

Educational trajectories in cultural worlds:
An ethnographic study of multiethnic girls
across different levels of schooling

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PART II: THE ARTICLES

- Article I: Roth, S. (2016). Exploring funds of knowledge during educational transitions: learning identities, positionings and future trajectories. In O. Erstad, K. Kumpulainen, Å. Mäkitalo, K. Schrøder, P. Pruilmann-Vengerfeldt, T. Jóhannsdóttir, & (Eds.), *Learning across contexts in the knowledge society* (pp. 153-167): Sense Publishers.
- Article II: Roth, S., & Erstad, O. (2015). Positional identities in educational transitions: connecting contemporary and future trajectories among multiethnic girls. *Ethnography and Education*, 1-17.
- Article III: Roth, S. & Stuedahl, D. (submitted). 'You Norwegians think we Muslims are not free'. Enactment of gendered positional identities during transition stages. *Gender and Education*.

PART I: EXTENDED ABSTRACT

1 Introduction

1.1 Voices of youth and their educational possibilities

The role of education in contemporary Western societies could be characterised by the existence of tension between increasing standardisation and performance indicators and concerns regarding how young people relate to the education system and their future learning possibilities, as indicated by increasing dropout rates and emotional stress symptoms (Erstad, 2013). The multiethnic society in which we now live represents a development that is challenging educational provision within the Norwegian context, which of course has implications for our education system. This thesis argues that it is important, in relation to such developments, to address and understand how young people themselves perceive their educational trajectories and future possibilities. My principal focus is on young girls born in Norway to immigrant parents, since they can be defined as being in a position where they might experience challenges stemming from educational trajectories across everyday activities, family life and school. Such issues represent a growing field of research, both in the Norwegian context and internationally. Yet, the dominant educational research focus is not on the students themselves and the importance of listening to their voices, but rather on classroom activities and quantitative measures of performance.

1.2 Gendered futures in a multiethnic society

There is renewed public interest in Norway in the ways young girls with immigrant parents construct their lives within their families, as well as how they view the possibilities offered by education (Kavli & Nadim, 2009). In a multiethnic society, different gendered ideals and future expectations coexist, which may lead to stereotypical beliefs or the need to understand different gendered practices (Lemke, 2012). One of the goals of the Nordic welfare state is to model equality ideals, for example, by removing the gender divide (Engebriksen & Fuglerud, 2009). Both men and women should be able to combine family life with work, and women should be able to participate in work on the same basis as men. At the same time, Norway has a large percentage of women who work in part-time jobs, and work is typically divided with respect to gender (Hegna, 2005). There also exist differences between the majority population and parts of the immigrant population (especially those from Pakistan, Iraq and Somalia) in terms of women's participation in public work as well as work in the home. As such, some immigrants engage in family practices that were traditional in Norway like gendered segregated practices. However, these practices do not dominate the overall picture anymore (Prieur, 2002). Even if it is easy to identify examples of differences between certain immigrant groups' gendered identities and the Norwegian equality ideal, it is important to look at the nuances. The immigrant population is not one homogeneous group, not even when classified according to nationality or religion. There are variations in gendered identities depending on the immigrants' education level and class, as well as between generations (Djuve, 1999; Kavli, 2001).

In addition, gendered identities are not static, since they are influenced by different practices within the society in which people live. For example, Norway has experienced significant changes in gendered identities over the last few decades (Norwegian Ministry of Culture, 2007). Such changes are also found within the immigrant population; women born in Norway to immigrant parents exhibit significantly higher participation in work and they start families later than their parents (Byberg, 2002; Olsen, 2008). Gendered identities may change – in all parts of the population. It is not certain that gendered family practices and identities will be reproduced in future generations. Hence, in a multiethnic society, girls are faced with a multitude of different gendered practices and expectations that may affect their gendered future trajectories.

1.3 Multiethnic girls in educational transitions

Educational transitions have previously been investigated in order to understand young people's subjectivities as they move from school to a work context (Du Bois-Reymond & Stauber, 2005), as well as in light of issues related to changes in contemporary societies (Tynjala, Stenström, & Saarnivaara, 2012). Transitions represent a particular focus of both educators and school reformers because transitioning students often experience significant academic, social, emotional, physical and/or developmental changes that may adversely affect their educational performance. During these transitions, for example, students may move from a familiar school to an unfamiliar school.

The Norwegian education system features three levels: primary school, lower secondary school and upper secondary school. Primary school (ages 6 to 12) and lower secondary school (ages 13 to 16) are compulsory. All students are granted admission (usually to their first choice institution, provided they have achieved the necessary grades) and can move to an upper secondary school (ages 16 to 18) located in the local or nearby community. More than 95% of students enter upper secondary education after completing lower secondary school (Eriksen, 2013). The students enrol in a new school depending on their grades and choice of vocational or general studies programmes.

According to Hegna (2013), students with immigrant parents who are more likely have high ambitions in lower secondary school face a greater risk of experiencing a less supportive learning environment in upper secondary school. In order to provide students with the necessary confidence and motivation following the transition to upper secondary school, the following factors must be considered: increased level of difficulty, new teaching methods, friends, environment and student identity (Hegna, 2013). It is therefore important to understand how students experience the transition phase.

It is worth noting that the Norwegian lower secondary school curriculum does not place a special focus on 'multiethnic'¹ issues. Instead, the concept of intercultural knowledge is central within the educational field. This concept aims to demonstrate that schools need to

¹ The concept of ethnicity is a disputed term. For a discussion of the ethnic categories and identities that are created in school without unwillingly essentialising people through stereotypical discourses, see Eriksen (2013, pp. 24-38).

foster the knowledge necessary for teachers to focus on cooperation with the diverse (multiethnic) students attending today's schools, rather than just focusing on multiethnic knowledge concerning 'the others'. This involves acknowledging and drawing on diverse students' different cultural practices as resources within schools (Bjarnø, Nergård, & Aarsæther, 2013). The subjects of Christianity, religion and philosophies of life, and social science are included in the curriculum in order to ensure diverse perspectives. In upper secondary school, the study programmes have, to some extent at least, the potential to include these topics (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2010). However, the Norwegian Ministry of Education has recently put forth a new *Norwegian Parliament Act no. 28* (2016) with the aim of improving the quality of education from kindergarten through to higher education, with the transitions between different school levels being given particular consideration. The Act addresses the needs of Norway's future society, including new knowledge-based technologies, improved education, ability to change, global orientation and social mobility. These broader policy concerns result in the need to conduct empirical research regarding how diverse students understand school. However, in my work, I rely on the concept of multiethnic students, since many of the participants themselves used this term when they described places such as London, their community, school and their peer groups.

It is important to draw on the experiences of students that address the gap between their worlds and the school world. The ambitions of the current policy discourse, as well as the vision of what school education should look like, might be too abstract (Simola, 2014). It is, therefore, important to adopt a grounded research approach when addressing the demands of a multiethnic society. The school context and sociocultural conditions that students experience can be important for policymakers. Hence, it is necessary to investigate how young people themselves perceive their educational trajectories and future possibilities.

1.4 Aims and research questions

In this thesis, I study multiethnic girls' perceptions of their own positional identities (Holland & Leander, 2004) as learners, as well as their construction of future possibilities. They are followed as learners during the transition between lower and upper secondary school. In Norway, during the final year of lower secondary school, students must choose between vocational or general study programmes. In order to aid students in planning their educational futures, lower secondary school has a focus on the students' involvement in an individual identity development process. Therefore, educational transitions involve personal development that may give rise to tensions because choices concerning the future must be made. Hence, the transition phase offers the possibility to hear the girls' own opinions regarding 'navigating' within the expectations and contexts of home, leisure time and school, which can lead to tensions concerning their gendered future trajectories.

It is important to understand how the girls' reflect on their everyday learning and identity processes within and across their family and social networks, as well as how they construct their future trajectories. How do they experience the possibilities offered by education before and after the transition to a new school level? Which processes are involved in shaping educational futures as seen from young people's perspectives? How do they perceive both themselves as learners and the tensions resulting from different expectations?

Does the transition create tensions in terms of educational choices that lead to reflections about future planning? In this study, my aim is to highlight young girls' experiences and their own voices as learners, as well as their reflections about, engagement with and planning of their future education. I explore how educational transitions present opportunities for change in terms of the girls' self-understanding of their positional identities and future orientations. Here, identity changes inform us how everyday practices relate to both learning contexts and identity formation (Hull & Zacher, 2007). I define learners and their learning broadly, including the social practices in their everyday lives and schooling that have implications for their educational trajectories (Ludvigsen, Lund, Rasmussen, & Säljö, 2011). Hence, the connection between learning and identity informs how learners engage in activities across both informal and formal settings (Barron, 2006).

In order to explain these identity development processes, I consider the way girls understand themselves as learners, as well as how they feel they are understood by others. An important concept in this regard is how the girls position their identities as learners across different contexts (see Chapter 3). By focusing on how the girls' sociocultural norms, identities and expectations that stem from their home, leisure networks and school come into play during educational transitions, one can better understand the choices multiethnic girls make regarding their educational futures. How does school support young multiethnic girls as learners in their identity and future processes so that they experience school as a place where they can build the futures they foresee?

This thesis investigates how young multiethnic learners' everyday practices and social gendered positional identities are related as part of their learning trajectories during the transition from lower to upper secondary school. In order to pursue this aim, I will address two main research questions and three sub-questions:

RQ 1 *How are multiethnic learners' everyday practices and social gendered positional identities related?*

RQ 2 *How are multiethnic learners' educational trajectories in the transition between lower and upper secondary school manifested?*

SQ a) *Which funds of knowledge come into play when girls' develop as learners?*

SQ b) *Which tensions and contradictions are experienced in different learning contexts?*

SQ c) *How do the girls orient themselves with regard to gendered future trajectories?*

As discussed in Chapter 5, the three sub-questions are inter-related. They were part of the research design that was developed in advance of the ethnographic field work. The research questions in the articles are based on the sub-questions presented above, but they have a sharper focus, and they have been adapted to address different empirical themes of the data set and contexts.

In order to answer the research questions, I will analyse young girls' reflections concerning their everyday learning and their identities as learners during educational transitions.

1.5 Researching young people

I have used an ethnographic approach to explore multiethnic girls' understanding of themselves as learners and their educational trajectories during transition stages. The data presented in this thesis are drawn from a large-scale ethnographic project conducted in a multiethnic community, namely the Grorud Valley [Goruddalen] in Oslo, Norway, which has a community perspective.² In my research, I have conducted participant observations in two school classes (one main class, one reference class) during the final year of lower secondary school. Thirteen students (ten girls and three boys) were followed more closely over two years on into upper secondary school in order to compile a rich data set covering their experiences of the transitions. The aim was to show the construction of their future orientations through the interplay of (1) choosing an educational trajectory in 10th grade, (2) the relation between everyday learning and the construction of identities, and (3) the cultural and identity support provided by the school.

The participant observations conducted in the community provided insight into the practices, habits, activities and meaning making of the participants. The interviews and field notes stemming from the participation observations detailed the students' reflections on their everyday learning and identities, as well as their expectations regarding education and the future, in addition to my interpretations. Their family exchange networks across the world, their local or global leisure activities and interests, and the differences between the school levels were also considered.

With regard to methodology, the research design is based on constructing biographic case histories (Thomson, 2009). This 'method-in-practice' is used to analyse how identity changes during contextual and temporal processes in order to study learners' positional identities. I draw on Thomson's (2009) model to organise mid-level data into theme-based case histories so as to identify how learners reflect on the way they position themselves in lower and upper secondary school. My investigation of learners' everyday learning, self-reflections and the constraints that shape their future orientations, shows the significance and creative ways of handling different cultural practices such as ethnicity or a youth lifestyle across different everyday contexts and schooling.

By studying these contexts using these methodologies, the thesis is framed within the broader issues of informal and formal learning, as well as learning identities and agency, and within research on categories such as class, ethnicity and gendered identities in

² Local Literacies and Community Spaces: Investigating Transitions and Transfers in the "Learning Lives" of Groruddalen [The Grorud Valley] (2009–2013). My project was part of the 'Learning Lives' umbrella project led by Professor Ola Erstad, Department of Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Oslo. The primary aim of this community project was to study and theorise the transfer of learning between different contexts and community spaces in order to depict the 'learning lives' of young people living in the Grorud Valley. The larger project consisted of three cohorts, each involving 20 students: cohort one followed children from preschool to 1st grade, cohort two from 10th grade to 1st year upper secondary school, and cohort three from the end of upper secondary school to higher education or work. The study presented here focuses on data derived from cohort two (three boys and ten girls).

educational contexts. My thesis contributes to the interpretation and construction of biographical case histories from ethnographic studies of identity and agency, as well as studies of youth, gender and ethnicity (Eriksen, 2013; Holland & Leander, 2004; Hull & Greeno, 2006; McLeod & Yates, 2006; Nielsen, 1996; Nielsen & Rudberg, 2006; Rysst, 2008; Thomson, 2009; Wortham, 2006).

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is structured in two parts. Part I consists of the introduction and six additional chapters. Following the introduction, in Chapter 2, I will provide a review of the relevant prior research. Here, I will focus on empirical research concerning learning and identities inside and outside of school, as well as studies of youth, gendered identities and ethnicity in education. I will point to trends, challenges, similarities and patterns in both fields. In Chapter 3, I will outline the theoretical approach I have employed in order to address the objectives of the thesis. The methodological means of studying one's self-understanding of one's own position are addressed in Chapter 4. Here, I will describe the research design and methodological considerations of the study, as well as the identity of the researcher in the field. The main findings are discussed in Chapter 5. Finally, in Chapter 6, I will suggest the pedagogical implications of paying attention to students' thoughts concerning their educational trajectories and future possibilities. I will also discuss the limitations of this research and suggest avenues for further research. Part II of the thesis consists of three articles. They appear chronologically according to how I worked on them during the research period, and they are based on theme-based temporal case histories (Thomson, 2009). Presenting the articles in such an order helps to make visible the researcher's development with regards to analytical reflection.

Article I:

Roth, S. (2016). Exploring funds of knowledge during educational transitions: Learning identities, positionings and future trajectories. In Erstad, O., Kumpulainen, K., Mäkitalo, Å., Schrøder, K. C., Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, P., and Jøhannsdottir, T., (Eds.). *Learning Across Contexts in the Knowledge Society*.

RQ: *How does young Norwegian girls' everyday learning across their funds of knowledge networks construct learning identities and positionings that constitute future trajectories?*

The first article is concerned with how family funds of knowledge (i.e. 'ethnicity') shared across global exchange networks are being used as resources and shaping learning identities as well as educational trajectories. It is important to consider how the girls, through both individual and social identity processes, understand and develop learning identities when creating future trajectories.

Article II:

Roth, S. & Erstad, O. (2015). Positional identities in educational transitions: Connecting contemporary and future trajectories among multi-ethnic girls. *Ethnography & Education*.

RQ: *How can learners' positional identities be understood and how do such identities develop during educational transitions from lower secondary to upper secondary school?*

The second article is concerned with how young people change their identities as learners within educational trajectories that are (re)constructed by non-academic and academic factors. It is particularly important to consider how leisure activities function as resources for the girls as learners. The girls were born in Norway to immigrant parents and they experience different expectations that represent an important backdrop to their social and academic identity processes.

Article III:

Roth, S. & Stuedahl, D. (submitted). 'You Norwegians think we Muslims are not free'. Enactment of gendered positional identities during transition stages. *Gender and Education*.

RQ: *How do young girls understand themselves as learners and enact their gendered positional identities when performatively constituting their futures during educational transitions?*

The third article is concerned with how social gendered and performative positional identities develop in the figured worlds of family life and everyday life during educational transitions. It is important to recognise how the girls' experiences of gendered (ethnic/religious) stereotypical narratives across contexts shape their gendered identity processes in school and in their wider educational trajectories.

In the next section, I provide an overview of the advances in sociocultural theoretical research on learning identities over the past few decades. I also present research on youth, gender and ethnicity in education. I build on this research to further develop my argument regarding the need to address and understand how young people themselves perceive their educational trajectories and future possibilities.

2 Review of Relevant Research

In order to achieve the objectives of the thesis, I reviewed international, Nordic and Norwegian educational research on learning across contexts and learning identities. I searched two databases³ using relevant keywords (see below) and identified a number of books and articles relevant to my work. In addition, I made use of background material obtained from (1) the Learning Lives project and (2) the PhD courses taught at the University of Oslo (Norway) and the University of Bristol⁴ (UK). The main keywords and topics used in my search were ‘sociocultural theory’, ‘local- or place-based projects’, ‘positional identity’, ‘youth and gender’, ‘educational narrative studies’, ‘community studies’, ‘out-of-school learning’, ‘lifelong learning’, ‘school and educational system reform’, and ‘cultures of youth and childhood’. Many of the keywords resulted in numerous hits, while for example ‘positional identity’ gave 38 hits in the Eric database. The results were screened with respect to Nordic projects and research alongside key international work. The identified studies of relevance to my research touch in different ways upon how learning and identity processes impact on how young people understand themselves and their positions as learners. The focus is on how young people perceive their educational trajectories and future possibilities during the transition between lower and upper secondary school. I will, therefore, elaborate on the reviewed studies of learning trajectories in terms of social practices, possibilities and constraints, and how learners understand their own positional identities. I will not engage in a review of concepts such as ethnicity, multiethnicity, cosmopolitanism or cultural diversity, since my main focus is on everyday cultural practices (Gonzales et al., 2005) and how identity changes (categories) in practice (Holland et al., 1998).

2.1 Studies beyond the school

I will begin this section by addressing the empirical research and reviewing the identified studies in order to describe from a sociocultural perspective the development of learning inside and outside of school. It is important to recognise the transfer between informal and formal learning and the construction of learning identities and, subsequently, its importance for learners’ educational trajectories.

According to Erstad (2010), one of the most established traditions exploring the relationship between learning in and out of school stems from the field of literacy studies. It is derived from early work on sociocultural theory in education such as the study by Scribner and Cole (1973). They claim that the school’s knowledge base, value system and prevailing learning situation are all in conflict with the culture that students’ bring into educational institutions. Instead, everyday experiences should be used in school so that classes are more interesting

³ Institute for Educational Sciences (ERIC) - <http://eric.ed.gov>
American Psychological Association (PsycINFO) - <https://www.apa.org>

⁴ Research stay from October 2012 – April 2013

(Scribner & Cole, 1973). These ideas are in line with Paulo Freire's (1970) literacy theories; the students' learning outcomes will not improve without a willingness to change the organised educational institution. Classic studies such as that conducted by Heath (1983) on oral and written language across contexts support Scribner and Cole's essential insight that we cannot equate learning with schooling. This literacy and learning axis allows us to broaden the notion of language so as to incorporate all forms of semiotic and multimodal communication (Erstad, 2010). A key construct in this field is the notion of learner identity. Although identity remains a disputed term (Côté & Levine, 2002), recent interest in the idea of 'learning lives' offers a means of exploring how the formation of pedagogic relationships around the self expands the focus on literacy practices, which enables us to consider learning and identity transfer between contexts. The main current scholarly use of the phrase 'learning lives' stems from Biesta, Field, Goodson, Hodkinson and McLeod's (2003–2008) project, *Learning lives: Learning, identity and agency in the life course*, where it refers to the coherence between learning, identity and agency in the individual as framed by a biographical approach to studying adults' learning trajectories over the course of their life (Biesta, Field, Goodson, Hodkinson, & McLeod, 2008).

Lemke (2008) promotes the co-construction of a 'learner-identity' by the self and the context as a way of moving forward sociocultural insights into literacy and learning. Erstad, Gilje, Sefton-Green and Vasbø (2009) draw on the term 'learning lives' to approach learning within and across 'educational' contexts by exploring the (re)positioning of learner identities across these 'locations'. Their study shows the importance of controlling the learner identity in relation to the exercise of literacy. It also highlights how literacy practices are embedded within the social relations that exist between individuals in and across contexts. The learners' narratives about themselves become resources that are then mobilised within the learning process. This approach connects formal and informal learning (Erstad, Gilje, Sefton-Green, & Vasbø, 2009).

Challenging the conception of 'context' is important because it informs us in an analytical sense of the way we interpret and understand the interrelationships that exist between people, their learning identities, and the circumstances they are involved in at different times and in different places and activities. Edwards, Biesta and Thorpe (2009) relate the discussion on context to the broader discourse on lifelong learning. The context, they argue, is an outcome of activity or rather it is itself a set of practices – the focus should therefore be on contextualising, as related to networking, rather than on context. Practices are not bounded by context, since they instead emerge relationally and have the potential to be realised in a range of situations based on participation in multiple settings (Edwards, Biesta, & Thorpe, 2009). Thus, in my work, contextualising and networking involve different types of social interaction, learning activities and contents. A biographical approach can hence be used to study the coherence between young learners' identity and the agency processes involved in their learning trajectories (cf. Biesta et al., 2008). Their everyday learning, constraints and possibilities can reveal information about how different contexts influence students' experiences. It is important to recognise how practices are constituted as resources

when young people position themselves as learners, as well as in their gendered social positions across locations when constituting educational trajectories.

Moje and Luke (2009) review the recent approach to identity found in literacy studies and seek to understand how a particular view of identity shapes how researchers perceive literacy, as well as how the view of literacy adopted by a researcher shapes meanings about identity. Their argument is that there exist five theories of identity, which they refer to as metaphors: identity as difference, sense of self/subjectivity, mind or consciousness, narrative and position. Moje and Luke (2009) claim that, traditionally, in literacy studies, the concept of identity as position explains how subjectivities and identities are produced when people are called to particular positions. They also explore commonplace episodes in order to clarify interactions and discourses that involve people (cf. Harré, 2013). From the perspective of literacy in the field of educational sciences, the differences that can be seen in the identity theories have implications for the way one thinks about how literacy impacts on identity and how identity impacts on literacy, with it being important to note that literacy and identity as social practices that ‘breathe life into each other’. However, it is not sufficient to state that the identities produced through social interactions are multiple and shifting. Literacy and identity studies should entail the identification of theories that increase our understanding of how literacy and identity develop in relation to literacy practices (Moje & Luke, 2009).

I follow the approach of Moje and Luke (2009) in using a theory (see Chapter 3) that enables me to study how activity and identity as position develop in practice (in my work across figured worlds). Holland and Leander (2004) claim that identity as position (i.e. positional identities) can also be linked to self-understanding. In my work, I link positional identities to the sense of self, to the way people understand their own positions in their everyday figured worlds (Holland & Leander, 2004).

Leander (2002) and Wortham (2006) both focus on the relationship between social practice and learners’ identity. By approaching students over time, one can show the development of the learning identity and the implications for engagement in academic learning. Leander’s (2002) biographical case study of Latanya’ follows an urban African-American student through the embodied space of classroom interactions with artefacts that led to her being ‘identified’ as ‘ghetto’ by her peers. In order to explain the intertwined relationship between learning and social identification, Wortham (2006), in his study of ‘learning identity’, follows a few students inside-of-school over the course of one (academic) year. His case studies show how historic social patterns have an impact on the position of the learning identity. For example, where an African-American student went from being considered a ‘good student’ to becoming a ‘disruptive outcast’. As suggested by Packer and Goicochea (2000), this can be described as ontological learning, the process through which individuals create and transform themselves as they interact with peers, sign systems and the world. In his elaborations on the work of Packer and Goicochea, Wortham (2006) discusses how “even academic learning is ‘ontological’ and not ‘epistemological’ because it involves changes in social being and changes in knowing. This process does not respect boundaries

between the academic and the non-academic because academic learning changes who we are, and because knowledge is an integral part of the general process of ontological change” (p. 25).

Vågan (2001) expands the approach of Wortham by emphasising how the educational context shapes the learner over time. He draws on the work of Wortham (2006), as well as that by Holland, Lachicotte Jr., Skinner and Cain (1998) on interactional identity positions in figured worlds, in a case study of Norwegian medical students’ accounts of their learning experiences during the early years of medical school. The study demonstrates their self-perceptions in two contexts of clinical training, as well as how different worlds and identities are formed in educational contexts. By focusing on the socially constructed and culturally figured nature of language, tools and interactions in learning contexts, the study shows how students develop an understanding of themselves in different educational contexts.

In this thesis, I draw on the work of Leander (2002), Wortham (2006) and Vågan (2011) to explain the students’ ontological learning in different contexts, that is, the process through which individuals create and transform themselves as they interact with peers, family, sign systems and the world. I use biographic case studies to describe the learning trajectories and how learners understand their own social positional identities, as well as how they reflect on their development during educational transitions. I do not separate the academic and the non-academic contexts, since both involve changes in social being and in knowing (cf. Wortham, 2006).

By building on sociocultural approaches to learning has, recent educational research identified media culture as an arena that challenges the school (Arnseth & Säljö, 2007; Livingstone, 2002). Barron (2006) and Ito et al. (2009) study how young people engage with digital media by following ‘learners’ across contexts, arguing for a personal networked learning ecology. Barron (2006) uses a case study to show how young people pursue self-initiated learning opportunities inside and outside of school once they become interested in a topic. Ito et al. (2009) describe genres of participation such as the ‘friendship-driven’ and ‘interest-driven’ categories. These genres of participation are seen as intertwined with young people’s practices, learning and identity formation within media ecologies (Ito et al., 2009). I will focus on self-initiated and networked principles, as well as how students’ understand their positional identities as learners across their learning trajectories, for example, through adopting a Korean hip-hop lifestyle, see Roth and Erstad (2015).

The above review is in accordance with the findings of Leander, Phillips and Taylor (2010), who claim that the classroom discourse is dominant in terms of how we think about education and school. The research has also focused on how the curriculum sets the boundaries for learning. Indeed, classroom research describes only a small section of the contexts where learning takes place. Being a learner does not stop when school finishes (Erstad, 2010). Therefore, sociocultural learning theory is relevant to explaining how young people acquire knowledge by participating in cultural activities (Erstad, 2013).

In this thesis, I consider the learning and identity transfer between contexts that young people participate in, that is, the way they understand both themselves and their positional identities as learners and their future orientations. This approach enables me to describe individual learning trajectories by following the learners over time. In other words, the coherence between learning, identity and agency of the individual in social (learning) contexts seen against constraints, possibilities and sociocultural norms. In order to show what can be gained from a study of learners and their self-understanding of their different positional identities, as well as the tensions that may occur in their everyday and educational settings, I will now discuss studies that point to the class, gender and ethnic perspectives within the family and other social settings, as well as the way the learning identity is positioned across contexts. My focus is, in particular, on how young learners perceive their educational trajectories and their future possibilities.

2.2 Identity in education

Hull and Greeno (2006) view identity and agency as the central focus of research on activity in informal learning. They claim that after-school programmes, with their alternative learning focus, can represent important spaces for identity formation, while school learning is often not optimised. In order to bring identity and agency into classroom research, they use the concept of positional identity (Holland et al., 1998) and refer to the ways in which individuals are expected to participate in the 'practices of a community' or figured worlds. Hull and Greeno (2006) show how new forms of participation are possible during informal activities that allow people to internalise a new discourse and begin to refashion their working identities. They also describe how acquired skills can flourish when they are applied meaningfully in out-of-school settings. The relation to other people in figured worlds provides examples of the types of people that participants can become, for instance, 'rap artist' or 'lover of books'. They claim that people learn to successfully participate in out-of-school social practices that require, for example, symbolic system capabilities because these practices support the development of identities and, in particular, identities in practice. If school learning practices could facilitate the same development of students' identities, the success of many more students could be fostered (Hull & Greeno, 2006).

My thesis expands this relationship to approach learning trajectories across figured worlds, as well as the way these practices and identities come into play in school when young girls' as learners construct their futures. It is essential to consider how individual identity and social interaction interweave with the students as learners and their future trajectories. To achieve this perspective, I apply the concept of 'positional identities' in line with the ethnographic approach of Dorothy Holland and the way she links it to 'figured worlds' (Holland et al., 1998). It is essential to recognise the way identities are formed in practice in relation to the socially organised and historically situated spheres of activity within which practices are embedded. These formations shape the figured worlds that function as imaginings of the students' understanding of themselves as learners and their different positional identities. From this perspective, one develops different aspects of the relation between society and subjectivity. One does not attend to the psychodynamic processes that may lead to the identification of the self within the structural inscriptions of gender,

ethnicity and so forth. Rather, one builds on reflection and self-understandings as the outcomes of living in the cultural forms practiced in one's social life. In this context, gender or ethnicity function as practices that may continue or change. I focus on the self-understandings of learners' positional identities within and across everyday figured worlds.

The following empirical studies show that students' gendered social relational interactions influence the way they position themselves as learners, as well as how such interactions may be connected to family background, youth culture and popularity in school. They also describe how categorisations found in society such as gender or ethnicity relate to learner identities and well-being in school.

Nielsen (2009) follows one class over a ten-year period through primary and lower secondary school in Norway. The class was visited for one week each year for participant observations and interviews with the students. Nielsen (2009) approaches how gender emerges in school; up until the 5th grade, the interaction is divided into gender, while from the 6th grade onwards, relational flirting becomes more prominent. In lower secondary school, the girls are one step ahead of the boys when it comes to flirting. The popular students develop a clear youth style, and such students take part in the flirting. Hence, one can see that a gendered flirting student position exists in school – the flirting students do not, however, do as well in school as the other students. Nielsen (2009) finds that gender, ethnicity and social background function as differentiating categories. However, the students do not have to be ethnic Norwegians in order to succeed: [...] 'as long as he or she has a middle class background and that the parents let the children take part in the Norwegian majority same-age culture the children can succeed' (Nielsen, 2009, p. 297). In a study of girls in upper secondary school, Ambjörnsson (2004) investigates how ideas about the feminine are linked to gendered categorisations in society. She observes that 'kicker girls', that is, girls attending a vocational school who do not particularly care about education and are noisy in class, are called 'whores'. These girls belong to a sub-class. The idea of a 'whore' informs us on gender, sexuality, ethnicity and class. 'Whore' functions as one of the strongest stigmas a girl can experience, although it is also a position some girls can adopt: 'kicker' girls can enter this position by calling themselves or friends 'whores' as a way of dealing with the situation. As such, they become less vulnerable and they obtain a status in a relation to boys. Their social class cannot be escaped, but they have found a way of dealing with it (Ambjörnsson, 2004).

The abovementioned studies indicate that gendered identities in social interactions relate to power relations between students, youth cultures, ethnicity, class and learner positions in school. Hence, there is a link between social contexts and gendered identities outside of school and the labelling, categorisation and positions of the learning identity performed in school. In this thesis, I am interested in understanding how learning trajectories, constraints and possibilities relate to learners' development during transitions when they constitute future trajectories.

2.3 Youth studies in education

Youth studies focus on investigating the youth dimensions of generalised phenomenon or experiences in order to explore broader questions relating to the nature of social change. Important aspects of youth studies include policy, processes of social and economic change, social justice, class, 'race', gender and segregation. Sociologically, it provides a focus for the discussion of structure and agency, as well as illustrating how social class, ethnicity and gender are negotiated. For psychologists, the study of adolescence explores identity development (Furlong, 2013). The anthropological and ethnographic studies reviewed below focus on how the transfer of knowledge and identities from sociocultural practices across contexts, for example, the family, friends and school, influence the way students position themselves as learners in school. Of central importance in this regard are gendered and ethnic practices, labelling, categorisation and learner positioning in school.

In her thesis, *"I want to be me. I want to be cool": An anthropological study of Norwegian preteen girls in the light of a presumed "disappearance" of childhood*, Rysst (2008) followed preteen girls (and some boys) in a classroom setting and in their everyday lives over a period of three years. The primary schools were located in two contrasting field sites in Oslo: Østli, which is a socially, economically and culturally heterogeneous suburb, and Vestdal district, which is ranked the best in Oslo on all welfare indexes and which features expensive housing that excludes low-income immigrants (Rysst, 2008). The method used in the study was anthropological, with a focus on how the tweens experience themselves and their peers as gendered persons across the contexts of home, school and leisure time. Of particular importance was the way the girls' 'wider milieu' and forms of commercialism such as magazines, films, fashion and pop culture manifested cultural ideas, gender constructions and social relationships.

Rysst (2008) used open-ended interview questions and field notes based on 'hanging around' in different contexts. Participant observations within the classroom were used to obtain an overview of the social landscape and get to know the tweens in an indirect manner by, for example, looking at the amount of attention they receive from the other children. The empirical events was analysed using an understanding of the term 'context', that is, the social context described the children's everyday activities and forms of play around themes such as family, consumption, material culture, peer relationships, past and present childhood. Rysst (2008) spent most of her time in the Østli School. Vestli, a mono-ethnic district, functioned as a reference school for the multiethnic Østli district. This thesis draws on the findings from the Østli School, since that district was multiethnic. The research focus was on whether the tweens' everyday lives were sexualised and, if so, whether the sexualisation of childhood should be seen in relation to how these processes reveal themselves in young girls' gendered practices. In general, Rysst (2008) found that the girls construct cool femininities without experiencing sexual symbolism in fashion in the same manner as older people. This generation gap may lead to a discrepancy in how bodily representation is understood as cool or sexy. Rysst (2008) also identified a pattern of gendered student positions inside the school that were only provided to female students; they were not available to male students.

Indeed, both gender construction and the subject positions were influenced by family history, negotiations within the family and participation in paid leisure activities. Different social categories and positions inspire the use of material items in the construction of femininities and the presentation of self. The categories represent cultural ideas for doing gender (cf. Butler, 1990; 1993) and they were activated when the parents and children negotiated about clothes and appearance. Gender models are drawn from family, peers and wider society (popular culture), as well as paid activities (e.g. football). The children differentiated themselves and others as white/brown, popular/not popular, and cool/not cool. Being perceived as 'cool' seemed to be a necessary element in the understanding of popularity. A 'berte' was a self-conscious female babe, while 'nerds' were conscientious about school work. The 'soss' adopted a snobbish style and used brand-name clothes (class distinction). 'Wannabes' were those who wanted to belong to a group but who failed to join that group because they did not correctly understand the relevant codes. The 'normal' category is positioned in the context of family and when engaging in leisure activities. The tweens can adopt one position with respect to their teacher ('normal'), while adopting another position (swapping) when talking to school mates ('cool'). The tweens' social interactions emerged at the intersection of friendship, gender, class and sociocultural background, and they were visible in the family, school and leisure activities. The gender divide occupied a strong position in the spatial organisation. As soon as the tweens were free to group with who they chose, they assembled in same-sex groups.

Despite the pressure from the fashion industry aimed at making preteens dress older than their years, the young girls primarily wanted to look teenage-like and 'cool' rather than 'sexy'. Some Muslim girls⁵ in the class could not wear revealing clothes. These girls adopt multiple subject positions in social contexts, for example, trying to be Norwegian in school whilst being Iraqi in the family context, which may shape conflicts. Clothing had more influence than behaviour on how the presentation of the self was understood by peers – it activated ethnicity in interactions with tweens of Norwegian origin. Skin colour did this to a much lesser extent, as indicated by the way ethnic minority children at Østli who wear Western clothes had more friends of Norwegian origin. All the girls positioned themselves in some way in relation to the 'cool' and popular students. Rysst (2008) found that the girls had multiple subject positions and expectations across contexts, which she indicates to be a source of tension. These are also important aspects in my research. However, in my work, I focus on learners' self-understanding of their positional identities. Integral to my work is the participation observation methodology described by Rysst (2008), that is, to hang around and follow students in order to capture everyday practices and positional identity processes across contexts and over time. The indicated connection between family practices and labelling and a suitable student position is also relevant, as is the strategic swapping between positions as a way of handling social relations with fellow students and teachers.

In an ethnographic study, *Young Norwegians, belonging and becoming in a multi-ethnic high school* [upper secondary school], conducted in Oslo, Norway, Eriksen (2013) studied

⁵ Rysst (2008) uses the term 'Muslim girls' to describe those who follow Islamic religious rules.

one group of 'general studies' students throughout one semester. The school used a modern pedagogic approach that demanded self-discipline. It had low entry requirements and 70–80% of the students came from minority backgrounds (16 different countries). Interviews and fieldwork constituted the data corpus, and discourse analysis was combined with psychosocial approaches. The objective was to investigate the relation between social changes in gender relations and how such changes become visible in school. This was studied by investigating school and family in relation to each other, and keeping a temporal aspect when considering how gender and ethnicity may change over time. Eriksen (2013) explores the female students' identity development, learning and belonging at the crossroads between a Norwegian equality ideal and changing ethnic relations. The study foregrounds ethnicity rather than gender because ethnicity is related to the students 'emotional investment', which was important in the design of the study.

The study showed the students' social interaction and the feeling of belonging when ethnic minority students were in the majority in one particular class in a 'Norwegian' upper secondary school. Ethnic boundaries were visible from day one, between the ethnic Norwegian students and the different ethnic minority groups. The students created a local meaning of ethnicity as either 'Norwegian' or 'foreigner'. To identify with or be identified as 'Norwegian' or a 'foreigner' was, mostly, related to skin colour; however, a girl with a Norwegian working class background was defined as a 'foreigner', while some youths with backgrounds from West Africa, South Asia or the Balkans were defined as 'Norwegian'. This categorisation related to attitudes regarding school work, noisiness and educational aspirations, as well as attitudes towards girls' sexuality. Attitudes regarding school work and sexuality impacted on the ascribed 'sense of belonging', and they were of importance for the individual and the social interactions in the classroom. Indeed, the class was led by a couple of noisy Muslim girls, which disturbed the teaching. Eriksen (2013) labels this as 'oppositional femininity', which is interpreted as stemming from the school's lack of limits. Being a noisy girl can also be associated with friendship and loyalty; they perceive themselves as being in it together. This cancels out the possibility of being a good student. The noisiness becomes a divide between cool 'foreigners' who do less well in school and the quiet and successful Norwegians. Eriksen (2013) found that ethnic student positions divided the students into categories linked to their achievements in school.

The divide between groups of students, and between most students and the teachers, became clear when the topic was sexuality. The new 'girl identity' became a paradox; the girls challenged the school's and their own limits by being loud and reducing the available positions with respect to sexuality (gender). They used sexual phrases to harass others, while finding it opportune to leave the classroom if asked to read a text about female sexuality. Sexuality was related to religion, while noisiness was connected to ethnicity. Strict moral guidelines concerning sexuality became a way for these Muslim girls to position themselves as 'better than' the 'Norwegians' and the Norwegian school system. According to Eriksen (2013), they did not feel included and their behaviour could be a way of shifting the focus away from poor results. The Muslim sexual morals seemed to give them the upper hand; they used the word 'whore' to feel culturally superior. There was no

difference between Muslim boys and girls in this respect. The majority of the girls from a minority background had a relationship with their parents that was based on respect. With a few exceptions, there was an agreement that they would not have sex before marriage and that they would start wearing a hijab during upper secondary school. Only some of the girls experienced threats at home as a way of controlling their lives.

In this school, the noisy 'Muslim' girls felt morally superior to the 'Norwegians'. At the same time, they felt less valued by Norwegian society as a home for Norwegians and not for 'foreigners', as well as less valued in school. Many of the minority students experienced and shared a temporary feeling of local belonging and ignored the national elements in which they did not feel at home. Instead, they resorted to a transnational level. They embraced a kind of 'overlapping' ethnicity that was not connected to having a background from a specific country, but rather a 'compromise'. Being noisy and intentionally using foul language was a way of creating unity. They were not a homogeneous group, but they acted like one. Many of the ethnic Norwegians felt marginalised. Even though the minority students wanted overall unity, many shared a feeling of being inferior in Norwegian society and the school system, which they regarded as a home for 'Norwegians', not for 'foreigners' (Eriksen, 2013).

As such, Eriksen's (2013) study shows how power and unity relations expressed as labels such as 'Norwegians' and 'foreigners' are in turn related to the way the students position themselves as learners in the Norwegian school context. Therefore, one can see how the family and school contexts are interrelated and construct learners' identities, which may constitute educational trajectories. Where Eriksen (2013) focused her analyses on ethnicity, I will elaborate on her description of 'oppositional femininity' and gendered positional identities, markers and labelling. The following reviewed youth studies discuss the connections between learning and identity development across contexts, as well as conceptions of gendered futures, which were fundamental for my thesis.

2.4 Identity and educational trajectories

Nielsen and Rudberg's (2006) study, *Modern girls. Three generations of women on their way*, provides insight into the modernisation of Norwegian society and how women have contributed to shaping new gendered practices and modern lifestyles. They interviewed 22 grandmothers (born in 1920), their daughters (born in 1945) and their grandchildren (born in 1970). Their work is relevant because it shows how ethnic Norwegian women have transgressed older generations' gendered practices as a result of a 'push' for change within the family. The study shows how becoming an adult is achieved through work and marriage for the older generation. Meanwhile, the old moral duty weakens; to stay at home and help the family seems to be of less importance. Instead, a new individualism takes shape and women seek to leave the local community and receive education. In particular, mothers from the older generation today support their daughters in seeking education and becoming economically independent. This motivation spread to all parts of society in a way that did not exist for the older generation. The reasons for this can be found in the increasing national wealth and the social democratic education policies implemented in Norway during the 1950s. Some working class parents encouraged their daughters to read novels,

something that likely inspired the daughters to seek education. Hence, modernity can be traced through the creation of phases of the gender order: (1) a phase of gender polarisation, (2) a phase characterised by a battle between the sexes, and (3) the emergence of female individualisation. Female individualisation occurs at a later stage than male individualisation – the consequences of this change become visible on a societal stage when women start to work outside the home (Nielsen & Rudberg, 2006).

Nielsen and Rudberg (1994) draw on their empirical study of three generations of women when distinguishing between (1) a gender identity such as ‘the gender I have – I am a woman and therefore I act in this way’, (2) gender subjectivity such as ‘the gender I am – I am me, and therefore I act in this way’ as laid down in childhood and unconsciously influenced by the gendered subjectivity of the mother and (3) cultural and social possibilities offered by society at any time. Furthermore, at the point of adolescence, there is always a lack of ‘fit’ between these dimensions, which is different for different generations and creates tensions. For girls in the 1940s and 1950s, there was tension between a modern gender identity and restricted cultural possibilities; for girls in the 1960s and 1970s, between a modernised gender identity and an old fashioned gendered subjectivity; and for girls in the 1980s and 1990s, between gendered subjectivity and cultural and social possibilities. The modern girl may not acknowledge gender as a limitation; she wants and believes she can do anything. However, Nielsen and Rudberg (1994) claim that gender might still be governed by structural processes. According to Thomson (2009), they have developed an understanding of changing gender relations as well as capturing the factors that interact in order to constrain change. The generational study shows that new gendered practices may be learned within and across the home setting and wider society, and they relate to expectations. This identity process of change is linked to education and future work outside the home – from duty to new kinds of individualisation. In this thesis, I am interested in understanding the connections between everyday practices and learners’ understanding of their positional identities, as well as their conceptions of educational trajectories and future possibilities. The influences on their identity processes are central.

McLeod and Yates’ (2006) educational study, *Making modern lives*, examines how gendered, classed and ‘raced’ patterns of inequality are reproduced, transformed or resisted by students during secondary school and through their career choices. They interviewed 26 school children who attended four Australian schools that differed in terms of class and ethnic composition. Their longitudinal quantitative research interweaves ‘older’ sociological theories (1970s) and ‘newer’ theories of power (1990s) and the discursive construction of the subject and knowledge relations. Throughout the study, the authors explore their reflective interpretation of the students’ narration of their lives. The main methodological concern is how to empirically explore how identities are shaped in complex, powerful, contradictory, discursive and social contexts. The study is longitudinal and recursive, and it follows personal biographies’ interactions with schooling (Brunskell-Evans, 2010; McLeod & Yates, 2006).

I recursively explore the longitudinal development of learners' self-understanding in their narration of their everyday practices, social positional identities and future orientations. I draw on McLeod and Yates' (2006) method to determine how identities are shaped in contradictory, discursive and social contexts, which in my work are analysed as learners' social positional identities as developed in educational trajectories and figured worlds in transitions between school levels. The ethnic or religious identities are only relevant when the girls themselves highlight these perspectives of their lives and use them as resources.

McLeod and Yates (2006) interviewed young people regularly during their ten-year study about their plans, their daydreams and their hopes for the future. It was important to see the biographical subject within his or her pattern of decision making, that is, how dreams and emotional longings about becoming a particular person are linked to decisions about the future. The analysis combines a focus on the structural and social context of the pathways with attention being paid to the dreams and plans that animate decisions and longings about the future and a sense of who they want to become. According to McLeod and Yates (2006), well-meaning programmes of career counselling delivered during the senior years fail to engage with the deeper sense of self or 'who I want to be' that leads young people to identify with certain careers (McLeod & Yates, 2006, pp. 103-104). Central to McLeod and Yates' (2006) study is how the sense of self and subjectivity are shaped, the way the school children draw on their family and biography when encountering learning in school. When examining self-formation, McLeod and Yates (2006) do so through positing youth as a distinct period of embodied emotional and psychological change during the human life course. They explore how this stage of embodied subjectivity is lived through engagement between family formation and public institution, and they conclude that families, schools and young people forge new identities relationally (Brunskell-Evans, 2010).

The data are analysed by combining the following: Foucault's concepts of discourse, 'technologies of the self' and 'governmentality'; Bourdieu's theories of economic and cultural capital, 'habitus', 'field' and disposition'; Giddens' thesis on the structuration of agency and 'biographical projects and reflexivity'; psychoanalytically informed understandings of desire; and Butlerian notions of performativity that rely on Foucault's concept of subjectivity for a feminist reading of gender identity. My perspective on the shaping of individuals as gendered subjects draws, therefore, on a broad understanding of gender as a social relation system as well as a subjective and biographical one. McLeod and Yates (2006) use the concept of 'unacknowledged gender' (cf. Nielsen, 1996) to gain information about the gendered 'being in the world'. Unacknowledged gender refers to the way gender is present as a background when one reflects on what kind of desires one has (McLeod & Yates, 2006). Brunskell-Evans (2010) claims that the framework attends to the historical and political context of educational practice and lived identity where young people are understood to be constructed and instrumental in constructing themselves.

In the analysis, my focus on the aspects of the relation between society (structures) and identity (subjectivity) shows how the girls reflect on their different gendered positional identities. The way they experience their identities across global family exchange networks

and everyday figured worlds is central (Holland et al., 1998). I draw on Holland et al.'s (1998) notion of cultural practices and key events during transitions that can initiate reflections and changes in gendered positional identities. I do not place an emphasis on adolescence as a critical period of embodied identity (Chapter 4). My analytical focus is an analogue to McLeod and Yates' (2006) perspectives on gender, class and ethnicity.

McLeod and Yates (2006) uncover how state policy, as constructed within the larger context of Western neo-liberalism and globalisation, and the structures of gender, class and 'race' are enacted at the local site of school culture, as well as their effects on future plans, political values and sense of self. By presenting single case narratives, the study shows how, for example, a 'good student' is constructed discursively and socially, and how such an identity takes different forms in different schools. The case of Nassar, an ethnic minority boy, illustrates issues about national cultures and changes, about gender and ethnicity, and about what is valued in and what is produced by different school settings. Nassar struggled to understand how to become a 'good student' – it influenced him negatively as a learner. In this context, the students were not self-conscious about gender as a component of school practices. However, the majority of the young people agreed that girls did better work in school. Boys frequently gave a negative slant to girls' practices at school. The 'good' student in this sense may therefore have a feminine persona. For the boys, the 'good student' was not a persona to which they aspired (McLeod & Yates, 2006, pp. 63-64).

According to McLeod and Yates (2006), young women today are often represented as the bearers of academic excellence, the overachievers at school, and the beneficiaries of feminism, who can 'have it all'. In media discourses, for example, girls are collectively facing futures that break with many conventional expectations. One criticism of such beliefs is that success and de-traditionalised opportunities are structurally differentiated and not equally available to all girls. This discourse may be based on an unproblematic adherence to those norms and meanings. The association of femininity with success raises questions regarding how young women negotiate the imperatives to be successful and to be their *own* person. Instead of looking at gender differences, McLeod and Yates (2006) begin from the biographical perspective and explore the interweaving of dreams, destinations and social constructions to illuminate how social changes, popular and academic discourses concerning gender futures, individualisation, and becoming your own person are negotiated within a specific social class and school. Nicky's case shows her ambivalence in relation to discourses of conventional and modern womanhood and motherhood and what it means to be a successful woman. By telling one story, her experiences are used as evidence of something more general – how and why one case concerning herself and her future matters – when compared to other narratives in the study and other discourses about gender relations across family and school. As such, her story is representative of many middle class young women and thus it may be generalised (McLeod & Yates, 2006). Hence, the feminist post-structuralism introduced in *Making modern lives* has entered the field of educational research (Brunskell-Evans, 2010).

Drawing on the work of McLeod and Yates (2006), I focus on gendered social relational practices and identities. Important in my work is to understand how girls at a micro level collectively face meso- or macro-level-based narratives about the future, for example, family meso-expectations or macro ideals such as becoming independent or adhering to gendered stereotypes. In a multiethnic society, different gendered identities and expectations coexist. They raise questions about how young women negotiate the constraints and possibilities that arise (Lemke, 2012) in their learning trajectories and, consequently, how they understand themselves and their future orientations. My analysis begins with biographical data to explore how identities develop through practices over time, that is, the interweaving of past identities, present lives and social interactions across contexts, as well as how future orientations coexist and shape learners' self-understandings. The learners' deeper sense of 'who I am or want to become' or how they are seen by 'others' is essential.

Thomson's (2009) investigation of how gender identities are created within late modern culture and the constraints that shape future possibilities is particularly relevant. In *The Inventing Adulthood* study, 100 young people were interviewed (recursively) over ten years during their transition to adulthood. By presenting the way in which four of these young people's lives unfold over time, one can see how a singular life is forged from a range of possible destinies, including the significance of intergenerational obligations, emotional attachments and processes of social mobility. In her study, Thomson (2009) develops a complex analytical approach, a 'method-in-practice', to transform long-term data based on recursive interviews from temporal processes into theme-based biographical and social interaction narratives, that is, case histories. The method makes visible the tensions experienced by young people between successive accounts, intentions and practices. By following individuals or groups over time, the researcher may gain insight into phenomena that change over time (the sequential dimension may be, for example, related to education). In addition, to approach the relationship between agency, structure and serendipity ('destiny'), the interplay between different factors in the determination of outcomes (Elliott, Holland, & Thomson, 2007) needs to be addressed. Longitudinal studies provide insight into the human methodology whereby risks and opportunities are mediated, for example, 'the reflexive project' (cf. Giddens, 1991) or 'the temporality of action' (cf. Adkins, 2005). A focus on change, Thomson (2009) argues, may be related to a paradigm shift that enables an analysis which privileges processual and temporal themes – the interplay between risk and resilience in the context of biography (cf. Thomson & Holland, 2003) – that is, the relationship between personal and social change (Thomson, 2009).

To investigate the subject in process using a longitudinal approach, Thomson (2009) develops her strategy by describing how existing research has struggled with this element. McLeod (2000) uses the formation of habitus over time, while Nielsen (1996) distinguishes between gender identity and subjectivity. Another strategy could be to combine the concept of 'reflexive project of self' (Giddens, 1991) and 'the project of action' (Reiter, 2003) (see Thomson 2009, pp. 29-44). Archer (2007) conceptualises the reflexive subject through the lens of critical realism, outlining a temporal sequence of discernment, deliberation and dedication underpinned by the dynamic of agency and structure. Thomson (2009)

approaches the subject in process by drawing on the notion of the reflexive project of self, although she elaborates on this with ideas on the situatedness of individual projects within families, generations and wider social processes, as taken from Nielsen (1996) and Archer (2007) in order to capture psychological depth.

Using this 'method in practice', Thomson (2009) highlights the creative ways in which young people handle the changing demands of personal relationships, schooling, work and play. Revealing unfolded accounts provides a perspective on the relationship between personal agency, family history and social structure where gendered continuity and change interact. Questions of gender are central: what it means to move from being a boy/girl to a man/woman. One example is Sherleen, a young woman of Afro-Caribbean heritage living in inner-city London, where a series of theme-based narratives of family, leisure and education represents the tools through which the self is constructed. Sherleen's change of gendered practices is contradictory and becomes apparent over time. The most striking feature is the similarity in the gender projects between the generations; both her mother and her grandmother are important to her. We see a young woman who expects to work and whose identity is constructed in and through notions of work, discipline and application; doing well demands that she adopts a strategy and navigates through distractions (Thomson, 2009).

In her study, Thomson (2009) focuses on individuals and their case histories as a route towards generalisation by pointing to the interplay between personal, social and historical processes. According to Thomson (2009), the cases are typical in that they reflect a pattern within the broader data, while they are unusual in that the choice of particular lives has been guided by the quality of the data, as well as the personal response to it. Each of the young lives in the study is unique, although they are patterned in systematic ways by location, common values, and comparable resources and shared experiences. Thomson (2009) claims that youth cultures can be understood as generational units reflecting shared social locations and values. Together they constitute a heterogeneous historical generation faced with challenges that arise from the material and social conditions that define their era. This approach focuses on depth rather than breadth, and it gives rise to a generative understanding of social change in which agency, timing and 'destinies' interact.

In my thesis, I use Thomson's (2009) 'method-in-practice' to analyse two years' worth of longitudinal data in order to construct theme-based biographic and social interaction narratives – case histories. Drawing on this model, when interpreting everyday possibilities and tensions, I am able to analyse learners' understanding of their social gendered positional identities and their future. Biographic case studies allow for the analysis of how the individual expresses the social context. They also allow me to generalise the themes related by the students, that is, the forms of self-understanding that identify their mediated actions and resonate in the narratives of other young persons included in my study. In my work, the transition phase represents the possibility to interpret identity during a phase where decisions about the future have to be made, which makes identity processes more visible. This method shows how students' educational trajectories shape gendered opportunities where family, provider and occupational future orientations hold uncertainty regarding whether to stay in or leave the community (Thomson 2009).

2.5 Summary

This thesis builds on the sociocultural research that informs us how studies beyond the classroom can highlight the way connections between informal and formal learning can create, change, motivate and challenge how young people may (re)position themselves as learners (Barron, 2006; Biesta et al., 2008; Erstad, 2013; Erstad et al., 2009; Heath, 1983; Leander, 2002; Leander et al., 2010; Lemke, 2008; Livingstone, 2002; Packer & Goicoechea, 2000; Scribner & Cole, 1973; Vågan, 2011; Wortham, 2006). The reviewed study concerning identity in education shows that the way students position themselves as learners in figured worlds may also be an important resource for learning inside of school (Hull & Greeno, 2006). The studies on youth, subjectivity, social gendered and ethnic identities, categorisation and labelling in education show how everyday practices influence the way students position themselves as learners in school. Non-academic contexts such as everyday practices, leisure activities, fashion and youth culture construct learning identities. Hence, these factors also influence learners' relation to teachers, as well as their engagement and well-being inside of school (Ambjörnsson, 2004; Eriksen, 2013; Nielsen, 2009; Nielsen & Rudberg, 2006; Rysst, 2008). These studies mainly rely on a combination of interviews and participant observations inside school (Ambjörnsson, 2004; Eriksen, 2013; Hull & Greeno, 2006; Nielsen, 2009). Rysst (2008) uses these methods within and outside of school. The reviewed studies on identity (subjectivity) and shaping gendered futures show how ethnic Norwegian girls learn to prioritise education and public work based on knowledge gained from their mothers, which, in turn, shapes new gendered identities (Nielsen & Rudberg, 2006). The key youth studies conducted by McLeod and Yates (2007) and Thomson (2009) show how modern societies provide knowledge and identities across the contexts of local and global culture. Here, patterns of change or continuity regarding gendered futures can be shaped by, for example, 'feminism ideals', family practices and generational relationships, friendships and school culture. This complex situation creates tensions that influence learners' self-understanding and educational trajectories. Furthermore, the religious and ethnic identities relate to funds of knowledge (see Chapter 3).

My work elaborates on these reviewed studies. I focus on identity transfer between contexts in learning trajectories (Ludvigsen et al., 2011). I want to understand how young people understand and negotiate their educational positions in a multiethnic and complex society where identity relies on different practices and social contexts. The constraints and possibilities that influence the girls' future orientations are particularly important. My research design applies ethnographic mixed methods, namely midlevel participant observations and formal and open-ended recursive interviews in different contexts over a two-year period. The data analysis draws on Thomson's (2009) theme-based biographic case study method. This method shows how learning and identity transfer between everyday life and school takes place. It can inform us about the learners' reflections on their social gendered relational positions in the context of constructing future trajectories. This relates to the kind of people they want to be and become in the future (McLeod & Yates, 2006). Based on the reviewed studies, a sociocultural approach is appropriate.

3 Theoretical Framings: How to Interpret Identity?

In order to address the research questions that inform this thesis, a sociocultural approach (Vygotsky, 1978) is employed that focuses on the development of the individual and the contribution made to this development by society. The underlying theory employed by this perspective is based on the way adults, peers and cultural narratives and values influence learning. According to this perspective, children are born with basic biological constraints on their minds. Each culture provides what Vygotsky (1978) refers to as tools of intellectual adaptation. These tools allow children to use their basic mental abilities in a way that is adaptive to the culture in which they live (Vygotsky, 1978). When interpreting the biographical case narratives (Thomson, 2009) with respect to learning from a sociocultural perspective, I draw on the concept of mediated actions (Wertsch, 1998). James Wertsch's (1998) work is rooted in and expands Vygotsky's theory. I will therefore not engage in a review of this work, which should be understood as foundational. Wertsch (1998) illuminates Vygotsky's research on mediated action, that is, the ways in which human and mental action such as mediational means, reasoning and communication are linked to the cultural, institutional and historical settings. Mediated actions occur, recursively, within and across sociocultural contexts. The concept of mediated action is a theoretical starting point; it emphasises how humans play an active role in using and transforming cultural tools and their associated meaning systems. In this thesis, mediated actions can illuminate the learners' social gendered and academic positional identities in their learning trajectories, that is, both individual lived experience and sociocultural norms (Lemke, 2012).

My research is informed by the approach of Dorothy Holland and her colleagues William Lachicotte, Debra Skinner and Carole Cain (1998), which draws on theoretical contributions made by Vygotsky, Bakhtin and Bourdieu. In their book, *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*, they introduce the concept of figured worlds, which is part of their larger sociocultural theory of self and identity. Holland et al.'s (1998) take on the concept of identity is anthropological and it is based on a cultural study perspective of an adaptation of the socio-genic concepts of personhood that is rooted in the American school of social psychology and the work of G.H Mead. It is important to recognise the way humans instinctually coordinate their actions and trace the career of this coordination through people's engagement in social life. Self-reflection begins to develop in the child as a product of a social history. The person acquires the ability to adopt the standpoint of others as she learns to objectify herself by the qualities of her performance (behaviour) in and commitment to social positions. Such objectifications become the cores of one's proactive identities. These selves – 'identities in practice' – form in relation to both the histories and socially and historically situated spheres of activity within which practices are embedded. This is conceptualised as figured worlds. I use this theory to analyse learners' understandings of their positional identities, as well as the practices embedded in figured worlds, that is, their learning and identity processes (Holland et al., 1998).

This thesis also builds on another central anthropological approach, this time informed by Vygotskian and sociocultural perspectives, as presented in Norma Gonzales, Luis C. Moll and Cathy Amanti's (2005) book, *Funds of Knowledge, Theorizing Practices in households, Communities, and Classrooms*. They use the concept of funds of knowledge but recognise the 'messiness of ordinary life' in order to theorise everyday practices. These practices are at times emergent, counterintuitive and sometimes opaque (cloudy). Yet, these practices are formed and transformed within sociocultural circumstances and through discourse and the ways of knowing that populate our streams of talk. According to this perspective, ordinary people's everyday activities represent the basis for the theorising of practices. In these stories, the social analysis emerges from its organic roots. The theory views the practices of language and action as constructing knowledge. The approach facilitates a systematic way of representing families and communities in terms of the resources they possess and how those resources can be harnessed for classroom teaching (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005).

Combining the above frameworks provides a tool for analysing students' narratives as derived from individual and social contexts. The analysis tool allows the investigation of how young learners' educational expectations and the changes associated with young women's future orientations were mediated. I observe the intersecting practices, funds of knowledge from global exchange networks, and identities in everyday lives and school, as well as the constraints and possibilities. By using biographic cases, I interpret individuals' everyday practices, positional identities, future orientations and how gendered structures are understood through students' mediated actions.

The levels of analysis consist of individual narratives and practices (micro), collective narratives and interactions in cultural worlds (meso), and larger social 'discourses' or sociocultural worlds (macro). The micro level refers to the unique context of biographical identity as a self-understanding of one's own position, while the meso level refers to narratives and social interactions following the figured worlds of the school and the everyday and family networks. The macro level refers to narratives such as Nordic collective equality ideals or stereotypes.

3.1 Everyday cultural practices

The concept of funds of knowledge was first used to examine everyday practices within Mexican immigrant areas of the United States and it focuses attention on culture as 'lived practices' (Hogg, 2011). The idea behind this analytical concept is to create a relationship with the messiness of ordinary life (Willis, 1977) in order to help teachers to identify and students to draw on everyday knowledge in school. The goal is to avoid labelling at risk students simply because of their minority background or low income. The premise is that they are as capable of academic success as any other students. The concept builds methodologically and theoretically on participatory ethnographic research on classroom dynamics and home life. Vygotsky's cultural-historical psychology and the concept of mediation are central (Gonzales et al., 2005).

3.1.1 Culture and mediation

Central to Vygotsky's (1978) theory is the question of how culture provides human beings with tools and other resources to mediate their thinking. From birth one is socialised by others into cultural practices, including ways of using language(s) and artefacts that become the 'tools for thinking' through which people interact with their social worlds. Therefore, human thinking has a sociocultural character from the very beginning, since all human actions involve mediation through such objects, symbols and practices. The cultural tools and practices, which may be stable or otherwise change across generations, are implicated in how humans think and develop. Vygotsky's (1978) theory is central on three analytical levels:

- 1) Funds of knowledge are generated through the history of families and then communicated to others through the activities that constitute household life, as well as through the formation of social networks central to a household's functioning in its environment. A household's cultural resources (tool kit) are needed to maintain (mediate) well-being.
- 2) Funds of knowledge can become cultural resources for teachers, since they document their existence and bring them to bear on their work. To do so, teachers need to acquire the tools necessary to conduct research that comes to mediate their thinking about these matters.
- 3) This is combined with an anthropological perspective that understands classrooms as cultural settings in order to change classroom practice.

Hence, teachers can transport experiences from their research into their classroom practice. This involves re-contextualising the knowledge obtained through research and the methods of inquiry that led to that knowledge (Gonzales et al., 2005).

According to this perspective, and of particular importance to my work, is the fact that the theorising of practice involves both households and classrooms. As the practices of the households are theorised, educators can arrive at a deeper understanding of their students' lives. According to Gonzales et al. (2005), this view differs from the perspective of Bourdieu (1977), who theorised contradiction and nuances. From Gonzales et al.'s (2005) perspective, the theorising of practices is seen as understanding the contexts of students' experiences, that is, the coherence and linear connections that teachers rely on in classroom practices. In this way, funds of knowledge play a role as a mediating cultural artefact (Vygotsky, 1978) on the teachers' comprehension of social life within the household. The concept serves as a conceptual organiser for theoretically reducing the complexity of people's everyday experiences without losing sight of the rich and dynamic totality of their lives. The analytical approach begins with theoretical research questions (about households' activities and labour). The data result from the translation of the information compiled into theoretically informed narratives. The slice of life presented results in the generalisation of a description of the teacher's/researcher's attitude towards the families and the sources of the data (Gonzalez et al., 2005).

3.1.2 Culture as lived experience

The theoretical groundwork for the funds of knowledge perspective discusses the concept of culture.⁶ It is important to recognise how one can reach a deeper appreciation of the conditions of lived experience, in my everyday work practices, by moving away from stereotypical notions of culture. By introducing the concept of ‘funds of knowledge’, Gonzales et al. (2005) question how educators can account for diversity if the central concept of culture is both criticised and marginalised. This can be achieved by viewing culture as a set of inquiries when considering the hybridity of funds of knowledge. Gonzales et al. (2005) claim that to lay out the implications of how one’s own theory will affect real students is the researcher’s responsibility. They argue that anthropology can bring theoretical and methodological insights into education by looking beyond the school itself in order to understand the local meanings and impact of schooling (Gonzales et al., 2005).

Gonzales et al.’s (2005) alternative perspective on students’ lives and backgrounds replaces the concept of culture. Their focus is on fostering respectful relationships between schools and communities. They hence question many of the assumptions of shared culture, and they chose instead to focus on culture as ‘practice’. This processual approach engages households in a dialogue in order to counter deficit models. Processual approaches to culture highlight the processes of everyday life, in the form of daily activities, as a frame of

⁶ Gonzales et al. (2005) begin their review with the evolutionist Franz Boas. Boas argued that human behaviour could be conditioned by the historical circumstances in which it arises. Boas changed the relation of ‘culture’ to man’s evolutionary development as related to tradition and the processes of human reasoning. This concept of culture has been criticised for making race invisible. Anthropology came to be dominated (1940–1980) by a view of culture that emphasised a holistic perspective assuming that culture provided particular rules for behaviour that everyone in a culture abided by. Keesing (1974) divided this view into culture as cognitive knowledge, structural development of the mind, and symbolic systems. From the perspective of Geertz (1973), studying culture involves understanding shared codes of meaning, that is, a semiotic interpretation of ongoing practices. The way culture was to be transferred into the educational arena was challenging due to the existence of a diverse population. Gonzales et al. (2005) claim that the view of culture as a holistic configuration of traits and values that shape rules for behaviour is seen as the root cause of educational failure. Thus, social theory legitimised the development of ‘cultural deficit’ models of schooling. The educational disparities of minoritised children gave way to a discourse that centred on educators ‘knowing the culture’ of their students and hence covering the underlying issues of power relations between different populations. Ogbu (1978) and Willis (1977) instead viewed the concept of culture as a way for students to exercise cultural agency – not always to their educational benefit. Anthropologists began to critically review whether the idea of culture could describe the diversity inherent within societies. Processual approaches began to take shape that stress case history methods and showing how ideas, events and institutions interact and change through time. Culture became viewed as dynamic, interactional, emergent and hybrid (cf. Bhabha, 1994), with hybridity tied to economic globalisation. Students draw from an intercultural and hybrid knowledge base, appropriating multiple cultural systems. Within postmodern perspectives, Foucault’s idea of knowledge as connected to power, textuality and ‘discourse’/‘discursive field’ came to dominate discussions regarding the cultural. The next direction, the positivistic assumption that an objective understanding of the social world is possible, created a climate in which texts were examined for the way in which they constructed knowledge claims. Hence, explorations of discourse that have the capacity to construct our realities make a scientific study of culture impossible (Gonzales et al., 2005, pp. 30-40).

reference. These activities are a manifestation of the historically accumulated funds of knowledge that households possess. The practices are viewed as dynamic, emergent and interactional. It is important to grasp a time-oriented perspective on continuity and change – a multiplicity of cultural claims (cf. Moore, 1987). In an attempt to discover household knowledge on its own terms (not group knowledge), parents responded with personal knowledge in a way that heightened their historical consciousness (Gonzales et al., 2005). In my work, questioning the households' practices during the home interviews allowed the parents and the participants to talk about their historical family knowledge in a Norwegian context. For example, in an interview with Maria's mother, she said that her daughter had asked if she had to marry an Eritrean in the future. In another case, Amirtha said her father was old fashioned when it came to discussing Sikh family practices – her father responded that they probably would have to let some of their Sikh practices go. Therefore, I do not pay attention to ethnic and religious categories, rather I focus on practices.

Gonzales et al. (2005) focus on what households do and how they think about what they do in order to avoid the expectations of group norms and static ideas of how people view and behave in the world. The term 'culture' may presume coherence within groups, which may not actually exist. The interculturality of households – how they draw on cultural systems and use such systems as strategic resources – is in focus. To conceptualise difference without using the term 'culture', the emphasis is on the practices and the strategies that households have developed over time, which shape the lived experience. The funds of knowledge are historically contingent and emergent within relations of power, although they are not necessarily equally distributed. In my work, I have investigated the practices and the strategies that families employ to secure their future. I have particularly focused on how the individual understands and adapts these practices.

The funds of knowledge that are transferred from the older generation to the younger generation can represent an interplay of ethnic, gendered, religious and different national practices. For example, how ethnic, gendered and religious practices are transferred from parents to the next generation. For instance, how Anna (Hindu, parents born in Sri Lanka) learned that she as a young girl should postpone marriage and value her religious, ethnic and gendered practices such as focusing on care giving and respect, which represents a change in practice when compared to her mother. She is encouraged to concentrate on education as a means of shaping a safe future and contributing economically to the family network.

As such, the concept of funds of knowledge relates to the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), which can be used to understand how social categories such as gender, ethnicity, class, religion, generation and nationality relate to intersecting social differentiating factors. The concept can explain how the categories influence individuals, social practices and institutional factors, and cultural understanding in the context of power and marginalisation. However, since the funds of knowledge concept looks for resources, these aspects occur more naturally when they function as resources in young people's educational trajectories.

In sum, the funds of knowledge approach facilitates a means of representing communities in terms of the resources they possess and how they can harness those resources for classroom teaching. Within families' funds of knowledge, one can find reciprocal networks of cultural know-how created in order to solve everyday challenges. Changing life situations bring forth knowledge possessed by individuals within a network. Funds of knowledge work as a resource inside the network that serves as a support mechanism and can therefore be applied safely (Gonzales et al., 2005).

Prior studies of family funds of knowledge have not generally addressed students' own 'funds'. They may create their own social worlds and funds of knowledge independent of the social life of the adults surrounding them. For example, rural parents can accumulate skills in agriculture, although their children are not able to cultivate plants. Agriculture has not been incorporated into the children's practices and therefore may not be meaningful to them. Instead, the children are 'participant observers' of the exchange of services and symbolic capital, which are part of the households' and the social networks' functioning (Subero, Vujasinović, & Esteban-Guitart, 2016).

Contemporary scholars who have worked on extensions to the funds of knowledge tradition have typically looked to the students' own worlds (peer groups, social networks and popular culture). Some of these studies have found that students' funds of knowledge include sources of knowledge that are applied within households and other communities, as well as brought to school. Some scholars who follow the funds of knowledge approach have focused on students' interests as a source of their funds of knowledge and school practice (cf. Andrews & Yee, 2006; Hedges, 2015; Subero, Vila, & Esteban-Guitart, 2015). According to this perspective, interests emanate from lived experiences in families, as well as through the mediation of friends in sociocultural practices such as internets (Subero et al., 2016). Other studies focus on how funds of knowledge direct attention towards people's intellectual side, their values and the cognitive resources that enable participation and learning. The premise here is that people are competent and their life experiences give them knowledge (Hogg, 2011; Kovalainen & Kumpulainen, 2007; Rajala, 2007).

According to Subero et al. (2016), the literature does not emphasise how funds of knowledge mediate the formation of identity, nor does it show how an identity tool (used to define a person) can illustrate funds of knowledge as inscribed into self-conception and self-expression (cf. Moisés Esteban-Guitart, 2012; Moisés Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014b). As such, Subero et al. (2016) expand the approach by using identity as a way to further emphasise the fact that different modalities of learning exist. This extension illustrates how a combined funds of knowledge and identity approach may allow (even for under-represented groups) prior knowledge and learning experiences to be connected with new academic knowledge and formal learning experiences (Chapters 5 and 6).

In this thesis, the concept of funds of knowledge is used to capture the knowledge that family networks pass on to (younger) members, including the importance of family practices continuing in a new country, the meaning of education and future responsibility. Funds of knowledge can hence inform us of the resources used when students' choose

particular educational trajectories. The unit of analysis is the way the funds of knowledge become personalised for the younger person, as well as how she (or he) reflects and draw on the funds of knowledge in their identity processes and future orientation. The design of my study focuses on the individual student and their cultural contexts rather than on a family or teacher viewpoint. I explore how funds of knowledge come into play (or not) during educational transitions and, hence, how funds of knowledge may mediate and transform learners' identities across contexts and over time.

I combine the funds of knowledge perspective with theories of how identities form in practice (Holland et al., 1998). This is done in order to analyse how young people's everyday practices can be used as resources within their learning trajectories, as well as when constructing their learner identities and future orientations. This framework helps me to understand learners' understanding of their own identity as position (i.e. subjectivity) and how they understand the connections to their past histories, present life and future identities. In article I, I analyse the way global family networks provide multiethnic funds. These funds create tensions but they are also used as resources in the positioning of learning identities when constituting educational trajectories. In articles II and III, the focus shifts to students' cultural practices within and across figured worlds.

3.2 Analysing identity in practice

Identity is central to social theories of learning, and it invokes and relates theories from various streams of psychology, social psychology, anthropology, sociology and cultural studies (Holland et al., 1998; Lemke, 2012). According to Gee (2000), identity has to do with the ways of participating in different sorts of social groups. Lemke (2012) argues that people participate in certain ways and enact multifaceted identities depending of the context of their participation. Identities can be enacted in different contexts such as 'daughter' at home and 'student' in school. This also means that people participate as learners in certain ways and enact different learner identities, depending on the context of their participation (Silseth, 2013). Hence, we can see that the connection between learning and identity has been addressed differently according to the sociocultural approach (see also Chapter 2). In this sense, a range of learning identities and positional identities can be found in people's everyday lives and in school (Gee, 2000).

According to Holland et al. (1998), the perspective of 'identity in practice' has cleared a space for new understandings of persons and their identities. Cultural studies' and feminist theory's issues with identity allow us to see persons taking form within the flow of historically, socially, culturally and materially shaped lives (hence, a more sociogenic approach to personhood has developed). Holland et al. (1998) are inspired by cultural studies, in addition to the socio-historical school of psychology (Vygotsky) and the work of critical theorist and semiotician Bakhtin (see also Chapter 2).

The work of both Bakhtin and Vygotsky affords a means by which 'cultural studies of the person' avoid permanently trapping persons in either 'cultural logics' or 'subject positions'. Hence, one can understand a vision of a person and society that is true to the parts played by cultural forms, power and social positions, as well as the process of identification. This

serves to respect humans as social and cultural persons who are therefore bounded, as well as recognising the processes whereby human collectives and individuals move themselves – led by hope, dreams or desperation – from one set of socially and culturally formed subjectivities to another. This work differs from anthropological and cultural studies, which are instead concerned with the cultural identities that form in relation to structural features of society such as gender and ethnicity (Holland et al., 1998).

Hence, in Holland et al.'s (1998) identity analysis, the premise is that identities are lived in and through activity and thus must be conceptualised as they develop in social practice. Identities are viewed as psycho-historical formations that develop over a person's lifetime; they are important bases from which people create new activities, worlds and ways of being. Humans can use their capacity for self-objectification and their ability to relate to and liberate themselves from dominance, by means of the social relations of power, by using these forces for self-direction. As such, Holland et al.'s (1998) theory relates to poststructuralist discourses that focus on hegemonic relationships locating the asymmetries of power (Gonzales et al., 2005). They proceed with identity transformation in practice within the limits of structural constraints. In the view of Urrieta Jr. (2007a), Holland et al.'s framework is useful in the field of education because it contains collective imaginings such as gender and ethnicity and it will therefore avoid cultural determinism in cultural research. Urrieta Jr. (2007b) also points out that since the theory is not operationalised, it has been criticised for being applied inconsistently in research. I will, therefore, describe the way I analyse how learners' understand their culturally and socially formed positional identities, as developed during educational transitions.

3.2.1 Identity in cultural worlds

Holland et al. (1998) claim that cultural studies of the person share an opposition to a general 'Western' notion of identity that takes as its prototype a unified subject (see also Hall, 1996). Today's cultural studies differ from the work of psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson, who focused on the tasks any person must accomplish in order to resolve the psychodynamic dilemmas of maturation and thus establish a consistent identity (Erikson, 1968). Contemporary cultural studies rely on feminist and psychodynamic approaches that recognise the social forces that render an integrated subject an unlikely occurrence. Holland et al. (1998), who do not favour the idea of a unified subject, view persons as being conceived from compositions of many, often contradictory, self-understandings and identities spread over the material and social environment, of which few are durable.

Holland et al.'s (1998) focus is on cultural forms and socially distributed power, although they do not attend to the psychodynamic processes that may lead to the identification of the self within the structural inscriptions of gender, ethnicity and so on. Rather, they build on notions of inner activity that cast the development of self-understandings as an outcome of living, that is, in the cultural forms of practices in social life. Bakhtin and Vygotsky provide a means of theorising 'history-in-person' as a way to conceive of identities as always forming (not primarily through psychodynamics). Holland et al. (1998) build on and move beyond the culturalist and the constructivist approaches in order to understand people's actions and possibilities. Behaviour is mediated by one's senses of self (identity). The

person is driven by an internalised cultural logic *and* by social situation. An empirical example from Nepal involving castes shows how both culturalist (logic) and constructivist (social) perspectives can be used in the interpretation of behaviour. Lower castes were usually prohibited from entering the houses of those of higher caste (Holland et al., 1998, pp. 9-15). The researcher went downstairs to bring a low caste interviewee up: Gyanumaya scaled the outside of the house, since she had found a way to get to the balcony without going through the house, which she knew belonged to a person from a higher caste. First, the culturalist perspective shows how the cultural significance of caste and pollution learned during childhood was a force inside Gyanumaya that directed her behaviour (cultural meaning systems). Second, the constructivist perspective shows how her behaviour was an index of the social significance of a caste identity imposed upon her. Social forces determined that the discourse of caste would be salient in that particular situation.

By drawing on the work of Bourdieu (1977), Holland et al. (1998) show that the culturalist and the constructivist perspectives cannot be collapsed into each other; context-sensitive rules are impossible because situations always arise that do not fit within the rules. These perspectives can be separated, but not in action, since people may hold more than one perspective at the same time (cf. Bakhtin, 1981). Humans, due to their dialogical nature, have a tendency to encompass different views at the same time (i.e. tension), regardless of their logical compatibility. The culturalist and constructivist positions are therefore put together in a dialogical frame (Holland et al., 1998).

Another parameter of their dialogic position that also combines the culturalist and constructivist perspective brings into focus the potential of both the behaviour and the artefacts that are produced through interaction, as well as the roles these symbols play in changing or preserving identity and subjectivity. In the case of Gyanumaya, attention is paid to the improvisational nature of the behaviour rather than describing 'the culture' (which differs from an anthropological focus). It is important to recognise the improvisation, what was produced – both the culture and the subject position – and the practical artefact of the moment (the verbal, gestural and material productions) that emerged from the situation. These artefacts might be taken up and later, perhaps, they might become culture. Thus, people, individually and collectively, are both the products of culture and critical appropriators of cultural artefacts that we and others produce (Holland et al., 1998).

Cultural production and heuristic development are also important processes when detecting the change of identities. Improvisations may occur when the past, brought to the present as habitus (cf. Bourdieu, 1977), meets with a certain combination of circumstances and conditions for which we have no set response. The improvisations are the openings by which change comes about from generation to generation. Hence, improvisation from a cultural base and in response to the subject positions offered *in situ*, is, when taken up as symbol, the potential beginning of a changed subjectivity and identity (cf. Aretxaga, 1993). Such productions are heuristic means of guiding and encouraging people's own and others' behaviour. As a consequence, there is a continual process of heuristic development. Individuals and groups are always (re)forming themselves as persons and collectives through cultural materials created in both the present and the past. In this process of

heuristic development, culture and subject position are joined in the production of cultural resources that are then subjectively taken up. However, humans are not free to develop whatever subjectivity they wish or to do whatever strikes them at a given moment. “One’s history in person is the sediment from past experiences upon which one improvises; using the cultural resources available, in response to the subject positions afforded one in the present” (Holland et al., 1998, p. 18).

In the articles, I analyse the learners’ self-understanding of the opposing positional identities afforded to them in their everyday lives and in school. Rather than investigating improvisation, I look into how the students reflect on the situation at hand. As such, I consider how the learners, in their identity processes, use funds of knowledge or cultural resources from figured worlds to understand themselves and change their own position (cf. Holland & Leander, 2004).

According to Eriksen (2013), in order to explain how adolescence is integral to young participants’ identity processes, Erikson’s earlier (Erikson, 1968, 1994) theory may be relevant. However, this theory of the stages of development⁷ has been criticised for lacking empirical evidence (Tetzchner, as cited in Eriksen, 2013). Erikson (1968, 1994) specifies how identity processes happen during youth, as well as the way young people’s particular kind of identity search and need for belonging corresponds to social changes and crises. The formation of identity is continually on-going, although it reaches formative crises in adolescence (Erikson, 1994). The existential questions are: Who am I? What will I be? There is a delay – a moratorium – created in the wait for adult responsibility. During this delay, young people are able to explore their possibilities, which empower them to experiment with roles (or identities) and find a set of values. The moratorium is the status of a person who has not yet made a commitment to a particular value system, but who is still in a phase of experimentation. Erikson (1994) has been criticised for presenting the possibilities to explore the moratorium as universal, since they are not equally distributed. The phase of experimentation during youth also differs among persons in terms of gender, ethnicity and class, as well as through history (cf. Nielsen & Rudberg, 1994).

Holland et al. (1998) do not pay attention to specific time intervals such as adolescence, but rather they focus on how past histories, the present and future images-of-self create tensions and improvisations in everyday lives. For example, having to choose an upper secondary school programme may trigger questions like “Who am I? What will I be?” and it might possibly create tensions about the future. As such, Holland et al.’s (1998) theory enables me to approach young people and their particularities during transitions. The three articles analyse the girls’ personal experiences of being learners, as well as how their identities develop when making decisions about the future that constitute educational trajectories. It is important to recognise how they experience possibilities and constraints when making

⁷ Erikson’s (1968, 1994) psychosocial theory of identity development identifies eight stages through which a developing human should pass from infancy to late adulthood. The stage theory characterises an individual advancing through the stages of life as a function of negotiating his or her biological and sociocultural forces. Each stage is characterised by a psychosocial crisis between those two conflicting forces. If an individual does indeed successfully reconcile the forces, he or she emerges from the stage with the corresponding virtue.

decisions about the future while transitioning to a new school level. Article III has, when compared to the other articles, a more nuanced focus on the differences between the levels of schooling.

3.2.2 *Understanding positional identities in figured worlds*

Traditionally, in ethnographic research, positioning theory has offered a conceptual framework with which to explore episodes of everyday life in order to uncover the interactions and discourses that people are involved in (Harré, 2013). Within this perspective, the term ‘positioning’ is used as an alternative to the idea of personhood and to the concept of role. This theory views identity and the self as discursively produced during the course of communication. Social discourses make available a range of positions, that is, a set of categories that people identify with, as well as their meanings. Positioning can thus be seen as the conceptualisation of ‘doing identities’ through talk (Andreouli, 2010). Positioning has also been linked to concepts such as literacy and identity. According to Moje and Luke (2009), ‘identity-as-position’ explains how identities are produced as a result of the ways people are cast into or called to particular identity positions.

According to Holland et al.’s (1998) perspective, positional identities are understood as dynamic entities that are part of the social interactions that take place between people within different contexts. The argument here is that individuals inhabit many incoherent self-understandings and changeable identities, both positional and figured, which are embedded in specific social contexts, that is, ‘figured worlds’. Figured worlds are “socially produced, culturally constituted activities” (Holland et al., 1998, pp. 40-41) wherein people come to produce (perform) new self-understandings (identities), both conceptually (cognitively), materially (artefacts) and procedurally (they inform participants’ outlooks). Identity is not bound by prescribed categories such as class, ‘race’, gender or ethnicity, rather it is socially produced *in situ* (Holland et al., 1998, pp. 52-53). Similarly, Urrieta Jr. (2007a) specifies that figured worlds are “socially organized and performed [;] they are dependent on social interaction and people’s inter-subjectivity for perpetuation. In them, people ‘figure’ how to relate to one another over time and across different time/place/space contexts” (p. 109). The influences of figured worlds are the foundation for the contexts of the production of personal or social identities, that is, negotiations of positionality, space of authoring and world making (Urrieta Jr., 2007a).

Therefore, within figured worlds, people ‘figure who they are’ and ‘produce personal and social identities’ through the negotiation of their ‘positional identities’. Positional identities refer to the positions ‘offered’ to people in figured worlds, for example, being a ‘noisy’ or a ‘quiet’ student in the figured world of school. Positional identity is an analytically separable counterpart to figuration. When positioned, people engage less in self-making, since the identities are instead being accepted, rejected and negotiated (Urrieta Jr., 2007a). People can also adopt a new position as part of an active process (Holland et al., 1998). However, positional identities can reveal how social interactions contribute to the formation of people as positions and sites of identity, that is, to their own understanding of themselves (Holland & Leander, 2004).

To clarify the positional aspects of identity, Holland et al. (1998) provide an empirical example of a young girl from Nepal (Shanta). She was in the field where her older brother was ploughing. Playfully, Shanta touched the plough. Immediately, she was told that it was a sin for a girl to touch a plough. Shanta learned that she, as a girl, was restricted from acts that her brothers could perform. Others treated her actions as claims to social positions and, on account of gender, she was denied. Hence, positional identities have to do with the day-to-day interactional and relational structures of the lived world. A person's apprehension of his/her social position depends on the others present, as well as on access to spaces and activities. Figurative identities are concerned with markers/signs that evoke storylines among common characters, while positional identities are concerned with acts that constitute relations of hierarchy, distance or affiliation. Figured worlds have their own valued qualities ('symbolic capital') such as 'honour'. Positional identities in figured worlds have to do with the assessment of a valued symbolic capital. The symbolic capital influences one's entitlement to the attention or support of others (Holland et al., 1998).

In my work, I use the concept of 'positional identities' within and across 'figured worlds' to analyse how learners objectify and understand themselves and their own positions. Here, I analyse the interplay between the figured identities (objectification) and positional identities (offered, rejected or taken). To analyse this link, I focus on the self-understanding of one's own position. This enables the analysis of how understanding one's own positions creates tensions due to the constraints and expectations found in everyday lives and in school. From this perspective, I investigate how learners form their identities as they engage in practices in an ongoing process that involves scripted social 'roles' (identities) and individual activities in their learning trajectories. These identities are subject to ongoing construction and hence they relate to learning that can change an identity. My work informs us of how the learners' understanding and formation of their self takes place during social interaction. The way they understand social gendered and academic positional identities reflects the processes that take place across figured worlds. Here, the impact on their self-understanding as learners and their future orientation is essential. How do young people reflect on their educational trajectories and future possibilities?

Article I has a particular focus on the learning identities and positional identities (described as positioning) that are used as an active process in which the subject takes part and pushes forward (mediated action). In article II, the focus is on the learners' social, gendered and academic positional identities. Here, too, the focus is on the way they position themselves when constituting gendered futures, although there is an emphasis on changes in identities. Article III focuses on gendered stereotypical positional identities across figured worlds. Of particular importance is the way learners' performative enactments develop and function as a response to experienced positions in their educational trajectories and transitions. In this regard, I will now present the theoretical perspectives that are important to my work on gender as a category and a social position.

3.2.3 *Gender as a category and a social position*

Eriksen (2013) claims that the social aspects of gender as a category are of great importance for young people (Nielsen & Rudberg, 1989). The argument is that young people behave as caricatures of the ‘feminine’ and the ‘masculine’ (cf. Erikson, 1968). The formation of these caricatures depends on the social environment that the young people are part of. Of particular importance is how young people form femininity and masculinity in an interplay with the environment (Eriksen, 2013). Lemke (2012) introduces the concept of ‘multifaceted identities’, which describe how people can be more feminine or masculine when seen against stereotypical gendered identities, contexts and environments. People may claim an affiliation with different cultures and institutions, as well as playing different roles. As such, identity development is multi-faceted and it is based on what we see as ‘normal’ or ‘abnormal’. Identity can be characterised by social categories that substitute multi-dimensional enactment. However, gender as identity is a social category that is never only ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’. Instead, we may be more stereotypically feminine or masculine in some respects. There exists a cultural pressure to conform to stereotypes. Individuals also combine aspects of identities even though a particular culture announces one ‘natural identity’. We may be more ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ depending on the context, to code-shift our identity performances and to acquire portions of cultural stereotypes. People perform according to the essence of cultural categories. We may have similarities and differences similar to some of the ideal types, while we may be outliers in relation to others. From this arises the contradiction between our ‘subjective’ identities – who we are to ourselves – and our ‘project’ identities – who we wish to be to others. Lemke (2012) argues that the hybridity⁸ of identity should be replaced with the concept of multiplicity, since identity is specific to contexts.

I follow the approach of Lemke (2012) in terms of the idea of multiplicity and I look for different positional identities and how they relate to contexts. My focus is on learners’ understandings of their own social gendered and academic positional identity; how they reflect on stereotypical narratives such as ‘not being free as a female Muslim’ (see, for example, Ekin in article III) depending on the contexts. In the analysis, rather than focusing on masculine and feminine boundaries, I look into Ekin’s performative response to her experiences of gendered stereotypical positions in order to understand and explain her self-understanding and her gendered view on future development.

In Holland et al.’s (1998) framework, too, social categories can have meaning across figured worlds. These categories are associated with gender, class, race and ethnicity, and they separate those who are routinely privileged from those who are not. In addition, cross-cutting markers tend to become stereotypically associated with these social categories. As an example, Holland et al. (1998) refer to gendered studies conducted in the United States that have found that women use tag questions and deferential forms more often than men

⁸ In more recent postcolonial research, multicultural youth cultures are seen as a hybrid of different cultural elements. The term hybrid, in this context, stems from literary theorist Bhabha’s work. With this term, he suggests that the celebratory premise of postcolonial society is that cultures and subjects meet and become cultural hybrids (Bhabha & Comaroff, 2002).

(cf. Cameron, McAlinden, & O'Leary, 1988; Lakoff, 1973; O'Barr & Atkins, 1980). These stereotypical associations between a marker (sign) and a category (gender) are the practical part and cultural parcel (plot) of the reproduction of social division, and of the categories (gender) that are its elements. Therefore, markers across figured worlds can become stereotypically associated with gender as a social category. In my work, these markers describe the 'gendered' positions, for example, how a 'bindi' can signal stereotypical positions such as suppression or fear of an 'unequal marriage' (see article III). The privileged access associated with gender may or may not have been taken up and made hegemonic in a particular figured world. As shown in article III, being 'quiet' has different meanings across different figured worlds. Indeed, the styles of indicating one's relative social position cannot be separated from a figured world of moral meaning, since being verbally active may be a sign of a high position in the figured world of school, or as a sign of a low position in the family (Holland et al., 1998).

In article III, the analyses focus on the stereotypical associations between the marker and the category of gender, as well as how they are linked to the gendered positional identities across figured worlds. Central are the girls' reflections on markers such as 'one should not talk too much' and their performative enactment (cf. Butler) in different social worlds such as family and school. Article III also focuses on how the gendered markers relate to learners' performative positions and how they cut across the girls' different figured worlds. In this way, we can interpret how the social category of gender has meaning across contexts and during educational transitions.

Holland et al.'s (1998) research showed that day-to-day practices always position the participants situationally, relative to one another. That is, participants in collaborative activities engage in conversations and interactions that always construct their own social position and their social relations with one another. These 'discourses' and the other forms of cultural artefacts used in everyday practices construct both subjects and subject positions. These positions are imposed (or forced) upon parties (and events) to the practice. From this perspective, entitled (or permitted) people speak, stand, dress and emote – they carry out privileged activities – in ways that are appropriate to both the situation of the activity and their position within it. Speaking certain dialects, offering particular opinions and holding the floor are indices of claims to privilege. For example, Shanta's family interpreted her touching of the plough as a claim to a social position, a position that, on account of gender, she was denied (see Holland et al., 1998).

Maintaining a relative gendered position in figured worlds demands social work on a day-to-day basis, and it involves acts of inclusion or exclusion, of allowing or compelling only certain people to demonstrate the artefacts that maintain and value certain positions. However, people may try to refuse the imposed and implicit gendered positions. There is no guarantee that everyone will have been brought sufficiently 'into' the 'language' of the relational markers to understand the 'would-be' impositions and take them seriously. Much of the inclusionary/exclusionary work of marker restriction is performed via the inclusion or exclusion of certain types of people from sites where the signing knowledge is interacted as a matter of course. For example, in situations where all students are admitted to the arena of

learning, teachers will take some students' claims to knowledge more seriously on the basis of certain markers of identity and they will be given informative feedback. In addition, people develop different relational identities in figured worlds because they are afforded different positions in those worlds. Positions may also be maintained beyond awareness (Holland et al., 1998).

According to Holland et al. (1998), positions become dispositions through participation in, identification with, and development of expertise within the figured world. However, one must remember that positions may be accepted, rejected or changed into positions people like. One must also pay attention to the fact that positional identities develop heuristically over time. Here, Holland et al. (1998) draw on the Vygotskian emphasis on semiotic mediation in understanding how children develop the dispositions of relational identities in figured worlds. However, according to Holland et al. (1998), semiotic mediation is also a means by which these dispositions can be countered – people sense their worlds and re-mediate their positions. Hence, the development of a social position into a positional identity and a gendered disposition comes about over the course of social interactions over time: to voice opinions, to enter into activities, and to self-censor depending on the social situation. Positional identities are publicly performed through observable markers. People tell each other who they claim to be in society. For example, how children learned that a woman's marital status was expressed by a necklace. This may happen in a non-reflective way (Holland et al., 1998, p. 257).

In this thesis, I focus on learners' reflections on gendered (dis)positions as experienced across contexts and during educational transitions. For example, as illustrated in article III (Narnia), a daughter understood that 'quietness' is a female gendered virtue from the past, a disposition that produces her performative enactment (position) in the present. Her performative position as a learner was to be quiet. When Narnia experienced other gendered family dispositions in her global network, they created tensions that influenced her gendered future trajectory. In article III, I look at how the girls reflected on their future possibilities in light of their thoughts concerning gendered positional identities (see Chapter 6.2.3).

The three articles all focus on the gendered positions and future expectations that the learners are provided with at home, in school and during leisure time. It is essential to recognise how these positions create tensions, constraints and possibilities, as well as how young learners' self-understandings of these gendered (dis)positions can result in alternative future orientations.

3.2.4 Changing gendered positional identities

Holland et al. (1998) argue that positional identities are born in the uninterrupted flow of everyday life. The meanings of actions remain taken for granted as part of the natural attitude, while response follows as a matter of course. The formation of identity in this posture is a by-product of doing, of limitation and correction, and it is profoundly embodied (cf. Bourdieu's habitus). A person's acquisition of the dispositions that mark a gendered identity can occur without his/her awareness and the moment of recognition can be disorienting (cf. Kondo, 2009). Behaviour can develop unmediated by one's reflections on

them, as claims to social position. For example, in the United States one is more likely find women in the kitchen and men in the yard (Holland et al., 1998). At a later stage, the associations between social positions and privilege may become a matter of reflection and hence function as tools that can be used to affect the self and others. In fact, some positional identities and their associated markers are also figured (see Chapter 3.2.3). For example, in Naudada, Nepal, good behaviour, when contrasted to the misbehaviour that constitutes *pap* (sin), is attributed to the script of the life path of a good person. These figured aspects of changing identities are found in article III, for example, in Narnia's self-understanding of good female behaviour. In contrast, the everyday aspects of lived identities may be unremarked, unfigured, without awareness, and unavailable as a tool for affecting one's behaviour. However, Holland et al. (1998) do not mean to imply that identities exist in two forms: one as a product of the imagination and the other of unreflected action. Rather, they consider the two orientations to be the production of social activity – positional and figured. The sources of the figured identities lie in the imaginative framing (Holland et al., 1998).

Furthermore, everyday activities may become a matter of habit. The relation between everyday activities and the remarked activities in figured worlds can be described as a continuum. The relation of life in a marked frame of imagination is more properly one that is marked than one that is unmarked (cf. Bakhtin, 1981). The two situations are convertible. Specific figured worlds can be made public over time to become ordinary genres of the everyday life. In a sense, some imaginative frames become 'fossilised' (cf. Vygotsky, 1978) in daily life. Yet, 'fossilisation' is not permanent. Ruptures of the taken-for-granted can remove these aspects of positional identities from automatic performance to recognition. This moment causes people to specify the figured world that prefigures everyday activities, both individually and collectively. Gendered markers, for example, can be objectified and available for reflection in relation to category, and they can initiate new figurings. Through objectifying the self and enacting a marker, a person may experience a version of herself as an object in a social world given meaning by markers, which is an element of the imagination. The objectifications take the form of voices (cf. Bakhtin, 1981) or images, which motivate plans for action as a mediating device for understanding one's own positional identity – whether to transform markers or performativity (Holland et al., 1998).

Hence, neophytes (or children) who enter a figured world acquire positional dispositions and identities. They come to know these markers (signs) as claims to categorical and relational positions, that is, to status. They learn to feel for the game (cf. Bourdieu, 1977), for how such claims on their part will be received. They come to have a set of dispositions towards themselves in relation to where they can enter, what they can say, what emotions they can exhibit, and what they can do in a given situation. Neophytes associate different spaces, contexts and activities in their environment with social positions that have become dispositions. Gendered dispositions to participate, or not, in given activities develop in places where gender participation is treated as claims of gender specificity (e.g. being a 'quiet' girl). However, the same semiotic mediators that guide behaviour, which may serve to reproduce the structures of privilege, may also work towards the potential for liberation from the social environment. The 'meta-pragmatic' capability to figure social practice –

through narrative, drawing and other means of articulation – is also a capability to figure it otherwise (disrupt positions). Through the interchanging of the two contexts, if identity provides opportunities to reform, symbols enable the objectification of the gendered treatment and new narrativised worlds are created (Holland et al., 1998).

In articles I to III, rather than focusing on how gendered family positional identities change, I focus on how the contexts of family, leisure and school provide different gendered positions. The emphasis is on how social positions influence the way young learners reflect on and understand their different ‘unmediated’ and ‘mediated’ gendered positional identities. It is important to grasp the experienced complexity in their different gendered positions that may exist across contexts and during educational transitions, which may create tensions, as well as the way cultural practices are being used to solve tensions when the girls constitute their educational trajectories. As such, the main focus is on the learners’ self-understandings of their positional identities and the way these objectifications contribute to the formation of people as positions and sites of identity (cf. Holland and Leander, 2004). This helps me to better understand the learners’ positionality and their mediated actions towards their future possibilities.

3.3 Summary

In this thesis, I draw on the concepts of funds of knowledge (cf. Gonzales et al., 2005) and positional identities in figured worlds (Holland et al., 1998) in order to interpret biographical narratives (Thomson, 2009). The theory helps me to analyse multiethnic girls’ educational trajectories as learners. The thesis addresses how young people think about their educational trajectories and their future possibilities. The concept of funds of knowledge (cf. Gonzales et al., 2005) enables me to analyse social networks in terms of the resources they possess and to determine the way in which schools can identify and understand the cultural practices of their students. The analytical focus is on the practices and structures created in global family networks based on past histories, present lives and how they relate to future action. For example, how family members pass on knowledge regarding future responsibility and education, as well as how such processes subsequently inform us about why young girls choose particular educational trajectories.

Through using the concepts of positional identities and figured worlds, I can understand learners’ social and academic positional identities. The social and gendered relational aspects are understood as dynamic entities that are part of the social interactions that take place between people within the figured worlds of family life, leisure time and school. People may also have similar or different positions across these worlds. Therefore, the formation of the individuals and their understanding of themselves and their positional identities can take place by means of social interaction. People might also adopt positions in figured worlds that can change during their learning trajectories. Of central importance is the fact that positional identities can reveal how social interactions within and across figured worlds contribute to the formation of persons as positions and sites of identity, that is, people’s own understanding of themselves (Holland & Leander, 2004). Of additional importance to my study is the determination of how students use cultural practices in figured worlds or from funds of knowledge networks as resources in their identity

processes. Their behaviour, their identity in the moment, is based on past experiences and cultural resources that make them behave in a new way – this is the link to learning – they reform their identity (Holland et al., 1998).

In the analysis, the concepts of ‘positional identities’ and ‘figured worlds’ will be used to analyse the tension that exists between young people’s educational and everyday possibilities and the constraints and expectations they experience due to family, friends and sociocultural norms. I am interested in identifying girls’ understanding of their positional identities when they cross their figured worlds or funds of knowledge networks. It is important to recognise the impact of this on their understanding of their different positional identities as learners and their future orientation. I investigate the interplay between everyday practices and social gendered positional identities. The two-year long ethnographic study enables me to approach how day-to-day social interaction is built by means of social, gendered and academic positions over time. I am particularly interested in analysing the role of day-to-day events and longer timescale processes (cf. Lemke, 2012) in the educational trajectories and the futures young girls see for themselves. The way mediational means relate to gendered positions through mediated actions (agency) will also be analysed. From this, I can understand the processes that shape educational trajectories in complex societies.

4 Methodological Ways of Studying Identities

This thesis investigates how young learners reflect on their educational trajectories and future possibilities. It is essential to determine how they draw on their trajectories and narratives of the self across the contexts of family life, leisure time and school. In order to analyse and present the data, I have experimented with and developed a method that presents longitudinal ethnographic data from a Norwegian context. To do so, I draw on Thomson's (2009) 'method-in-practice' to create theme-based case narratives about identity-in-process. Thomson's (2009) method is built on interview data based on four themes. In my work, the ethnographic data were interpreted based on the themes of global family practices (ethnicity, article I), changing positional identities (article II) and gendered stereotypical identities (article III). When constructing the biographic narratives, I need to understand the connection between young people's everyday social and cultural practices (funds of knowledge), their positional identities and their educational trajectories.

- Do these practices come into play when they develop as learners and in the educational trajectories that they choose?
- Are there any tensions resulting from opposing social, gendered and academic positional identities at home or with friends when compared to what they experience in school?
- How do the constraints and possibilities the girls' meet in their everyday lives shape their reflections, learning and change of identity?

The research is an ethnographic study involving two lower secondary school classes (a one-year data collection period) and a few biographical case histories (a two-year data collection period) from these school classes. The data illuminate the learning trajectories and positional identities of ten girls and three boys from an inside (emic) perspective. The data are longitudinal and collected using participant observations and formal, open-ended interviewing. I collected the data myself and I have experience as a teacher and clinical pedagogue, which might have influenced my field role. The research themes and the fieldwork are of a sensitive character. In this chapter, I will discuss my research design, which aims to provide biographic case histories, the students' mediated actions as a unit of analysis, and the methodological considerations.

4.1 Research design

The research aims to investigate how young students connect everyday experiences and school learning when they create their future trajectories. This is intended to provide 'thick descriptions' of the learning contexts and identity processes, as well as young people's mediated actions, in order to construct case histories. I approach individual learning trajectories across social contexts and transitions.

Three themes are central:

- 1) Multiple contexts of learning and funds of knowledge (cf. Gonzales et al., 2005).
- 2) Learners' positional identities in figured worlds (cf. Holland et al., 1998).
- 3) Mediated actions that express tensions and positionality (cf. Wertsch, 1998).

These themes link my theoretical framework to the methodological approach so as to compare and contrast learning in and out of school with students' positional identities and mediated actions. Hence, the knowledge generated by my research concerns how everyday practices in young people's social networks and their available positional identities (social, gendered and academic) constitute educational trajectories. The way young people reflect on their tensions and identity negotiations in their everyday lives can illustrate how they understand their learning trajectories, identity processes and future possibilities, both educational and occupational.

This thesis explores social processes across contexts that are built on in the tradition of literacy studies. The backdrop is the pedagogic teaching and learning transactions discourse (Coiro, Knobel, Lankshear, & Leu, 2008; Willett & Sefton-Green, 2002), with a focus on learning across contexts (cf. Leander et al., 2010). To analyse learning in different settings, the processes are tracked as they are mobilised across contexts and, equally, across time. For this reason, the learners were sampled during a transition period of two years in order to explore a means of characterising changes in their learning behaviours and identities. During educational transitions, people may need to change identities in order to adapt to the new contexts. In this way, learning trajectories will be used to understand learning within and across different contexts, as well as to visualise how the enacted positional identities may develop or change over time.

A society transformed by and through new technologies, artefacts, labour, and new arenas and institutions will create new conditions for learning (Ludvigsen et al., 2011). The ways individuals meet, interpret and engage with other participants, as well as how these activities are structured, shed light on such transformations. This calls for a perspective on learning that considers learning to be both a socially organised activity and a foundational activity (cf. Säljö, 2000, 2005). This means that what people learn in specific settings is dependent on how activities are socially organised, negotiated and how they have emerged as institutional practices. In this context, the interplay between communication and interaction with fellow human beings, digital technologies and learning is important.

Ludvigsen, Rasmussen, Krange, Moen and Middleton (2011) elaborate on the intersecting trajectories of participation in the context of temporality and learning, and they claim that time is a key issue. When communicating past experiences and planning the future, we create events where learning can take place (Ludvigsen, Rasmussen, Krange, Moen, & Middleton, 2011). Similarly, through my use of Holland et al.'s (1998) theory, students' past histories and future orientations relate to their everyday learning and identity in practice. In the view of Leander et al. (2010), we need to expand institutional learning to reflect today's new mobilities of people, media and social phenomena, as well as the connections between global and local life. As such, institutional learning may also be seen

as a node in a long learning trajectory. Hence, learning trajectories (Leander et al., 2010) help me to broadly define students as learners and their learning, encompassing the social practices in their everyday lives and at school that have implications for their identity processes and educational trajectories when transitioning.

Thus, I view learning as socially organised activities over different timescales that relate to students' identity in practice, that is, their past, present and future identities. How knowledge can be exchanged and drawn upon across the social sphere of family life, leisure time and school is central. This 'gap closing' (i.e. learning) entails identifying students' reflections on the knowledge derived from one context (family) and used in another context (school) to describe trajectories of participation – learning trajectories (Dreier, 1999, 2003; Edwards et al., 2009; Leander et al., 2010; Ludvigsen, Rasmussen, et al., 2011).

When analysing learning trajectories, one needs to understand the contextual factors and the resources that these contexts provide alongside the trajectories of participation. In this thesis, the contexts are young people's everyday lives in their global networks and at school. Hence, although learning is situated in everyday practice, people also draw on resources from other surrounding practices in order to make meaning in the here-and-know (Engeström, 1996).

In articles I to III, the learning trajectories help me to analyse how the young girls reflect on their situated practices in figured worlds and how they draw on resources from other surrounding practices. The connection between learning and identity within contextual framings can inform us of the engagement in learning activities across informal and formal settings (Barron, 2006). In the articles, I explore learning trajectories and learners' understanding of their social positional identities across locations in one community. Hence, I show how cultural practices are used as resources and in identity processes, as well as how they play a role in educational trajectories.

In order to connect learning trajectories and learners' positional identities, I will address: (1) the connected social practices/learning across networks, that is, funds of knowledge, (2) social practices/learning as influenced by the surroundings (figured worlds), and (3) how social practices/learning change identity (positional identities). Further, the challenges faced between different levels of education across both contexts and time in this thesis are: (1) the possible tensions experienced, (2) how those tensions may be solved, and (3) how gendered future orientations develop.

According to Erstad (2010), only a few studies that track individuals across contexts make use of case studies. Traditionally, social anthropology, ethnography of learning and sociolinguistic ethnography (see Ball, Maguire, & Macrae, 2000; Heath, 1983; Rampton, 2006) do not utilise data that are aggregated to provide a 'thick description'. Therefore, the tradition of biographic methods and other narrative approaches to education offers concepts that are used to analyse how young people view themselves as learners (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2006; Sawyer, 2006; Thomson, 2009).

In order to achieve thick descriptions and ‘follow’ individuals across contexts, I explore and draw on Thomson’s (2009) ‘method-in-practice’ to construct case history narratives regarding how identity develops in practice. This method shows how the interplay between individual contextual and social interaction shaped learning identities initiate learners’ educational trajectories. Of particular importance to my development of this method is the fact that the analysis *is* the different constructions of the narratives, depending on what I aim to shed light on or understand.

Article I focuses on learners’ global family practices (i.e. ethnicity). In article II, I approach how social positional identities change due to non-academic factors. In article III, I focus on gendered stereotypical identities and learners’ enactments in educational transitions. The thematic cases reflect a transformation of the dataset through an emplotment that reflects the participants’ everyday practices and identities over time. These cases visualise the relationship between an individual’s account of his/her self and the arenas of life that reflect the practices of family and friends, learning identities and future orientations during educational transitions. Of particular importance to the education context of my research were the participants’ own reflections on their social, gendered and academic positional identities, their expectations and educational trajectories, and their future possibilities as experienced in the transition between different school levels.

4.1.1 Mediated action as the unit of analysis

Mediation is central to the sociocultural perspective on learning as based on the relation between human mental functioning and cultural, institutional and historical settings (Vygotsky, 1978). These settings shape and provide the cultural tools that are mastered by individuals in order to form identities. Mediational means, such as language and technical tools, facilitate functional forms of action (i.e. reasoning and communication). By forming part of a person’s behaviour, a psychological tool is adapted to the structure of the reasoning and communication (i.e. the mediated action). Mediated action involves tension between the mediational means, as provided in a sociocultural setting, and the unique contextualised use of those means when carrying out actions. Of importance to my work, and in agreement with the findings of Wertsch (1998), one should not reduce this unit of analysis to the mediational means or to the individual in isolation. Mediated action is defined as ‘individual(s) operating-with-mediational-means’ (Wertsch, Tulviste, & Hagstrom, 1993, p. 346), which includes agency. Hence, an individual’s agency is expressed in the social sphere (Wertsch, 1991), as developed in the tension⁹ between the sociocultural mediational

⁹ Wertsch (1991, 1998) uses the notion of utterance and dialogue building promoted by literacy theorist Bakhtin to explain the irreducible tension that is inherent in mediated action. Another level of language form and meaning systems that serves to mediate the production of utterances is ‘speech genres’, which add a personal attitude to the mediated action (biographic factors). We speak in speech genres (e.g. ‘family talk’); all our utterances have definite forms of construction of the whole (e.g. the meaning of ‘be quiet’ in the family talk). The mediated action of dialogically producing utterances is shaped by the irreducible combination of cultural tools (social) and unique (individual) use (i.e. reasoning, communication, dialogue, mediated actions).

means and the unique contextualised use of those means (cf. the self, the social, the particular; Thomson, 2009).

According to this ‘learning trajectory’ perspective, one can state that experiencing opposing future positions in the present, which also relate to the students’ past histories, may create tensions. As an example from my research, Mona’s home and school contexts were very different. In school she acted as a ‘bad girl’, while at home she performed according to her parents’ expectations of a conscientious girl. Her teachers had informed her parents about her behaviour (performance) at school. This created tensions that, in our first meeting, she was obviously not able to solve. Mona’s solution, which involved reflection and mediational means, was to be academically polite by switching to a more indirectly ‘bad’ social behaviour in school (cf. Rysst, 2008). In this way, her mediational means was expressed through her gendered, social and academic learning and identity processes. Hence, one can link mediated actions to an analysis of biographical narratives, social positioning and interaction during transitions. From this, a change in identity can be seen as mediated in the societal sphere as transformations of the positional identities in the learning trajectories, which is achieved through the expressed mediated actions.

4.1.2 The research context and the participants

The fieldwork was carried out in the suburb of the Grorud Valley [Groruddalen]. The community of the Grorud Valley (130,000 inhabitants) is situated in the eastern part of Oslo (600,000 inhabitants), Norway. The community was largely inhabited in the 1950s and 1960s by Norwegian working-class families. Since the 1960s, many refugee and immigrant groups have moved in (Nielsen, 2009). Today, it consists of a high percentage of families with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and it can be described as a multiethnic suburb. The community scores low on surveys of living conditions, although living conditions vary significantly within the valley. There can be large differences in what children and young people have available in terms of material and immaterial resources (Nadim, 2008). To improve living conditions, the Municipality of Oslo, backed by large investments from the Norwegian State, made a commitment to improve the community over a period of ten years (2006–2016). The fourth programme area of this investment concentrates on ‘upbringing, education, living conditions, cultural activities and inclusion’. The programme has been extended to 2026.

The community features several neighbourhoods with high- and low-rise apartment buildings in addition to villas and terraced houses. Public transportation to the rest of Oslo is good. The centre of the valley is home to industry and railroad warehouses originating from the 1950s. Surrounding the north and west sides of the valley are forested areas that are used by the inhabitants of Oslo for recreation, including ski routes, lakes for swimming, etc. Most inhabitants of the valley live less than 15 minutes away from these recreational areas. A shopping mall is located in the centre of the valley. There is also good access to leisure activities such as sport and youth clubs organised by independent organisations and by the intervention programme. Religious/ethnic groups also organise clubs and after-school tuition.

My fieldwork in the Grorud Valley was conducted in two smaller neighbourhoods with different socioeconomic conditions indicating a variation in the population. While the 'Østby' neighbourhood (School A) predominantly featured apartment buildings, the 'Vestby' neighbourhood (School B) also had many terraced houses and villas. Both neighbourhoods had the typical grocery stores, gas stations, youth clubs, and outdoor and indoor sports arenas used by people of all ages. The Grorud Valley community offers an opportunity to investigate multiethnic students' everyday practices and social positional identities across settings, the tensions they may experience, and the way they perceive their gendered future possibilities.

The two lower secondary schools, which are referred to as A and B, were randomly selected from among the schools in the two neighbourhoods. Along with Assistant Professor Hans Christian Arnseth, I visited the schools to inform them about the research project and to ask for permission to conduct research. The schools accepted our request and selected representative 'average' classes based on the schools' own conceptions. An initial letter describing the content of the project was provided to the school, the students and their parents. The parents had to consent to their children participating in the research, since all the students were below the age of 18. School A had about 500 students, 70% of whom came from a minority background. The school made an effort to create a good environment by implementing common rules for the staff and employing young social workers from the community. School B had about 400 students, with 40% of them coming from a minority background. The school focused on individual monitoring, reading, maths and common rules for the staff. There seemed to be more interest among the headmaster and teachers of School A regarding fitting my research into the school's schedule than among the staff of School B. In School B, I felt that my research interfered with their teaching. I therefore chose to conduct the major parts of the fieldwork in School A and keep School B as the reference group. Classes A and B each had about 25 pupils and an almost equal number of boys and girls.

The teachers in both the lower secondary schools were a mix of young teachers who had recently finished their education and more experienced teachers. The newly qualified teachers expressed engagement with their job and a desire to contribute to the multiethnic community. Some of the more experienced teachers felt that some of the parents put too much academic pressure on their children. They felt it might be challenging to lower the parents' ambitions.

Before selecting the participants, all the students in Class A were observed as learners during both classes and breaks, followed by open-ended interviews concerning their everyday activities, their learner positions and their future orientations. In Class B, I conducted a one-day open-ended interviewing sequence regarding all the students' future orientations and the forthcoming transition to upper secondary school. I observed that some of the students were quiet while other students talked loudly with other students or in classroom discussions. Most of the students expressed high academic ambitions.

I attended Class A for two to three days per week from late December 2010 to June 2011. Class B was visited occasionally during the same period (altogether, 20 days). After about two months, ten female participants were randomly selected from the two classes, since I was interested in identifying young girls' practices and identities when moving between their different figured worlds during the transition to a new school. Eight of the girls attended School A, while two attended School B. I also collected data on three randomly selected boys from School A for the umbrella project. They also functioned as reference participants regarding learners' self-understanding and future orientations in my study. These students were all born in Norway (see Table 1 for further demographic characteristics). Their parents were first generation immigrants, except from two students who had ethnic Norwegian parents.

Table 1 The participants (10th grade)

Lower secondary School A	Parents' origin	Religion	Language**	Upper secondary school programme
Amirtha (f)	Asia	Sikh	Norwegian Punjabi	General studies, social sciences
Narnia (f)	Asia	Hindu	Tamil Norwegian	General studies, natural sciences
Anna (f)	Asia	Hindu	Tamil Norwegian	Vocational studies, pharmacy technician
Ekin (f)	Asia	Muslim	Turkish Norwegian Kebab-Norwegian	General studies, social science
Kari (f)	Europe	Christian	Norwegian	Vocational studies, media & communication
Ndey (f)	Africa	Muslim	Mandinka Gambian-English Norwegian	Vocational studies, business programme
Marjan (f)	Asia	Muslim	Urdu Norwegian	General studies, social sciences
Lien (f)	Asia	Christian	Norwegian Vietnamese	General studies, natural sciences
Malik (m)	Asia	Muslim	Turkish Norwegian Kebab-Norwegian	General studies, social sciences
Ali (m)	Asia	Muslim	Urdu Norwegian Kebab-Norwegian	General studies, natural sciences
Arif (m)	Asia	Muslim	Turkish Norwegian	General studies, natural sciences
School B				
Maria (f)	Africa	Christian	Norwegian Tigrinya	General studies, social sciences
Mona (f)	Africa	Muslim	Norwegian Comorian	General studies, social sciences
Anne* (f)	Europe	Christian	Norwegian	

*Anne withdrew from the study because she was injured during the fieldwork period.

** Listed according to their own use. Kebab-Norwegian is a mix of mother-tongues and Norwegian.

The parents worked, for example, as office or shop assistants, restaurant owners, cleaners, mother-tongue teachers, in the health care or finance sectors, or as taxi drivers. Four of the parents had used the Norwegian adult education system to qualify as an assistant nurse (two of the mothers), a nurse (one father) or an economist (one father). The latter two parents had completed upper secondary school in their home countries. The others had received less

schooling. One father had moved back to Africa. In two of the cases, the participants only had one parent. Instead of categorising the parents' resources after assessing their socioeconomic background, a funds of knowledge approach was used to identify the everyday resources available to the children in their families and communities (Gonzales et al., 2005; McLeod & Yates, 2006).

In general, the students and their parents talked positively about their lower secondary and upper secondary schools. They mentioned that some of the schools had improved. One of the girls was encouraged by her parents to apply to a school with a good reputation outside the community.

After completing lower secondary school, the students attended different upper secondary schools offering vocational and general studies programmes. The law of 'Fritt skolevalg' ('Free school choice') meant that people could apply to any upper secondary school, including schools outside of their community, although admission was based on their grades. Effectively, a free choice of school is in the best interests of students (Eriksen, 2013). In this study, twelve of the thirteen participants attended upper secondary schools inside the Grorud Valley. One girl attended a school in the centre of Oslo. She was accepted to a vocational study programme based on her 'extracurricular circumstances'¹⁰. Three of the girls had applied to schools outside the local community as a priority, but they were not admitted. The upper secondary schools inside the Grorud Valley have a majority of ethnic minority students, while the schools outside the community have a majority of ethnic Norwegian students.¹¹ The students were generally not followed during school hours in upper secondary school; they were predominantly followed in their leisure time in order to protect their anonymity.

4.1.3 Collecting data

In this ethnographic study, the two-year data collection period featured three phases, as outlined in Table 2. In the first phase, there was a six-month period of participant observation in the class during 10th grade (last year of lower secondary school) in order to build mutual trust relations, conduct open-ended interviews and observe the positioning of all students. During the second phase, ten female informants were chosen for one formal interview within school and one home visit. In the third phase, one leisure activity/'hang out' session was attended, several open-ended interviews were conducted and artefacts were collected from the informants (e.g. school tasks and pictures of activities) before and after the transition to (a new) upper secondary school. The design for the investigation of learners' future trajectories relied on participant observations and interviews conducted in different social contexts to retrieve their case histories and life stories. Formal interviews, open-ended interviews, diaries, pictures and sound recordings aided and supplemented the observations in order to ensure a rich data collection. The lower secondary classes were also followed on excursions and during cultural and social events organised by the school. One part of the research design was to be with the students during formal or informal leisure activities and

¹⁰ In Norway, some students are granted preferential legal rights to study based on their extracurricular circumstances, for example, students who need special education or who have impaired hearing.

¹¹ Information about the different schools was obtained from the schools' administrators.

to receive information from them in order to understand the contexts they participated in in their daily lives (e.g. handball, Facebook). They contributed their own material from these contexts (e.g. links to internet pages, pictures). Another context for the research was home visits so as to understand how their parents perceive education and the futures of their children.

My work conforms to the Norwegian guidelines for research ethics.¹² The suggested research ethics checklist was followed, since my research involves sensitive themes and methodologies. I followed the guidelines of the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD¹³) in terms of collecting and storing data, and I obtained written informed consent from the informants and their parents.

Table 2 Data collection plan

Time	End 2010 and spring 2011 Lower secondary 10 th grade			T R A N S I T I O N	Fall 2011 Upper secondary 1 st grade	Fall 2012 Upper secondary 2 nd grade	
	Place	School	Leisure		Home	Leisure	School
Activity with input	Participant observation	One hour formal interview (individual) in study classes	Participant observation and open-ended interviews		One hour formal interview during participant observation	Participant observation and open-ended informal interviews	Participant observation and open-ended informal interviews
	School work Pictures Web pages Blogs, diaries Field notes	Audio Transcript	Audio Transcript Field notes		Audio Transcript Field notes Web page Blogs	Audio Transcript Field notes	Audio Transcript Field notes
Events	Classes Breaks Museum visits Cultural evenings	Office	Sport activities Youth club Shopping Café Neighbourhood		Café visit Office	In the class School breaks	Café visit
School A: The activities took place for two to three days per week over a period of six months.							
School B: The activities took place for approximately one day per week over a period of six months.							

4.1.4 Conducting ethnographic research in educational contexts

In my ethnographic work, I applied a logic-in-use system (Green, Skukauskaitė, & Baker, 2012) to determine what the individual students in a social group needed to know or understand in their everyday lives. The system allowed me to identify patterns regarding

¹² <https://www.etikkom.no/en/ethical-guidelines-for-research/>

¹³ <http://www.nsd.uib.no/nsd/english/index.html>

perceptions, beliefs and actions, as well as to evaluate how individuals and social groups developed in everyday situations. From this perspective, cultural knowledge is socially constructed, language is laden with culture, and culture is shaped through its use of language; hence, the two aspects are viewed as dependent on each other (cf. Agar, 1994, 2006). Viewing culture as intertwined with language helped me to draw culturally based conclusions from what the students said, did and their use of artefacts. It was important to recognise situations where the researcher (or the participant) was confronted with unexpected details, that is, 'rich points' (Spradley, 1979). As an ethnographer, I tried to change the 'point of view' to an insider perspective in order to discover each student's perspective (observe the unexpected). Here, the cultural expectations, meanings and practices became visible to me or the participants. These situations allowed me to track cultural knowledge and build accounts of phenomena from an insider's perspective (Green et al., 2012).

However, according to Rysst (2008), in ethnographic fieldwork, people's construction of meaning cannot be described through only what is 'said'. The non-linear organisation of human thoughts can be 'hidden'. Interpretation and awareness of how the informants use their body language to make visible positive and negative responses are therefore important. Observing body language underlines the distinction between what has been said and what was done (Malinowski, 1922, 1984). Researchers need to include vocal language, body language and written language in order to properly understand young people's everyday lives (Rysst, 2008). My communication with the participants consisted of oral interviews, written language (tasks), pictures and internet pages (Facebook, blogs) supplied by the students. I looked for body language when something unexpected happened during the conversations. I could also choose, based on ethical reflections, to further explore the 'rich point' in order to understand their perspectives.

Yet, is it possible to study young people living in complex industrialised societies by using ethnography as a tool? One can perform ethnography in a post-industrial society by taking "part in the natives' games, we can follow them on their visits and walks, sit down and listen and share in the conversations" (Malinowski, 1922/1984, p. 21). Rysst (2008) claims that a natural starting point is school, while being patient and spending time is necessary in order to succeed. However, studying young people in the school context can be challenging. The students may experience tensions between themselves, which necessitates a relationship based on trust to avoid them withdrawing as participants or changing the research topic (Nielsen, 2009). The next challenge is to gain access to the private sphere, to 'hang around' young people in different contexts outside of school (cf. Rugkåsa & Thorsen, 2003; Rysst, 2008). Here, methodological and ethical reflections concerning the researcher's identity in the field, the way the researcher constructs descriptions of cultural knowledge (from the participants' inside perspectives) and the way the researcher works to create mutual trust relations so as to gain access to the field and avoid analytical distance are all important (cf. Gonzales et al., 2005; Rysst, 2008; Spradley, 1979). It felt natural to begin the fieldwork in the classroom, where I could get to know the participants, build relations and communicate

mutual respect. In that way, I hoped to get in touch with students who would participate as informants beyond the school context.

The combined use of ethnographic fieldwork and interviews meant that each method could enrich the other. The fieldwork provided me with insight into practices, habits, activities, meaning making and identities during educational transitions. The interviews conducted in the field were used to gather data on the girls' own understanding about their lives, activities and learning, as well as their interpretations of their identities in particular situations. My interpretations of their positional identities across everyday contexts were collected in field notes (Holland et al., 1998). The information I accessed during the interviews and participant observations sometimes overlapped. Combining the two helped me to better understand things I had seen or discussed, to check that what I thought I saw and understood in the field was correct, and vice versa. Using a combination of the two methods was also important for gaining access to practice and narrative production (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009 as cited in Eriksen, 2013). It helped me to answer questions such as: What aspect of culture created the collective narratives, practices and imaginations, and how did the girls as individuals understand themselves and their positions across their figured worlds? For me, following the students during the last six month of their last year of lower secondary school and during the transition to upper secondary school (until the second year of upper secondary school) was instrumental, since I thereby chanced upon the possibility of exploring their identity processes as learners within and across everyday learning contexts, which allowed me to understand the possibilities and restrictions inherent in the transition from everyday lives to school. The way they change identities in order to adapt to the new contexts can illustrate how the enacted positional identities may change over time (i.e. how they voice own positioning – their mediated actions).

A commonly mentioned restriction regarding ethnography is the relatively low number of participants involved. Is the number sufficient to provide a representative data set? However, the ethnographic argument is that ethnography enables researchers to explain details regarding sociocultural practices and behaviour. The gap between ethnography and approaching individual life histories is not always clear (Spradley, 1979). To avoid this gap, the creation of biographic cases allows me to view students' mediated actions through both the individual contextual and social-cultural aspects.

4.2 Methodological considerations

This section anchors the ethnographic study in the contextualist methodology via the juxtaposition between the 'requirements' derived by Mjøset (2009) in order to discuss one's own participating research (effect) in one's own methodology. It discusses epistemological considerations related to how the researcher positions herself as an insider/outsider or a user of professional knowledge in the field and how this might impact the knowledge obtained. This section will clarify the important properties of insider knowledge and how professional knowledge can be a useful tool in participatory research seeking epistemological valid data.

An ethnographic case study utilising the contextualist methodology is anchored well inside the framework of the philosophy of science (cf. Mjøset, 2009) – the sensitivity is linked to

participation. Gaining knowledge through participation implies that the researcher interacts with what/who she studies, while sensitivity to cases implies that the observer acknowledges the information supplied by the actors in the cases. Traditionally, researchers tend to consider participant observation as a source of bias. Yet, given the difficulties of obtaining sound data on beliefs (cf. Elster, 2007), the ethnographic pride in ‘being there’ certainly has its merits. Specific to research in society is the fact that one can enter into a sphere where the relevant mechanisms are supposed to be. The researcher can study something that may also be a feature of her/himself, which implies that there can be a connection between her/him and the gathered knowledge (Mjøset, 2006).

Therefore, a participating researcher must be aware of her/his own cultural horizon and theoretical background. It is important to consider validity, not just research ethics. All participatory researchers bring their own preconceptions and interpretations to the problem being studied; value-free interpretative research is impossible. Researchers must therefore state beforehand their prior interpretations of the phenomenon. Unless these meanings and values are clarified for the researcher, their effects on the interpretations will remain misunderstood (Denzin, 1989; Mjøset, 2009; Salling Olesen, 2011). I have actively used the ‘guidelines’ stemming from the ‘funds of knowledge’ approach, that is, a ‘cultural practice’ focus (Gonzales et al., 2005), to understand and avoid my own bias when entering a multiethnic community as an ethnic Norwegian female researcher. This has been a useful hermeneutic approach to understanding my own cultural horizon.

Hermeneutics is concerned with understanding and interpreting action by examining the intensions behind action so as to grasp the inner meaning and holistic understanding in light of the researcher’s own pre-understanding. The hermeneutic circle is related to the distinction between observable terms (O) and theoretical terms (T) because the observable depends on expectations, perceptions and theoretical background, and it can be related to researchers’ cultural horizons. The distinction between T-terms and O-terms is a mix of the observable and the non-observable and the theoretical and the non-theoretical. Beliefs/perceptions are referred to as ‘theoretical’ because they are a non-observable phenomenon that consists of T-terms. This characterises the experience-based beliefs/perceptions often constructed by (professional) practitioners (Kvernbekk, 2005).

The theories of identity in practice (Holland et al., 1998) and funds of knowledge (Gonzales et al., 2005) can be linked to the researcher’s T-terms. This can be illustrated as follows:

Amirtha (aged 16, parents from India) described how her Norwegian side was at the forefront; she dressed Norwegian, used Facebook, was allowed to go to discos etc. During a home visit, she changed into Indian dress and explained that she always uses Indian clothes at home because she feels comfortable in them. (Field notes 2012)

As a researcher, I interpreted (T-term) this action (O-term) to be an example of her different positional identities across contexts, as well as how the cultural practices she learned at home served to safeguard her bicultural situation (cf. insider/outsider knowledge, emic/etic approach). Thus, the O/T distinction is not clear cut and thus it becomes relevant in the

context (cf. Kvernbekk, 2002). Awareness of the hermeneutic circle and the distinction between observation and theory can help the researcher to understand her theoretical background and, thus, develop her ability to gain epistemologically valid knowledge. The potential to discover one's own use of T-terms can be related to the researcher's ability to understand her self-observations and self-reflections. The researcher should also confirm that the theories-in-use are 'correct' for the research (this discussion can be related to insider/outsider and professional (tacit) knowledge, see below).

An emic approach seeks to understand how people think, how they perceive and categorise the world, their rules for behaviour, what has meaning for them, and how they imagine things. The etic approach instead shifts the focus from local observations, categories and interpretations to those of the anthropologist. The etic approach recognises that members of a culture are often too involved in what they are doing to interpret their cultures impartially (Kottak, 2006). Bridging the emic and etic perspectives can be useful in qualitative research (cf. Thomson, 2009), which concerns the characteristics of human nature as well as the form and function of human social systems. I follow Thomson's (2009) method in practice to approach the insider perspectives (emic), which build on the participants' own opinions and statements (cf. grounded theory), and the outsider perspectives (etic), which build on theoretical concepts.

4.2.1 *The method of case studies*

The logic related to the contextualist methodology is closely connected to the conduct (method) of case studies. The outcome is preceded by a process that unfolds over time: (1) the relation to the research problems and selecting the process and/or outcome to be studied, (2) the definition of the context, and (3) tracing the specific links in the selected process. Both the outcome and the process are significant in and of themselves. In 'case reconstruction', the researcher reconstructs the process towards an *outcome* that has occurred in the *past*, while in the case of 'in process intervention' with a participating researcher, the *outcome* is located in the *future* (Mjøset, 2009).

In this thesis, I combine 'reconstruction' and 'in process intervention'. The reconstruction of the cases builds on information related to accounts of knowledge and events gained in the past. In addition, the study is conducted in the present context by observing everyday practices. The sensitive research questions being asked seek to determine the participants' reflections on phenomena related to the past, everyday practices and the future. Hence, the research questions can operate as a learning opportunity (cf. the sociocultural perspective; Greeno, 1997) and they can, in a way, 'intervene' with the risk of changing the outcome. Therefore, the study addresses the participants openly using meta-communication about the method and the ability to learn from the research themes. This is done in order to avoid intervention (to empower the participants). It is the participants' own reflections, thoughts and feelings that are of interest. A 'mixed' approach can be a tool for understanding the present in light of the past and the future (cf. Mjøset, 2009). Case studies are, therefore, suitable for understanding everyday practices and positional identities. The learning

trajectories are located in the Grorud Valley and, through the interpretation/comparison of the cases, one can understand the (gendered) future trajectories.

The contextualist notions of theory represent two ways in which knowledge is drawn from and related to our ability to be sensitive to cases: explanation-based theory (cf. grounded theory) and critical theory (Mjøset, 2006 as cited in Mjøset, 2009). The impulse towards critical theory emerges when social researchers participate closely with social groups that have legitimate claims to social change. The researcher does not simply reconstruct an *outcome*, but rather takes part in broader efforts *to change an outcome*. This is known as process intervention, but outside the confines of the research community (Mjøset, 2009). The critical research methodology known as Youth-Led Participatory Action Research (YPAR) addresses political challenges and focuses on how critical participatory research can be a tool for youth development and social justice through reflection, learning and empowerment (Camarrota & Fine, 2008).

Obviously, the participating researcher in the YPAR methodology shares similarities with my work. But, the goal is neither to change the outcome nor to change the participants. This argument strengthens the view that the participating researcher in my thesis is within the boundaries of contextualism and the practical philosophies of science ‘guidelines’ created by Mjøset (2009). Thus, the methodology is closer to adhering to explanation-based theory than critical theory. Mjøset (2009) does not describe in-depth the relation between ‘getting sound data on beliefs’ (cf. Elster, 2007) and the position of the participating researcher. This is an aspect that has epistemological significance. The position from which the researcher constructs knowledge may be linked to the kind of knowledge the researcher obtains (Kvernbekk, 2005). The researcher’s own background and experiences may impact on her position in the interaction with the participants and, thus, the epistemological aspects of the constructed knowledge. It is of importance to this thesis that the participants contribute insider information so that the approach explores how the young people themselves experience their learning trajectories in one community (to explore their individual voices rather than a generalisation). The next section discusses the noticeable differences between knowledge obtained from an insider/outsider or professional perspective.

4.2.2 The interplay between knowledge forms

Insider knowledge involves experiences, feelings, cognitive aspects, practical actions, relations and assumptions of sameness. It is well-known from everyday life. Usually, such knowledge claims take the form of ‘I know what it is like to be a ...’ (for example, a teacher or a student). The form of the claims provides the justification for using the more general term of ‘insider knowledge’ (Strøm, Kvernbekk, & Fagermoen, 2011). Of particular interest here is the strength of knowledge and beliefs constructed from within such a position, that is, the epistemological aspects.

According to Fay (1996), an insider is a person who, due to her privileged position, has access to sources of knowledge and who can construct insights that no outsider can ever construct (due to not being on the inside). Such insider knowledge is especially reliable and trustworthy precisely because of that privileged position (Fay, 1996). Kvernbekk (2005)

discusses the different perspectives of insiders and outsiders and argues that the strong position of the insider (Razavi & Devereux, as cited in Bridges, 2009) is not philosophically durable; the outsider can interpret the insider's performances differently, but it is impossible to deny the insider's feeling of being, for example, born in Norway to immigrant parents. Strøm et al. (2011) argue that Merton's (1971) perspective describes insiders as natives in a group and from this follows the notion that only the insider can truly know, and that empathic understanding is ruled out in principle. Strøm et al. (2011) accept first-hand experience as a necessary condition for insider knowledge – it is personal, practical, concrete and lively. If first-hand experience is conceived as a necessary condition for knowing (e.g. what it is like to be born in Norway to immigrant parents), then only insiders can know, since they alone have access to the source of the knowledge. Strøm et al. (2011) claim that this is not the complete picture, since insiders have (only) privileged access to their own intentions, perceptions, judgements, feelings and decisions during the activity; insider knowledge captures important features of human learning and the formation of beliefs and our emotions hardly speak to the truth value of beliefs. What is the validity of insider knowledge?

Data drawn from first-hand experience are apt to be vivid. Such data are concrete, visible, emotionally interesting and subjectively convincing, and they impact on the formation of our beliefs. The most vivid information of all is that which people produce as participants in activities – what we see, feel and taste. Since people tend to have great faith in the beliefs they have formed, they do not check the validity of their own inferences. Therefore, the vividness of the data is an epistemological pitfall if too much weight is attached to vividness in the belief formation process. Vividness explains the difference between insider and scientific knowledge. However, the analysis of insider knowledge is necessary if the value of such knowledge is to be reasonably assessed. It is important to designate insider knowledge with a status that acknowledges its privileged access to the insider's intentions, perceptions, evaluations, decisions, reasons and feelings, and therefore yields insight into these areas. The fallibility of insider knowledge must, however, be openly addressed (Strøm et al., 2011).

By following the approach of Strøm et al. (2011), as a researcher I may position myself as an insider in different ways during fieldwork. I have experience of being young, a girl, a student, having religious grandparents, growing up far from my grandparents, having a father who experienced racism ('move back to Pakistan' – my father is not from Pakistan), and being a teacher or a clinical pedagogue etc.

Understanding the inside/outside distinction can enable the researcher to ask for information that only insiders (the participant) can provide (Kvernbekk, 2005). An outsider may consider the insider's activity and performance, which can explain to the researcher how Ekin (16-years-old, Muslim) experiences the same amount of freedom as young 'Norwegian' females:

'You [Norwegians] think that we [Muslim girls] are not allowed to do anything' [...] (Interview 2012)

Ekin's daily activities are more restricted when compared to her male family members; she was allowed to participate in some activities outside the home, for example, her after school tuition club. (Field notes 2012)

As a researcher, I can 'inside interpret' Ekin's experience and thus obtain epistemologically valid knowledge. This shows the potential of understanding inside knowledge from an outside research position, as well as how the data are interpreted. The observed findings can easily be connected to the O/T distinction. Many of the interesting findings relate to T-terms such as capturing the reflections and perceptions that the participants have regarding issues that culturally 'figure' their lives. Many of these T-terms 'manifest' themselves through observable O-terms such as the hard work many of the participants put in during upper secondary school so that they can study at a higher level later on. There can be many reasons why they want to study, for example, expectations, to be independent, etc.

Bridges (2009) claims that people can never entirely be insiders to another person's condition because our individuality guarantees that there will always be something that sets us apart. This indicates that, once one accepts the notion of the plurality of insider and outsider understandings, then the distinction becomes 'increasingly blurred' (Bridges, 2009, p. 109). However, outsiders are not entirely shut off from the kinds of understanding that insiders might have. An outsider can begin to enter other worlds, societies and experiences by bringing curiosity, sympathy, asking the insider to describe and explain matters to the observer, and utilising imagination and empathic questioning (an epistemologically approach). Such entry relies on certain conditions; human beings display many common ways of structuring our understanding of the world. The recognition of points of commonality combined with an appreciation of diversity in the expression of this commonality provides the possibility for mutual understanding. The researcher is closer to an outsider than an insider. She is responsible for the sensitivity of the interpretations, dealing with the truthful rendering of observations, and ethical issues concerning respect for the participants with regard to political issues and structures of power. Researchers will also understand social phenomena differently. In addition, if the researcher is an insider, our emotions can affect the rendering of the observations. This can affect the 'truth value of beliefs' (cf. Strøm et al., 2011). In this doctoral thesis, I aimed to participate as an outsider in order to understand (interpret) the knowledge provided by insiders with an outside perspective. This resembles professional knowledge.

4.2.3 Professional knowledge

Strøm et al. (2011) discuss the epistemological status of health care workers' professional knowledge and insider knowledge so as to understand the relationship between patients' everyday experiences and health care workers' professional knowledge. They explain how 'professional knowledge' comprises both scientific and clinical knowledge. Scientific knowledge is generalised, objective, testable, reliable and based on evidence, while clinical knowledge is a form of insider knowledge possessed by professionals. It is based on experience, with the additional demands of being able to apply scientific knowledge to particular circumstances. Clinical knowledge is often regarded as partly tacit. It can be linked to the researcher's T-terms.

Clinical knowledge regarding patients' preferences is necessary when making qualified decisions, and it involves skills in applying abstract, generalised knowledge to particular cases. Such skills are acquired in practice, through experience (Cartwright, 1989 in Strøm et al., 2011). The tacit aspects are connected to the expert practitioners' fusion of scientific and experiential knowledge and skills (Benner, 1984 in Strøm et al., 2011). Clinical situations involve multiple phenomena that need to be handled by professionals where scientific and clinical knowledge interact in quite different processes, including meaning-making during the perception and framing of the situation and making decisions about the type of treatment and enactment. The former kind of knowledge is characterised by a logic related to 'truth' or 'validity', the latter to a logic of what is the 'best' or 'most appropriate' (Kim, 2010 as cited in Strøm et al., 2011).

Health care professionals, like clinical pedagogues, who use clinical knowledge have professional knowledge. When working as a clinical pedagogue, one obtains clinical professional knowledge based on both scientific and clinical knowledge. From this, one might claim that teachers also have professional knowledge derived from both scientific and experiential (clinical) practice.

Thus, my own tacit clinical knowledge (T-terms), as part of my own professional knowledge, also influences my identity in the field (O-terms) – not only my own cultural background and choice of theories. To better understand these connections, professional knowledge is a valuable concept. It can help me as a researcher to position myself as an outsider, rendering inside information and not changing the outcome (cf. critical theory). Drawing on professional knowledge in new research contexts (or when one lacks relevant research experience) can help me as a participatory ethnographer to obtain epistemologically valid data. I have found that case histories are a suitable methodology if one follows the contextualist guidelines outlined by Mjøset (2009). Knowledge regarding insider knowledge is important for understanding the specific characteristics of such knowledge. Of particular importance is the relationship with my own emotions as a researcher. By understanding one's own professional knowledge, one can avoid constructing vivid knowledge. This serves to present the young Norwegian multiethnic girls' inside voices as a truthful rendering of my observations.

4.3 The identity of the researcher in the field

In this section, I will discuss information about the community, information provided to the participants, particularities from the interviews, my emerging researcher identity, how I understood the participants' contributions and my focus on their gendered identities.

4.3.1 The community

In the field of ethnography, it is essential to be familiar with the community (Gonzales et al., 2005). Thus, during the first year of the data collection period, I rented a room in a friend's house a short train ride from the two schools so that it would be easy for me to visit the communities regularly. The communities surrounding the schools and where the students spent their leisure time could therefore be closely observed. I could also easily meet some of the students after school hours. Being able to hang around in the students' neighbourhoods

and getting to know them outside of school created an informal setting that made me comfortable in this new environment.

During my first visits to Schools A and B, and at the beginning of the fieldwork, I was aware of the multiethnic character of the community. The school buildings, for example, were very recognisable as 'typical Norwegian', while the students were mainly from ethnic minorities. I think that my ethnographic work was shaped by my interest in understanding how these young people experienced everyday life and their student identities in this environment. The closeness to the community made me view the students' positional identities in the broader context of everyday lives in Oslo, Norway and globally. The connection between everyday practices and one's understanding of one's own positional identity (social gendered) across contexts, as well as the students' development as learners and the constitution of their educational trajectories, all turned out to be key in understanding my data. Different aspects of these connections are discussed in the articles.

4.3.2 Information sequences

One month into the fieldwork, I was permitted to present more elaborate information in the schools when compared to the first research sequence in December 2010. My intention was to provide the participants with information in such a way that it would enable them to understand the research themes and feel respected (Gonzales et al., 2005). It was important for me to portray myself as a researcher and someone who was willing to learn from them as well (Spradley, 1979). I explained my view that the globalisation process can impact where we want to/can/must live or move to, and that different practices follow on from this. I focused on the importance of investigating what people can learn from living global lives, without denying that it can also be challenging to be young. I did not talk about immigrant youngsters. I stated that the project was of interest to the Ministry of Education and Research and that their experiences were important.

I asked the students to think about their funds of knowledge and their everyday practices with their families and friends, for example, their immigration histories, family members' labour histories, family practices, their leisure activities, interests, youth lifestyles, movies and novels they liked etc. I noted I was interested in their reflections on being students, their practices, habits, activities and meaning making, their educational expectations, positional identities and their futures. I explained that I would be, initially, attending their classes during this last year of lower secondary school and that I would later ask for permission to follow and interview them outside of school. They could decide 'how and when'. I encouraged them to discuss, at home, the possibility of participating in the study. I confirmed that they could leave the project if they wanted to later on, and that the data would be used as part of the umbrella project and in my PhD project. I said that their identities, names and the place they lived would be altered when the research was published in order to preserve their anonymity.

As an ethnographer, I was aware that my interpretation and writing of a biographical case history involved ethical dilemmas. I had to protect, interpret and write ethically about the participants. I was also aware of the fact that my interpretations may be different to the way

the participants understood themselves. It was therefore important to provide information about the research and the fact that the writing of a scientific work is an integral component of the project, just like any other part of the research (Sikes, 2010). Some of the students wanted to see the narratives; some of them recognised the interpretations. One girl said she did not want to withdraw since I had worked so hard on the material. Some students were not interested in that aspect of the work (they did not respond to my request some years after the fieldwork was completed), while some were proud of their contribution and obviously trusted me. Their feelings show that the researcher bears an ethical burden during the creation process of the narratives, that is, the narratives are not neutral (cf. Fetterman, 2010).

4.3.3 Interviews

My research is based on both formal interviews and open-ended (in-depth) interviews conducted during participant observations. Of the 13 participants, the first formal interviews of 11 of the students were conducted separately, while two of the girls were interviewed together. The reason for this was that, although I wanted to conduct individual interviews, I agreed that they could be interviewed together with friends. I assumed that they would be more comfortable if they could decide the form of the interview (cf. Eriksen, 2013). The formal interviews in school were conducted in a specific office assigned to our research project. I sometimes followed the participants alone; sometimes I followed a peer group or other arrangements. Each home interview lasted about two hours and involved formal (audio recorded) and open-ended interview sequences (field notes). The teachers were only interviewed informally (i.e. ordinary conversations during the breaks). The participant observations and open-ended interviews were adapted to the participants' schedules and daily routines, and they were carried out according to the timeline outlined in Table 2. My general impression of the participants, such as their body language and ways of speaking, during the observation and/or interview context was noted (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). These field notes became useful during the analysis of the interviews and they recursively provided depth and direction to the following interviews and analyses.

I experienced a shift in my relationship when I stopped being a participant observer and became an interviewer. The students seemed to position themselves as more relaxed during the interview sessions than when their friends were present in the 'hang around' situations. My position as a grown-up professional researcher was also different in the interview sessions than in the hang around situations. In the interviews, I could be more personal, while in the hang around situations I was careful to 'protect' the participant(s). I always opened the interviews by reminding the students about their anonymity and telling them that information given previously could be moderated or removed if necessary. I also mentioned that, if they told me something I would consider to be very challenging for them, I would have to share the information with a public institution such as the school nurse in order to protect the student. I expressed an interest in their everyday learning and social positional identities, and there were no limitations on what we could discuss. In that way, the participants had the chance to talk about social contexts such as past, present, and future experiences in their everyday lives or in the school setting. The questions were open-ended and they allowed room for individual experiences and time/context-specific information.

For example, all the participants relayed their families' immigration story (time/context), although the ways they retold the stories were individual.

After the initial questions, the participants were allowed to suggest their own topics as part of the open-ended interviews, so long as the research themes were covered. The key research themes were family history, the significance of moving to Norway, everyday activities with family and peers, their own understanding of themselves as learners and their positional identities, the relationship with formal learning, and gendered future orientations. If the participants did not introduce these research themes themselves, I prompted them with cues such as "do you know if there are certain student positions in your school like ..." or "describe the way everyday knowledge from home or friends comes into play in school".

The open-ended theme-based interview method placed a focus on what was important to the participants, rather than following a set of predetermined research questions provided by me. I departed from a funds of knowledge approach in that I also focused on self-understanding in the learning trajectories. However, I followed the funds of knowledge approach in that I had prepared only a few themes. I tried to maintain the mutual trust created between the participants and myself during the participant observation phase. My follow-up interview questions could therefore aim at being natural responses to the stories the participants had told. As such, the interviews resembled a natural conversation, with me volunteering some comments when necessary to keep to the topic or elaborate on the research themes. As Eriksen (2013) argues, when conducting fieldwork, in-between the interviews, it is important to maintain the mutual trust relation that has already been created and not to jeopardise the relationship with the participants by suddenly seeming remote.

The participants were highly involved in discussing their social gendered and academic learner positions, their performance in school, teachers' performance, their friends' and families' view of their performance and their own thoughts about their future possibilities. All the participants, except for a few students who struggled in school and who hence preferred to skip classes, were to some degree at least frustrated with their educational trajectories and the possibility of not succeeding. Therefore, I had to be aware of the possibility that the participants would prefer to discuss matters that are of emotional importance to them and, as such, a certain degree of guiding the open-ended interviews is important in order to understand that this information may have been subject to too much focus during their life histories (i.e. participant bias). However, I was careful to compare the information provided during the interviews with what I observed in the participant observations, which is one of the strengths of combining the two research methods (cf. Holland et al., 1998). During the observations, it was sometimes striking how their emotions played an important role in their social gendered and academic positioning in the classroom.

The way topics were suggested during the interviews, and by whom, was in itself valuable information. For example, the participants who had a 'quiet' or 'noisy' attitude displayed different personas in the interviews when compared to the personas seen during the observations in school. This was important for my further analysis of their identity processes, tensions and educational trajectories. The funds of knowledge approach was

important in the interviews, since it can provide insight into the meaning of everyday practices rooted in the past and present when creating futures. This approach was suitable for acquiring a sense of everyday learning. The method may have been slightly biased in terms of what is presented as brought forward by the participants as the open-ended interviews progressed, since they had emotional investments in the school topics with respect to the performance expected of you from home, friends, teachers or themselves.

The literature problematizes qualitative interviews (cf. Briggs, 1986; Circourel, 1964; Mishler 1986a as cited in Mann, 2016; Silverman 1973) in the sense that interview talk is a co-construction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Mann, 2016). Good interview interaction occurs when the interviewee experiences mutual trust. Any reality is jointly constructed by the interviewee and the interviewer. Mann (2016) claims that Rapley (2015) makes a distinction between interview data as ‘resources’ and as ‘topics’, which brings into focus the two contrary positions of interview data as: (1) a resource approach regarding the collected data that reflects the interviewees’ reality outside of the interview, and (2) a topic approach that views the collected data as reflecting the reality jointly constructed by the interviewee and the interviewer (Mann, 2016). I view the formal and open-ended interview talk as jointly constructed. I mainly draw on the interview data as a topic approach because the topics sometimes emerged during the open-ended interviews. For example, when the students in 10th grade were about to choose their study programmes, I was present and so could interview them about their choices. I reverted to previous topics in later interviews.

4.3.4 The emerging professional researcher identity

The following excerpts from my field notes illustrate how my emerging researcher identity was initiated, as well as how it developed during the fieldwork period.

School B: The classroom situation was a bit noisy. The following question was asked by one of the boys in class, who probably hoped to make me look a bit foolish, although it made the other students curious:

Mohammed: Imagine if you do not understand what I mean, imagine if I say ‘pirate’, what will you think then? (About five of the boys were laughing; many of the other students were looking at me). (Field notes 2012)

I responded that ‘pirate’ might have a different meaning in, for example, ‘Kebab-Norwegian’ compared to the meaning in ordinary Norwegian, and that I might have to ask for an explanation of certain things the students said. Having passed his ‘test’, I felt that a kind of mutual respect was created between myself as a grown-up researcher and the young students.

School A: In the beginning, when I first presented, there was some noise in the classroom, although they soon started to listen. After my presentation, one of the boys, Malik, had a critical question:

Malik: Are you criticising our parents for pushing us too much regarding education? (Field notes 2012)

This question gave me the opportunity to explain the idea of funds of knowledge and to ask whether a ‘push from parents’ could also be a positive factor in helping them to focus on school work. This led to a discussion about their parents’ expectations in their education. I explained that my wish was to understand how they reflected on such questions. Malik said:

Malik: *Normally, we do not talk like this in class. This conversation is different [serious].* (Field notes 2012)

The discussions seemed to foster an atmosphere wherein the students became curious about the research topics. They responded to the research topics and challenged me, as a researcher, with relevant questions regarding the upcoming fieldwork. The information sequences show, I think, how my access to the field was shaped by my presenting a thematic research project that the students could show societal and personal engagement in. In the break after the session in School A, one of the girls said:

Amirtha: *It will be a pleasure to contribute.* (Field notes 2012)

After the information sequence in School A, I became ‘the researcher’. Instead of using my name, they referred to me as ‘researcher’. In School B, too, the main participants also addressed me as ‘researcher’ (they did not use my first name). This probably created an emerging identity for me as a ‘professional researcher’, someone who was interested in their life experiences and their future trajectories on behalf of Norwegian society. Entering into the identity as a professional researcher made my ethical responsibility all the more clear (Yee & Andrews, 2006).

The most important aspects of being a professional researcher in the field were making the participants understand the consequences of the research, being respectful and showing my genuine interest in the research topics. In order to access their societal knowledge, I had to address personal and, therefore, sensitive topics. It was thus necessary to adopt an identity as a professional researcher. In addition, the research design required me to hang around young people in school and during their leisure time with friends and family – something that could be seen as entering their private sphere (cf. Rysst, 2008). I felt that taking on a ‘professional identity’ created the necessary distance between them and me. Through my professional researcher identity, I aimed to make the participants see the importance of the information they were about to provide to the research community and wider society about living global lives. Being a professional researcher may also have helped the other non-participating students to understand the research that their fellow students were taking part in; the barrier for participating was hopefully reduced. The professional identity was beneficial for my intention of getting to know the students on their own terms and listening to their knowledge and their reflections.

Being a professional researcher and, in turn, having some authority, meant that the ethical aspects of the research process became particularly visible, both to myself and the participants. I tried to be sensitive to their well-being and to protect their feelings in social settings by letting them, for example, decide the pace and place. I emphasised the use of a critical reflexive communication process to avoid them giving me private information that

they might later regret disclosing (to raise their awareness). Certainly, the participants were ordinary students and, as such, they were not well acquainted with the various aspects of ethnographic research (cf. Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Seeing me as a professional researcher probably made it clear to the participants that what I witnessed and what they told me would form part of a research project on the consequences of increased globalisation and that the research would be likely be published in scientific journals at a later stage. One way of helping the participants to see the consequences of participation can be found in the manner that Eriksen's (2013) fieldwork was conducted in the classroom. Eriksen chose to adopt the 'role' as an author writing a book instead of adopting a teacher role. Her argument was that taking on an author role would make the participants understand that the submitted information would be published at a later stage (Eriksen, 2013). I chose to focus on a professional researcher identity instead of that of an author.

My focus on what the students thought was important knowledge for Norwegian society might have rendered them able to place me in their social geography and to understand the project and what they thought was important to communicate to the public sphere, as well as its consequences for them. Following a research design that included participant observations in arenas other than the school made the identity of a professional researcher preferable to that of a teacher. The identity of a professional researcher using participant observations probably implied to the participants that they could take control of the pace and the place of the observation (i.e. it could protect the participants' feelings in social settings). A teacher identity could be understood as 'instructive' with regard to what kind of information the participants should provide (Eriksen, 2013).

4.3.5 The participants wish to contribute

My impression during the fieldwork was that the participants and their parents were quite eager to talk about their life experiences and growing up, as well as their communities and education. In particular, the students' engagement with the fieldwork, with my interpretation on a societal and personal level, informed me about several ethical and methodological implications for the research. The societal and personal engagement might explain why the students accepted me as a researcher and why they wanted to participate in my research; they seemed to want to contribute knowledge to Norwegian society and talk about their personal life experiences and identities. As the fieldwork progressed, I questioned myself regarding whether I had touched upon a theme that the students felt a 'need' talk about. There could be a risk that I might be used, perhaps unconsciously, by the young people in their identity processes as a neutral grown-up discussion partner due to the research themes and the proximity between researcher and participants. The following excerpt illustrates the societal engagement and identity negotiations.

Ekin: You [Norwegians] think that we [female Muslims] are not allowed to do anything. I have visited seven countries with my youth group – without my parents.
(Field notes 2012)

My observations showed that Ekin experienced more parental control than her male siblings (see also Eriksen, 2013, p. 49). She strongly engaged with her religion's view of gendered

equality and how it was practiced by Muslims in her school. She would get very upset if some of the Muslim boys did not respect the view of females as expressed in the Koran. Ekin exhibited great engagement with the identity topics. It was clear that she wanted her story to be heard.

One of the other participants shared information about a family trip to visit relatives in an East African country where she witnessed the many hardships, but also the positive life events that her relatives experienced. One of her relatives had completed a good IT-related education, but there were no relevant jobs to be found at home or abroad. One of my strategies here was to be considerate:

Interviewer: I hope my questions are not too invasive?

Mona: No, not at all, it is a relief to talk about this; it is like 'therapy'. (Interview 2012)

The girls show engagement with the fieldwork both socially and on a personal identity level. It was, therefore, important for me to adopt an identity as a professional researcher and listen to their knowledge, as well as avoiding the participants placing me as a researcher in their social geography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983) as a neutral and grown-up 'expert'. My identity as a professional researcher probably made it possible for the participants to talk about difficult issues. Lien, for example, talked about her challenging situation at school; she felt invisible to the other students and the teachers. As a participant in my research, she had the opportunity to be seen and to express her identity and experiences.

Interviewer: What does it mean to be a participant?

Lien: I regard it as work. I feel that I do a kind of job. Like I am at work [...] I have learnt the distinction between private and personal. We [the three other female participants] talk about what we can tell you, about whether a topic is too private. (Interview 2012)

Lien elaborated on the above answer in a later interview.

Lien: I have thought [more] about that question [...] when I had to tell you about myself I started to think and I became more proud of myself. I felt like I was doing something important. I have agreed to participate in a quantitative research project. (Interview 2012)

Their engagement and 'need' to contribute might have given me some power of definition over what and who were considered important. This might have been the situation whether they viewed me as a professional researcher or a neutral grown-up who was interested in their lives. To contribute to the research may have had implications for the participants' position in the group and their sense of their own value (cf. Eriksen, 2013). There were situations where I felt I knew less than the students. Feeling, sometimes, uncertain and like an outsider made my researcher identity more fluid and complex (Thorne, 1993 as cited in Eriksen, 2013). The following situation is illustrative of this:

I had been in the class all day and nobody seemed to be interested in me. I felt a bit of an outsider and I thought: Have I been here too often? Perhaps the students are bored of having a researcher visiting them? Then, Malik looked up from his desk and said: What are you doing today? Isn't it boring being here? I explained that observing a normal school day was also meaningful for my research. I made an attempt to validate my participation. However, I felt that it was Malik, actually, who helped me to not be invisible in the class due to his seeing me – the positions had changed. (Field notes 2012)

In general, throughout the fieldwork, the participants contributed with knowledge, they talked eagerly, explained slang and situations, and they helped me to understand and become a part of the social milieu when they noticed that I was, perhaps, feeling or being outside the group.

My identity as a professional researcher gave me the possibility of appearing to be someone who wanted to learn from the participants by creating mutual relationships (see Gonzales et al., 2005) and receiving detailed data (Fangen, 2004; Green et al., 2012; Spradley, 1979). It was important for me, as a researcher, to act professionally in the field. By addressing the participants with open-ended questions, allowing them to reflect on the topics, and returning to certain subjects on later occasions, I think that I helped the students to become interested in the fieldwork. Additionally, letting the students decide the pace and the place for the interviews and meetings inspired them to contribute. I believe that by using this approach, I contributed to the students' acceptance of me and my work. In some cases, the students' perceptions of my identity in the field also changed (cf. Album, as cited in Eriksen, 2013 p. 46) over the two-year research period.

In Eriksen's (2013) study, which also involved sensitive themes, she followed an emotional trajectory during her fieldwork. In many cases, in the interviews, her participants gave her a wealth of information and described Eriksen as a 'therapist'. According to Eriksen (2013), it was important to strike an ethical balance, although she found it difficult not being able to follow up with the participants after the interviews, or even to publish all the information given in confidence despite the fact that her work depended on analysing and contextualising their stories. Eriksen (2013) argues that there is no easy way to handle this. She gave the participants the opportunity to withdraw their information during and after the interviews – all the way up to her submission deadline. It was important for her to alter the identities of the participants when dealing with sensitive information, although the most sensitive information was obscured (Eriksen, 2013). I came across many ethical situations that were of the same nature as those experienced by Eriksen. I, too, followed an emotional trajectory during the fieldwork. I also told the informants that their information could be withdrawn at any time during the fieldwork, right up until the submission deadline for my work. I also chose not to use some of the sensitive information that was given to me.

4.3.6 *How I understood the participants*

Equally important to the issue of how the students understood me is the question of how I understood the participants. I began my research by observing the participants' positional

identities and I initiated my conversations about social relations and their future educational trajectories. When meeting the classes, I recognised that the students were characterised by a wide range of cultural and religious rules and expectations conveyed from home. Despite the level of noise in both classes, there were many students who expressed an interest in learning. Yet, compared to my experience as a lower secondary school teacher, the difference was striking in terms of the teaching methods applied with the aim of exerting control over the classroom situation.

Some examples that illustrate the differences include the fact that I observed that the teachers mainly conducted their teaching from one end of the classroom, by the blackboard. The classroom situation in School B was characterised by frequent disruptions from some of the students; however, their interruptions were academically oriented. There was a group of five boys in the class in School B who exhibited attitudes, values and practices (religious, gendered and social) that often shaped the academic discussions in the class. Their teacher (female/Muslim) was not afraid to challenge the students' sometimes radical views (cf. Mohammad above). In School A, the disruptions were more noisy and oriented towards making fools of both some of the teachers and other students. The noisy group in School A consisted of a few boys and girls, but compared to the School B group, the rest of the students in the School A class never responded to the noise and harassment from the noisy group. In both classes, about half the students were quiet. As in School B, the students in School A enjoyed, in particular, topics about different cultural and religious practices (e.g. religious views on abortion) and mathematics; during the discussion of these topics the students ceased their noisy, disruptive performative positions.

In the beginning, to fit such general classroom positions into a logic-in-use system, I made accounts of which students received academic and/or social attention from the teachers and other students and which did not. This logic enabled me to obtain a more systematic description of the academic and social positioning of the students. Having School B as a reference point helped me to derive some analytical distance; the variety of student positions in the two classes (A and B) created a space for reflection (Ricoeur, 2006 as cited in Eriksen, 2013). Although certain classroom environmental features were well-known to me, such as the presence of the noisy and the quiet students, the distance to my past experience was large for an adult researcher. My difference from the majority of the participants caused them to explain to me what it is like to grow up in the Grorud Valley as a young person today. I followed the approach of Eriksen (2013), who claims in relation to her ethnographic approach in a multiethnic school that her whiteness and difference from the majority of the participants caused them to explain what it was like to not be white or not have Norwegian parents. Eriksen (2013) questions whether the assumption that 'similar' is better when the researcher seeks to gain 'deep' or valid information about the experiences of others, which is commonly found in much feminist and ethnicity research, is valid. Being different can also mean that information is relayed more accurately to the researcher (Eriksen, 2013). It is likely that some of the information relayed to me was not captured. The variety in cultural practices might have caused me to miss or misinterpret statements due to my limited

knowledge of the different languages and cultures of the students. However, I asked for explanations when necessary in an effort to understand their connotations (Spradley, 1979).

4.3.7 Gender identities in everyday life and school

It became apparent during the interviews that gender was integral to the girls' social and academic everyday life and their time in school. Gender was an important part of the students' narratives regarding behaviour and family expectations, choice of friends, educational futures and family life (e.g. marriage or caretaking, education and future job). For some of the students, gender was explicit, while for others it was less pronounced. Using the concept of funds of knowledge, and hence looking at how practices and identities function as resources, might have led me to focus less on the interplay between gendered, ethnic, religious, generational and global factors.

In lower secondary school, some of the participants mentioned gendered power relations in school, while others said there was no issue between the sexes. Maria and Mona in Class B commented: *"If some of the boys spread rumours, you have to confront them"* (Field notes 2012). In both classes there were mixed peer groups, while other groups consisted of only boys or girls. The latter groups expressed that they were not allowed to or did not want to mix with the opposite sex.

When the participants started to explain their academic and social positions in school, particularly during the formal interviews, their gendered identities turned out to be a central focal point around which other positioning existed. For example, if you were a Muslim girl you could still be 'noisy' and hang out with boys or be 'noisy' and not hang out with boys. You could enter the 'chick' position, which was the equivalent of being 'blonde' for ethnic Norwegian girls ('foreigners' could not enter the 'blonde' position). In short, there existed myriad, often contradictory, gendered positions that were not strictly connected to ethnicity or religion.

Where Eriksen (2013) found that the boys talked less during the interviews than the girls, I did not find any differences; however, individual differences sometimes occurred. Both groups tended, sometimes, to experiment in the interview and observation situations with the gendered rules set forth by their parents. Sikes (2010) has shown that individuals may actively use the interview opportunity to construct alternative identities. Similar situations occurred in my fieldwork, which created ethical dilemmas. During the first in-depth interview with Ali, an ambitious young boy with good grades, he talked freely about having been expelled from school and changing his attitude to a light version of a 'bad boy' because he did not want to disappoint his family. Towards the end of the conversation, he said the following:

Ali: I enjoyed talking to you. It was OK to talk about these topics [...] In Pakistan I can talk to women on my own, but in Norway I can only talk to women in the school setting [...] (Formal interview 2012)

Ali said that he did not want me to tell his class mates about his participation. I answered that our conversations were confidential and that I would treat him the same in school as I did before he became a participant. (Interview 2012)

After the school interview, Ali unexpectedly contacted me on Facebook wanting to add me as a friend in addition to having sent me a Facebook email. I replied to this email, writing that becoming Facebook friends could be compromising, and declined his request. During this email conversation, he repeated that the interviews had to be confidential. (Field notes 2012)

My interpretation was that Ali, in the interview situation, opened up and talked freely about his contradictory positions between school and friends (bad boy) and his family's expectations (being nice in school). Saying it was 'nice to talk to you' probably meant it was 'good to talk about the two absolutely contradictory positions'. I reflected on the problems that Ali probably faced; he would not want his school friends to know he was talking to me, while he might feel guilty because his parents would probably disapprove of the thematic issue (that he was still bad) and of his having a conversation with me alone (I was after all not a teacher). Yet, he expressed confidence and a 'need' to talk about his difficult academic learner position.

It seemed that Ali experimented with gendered cultural rules and an alternative identity that he could use in Pakistan but not in Norway. In the next interview, Ali was more reserved, offering ordinary answers to the research questions. Ali met me for the final interview in my office at the university. Talking to me in school and at the university, where he was allowed to talk with women, was probably a compromise he was comfortable with. In retrospect, I should have discussed the gendered cultural rules with Ali and made him reflect on his 'experiment', as well as questioning what his parents would think about the interviews. I was probably too anxious not to hurt him even though he most likely would not have suffered (cf. Sikes, 2010).

There were also situations where some of the girls wanted to arrange fieldwork with me in inner city Oslo. Based on previous home interviews, I felt that four of the girls' parents practiced gendered rules such as not being allowed to hang out with boys on their own and not being allowed to stay out too late in the evenings. The girls insisted that I could 'hang around' with them in the inner city. I got the impression that this was not somewhere they used to commonly go. One of the girls said '*There are so many white people here. It is so different from home*' [the Grorud Valley], indicating that she did not go to inner city Oslo very often. I assumed that their parents felt the girls were safe with me, since I had provided them with my credentials and phone number and I had also conducted some home interviews. Could it be that the girls used the interview situation as an opportunity to visit inner city Oslo, a place where they were normally not allowed to go?

This shows how ethnographers can find themselves at a crossroads where methods and ethical decisions intersect, and that such incidents can be difficult to anticipate. They must make decisions that satisfy both scientific and moral demands. Being honest in the accounts the researcher offers regarding how she conducted the research is essential for

understanding the ethical dilemmas and identifying alternative solutions (Fetterman, 2010). In Ali's case, I considered it unethical to arrange, for example, 'hang around' meetings due to the need to protect the participant; instead, the interviews with Ali were conducted in places where he felt comfortable. However, with the girls, I felt more confident and able to engage in an open discussion. I asked them to reflect on what their parents would think about the different interview situations, as well as what kind of and how much information they could share.

4.4 Creating theme-based narratives from the data

In this thesis, I investigate young girls' (and some boys') identities and their learning trajectories when constituting gendered future directions. The constraints and possibilities that are encountered in everyday life and the way the girls solve their possible tensions are also approached. The study is longitudinal; the learners are followed over a two-year period.

4.4.1 Biographic case histories

When building the case histories, I used Thomson's (2009) longitudinal biographical 'method-in-practice' to create theme-based narratives, that is, case histories (cf. Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2006). This method helps me to analyse individual learning trajectories in social practice (Sawyer, 2006), the important 'rich points' (Spradley, 1979) in everyday life and young people's positional identities, as well as the tensions and future possibilities found in temporal themes.

According to Thomson (2009), there has been a resurgence of interest in recent years in biographical methods – referred to as a biographical turn (see Thomsen, 2009). The terms 'biographical methods' and 'life history research' encompass different approaches that are defined through a common methodological starting point, namely the collection and analysis of biographical or autobiographical accounts. This includes different research traditions. Common to each typology is a distinction between realist and constructionist positions – the relationship between the life that has been lived and the story that is told. Proponents of biographical methods distinguish them by virtue of their ability to engage with temporal processes. There exists little reference to longitudinal methods within the biographical methods literature, although re-interviewing is relatively commonplace and relationships between researchers and the research change over time. The way biographical methods tend to grasp temporal processes is through the reconstruction of different events, that is, the desire to understand what has happened rather than to explore what is happening or what will happen (Thomson, 2009).

The emergence of a 'qualitative longitudinal method' is a recent development (cf. Saldaña, 2003; Thomson & Holland, 2003). The longitudinal method makes visible: (1) contradictions between successive accounts and between intentions and practices such as opposing positions, (2) phenomena that can change over time and sequential dimensions such as 'educational' trajectories – to follow individuals or groups over time, (3) the relationship between agency, structure and serendipity – when questions of *timing* are important as in the case of academic, social and gendered positions during transitions, and (4) the way opportunities are mediated, such as educational constraints and possibilities.

Hence, longitudinal qualitative research focuses on a diachronic analysis – processual and temporal themes such as the interplay of risk and resilience in the context of biography (cf. Thomson & Holland, 2003).

According to Thomson (2009), a longitudinal approach to life-history methods also brings to the fore the question of the subject in process. Thomson (2009) draws loosely on the notion of the reflexive project of self (cf. Giddens, 1991), in combination with ideas taken from Nielsen (1996), Archer (2007) and others, in order to capture psychological depth and the situatedness of individual projects within families, generations and wider social processes. In this thesis, I draw on the theory of Holland et al. (1998) and Gonzales et al. (2005) to approach the subject in process. This framework can help me to analyse how identity processes relate to individuals' self-reflection and their learning in wider social contexts (i.e. learning trajectories; in family, leisure and school).

In a discussion of how researchers can work through narratives using a longitudinal approach, Thomson (2009) identifies several challenges: variation in the interviewees' styles, the 'autobiographical turn in the society' that may both control individuals and express marginal voices, the 'narrative' failure that reflects a failure on the part of the interviewer to recognise the subject position and narrative style of the interviewee, and the silencing of some accounts. However, she argues that narrative style in general is not a methodological problem that needs to be overcome, since it can play a role in influencing what it is possible for an interviewee to say. Thomson (2009) suggests investigating the potential within longitudinal studies where depth, contradiction and trust can be the dividend of research relationships that are built up over time (and not to search for 'authentic voices'). In the field of biographical research, the life story is the data (an individual interview account), while the life history is the analytical story that is told by drawing on a range of data sources. A rich data set only becomes a narrative through emplotment, and three forms of synthesis are achieved between (1) many events and one story, (2) discordance and concordance, and (3) different senses of time. Therefore, Thomson (2009) uses the term 'case history' to reflect the transformation of the raw data through emplotment. She also focuses on using a small number of cases to do justice to the complexity and scale of individual data sets, as well as focusing on the individual identities 'in process' that complement the unfolding lives.

I drew on Thomson's (2009) method when making my decision to use a small number of cases, to use individual life histories, to present the individual data set and to explore questions about changes in participants' academic, social and gendered positional identities in the social context or figured worlds. In this way, I can represent and interpret the girls' own stories, as well as capturing the personal dimensions of experiences as they are interrelated across sociocultural contexts and over time. This approach can demonstrate how social interaction and identities, as interrelated practices, are connected to the capacity to adapt to changing roles within contexts over time (Thomson, 2009). The data sets are analysed individually, then as a cluster and, finally, comparatively. Through this iterative process, I bring together the singular (life history) and the universal (gender order). In my work, I focus on changing identities as connected to both biographical and social contexts.

4.4.2 From reading to writing: Stages of analysis

I processed the raw data from my fieldwork using a three-step process (cf. Eriksen, 2013) in order to create the thematic accounts, that is, to create biographic case narratives from the longitudinal data. In each step, my interpretation guided what was included in the final narrative analysis. I am familiar with the data and, at the same time, am revisiting the data during the analytic process (Thomson, 2009).

The three stages of the analysis were as follows:

- 1) Small talk/preliminary interpretations: My own interpretations as recorded in a notebook during the fieldwork; the ‘in the moment small talk’ with the participants. This represents the first selection of what information to include and what to exclude, what seemed to be relevant and what seemed to be irrelevant.
- 2) Full field notes: Writing full field notes from my preliminary interpretations and transcribing the audio recorded ‘small talk’ involved a further, preliminary, analysis featuring the ordering of experiences, both ‘creating and discovering patterns of interaction’ (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1998, p. 51) from all the data sources. I always transcribed and wrote my field notes the same evening after returning home from the fieldwork. I spent hours writing as many details as possible in my field diary. Sometimes, I wrote my first preliminary analysis of what I had witnessed (events) in separate sections. This means that in the transcriptions and field notes, there exists an analysis in the sense that the re-telling of observed (transcribed) reality will always be an interpretation. What the ethnographer experiences during the fieldwork will always be the researcher’s experiences or the researcher’s experiences of the students’ experiences (Sikes, 2010). I hope I have made this clear in the text presented.
- 3) The articles and the thesis: I transcribed the interviews/field notes from Norwegian to English. I added information from the field notes about notifiable things that had happened.

Using the approach I have applied to the analysis of the cases, I seek to maintain the boundaries between my identity as an analyst/interpreter, since I was also the interviewer, by sharpening the focus on the significance of writing as an interpretative and ethical act (Thomson, 2009).

The process of moving from a longitudinal data set to a case history involves both the condensation of the data and a structured analysis. It is important to perform (combine) cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses. Transforming a two-year data set consisting of interviews and field notes into case histories entailed the inductive identification of the themes from the whole data set: events of everyday learning and the positional identities. Further, the analysis of the data accounts in the later material recalled earlier statements. The outcome of this stage of analysis was the analysis of a series of data accounts for a single individual – to obtain an ‘overview’.

The second stage entailed moving from the component parts towards the recreation of the whole in the form of an analytical narrative. I followed the approach of Thomson (2009) in terms of the way she developed a structure to show the rich longitudinal material and work out the 'story'. Thomson (2009) has developed a holistic model for capturing the relationship between an individual's accounts of his/her self and different arenas of his/her life (cf. Foucault's 'techniques of the self' and 'daily 'aesthetics of existence', which enable the analysis of the connected individual). The discursive resources available to the individual can then be analysed when enquiring as to how that person constructs an identity from those resources, while still being compatible with biographical data. This model enabled the analysis of the resources that students draw on when positioning their academic, social and gendered identities (individual's accounts of his/her self) in their learning trajectories (different arenas of their life) over time in order to understand what they 'did'.

This method helped me to take account of the relationship between the biographic aspects and the contexts linked to the young people's understanding of themselves and their change of academic, social and gendered position across their funds of knowledge networks (Gonzales et al., 2005) or figured worlds (Holland et al., 1998). This helped me to understand how they position themselves towards gendered futures, which are made visible through mediated actions (Wertsch, 1998). The resulting thematic cases reflected a transformation of the data set through an emplotment reflecting the participants' positioning over time. The case histories can illustrate the relationship between individuals' accounts of their self and different arenas of their life reflecting the cultural practices of family and friends, as well as their position as learners and their future trajectories during the transition between lower and upper secondary school.

Analysing learning across contexts and over time helps me to visualise how everyday practices influence positional identities and future directions and trajectories. It demonstrates how cultural practices are shared and used as resources (funds of knowledge) that play a role in changes that occur in the positional identities. Analysing the cases can help me to document how educational transitions open or close future possibilities for young girls. An implicit finding regarding their gendered future direction is the continuity or discontinuity of family practices.

My analysis represents a narrative analysis (not an analysis of narratives). It draws on different data sources in a confined system of study. The outcome is a story configured around a plot told in retrospect, that is, a 'history' exploring intentional and unintentional outcomes. In constructing this story, I have captured a process of change over time and a sense of the subjects as positioned within distinct social locations that provide them with access to local resources, scripts and recipes for structuring experiences (cf. Bruner, 1987). The story is structured around the possible lives available – the academic, social and gendered positional identities. It is important to recognise the role of stories in mediating between experience, identity and expression, as well as maintaining the complex tangle of causality and self-determination (cf. Bertaux-Wiame & Thompson, 1997) and enhancing understanding rather than supplying accurate explanations (cf. Bertaux, 1981). The

narratives are written in the past tense in order to signal that the description is based on a situated observation and it is not intended to be a timeless truth (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003).

Being both a researcher and a writer gives the researcher power to create versions of reality. The researcher claims to present a legitimate and authentic account of people's lives. The researcher must be aware of this control (Sikes, 2010). Therefore, I told the participants that the interpretations contained in the narratives were made by me and that some of the participants might react to my interpretations. I signalled that I 'owned' the narratives, although it was particularly important that my interpretations and cases were ethically founded (cf. Bruner, 1993; Sikes, 2010). Sometimes, the notion of respondent validation can be used to show the interpretations to those they concern and offer them the opportunity to comment. In my research, some of the participants responded positively to the opportunity to review their narratives, while some did not. Like Eriksen (2013), I used pseudonyms and other attempts to disguise the participants. According to Sikes (2010), this strategy only works in the wider world where readers do not personally know, or know of, the people concerned. In the case of my work, I believe that only close friends will be able, should they read my work, to identify each other in the narratives. During my validation process with the participants, I agreed that they were only to read the material that concerned themselves. They were also made aware that the deadline for withdrawing information would be at the time of submission of the articles. As Ellis (2007) argues, this shows that I had to consider the potential ethical implications of each individual case and that researching and writing lives is intimate relational work.

4.4.3 Generalisation

In this study of two school classes (during 10th grade), only thirteen students are followed during the transition to upper secondary school – and over a two-year period. They provide the main data corpus of my work. How can a study of so few young lives speak to more general issues for education? How can particular experiences and meanings be used as evidence of something more general? McLeod and Yates (2006) discuss and explore how and why one young woman's narrative about herself and her future is revealing and matters beyond its own particularity. First, one needs to perform a standard categorisation. In my work, the participants' particularities include the fact that they are 'gendered'; ten girls and three boys participated in the research. Six of the girls' narratives represent the ten girls (the boys function as reference cases). They live in a multiethnic suburb, with different ethnic affiliations and experiences (see Table 1), and they attend public schools. Two of the girls (Ndey and Hanne) come from a relatively poor background. However, the particularities go beyond these categorical descriptions of the girls' experiences and the way they are framed and reframed. The girls' positional identities are further illuminated by considering a comparison with those other young people in the study. Particular themes are identified and interpreted recursively (Thomson, 2009). Of importance to this approach is the comparison with other young women in the study, as well as in popular and academic discourses about contemporary gender relations and young women (McLeod & Yates, 2006).

In my work, one single participant's everyday practices and funds of knowledge, as well as their positional identities and future orientations 'imagined' and constructed across figured

worlds over time, illustrate some of the ways in which cultural discourses and narratives shape mediated actions. It is important to note how different forms of feminism and equality narratives, independence, gendered stereotypical positional identities and narratives are mediated – along with the impact of changes associated with gendered perspectives (feminism) and the girls' working lives. By drawing on the biographical methodology outlined by McLeod and Yates (2006), I can observe the intersecting effects in my work between positional identities across the figured worlds of family life, everyday lives and school, and I can see how dispositions are experienced, discovered and negotiated. I found that these figured worlds were not seamless (i.e. the worlds approached gendered positional identities in different ways), although some were persistent.

According to McLeod and Yates' (2006) method, the orientation towards the future is not simply viewed as being determined by family or class – nor is it free from the sense of norms and possibilities. I could address the issue between structures and change using their biographic method. Hence, I was able to capture the interplay between learners' everyday practices, their positional identities and their future orientations with the more structured effects of school and family location. However, in my work, I focus on how the young girls' understand themselves, their identities and their positions (structures) through their reflections on their trajectories and future possibilities. Across these trajectories, they reflect on their changing identities through mediated action.

5 Main Findings

This chapter contains a summary of each article followed by the findings, which are structured and categorised in tables. Next, there is an analysis that focuses on the findings across the articles and, finally, an analysis that is framed by the research questions (see Chapter 1).

5.1 The articles

The first summary of each article forms a level one analysis. Following the summary is a second level analysis that deals with the research questions across the articles. For more details and complete findings see the attached articles I, II and III.

5.1.1 Article I: *Family (ethnic) practices across global networks*

Roth, S. (2016). Exploring Funds of Knowledge During Educational Transitions. In *Learning Across Contexts in the Knowledge Society*.

Article I investigates the everyday learning of two young girls (Maria and Ndey), as well as how they understand themselves as learners across contexts and over time, which constitutes their future trajectories. I define learning broadly, encompassing the social practices found in everyday lives and at school (Ludvigsen et al., 2011). I investigate how the two young girls' positional identities (Holland et al., 1998) change based on the funds of knowledge (Gonzalez et al., 2005) that are exchanged across their global family network and the contexts of leisure time and school. The ways in which funds of knowledge create tensions and are used as resources when adopting learner positions and creating gendered futures are analysed. The girls' reflections on themselves as learners and their 'images of self' become visible during transitions when they have to make decisions about the future. The research question informing the study is:

RQ How does young Norwegian girls' everyday learning across their funds of knowledge networks construct learning identities and positionings that constitute future trajectories?

Theory: To address this research question, I draw on Holland et al.'s (1998) concept of positional identities within figured worlds and Gonzales et al.'s (2005) concept of funds of knowledge. Together, these concepts explain the processes by which identity develops in practice and over time. Since identity is in ongoing construction, it can change, and changing identity involves learning, since this must involve being or doing something new. As such, reflections on one's position contribute to the formation of persons as positions and sites of identity, that is, to the understanding of themselves (Holland & Leander, 2004).

Methodology: The theme-based ethnographic biographic case histories are analysed using a 'method-in-practice' (Thomson, 2009) conducted in a multiethnic suburb. I use the case histories of the two girls to investigate the role of family practices in the girls' learning trajectories, learning identities and future orientations. The case histories are also used in the

analysis of how the everyday practices and identities that constitute the girls' futures become visible during educational transitions. Positioning is a 'prerequisite' for adapting to changing roles through the use of global practices and school during the transition phase.

Table 3 Findings of article 1

Article I	
<p>RQ: How does young Norwegian girls' everyday learning across their funds of knowledge networks construct learning identities and positionings that constitute future trajectories?</p>	
<p>Interpretation components</p> <p><i>Analytical concepts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positional identity Figured worlds Funds of knowledge networks <p><i>Analytical variables:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family figured world Funds of knowledge networks Tensions Learning identities Positional identities Change of identity Future positions Educational trajectories To stay or leave Norway <p><i>Conditions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning trajectories Educational transition 	<p style="text-align: center;">Findings – Learners' developing sense of self and connected learning</p> <p>The important factors that influence the girls' future life decisions include the connection between self-understandings (of their own positions), multiethnic family practices across (global) funds of knowledge networks, their positional identities as learners, teacher support and funds of knowledge as transferred to school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Transitions</p> <p>The transition makes visible how their positions as learners and their future trajectories develop (to be confident or not). It was essential for the girls to connect multiethnic funds of knowledge – exchanged across family networks – to school subjects when planning an educational trajectory and future job. Inspired by their exchange networks, the girls changed from investing in their social worlds during lower secondary school to investing in the academic world, despite some educational challenges, after the transition to upper secondary school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Learning identities, positionings and learning trajectories</p> <p>In their learning trajectories, the students' positionings and learning identities evolved from practices in family networks, solving tensions regarding their educational futures and teacher support. Family networks were kept alive as a strategy for creating a safe future and they provided resources for learners' self-understandings and their recognition of the need for education. The provided knowledge concerned: multiethnicity, integration matters, refugee and global economic equality (important when creating futures and solving tensions about educational challenges), and societal narratives about solidarity (that the girls negotiated (implicitly) regarding the future).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Gendered futures</p> <p>During the two-year duration of the study, the girls were hesitant and conscious about their selves. The girls became oriented towards specific educational trajectories such as social worker/societal contribution. One of the girls (Maria) struggled to fulfil her future dream and postponed her educational trajectory. She struggled to connect her interests to schooling and felt a lack of teacher support, which caused her disappointment. The other girl (Ndey) developed a more ambitious educational trajectory. Through support from a teacher, she managed to connect her interest to schooling and she positioned herself as eager and improved her self-conception as a learner. In the context of the renewed interest in understanding women's futures in multiethnic Norway, one can see that these girls are interested in public work as a way of contributing to and transforming global society.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Schools and families – new insights into educational trajectories</p> <p>Exploring students' everyday knowledge can enable teachers to create learning communities in which experiences can be shared – to contextualise and help them understand their own and others' practices. Teachers can help students to understand and connect their self-understandings (identity), their funds of knowledge and their everyday positional identities in order to catalyse confidence and motivation, as well as assisting in the positive development of their educational orientations during transitions. Families, schools and guidance counsellors may benefit from increased knowledge about how students' exchange networks play a role in their self-understandings, learning identities and future trajectories. This should help them to support learners in developing futures that are meaningful and worth working for.</p>

5.1.2 Article II: *Changing social positional identities*

Roth, S. and Erstad, O. (2015). Positional identities in educational transitions: Connecting contemporary and future trajectories among multi-ethnic girls. In *Ethnography & Education*.

Article II investigates how two girls' (Amirtha and Lien) personal experiences of being learners, in the interplay between gendered expectations in the family and non-academic learning, shape their educational trajectories. Their experiences are interpreted by analysing their understanding of how their social, gendered and academic positional identities change from one level of schooling to the next. The research question that guides the analysis is:

RQ How can learners' positional identities be understood and how do such identities develop during educational transitions from lower secondary to upper secondary school?

Methodology: The resulting thematic cases reflected a transformation of the data set through an emplotment reflecting the participants' changing positional identities over time. These cases visualised the relationship between an individual's account of herself and different arenas of life reflecting the practices, as well as her position as a learner and her future orientation. The analysis of the cases documents how educational transitions may open or close future options.

Theory: The article shows that Holland et al.'s (1998) conceptual framework can be used to explore the interplay between cultural practices and social, gendered and academic positional identity processes within and across figured worlds, as well as educational trajectories during transitions. From this, we can understand how transformations in learners' positional identities are understood and related to their engagement with learning and the constitution of their gendered futures.

Table 4 Findings of article II

Article II	
RQ: <i>How can learners' positional identities be understood and how do such identities develop during educational transitions from lower secondary to upper secondary school?</i>	
<p>Interpretation components</p> <p><i>Analytical concepts:</i></p> <p>Social gendered and academic positional identities</p> <p>Learning identity</p> <p>Figured worlds of family, friends, school and society</p> <p><i>Analytical variables:</i></p> <p>Learners' self-understanding</p> <p>Constraints and expectations across figured worlds</p> <p>Tensions between educational and everyday possibilities</p> <p>Interplay between non-academic and academic practices</p> <p>Educational trajectories</p> <p>To stay or leave the local community</p> <p>Gendered futures</p> <p><i>Conditions:</i></p> <p>Learning trajectories</p> <p>Educational transition</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Findings – Learners' developing sense of self and connected learning</i></p> <p>The important factors influencing the girls' future life decisions were the connection between non-academic and academic learning, their self-understandings of social gendered and academic positional identities, and how their identities changed from lower secondary to upper secondary school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Transitions</i></p> <p>The transition makes visible through the students' self-understandings how learners' positional identities and learning trajectories develop during transitions between levels of schooling. Transitions are experienced as a complex web of non-academic and academic influences. Learners' possibilities and limitations become visible during the transition and they initiate a change in future directions. The girls continued to invest in their education despite the educational challenges they experienced before and after the transition.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Learning identities, positional identities and educational trajectories</i></p> <p>Everyday learning and non-academic factors such as playing chess, reading novels and a youth lifestyle influenced the way the girls positioned themselves as learners. So did the way they were positioned by teachers and the development of their educational trajectories. Tensions about confidence, friendship and social interactions across their everyday social contexts were crucial to their sense of self. They felt positioned towards education and family life by their parents in both a burdensome and inspiring way. They felt a need to understand their gendered future expectations (regarding family life, education), which created tensions. The girls sought knowledge to solve tensions regarding their future trajectories and they developed increased self-understanding (about own identity) as persons and as learners. Lien felt disempowered at the outset of the study, but gradually she took control. Amirtha felt a loss of control over her own decision making, although she gradually regained control. Educational trajectories could be enacted when they controlled their learning identities after solving tensions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Gendered futures</i></p> <p>Throughout the two-year duration of the study, the girls were hesitant and conscious about their selves. They showed an emerging reflexive autonomy. Amirtha struggled to understand her gendered future position, while Lien worked to position herself as a student towards a specific future trajectory. The narratives show the connection between cultural interests and positioning as learners in school. Lien connected her interests to school subjects and improved her self-conception as a learner. Amirtha lost her connection to her main interest (chess) and struggled with motivation and her grades suffered as a result. The girls positioned themselves towards future education and to become providers. Societal level narratives such as 'becoming independent' initiated reflections on gendered futures. Different family gendered expectations were important in terms of having to stay in or leave the local community.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Schools and families – new insights into educational trajectories</i></p> <p>The findings indicate that family practices, interests and learning identity are important in future decision making. Teachers can help students to connect their past and contemporary histories from outside of school in order to gain self-understanding and motivation in the process of reflecting on futures. However, the teachers were not actively involved in school life and in the way students positioned themselves as learners in school. The teachers in both school levels were not aware of the learning trajectories that the girls experienced in their transitions from lower to upper secondary school. Teachers can benefit from obtaining more knowledge about the educational and future positions students experience and must navigate between home and school. Teachers should map wellbeing, the academic goals of their students and how they can achieve those goals. In a multiethnic society, gendered practices and positional identities may differ. Students can therefore benefit from participating in school communities that acknowledge and discuss differences in gendered identities. The students can thus feel confident in school and in their own process of creating futures.</p>

5.1.3 Article III: Handling gendered stereotypical identities

Roth, S. and Stuedahl, D. (submitted). “You Norwegians think we female Muslims are not free”. Enactment of gendered positional identities during transition stages. In *Gender and Education*.

Article III investigates how two girls (Narnia and Ekin) involve their social networks in positioning as a learner during the transition between lower and upper secondary school. Their gendered identities and future trajectories are interpreted by analysing how they experience the possibilities represented by education, as well as how they negotiate with the resources taken from everyday life with family and friends. The research question that guides the analysis is:

RQ: *How do young girls understand themselves as learners and enact their gendered positional identities when performatively constituting their futures during educational transitions?*

Methodology: The resulting biographic thematic cases reflected the transformation of the data set through an emplotment reflecting the girls’ positional identities over time. These cases visualised the relationship between the girl’s accounts of their self and the different arenas of life reflecting the everyday cultural practices, as well as their performative positional identities as learners and future orientations. The way we analyse the cases documents how stereotypical (macro and meso narrative) gendered positional identities are negotiated (on a micro level), as well as how they influence learners’ gendered performative enactment when transitioning to a new school.

Theory: The article shows that Holland et al.’s (1998) concept can be used to explore how the two girls experienced a complex web of provided gendered positional identities through their self-understandings, which created tensions and influenced their educational trajectories. The girls responded with performative enactments as learners in school. The trajectories they followed across global contexts were related to how their gendered positional identities were performed when constituting their educational trajectories. Hence, gender became a pivot point in their everyday lives and future choices.

Table 5 Findings from article III

Article III	
<p>RQ: <i>How do young girls understand themselves as learners and enact their gendered positional identities when performatively constituting futures in educational transitions?</i></p>	
<p>Interpretation components</p> <p><i>Analytical concepts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social gendered and academic positional identities Understanding of own position Performative position Figured worlds of family, friends, school and society Learning identity <p><i>Analytical variables:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners' self-understanding Change of identity Educational trajectories Tensions across figured worlds Constraints and expectations between educational and everyday possibilities To remain or leave the community Gendered futures <p><i>Conditions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning trajectories Educational transition 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Findings – Learners’ developing sense of self and connected learning</i></p> <p>The important factors influencing the girls’ future life decisions were the connection between their self-understandings of their own identities and expectations during interplay with different gendered narratives such as gendered (ethnic/religious) stereotypical positional identities (being suppressed, being not free) and teacher support.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Transitions</i></p> <p>The transition makes visible through the students’ self-understandings how their positions as learners and their future trajectories developed. It is essential to recognise how the experienced gendered stereotypical positional identities across the figured worlds of family, school and society (macro level) – as exchanged across global family networks and everyday life – influenced their gendered positional identities in school. Their development as learners and their future orientations were strongly influenced by gendered positional identities. As a response to stereotypical narratives, Ekin changed to an increasingly oppositional performative position after the transition to upper secondary. Narnia showed increasing confidence and motivation. She continued in a gendered family position, that is, to be quiet.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Learning identities, positional identities and learning trajectories</i></p> <p>As learners, the performative positions evolved from societal (macro level) narratives (independent, wearing a bindi connotes being suppressed, Muslims are not free) and practices within global family networks and everyday life (meso level). As a response, in order to solve the tensions that the narratives created (micro level), the students chose to either reject the way these positions played out in school (Ekin) or adopt motivated educational trajectories (Narnia).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Gendered futures</i></p> <p>During the two-year duration of the study, the girls were hesitant and conscious of their gendered futures. Narnia pursued her educational trajectory of becoming independent and taking care of her family. Ekin focused on her performative position and promoting the gendered values found in Islam in school. Her educational trajectory suffered. As a response to these challenges and as a possible independent choice, she foresaw a future as housewife with a family and kids (not a future job). This might have been a response to family expectations of focusing on education and her future occupation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Schools and families – new insights into educational trajectories</i></p> <p>Teachers can help students to identify the gendered experiences that evolve from everyday life and to connect their understandings of their own identity and the relation to their performative positions in school. This can catalyse confidence, as well as motivating the positive development of their educational orientations during the transition between school levels. Schools may benefit from increased knowledge concerning how students’ experiences, friendships and gendered positions play a role in their self-understandings as learners, performativity and future trajectories. For example, Ekin could not discuss her rebellious performativity at home, although home-school cooperation regarding performativity could have been instigated during lower secondary school. The school had no knowledge about the reasons behind her position or the tensions that Ekin experienced; hence, the teachers could not assist Ekin in resolving those tensions. However, Narnia found support for solving her tensions within her family and social network.</p>

5.2 Summary of the main findings

This thesis explores how young peoples' everyday practices and their social gendered positional identities are related, as part of their learning trajectories, when they transition from lower to upper secondary school. The findings underline how family practices (funds of knowledge), leisure activities and positional identities create tensions and influence learners' orientations towards their educational trajectories. This allows me to approach the self-understanding and future orientation that inform us about gendered future trajectories. I will now present the findings across the three articles. The findings discussed below are, primarily, linked to the sub-research questions. The research questions in the articles are inter-related to the sub-questions, but have a sharper focus because they are adapted to address different empirical themes in the data set (see tables 3, 4 and 5 in Chapter 5.1).

5.2.1 *Funds of knowledge and learners' positional identities*

SQ a) Which funds of knowledge come into play when the girls' develop as learners?

The findings of this thesis underline that an understanding of learners' cultural practices (funds of knowledge) and social positional identities is needed in order to assess and operationalise new approaches to school learning in an increasingly multiethnic world. I found that multiethnic girls' everyday learning provided contextual resources for negotiating, changing and positioning their social gendered and academic identities. In general, their everyday learning and identities was important to the learners' self-understanding and development inside of school.

The review of the studies conducted beyond the classroom (Chapter 2) underlines that learning and identity transfer across contexts serve to construct learning identities (cf. Leander, 2002; Wortham, 2006), which in turn influences engagement with formal learning. From Biesta et al.'s (2008) perspective, the coherence between learning, identity and agency in the individual can be studied by following learning trajectories over time. Drawing on a broader understanding of context enables the interpretation of people, learning identity and everyday lives (cf. Edwards et al., 2009). The review shows that if the learners' everyday practices are reflected in school, the classes may become more interesting (cf. Scribner & Cole, 1973; Heath, 1983; Erstad, 2010). These reviewed studies support my argument regarding the need to understand how young people themselves think about their educational trajectories and their gendered future possibilities.

The three articles show that the most prominent funds of knowledge found in my study are the family's involvement and expectations regarding education intended to secure a good future. Outside-of-school activities and ethnic family practices within global networks, leisure activities and gendered family practices all had a major influence and implications for the different learners' development. The girls used these practices and interests as resources, in different ways, to handle their families' and their own expectations, as well as to visualise future possibilities. As a common result, in order to understand such expectations they sought knowledge from everyday learning. In article I, I investigate how

funds of knowledge emerge from global family networks. Maria, for example, increasingly drew on her Eritrean family practices in understanding her own identity, which shaped both her learning identity and educational trajectory. Experiencing refugee issues and the situation of Eritrean family members who were less fortunately positioned than her resulted in an engagement with learning. Despite this engagement, her experience was that her funds of knowledge based interests and identities did not become contextualised in school. Her self-conception as a learner suffered. She turned to her family network for educational support. Ndey, in almost the same way, learned from her mother to draw on and combine her Gambian family practices and culture with the Norwegian practices when seeking to understand her own identity. These family practices and positions shaped her learning identity. Her family funds of knowledge were based on interests such as travel and meeting people by traversing her global family network. She adhered to a multiethnic identity; she wanted to live and work in a multiethnic society such as New York. Together with her teacher, she connected her multicultural experience to subjects and thus improved her self-conception as a learner. As such, the girls used their global family practices (ethnicity) as funds of knowledge in their educational trajectories.

In article II, I investigated how everyday practices and identities emerge from family and leisure activities and interests such as chess and a Korean hip-hop lifestyle. Although it is not mentioned explicitly, the article shows how family cultural practices (funds of knowledge) provide recourses that initiate educational trajectories and resources for solving tensions regarding how to pursue such trajectories. One of the girls (Amirtha) was particularly ambitious. When she faced challenges during upper secondary school, she gradually took control over her educational path and decision making. However, she seemed to lean on strategic choices and guidance from her father. Amirtha switched to an educational programme where she thought she could obtain good results. Another girl (Lien) also experienced educational challenges. When she did not succeed in lower secondary school, her funds of knowledge strategy was to solve her educational problem on her own. This knowledge probably meant that the problem had to be solved. Lien found support in the Korean hip-hop lifestyle.

In article III, I investigated how gendered practices and positional identities in global family networks (funds of knowledge) emerge as a resource for shaping learning trajectories. In her everyday learning, Narnia faced different gendered identities across her global family network, that influenced her self-understanding and performative 'quiet' position. For example, visiting her grandmother in her parents' home country triggered reflexions on gendered possibilities. As such, her gendered experiences became resources for her educational trajectory; she positioned herself as a motivated student despite facing educational challenges. Ekin drew on family engagement in her religion in terms of understanding and engaging in gender equality between the sexes. Although it is not mentioned explicitly in the article, these practices can be seen as funds of knowledge. Ekin also felt positioned as 'not free' as a female Muslim girl [by Norwegians]. These practices influenced her self-understanding and performative position in school. Her response was to protest loudly through adopting a 'noisy' learner position and questioning some of the

Muslim boys' lack of respect for the equality ideals found in the Koran (the school did not identify her engagement in gender equality).

The review of youth, gender and ethnicity studies (Chapter 2) underlines the influence of socioeconomic and cultural background on the learning process. In my work, 'background' consists of funds of knowledge and identities that are transferred to school. Such funds of knowledge and identities become important in the initiation and positioning of learners' academic identity and educational trajectories. According to Heggen and Øya (2005), Norwegian girls who lack the 'right' academic habitus may draw on social relationships, leisure activities and gendered identities when constructing and succeeding with their education (Heggen & Øya, 2005). This finding is in accordance with my work.

Across the articles, this thesis explores how the everyday cultural practices (funds of knowledge) relate to learners' social, gendered and academic positional identities, which also influence their formal learning. The articles show that the students' self-understanding of their own position as learners relates to how they see themselves in their different social, gendered and academic figured worlds. For example, in Lien's case, one can see how her mother's cultural practice and gendered identity become visible in Lien's past, present and future identity and subsequently form Lien's academic trajectory. Lien's mother feels that she married too early, so Lien focuses on education and her future occupation before marriage. In all, the important factors for positive development as a learner, regardless of grades, are to connect one's funds of knowledge and identities to subjects in school and future orientations; it motivate education. The articles show how educational trajectories are constructed by everyday cultural practices (funds of knowledge) as they interplay with identities within the family and wider society. Indeed, everyday interests and understandings of one's own identity and the development of educational trajectories are related.

Across the articles, it is clear that the girls' mediated actions reveal how learning and identity transfer across contexts provide valuable knowledge for learners. The transformative potential found in the students' self-making processes emerged from cultural norms, interests and values. Hence, it is necessary to shift attention away from learning 'in the classroom' and towards students' learning ecologies (Barron, 2006; Barron, Wise, & Martin, 2013; Leander et al., 2010; Roth & Erstad, 2013) and identities when transitioning to a new school level (see articles I, II and III). Expanding the context of school may therefore help us to understand the full complexity of learning (Rajala, 2016) further by including identity (see articles I, II and III).

I found that the girls who experienced challenges in school pursued their educational trajectories by using funds of knowledge exchanged in their family networks. It is important to recognise how the strategies were transferred from the family to the younger generation; they seemed to believe in the potential of education to provide future possibilities.

5.2.2 Learners' everyday practices, tensions and positional identities

SQ b) Which tensions and contradictions are met in different learning contexts?

The findings of this thesis underline how girls experience different social gendered and academic positional identities across family life, leisure time and school. Across the articles, tensions regarding family practices, friendship, confidence and social and academic interactions were crucial to their understandings of their own positions. When learners' positional identities regarding their own expectations across contexts do not match, tensions may arise. The above finding is in accordance with the work of Rysst (2008), who found that multiethnic students in particular experience multiple subject positions between home and school, which may be a source of tensions. The findings of the review (Chapter 2) indicate that students and their gendered and ethnic identities in school, labelling and categorisation become visible through, for example, flirting, power relations and unity constructions such as 'foreigners' and 'Norwegians'. Taken together, the studies indicate that background and learner identities interplay with academic results (Ambjörnsson, 2004; Eriksen, 2013; Nielsen, 2009). Hence, my argument that the students' positions in terms of their inclusion in the social and academic spheres in school influence their learning identities is supported.

The three articles show that a mismatch between family practices, educational plans and one's own position as a learner, as well as how they are met in school, give rise to tensions that result in a challenging learning trajectory (Maria, Lien, Amirtha and Ekin). In article I, for example, Maria was interested in African history and Eritreans' limited possibilities. Maria's tensions were connected to having first-hand knowledge of the situation in her home context and a feeling that the teachers did not 'believe' her in the school context. Here, one can see a tension between her ethnic identities and how she felt positioned (acknowledged) in school. Despite facing challenges in upper secondary school, when encouraged by her global family network, she resolved her tensions. Maria postponed her educational trajectory and positioned herself to not 'give up' on school.

Across the articles, the negotiation of contradictory social gendered and academic positions both inside and outside of school had a significant impact on how the girls conceived of themselves as learners. For example, in article II, Lien, as a girl, learned from her mother to postpone marriage and focus on education – Lien expected to do well in school. This narrative was central to motivating her educational trajectory. However, Lien also experienced tensions, both socially and academically, during lower secondary school. A turning point for Lien was, despite not being Korean herself, her introduction to the Korean hip-hop youth lifestyle by a school mate. Korean hip hop became an important resource in her learning trajectory and her positioning as a learner. In particular, mastering the Korean language in school made her believe in herself as a learner. This inspired her to focus on education. If she could do well in Korean, she could do well in other subjects. Lien solved her tensions on her own. Questions about gendered future did not seem to be in the

foreground for Lien.

Different gendered family positions in Amirtha's everyday life made her seek to understand her own identity and expectation-related questions such as "who am I going to be?" These reflections influenced her learning identity and educational trajectories. Amirtha had to quit playing chess because she wanted to prioritise education in order to provide for her family in the future. Facing different family positions, such as studying in order to provide for the family (father), the family practice of arranged marriages (mother) or playing chess led to a lack of academic engagement during upper secondary school. The teachers in upper secondary school did not know that Amirtha was a capable chess player. In lower secondary school, her teachers had positioned her as a 'clever student', but in upper secondary school Amirtha felt positioned as 'less clever'. Her self-conception suffered. When she chose a study programme that matched her gendered family practices she was able to better understand her own identity and pursue her educational trajectory.

Across the articles, the girls' gendered positional identities differ across contexts. Four of the girls displayed tensions regarding their gendered expectations and future trajectories. Article III, for example, shows how Narnia linked her understanding of herself as a learner, both academically and socially, to how she perceived her gendered positions, expectations and trajectories. She feared stereotypical understandings and did not, therefore, use Hindu gendered markers that she felt could have different meaning in her family network and wider society. Her gendered position, based on the past and present gendered identities seen in her family, was to be 'quiet'. Another gendered position was not to mix with the boys. She performed these positions across her figured worlds. The tension experienced by Narnia was that the expected gendered behaviour in the home context could not be performed in school. Observing and understanding the different gendered positions found across contexts was applied in her educational trajectory (to be independent and support her family), which helped her to stay motivated as a learner despite the challenges she faced (see also Chapter 5.2.1). Ekin displayed a different feature of gender positioning to the other girls. This position created tensions that she did not manage to solve. Her oppositional performative gendered position did not become subject to reflection and it was not discussed at home or in school before the transition to a new school. If she had received the right support in seeing the link between her identity and her academic position, she might have experienced increased self-understanding and motivation to pursue an educational trajectory.

The analysis across the articles shows how the girls' family networks, leisure activities and gendered practices (funds of knowledge) functioned as resources for handling their tensions regarding identity issues and in their educational trajectories. Having a family or social network available to help handle personal or educational tensions functioned as a resource for the learner's self-understanding and development. To believe in themselves as learners and to see future possibilities is a positive resource when seeking to focus on education. In all, although I only mention reflexive autonomy in article II, all three articles show how, during the two-year duration of the study, the girls were initially hesitant and conscious about their selves. They all showed an emerging reflexive autonomy regarding their future

trajectories (except Ekin, see 5.2.3). Their understanding of themselves and their development was related to confidence, and how they positioned themselves as learners; it motivated their educational trajectories. Hence, students' identities across contexts are experienced as a complex web of global, non-academic and academic influences (Wortham, 2004). Social contexts initiate changes in learners' identities and future trajectories.

Therefore, these findings support my argument regarding the need to pay attention to learners' self-understandings and identities beyond school. It is important to listen to what young people themselves think about their educational trajectories and future possibilities. To adequately aid students with their self-understanding as learners is a particularly important support mechanism for young students in complex societies (McLeod & Yates, 2006; Thomson, 2009). My work has a strong focus on the complexity of young people's lives across everyday sociocultural contexts in increasingly global and multiethnic societies.

5.2.3 Gendered educational trajectories

SQ c) How do the girls orient themselves towards gendered future trajectories?

Across the articles, my work shows how studying everyday practices, positional identities and educational trajectories through an analysis of mediated actions provides information on how students think about themselves as learners and their gendered future perspective over time. The analysis across the articles shows how the girls oriented themselves with a variety of gendered expectations and positional identities that became apparent as they traversed different contexts. Although not mentioned explicitly, the articles draw on micro-, meso- and macro-narratives in terms of the way the girls' gendered positional identities, expectations and self-understandings created tensions. Everyday practices were used to solve the expectations and tensions, as well as in the construction of gendered futures (see also Chapter 5.2.1–5.2.2).

In the review of youth studies (Chapter 2), Nielsen and Rudberg (2006) underline how the construction of gendered identities and future trajectories during adolescence in Norway can result from differing practices between generations. The parents position the younger female generation towards education and work outside of the home. In the articles, it was seen that the parents expected their daughters to be educated. The girls found such expectations to be both burdensome and inspiring. However, when they solved their educational tensions, the girls could pursue their future trajectories. This is in accordance with the findings of the reviewed studies that show how generational factors influence the creation of futures.

In article I, family networks initiated reflections on futures that inspired the girls to focus on education. They saw the importance of education from a global equality perspective and they recognised the educational possibilities available to them. Their gendered futures were produced accordingly. Societal narratives containing, for example, solidarity, provided positions that the girls negotiated (implicitly) regarding their future occupation – they were not mentioned as a position 'given' by someone. On a meso and macro level, the girls negotiated a solidarity narrative. They wanted to contribute on a societal level, whether

locally or globally. Although they did not explicitly mention solidarity, the results show that multiethnic girls are interested in public work as a means of transforming and contributing to society.

In article II, on a meso level, figured worlds and social interaction initiated reflections on different perspectives regarding gendered futures, for example, family life, marriage, education and social contribution. While one girl (Amirtha) constructed a narrative about contributing to her family and remaining in the community, another girl (Lien) focused on creating her own independent trajectory and exploring youth lifestyles outside the community. The girls reflected on and saw themselves in light of their families' gendered expectations (meso) and implicit societal narratives (macro). Hence, young girls experience a complex web of gendered expectations and identities, and they rely on reflection and learning in order to shape their own choices about their futures (see Chapter 5.2.1 and 5.2.2). They seem to see education as a necessary tool in their view of future possibilities (except for Ekin, see below).

The girls' expectations regarding family life and marriage were sometimes explicit (see articles II and III). For example, how Lien was told to postpone marriage and having children. Alternatively, they could be implicit, for example, when the girls' expectations regarding family life were not a topic of conversation (article I). Across the articles, all the girls valued independent choice regarding marriage. Their families also positioned the girls regarding contributing to the family (articles II and III; Amirtha and Narnia) or the need to be economically independent (articles I and II; Ndey, Maria and Lien). Ekin expressed thoughts about her future marriage as a decision she would make for herself. Their families' gendered expectations initiated self-reflections on future trajectories that inspired them to focus on their education (except for Ekin). The independent position was a macro narrative the girls used as a 'turning point' in their self-understanding. They did not reflect on why they felt they 'had to be' or 'wanted to be' independent. Hence, being independent may be an imperative in their lives.

In Nielsen and Rudberg's (2006) study, the contexts where the transfer of information occurs are the generations within families. In my work, the contexts for acquiring and transferring knowledge are the figured worlds that the girls experience in their everyday lives inside and outside of school. In these contexts, the girls could find the resources necessary to handle constraints and seek possibilities that in turn influenced the self-understanding necessary to deal with gendered expectations, in different forms, on the micro, meso and macro levels.

Summarized, the articles reveal how students' personal dimensions, their wish to understand themselves and their gendered expectations across their family networks, institutions and society influence the way they develop as learners and how they see themselves in the future. From this, their learning trajectories evolved. In article III, one of the girls (Narnia) had a stereotypical understanding of her own gendered (ethnic/religious) position as a suppressed (micro level) girl, which seemed to be shaped by a fear of being positioned as

suppressed within her ethnic family network (meso level). These understandings in turn relate to a narrative of fearing not being an independent person (macro level). The gendered positional identities Narnia experienced were complex and intertwined. Her solution seems to be to succeed with her educational trajectory; then, she could both contribute to her family and become independent. Another girl (Ekin) exhibited an interest in understanding the gendered expectations and positions in her family and her religion. She learned that, according to the Koran, women deserve respect, something that she promoted in her learning trajectory and in her performative position as a learner. The stereotypical understanding of 'being a female Muslim and thus not free' was an important narrative in her life. However, she did not manage to connect this perception to school topics. Her performative position was seen as oppositional by her teachers and her educational trajectory suffered. When she did not succeed with her educational trajectory, she focused on family life in the future. This can be seen as an oppositional response to family/society expectations. We can also see a divide between future orientation, choice of programme and counselling (McLeod & Yates, 2006).

The articles point to how gendered family expectations were rooted in past histories, present identities and future identities. In article II, for example, one of the girls' parents (Amirtha) positioned her differently regarding marriage, education and contribution to the family. To understand herself and her expectations, she read novels and discussed gendered topics with her parents. Another girl (Lien) strove to fulfil her gendered expectations, to postpone marriage and focus on education. A youth lifestyle, Korean hip-hop music, its lyrics and learning the language catalysed her educational trajectory. As such, one can see that the girls engaged in specific social practices in an ongoing process that involved the structuring of scripted social (gendered) positions (roles). They improvised through learning and, therefore, their identities changed (Holland et al., 1998). Within this interplay, one can observe a link between how past histories, present identities and 'future images of self' shape learning identities and gendered futures, as well as educational trajectories.

The reviewed studies concerning changing gendered identities and future trajectories (see Chapter 2) underline that it is important to understand, in complex societies, how young people collectively face macro-level narratives, for example, 'to become your own person' (McLeod & Yates, 2006). My work shows that the girls face different meso and macro narratives, such as the need to contribute to the family or global society, as well as the need to be independent or suppressed. The reviewed studies show how everyday and school cultures develop young people as persons and learners over time based on both individual and contextual factors (McLeod & Yates, 2006). In that respect, my work shows how the girls value the influence of everyday contexts. In sum, to understand their gendered expectations, the analysis across the articles reveals that the girls used resources such as novels, lyrics, the Koran, the Internet and social networks to solve tensions. The articles illuminate how gendered expectations in their everyday lives initiate a need for self-understanding, which in turn relates to the development of their learning trajectories.

6 General Discussion

The aim of this thesis is to explore learners' thoughts regarding their everyday practices and social positional identities during the transition between school levels, a phase that involves personal development because decisions about their future must be made. In a multiethnic society, it is of interest to understand more about how different social contexts provide knowledge forms and identities of importance to learners. It is essential to recognise the possible tension that exists between their educational and everyday possibilities and the expectations derived through family, friends and sociocultural norms. I therefore investigated the learners' self-understandings of their own positions and future orientations. Of central importance is their opinions regarding school and their understanding of questions such as 'who am I?', 'who do I want to become?' and 'how do people understand me?'. I thus engaged in questioning how everyday learning and identities shape educational trajectories when learners are transitioning between school levels.

A key implication for educational practice and policy makers that emerges from this thesis lies in its capacity to suggest directions for understanding learners' mediated actions, that is, their agency. My thesis can inform us about how complex influences stemming from family networks across the world, leisure activities and school shape the challenges seen in young people's identity processes. Therefore, my argument is that there is a need for educational institutions to pay attention to how young people think about their educational trajectories and future possibilities. In this respect, my work contributes with information on how individuals pursue their learning trajectories. Helping students to find relevance in school subjects and to connect and contextualise school with their everyday lives and identities is crucial during a time when education systems are losing contact with students, especially as students are becoming alienated from school in increasing numbers (Säljö, 2005).

My literature review (Chapter 2) focuses on the importance of expanding the perspectives on contexts of school learning, and following; on the development of learning identities and students' engagement with learning. I also reviewed educational studies of youth, gender and ethnicity that elaborate on learning identities and the construction of future orientations. Based on the results discussed so far (Chapter 5), I will now elaborate on how life worlds, practices and identities initiate learners' engagement, confidence and trajectories.

6.1 Insights into multiethnic learners' development and educational trajectories

The aim of this thesis is to study how young people in our global (physically and digitally) and increasingly complex society (Facer, 2011) understand themselves and their positions as learners within their educational trajectories, as well as how they see future possibilities.

6.1.1 *Understanding learning and identities across contexts*

According to Subero et al. (2016), there is increasingly agreement that arguments about

when, how and why learning takes place have changed in our complex society. Therefore, they claim that a new model for understanding formal education is needed. Funds of knowledge should be expanded with 'funds of identity' (Chapter 3). These concepts can help us to expand the context of school learning and incorporate students' identities in this respect. Some of the current funds of knowledge approaches show how learning relates to knowledge creation (cf. Paavola, Lipponen, & Hakkarainen, 2002), as well as how learners learn because they are motivated to do so by their interests, family knowledge, needs or pleasure (cf. Moises Esteban-Guitart, Subero, & Brito, 2015). When students recognise that their identities and interests connect across contexts, they will engage in learning (cf. Cummins, 2007; Moisés Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014a). Of importance to this perspective has been my investigation of how funds of knowledge and positional identities can help to scaffold school learning. According to Subero et al. (2016), inclusive pedagogy can positively affirm the students' identities and their sociocultural legacies. The educational challenge is to create learning spaces that bridge multilingual practices, prior knowledge, interests, academic activities and relevant contexts. Through an awareness of the combination of funds of knowledge and identity, educators will be better able to tackle the learning challenges confronting societies in the twenty-first century (Subero et al., 2016).

Rajala (2016) also claims that we require an expansion of the canonical definitions of what counts as 'knowledge' and 'knowing' in school. The extension of school learning can be defined as taking instruction into out-of-school settings or using resources developed outside of school as part of the instruction inside school. For the expansion of the context of school learning to take place, a qualitative transformation of instructional activity is needed. This transformation could take place through the pursuit of problems of relevance to wider society, through transformative encounters with non-school activity systems and through the redefinition of what counts as knowledge and knowing. It is important to recognise and build on students' divergent task interpretation, opposition (cf. article III) and means of transacting knowledge (Rajala, 2016).

Hence, I find support for my argument regarding the need to draw on students' practices and identities across the contexts of family life and everyday life in school. In this respect, paying attention to students' reflections on their identities and interactions beyond school is important, since it initiates the students' mediated actions towards their educational trajectories. Students' practices and identities can, generally, be used as resources in formal learning and creating future trajectories (Barron, 2006; Sefton-Green, 2016) by connecting the knowledge and identities derived from their everyday lives to their schooling. It is important to help them contextualise their past, present and future identities. To give priority to students' funds of knowledge and their identities, despite their different experiences can help teachers to position their students as knowledgeable (Hogg, 2011). My work shows that a conceptualisation of educational trajectories in cultural worlds requires that teachers learn about and learn from their students' knowledge, identities and lives (Freire, 1970).

During the fieldwork, I came across situations involving the ethical dimensions of personal lives as linked to different cultural practices. These dimensions of everyday life could not

always be drawn on in the teaching process by using funds of knowledge or identities in school. For example, some of the girls' gendered practices involved covering their bodies in order not to expose skin. During the observation of an excursion to the seaside where some of the other students went wading, the girls decided to roll up their trousers and wade as well. The situation seemed to occur as a spur of the moment act (Holland et al. 1998). Teachers in global contexts will frequently experience such situations during the teaching process. Such situations might have been challenging in terms of discussing them on a personal level; they may also have been met with dismay at home. Therefore, I follow the approach of Rajala (2016), who claims that there are practices in students' everyday lives that they do not want to connect to their learning in school. Some students also prefer traditional teaching methods. The teachers must therefore evaluate which funds of knowledge and identities can be used in school. In line with the work of Rajala (2016), I suggest that we discuss and learn from the ethical reflections that such topics can bring forth (cf. Thomson & Hall, 2008). Approaching tensions may be a good starting point; solving tensions can hence be regarded as an opportunity to negotiate social and cultural differences (Rajala, 2016).

Another perspective found in this discourse concerns whether including out-of-school practices in the curriculum poses a risk that students may experience increased control of their everyday non-school activities by school (Sefton-Green, 2016). This shows that, in diverse contexts, it is important to use ethical guidelines and critical reflections during a dialogue with students and their families when forming the basis and agency from which funds of knowledge and identities can be used in the teaching process. From an educational practice and policy perspective, it is important to consider the tensions that may emerge between students' funds of knowledge and official school values (Hogg, 2011; Thomson & Hall, 2008; Zipin, 2009). In addition, it is important to remember that pedagogical ideas are best improved by giving primacy to teachers' agency. In this respect, teachers can co-configure educational designs together with their students as an integral part of the enactment of a new pedagogical idea (Engeström, 2008; Engeström & Sannino, 2011; Rajala, 2016).

6.1.2 Understanding learners' positions inside and outside of school

This thesis underlines how young learners' want to understand themselves, as well as their own, others' and family expectations across contexts. Everyday resources can be used to understand how their own identity changed, the way they positioned themselves and their educational trajectories. Hence, the learning identity is integral to the person they are and the future possibilities they foresee (Sefton-Green, 2016). I also argue that the everyday learning and identities acquired in different contexts influence learners' gendered performative positions in school (see Chapter 5). One example of this is the way gendered oppositional or quiet learner positions (article III) relate to stereotypical (meso and macro) narratives from everyday social contexts. According to Ligorio (2010), when students reflect on their identities in a dialogical way during school, they seem to lose the sense of dogma that can pervade gendered, ethnic and religious identities. Diverse students can enrich both the classroom and individuals so long as their presence is handled from a social,

cognitive and dialogical identity point of view (Ligorio, 2010). Paying attention to students' oppositional initiatives in classroom dialogues can initiate the potential for their elaboration of their personal contribution in discursive modes of participation (Rajala, 2016). Exploring learners' reflections on stereotypical positions beyond school can help them to understand and share their experiences, as well as understanding their own positions (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2014).

The way the students experienced their social positional identities in their social and academic figured worlds influenced how they understood and positioned themselves as learners. In article II, we found that feeling relationally unconfident in school made them perceive themselves negatively as learners, and their grades suffered as a result. In article I, I saw that, Maria did not manage to develop an academic position that was acceptable to her teachers and, in part, this influenced her perception of herself as a learner in a negative way. In article III, Narnia and Ekins' self-understanding, confidence and learning could have been improved if the teachers had been able to understand and make explicit the interplay that exists between their social, gendered and academic identities and figured worlds. Their social positional identities could have been used as a resource in numerous academic subjects. Hence, the power relations in school influenced the learners' motivation.

For teachers, being aware of the way they position their students as learners is also important. The case of Ndey in article I illustrates the importance of the way teachers can help students to understand their funds of knowledge such as family ethnicity as exchanged across global networks and their identity-based interests and future orientations. This approach can catalyse motivation and well-being, as well as assisting in the positive development of learning identities when pursuing educational trajectories. Although it is not mentioned explicitly in the articles, some factors are more likely to be positively valued, like for example playing chess in article II, while other factors hinder positive development such as religious practices being the case in article III. Being aware of how teachers value activities and position their students can be a valuable resource for supporting learners. Hence, to acknowledge students can be important for learning (cf. Honneth, 1996).

The analysis across the articles reveals that teachers, family and friends can help students in adopting suitable learner positions. It is important that the students build on their belief in themselves as learners as we saw in Lien's story in article II in order to complete their educational trajectories. Even though it is only explicitly mentioned in article II, I see the same pattern regarding how the students felt about being learners in article I and III. They understand themselves as learners in relation to a polarised axis between feeling disempowered and a loss of control and working to regain control over their decision making (Ndey, Lien and Narnia) or vice versa (Maria, Amirtha and Ekin). Controlling the positioning of their learning identity (cf. Erstad et al., 2009) initiated the engagement necessary to pursue their educational trajectories.

6.1.3 Understanding multiethnic learners when transitioning between school levels

Educational transitions have long been a particular focus of educators and school reformers

because students may experience academic, social and developmental challenges during such periods. In particular, multiethnic students who are more likely to exhibit high levels of ambition during lower secondary are at greater risk of experiencing a less supportive learning environment in upper secondary school (Chapter 1; Hegna, 2013). In lower secondary school, across the three articles, all the girls exhibited educational ambitions. After the transition, I found that three of the girls experienced positive development (Lien, Ndey and Narnia), while the others experienced challenges (Maria, Ekin and Amirtha). Across the articles, I found that identity-based interests and future orientations became important factors in students' decision making and future-life direction when transitioning. Therefore, one should help students to connect the identities they bring to school, the identities they play out in the now (Subero et. al., 2016) and those they foresee for themselves in the future. To accomplish this, teachers could create opportunities to pursue the learners' identities and personal interests across their learning ecologies (Barron, 2006; Barron et al., 2013; Rajala, 2016; Roth & Erstad, 2013).

The teachers were not actively involved in everyday school life and in the way the girls positioned themselves socially and academically when entering a phase of transition. The teachers were also not aware of the learning trajectories the girls followed when transitioning between school levels. Social and academic support provided by identifying and acknowledging students' identities (Honneth, 1996) is central in this regard. My work suggests that, both before and after the transition, it is particularly important to focus on the students' identities beyond school and connect their identities to lifelong and holistic development processes and perspectives. It is important to explore and be aware of the students' long-term perspectives and future orientation as members in society, both for the students themselves and for the teachers. In the field of education, thoughts about the future are particularly relevant. Visions, demands and possibilities are continuously mobilised as variations of opinions about the improvement of education (Kumpulainen et al., 2009).

In school, we often find a focus on the curriculum as a separate entity, which results in specific knowledge being delivered in classes. Students need support in order to understand the personal value of the wider context of learning outside of school. This approach can help them to see the connection between the two school levels, their personal learning ecology and their future orientation. The relationship between education and the future is played out in the classroom. Students implicitly concern themselves with the use of subject domains – 'will I ever have any use for this?' It is important to shed light on the relationship between the future and education as a dialogue between expectations, adaption and creativity. It is also important to defend the right of schools to function as a resource for society and the local environment in order to identify and construct ideas about the future young people want (Kumpulainen et al., 2009). Education is also a force to be reckoned with when it comes to creating progressive futures. It is important to recognise that the concept of future possibilities incorporates the idea that, for some people, the futures they imagine might be restricted (Facer, 2011).

Schools and guidance counsellors may benefit from increased knowledge about the manner in which everyday learning and identities play a role in how students orient themselves towards the future. Taken together, my findings can help in understanding the way students should receive guidance regarding cultural interests and identities when deciding on suitable school programmes during the transition phase. When teachers acknowledge students' funds of knowledge, identities and future orientations, the students are more likely to choose a suitable school programme. In this way, teachers can assist learners in the construction of a positive view of their future development. These realisations can provide schools with the insight necessary to support learners with confidence and motivation during transitions. A dialogue between the students, home and school can initiate reflections on future orientations, leading to students' increased self-understanding and motivation to realise their future dreams. Important topics for discussion should include mutual expectations and input on how to help students make independent choices. Students, schools and families can all map the learning ecology, the academic goals of the students and how to achieve those goals. Students can then find support for developing identity-based futures that are meaningful and worth working towards.

6.1.4 Understanding gendered identity processes

In the analysis (Chapter 5), I found that the young girls' socially shaped gendered identities were ongoing processes across their micro, meso and macro figured worlds. As such, my work addresses the girls' complex everyday life, as well as the constraints and possibilities they experience within and across their social networks. Of central importance is how the tensions between identities and future orientations across cultural worlds were negotiated in the construction of gendered futures. From a gendered perspective, the girls negotiated (and changed) gendered structures, for example, forced marriage or seeking other living arrangements, or having a job or a family life. In the context of the renewed interest in understanding women's futures (see Chapter 1), the articles show that these girls are mainly interested in having an occupation and becoming economic contributors. This change indicates that the girls, when compared to their mothers, focus on education. Hence, identity in practice is constituted and sociocultural change influences their educational trajectories.

Across the articles, I found that in a multiethnic society, young people have to take into consideration a complex web of gendered positional identities when they construct their gendered futures. For example, Amirtha (article II) negotiated between issues such as marriage (partner, arranged, decide for herself), education (achieving good results), leisure activities (quit chess), building friendships (entering a good new school but feeling lonely) and making independent choices. Here, one can see how Amirtha understands the different positional identities provided across her figured worlds. The resulting tensions relate to how she, having been born in Norway to immigrant parents, experiences everyday life and foresees her future possibilities. One can see that when she solves her tensions based on the different positions provided, she actively positions her identity differently.

Across the articles, I found that the girls negotiated their friendships, gendered social power relations and equal rights, and economic and work-related possibilities across networks. The

girls were mainly left to sort out the tensions resulting from these complex situations on their own. They reverted to sociocultural resources such as discussions with friends and family or reading the Koran, or lyrics to solve their tensions. The girls did not mention school as a place where they could explore their personal identity processes.

My work shows that identity is negotiated with respect to the expectations and practices of the family and their global network, as well as other institutions such as school, ethnic networks and global lifestyles. According to Lemke (2012), these institutions seek to influence young people's gendered and ethnic positional identities. If we start to mix identities (i.e. hybridity), for example, combining a modern lifestyle with religious symbols, the social control functions of identity face difficulties (Lemke, 2012). However, mixing identities leads to contradictory positions that give rise to reflections. For example, a student who is positioned/positioned as a 'noisy' girl in the classroom, while swapping to 'obedient' in the family. Such swapping of identities may give rise to tensions: 'who am I?'

It is commonly agreed that contemporary identity processes are more challenging than those of yesteryear (Krange & Øya, 2005). In sum, my work shows that the girls experienced many identity issues, and that social and cultural influences were challenging with regards to finding their own gendered identity and future orientations. The girls' identities were personal, family based, sociocultural, ethnic, religious, national and global. Their identities were shaped through social interactions with other people. They were constructed and challenged by everyday life events and practices. Some noticeably important influences include culture, family, friends, social networks, gendered identity, learning identity and the student's local, national and global sense of belonging. The girls had to navigate between different narratives of what is honourable gendered behaviour across their micro, meso and macro figured worlds. They had many choices and possibilities. The result was an identity process based on reflection and navigation within all the possibilities available to them.

According to Farstad (2016), this 'room of possibilities' can shape the identity challenges that threaten individuals' distinctiveness. From a psychological perspective, both stability and flexibility are important for developing a stable identity. Also important when handling identity processes is the need to identify, evaluate and reflect on both positive and negative influences (Farstad, 2013a). The way people internalise or reject influences is important for their positive development, as well as depending on the role of significant others (Engedal, 2006) such as the teachers at school. Petzold (2008) claims that personal identity work performed through self-reflection and discursive processes can help people to make autonomous identity choices. Being autonomous is a position whereby individuals use their character and determination to negotiate, adapt and choose their own identity (Petzold, 2008). It can be constructed through a meta-reflection on one's own identity. From this perspective, self-understanding become important skills when making personal choices.

My work highlights the many gendered identity issues and future expectations the girls experience. However, my work also shows how their sociocultural everyday lives offer a variety of future possibilities regarding family life, education, occupation and the development of their own identity. In school, through dialogues and classes, it is important

to use these resources in order to support young people in exploring their possibilities. Supporting students in exploring their self-understanding (answering questions such as ‘who am I?’) represents important identity work that can be linked to subjects, instruction and the development of a future orientation. In school, these topics can contribute to an inclusive pedagogy (‘who am I as part of the common community?’). Hence, there exists support for my argument concerning the need to pay attention to students’ practices and their self-understanding of their social identities beyond the school. This approach can support their gendered identity processes and their mediated actions towards educational trajectories.

6.1.5 Implications for policy makers

This thesis is timely from the perspective of the current educational policy in Norway. Recently, the new Norwegian Parliament Act no. 28 (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2016) has aimed at improving and reforming schooling. The focus areas are ‘subjects, in-depth learning and understanding’, which clearly address how to improve academic learning outcomes. The Norwegian public school system will still be based on an equality-oriented and inclusive learning environment pedagogy for all. The intention is that education still will serve as a guarantee for social mobility as motivated by humanistic beliefs in the growth of the person – *bildung*. The Act deals with how, in our global world, school can shape both national and global orientations (see Chapter 1). My work adds to the discourse on how the content of the new Act can be put into practice within the teaching process. According to Hattie (2009), who draws on the work of Steinberg, Brown and Dornbusch (1979), school reforms will not be successful until we first face and resolve the engagement problem; too many students are ‘physically present but psychologically absent’ (Hattie, 2009, p. 37). Part of the problem is that students either cannot keep up, classes are too difficult, many are bored, lessons are too easy or else they perceive too few consequences of the learning. When students spend 85% of their time listening to a teacher talk, we make it difficult to foster engagement. Hattie (2009) claims that we need better indicators of success, as well as making students more active in their own learning process.

My work diverges from the standardisation and test-based accountability policies that are internationally dominant at present (see Chapter 1). Such an approach has been criticised due to its inability to respond to (all of) our educational challenges (Biesta, Lawy, & Kelly, 2009). My work contributes to this discourse by suggesting that schools should pay greater attention to social and contextual cultural activities that become part of students’ learning ecologies. My argument is that if the school pays attention to their identities and future orientations, it will be possible to initiate self-understanding and educational motivation. If you have students who do not know who they are, they will not care about what goes on in school (Cummins, 1996). My work underlines the importance of understanding the identity issues that shape a significant backdrop for young people (Lemke, 2012). It is necessary to pay attention to learners’ identity processes in order to spark their mediated actions (agency). Education will therefore become psychologically ‘alive’.

Parliament Act no. 28 (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2016) underlines how in-depth learning, self-reflection on one’s own learning and developing learning strategies shape

motivated learners. Equally important is a meta-reflection on one's own identity (cf. Farstad, 2016) and future orientations, which raises awareness of the purpose of learning and hence motivates educational trajectories. To improve students' learning outcomes, Parliament Act no. 28 also underlines the importance of connecting what is seen as important within subjects to what is regarded as important personal knowledge for the students, in addition to what is important for wider society. My work shows how the students' learning ecologies create a link between these learning domains. Parliament Act no. 28¹⁴ also recognises the importance of schools realising values that are anchored in human rights. In that respect, policy makers want education to result in educational trajectories that foster local, national and global citizenship. However, according to Mannion, Biesta, Priestley and Ross (2011), there exist pitfalls when policy makers attempt to consider global citizenship education. There is a risk that the idea of education aimed at global citizenship will seek to wrap up environmental and developmental agendas within an underlying agenda. The identity of the 'responsible citizen' may be defined in official curricular documents in cultural and economic terms (i.e. doing work for the economy/doing good work in the community). This justice-oriented citizen may become confused within the curricular global turn. Such global education may become complicit with a hegemonic desire to 'civilise' less developed countries according to developed world models. As such, policy makers and schools should take a reflexive look at their position with regards to the rest of the world (Mannion et al., 2011). When developing global citizenship education, a useful starting point for schools may, as shown in the articles, be to draw on the students' own experiences and identities. For schools, this knowledge can be used in subjects and in building an inclusive pedagogy that facilitates the development of globally oriented citizens. The knowledge that students acquire across their global family networks can be important in preparing them for life in an increasingly globalized world.

6.2 Theoretical and methodological contributions

The concept of identity has long been central to sociocultural research due to its mediating function between the micro-social events in which human agency is foregrounded and the macro-social structures that contain relations and longer timescale processes. According to Lemke (2012), Holland et al.'s (1998) concept of identity may be expanded, and in certain cases limited, when analysing agency over short-term timescales and, positionality, over long-term timescales. The concept of 'identity-in-practice' is not identical to 'identity-across-events' or over 'the lifespan'. Such developments of phenomena that occur over longer and shorter timescales are linked to one another, although they cannot exchange information because they do not naturally interact (Lemke, 2002). Elements of agency are

¹⁴ The paragraph of the law for education is the fundamental value of the school. It is founded on the principles of the Children's Convention and general human rights. Elementary education shall "...give the students and apprentices historical and cultural insight and values. The education shall build on fundamental values from a Christian and humanitarian heritage and tradition, such as freedom of belief, compassion, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, and values noted in other different religions and beliefs anchored in human rights. School shall education and form. The paragraph emphasizes development of knowledge, skills and attitudes important for mastering everyday life, taking part in work, and to take part in relationships and in the society" (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2016, p. 6).

predominant in the notion of identity as observed during short timescales, while positional (structural) determinations are predominant during longer timescales.

Lemke (2012) draws on the concepts of performance¹⁵ (Butler, 1990, 1993) and ‘figured’ identity (Holland et al., 1998) in order to explain how longer-term aspects are reinscribed in us as we act in the moment. We continue our previous pattern of response to certain situations and, according to what is expected of us, we can continue or change our identities, while our future identity is based on how we see ourselves and how we are seen by others. Longer-term identities, as inscribed in our habitus (Bourdieu, 1987), depend on earlier performances and they constitute a disposition for the action of the moment. Meaningful human action is a site of heterochrony with an identity that will change when the opportunities and characteristics of relationships change. The way we process and act in response to events is linked to the automated processes of identity maintenance that are created and self-reinforced over a long timescale with recurring situations. Shorter, unique events that are not likely to repeat create identities that last for only a short time, such as weeks, whereas other events such as religious beliefs can create identities that last for months or years. Hence, identity is an abstract notion that sums up many aspects of who we are over longer timescales. Identity is not only based on our subjective experiences (Lemke, 2012); in my work, it is also influencing our understanding of our own positions. In this respect, my analysis has enabled me to understand the identity processes that lasted for over two years during an important phase of educational transition. The girls’ present identities result from their experiences in short timescales. However, through reflections on their present positions and their expectations as derived from the sociocultural environment, they draw on longer-term timescales, that is, from the past and the future. The analyses show how they are able to connect their imaginings of a future identity and the identity given to them as a result of their family positions, which shows how long-term timescale are woven into identity shaping within short timescales.

For example, Narnia in article III reflects on the gendered positions she is given at home and in Sri Lanka. Here, we can see that the family positions (long-term identity) that are different in the two contexts make Narnia reflect on her gendered future positions. Narnia fears stereotypical interpretations in her ethnic network and wider Norwegian society. Understanding the positions that exist in the present causes Narnia to plan a future trajectory that can be viewed as an attempt to change her future identity (long-term identity). Hence, my analysis shows how gendered identities formed on different timescales are understood

¹⁵ According to Butler’s (1990, 1993) understanding of gender, as opposed to the idea that gender performance is an expression of some sort of natural gender, gender identities are placed in a performativity domain (cf. Derrida, 1988 as cited in Lemke, 2012). Butler (1990, 1993) claims that gendered practices depend on repetition in order to be recognised and understood. Repetition involves a re-contextualisation and, therefore, also a possibility for change. Gendered identity is thus an act that produces gendered significance through repetition – ‘people do gender’. A shift within the binarity of gender is possible, although it is difficult to see connections that are completely independent of the cultural conditions of gendered differences. However, Haraway (1991) claims that feminists should encourage coalition (union) through affinity (sympathy), rather than focusing on differences that can create unfavourable power structures.

and negotiated in the present, especially when they stand in conflict with the future identity. Planning an educational future may be seen as a way to change gendered structures.

Central to my work has been the investigation of how everyday practices (funds of knowledge) relate to the processes of identity development. Funds of knowledge are defined as historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge that are essential for household and/or individual functioning and well-being (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). By focusing on funds of knowledge, I have investigated how learners' seek and find resources in their everyday life that can be used to solve issues relevant to the pursuance of educational trajectories. Essential to this approach is the analysis of the family history of under-represented students, their practices and their networks. In my work, this corresponds to the person's social worlds and funds of knowledge networks (see Chapter 3). The concept of funds of knowledge has helped me to identify the cultural resources available within the students' global social networks that are used in shaping their identity processes across cultural worlds. For example, in article I, we see that Ndey's family funds of knowledge involve staying in touch and supporting each other worldwide, and she described her identity as multiethnic. By combining the funds of knowledge with how identities change within and across cultural worlds, I have been able to maintain a focus on the students' practices and identities as resources, as well as determining how to harness them in teaching processes.

I could have used Holland et al.'s (1998) framework to look more closely into how, for example, the intersectionality of ethnic, religious and generational funds of knowledge is related to the girls' self-understanding and development of their social positional identities. I could also have explored the girls' different subject positions, for example, how my observation showed that Ekin changed position from 'polite' at home and at the youth club, to being 'noisy' in school and with her peer groups. Holland's framework would have been valuable for making the connections between these changing identities with religious or ethnic aspects, but my main focus has been on how the girls negotiate and perform in relation to social gendered contextual factors. However, Holland et al.'s (1998) framework did help me to analyse how young people themselves think about their identities, educational trajectories and future possibilities. To do so, I focused on the reflections, tensions and self-understandings put forward by the girls.

By using the concept of a learning trajectory, I emphasised a broad understanding of learning in social contexts (Ludvigsen et al., 2011) across figured worlds. This concept has helped me to analyse how the girls improvise when they experience challenges, that is, the way everyday learning relates to identity processes across contexts and in temporal themes. The methodological contribution of my work draws on Thomson's (2009) 'method-in-practice' by creating theme-based case narratives concerning identity-in-process. While Thomson's (2009) method is built on theme-based interview data, my method was grounded in ethnographic observations and interviews and the individual narratives therefore exhibit different themes. As such, I could identify biographic contextual and social interactions across contexts and over time.

6.3 Reflections on the research and its continuation

This thesis adds to the discourse exploring learners' thoughts about their everyday practices and social, gendered positional identities inside and outside of school and across educational transitions (see Chapter 2). By means of this approach, learners' self-understandings and future orientations as local, national and global citizens can be understood. In this context, my argument concerns the benefits of placing students' learning ecologies and identity processes at the core of an improved education system. Central to this is the importance of connecting the curriculum to students' experiences, challenges, interests and identities (Barron, 2006; Subero et al., 2016), as well as their future orientations (see articles I, II and III). I hope that this thesis has generated new insights into how students' practices and experiences, as well as their understanding of their identities across the contexts of family life, everyday life and school, initiate their educational trajectories and the construction of gendered futures. This implies an expansion of the context of school learning (Rajala, 2016) and the need to pay attention to students' identities beyond the school environment in order to promote their mediated actions towards future trajectories. A necessary condition is to help students connect these trajectories before and after the transition to upper secondary school. Additionally, upper secondary school level education will benefit from a focus on the students' personal identities, interests and future orientations – not just academic subjects. I contend that the findings of this thesis should be regarded as tentative, given the relatively low number of participants involved in the research. However, following the thirteen participants across contexts and over time has made possible a detailed data-driven analysis of learning trajectories and the development of learners' positional identities.

Parliament Act no. 28 (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2016) has a particular focus on fostering an inclusive and respectful school community based on dialogue. My work shows that the interplay between social gendered and academic figured worlds influences both confidence and learning in school. Teachers may lack insight into the specific interplay between these two worlds. In this context, more in-depth research regarding how social and academic factors are involved in educational transitions is needed. This should help us to further understand how students handle these 'parallel worlds', as well as how the different life worlds influence their educational trajectories.

This thesis shows that multiethnic girls use education as a tool for understanding themselves and their gendered expectations. It is important to recognise the way in which they find the inspiration to connect education to their lifelong holistic development of gendered futures. The articles show that, despite the challenges they face, the girls continue to invest in their education (except in the case of Ekin; see article III). One limitation of this thesis is that it involves only a few male participants; the rich data sets obtained from the male participants have not yet been analysed in depth. The data concerning one boy (Ugur) has been analysed by Roth and Erstad (2013), although a more contextualised analysis of the boys' identities beyond school would have been beneficial. In Norway, as many as 30% of students in upper secondary school have not completed their schooling five years after starting. The drop-out rates for vocational programmes are particularly high, and they are higher for boys than for

girls (Statistics Norway, 2016). An in-depth study of boys' identities and future orientations and their use of networks could shed light on their creation of future trajectories.

Working on this thesis project has made me increasingly aware of the importance of both ethical guidelines governing research and determining my own identity. As the work progressed, there arose situations where I had to make ethical and methodological decisions 'in the moment', which sometimes involved the participants, their family, school staff and myself. My approach was to use reflective conversations in order to avoid 'unethical situations' (Chapter 4). Viewed retrospectively, for this kind of research, a joint meeting with the participants and their parents in the school setting might have been beneficial. Such a meeting would have allowed me to inform them about the research design and the research ethics, thus offering an opportunity to discuss the guidelines governing how the work was to be conducted. My work shows that more knowledge in relation to cooperation between the school and the parents is needed. Different contextual practices demand a joint understanding of how cooperation between home and school can be achieved.

The strength in my research lies in the fact that I felt the participants were engaged and responsible when contributing to the study. My impression was that they recognised the importance of telling their stories and informing me about their learning trajectories. Analysing the data together with my co-authors, supervisors and other colleagues in joint data sessions has enabled me to, at least partly, overcome the bias that stems from my participatory observer identity (Chapter 4).

By drawing on the findings of this thesis, educators and policy makers have access to tools that allow us to understand how multiethnic students think about themselves and their education, as well as the future possibilities they foresee for themselves in the Norwegian school system. The real value of these tools will become apparent when teachers are better able to initiate and support their students' educational trajectories. To do so, teachers need to co-configure their educational designs together with their students as an integral part of the enactment of a new pedagogical ideal.

7 References

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ERRATA SHEET

This errata sheet lists errors and their correction for the doctoral thesis of Solveig Roth, titled “Educational trajectories in cultural worlds: An ethnographic of multiethnic girls across different levels of schooling”, Dept. of Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences. University of Oslo, 2017.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Correction</i>
Page 2, par. 4, line 1	“are more likely have high”	“are more likely to have high”
Page 5, par. 1, line 8	“over two years on into”	“over two years into”
Page 16, par. 2, line 14	“participation”	“participant”
Page 24, par. 2, line 6	“mid level”	“longitudinal”
Page 25, par. 2, line 12	“and”	“an”
Page 28, par. 1, line 3	“in my everyday work”	“in my work everyday”
Page 29, par. 4, line 7	“these aspects occur more naturally when”	“these categories can be approached in situations where”
Page 37, par. 1, line 2	“(Nielsen & Rudberg, 1989)”	“(cf. Nielsen & Rudberg, 1989)”
Page 50, par. 4, line 5	“for one formal interview”	“for one or two formal interview(s)”
Page 76, par. 1, line 8	“dispositions”	“(dis)positions”

Article III: Roth, S. & Stuedahl, D. (in progress). ‘You Norwegians think we Muslims are not free’. Enactment of gendered positional identities during transition stages. *Gender and Education*.

This article had been submitted to *Gender and Education* when the dissertation for the degree of Ph.D. was sent for evaluation. The article has since then been accepted for revision. *Gender and Education* has suggested, among others, the following:

- A more clearly described ethnographic approach.
- More emphasis on minority and majority issues regarding religious and gendered subject positions.

Therefore, an improved version of the article may be published in *Gender and Education* at a later stage. See *Gender and Education*, <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cgee20/current>