

“Noen elever har mer behov for mer praktisk rettet oppgaver dersom de har kjørt seg fast i grammatikken. Kanskje ikke språk ligger for deg i det hele tatt. Dette henger igjen sammen med mestringsfølelse. Elevene kan miste motet helt. Kanskje en praksisplass en gang

i uka gir følelse at du får til noe” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

“Some students that struggle with grammar have a stronger need for practical tasks. Maybe language is not for them. This hangs together with the feeling of achievement. Students can lose heart entirely. Maybe an internship once a week gives a feeling of achievement” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

In the Knowledge Promotion, one aim was to make the teaching of FL more practical, but she does not think that this is always easy because it depends on the teacher and how practical he or she manages to make it. They could use multimedia and project work for instance, but not all teachers have an enthusiasm for this and time is often limited.

“Når man ser ting i større perspektiv enn barneskolen, når barn kommer hit og kan arabisk og at man igjennom morsmålsopplæring og tospråklig fagopplæring kan ivareta det til for eksempel 5 trinn og går inn og i tillegg ønsker å ha et fremmedspråk, har man da lagt basis for språket på morsopplæring og fremmedspråk. Kan man da fortsette med arabisk vil disse elevene bli kjemperessurser i arbeidsmarkedet. De behersker eksotiske språk på en helt annen måte enn det vi gjør med tre år på ungdomsskolen” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

“If one looked at FL in a broader perspective than primary school and saw that the children who come here (to the primary school) master Arabic, for instance, and receive teaching in Arabic and bilingual education in other subjects and we manage to safeguard their existing language skills at least until the fifth grade and teach them a FL in addition, we will then have build a good language foundation for these children. If we can continue with language teaching from the fifth grade, these children will be a huge resource for the society and the labour market because they master exotic¹⁷ languages in a totally different manner than others do after three years of 2FL teaching in secondary education” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

¹⁷ “Exotic” languages are languages that are not typically taught as a 2FL in Norway, such as Arabic and Chinese.

Her concern is that we waste a great deal knowledge because we do not manage to facilitate the improvement of existing abilities. “If we managed to safeguard this knowledge and develop it, then school life would also be different for those who struggle with the feeling of achievement” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

Since the principal appears to be interested predominantly in FL and thinks that FL is important for everyone, I ask her where the sceptics stand and if she thinks I would have met the same optimism some years ago: “*Fremmedspråk var ikke et stort tema når jeg gikk på skolen. Det var noe du måtte lære. Det avspeiler globaliseringen i verden, verden kommer tettere innpå*”. (English: “The importance of FL was not a great topic when I went to school”, she claims. “It was something you had to learn. Today, the world has become smaller and people are more adventurous”) (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

She is also convinced that knowledge of FL will give students an advantage in the labour market: “*Dersom du mestrer fremmedspråk og da spesielt et eksotisk språk, i tillegg til en spesifikk utdanning, er du en vinner på arbeidsmarkedet*” (English: “If you master foreign languages, especially an exotic language, in addition to your specific education, you are a winner in the labour market” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

Since this respondent had both positive and negative thoughts about focusing on FL, my concluding remark was that language study is for many, but not for everyone – a remark she agreed with: “*Å lære flere fremmedspråk er gøy så lenge du er god i språkfag, men for de som sliter, kan det bli for mye*” (English: “To learn several languages is fun as long as you are strong in language subjects, but for those who struggle, it can be too much” (Female principal, personal communication, December 13, 2010).

5.7 Interviews in Berlin

The interviews in Berlin were more focused on the foreign language politics in general and the questions were therefore more open. Many of the questions to the senior official at the *Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung* (SFBF) concerned facts about the German education system as well as confirmations that the collected literature was updated and correct. The most interesting point from this interview was her personal opinions about the early selections as well as the economic influence on the politics of language teaching. She was quite ambivalent when it came to the system and saw both the positive and negative aspect of both tracking and non-tracking.

5.7.1 Foreign languages and business

The senior official at SFBF in Berlin was very clear on the point that economy had a direct impact on FL politics. One example she gave was the increased focus on Chinese language in Berlin schools. Today, Chinese is taught as a 2FL in eighth schools in Berlin (Personal communication, SFBF, November, 10, 2011). The reason for this, she explained, was a belief among politicians that China would play an increased role in relation to Germany in the future and that knowledge in Chinese language and culture was important in order to get the most out of China's future development as a business partner (ibid).

5.7.2 Foreign language politics as a political instrument for economic development

This paragraph presents some of the conclusions that can be drawn from Berlin's focus on Chinese as a 2FL. These comments will be elucidated in the analysis and in the comparison between the foreign language politics in Berlin and Oslo. The comments that follow are based on the interview with the senior official in Berlin, but not expressed by the interviewee herself.

A Berlin decision to teach Chinese as a 2FL is a result of the politicians' belief that Germany could gain from China's economic development. This implicates a belief that Germany's economy would gain from China's economic development. Having parts of the German population skilled in Chinese and familiar with the Chinese culture could be positive for Germany's economy. In the literature review, we saw that research done by Glenn Ole Hellekjær in Norway shows that Norwegian companies lose money and contracts because of the lack of knowledge of foreign languages. Although this is research conducted in Norway, it is likely that the same would be the case in Berlin. If German companies are more likely to win contracts with Chinese companies because of language skills, then this is indeed an economic argument in favour of teaching Chinese as a 2FL. However, Chinese is also offered in two secondary and upper schools in Oslo as a test project (*Fremmedspråksenteret*, 2011). This is a direct result of *Languages Open Doors* (2007-2009) that aimed to promote FL in basic education in Norway¹⁸.

The senior official in Berlin used China and Chinese as an example, but the argument that Chinese as a 2FL could have an economic advantage for Germany could also be generalised to other languages. The main point is her argument that competences in foreign languages are important for the economic development of the country.

5.7.3 Foreign language teaching in Berlin – An English teacher's point of view

One interview was conducted with a female English teacher at a public primary school (*Grundschule*) in Berlin. This interview was conducted in English and was conducted at the school she worked at in eastern Berlin.

A general policy in Berlin is that schools start with a FL in grade three. This school focused on French. As the age of nine approaches, students have to choose either French or English. The interviewee thinks it is good to start with FLT in grade three (earlier, it was in grade

¹⁸ According to White Paper nr. 26, *Languages build bridges* (Norwegian: språk bygger broer), only 54 students were taught in Chinese in Norwegian schools in 2007 (Språk bygger broer, 2007-2008, part 6.2.2).

five). “At this age, they are interested in music, like to imitate, and still have a good ear for FL, and learn it easily” (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010).

Pupils are not graded at this point. Grading starts at the end of the fourth year, and the English teacher views this practice positively. Since she has been working as a teacher in Berlin for many years, she could also compare the starting age of a FL. The interviewee says the results are more or less the same when you start at grade three compared to two years later: “Scientific research proves that the results are not much better”. They are better in pronunciation, but they do not learn the grammar more easily. Also, the ability think abstract is not there at this early stage” (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010). On the question of whether grammar is important, she says that children learn the language faster when they learn the rules. When you start with the FL teaching in grade five, they learn the grammar faster. However, she thinks that they should start with a 2FL earlier. Currently, there is a long gap until the 2FL begins in grade seven. It would therefore be better to have 2FL from the fifth grade, and she is not worried that pupils would be confused by 2FL (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010).

In *Grundschule* every child must go to the nearest school, as in Oslo, but from the seventh grade they have to go to *Oberschule*. There is free school choice at this level, but it depends on places available. They therefore have to choose a school type and a school when they turn twelve. It is the grade average that mainly determines the school type. If they have an average of 2.9, the teachers recommend *Sekundarstufe*. If the grades are better than 2.2, there is no discussion at all – the pupil is going to *Gymnasium*. If it is between grade 2.2 and 2.8 however, the teachers have to look at it more carefully.

The recommendations from teachers as well as the grades will often be crucial for what school type the parents choose. There are examples of parents that wanted their child to go to *Gymnasium* even though it was not recommended. Parents have the last word in these cases and they can still choose to send their child to *Gymnasium* although it is not recommended. These parents are often resource strong. The school I visited in Berlin was, as in Oslo, located in a mixed area with many immigrants, something that was expressed in the school. The parents with an immigrant background often think it is difficult to choose a school and to find

a profile they like. In these cases, the teacher recommends that they go and visit a school on a normal day, look at the schoolyard, and get a feeling for the school.

Another area where the parents' opinions count is the selection of FL. For example, French is popular when parents have a French connection. "We recommend that parents that have a special interest in a culture, choose this language" (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010). It is usually children from higher socio-economic backgrounds who choose French, but there are others who simply have an affinity towards France (ibid).

5.7.4 Foreign languages have a high status in Berlin

When talking about FL status, the interviewee believes that a subject gains a higher status when it is mandatory and if the children are measured with grades. Her experience is that subjects that are voluntary do not have the same status as math or FL. She explains to me that Germans in general enjoy learning languages. They are proud of themselves when they have achieved a bit and when they can communicate with tourists and show off their language skills. "Germans consider it fun to learn FL" (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010). FL is regarded as highly important. French, Spanish, and Italian have a particularly high status because of travelling, and the first two are the most traditional choices. Other reasons for the high status of FL are the parents: "Parents think FL is important for future jobs" (ibid).

5.7.5 Competition is positive

Another aspect is the competition:

"We have a lot of competition here. The Polish border is only 100 kilometers from here. The young Polish children know FL well and this makes it very competitive. They have to stretch a bit and the parents feel that the competition is there. In fact, many parents want their children to learn three FLs" (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010).

There is also an economic aspect to this, along with competition between schools. When I ask her what she thinks about this competition, she answers: “It is stressful for the teachers (laughing) but it is good for the students. I think children like competition” (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010).

“We need competition”, she continues, “but the competition between schools is more or less based on rumours. I think it is important to have a certain profile for a school” (Interview, English teacher, 2010). In this way, parents can choose a school based on the school profile, instead of rumours.

“There used to be, for instance, a school over there (points) which had sheep¹⁹. I think that is quite nice. Here we have French that is part of our profile as well as integration, or inclusion (...). In practice, this means that students who have difficulties (often ones from minority backgrounds) are taught in the same classrooms. This requires more teachers and it is therefore better to have a profile to show the strengths of the schools since people have different needs, and this also increases the quality” [of education] (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010).

Since my impression from the media was that most people are positive towards a 2FL in Berlin, and that there is no debate about the importance of a second or a third FL, I asked her about her impression. “Everybody wants it. They even start 1FL from first grade and this is something the parents want” (ibid). Not only do the parents want it, but the politicians and the pupils want it too. Also, Latin has a good position in Berlin and one argument for Latin is that it would ease the learning of other FLs. To this, she tells me a little story about a little palaeontologist:

“I once had a little student, a nine-year-old boy. He said: I want to leave this school next year.

After four years? Yes. I want to be a palaeontologist.

Palaeontologist (repeats slowly). I didn't even know the word!

And that is why I have to go to gymnasium, because I have to learn Latin.

And he did it” (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010).

¹⁹The sheep would then be a part of that school's profile.

6 Comparison of data from Oslo and Berlin

This chapter will compare the data from Oslo and Berlin and is a part of the analysis. The data is divided into four categories: economy, competition, minority students and cultural competence. The interpretations in this chapter are based on the data from the research. These interpretations are made by the researcher and are not necessarily reflecting the respondent's opinions. The quotes in this chapter are only intended to illustrate certain points.

The impact of politics on FLT is discussed in light of economic growth. Competition is a key term on this matter in the way that efficiency has also become important in education. The argument that the knowledge of foreign languages give cultural competence stands in contrast to the economical arguments in the way that it focuses more on individual - rather than national gains.

6.1 Foreign language, business and economy

In the data presentation we saw that the teaching of 2FL could be positive for the development of the country's economy. The discussion is not on whether knowledge of several foreign languages is good for business or not, it is rather a question of how much the economic aspect influence the foreign language politics.

There are always different interests when it comes to politics and the written policy is a result of compromises. It is the policy-makers that have the last word in this process. There are various interests involved, but it is the 'winning' interest that is finally implemented. The 'winning' interest would then be the policy that the policy-makers looked upon as most important. If the main interest was to strengthen the economy in the country, this could be at the expense of other interests, for instance that some students would fall off as a result of the new requirements.

The economic interest would be of main interest for the state rather than the individual. In the introduction it was stated that the comparison was guided by the hypothesis that foreign language politics in Berlin was to a greater extent guided by economic growth and competition than in Oslo.

The data from the interview with Minister Clemet, MoE in the Second Bondevik cabinet, confirms this hypothesis. Since Norway has a strong economy, they do not have the same economic concern as other European countries: “*Det er en slik oppfatning her at vi har den rikdommen vi trenger, vi behøver ikke bry oss så mye*”. (English: “It is such a perception here that we have the wealth we need and that we do not need to bother so much...”) (Personal communication, November 20, 2010). This does not mean that economy is not important, but it was perhaps not the main interest of the Second Bondevik government (2001-present).

6.1.1 The education systems reflect the economic imperative

This is a reflection of the education systems too. The streaming in Germany is reflecting an economic imperative in the way that it lifts up few individuals. In this way, the talents are more encouraged. The Norwegian education system is on the other hand ignoring talents²⁰ to a greater extent, which have also been a part of the criticism towards this system (see Chapter 3). A student, who is strong in theoretical subjects, would be more encouraged in Germany than in Norway. He would know already at age 12 that he is doing well, since he starts *Gymnasium*. The German system puts different resources in the different school types since the goals are different. A goal in *Gymnasium* is that these students should start university and perhaps become future leaders. The theory strong students will, most likely, get more attention from the teachers in *Gymnasium* than if they went to a school in Norway, because the teachers in Norway have to use their resources on all of the students. There is done little research on gifted children in Norway, but in a research project, published in June 2011, Skogen and Cosmovici (2011) criticize the Norwegian unity school for not taking care of gifted children. It may therefore seem that it is difficult to have a homogenous school system

²⁰ There are many kinds of talents, but it is here referred to academic talents.

and at the same time keep the same teaching quality for all of the students, while the problem is the opposite in Germany. The weakness of one system is therefore the strength of the other.

6.1.2 Emphasis on inclusion in Norway

In Chapter 5 we saw that the Second Bondevik Government used business relationship and competition as an argument for a 2FL, but this notion was not mentioned in the revised version. I do not think that economy is not important for the Second Stoltenberg Government, but it could indicate that economy was more important for the Second Bondevik government. The resistance that the proposition met could in this way be explained with ideology. Since Norway is a strong social-democratic state which is reflected in the unity school, it may not be very surprising that a policy that focuses on inclusion rather than economy is more accepted. However, it should be noted that business and competition were only two aspects of the argumentation for a 2FL in the first version of *Languages Open Doors* (2005). We can therefore not say that the first version ignored other aspects, such as inclusion.

The Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) in Norway wanted to remove the compulsory part and introduced instead the more practical “*Arbeidslivsfag*” as an alternative to a 2FL in lower secondary schools. The aim of the subject is to give students who want it, opportunity to work more practically and try out their interests for vocational teaching (*Utdanningsdirektoratet* 2011). The students could also choose to specialise in Norwegian or English language. This would then be an alternative for those students who already struggled. It may therefore seem that the interest of SV and the Second Stoltenberg Government would be more on inclusion than economy. For them, it seems that the concern that Norway would lag behind other countries is not as important as to include more students in the teaching. If the teaching is Arabic or a more practically oriented subject, is not so important as long as the schools manage to meet the needs of all of their students.

However, one could also argue that the inclusion aspect has an economic advantage if the

more practical “*Arbeidslivsfaget*” keeps students in school and hence decreases the drop-out rate. We can therefore not simply conclude that alternatives to a compulsory 2FL will be negative for the economy. However, although the second Bondevik government used economy to argue for a 2FL, this does not mean that they were more interested in economy than the Second Stoltenberg Government. It could also be that the Second Stoltenberg Government chose to focus on inclusion rather than economy because they knew that it would be more accepted in the population. If it was assumed that an economic argumentation would lead to protests, it would be more strategic to focus on inclusion, which also fits the social-democratic Norway better. In Chapter 3, it was mentioned that the real purpose of schooling is not necessarily reflecting the real purpose behind the FLP and this would be an example of that.

One objection to a compulsory 2FL was that it would be too theoretical for students who struggle. However, the Bondevik government meant that this was a misunderstanding; they believed that a 2FL could be made more practical. This was suggested in “Culture for Learning” and Minister Clemet is also mentioning this in the interview (Chapter 5). When the Second Stoltenberg Government chose to remove the compulsory part and explained that it would be too theoretical for the theory tired students, this was nonetheless a signal that they wanted to include more students. This is also connected to differences in ideology that is discussed in Chapter 7.

The senior official who was involved in the policy-making processes in Berlin was open on the fact that their foreign language politics was guided by economic interests. Chinese was offered as 2FL in eighth schools because of a belief that this would help the country to get more out of China's future development. It is hence an economic argument for FL. This could also be a result of the elite thinking that has long prevailed in Germany. Since the elite thinking is aiming at getting the most out of the inhabitants, this is in contrast to the Norwegian system that all students should get the same opportunities. However, as we saw in Chapter 5, Chinese is also offered in two schools in Oslo as a result of the increased focus on FL in Oslo²¹.

²¹ An increased focus on FL is a direct result of white Papers nr. 26 and 30.

This indicates that the recourses in Norwegian education is more on getting a certain basic competence for all students and the focus has been more on helping students who struggle rather than helping students that are already doing well. However, this is only speculation to the finding that Norway is not using economic arguments for having a compulsory 2FL.

Overall, it may seem that both countries pay attention to economic dimensions, but since the data from Oslo looks into two governmental periods, we have also seen that the economic dimension has changed. The Second Stoltenberg Government seems to focus less on the economic dimension than The Second Bondevik government. If we compare the FLP in Berlin with the FLP in Norway today, we can say, as a temporary conclusion that Germany seems to be more focused on economy than Norway, but this does not mean that economy is not an important dimension in the FLP in Norway. The next category that will be compared is the competition aspect, which is also connected to the economic argument.

6.2 Competition

This section compares Oslo and Berlin when it comes to competition and foreign language teaching, both when it comes to competition on the global market and competition between students. This section is also touching upon the free school debate and the consequences this may have for foreign language teaching and access.

Minister Clemet claims that the Norwegian population do not care so much about others, because they already have the richness that they need. She was strongly criticised for this. She wanted a more competitive school with more testing. This criticism, together with the change in a mandatory FL in Norway, is two examples that support the hypothesis that Norway does not welcome competition.

In “Culture for Learning” it is stated that many countries offer more years of teaching in two foreign languages than Norway (Culture for Learning 2004:47) and I have later commented

that this indicates a fear of lagging behind other European countries. This relates to competition in the way that the world has come closer. Norway competes on the global market and since research has shown that Norway loses contracts because of language problems²², this has been an argument in the discussion of a compulsory 2FL, but as we saw in the comparison of economy above, this has not been a strong enough argument for the Second Stoltenberg Government.

In Berlin however, the English teacher responded that a 2FL is something everyone wants. The competition is also very present given the high unemployment rate in the city. The English teacher is also pointing out that young Polish children in Berlin have a good knowledge of FL, something that makes it even more competitive. The parents feel that the competition is there and they are often pushing their children to learn FLs.

The free school choice from secondary school in Berlin could also result in competition between students since they are evaluated with grades, but this is only speculation as there are not done research on this. Still, pupils do not have to compete to get into lower secondary schools in Norway. In Berlin, pupils have to apply to *Oberschule* at the age of 12. On the internet, the parents can find a full overview of the different school types in Berlin, their profile, the amount of minority students and the foreign languages that they offer (*Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung* 2011). Since not all schools offer the same foreign languages, this means in practice that a student who wants to learn Japanese would not get this offer if he is not accepted to this school. In this way, the free school choice is not only creating competition, but it could also lead to social segregation.

However, the English school teacher in Berlin thinks that the school profiles are important. She also claims that the competition between schools is more or less based on rumors since the profile does not include an overview over the quality of the school or grades. “I think it is important to have a certain profile for a school” (English teacher, personal communication, November 10, 2010). The profile of the school she is working at in Berlin has for instance a

²² See Hellekjær (2005) referred to in Chapter 4.

profile that focuses on minority students. Since minority students often need more help, this requires more teachers, and this is a recourse that this school has. She therefore thinks that it is better to have a profile to show the strengths of the schools, since people have different needs (ibid).

Oslo is not offering school profiles as in Berlin, but as Minister Clemet claims, the quality of the school is often based on rumors and people move to the area where the school is supposed to be good. It is also available a list on the internet of the number of minority students in the different areas in Oslo (*Utdanningsetaten* 2011). This overview shows that there are huge differences between the schools in Oslo. While some areas have 1% minority students, other areas have 69% students with a different mother tongue than Norwegian or Sami (*Utdanningsetaten* 2011).

It is argued that the free school choice in Berlin is good in the way that it meets people's different needs. Minister Clemet argues similarly when it comes to free school choice in Oslo and claims that segregation in schools is resulting from residential segregation and not school politics.

It seems also that the competition term is more positively interpreted in Berlin. The English teacher thinks children like competition. It is not stated anywhere that the schoolchildren in Oslo are less competitive than they are in Berlin, but one could guess that the competition is weaker in Oslo since there are no grades in primary schools as in Berlin. Also, since it is overall easier to get a job in Norway given the low unemployment rate, this could also result in less competition among students. It could also be that the parents in Berlin stress their children more on this matter than in Oslo since they know that the competition is harder when they enter the labour market.

This previous section has discussed whether a free school choice could increase differences between students. This is relevant for FL teaching in the way that some schools could offer

different foreign languages than others, as they do in Berlin. The schools that have a more popular profile with many applicants would therefore increase competition amongst students and students with good grades would be more likely to get accepted into these schools. This could lead to social segregation, but more important for our topic, is the fact that it could result in some students getting access to more foreign languages than other students. The next part will discuss teaching of foreign languages in relation to minority students.

6.3 Foreign language and minority students

As stated in Chapter 4, the focus in this thesis was mainly on foreign languages, but in the data collection, the question of minority students and FLT was mentioned several times and should therefore also receive some attention. In the previous section which compared FL and competition in Berlin and Oslo, we saw that some schools in Oslo have 69% minority students and these students should not be ignored.

If we go back to the data presentation of documents from Oslo, we saw that the revised version of “Languages Open Doors” have an increased focus on minority students although the focus is less on second foreign language teaching in the way that the compulsory part is removed.

This change is inclusive in the sense that they embrace minority student’s competence in languages that have lower status in society instead of only focusing on second foreign languages. The female principal in Oslo was concerned that the minority student’s mother tongue would vanish during the schooling. As a consequence, they would not get functional in their mother tongue. She believed that Oslo would lose a lot of competence since they did not offer teaching in their mother tongue. The revised version has also added the measure of starting up with non-European languages as foreign languages (Languages Open Doors 2007:39). The policy change focused therefore in part on the recognition of foreign mother tongues as legitimate FL.

In report on Education in Berlin and Brandenburg they look at how schools handle students with a different mother tongue than German. It is emphasised that the promotion of early childhood bilingualism could be beneficial for the cognitive, emotional and the social development, but it is stated that this emphasis is based on research with unclear findings. Since this is international research, they are also unsure if the findings can be transferred to Germany.

In Berlin, the immigrant languages are being integrated into the schools in two ways: 1) Teaching the heritage language as a more or less integrated add-on offer within the mainstream monolingual or 2) Bilingual education. The second variant, however, requires a deep, structural and curricular reform of the monolingual school and the second option is only offered at seven elementary schools for a total of 800 Turkish-speaking pupils (*Bildungskommision* 2003:150).

In the same document it is suggested that the teaching of the native language could improve the status of native languages (*Bildungskommision* 2003:150). This corresponds to the principal in Oslo and her belief that the status of the other foreign languages would improve if the school offered teaching in it. It is then referred to other foreign languages than the ones that are typically taught, e.g. English, German, Spanish, and French. However, the report from Berlin where they have tried to teach other foreign languages than the classical ones, it is stated that the children have a tendency to choose the common foreign languages, usually English (*Bildungskommision* 2003:150). If more FL were offered, the status would not necessarily increase.

The principal in Oslo suggested that the status of Arabic and other foreign languages that many of the minority students speak would increase if they were taught as 2FL. The schools in Berlin which offer these languages show that the pupils have the tendency to choose English and French after all, according to the report from the *Bildungskommision*. The principal in Oslo might have a point when saying that Arabic would get a higher status if it was taught in schools, but if students still choose French or Spanish instead of Arabic and Chinese, it would make little sense to offer teaching in these languages. On the other hand, it might not be surprising that most children still choose languages such as French, German and

Spanish since they have a higher status. This could however change if the status of these languages increased, which means that knowledge of for example Arabic was looked upon as useful knowledge.

The schools in Berlin offer more foreign languages than Oslo. The principal in Oslo commented that the focus should be on foreign languages other than English, German, French and Spanish. If other languages such as Arabic were taught, it would improve the status of these languages, according to her. However, the report from Berlin claims that students tend to choose English although other languages are offered too. This could be a point that should be studied more before other FL are offered in Oslo, for example by conducting a survey where pupils are asked whether they would choose other foreign languages if they were offered. However, we should not take for granted that students in Oslo would choose English instead of other FL, although students in Berlin have a tendency to do so.

The data from Oslo and Berlin are similar in the way that they emphasise the role of minority student's mother tongue. Data from both cities suggest that these students have language competences that are not lifted up.

6.4 Cultural competence

In the German document "*Bildung und Schule in Berlin und Brandenburg – Herausforderungen und gemeinsame Entwicklungsperspektiven*" (Bildungskommission 2003), cultural competence is given much attention. Cultural competence is here intended as a set of certain skills, and if you master these skills, you get an open access to cultural goods. Two of these skills are related to foreign languages: 1) to master the lingua franca, 2) and to master foreign languages (ibid). If you know foreign languages, you will also get access to cultural goods. You will get a broader perspective in the sense that you get new horizons and ways of understanding and interpreting the world (Bildungskommission 2003:80).

This is an argument for teaching of foreign languages that stand in contrast to the economical. It is an individual argument in the way that it rewards those who learn foreign languages. To

get access to cultural goods is something you as an individual would gain from. You would get access to different cultures, their literature and humour.

To have a broader understanding of the world and be able to view it from different perspectives could also increase tolerance among people and cultures. Minister Clemet is also putting this argument in front of the economic; however she is using the term 'cultural understanding'. Minister Clemet claims that the people in Norway are less interested in others. If cultural competence is something you attain from learning FL, the cultural competence in Oslo would be weaker if it was compared with other European cities with better FL competence. In these terms, Norway should perhaps be more concerned that the inhabitants would be less tolerant towards other cultures than the fear of lagging behind when it comes to business, but this is an interpretation that only works if cultural competence results in increased tolerance.

Data from both cities argue that teaching of foreign languages would give cultural competence. This could indicate that those who know several foreign languages would have a greater cultural competence also. If this is correct, one interpretation could be that Norwegian students would lag behind other European students with more foreign language competence, since many of the Norwegian students would have less cultural competence as a result. This is a concern that is not mentioned in the data itself, but is rather a reflection of the term cultural competence. This is, however, a simplification in the way that the quality of the language teaching is not taken into consideration. To teach several FLs does not necessarily lead to better foreign language competence, or cultural competence that may follow from it.

Data from Berlin and from Oslo suggests that 'cultural competence' is something you attain when learning FLs, but 'cultural competence' is not a term that is used in all documents and interviews. 'Cross-cultural' and 'cultural awareness' are other terms that are interpreted in the same way. Since these terms differ, it is difficult to say whether data from one city focuses more on this than the other, but if the meaning is the same, it may seem that both cities emphasise the importance of cultural competence. The data did in other words not clarify whether one city focuses more on languages as cultural skills than the other.

7 Findings

This chapter presents the findings deduced from the data presented in Chapter 5 and from the comparison in the foregoing chapter. Three questions guided the research and each of these questions is given one section respectively although they are strongly connected and interfere to a large extent. The FL politics in Berlin and Oslo have the main focus, but the last question view FLP in a wider context. The next part is exclusively focused on Norway.

7.1 What informs the actual formulation of foreign language politics?

In Chapter 5, the FLP in Norway was presented through the white paper “Culture for Learning”. This part looks at the processes leading to it, in other words; what really lies behind the FLP in Norway. Since the focus is on FLT, the purpose of schooling could help us getting insight into the various interests. If the purpose of the schooling is to prepare students for society, the curriculum will reflect this goal in the way that it will focus on subjects that students will need. If the purpose of schooling is to strengthen the economy in the country, this will be reflected in the curriculum, for example by teaching a 2FL to all students. However, this is an example only meant to illustrate that the interest of a country is reflected in the curriculum. It is a simplification in the way that the content in the curriculum is more likely to be guided by several interests.

One important question in this thesis is why Oslo chose not to make a 2FL compulsory although a 2FL is compulsory in Berlin, among other cities/countries. However, the fact that all students in Berlin have to learn two FLs in addition to their mother tongue, does not mean that the focus on FLs is greater in Berlin than in Oslo. Nonetheless, it may be an indicator that the language focus is greater in Berlin.

It is also mentioned that Norway has two versions of their official language: *nynorsk* and *bokmål*. Although *nynorsk* and *bokmål* are two very similar versions of the same language, it may be one explanation to why Norway chose not to have a compulsory 2FL, since the students already have a challenge when it comes to their own mother tongue. It has also been a discussion in Oslo about whether *nynorsk* should be compulsory or not. This discussion may be one explanation to why a compulsory 2FL was not welcomed at this point, namely because *nynorsk* is seen as an extra challenge for the students in Oslo, a challenge that is not shared with the students in Berlin. It will be interesting to see whether *nynorsk* remains compulsory. If *nynorsk* was made voluntary, it would be interesting to see whether this would effect the FL policies, at least when it comes to a compulsory 2FL.

The *nynorsk* case is also interesting when we discuss whether or not the FLP is influenced by external pressure. The literature suggests that globalisation has put an increased pressure on policymakers. This means that policymakers have a great deal of external pressure, in addition to the internal pressure from their own country. However, it is not clear whether this pressure is as big for policymakers that work with education, compared to policymakers that work with issues that are more directly related to foreign affairs (e.g. export). It is, in fact, suggested that education is one of the areas where the policymakers in a country still maintain control. If the education policy was only a result of external pressure from abroad, it is less likely that *nynorsk* would be a priority for the policymakers. In Chapter 4, it was mentioned that national education systems have a function of promoting national cultures and identities. *Nynorsk* is a subject that represents Norwegian culture and history. When *nynorsk* is compulsory, and not a 2FL, this may be one evidence that educational policymakers in Norway maintain control. In other words, the policymakers in Norway do not feel too much pressure from other countries (e.g. Germany), the EU, or the European commission.

However, another important part of this thesis, is the fact that two governments in Norway disagreed when it came to a compulsory 2FL. It is therefore a simplification to say that policymakers in Norway are not affected by external pressure. We could perhaps say that the Stoltenberg government was not pressured from abroad when it came to this particular case, but this would also be a simplification, because a policy is guided by several factors. It could

also be that the second Bondevik government felt more pressure from abroad when they wanted to make a 2FL compulsory. However, if we look to the convergence theory, it may also be that the Bondevik government used external pressure (e.g. competition, economic advantage) to legitimise their policy. Chapter 5 also revealed a fallacy in “Culture for Learning” (2004) in the way it was argued for a compulsory 2FL. This may fit Shohamys belief that governments manipulate people through the language they use in public documents. However, it is not sure whether the weak argumentation is a result of bad work, or if the intention was to manipulate.

7.1.1 Norwegian Ideology and the Social Democracy

The change in government was between a right wing government and a left wing government. The former is more capitalistic oriented, while the latter is social-democratic. Since the social democracy is strong in Norway and since the unity school is based on social-democratic values, the Knowledge Promotion could have resulted in a fear that the school politics would become more capitalistic oriented or that the focus would be more on the individual rather than on communion, as the research from Backmann and Haug shows.

The fact that two political parties have different ideologies is not surprising in itself. The interesting point is that the social-democratic unity school in Norway has had an incredibly strong position with few alternatives since World War II. Although it has been questioned - especially after the international testing, the position is quite unique. My understanding is that the unity school has almost become a part of the national feeling in Norway. The Labour Party's position after the World War II has been strong, with 14 out of 22 Prime Ministers coming from the Labour Party (*Store norske leksikon* 2009). The social-democratic ideology could in this way be seen as Norway's ideology.

This is also connected to Mr. Bergesen's suggestion that change was difficult because of differences in ideology. Since an ideology does not change overnight, this might explain why change was so difficult in Norway. The Knowledge Promotion was more oriented towards

knowledge, and the part of making a 2FL compulsory was only one part of this. The central, ideological objection was - as Mr. Bergesen claims and which we also saw in Chapter 5, that the knowledge focus was conflicting with the idea of an inclusive school for all students, independent of talent or background. Mr. Bergesen calls it “*venstresidas skolepolitiske monopol*” (English: The left’s political school monopoly) (Bergesen 2006:78). The Knowledge Promotions’ focus on (quantifiable) knowledge could in this way have caused an ideological conflict in the Second Stoltenberg Government.

This ideological conflict could be one explanation to why the compulsory part was removed. Mr. Bergesen suggested that the removal of the compulsory part became symbolic for SV and that they realised that this was their chance to influence the politics from the right wing. Although this was rejected by Minister Djupedal, the historical background of the unity school in Norway, and the strong social-democratic position, supports his hypothesis. If it is correct that the Knowledge Promotion came into conflict with the Second Stoltenberg Government’s ideology, it relates to Cummings’ idea that political shifts are closely associated with class rearrangements, and that these in turn influence the focus on educational reform.

The external pressure from without may have been one reason why few changes were made in the reform. However, the change in the FLP could in this way symbolise some kind of protest to the tendency of focusing more on the individual rather than the collective. However, it is not clear whether the Second Stoltenberg Government always wanted to remove the compulsory part or whether it became an important case at a later stage. The change could also be a result of a change in the philosophical and the political vision in the government. In Chapter 5, it was mentioned that the media could influence the politicians, and although it is earlier stated that the policy-makers make the last decision in the policy-making process, other stakeholders could influence them in a certain direction, or change the vision completely. This is however difficult to trace since we have not given other stakeholders such as the media and the parents any attention, but it is important to remember that other stakeholders could also influence the policy, although it is not observable.

7.1.2 The educational structure

In the previous part, we saw that the knowledge focus in the Knowledge Promotion was conflicting with the idea of an inclusive school for all students. This idea was so embedded in people's mind that it created reactions when the focus changed. However, in Germany, the streaming and the traditional elite thinking may be one reason why a compulsory 2FL is not questioned. FL is categorised under "universal education" in the German Report on Education, something that shows the contrast between the attitudes towards FL in the two cities.

7.2 To what extent can shifts in language politics be explained by changing contextual factors?

This part will look at Norway exclusively and is used as an example to how the contextual factors operate. In the previous part, we saw that ideologies influence the formulations of FLP. Differences in ideologies are also relevant for this part since ideology is a part of the context in which policy-makers work within. The discussion in the previous part is therefore relevant also for this part.

7.2.1 Minority students

The focus was originally on second foreign language teaching in European schools, but we have seen that the issue of mother tongue teaching has also arisen. This is especially relevant in schools with high groups of minority students. A female principal in Oslo called for an increased focus on mother tongue teaching for minority students. Her point is to elevate languages such as Arabic and Turkish which, as she points out, have a low status in Norway. If these languages received more attention, their status would also increase. The status is low because society is not signalling that there is a need for people that are proficient in these languages. As a result, students having Arabic or Turkish as the mother tongue would rather

focus on other languages, such as English. In that way, they would not be proficient in their own mother tongue²³.

One way of elevating minorities mother tongue, could be to evaluate the mother tongue teaching with grades. Subjects evaluated with grades, have higher status according to the principal. She is working in a primary school, but she suggests that minority students would work more with their mother tongue also at this level, if they knew that it would be evaluated with grades in lower secondary school.

The interviewee is not sure whether the mother tongue teaching should be taught in addition to, or instead of a 2FL, but she suggests that the mother tongue should be measured with grades. In this way, the language would get higher status, since she believes that subjects measured with grades have higher status. If I get her right on this point, this means that subjects that are quantifiable are more valued in society, because there is greater evidence of their having been attained to a particular level. By studying measurable subjects, they gain status in society because they can display proof of their achievement. Therefore, minority languages should be elevated to a position where they are measured, thereby giving them a clear, quantifiable place in society and also giving greater recognition to the skills of, for example, Arabic and Turkish native speakers.

The choices should, in other words, not only be between “*Arbeidslivsfag*” and a foreign language as it is today, but also the teaching of the minority mother tongue. It is possible to choose Norwegian instead of a 2FL today, but not Arabic or other foreign languages that many students speak. If so-called theory-tired pupils are those from a minority background, and these were given the possibility to choose a mother tongue, this could motivate these students at least. It could also be a better option to “*Arbeidslivsfag*” if the mother tongue was given a greater status in the sense that it would become a subject with useful knowledge.

²³ Arabic and Turkish are mentioned as examples of mother tongue, but the pupils in a school often represent several languages and if the mother tongue should get more focus, one question that the policy makers have to consider, is what languages the schools should offer. This is only one of the problems that policy makers have to think of, but the issues around such a suggestion is not given attention here, but can be found in Inglis (2008).

If “*Arbeidslivsfag*” is looked upon as a subject that is not appreciated, the mastery of this subject would not lead to increased motivation or feeling of achievement in school. The aim of this subject would then be unfulfilled and it would therefore be paradoxical, since the goal is that this subject should be more motivational for students who struggle. This is, however, only hypothetical as this subject has been recently implemented (2009) and still at a test level (*Utdanningsdirektoratet* 2011). It will, however, be interesting to see if “*Arbeidslivsfaget*” decreases the drop-out rate in Oslo or other Norwegian municipalities.

Although it can be discussed whether “*Arbeidslivsfaget*” is a better alternative to a 2FL, the politicians struggle to find a solution to the drop-out problem in upper secondary schools in Norway, is still a signal that it is still very important that *all* students are included in the teaching.

7.2.2 Economic concerns

As seen in “Culture for Learning”, there is a concern about lagging behind other countries because of bad knowledge of foreign languages. Hellekjær (2005) is concerned that bad knowledge in foreign languages is negative for the economy of the country. Economy and FL is connected, and it is therefore naturally that economy is one argument for an increased focus on FL. When the Second Stoltenberg Government (2005-present) chose not to make a 2FL mandatory, this might have signalled that economic development is a weaker argument for them than equality.

This has a competition aspect. Minister Clemet talks about this in the interview, saying that “the need for FL competence goes together with economy and business”. While Minister Clemet connects FLT with business, this is not a focus for SV, at least not officially. If SV did regard business to be an important factor for having a compulsory 2FL, it is not shown in the policy. The reason for this could be a protest against the school as an efficient institution with the only purpose of increasing economic growth. In one the world’s richest countries²⁴, it may

²⁴ The World Bank (2009) ranked Norway as the third richest country in the world when it came to the gross

not be strange that some people don't see economic growth as the main imperative for education. If foreign languages are regarded as positive only for economic growth, it is not surprising that SV was negative.

The education act in Norway states that schools should prepare students to master their lives and to participate in work and society (*Lovdata* 1998). The question would then rather be whether a 2FL is necessary for everyone in order to master one's own life. According to Minister Clemet, knowledge of several FL improves your life in the way that you get a broader perspective on the world. The same is stated among the respondents in Berlin. There may therefore seem to be disagreement among the political parties in Norway about what we need to learn in order to be able to participate in society, while in Berlin there is a broader consensus that language knowledge improves life quality.

In the previous chapter and in the presentation of the literature, the purpose of schooling is mentioned, which in turn means who the policy is aimed at. If the argument for having a compulsory 2FL was driven by a concern for economic growth and a fear that Norway would lag behind on the global market, at least a part of the policy is motivated by national interests. This does not however mean that individual concerns are absent.

Economy and cultural competence are two important dimensions that guide the politics in both cities. The data suggests that Berlin is more focused on the economic dimension than Oslo, but this is a conclusion that is based on a limited set of data. It may seem that the focus is fluctuating between economy, cultural competence and inclusion in Norway, partly because of governmental changes. One reason why the focus is not either on economy or inclusion or cultural competence, is that the policy-makers are influenced from different directions, both within the country and without. Since the influence within the country is not always the same as from without, the focus is changing.

7.2.3 Different purposes and interests

An economic concern is one argument that reflects a policy aimed at pursuing national interests over individual ones. Students may win when they enter the labour market if they speak two FLs properly. However, it is not given that teaching of a FL results in knowledge of that language. The reason for this is that teaching does not always result in learning. Students who have the possibility to use the foreign languages outside the classroom have an advantage because they use the language. What happens outside the classroom is related to the student's socio-economic backgrounds. This could for instance mean that one student travels a great deal with his family, while another student is not able to travel. The first student will therefore get the opportunity to practice the foreign language more often. This is resulting from differences in socio-economic background and not motivational or intellectual factors. Although Berlin has a compulsory second foreign language, this does not mean that the opportunity is the same for all children. Socio-economic background is one reason for this.

7.2.4 Competition

A female principal in Oslo argued that teaching of modern tongue to minority students would be a great resource for society and the labour market. She is concerned that Oslo is throwing away existing knowledge because we do not offer teaching in mother tongues. This goes together with Minister Clemet's viewpoint of an increased focus on immigrant mother tongue languages. While it is clearly argued that this would benefit the labour market, it is also given that Norway's competitiveness would improve when people mastered a variety of languages on a deeper level. In Oslo, the challenge would be to increase the status of these languages. The status must improve. In that way, the pupils will choose to learn FL other than English.

The belief that competition is interpreted as positive in Berlin was one hypothesis that was confirmed in the interviews. All of the respondents in Berlin mentioned that FL has a high status there and this is a point where Berlin differs from Oslo. The term 'competition' was also more positively interpreted among the respondents in Berlin. One English teacher comments that Poland is near Berlin geographically. As a result, competition is higher and this is something that parents feel (Interview, Berlin, 2010). The competition is increased

because Polish students often speak several languages before they enter school. These students will therefore have an advantage the day they enter the labour market if the Berlin schools do not focus on FL²⁵.

Another explanation to why competition is more present in Berlin than is Oslo is the unemployment rate which is higher in Berlin. As a result, the competition is stronger in Berlin because of more competition for the jobs available. In February 2011, 12.6% were unemployed in Berlin (*Regionaldirektion Berlin-Brandenburg* 2011) compared to 3% in Oslo (NAV 2011).

The free school choice from *Oberschule* could also result in more competition as students have to apply for these schools. This is also relevant for FLT since the different schools in Berlin offer different FL. In this way, the FL that are not taught in many schools, are available to few students. On the other hand, these FL might not be that popular. This is, however, difficult to say since there is little research done on school choice and competition in Berlin.

So far, it is assumed that competition is higher in Berlin and that competition is not looked upon as solely positive in Oslo. The fear of competition has been shown when Oslo introduced national tests and when it was suggested to publicise the results from the schools. This also goes together with the unity school in Norway and the belief that everyone should have the same opportunities. While the economy and the low unemployment rate tell us that the competition is not needed in Oslo, this is also a relevant point. Therefore, the question is more whether we want competition - and not whether we should have it because it would be good for the economic development of the city or country.

To conclude, we can say that Berlin has more competition in schools and in society than Oslo. Berlin wants competition because it is good for the children. Competition is not proved to be absent in Norwegian schools, but the school system as well as the low unemployment rate do not encourage it. If competition is less welcomed in Norway it is not surprising that the argument of lagging behind other countries is not taken seriously. When the economy is

²⁵ On May 1, Germany opened up their labour market to citizens of the Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004 (Dettmer and Puhl 2011) and this includes Poland. This was not mentioned in the interviews, but it is assumed that the competition would increase following from the increased pressure this could have on the labour market in Berlin.

strong and the labour market good, it is not surprising that people are not afraid of lagging behind, as long as “we” (Oslo) are doing well. As Clemet states, the people in Norway seem to be less interested in the rest of the world because of a belief that they manage on their own, as a result of the oil richness. If the rest of the world is not so interesting and money is not a concern, this could be one reason why not everyone considers a 2FL to be important for all.

In this part we have seen how a change in government resulted in a policy change in Norway. We have looked at the dynamics in this change process and the contextual factors that resulted in the change. In the next part, the significance of FLT will be discussed in a wider context.

7.3 Foreign language politics in Europe

While the two previous parts discussed factors impacting on decision-making, this part will discuss whether these factors are transferable to other countries.

In the literature review we saw that globalisation is an important part of the context in which politicians and policy-makers work, in the way that it affects regional and international economies. We have seen that there are many understandings of globalisation, but this discussion is left here and it will be assumed that globalisation influence politics. The increased focus on FLs in Europe is one example of such an influence. Globalisation represents an external pressure to the governments and is led by competition and economic interests. This is one aspect that is not only relevant for Germany and Norway; other European countries are also affected by external pressure. However, governments must also consider national interests. In the previous part, shifts in FLP were discussed. One explanation to why politics change was the shift in focus between national- and international interests, or pressures from within and without. These shifts are applicable to other European countries too as long as both the internal- and external pressure is important.

Another implication of globalisation is Carnoy's point that nation's political power is changed. The pressure from without is strong because of globalisation. As a result, the external pressure may win over the internal more often. This implicates that countries that are more pressured economically than Norway, would more often lead politics resulting from external pressure. One example of such an external pressure is the recommendation of the EU to teach two FLs to all students which relates to all of the European countries. In Norway, one internal pressure was the idea of inclusion. Since the economy is going well in the country, the external pressure to adapt to this recommendation may not have been as strong.

“The Knowledge Promotion” often refers to the terms *quality* and *assessment*. This followed from the PISA shock and the reform could in this way reflect school politics that are more guided by external pressure than before the reform. A discussion followed, but this subsided as a result of what Minister Clemet called *a paradigm shift*. The plan of making a 2FL compulsory in lower secondary school was a part of the Knowledge Promotion and since the revised version removed this part, it may indicate a shift that was not as strong as Ms. Clemet claims, although she is right that the focus on learning is greater today and that the external pressure is strengthened. PISA as an external pressure is one reason why several countries in Europe have made changes in their educational structure.²⁶

7.3.1 Tolerance

One reason for teaching foreign languages is the belief that knowledge of FL would increase tolerance among cultures and people; prejudice may be less prevalent if one has knowledge about a culture and their language. The belief that foreign language knowledge could reduce prejudice among people and cultures is one important reason for teaching foreign languages to students in whole Europe, not only in the two cities that are studied here. Since this is a recommendation from the European Commission, it is also natural that the focus on FL involves several countries.

²⁶ For example Poland, see OECD, 2011.

Based on this, I suggest that the challenges that policymakers meet in the processes of developing and implementing FLP are to a great extent the same. This is first and foremost because of various interests. There are several reasons for teaching FLs. Political parties, cities, and countries may disagree on the FLP, but it is clear that the focus on FLs has increased in Europe and that students have more competence in FLs today.

7.3.2 What about the cognitive aspect?

In the introduction of this research, I asked whether knowledge of several FL would improve cognitive capacity. This is not explored in the thesis, but if FL competence improves thinking, this is a strong argument for learning FL. This would mean that those who learned a second or a third FL would improve their performance in others subjects too. In this way, the argument of having a practical subject (e.g. "*Arbeidslivsfaget*") would lose its strength. To learn a 2FL would be a better choice for the weaker students too, because a 2FL would improve their achievement in other theoretical subjects also.

8 Conclusions and final remarks

This research has looked into the dynamics of policy-making processes. The foreign language politics (FLP) in Oslo and Berlin were used as examples in order to get insight into the policy-making processes and the dynamics that drives the policy in a certain direction. It has been suggested that the outcome of the policy-making processes was influenced by economic interests, competition as a result of an increasingly open market, individual gains such as cultural competence and tolerance. Differences in ideologies have been discussed in relation to the political shift in Norway, but also because of variances in the educational systems. We have seen that the policy could reflect the purpose of schooling, given that the Norwegian education system is more inclusive than the German in the way that it has led to some selection. FLP is guided by a variety of interests, such as economic development and competition. Both countries pay attention to economic dimensions. However, it is suggested that Norway focuses more on inclusion than Germany and this is also reflected in the ideology and the education systems. It may seem that it is more legitimate to argue economically for FLP in Berlin than in Oslo, at least in the public debate.

A policy is resulting from compromises and the examples from Oslo have illustrated this point clearly by looking at a particular policy change. The change in government caused a change in the foreign language politics and arguments for this change have been helpful in order to trace the dynamics that influenced the policy. The research has in this way not only looked at the specifics of foreign languages; it has also given insights into the dynamics of policy-making processes.

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Appendix A
Interview guides, Berlin

What are the reasons for having a 2FL? (Individual/personal, national/international)

2FL - relevant for all children? Why?

To what extent is Berlin following the recommendations from the EU when it comes to FLT?

Economy and its influence on FLP. To what extent are the policy guided by economic interests?

What guides the FLP? What interests lay behind?

Teachers

- Who decides where the children go after *Grundschule*? What are the parent`s points of view?
- Who make the last decision?
- Can all children learn a 2FL? Is it necessary to teach a 2FL to all students? Why/ why not?
- For me it appears that a compulsory 2FL is only positively interpreted in Berlin. Have there been any protests against it? If yes, who and why?
- What is your comment to the new school reform in Berlin and how does it differ from the previous?

Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung

- *Sind sie involviert in die Policy-making Prozess?*
Are you involved in the policy-making processes?

• *Die Bedeutung der Fremdsprachen hat in den letzten Jahren viel Aufmerksamkeit bekommen. Die Europäische Union und die Europäische Kommission empfiehlt allen Europäischen Bürgern mindestens zwei Fremdsprachen zu beherrschen, neben ihrer Muttersprache. Eines der Argumente ist dass, die Möglichkeit in mehrere Sprachen zu kommunizieren ein großer Vorteil ist für Organisationen und Verfirmen. Im welchem Maße beeinflusst die EU Berlins Fremdsprachpolitik?*

• FL has received much attention in the last years. The EU and the European Commission recommend that all European citizens should speak two FL in addition to their mother tongue. One of the arguments for this is that organizations would gain from this economically. In what way does the EU influence Berlin's FLP?

Denken sie, dass Policy-maker den Status einer Sprache beeinflussen können?

• Do you think that policy-makers could influence the status of a language?

Ich weiß dass Berlin zurzeit eine Reform erfährt mit dem Ziel die Grundschule und Sekundarstufe 1 zu vereinen. Bist jetzt konnten die Schüler nach Beendigung der Grundschule zwischen 3 Schulformen wählen. Mich interessiert wie die Eltern in diesem Entscheidungsprozess beraten werden und wie Objektiv dieser ist.

• Berlin is now going through a reform. Until now, students could choose between three different school forms. In what way are parents involved in this decision process and how objective is it?

Was denken sie über den Entscheidungsprozess? Ist es Objektiv?

• Is the decision process objective? What are your thoughts about this?

Denken sie, dass die Konkurrenz unter den Schulen, als folge der Freie Schulwahl, Vorteil Haft für den Schülern?

• What are your thoughts about the free school choice in relation to competition?

In welchem Maße folgt Berlin der Empfehlung die Europäische Unions allgemein Sprachpolitik?

Is Berlin following the EU's FLP? Why?

Appendix B

Interview guides, Oslo

- What are the reasons for having a 2FL? (Individual/personal, national/international)
- 2FL - relevant for all children? Why?
- Why did Norway choose not to make a 2FL compulsory although it was recommended by the EU?
- Economy and its influence on FLP. To what extent are the policy guided by economic interests?

What guides the FLP? What interests lay behind?

Interview with Mr. Bergesen

- *Hvorfor er fremmedspråk (FL) viktig?*

Why is FL important?

- *I "kampen om kunnskapsskolen" skriver du at du var overrasket over motstanden. Du foreslår ideologiske forskjeller som en årsak til motstanden. Kan du utdype dette?*

In "the fight against the knowledge school" you write that you were surprised about the resistance. You suggest ideological differences as one explanation to this. Can you please explain this further?

- *Noe av kritikken mot et obligatorisk 2FL var at det ville gjøre skolehverdagen vanskeligere for teoritrøtte elever og skape større ulikheter. Hva er din kommentar til dette?*

Some of the criticism towards a compulsory FL was that theory-tired students would struggle more and that it would create differences. What is your comment to this?

Interview with Minister Djupedal

- *Hvorfor valgte dere å ta bort den obligatoriske komponenten?*
- Why did you choose to reverse the compulsory component?
- *Bergesen mente et obligatorisk FL ble en symbolsk sak for SV. Hva er din kommentar til dette?*

Mr. Bergesen thought that the case of making a 2FL compulsory became a symbolic case for SV. What is your comment to this?

- *Var det enighet i regjeringen om å ta bort den obligatoriske komponenten?*

Was there an agreement to remove the compulsory component?

Interview with Minister Clemet

- *Hvorfor er det så viktig at elevene lærer fremmedspråk (FL)?*

Why do you think it is important that all students learn FL?

- *Er FL viktig for alle elevene?*

Are FLs important for all of the students?

- *Som utdanningsminister ønsket du å gjøre et 2FL obligatorisk i ungdomsskolen, men dette ble endret som følge av regjeringsskiftet. Et av argumentene for å fjerne den obligatoriske komponenten var at teorivake/trøtte elever ville få det vanskeligere og at forskjellene mellom studentene ville øke som en konsekvens. Var dette den eneste årsaken til endringen?*

As a MoE you wanted to make a 2FL compulsory in lower secondary education, but this was changed due to a change in government. One argument to remove this part was that theory-tired students would struggle more and that the differences between students would increase as a consequence. What other explanations were there?

- *Mange frykter at Norge blir liggende etter internasjonalt ved å ikke ha et obligatorisk 2FL. Mye av frykten skyldes, slik jeg har forstått det, økonomisk tap. Hva er din kommentar til denne frykten?*

Many fear that Norway would lag behind internationally without a compulsory 2FL and this fear is to a large extent economic oriented. What is your comment to this?

- *SV har et forsøk nå der de innfører arbeidslivsfag i stedet for FL for å erfare hvordan arbeidslivet er. Hva tror du om det prosjektet? Dersom prosjektet viser at flere elever fullfører skolen er vel det også en økonomisk gevinst?*

SV introduced a practical subject (*Arbeidslivsfag*) as an alternative to a 2FL. What do you think about that?

- *Er det så farlig om Norge blir liggende etter internasjonalt? Hva er de reelle konsekvensene tror du? (for elevene)*

What are the real consequences of not having a compulsory 2FL? Is it that important whether Norway lags behind or not?

- *Er Norge mer nasjonalt orientert enn andre Europeiske land?*

Is Norway more nationally oriented than other European countries?

- *Hvorfor følger ikke Norge EU og Europarådets anbefalinger i denne saken?*

Why did Norway choose not to follow the recommendations from the EU and the European Council?

- *Dersom det ble innført et 2FL slik dere ønsket, hvilke endringer ville du forvente å se? Hvordan er det annerledes fra språkpolitikken i dag?*

If a 2FL was introduced, what changes do you expect to see? What would be different from the FLP today?

- *Hvorfor tror du motstanden mot et obligatorisk 2FL var såpass stor blant lærere, elever og foreldre? Bergesen skrev i "Kampen om kunnskapsskolen" at han var overrasket over den massive motstanden og mener en forklaring kan være at ideologiene står sterkt i Norge. Hva mener du?*

Why do you think some teachers, students and parents were against a compulsory 2FL? Mr. Bergesen wrote in "The fight against the knowledge school" that he was surprised about the

resistance. He thinks this could be because of strong ideologies in Norway. What is your comment to this?

● *I "språk åpner dører" står det at fremmedspråk er viktig. Er det mulig å endre FL status uten å gjøre det obligatorisk? Hva kan eventuelt gjøres for å endre holdningene til FL? Er det nødvendig å endre folks holdninger eller praksis for å kontrollere språk-polisen?*

FL is important according to "*Languages Open Doors*". Is it possible to change FL status without making it compulsory? What can be done to change attitudes towards FL? Is it necessary to change attitudes or praxis in order to control the language policy?

● *Ser vi på historien har Norge hatt stort fokus på nasjonalspråket og brukt det som samlende. I senere tid, med fokus på FL virker det på meg som om diskusjonen ofte handler om å ta vare på det nasjonale språket eller og fokusere på FL. Trenger det være enten eller?*

The history in Norway focuses to a large extent on the national language which is used as unifying. For me, it seems that the discussion is often about preserving the national language or to focus on FL. Is it either or?

● *I Berlin har de fritt skolevalg fra elevene er 10-12 år gamle. Enkelte av skolene tilbyr mer FL enn andre. Tror du språktilbudet ved skolene øker konkurransen og i så fall, er det positivt med økte forskjeller mellom elevene? Kan konkurranse motivere elevene?*

Berlin has a free school choice from students are 10-12 years old. Some schools offer more FLs than others. Do you think the variety of languages offered increase competition, and if yes, is it positive with increased differences between students? Can competition motivate the students?