

Cultural expressions and multilingualism in a Norwegian primary school

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Outline

- Introduction – background of study
- Activities for cultural expressions & multilingualism
- Conclusion

Background of study

- Article: *Jeg gotta like spille fortnite, men I never win the game: Implementing Multilingual Pedagogies in a Norwegian Primary school*
- Data collected during a one-year development project aimed at supporting teachers working in multicultural classrooms
- 2020-2021: only 2 out of 11 teachers completed the program
- 2 teachers in this study, T1 and T2: both over 30 years of teaching experience; teaching 3rd and 4th grade respectively

Development project

- Four lectures and three mentorship meetings for teachers
- Lecture topics: religion in a multicultural context, transitions from everyday language to school language, and multilingualism as a resource
- After each lecture, teachers had 'homework' – worked with activities from lectures and wrote reports before the mentorship meetings
- Article published here: <https://www.mdpi.com/2226-471X/7/2/147>

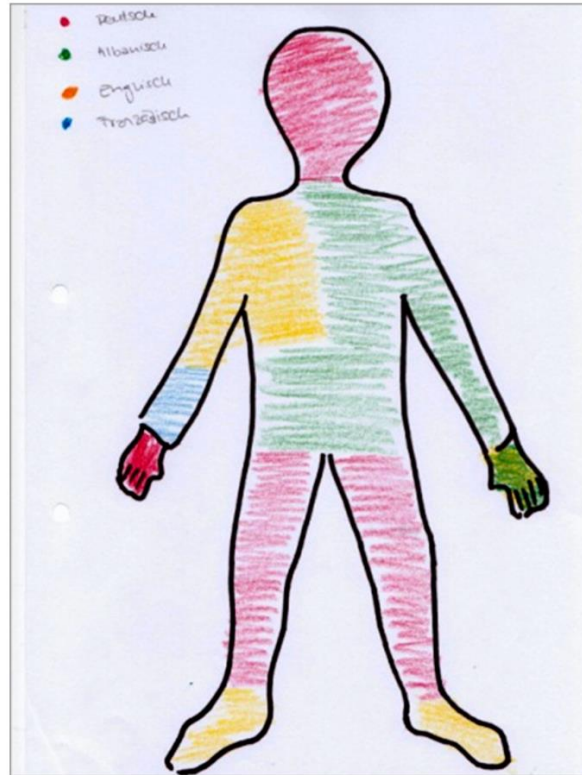
What kinds of cultural expressions did the teachers employ?

- Language portraits
- Fairytale posters
- Multilingual poetry

Language portraits

A language portrait is a body silhouette that children fill in or colour to represent their various linguistic resources and their emotional relationship to them.

Language portraits are particularly suited for young children as it is 'a mode of meaning-making in its own right, which follows another logic than the verbal mode' (Busch 2012, 12).

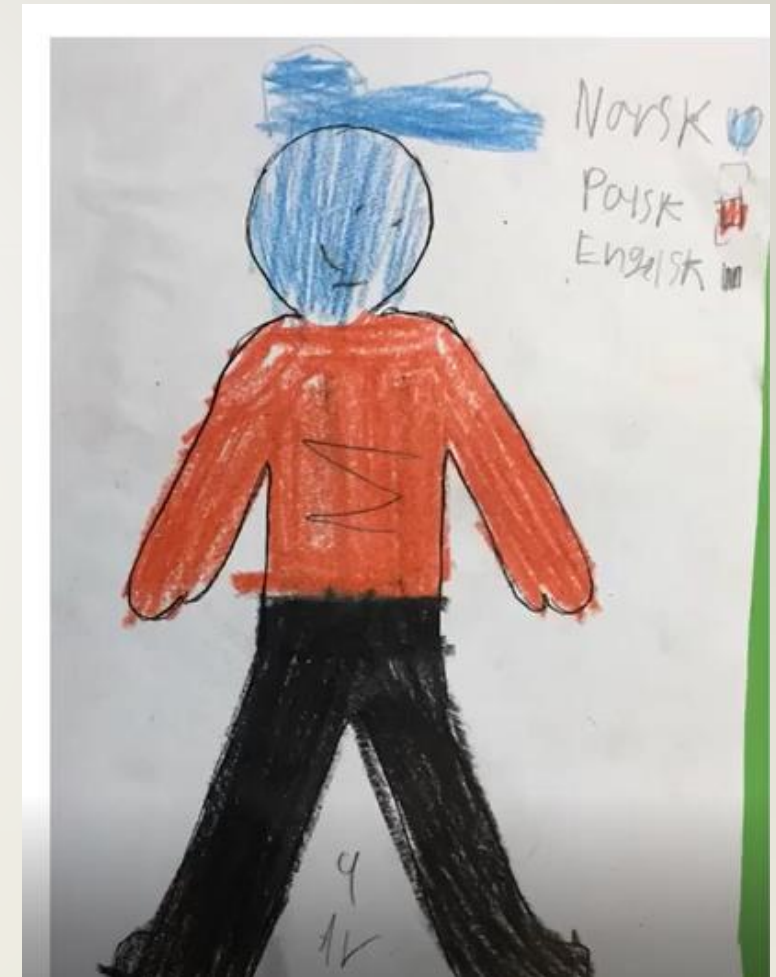


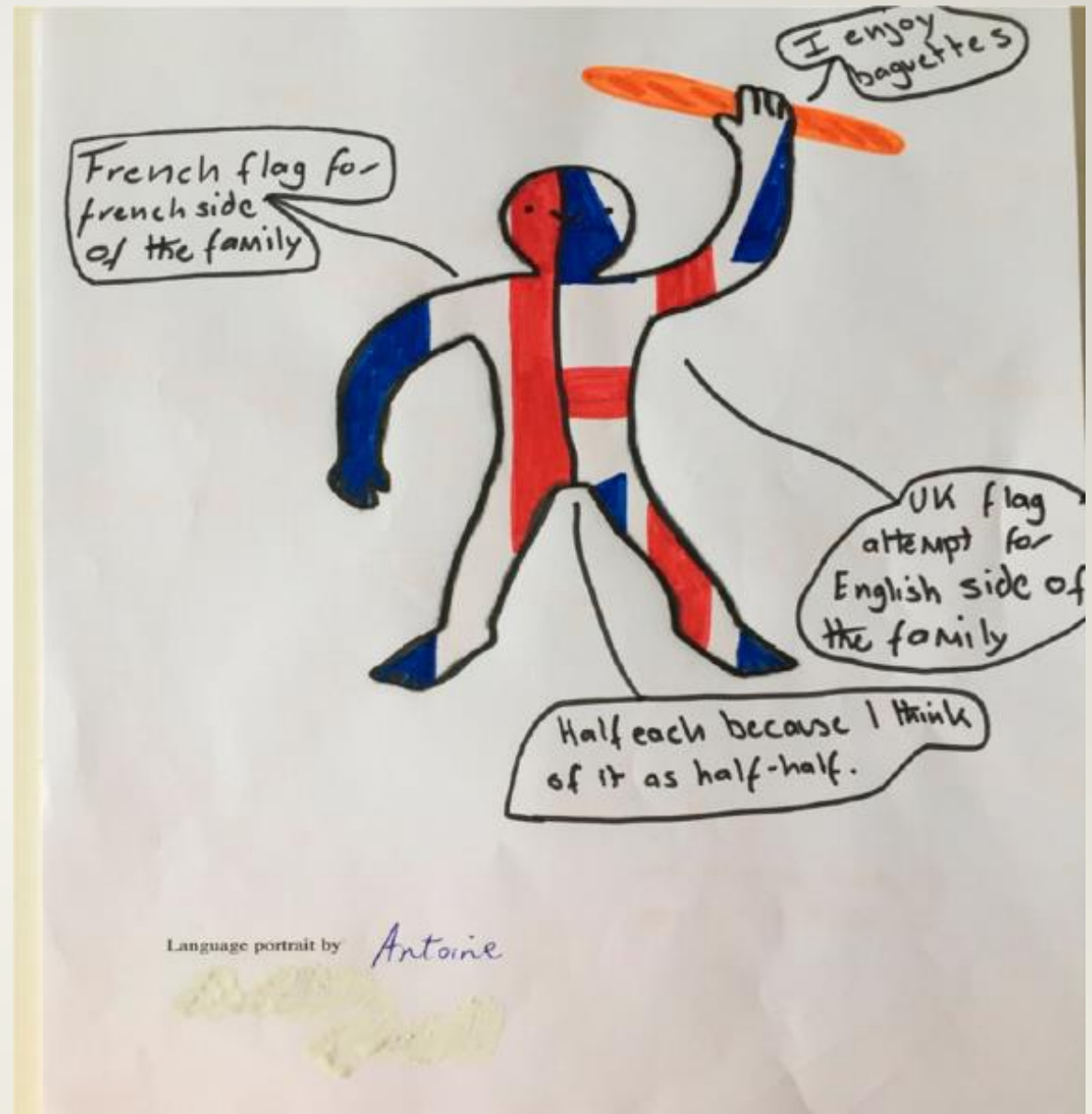
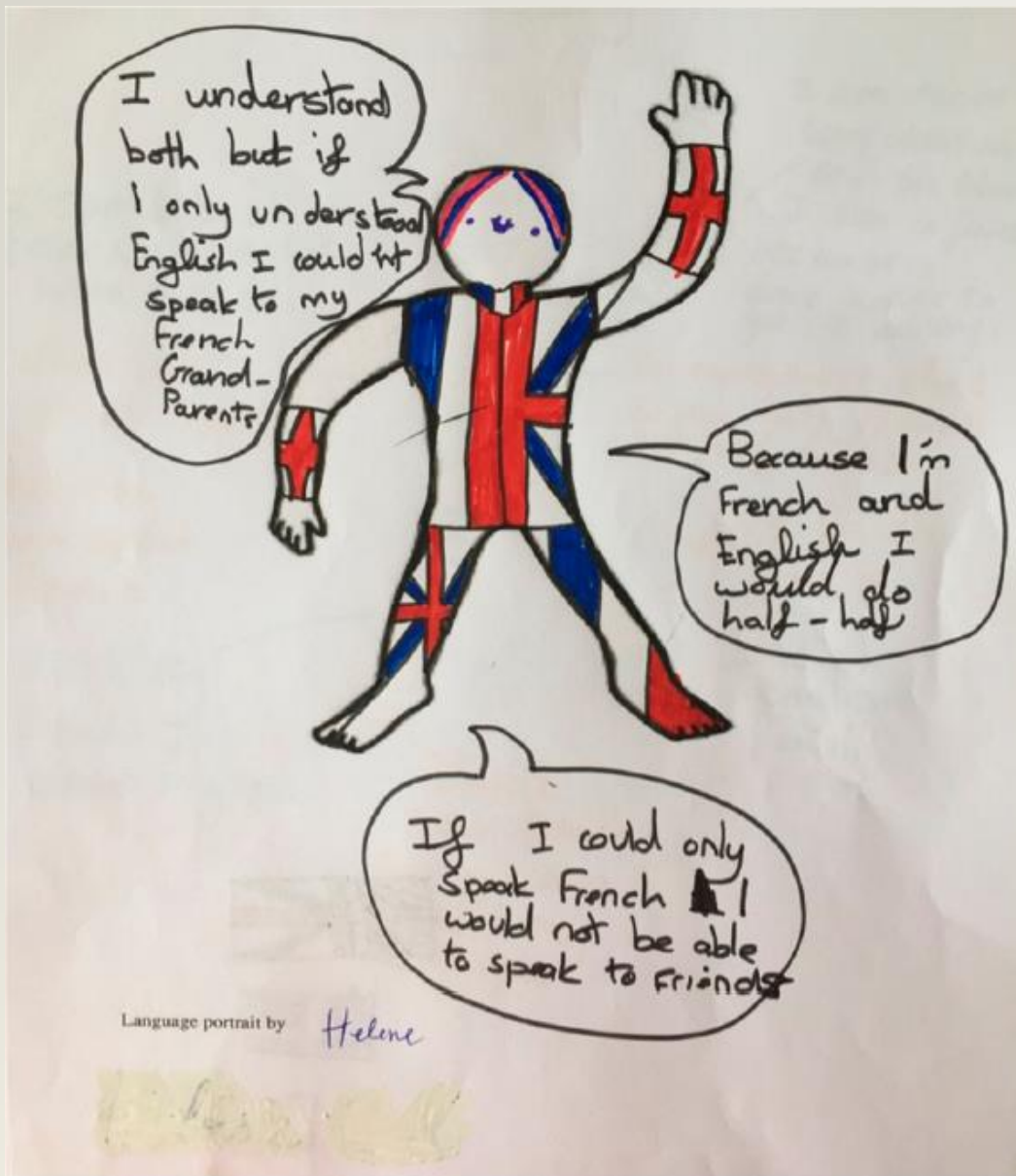
I speak four different languages. My mother or first language is Albanian. It covers a big part of my language body, because I use it every day to talk with my family, my friends and my boyfriend. Besides the biggest part of my upper body my hand is also green / blue. I painted it that way, because Albanian, as my hand, too, is a tool, that helps me in my every day life. French, in the same hand, is marked with blue, too. It's only a small part, because I don't like this language too much. Nevertheless I can handle it and use it quite a lot in Switzerland. German is my second language. English is my last language. It's in my heart and feet. With English I can communicate everywhere in the

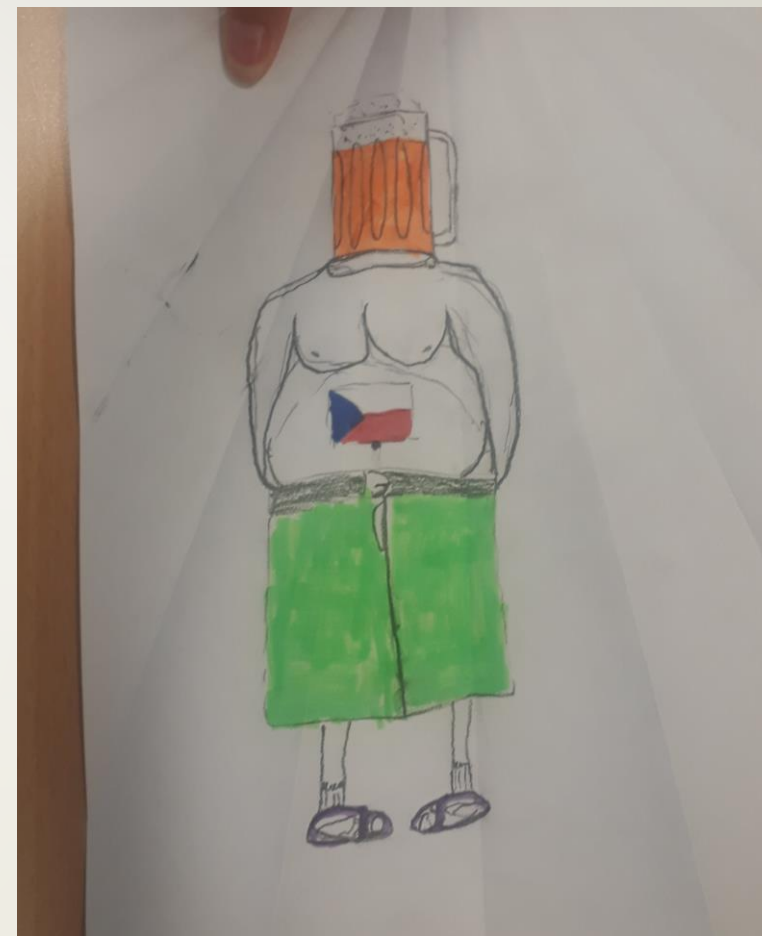
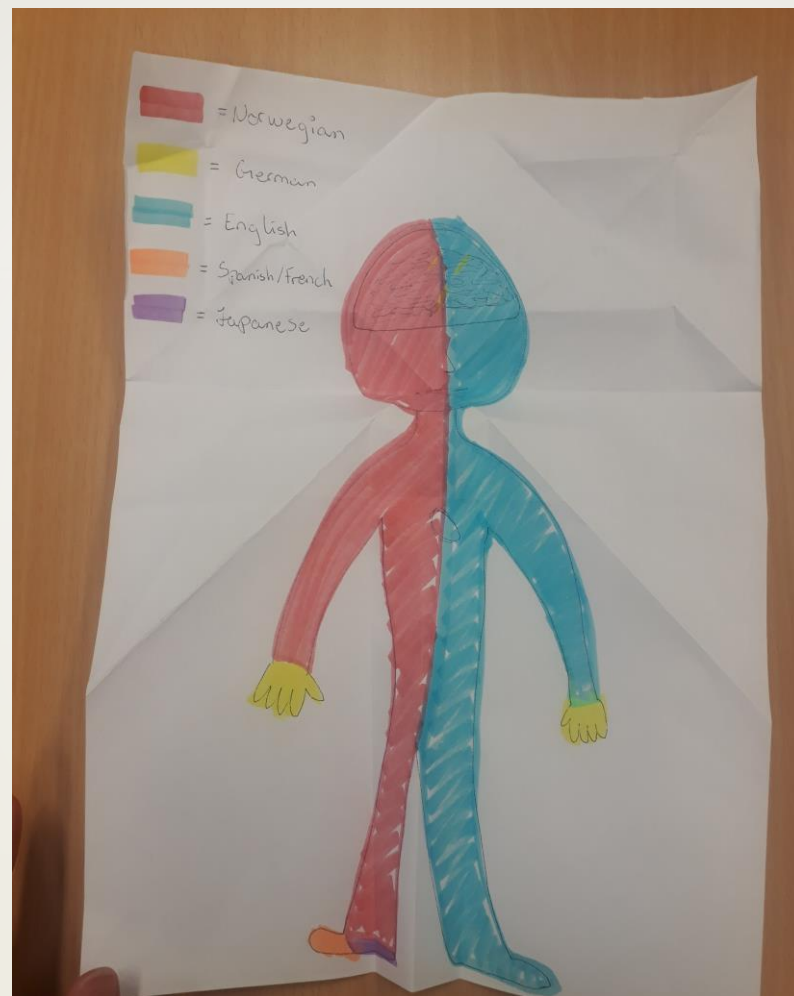
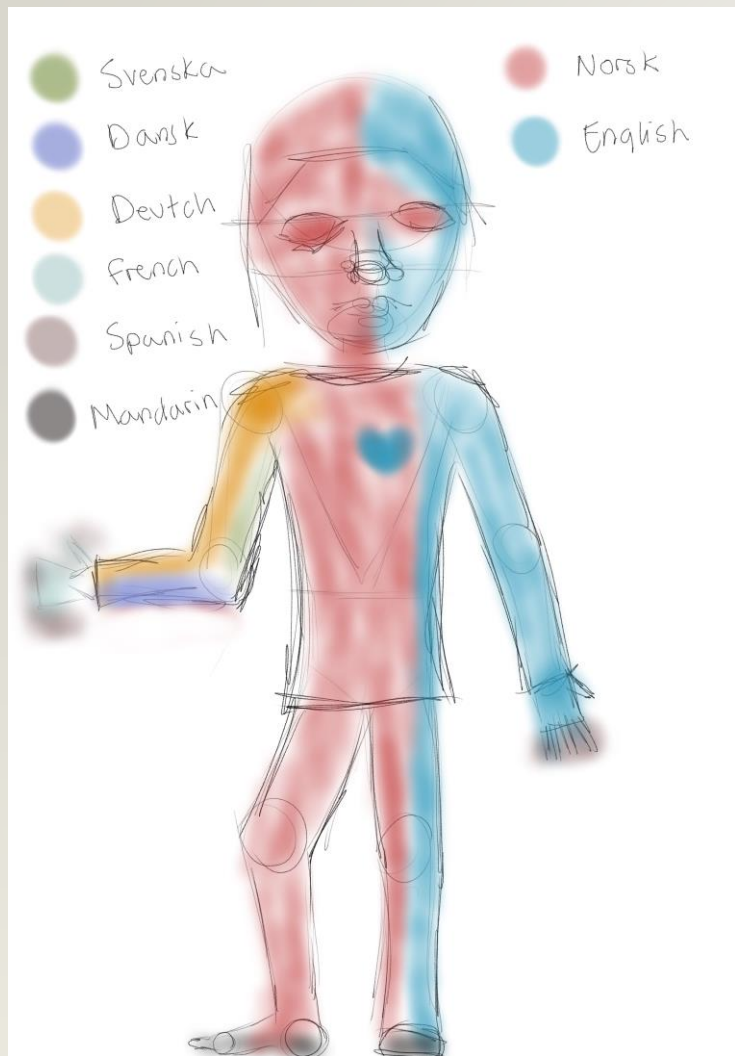
Source: maledive.ecml.at

Language portraits – how?

- T2 modelled activity for pupils
- Pupils created their own portraits
- Pupils presented their portraits to T2
- T1 and T2 implemented this activity at school level
- Pupils asked their parents about their languages







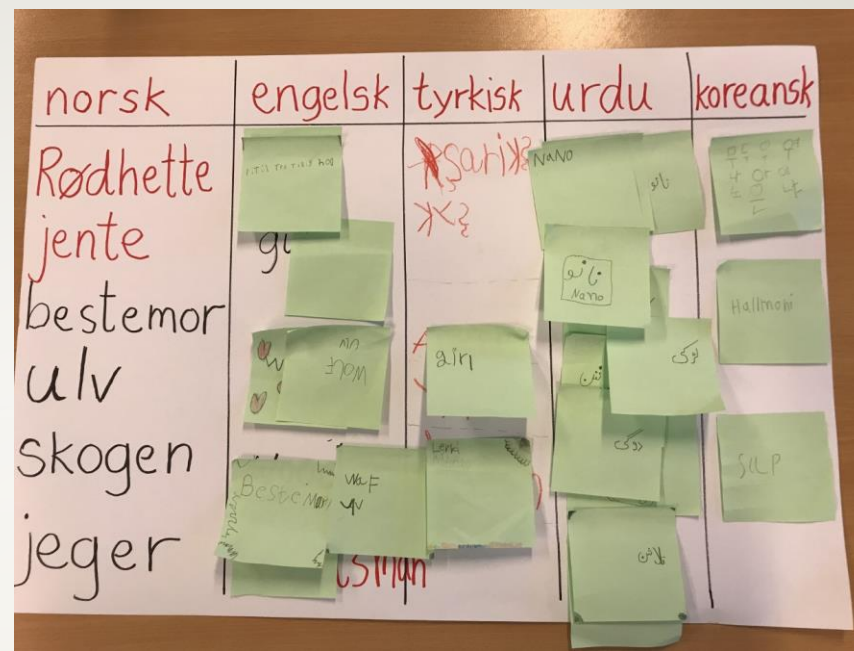
Language portraits of teacher students

Language portraits – outcomes and benefits

- Facilitate expression of identity and reflections on linguistic identities.
- Raise metalinguistic awareness – reflections on language (concept) and knowing a language (allowing pupils to define what language is).
- Facilitate co-learning at school and beyond – bridging the gap between home & school.
- Contribute to visualizing diversity through creating schoolscapes.
- Create a sense of pride and mastery: T1 & T2: “they [the students] were motivated, proud, and showed mastery”.
- N.B. One language-one domain associations might be reproduced if they are not challenged.



Fairytales posters

- T1 selected *Little Red Riding Hood* for fairy tale work to raise awareness about linguistic diversity.
- Fairytales read out loud in Norwegian, English and Turkish.
- Pupils contributed to creating a multilingual dictionary poster in several languages.
- Pupils created their own multimodal posters with keywords.



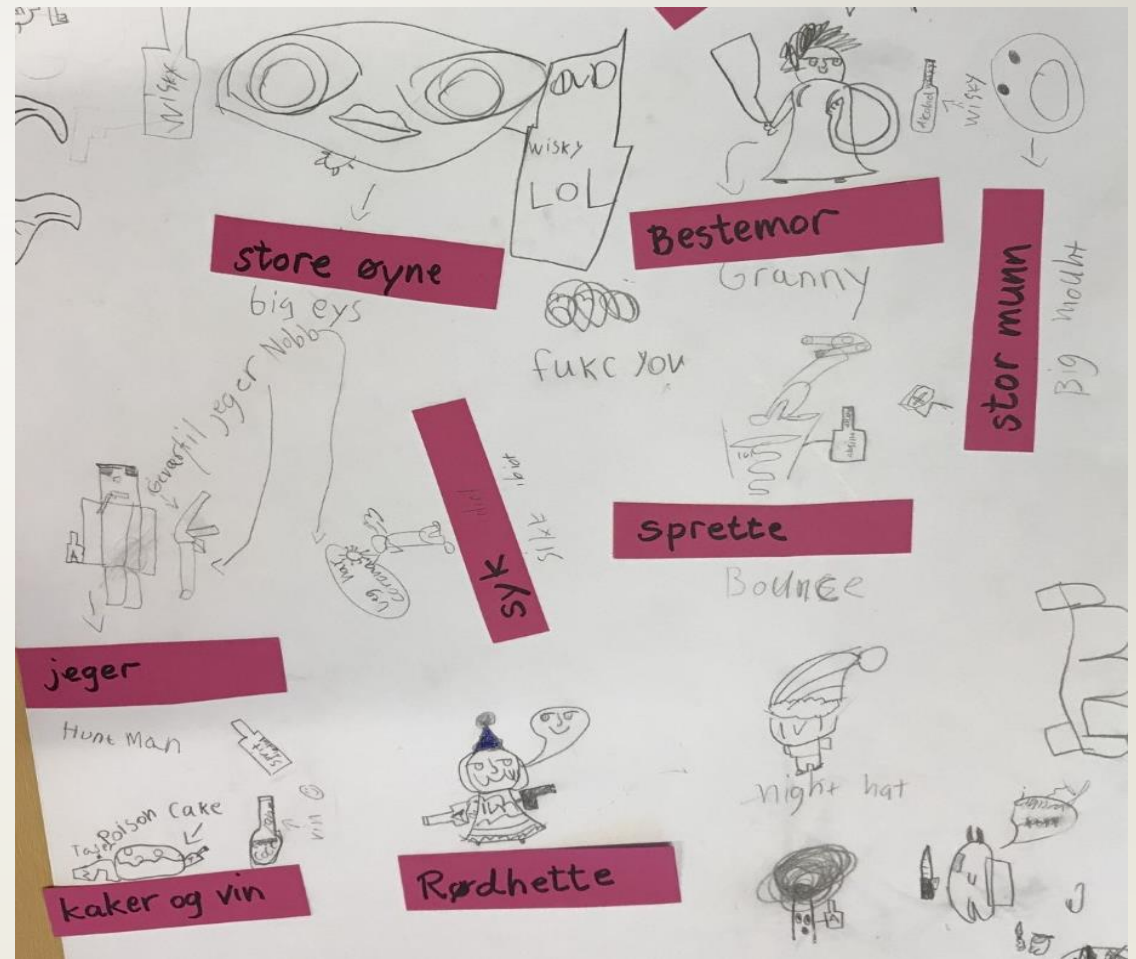
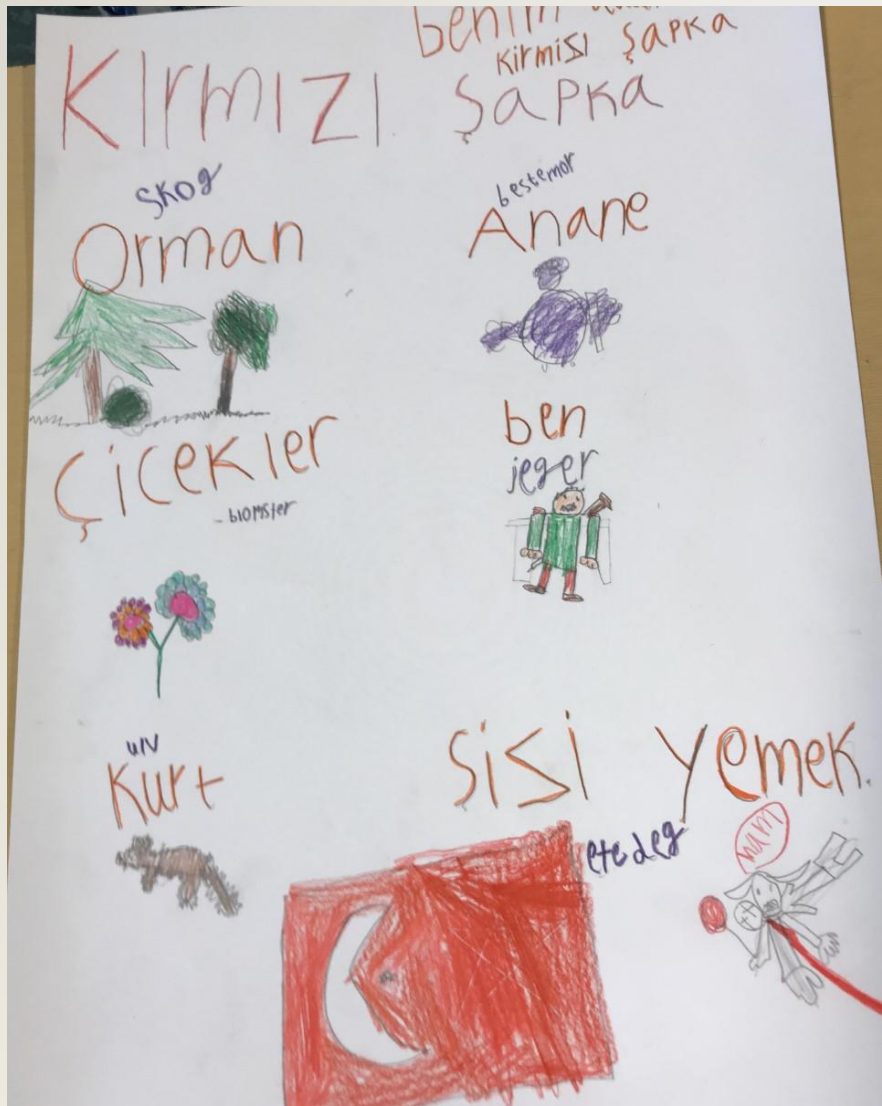
Norsk	engelsk	tyrkisk	urdu	koreansk
Rødhette				
Jente				
Bestemor				
Ulv				
Skogen				
jeger				

Multilingual dictionaries

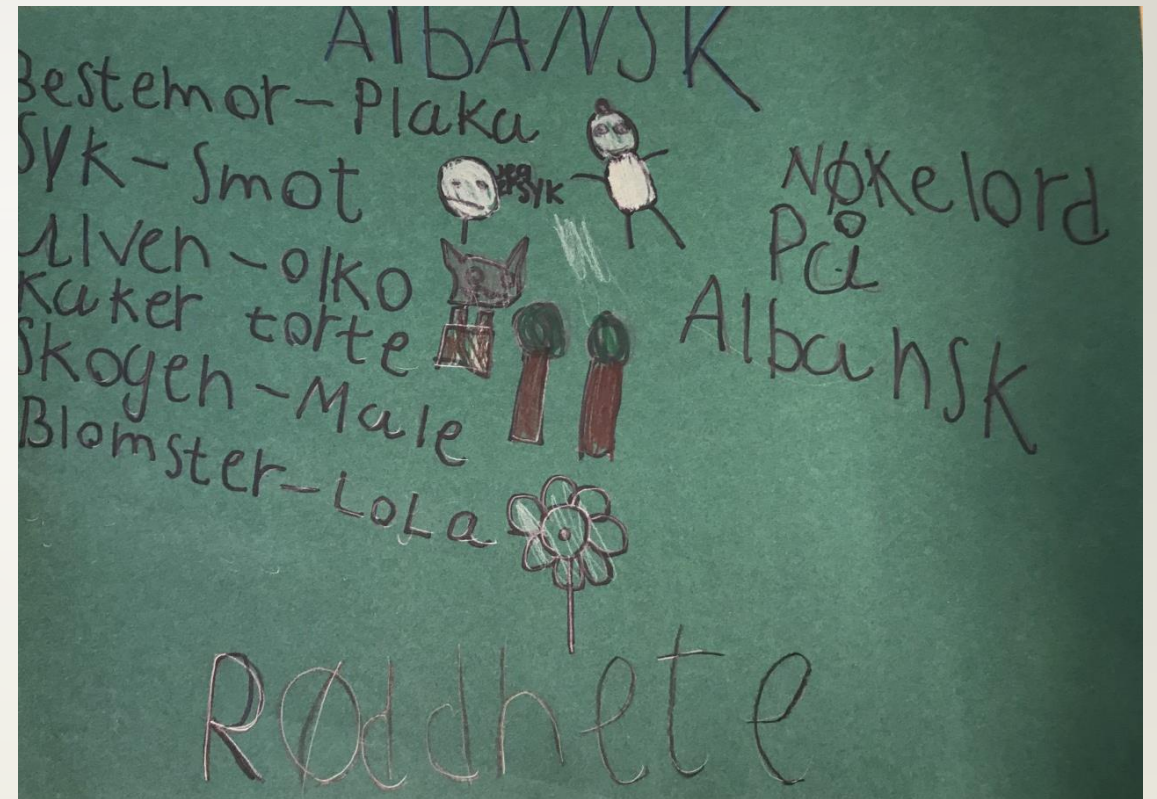
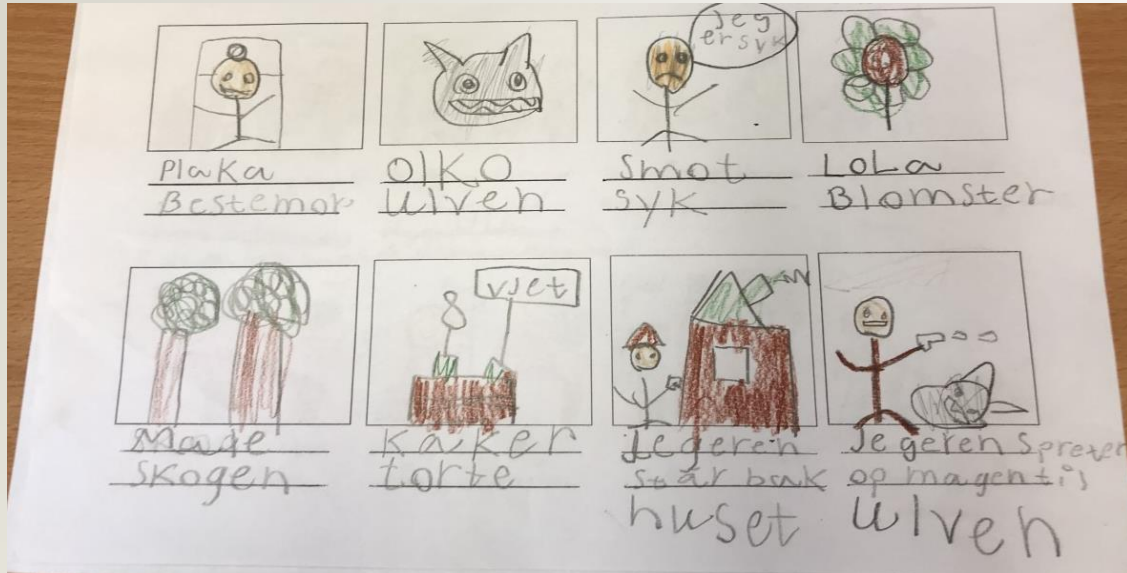
Tegning	Norsk	Engelsk
	trekke på seg	dress up
	løpet er kjørt	it is over
	Gi gass!	Speed up!
	fullføre	finish
	lillebror	littel

Tegning	Norsk	Engelsk	Morsmål/dialekt/synonym
Picture provided	Trekke på seg	dress up	Pena
Picture provided	Løpet er kjørt	it is over	Hatam hajae
Drawn by student	Gi gass!	speed up!	Geldig car
Drawn by student	fullføre	finish	jit jac
Drawn by student	lillebror	(student: litel brother)	charta bahi

Fairytale posters



Fairy tale poster & comic strip





Mie
(mandarin)



Meh
(Japanese)



Mbek
(Indonesian)



Tall, Grande and Venti Billy Goats went over the bridge, where the troll lived underneath.

Fairytales posters – outcomes and benefits

- Activate learners' repertoires and their creativity and artistic abilities.
- Empower learners by allowing them to become experts by using their home languages (power dynamics in the classroom) => sense of pride for their language and background.
- Enable teachers to glimpse into the importance of different languages for each pupil (e.g. script, size, repetition etc.)
- Contribute to co-learning and raise awareness about diversity in the classroom, e.g. teachers become aware of pupils' literacy skills and these become validated.
- Support vocabulary learning through multimodality and activating schemata.
- N.B. According to T1, learners who only had Norwegian as a home language were less engaged with the activity.

Multilingual poetry

- T2 asked students to use Norwegian rhyming couplets to make their own poems by using various languages in their repertoires.
- Pupils read their poems out loud and reflected on rhythm changes in different languages.
- Pupils were also allowed to write freely or translate & transliterate from Norwegian to other languages.

Så rart–norsk, engelsk, dansk

Så rart å be spider
with yarn i sin egen
krop og spinne alle dage.
But how can det skjule på
så mange kilometer tråd
in such one lille mave?

Example 2. Multilingual poem by S1.

So weird–Norwegian, English, and Danish

So weird to be a spider
With yarn in its own
body and spin all day.
But how can it hide
So many miles of thread
In such a little belly?

Så rart å be spider
with yarn i sin egen
krop og spinne alle dage.
But how can det skjule på
så mange kilometer tråd
in such one lille mave?

The different languages are highlighted in the student text:

- Norwegian (original text: highlighted in red)
- *English* (original text: highlighted in orange)
- **Danish** (original text: highlighted in yellow)

Multilingual poetry

Så rart-norsk og urdu

Så agib å være flaggermus
ar flakse rundt fra gar til gar
og jana til sengs i Per
Men er det noen som samage
Hvordan den kan få sona når
Den latekrie etter anglio.

Example 1. Multilingual poem by S3.

So weird-Norwegian and Urdu

So weird to be a bat
and flutter round from house to house
and go to sleep in trees
But is there anyone who understands
How it can sleep when
It hangs from its toes.

Jeg gotta like spille fortnite
men i never win the game og din so ... ²
tinx or gay ... var the game that was m[y]
most favorit spill but the changes is
a haug of sukcs epic games er en haug
som suger

Example 3. Free multilingual poem by S9.

I gotta like playing fortnite
but I never win the game and your so ...
tinx or gay ... was the game that was m[y]
most favorite game but the changes is
a pile of sucks epic games is a pile
which sucks

Multilingual poetry

Doro kuter and Inihtdi inkulal
Doro kuter hulet yetetebese ye.
Doro kuter sositi teshefenwali
Terepeza. Doro kuter arati
Bela inikulalun. Gin isu
Newi tinishi doro wede yenegena
Kwasi yehedewi. Ina sitimelesi,
Dehina keziya yeinikulali
Zagolochi agenyechi.

Egget – The Egg – translated &
transliterated to Amharic

Hen number one laid the egg
Hen number two fried it.
Hen number three laid the table
Hen number four ate the egg.
But the tiny little hen who
Was at the Christmas ball
All she got when she returned
Was the eggshell.

Egget – The Egg – my translation

Multilingual poetry – outcomes and benefits

- Facilitates literacy transfer and the development of writing skills based on oral skills in the home language (e.g. from home languages to English/Norwegian/target language).
- Validates minority languages as languages for writing, even when literacy skills are not fully developed in the respective languages (e.g. through transliteration).
- Allows learners to play with language and artistic forms, such as rhythm and rhyme.
- Allow teachers to understand the text, when based on interpretation.
- T2 noted that a learner who had previously participated very little showed enthusiasm for reading his own poem in class.

Conclusions – benefits of cultural expressions

- 1) Provided minority-language students with a sense of pride and accomplishment concerning their linguistic and cultural heritage.
- 2) Validated their multifaceted identities in the classroom.
- 3) Fostered metalinguistic awareness and language learning.
- 4) Facilitated co-learning both within and beyond classroom walls.

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