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The Bilingual Self-Esteem

A theoretical analysis of immigrant students and the Norwegian school system

Masteroppgave i psykologi - Læring-, Hjerne, Atferd, Omgivelser

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Trondheim, Oktober 2017

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Acknowledgment

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor Prof. Dr. Ute Gabriel for her immense support, motivation, patience and knowledge. Furthermore, I extend my sincere thank you to my friends and family who have provided me with emotional support and friendly advice throughout this process. I am sincerely grateful to each and every one.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Abstract.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Central Concepts.....	4
<i>Bi/multilingual-Bi/multilingualism</i>	4
<i>Motivation for learning</i>	4
<i>Self-esteem</i>	5
Theoretical Framework.....	7
Cognitive challenges.....	8
Language proficiency.....	10
Socioeconomic status.....	11
The bilingual self-esteem.....	12
<i>Identity negotiation</i>	13
<i>Cultural framework switching</i>	16
The Norwegian school system.....	18
NAFO.....	19
Initiatives on improving academic achievement.....	19
<i>Kindergarten</i>	19
<i>Primary- and lower secondary school</i>	21
<i>Upper secondary school/high school</i>	24
Summary of review.....	25
Analysis.....	
Conclusion.....	27
Summary.....	27
Limitations, implications and contributions.....	30

Abstract

Research indicates that bilingual students are often at risk of academic underachievement. This study took to investigate this further by examining bilingual students' motivation in relation to their academic achievement, and to which extent self-esteem may be a contributing factor. The study lays emphasis on bilingual students with immigrant background. Different theoretical explanations for academic underachievement are discussed however, the study ends up introducing its own explanation, the bilingual self-esteem. Furthermore, a review of the Norwegian school system is carried out to investigate how the government and the schools have approached the issue of academic underachievement amongst bilingual students. Moreover, the study proposes different solutions on how to better the measures that exist today in the Norwegian school system.

Introduction

Globalization has become one of the most widely used terminologies to describe the current state of the world (Arnett, 2002). The degree and intensity of connection has accelerated dramatically among different cultures and world religions. Parallel with globalization, the number of multilinguals has increased significantly the last decades, thus the majority of people can characterize themselves as bilingual and/or multilingual (Shin, 2005). Globalization has created a demand for multilingual competency. Multilingual competency or skills are essential for communication especially in today's world with increasing mobility and interaction. Approximately two-thirds of the world population have multilingual competency and can communicate in more than one language. This requirement of foreign language skills has put multilingualism on the spotlight. Multilingualism is gaining momentum each and every day (Shin, 2005).

Migration to Norway has increased dramatically over the last 10 years (SSB, 2017b). Statistics show that immigrants account for 13,8 percent of the population in Norway as of January 2017. Norwegian-born with immigrant parents, also known as second generation immigrants account for 3 percent of the population. Immigrants in Norway originate from over 221 different countries and autonomous areas. Some migrated to the country because of labour whilst others migrated as refugees (SSB, 2017b). In the past few years Europe has been in a refugee crisis due to in large part the war in Syria and Iraq (UNHCR, 2017). The number of refugees seeking asylum in other countries has increased significantly. By 2016 there were 11,100 more resident immigrants from Syria in Norway. As of January 2017, 20 800 immigrants from Syria were registered compared to 9 700 the year before (SSB, 2017b). What these numbers reflect is a growing multilingual and multicultural society in Norway. Henceforth, it is important to identify the multilingual situation and study the way in which it affects us, in order to assess its timeliness and real value.

Furthermore, what makes this topic of bi/multilingualism interesting is the ongoing debate in the linguistics field on the advantages of being bilingual (Maki, 2015). The debate is fuelled by the many studies done on bilingual speakers of all ages that have shown them to outperform monolinguals on certain cognitive performance measures. For instance, in a research study done by Bialystok (2010), 6-year-old children executed a task that required attending to either the global or the local level of a set of hierarchical stimuli. Results from the study showed that bilingual children produced faster reaction times to both congruent and incongruent trials when presented with mixed blocks of trial. The study consisted of three small studies. The results were similar in all three studies. In spite of them performing

equivalently to monolingual children in the control tasks, the bilingual children outperformed the monolingual children in the conditions that were more effortful and in which controlled attention was required. However, the assumption of a bilingual advantage seems to be a bit problematic. First and foremost, there are general inconsistencies within the findings in this research area (De Bruin, Treccani, & Della Sala, 2015). The number of studies that have not found any tie between bilingualism and better cognition has risen dramatically over the past few years. One researcher, took to investigate this further (De Bruin et al., 2015). De Bruin and her colleagues systematically combed through conference abstracts from a hundred and sixty-nine conferences between the years 1999 and 2012, that had to do with bilingualism and executive control. What they found was a discrepancy in publications between studies that demonstrated a bilingual advantage versus studies that found none. At conferences, about half the presented results provided either complete or partial support for the bilingual advantage on certain tasks. The other half provided partial or complete refutation. When it came to the publications that appeared after the preliminary presentation, though, the split was decidedly different. Sixty-eight per cent of the studies that indicated a bilingual advantage ended up being published in a scientific journal, compared to just twenty-nine per cent of those that found either no difference or a monolingual edge (De Bruin et al., 2015). Thus, this has fuelled an ongoing debate on whether there are advantages to being bilingual or not. Some have even suggested the non-existence of bilingual advantages, or that it only occurs under certain circumstances (Paap, Johnson, & Sawi, 2015). De Bruin is not refuting the notion that there are advantages to being bilingual (De Bruin et al., 2015). Some of the studies that she reviewed really did show an edge. However, perhaps these advantages that are being reported so fiercely are neither global nor pervasive as they are often reported.

Another problem presents itself when being bilingual or multilingual is associated with cognitive skills, like enhanced executive function. A quality like enhanced executive function has been linked to among other things better academic achievement (Best, Miller, & Naglieri, 2011). This has caused many media reports to automatically jump to the conclusion and assume that being bilingual makes you smarter and academically stronger (Bhattacharjee, 2010; Millner, 2015). Whether this is a fact or not, and whether the media is feeding biased information to the people or not, this makes it important enough to further investigate the topic. The current state is that we are living in a multilingual and multicultural world, which makes the topic of bi/multilingualism quite relevant. It is therefore important investigate the multilinguals situation further, so that we all can continue to educate ourselves with the right pieces of information at all time.

This is a theoretical research study that wishes to investigate the following research question:

“How motivated are bi/multilingual students in respect to academic contexts, and can self-esteem be a contributing factor in this?”

In doing so the thesis will be focusing on bilingual and multilingual students in the Norwegian school system. In Norway, most multilinguals are minorities with immigrant background. Thus, these are the bi/multilinguals that will be in focus in this study. The thesis will begin by defining concepts that are essential to this study. Further on, it will introduce relevant theories in relation to the study before moving on to a review of the Norwegian school system. Finally, the thesis will end with a discussion on different solutions to the problems raised in the review, followed by a summary of the study’s conclusion.

Central concepts

Bi/multilingual/ bi/multilingualism

Bi/multilingual and bi/multilingualism are terms that are often used interchangeably. However, there is a subtle difference between the two concepts that is worth mentioning. The dictionary defines bi/multilingual as a person who can speak two or more languages with equal or nearly equal fluency of a native. Bi/multilingualism however, goes beyond language speakers and the individual person, and encompasses communities, schools, books, websites, etc. (Unknown, n.d.). Furthermore, it is important to notify that multilinguals come in all forms (Grosjean, 2010). Since we live in a globalized world people become or are multilingual due to different reasons. Some are multilingual because they are immigrants in a foreign country, some are multilingual due to their parents originating from a different ethnic background, and others are multilingual because they willingly learn a second language that is not their native language. Thus, multilinguals are not a homogeneous group. Therefore, for this study the bi/multilinguals in focus are those with immigrant background, also referred to as first-generation and second-generation immigrants (OECD, 2006).

Motivation for learning/Academic motivation

Motivation is a theoretical construct used to explain behaviour (Guay et al., 2010). The term motivation derives from the Latin word *movere* which means “to move” therefore, it is

indeed the factor that causes a person to do or not to do something (Broussard & Garrison, 2004).

In relation to academics, motivation has easily become a subject of interest for researchers because of its relation to education. Studies like the one done by Endler, Rey, and Butz (2012), have been able to show and emphasize the importance of motivation for learning, especially in relation to how students' are able to adapt when studying and how they are able to manage challenges and failure. According to Williams and Williams (2011) motivation is the most important factor in helping educators improve learning. Motivation is also an important factor in explaining the levels at which a student shows interest and ability in various occupations (Brophy, 2004).

Literature identifies two types of motivation, internal and external motivation (Nakanishi, 2002). Explained simply, internal motivation refers to doing an activity because one wants to. It has to do with pursuing an activity for itself, and the pleasure and satisfaction that derives from that. Internal motivation derives from the innate psychological needs of competence and self-determination (Klonis, Plant, & Devine, 2005). On the other hand, external motivation has to do with performance goals where recognition is coming from some kind of outside force. Meaning partaking in certain behaviours or actions as a means to an end and not for the sake of the activity itself (Klonis et al., 2005). Literature indicates that actions driven by external motivation are characterized by lower investment and efforts toward simple tasks, whereas activities driven by internal motivation are characterized by greater effort toward complex and challenging tasks (Ames, 1992; Ames & Ames, 1990; Nakanishi, 2002)

Academic motivation is influenced by a variation of factors. These factors include personal motives, such as the psychological need for achievement and success, or individual self-esteem (Katz, 2004). Furthermore, scholars believe there variation between individuals when it comes to motivation or learning, and self-esteem (Sowislo & Orth, 2013). In addition, researchers have found a positive correlation between motivation for learning and self-esteem (Harlen & Deakin Crick, 2003)

Self-esteem

Self-esteem appears under various names, such as “self- concept”, “self-image”, “self-presentation”, or “self-evaluation” (Kvello, 2014; Neziroglu, Khemlani-Patel, & Veale, 2008). Self-esteem refers to subjective descriptions and evaluations of one self in different areas. More specifically one can say it is every thought, feeling, belief and knowledge you

have of yourself. Different scholars look at self-esteem differently. Some consider self-esteem as an innate virtue that is internally developed (Dweck, 2002). In other words, self-esteem is not easily affected by environmental experiences because, it is supposedly already developed when an individual encounters the environment. Other researchers refer to it as a dynamic virtue that is socially constructed (Franken, 1994). Self-esteem is looked upon as something that is learned by the individual during his/her life and constantly evolving as a result of the experiences of the individual, his/her interaction with “significant others” and contact with the environment. Some scholars divide self-esteem into two aspects, global self-esteem and specific self-esteem (Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach, & Rosenberg, 1995). Global self-esteem refers to the individuals positive and negative attitude towards the self in entirety. The latter, specific self-esteem allude to the individual’s attitude towards specific facets of themselves. Specific self-esteem is often further divided into smaller areas such as moral, social, emotional, cognitive/academic and physical self-esteem. Out of these five areas, cognitive/academic self-esteem is possibly the most relevant to this study. It speaks specifically of the intellectual or academic side of one self, particularly how one perceives their own level of knowledge and learning ability (Kvello, 2014). Research indicates that people who have a positive self-concept generally have more motivation and self-awareness of their capabilities and limitations (Franken, 1994). In contrast, low self-esteem reflects low motivation and low confidence (Azar & Vasudeva, 2006).

Theoretical Framework

Bilinguals use different languages for different purposes in life (Grosjean, 2010). For instance, a tour guide switching to between English and Spanish, so tourists can better understand them. Utilizing multiple languages in everyday life entails that bilinguals typically use their languages in different contexts, situations, with different people, for different reasons (Grosjean, 2010). This has often caused the assumption that being bilingual is perhaps too challenging. This assumption further derives from the presumption that obtaining two languages that are constantly active may be too difficult and confusing (Hakuta, 1986). As highlighted by (Bialystok, 2006) during the first half of the twentieth century, researchers actually assumed that bilingualism disturbed a child's normal development . It was thought that it would put a child in a disadvantage position in respect to their cognitive development, thus causing parents and teachers to try and put a stop to such schooling. Despite the extreme looks of these assumptions, there are research findings from this century that seem to further support them. One of them is The Programme for Internationals Student Assessment (PISA), the findings of which seem to have found evidence which supports the assumption that certain bilinguals/multilinguals run the risk of academic underachievement (OECD, 2006).

PISA is a triennial international survey, which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide. In the PISA 2003 report, 15 years old first- and second-generation immigrant students were analysed (OECD, 2006). They were then compared with their native peers. There were 17 countries involved, 14 of them were OECD countries including Norway, and the last three were partner countries, Hong Kong-China, Macao-China and the Russian Federation. According to the report a significant gap in academic performance was found between immigrant students and their native peers. PISA 2003 classifies students into six proficiency levels according to the level of mathematical skills they demonstrate. Level 2 is considered to represent a baseline level of mathematics proficiency on the PISA scale at which students begin to demonstrate the kind of skills that enable them to actively use mathematics. The findings indicate that only small percentages of native students fail to reach level 2. However, more than 40% of first-generation students in Belgium, France, Norway and Sweden and at least 30% of second-generation students in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, the United states and the Russian Federation perform below level 2. The trends in reading were similar to those in mathematics. In 11 countries, including Norway, more than 25% of first- generation students fail to reach level 2 in reading. Similarly, in nine countries – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Switzerland and the

Russian Federation – at least 25% of second-generation students performed at level 1 or below. What actually is of special interest is the group of second-generation students. These are per definition students born in the country of assessment with foreign-born parents (OECD, 2006). According to OECD (2006) this is in line with research on assimilation tendencies for immigrants across generations. Second-generation students are expected to be less disadvantaged in terms of achievement than first-generation students. In France, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland the results do show this trend with at least 10% fewer second-generation students than first-generation students performing below level 2. Nevertheless, the percentage of second-generation students failing to reach level 2 is still substantially higher than the percentage of native students. This proves that the academic challenges the students are facing are not necessarily tied to the fact that they are immigrants, but perhaps to the fact that they speak multiple languages. This then leads to the question, what is causing these academic challenges for bilingual students?

Various factors have been suggested to be behind these academic differences. Cognitive challenges, language proficiency, and socioeconomic status are amongst the most common and most widely accepted explanations. Each of these factors will be presented in more detail below, before I outline what I consider to be an interesting alternative explanation, namely the bilingual self-esteem.

Cognitive challenges

One common explanation as mentioned above, is cognitive challenges (Bialystok, 2006). Substantial evidence shows that bilingual minds processes language through joint activation (Beauvillain & Grainger, 1987; Kroll & De Groot, 1997). Using eye-tracking technology, Marian, Spivey, and Hirsch (2003) discovered that English-Russian bilinguals were distracted by a picture sharing the same phonology with Russian, when performing a task in English. This happened even though there were no contextual cues indicating that Russian was relevant. This indicates that fluent bilinguals show some measure of activation of both languages and some interaction between them at all times. This happens even in contexts that are entirely driven by only one of the languages. In other words, both languages are active and available when one of them is being used. Having to deal with this persistent linguistic competition can result in language and attention difficulties (Marian & Shook, 2012). For instance, knowing more than one language can cause bilinguals to do less well on verbal tasks such as pictures naming (Gollan, Montoya, Fennema-Notestine, & Morris, 2005)

and can increase tip-of-the-tongue states (Gollan & Acenas, 2004). These are referred to as deficits in lexical retrieval. This joint activation situation causes an attention control problem that is unique to bilinguals (Bialystok, 2009). Supposedly, bilinguals experience a need to correctly select a form that meets all the linguistic criteria for form and meaning without getting distracted by the competing system. This need to control attention to the target system in the context of an activated and competing system, is what differentiates bilingual speech production from that of monolinguals. However, at the same time attentional control is also responsible for both the cognitive and linguistic consequences of bilingualism. In younger bilinguals, the language deficit caused by attentional difficulties presents itself as control of fewer vocabulary in each language compared to monolinguals (Mahon & Crutchley, 2006; Oller & Eilers, 2002). On the surface this may seem harmless however, in light of Bialystok (2009) study we know that vocabulary size is a central measure of children's progress in both literate and oral forms of language developments. Furthermore, vocabulary size in some sense serves as a proxy for the representational base of language when children are constructing language. Thus, a richer and more diverse vocabulary reflects a more elaborate understanding of language. Similar patterns exist for adult bilinguals however, in their case the measure is not usually vocabulary size but rather access to vocabulary, also referred to as lexical retrieval/access.

Though the studies above may prove that bilinguals perform poorly on verbal tasks compared to monolingual, it does not necessarily prove that deficiency in lexical retrieval is the reason for academic underachievement amongst bilinguals. Furthermore, scientific findings prove that bilinguals perform better at non-verbal task such as the Simon task (Lu & Proctor, 1995) and the Stroop task (Bialystok, Craik, & Luk, 2008) than monolinguals. Succeeding at non-verbal task requires a great amount of executive control. Speaking two or more languages requires an amount of control to be able to focus attention on the target language (Bialystok, 2009). Generally, this is operated by executive processes of control. The primary task of the executive system is inhibition, shifting of mental sets/cognitive flexibility and updating information in working memory (Miyake et al., 2000). Thus, bilinguals use these control systems every time they speak or listen. Therefore, the constant practice and use of the executive system must strengthen these control systems and even change the associated brain regions (Bialystok, Craik, & Luk, 2012). It is important to note that executive function has been linked to improvement in learning and thereby academic performance (Bull & Scerif, 2001; Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2009; Lehto, 1995). According to a study by St Clair-

Thompson and Gathercole (2006), working memory is closely linked with attainment in English and mathematics, and inhibition is associated with achievement in English, mathematics, and science. It is believed that the executive system may help a bilingual person to better process information which leads to better foundation for learning (Marian & Shook, 2012). Taking all these findings into consideration, the effects of cognitive functions on academic performance/achievement are actually not that simple. Which in turn makes it difficult to conclude that cognitive challenges associated with speaking multiple language are the cause for academic underachievement amongst bi/multilingual students.

Language proficiency

Another common explanation is based on language proficiency. The role of language skills is often emphasised, especially in relations to immigrant and minority students. It is often argued that a lack of proficiency in the receiving country's official language could be a major hurdle for integration in the school system, thus causing academic challenges (Schmid, 2001). According to the PISA 2003 (OECD, 2006) report immigrant students who speak a different language at home from the language of instruction tend to perform at lower levels than immigrant students who speak the language of instruction at home. Taking into account the average across OECD countries, immigrant students who speak the language of instruction at home are roughly a half-year of learning behind their non-immigrant peers in mathematics, while immigrant students who do not speak the language of instruction at home are about a year behind. Which means more than half a grade level separates immigrant students who do and who do not speak the language of instruction at home (OECD, 2006). It is believed that speaking a different language at home reduces the opportunities to learn and be proficient in the language of instruction.

Jim Cummins introduces his own term called cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1980). CALP refers to more highly abstract decontextualized communication which mostly takes place during academic learning. CALP is often used to discuss language proficiency levels of bilingual students. Empirical evidence suggests an interdependence of CALP across languages. In other words, academic aspects of first language (L1) and second language (L2) are interdependent. Which means that the development of proficiency in L2 is partially a function of the level of proficiency in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins. This has been labelled as the interdependence hypothesis. According to the hypothesis L1 and L2 CALP are manifestations of the same

underlying dimensions thus, previous learning of literacy-functions of language in L1 should be able to predict future learning of these functions in L2 (Cummins, 1980). Most evidence supporting this hypothesis comes from correlation studies (Cummins, 1979; Ekstrand, 1976). Following the logic of the interdependence hypothesis, one could expect that speaking a different language at home (L1) should better the proficiency of the language of instruction (L2). In other words, home language use should not interfere with the learning or opportunity to be proficient in the language of instruction. This in turn means that home language should not affect academic achievement in any negative way. It suffices to therefore indicate at this point that it is a complicated issue that is difficult to draw definite conclusion from. Whether language proficiency contributes to academic underachievement amongst bilinguals is to say the least uncertain.

Socioeconomic status

Considering that most bilinguals have an immigrant background, it is important to examine socioeconomic status as a plausible explanation for academic underachievement (Grosjean, 2010). In the PISA report (OECD, 2006), it is revealed that significant differences found in reading ability between students with immigrant background and students of the majority can also be explained by their socioeconomic background. A person's socioeconomic status (SES) is their overall social position in society (Ainley, Graetz, Long, & Batten, 1995). This includes both the social and economic domain. Socioeconomic status is determined by an individual's achievements in education, employment and occupational status, as well as and income and wealth. Research has continuously linked lower SES to lower academic achievement and slower rates of academic progress. For example, one study indicates that children from low SES households and communities develop academic skills slower than children from higher SES groups (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, & Maczuga, 2009). In another study, children from low-SES families were shown to enter high school with average literacy skills five years behind those students who come from high-income households (Reardon, Valentino, Kalogrides, Shores, & Greenberg, 2013). Doerschuk et al. (2016) showed in their study that the success rate of low-income students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines is much lower than that of students who do not come from underrepresented backgrounds.

Immigrants often migrate to other countries in hope of improving their standard of living (OECD, 2006). Sometimes countries require a certain level of education and training before issuing entry admissions. Which would then result in a more highly skilled immigrant

population. However, there are instances such as influx of illegal work migration and refugee influx (Rivera-Batiz, 1999). These instances are often associated with immigrants of lower education and skill levels. It is therefore probable that such situations cause immigrants to be at a disadvantage in terms of their levels of skill and position within the social and economic hierarchy. Socioeconomic background is able to create academic differences in the classroom because, each student possesses resources that is most certainly according to their family socioeconomic status (NOU2010:7, 2010). For example, a good economy makes it easier to lay material conditions for learning (Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999). Conversely, poor economy could lead to stressful situation in the family which could adversely affect the children (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997). Furthermore, studies actually indicate that parents' education and knowledge about school are even more important than economic factors, in respect to academic achievement (Bakken, 2009). Most likely the reason is that parents' education contributes more directly to the young people's interest in literary learning and ability to abstract thinking than what their economy does.

In conclusion, a lot of evidence supports socioeconomic status as a plausible explanation of why immigrant students achieve poorer school performance than the majority population.

The bilingual self-esteem

In as much as these various theories have been propounded to give explanation on the issue of academic underachievement, most of them seem not be adequate nor substantial enough. There seem to be some uncertainty around the theories concerning cognitive challenges and language proficiency. Hence, there is a need for more plausible theories besides the theory of socioeconomic status. An attempt will therefore be made in this study to propose another relevant source of explanation. A body of research support a connection between self-esteem, motivation for learning, and academic achievement. Zoabi (2012) did a study where he examined the relationship between self-esteem and motivation for learning among pre-academic preparatory program students and regular students in their first year of study. Results from the study show a positive relationship between self-image and motivation for learning amongst both groups. In another study, self-esteem and its link to academic achievement was examined amongst Iranian university students (Saadat, Ghasemzadeh, & Soleimani, 2012). A direct positive relationship was found between academic self-esteem and academic achievement. The study's results support the findings of Bankston and Zhou (2002); Lockett and Harrell (2003); Schmidt and Padilla (2003), who all cited a positive correlation between self-esteem and academic performance.

As we can see self-esteem is relevant for learning/academic motivation which in turn makes it relevant for academic achievement. Perhaps there are certain factors that influences the self-esteem of bilinguals, making self-esteem's effects on academic achievement different for bilinguals. Identity negotiation and cultural framework switching are plausible suggestions for what these factors may be because, these factors seem to be uniquely relevant to people who speak multiple languages (Fielding, 2015; Schrauf, 2000). To sum it up, factors like identity negotiation and cultural framework switching influences the self-esteem of bilingual students. In turn, the bilingual self-esteem influences academic motivation and consequently academic achievement as well. (see Figure 1.)

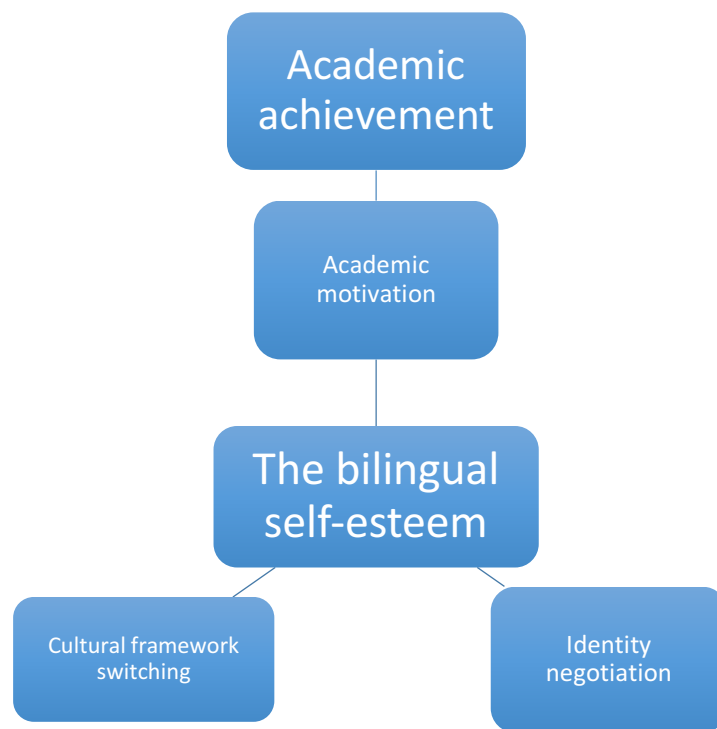


Figure 1.

Identity negotiation

According to Fought (2006) language is a fundamental aspect of identity. “Who we are”, per say, is closely related to the language we speak. Our languages influence our identity, especially our ethnic or social identity (Deaux, 2000). Fought (2006) claims that language acts as a key element that assists individuals to balance the various roles and aspects of their identities. The term identity is very complex and has been thoroughly investigated in

various spheres of research (Fielding, 2015). However, according to Fielding (2015) there seem to be little consensus over a precise definition of identity. The complex nature of identity construction and the impact of interpersonal negotiation involved can sometimes result in a conflict of identity for bilinguals, who at most times feel a connection to two or more cultural groups. This conflict often results from what is termed as identity negotiation. Figure 1. illustrates the bilingual identity negotiation framework (BINF) (Bourdieu, 1977; Joseph, 2006; Norton, 2000, 2006; Tajfel, 1978). This framework shows the relationship between an individual's self-concept and the wider societal influences upon that self-concept (Fielding, 2015). Within the society and within the individual's self-concept the negotiation of an identity as connected with language and bilingualism takes place. The BINF contains the inter-linking factors of socio-cultural connection, interaction and investment. For a bilingual who feels connected to more than one language and culture, these three factors are essential in the development of their identity.

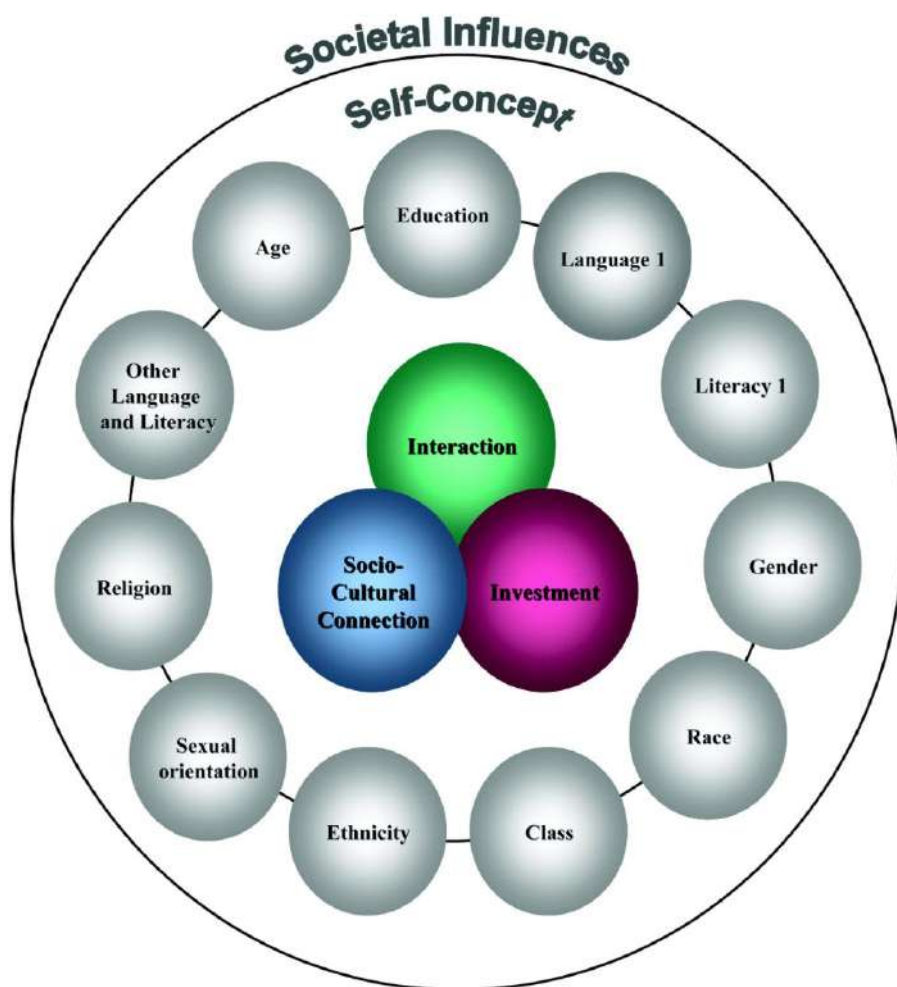


Figure 2. Bilingual identity negotiation framework – within the surrounding impacting

influences (Incorporating ideas from(Bourdieu, 1977; Joseph, 2006; Norton, 2000, 2006; Tajfel, 1978)

The first element, socio-cultural connection encompasses the individual's connection with those around them (Fielding, 2015). In other words, their feeling of membership of a language and culture and the ways in which, and the extent to which they feel connected to the languages and cultures in their lives. This feeling of connection then influences their future experiences of language and bilingualism. The second element is interaction. An individual's self-concept and the way they feel in the language is influenced by the types of interactions they experience in that language. This can impact upon their feelings of confidence and self-esteem associated with each language. The third and last element is investment. Norton (2000) developed this term. The common understanding of the term is that, in addition to individual motivation to identify with language, a person also needs the support of the community whose language they are learning. If a community limits opportunities for an individual to use language in a meaningful way and to develop a feeling of ownership of the language, this individual may face tensions and conflicts in becoming bilingual

Bilinguals have been shown to negotiate identities associated with both the languages and cultures that they are connected to (Fielding, 2015). In order to succeed in this, they need both quantity and quality of the cultures and a supportive environment in which language learning is valued by the community and the family. This refers back to the three factors mentioned above. It seems that some bi/ multilinguals who have a connection to several cultures subsequently experience conflict as they are caught between these cultures. Some may even feel like they are not full members of either culture. For instance, students in one Australian study of a South-East Asian community in Melbourne identified themselves as a fusion of Asian and Australian. However, when they were asked to place themselves on a scale most of them positioned themselves towards the Asian end of the scale (Lotherington, 2003). Lotherington (2003) found that there was a conflict for these students because society promotes the view that Australian means white. Hence, this created a problem for the students, in which they had difficulty negotiating their identities as first generation Asian-Australians within broader societal structures. In another study, Japanese students returning to live in Japan reported feelings of not belonging in either culture after living abroad for an extended period (Kanno, 2003). Kanno (2003), argues that these students end up with a

conflict of feelings, as they feel like they are “between” the two cultures. In both contexts, they feel like outsiders. This identity negotiation battle that bilinguals experience can possibly influence their self-esteem. They may constantly feel like they have to choose one culture over the other or, they may feel like they do not belong in either culture at all. Consequently, this can then impact academic motivation and academic achievement.

Cultural framework switching

Another possibility for identity conflict can stem from cultural framework switching. Some research studies use language as an experimental prime to show that people speaking two or more languages, whom are also exposed to the different cultures associated with the said languages, are able to switch between different aspects of their identity. Given that cultural practises are so deeply embedded in language, being proficient in a second language often entails the establishment of a new cognitive system (schematas, mental models or representation), that reflects new ways of constructing the self and its relation to the social and physical world (Ochs, 1996; Schrauf, 2000; Valsiner, 2001). Proof of this comes from various studies that have studied language in relation to bicultural individuals. For example, Ross, Xun, and Wilson (2002) did a study on bilingual individuals’ self-perception. Participants from the study were Chinese born and were randomly assigned to participate either in English or Chinese. Canadian-born participants of either European or Chinese descent served as controls. The results from the study were parallel to findings from previous studies. Participants responding in Chinese reported more collective self-statements in open-ended self-descriptions. Furthermore, they scored lower on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, and were also in more agreement with Chinese cultural views than did the remaining groups. The results suggest that East-Asian and Western identities may be stored in separate knowledge structures in bicultural individuals, with each structure activated by its associated language. Similar studies have been done by other researchers, who have arrived at the same conclusion. For instance, Luna, Ringberg, and Peracchio (2008) executed three separate studies that were of both qualitative and experimental evidence. Results from their study indicate that language triggers the switching from one mental frame to another. Results from Wang, Shao, and Li (2010) also supports this dynamic relation between language, culture and the self. In their study, bilingual children from Hong Kong were interviewed either in English or Chinese. Their expectation was to find a match between the children’s answers of self-views and the culture of the language that they were interviewed in. As expected, children

interviewed in English provided more elaborate and self-focused self-descriptions and memory accounts and endorsed more Western, compared with children interviewed in Chinese, and vice versa.

As mentioned different cultures consists of different cognitive systems and schemas. Thus, the demands of each culture are different. This may again enforce identity negotiation situations and may perhaps create some conflict for the individual. Also, these studies confirm the stories we often hear of bilingual and multilingual individuals claiming to feel like they are different versions of themselves depending on which language they employ in the moment. It may then seem like different languages may pertain to different self-aspects. By applying this train of thought to self-esteem, we could assume that self-esteem could vary between the different languages in the sense as they are attached to different cultures and cognitive systems. Therefore, depending on which language is used in the academic context, the level of academic self-esteem may vary. There is a possibility that this could then influence academic motivation and academic achievement. For example, first-generation immigrants may be vulnerable to such a situation, where they may perhaps not feel too confident in their L2 abilities, which may consequently influence their self-esteem, academic motivation and academic achievement.

The Norwegian School system

Kindergarten is the most important integration and language education arena for minority language children in pre-school age. Research shows that well-organized measures for minority children in kindergartens have a positive impact on their school start, their Norwegian skills and how they progress in school later on (Nergård, 2003; Sand & Skoug, 2002, 2003). About 54 per cent of all minority language children between the ages of 1 and 5 years old went to kindergarten by the end of 2005. The corresponding figure for all children in the age group was 76 percent. Minority-language 5-year-olds in kindergartens account for 82 percent, compared with 93 percent of all 5-year-olds in kindergarten. For the 4-year-olds, the numbers are 79 and 92 percent respectively. It is therefore a stated goal to have more minority language children go to kindergarten (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007).

Both Norwegian and international assessments show a consistent pattern of minority speaking students scoring lower than their majority speaking peers (OECD, 2006). In Norway, there is a national assessment called “nasjonale prøver” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, n.d.). The purpose of this assessment is to offer each school some basic knowledge about their students’ basic skills in reading, mathematics and English. Results from the 2016 national assessment is consistent with previous tests showing that immigrant students, especially first-generation immigrants are scoring lower than their fellow Norwegian peers (SSB, 2017c). When it comes to second-generation immigrant students, those with immigrant background from EU/EØS, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have a higher mastery level than Norwegian students and other second-generation immigrants with different backgrounds (SSB, 2017c).

The vast majority of graduates from primary school and lower secondary school choose to begin in upper secondary education/high school (Utdanningsspeilet, 2004). Almost 100 percent of the students who complete the 10th grade apply for admission, and around 96 percent go straight to high school. Of all the registered graduates from lower secondary school in the spring of 2003, 96.3 percent of them gained admission into high school that same academic year. However, the same cannot be said about students with minority language backgrounds (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). In autumn 2005, about 90 percent of the immigrant graduates with minority language backgrounds went directly over to starting a high school education. It is somewhat lower than the average for the entire population as a whole. In practice, some students in high school start with insufficient knowledge and skills from primary and lower secondary school. This is especially true of students who have not

acquired basic learning processes in elementary school, students who have minority language backgrounds, and those who begun late in their primary school education (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007).

NAFO

The National Centre for Multicultural Education (NAFO) was established in 2004 as one of the steps undertaken by the Norwegian government to implement its strategic plan: *Equal Education in Practice! A strategy for better learning and greater participation by language minorities in kindergartens, schools and education 2004-2009* (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007; NAFO, n.d.-a). After the end of the strategic plan period, NAFO has continued working for competence –building, networking and implementing developmental projects with the aim of promoting inclusive and equal education for linguistic minorities in kindergartens, schools and institutions of adult education. NAFO carries out assignments given by the Directorate for Education and Training (Udir). The center also collaborates with universities, university colleges, the National Parents' Committee for Primary and Secondary Education (FUG), the Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning (VOX) and other national centers for education. Focus-schools and focus-kindergartens within the education system are NAFOs central partners. NAFO runs competence-building programs for work within, and leadership of, institution involved in the education of linguistic minorities and for the development of inclusive multicultural learning communities in Norway (NAFO, n.d.-a). The Norwegian government has in the last couple of years introduced measures aimed at supporting and boosting academic achievement amongst minority students (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). Institutions like NAFO has been playing a key role in this respect.

Initiatives on improving academic achievement

Kindergarten

By 2016 there were 46,000 minority language children in kindergartens, an increase of 7 percent from the previous year (SSB, 2017a). The proportion of minority-language children between 1 and 5 years in kindergartens compared to children of the same age with immigrant background was 76 percent in 2016, which was 2 percentage points higher than in 2015. The proportion of minority-language children in relation to all children aged 1-5 years was 16

percent, an increase of 1 percentage point compared with 2015. Compared to the results from 2005, there is an obvious improvement over the last few years. There is a possibility that the improvements stem from the different measures the government had put in place from the strategic plan. In 2006 the government introduced an arrangement of free core times in kindergartens for 4-5 year olds. The program had its focus on the recruitment of children who are without daycare facilities, and in addition aimed at systematic language stimulation in kindergartens (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). Targeted follow-ups of the parents and guardians with minority background is also prioritized to ensure that they also get better knowledge of the Norwegian language. From august 2016 the arrangement was extended and to include 3 year olds as well (Regjeringen, 2016). Thus, 3- 5 year olds with minority background and/or from low income families have a right to 20 hours of free kindergarten per week.

There are further programs aimed at children deficient Norwegian skills at the primary school level. Being able to master languages is a prerequisite for participating actively in the society (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). NAFO has introduced a programme called “språkløftet” (NAFO, 2011). The main purpose of the programme is to promote good language skills in both the mother tongue and Norwegian. There was in the beginning nine municipalities who were a part of the program. A group of children from each municipality were followed for four years, from the health centers, to kindergarten and two years into primary school. The program included parents and guardians as well. An important part of the initiative is to contribute to a good transition between kindergartens and schools, and to promote cooperation across levels of administration and institutions and between professional groups in language development and Norwegian skills in children (NAFO, 2011).

In 2006, funding was granted to the staff in kindergartens to increase competence in multicultural education and language stimulation for minority-language children (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). The county councils received funding for training and local development work in the kindergartens. NAFO, in cooperation with county governors and colleges and universities, are leading different competence development programs and development projects in a selection of counties and kindergartens.

The Education Directorate and NAFO have prepared guidance materials for parents, teachers and staff at health centers and in kindergartens (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). The guidance material is an information booklet that is translated in 17 languages in addition to the two Norwegian language forms. The booklet deals with 10 different questions that parents often ask about children's multilingual development. These may be questions like: "Can

children learn several languages at the same time?" And "What can be done if the child only answers to Norwegian home?"

Primary- and lower secondary school

The government has at the primary and lower secondary school level established a scheme of grants for development projects at schools with more than 25% minority speaking students (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007; NAFO, 2011). The purpose of this measure is to encourage schools with many minority speaking students to successfully manage the special challenges that these particular schools have. Furthermore, it also aims at improving on the benefits students' get from their education and, consequently, their academic results. At the start-up of this program the government set aside 6 million kroner, of which 3 million went to Groruddalen, a district in the eastern part of Oslo, with heavily populated by minority groups.

In the 2005 Soria Moria declaration it was greatly emphasized that bilingualism is a resource in a globalized world, and that good language training is the key for minority children and students to succeed in education and in career (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). The ministry of education has therefore initiated an overview of already existing research on mother tongue education, including bilingual education and Norwegian as a second language, so that one can gain more insight into the effects and significance. In 2007 a pilot on mother tongue as a second language was initiated for students with a minority language background for the school year of 2007/2008 (NOU2010:7, 2010). The project was carried out first in the municipality of Trondheim. The target group were minority students who were not entitled to mother tongue education because they were considered to have good Norwegian skills. The objectives of the project were, among other things, to provide minority language students with the opportunity to further develop their bilingualism. Further focus was also laid on the content of education in using mother tongue as second language as well as models for organizing education in mother tongue. From the start, there were four language groups; Vietnamese, Farsi, Russian and Bosnian-Croatian Serbian. In addition, a group for Arabic was added in January 2009. Many of the students only had oral skills in their native languages when they started and therefore received basic reading and writing instruction.

The Education Act (Opplæringsloven, 1998) states that students in primary and lower secondary schools are entitled to special language training until they have sufficient Norwegian skills to attend regular classes. Special language training is an aggregate of different tools based on four categories (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). One category includes differential adjustments in learning the Norwegian language based on a general

curriculum in Norwegian (NOU2010:7, 2010). Another category is Norwegian language education according to a tailored curriculum. The third and fourth category is mother tongue education, and bilingual education. In 2007 changes were made in the education system by terminating the age-based curriculum for Norwegian as a second language and rather chose to introduce a level-based curriculum. Thus, when the students have reached the curriculum goals they can then move on to Norwegian language learning with the regular Norwegian curriculum. Guidance materials have in addition been developed for teachers teaching basic Norwegian to ensure quality in the special language training programme (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007).

There are other measures put in place to ensure customized and differentiated education for all students. One way that has been done, is by offering non-European languages as foreign language subjects in the curriculum (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). This got started again in the municipality of Trondheim where some of the lower secondary schools offered Chinese as a foreign language (NOU2010:7, 2010). The purpose of introducing non-European languages to the foreign language subject was to lay the groundwork as motivate for further foreign language education, as well as contribute to positive attitudes toward multilingualism.

Another way has been through assessment and examination of the students' skills and needs. The Directorate of Education has responsibility for the preparation of assessment materials needed to assess the linguistic skills of minority language students, and identifying those in need for assistance under the special education program, as defined in the Education Act section 5.45 (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007; Opplæringsloven, 1998). NAFO in addition, prepares on behalf of the Directorate of Education, assessment/mapping tests in reading in several languages.

Homework assistance and summer school has been another tool the government has initiated to ensure differentiated education models for all students and consequently, improve academic achievement amongst minority students (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). In connection with the role of the school as an arena for social equalization, homework assistance can be one of the key measures that is been adopted. Homework assistance is implemented by the schools and can also be run in cooperation with non-governmental organizations. Students who come to the country during the academic year and others who need extra support will be able to benefit from an offer with extra lessons during the summer holidays. Summer school helps newcomers get a better starting point before the new academic year begins.

Further measures that has been put in place is increase recruitment of minority speaking teachers in all grades in both primary and lower secondary school (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). The need for more teachers with minority background is important as they can act as positive role models for the students. The cultural- and linguistic knowledge of these teachers can in addition be utilized in the Norwegian school. In order to see this through the government created a scholarship fund for minority language teachers who work in schools but, have no formal qualifications, or those who have foreign teacher education and need additional education to achieve formal qualifications. The scholarship is used for further education with the purpose of obtaining approved teaching education or competence on the basis of a four-year education from university or university college.

The government has also enforced different measures to help better the learning environment as well as to prevent racism and discrimination (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). The Education Act Section 9a stipulate that all pupils in primary and lower secondary schools have the right to a good physical and psychosocial environment that promotes health, well-being and learning (Opplæringsloven, 1998). Everyone working at school is obliged to ensure that students are not exposed to abuse in the form of offensive words and acts such as bullying, violence, racism and discrimination. The law gives students and parents great user involvement and access to appeal. One way of ensuring this is by an annual survey conducted for the students (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017). The survey gives the students an opportunity to express their opinion about learning and well-being at school. The results are used by the school, the municipality, and the state to improve on already laid down measures for students.

Another way is through the introduction of school based program aimed at developing learning environments that promotes education and social learning (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). The Center for Behaviour at the University of Oslo has developed the program "Positive Behaviour, Supporting Learning Environment and Interaction" (PALS) (Madslie, 2007). PALS is a Norwegian adaptation of the school-wide models of SW_PBIS (School-Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support), developed by the University of Oregon. The model is further developed and adapted to Norwegian conditions. The PALS model is based on research and knowledge about which measures are effective in promoting a safe learning environment and social and school-related competence of students. The model also aims at increasing employee skills by developing the school as a learning organization. Employees receive basic training in universal preventive measures that benefit all students. In addition, they receive training in individual measures for those students who need extra social or school education and support. Another model that has been implemented in many

Norwegian schools these past couple of years is the “Learning environment and Pedagogical analysis model”, also known as the LP model (Nordahl, 2005). The overall goal of this model is to realize the potential for learning of all students. This is linked to the development of both linguistic, social and professional skills as well as well-being. Developing a good and inclusive learning environment will promote these goals. Thus, LP Is supposed to not only contribute to learning and development, but also to form the students in a broader perspective. The evaluations of LP show consistently increased student well-being. This includes, improved relationships between pupils and teachers and between pupils, reduction in behavioural problems such as bullying, and reduction in negative classroom behaviour with less disturbance and turmoil in teaching and improved school-related achievements (Nordahl, 2005)

Upper secondary school/high school

In Norway, newly migrated students who have inadequate basic education can be offered basic primary school education which is incorporated into the upper secondary school system (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). The program area provides language-based training in a separate group for minority language students. There is training in the following subjects Norwegian, English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Current applicants are called for assessment beforehand. After completing the program area, students receive a complete basic school level diploma. They can then apply for ordinary first year in high school through regular application processing. There are different ways of organising these kinds of introductory programs. Thora Storm is a high school in city and municipality of Trondheim. Thora Storm has a long-standing tradition of educating multicultural students, and have been trying out different models for years (NAFO, n.d.-b). Today, the school has an introductory course where students attend all their courses in one class. In addition, they have a study specialization offer for minority language students (STM). Here students in the STM program attend the first year in their own class, while students in the second and third year alternate between being in their own class and in class with students with the Norwegian speaking students. Feedback from the students indicate that they learn a lot from being with the Norwegian speaking students as well as having a good fellowship in the STM class.

Another initiative in place for minority speaking students in high school is counselling and guidance service (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007; NOU2010:7, 2010). The government has in this respect invested into improving on competences amongst leaders,

counsellors, teachers and instructors on bilingual development, special Norwegian language education, vocational education and multilingual questions.

Summary of review

The government in Norway has in the past few years worked to put in place a lot of initiatives to improve upon academic achievement amongst multilingual students with immigrant backgrounds (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007; NOU2010:7, 2010). However, it could be said that these measures put in place do have some limitations. It is clear to see that early intervention is a big component of the government and the school systems initiative. This is understandable, because early intervention can contribute to reduce the risk levels for these students. Under the government's initiative plan, one could notice that there are many initiatives for minority children in kindergartens, primary school and lower secondary school than there is for those in high school. One can argue that there is probably no need for that many initiatives on the high school level because, most students at this level (high school) should be able to have earlier benefitted from offers available in the lower levels. However, this does not seem to be the case, as statistical numbers from the Norwegian statistics bureau (SSB) show that a big number of minority students drop out and do not complete their high school education (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007; NOU2010:7, 2010; SSB, 2014). Researchers have concluded that this is especially true for first generation immigrants with non-western backgrounds. Whilst two out of three young people among the majority population achieved study or vocational qualifications after five years, this was only true for about half of first generation immigrants from non-western countries. Perhaps, there is a need for an expansion of the measures available to date at the high school level for minority speaking students.

Furthermore, there seem to be a lot of focus on and a lot of resources being put into language learning for obvious reasons. Different forms of language education are offered to minority students at all the education levels (NOU2010:7, 2010). In most cases the academic language and written language is especially emphasized or prioritized. This to extent is beneficial for first generation students who may be fairly new to the country. However, there is a risk of neglecting the group of second-generation minorities who might be in need of other means and measures to improve their academic achievement. In the PISA report, it was clear that a substantial number of second-generation students are under the risk of academic underachievement (OECD, 2006). Thus, it is important to include them just as much as first-generation students. For this group, language barrier may not necessarily be the reason why

academic underachievement may occur. For instance, self-esteem issues caused by identity conflict could be a possible factor for their academic challenges. It is therefore important to have measures that also focuses on these problem areas. Furthermore, in order for the measures to be beneficial, they should also be interesting enough for the students to seek after, and make use of.

Another concern is the assessment tests (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). It can be said that these assessment test are mostly useful for identifying problem areas, as they should be, whether it be about academically or psychosocially oriented. However, it is essential that the government and school do not only focus on identifying problem areas related to these minority students but, rather help to identify the capabilities that they do possess. Imagine if just as much time was invested in using those same assessments test to identify diversity, and how that diversity can for instance be used to build on language stimulatory measures. Sometimes it is much more resourceful to be solution-oriented than problem-focused. This is not a suggestion that they should quit implementing the traditional assessment tests that do help them identify problem areas. However, they should definitely also invest in modifying the same assessment test to identifying already existing potentials of these students and finding ways to utilize that.

Analysis

At this juncture, one could say that most of the current initiatives in place are developed on the basis of more traditional explanations and factors. For example, measures like free core times in kindergartens, and the establishments of grants for development projects at schools with high percentage of minority speaking students, are probably developed on the basis of the socioeconomic status theory. The same goes for measures like special language training, and the use of assessment test to identify students in need of special education programs. These measures probably pertain to the cognitive challenges and language proficiency theories. However, some of these traditional theories appear to be inadequate and not substantial enough due to uncertainties on how they actually can cause academic underachievement amongst bilingual students. For instance, it is uncertain and complicated to understand how speaking multiple language can cause cognitive challenges that may consequently affect academic achievement. Especially when studies also link the skill of speaking multiple languages to better executive functions (Bialystok et al., 2012), which in turn is associated with improvement in learning (Bull & Scerif, 2001; Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2009; Lehto, 1995). It is also a complicated affair in regard to whether speaking one's native language at home disrupts the opportunity to be proficient in the language of instruction (Cummins, 1980). Nevertheless, studies continue to show a direct positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement (Saadat et al., 2012; Zoabi, 2012). In other words, when one of the variables for instance self-esteem, is high then the other variable academic achievement is also high, and vice versa. Furthermore, this study has been able to identify certain factors that are specifically relevant for bilinguals' self-esteem. Therefore, at this point it is important to emphasize the need to take into consideration factors like self-esteem in the discussion of bilinguals' academic achievement, and try to implement strategies to this effect. If factors like identity negotiation and cultural framework switching can cause identity conflicts, which in turn can influence self-esteem in any negative way, then perhaps ways to prevent this should also be taken into consideration. Thus, a possible solution is to find ways to support bi/multilingual minority students' self-esteem and making positive investments into their capabilities.

One way to support their self-esteem is through helping them build and strengthen their ethnic identity. Studies like Chen, Benet-Martínez, and Harris Bond (2008) have been able to prove that bilingual competence, and perceiving one's two cultural identities as integrated are important antecedents of beneficial psychological outcomes such a better self-esteem. Similarly, Lee (2008) examined the interrelated issues of private and public domains

of self-esteem, ethnic identity formation, and bilingual confidence among youth of a minority group in a city in western Canada. Findings from the study confirm the importance of ethnic identity on minority youth's global self-esteem. Furthermore, results from the study also indicate that self-confidence with bilingual proficiency has a great effect on Chinese youth's global, academic, and social self-esteem. In another study, Yu (2015) explored the relationships between heritage language proficiency, ethnic identity, and self-esteem in the American-born Chinese (ABC) children who go to Chinese language schools for Chinese language learning on weekends. Results from the study show that there are positive relationships between Chinese heritage language proficiency and ethnic identity ($r = .316$, $p = .006$), language proficiency and self-esteem ($r = .255$, $p = .022$), and ethnic identity and self-esteem ($r = .240$, $p = .029$). There is a clear interrelation between language, ethnic identity and self-esteem. We know that cultural practices are embedded in language, hence language serves as a gateway for one's cultural background, beliefs, values etc. So perhaps by providing ways to strengthen ethnic identity it may be possible to prevent situations of identity conflict but, most of all we may be able to support their self-esteem which in turn may help improve academic achievement.

For instance, many minority children come from countries with strong oral traditions. People with oral tradition background tend to save knowledge in the form of pictures and narratives (Uri, 2017). This is major strength and absolutely something to continue to nurture. However, this seem to be an untapped resource. This is a golden opportunity for kindergartens to incorporate different models of language education for the children. It can also be utilized in primary school by for instance engaging the children to explore different aspects of oral language use and getting them to compare the different languages they have in the classroom. This increases the students' meta-language awareness and can create greater interest in reading and writing. It also creates room to include other children whom may not come from minority background, and thus contribute to not only supporting the self-esteem of the minority children but also supporting diversity as a whole.

Another way to support self-esteem through ethnic identity is by generally promoting diversity as a strength and something positive. It is important to mature in our diversity if we want to be able to utilize it in a productive way. We must not only identify the differences between the students but also be able to turn those differences into strengths. One way to do that is as mentioned by modifying the use of assessment tests and using them as resource to identify potential amongst the student. For example, instead of only using the student survey as a way of identifying discrimination, bullying, and racism perhaps, they should also invest

into identifying different forms of inclusion efforts and how these could be implemented in the schools. In school students are a part of different communities, whether it be their learning community, social community or any other community. It is possible to feel included in one community and excluded in another. Thus, finding better inclusion in the communities that matter for the students could perhaps be a measure that supports their self-esteem. A study even indicates that there is a lack of collective effort amongst school boards on how to meet challenges related to inclusion and facilitation of minority language students in high school (Fredheim, 2016). According to the study this is due to lack of cooperation routines and low awareness of inclusion amongst the school leaders. It is possible that by taking a different approach with assessment tests and shifting to more solution-oriented possibilities, that could contribute to better awareness and maybe even help establish better routines in the schools.

In relation to the concern raised earlier that there may be too much focus laid on language learning (especially with great emphasis on more traditional forms of language) by introducing and making use of the oral language traditions as well, one can further broaden the spectrum of language learning. Further on by taking on the perspective of self-esteem the options are widened a bit more and can encompass more individuals. Both first-generation and second-generation minority immigrants in all grade levels can benefit from the options. This means that more measures can be developed as well for those in high school who may feel like their options are a bit limited.

Conclusion

This study has intended to look at bilingual students' motivation in relation to their academic achievement, and the extent to which their self-esteem is a contributing factor. The study more especially laid emphasis on bilingual students with immigrant background. From the discussion thereon, one could realize the inadequacies and uncertainties of the more traditional theories in their explanations. Therefore, the study went further in introducing the bilingual self-esteem as another relevant source of explanation for bilingual students' academic underachievement. Moreover, the study carried out a review of the Norwegian school system and examined how the school system has approached the situation of bilingualism and academic achievement amongst immigrant students. Though the government and school system have implemented many measures for these students, some parts of it are still of concern. Concerns were raised about the skewed distribution of measures that mostly only benefits first-generation immigrants and students up to lower-secondary school, but less beneficial to the second-generation immigrants and high school student. Furthermore, concern was raised about the assessment tests, as they are perceived to be more problem oriented than solution focused. It is noticeable that most of the measures are tailored according to the more traditional theoretical explanations. However, if those theories are not adequate enough then where does that leave these measures? This study therefore went on to propose different solutions that consider, and also is tailored accordingly to the theory of bilingual self-esteem. The proposed solutions all suggest the importance of supporting the bilingual self-esteem through building and strengthening ethnic identity. It is in the light of this that this study suggested solutions that include ideas like the introduction of oral traditions to the classroom as well as utilizing assessment tests to better promote diversity and inclusivity. Students will in this way then develop a feeling of a closer bond to their ethnicity and consequently support the bilingual self-esteem.

Limitations, implications and contributions

This study has made an attempt on answering the research question through theoretical and literature research. In doing so, the study was not only able to review past research and theories, it was also able to introduce its own hypothesis. However, there are some limitations to the study. Though the hypothesis seems to be supported by a handful of research studies, it has yet to scientifically tested. This is unfortunately the downside of theoretical studies. Therefore, definite conclusions are hard to make in this case because, it is yet to be confirmed

if the hypothesis actually is significant to the situation at hand. Further research is therefore necessary to determine for sure the legitimacy of the hypothesis. One possibility is to perhaps carry out a quantitative research study to examine the relationship and significance level of the different factors mentioned in the bilingual self-esteem hypothesis. Another possibility is to carry out a qualitative research study. Perhaps interview a few students and staff members from a school and see if the themes that emerge corresponds with factors within the bilingual self-esteem hypothesis.

Few studies have researched this particular aspect of bilinguals and bilinguals. Many have studies it in relation to academic achievement and academic motivation but, few have taken it a step further to include self-esteem. Hopefully this study provides researchers and people in the education field with some more insight and knowledge about bilinguals and their learning nature. Perhaps, the study may also contribute to reducing many of the misconception out there about bilinguals, especially in the media.

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