

Multilingualism in English textbooks in Austria, Norway and Spain

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Abstract

This study analyses the extent to which English textbooks from three European countries, Austria, Norway, and Spain, reflect curriculum aims about multilingualism in national curricula and educational research on multilingualism more broadly. Six textbooks for lower secondary school were analysed focusing on texts and tasks that encourage students to make use of and reflect on their language repertoire. Findings from the textbook analysis show that only two of six textbooks encourage students to make comparisons with other languages, predominantly the language of instruction. Only one of the six textbooks analysed contains any tasks that explicitly invite students to make use of their whole language repertoire. None of the textbooks contain tasks that ask students to reflect on their own attitudes towards multilingualism, such as their motivation for learning languages or multilingualism in their societies. The article calls for greater attention among textbook developers to curricular aims and current educational research concerning multilingualism. This is a precondition for textbooks to fulfil the desired function as agents of change promoting key pedagogical developments.

Keywords: *multilingualism, English language teaching, textbooks*

1. Introduction and aims

Implications of students' multilingualism for language teaching and learning have received much attention over the past few years. The Norwegian curriculum for English, revised in 2020, for example, describes cognitive and social aspects of multilingualism in a much more explicit way than previous curricula, emphasising the importance of considering all languages the students know as a resource for language learning (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). A large body of research has emerged over the past two decades examining teachers' attitudes and practices in linguistically diverse student groups, with special attention to the question of whether and how teachers take their students' existing language skills into account in their teaching (see Burner & Carlsen, 2023 for a review of this research). One recurring main

finding is that, while teachers show positive attitudes towards multilingualism in general, it tends to be regarded as a challenge in practice and is often ignored in the English classroom (see e.g. Neokleous et al., 2022; Burner & Carlsen, 2023). Lack of appropriate training and guidance is frequently mentioned by teachers and researchers as the main reason for this neglect (e.g., Bredthauer and Engfer, 2016; EU, 2015; Illman & Pietilä, 2018; Myklevold & Speitz, 2021; Neokleous et al., 2022).

The importance of recognizing and building on students' linguistic repertoires was highlighted already in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). Since then, national curricula in different European countries have integrated aims or pedagogical guidelines concerning students' multilingualism and how this resource should be harnessed, although to different degrees. One noteworthy critique of the initial CEFR document was that it did not offer sufficient guidance for different educational stakeholders such as curriculum developers and textbook developers about how to implement its aims (Martyniuk, 2012). Several companion documents have since been published to address this, among them one volume focusing on pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures (Council of Europe, 2012; Council of Europe, 2018).

Past empirical research has questioned the impact of official curricula on practices in schools and classrooms, also concerning the aims of multilingualism. As Hélot (2015) has shown in a French context, linguistic diversity may be promoted in national curricula but this emphasis has little effect on attitudes and teaching approaches in schools. Similarly, Myklevold and Speitz (2021) identify a gap between what they define as the "ideological" level of the new language curricula in Norway on the one hand, and the "perceived" and "experiential" dimensions on the other hand (see also Myklevold, 2021; cf. Suuriniemi & Satokangas, 2021). Teachers interviewed in their study report a lack support about ways to understand and apply curriculum aims concerning multilingualism in practice. Further studies of English teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism have demonstrated great differences in terms of how multilingualism is understood, how it affects language acquisition, and to what degree it should shape the way English is taught (e.g. Bredthauer & Engfer, 2016; Burner & Carlsen, 2022; Burner & Carlsen, 2023; Neokleous et al., 2022). In view of this mismatch between framework documents and practices, several studies have argued that developers of teaching material play an important role in translating the principles of the curricula into practical tasks and guidance for teachers (Bredthauer & Engfer, 2016; Meier, 2016; Myklevold & Speitz, 2021). Meier (2016) in fact described the lack of pedagogical support for teachers, including appropriate teaching materials, as one of the main obstacles to the realisation of the "multilingual turn" in language teaching.

The present study examines approaches to multilingualism in widely used textbooks for English in three distinct educational contexts in Europe: Austria, Norway and Spain. The motivation for such a transnational study was to examine how approaches to multilingualism in language textbooks compare in educational settings that – although governed by separate national educational policies – share key pedagogical underpinnings, first and foremost the European educational framework documents such as the CEFR. Although a number of studies on multilingualism in textbooks exist from different national contexts looked at in isolation (e.g. Haukås, 2017; Vikøy, 2021 in Norway; Marx, 2014 in Germany; Kofler et al., 2020 in Switzerland; Suuriniemi & Satokangas, 2021 in Finland), none have so far adopted a transnational perspective in exploring this topic. Such a transnational analysis offers a broader view of the impact educational research and curriculum reforms have had on EFL teaching in Europe. The analysis, furthermore, may point to tendencies within different countries and reveal shared pedagogical opportunities and challenges between countries in terms of how multilingualism can be operationalised in teaching material. Greater awareness about this will be useful for publishing companies, textbook authors as well as teachers and teacher educators.

The specific choice of countries was, on the one hand, motivated by the lack of previous research on multilingualism in English textbooks in these countries and, on the other hand, by my familiarity with their languages and educational systems. English, moreover, has a comparable status in all three countries as the first foreign language learned by students. A further relevant contextual point is the fact that all three countries are characterised by a high degree of linguistic diversity within the population due to migration and the existence of several official regional and minority languages (see further section 2.3 below). The three countries' linguistic diversity underscores the relevance of the study, the aim of which is to examine whether textbooks that are widely used in these countries encourage students to draw on their linguistic resources and promote knowledge about and positive attitudes towards multilingualism in line with pedagogical framework documents and current research. The following research question has guided the study:

- To what extent and how do English textbooks in Austria, Norway and Spain reflect curriculum aims and current research perspectives on multilingualism?

To address this question, the following sections will present the context for the study, starting with multilingual pedagogy and its implication for language education. The next sections will look at previous research on multilingualism in language textbooks and references to multilingualism in the national curricula of the three countries in question before turning to the methods and results of the present study.

2. Background

2.1 *Multilingual pedagogy and the implied language learner*

Monolingual approaches to language teaching were not challenged to a significant extent until the contributions of Cummins and others in the 1980s and onwards (e.g. Cummins, 1980). This research was initially focused on bilinguals and argued that such learners possessed unique linguistic profiles that could not be separated into isolated parts and that this “multicompetence” distinguished them from monolingual learners (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011). In line with this perspective, the CEFR (2001, p. 4-5) states that the abandonment of a “compartmentalised” understanding of languages lies at the core of a multilingual approach. For educators, this view entails the recognition that the languages learners are familiar with, no matter which languages and the level of their language competence, represent potential resources that should be made use of in their language learning.

The potential cognitive benefits of multilingualism in the context of language learning have been extensively studied over the past two decades. The core benefits concern the potential of multilingual learners to make connections between existing language skills and language learning experiences on the one hand and the new language being learned on the other hand. In their intervention study, for example, Busse et al. (2020) describe the positive outcomes of primary school EFL units in which the students’ knowledge of different languages was involved in a systematic way compared to a control group in which this was not the case. Students showed both significant gains in vocabulary learning as well as a higher level of motivation. As Cummins (2017) highlights, the main benefits characterizing multilingual learners is the ability to “transfer” knowledge from one language and learning situation to another, including concepts, linguistic elements, phonological awareness, pragmatic knowledge and metacognitive and metalinguistic learning strategies. Hirosh and Degani (2018) distinguish between *direct* and *indirect* learning influences in their review study of the effects of multilingualism on novel language learning: direct influences depend on the linguistic affinity between languages and include both knowledge transfer and the ability to employ learning strategies based on previous language learning experiences. Indirect influences comprise cognitive and social abilities that learners have previously developed in the process of learning languages. These include linguistic competences, such as a broader verbal memory and phonological network than monolingual learners, and non- linguistic factors such as the ability to concentrate on the most relevant information in working with a novel language (attentional control).

For language teachers, these findings underline the need for a pedagogical approach that encourages students to draw on their previous language learning experiences. García et al. (2017)

use the terms *stance* and *design* to describe the teacher's knowledge about and positive attitudes towards multilingualism on the one hand, and the systematic activation of students' previous language skills on the other hand. A multilingual pedagogical approach thus involves cognitive and attitudinal dimensions. Megens and Allgäuer-Hackl (2022, p. 261-262) formulate the following key pedagogical principles, addressing both of these dimensions:

- a) All the languages in the participants' repertoires are included and valued.
- b) Capitalizing on the (linguistic) knowledge and (language) learning experiences students bring to class is one of the main goals.
- c) Transfer/ interference phenomena are taken as an opportunity to compare and contrast languages, and to create and/or enhance multilingual awareness.

As proponents of the multilingual turn in language education are careful to underline, these principles can benefit all students, not only those who already know several languages or those with little knowledge of the language of instruction (May, 2014; Meier 2016; Busse et al. 2020).

The pedagogical approach referred to as *translanguaging* seeks to apply the principles above in practice by involving the students' language repertoires in systematic ways within learning activities (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011, p. 359; García et al., 2017). Importantly, translanguaging also involves a social dimension as it seeks to challenge traditional language ideologies that see monolingual native speakers as the norm and marginalize speakers of other languages. As Cenoz & Gorter (2013) and others have called for, this inclusive view of languages should change the way languages are taught in school too; teachers (at any level) should strive to collaborate to encourage comparisons and reflections across languages and thereby soften the established borders between language subjects.

In contrast to these recommendations, empirical studies on language teachers' practices in multilingual classrooms show that a monolingual bias persists in language education: despite increasingly diverse classrooms, languages are often taught in strict isolation and as if students shared the same language background (e.g. Burner & Carlsen, 2023). Several textbook studies indicate that this monolingual bias is reflected in language textbooks too, a perspective which is especially relevant for the present article (e.g. Marx, 2014; Burner and Carlsen, 2022; Haukås, 2017). The ways in which textbooks make use of and refer to other languages indicate what type of learners the authors have in mind in the conception of texts and tasks (Vikøy, 2021). Derived from Wolfgang Iser's notion of the *implied reader* (Iser, 1987), the term "implied learner" may be used to examine views conveyed in texts and tasks about the assumed characteristics of the learners encountering the books, especially relating to their linguistic and cultural background.

2.2 Definition of the multilingual pedagogical approach applied in this study

The present study understands a multilingual pedagogical approach as addressing two main aspects of language learning (cf. Krumm & Reich, 2013; Schnuch, 2015):

- a. Cognitive and metacognitive aims, i.e. knowledge about languages and the ability to analyse and compare languages.
- b. Affective and attitudinal aims, i.e. interest in languages, positive attitude towards languages, and motivation to learn new languages.

Typical learning activities addressing cognitive and metacognitive aims include looking for transparent vocabulary in the novel language and contrastive tasks asking students to notice linguistic similarities and differences between the language learned and other languages they know. Affective aims can for example be promoted by encouraging learners to reflect on their language use, previous learning experiences, and attitudes towards language learning. The European Language Portfolio is one example of a resource that aims to promote such aims.

2.3 Previous textbook studies on multilingual approaches

The need for teaching material that is tailored towards linguistically diverse student groups has been described in several studies (e.g. Illman & Pietilä, 2018; Myklevold & Speitz, 2021; Schmid & Schmidt, 2017). Language teachers in Norway interviewed by Myklevold and Speitz (2021) criticise the lack of attention to multilingualism in new language textbooks published to reflect the revised curriculum of 2020, and also point to difficulties interpreting the curriculum aims. Schmid and Schmidt (2017), in their study on English teachers' views on multilingualism in Germany, highlight the need for the development of pedagogical material that can support teachers in exploiting multilingual learners' cognitive and metacognitive skills, given the fact that many teachers express a lack of knowledge about suitable strategies.

Although little research exists on multilingualism in foreign language teaching materials, a few studies have been published from different national contexts that form useful points of reference for the present study. Kofler et al. (2020) analyse the most widely used textbooks for English and French in the German-Swiss part of Switzerland, focusing on the degree to which the textbooks contain activities and tasks relating to cognitive, intercultural, and didactic aspects of multilingualism. The last category comprises strategies of language learning and use. The authors find that individual textbooks differ greatly in terms of attention given to the topic, pointing out that most textbooks present tasks relating to multilingualism as "excursions" or "brief additions" that can easily be skipped by teachers. Although the textbooks analysed contain language awareness activities focusing on lexical elements such as cognates, the primary aim of such tasks

seems to be to make comparisons with the languages of instruction (German and Swiss-German). Similar findings are described in a German context by Max (2014) and Thaler (2016), who examine the extent to which curricular aims about multilingualism are reflected in language textbooks in Germany. Marx (2014), analysing four textbooks for German, finds that while languages other than German are referred to only rarely, English dominates as the language of reference. The involvement of other languages can at best be described as “side dishes” (“Häppchen”) rather than forming part of a consistent pedagogical approach as promoted in the curricula. Thaler’s (2016) analysis of two widely used English textbooks finds that the potential of multilingualism is almost entirely ignored in both. Although one of the two textbooks analysed includes multilingualism as a “key feature”, it only contains two activities related to multilingualism, both concerning transparent words in English, German and other languages the students may know.

Haukås (2017) comes to a similar conclusion in her analysis of German textbooks in Norway, focusing on the degree to which the books encourage learners to draw on their language resources and reflect on past language learning experiences. Her analysis shows that multilingual approaches are hardly present, and that contrastive perspectives mainly occur in the presentation of grammatical features, with Norwegian as the only language of reference. None of the activities encourage learners to reflect on linguistic similarities and differences with English (the first foreign language) or other languages the students may know, and none builds on the learners’ previous language learning experiences. Haukås notes that her findings confirm the “prototypical reality” that foreign languages are typically taught as if learners had no previous language learning experiences (Haukås, 2017, p. 126).

In a comprehensive study conducted in the Finnish context, Suuriniemi and Satokangas’s (2021) examine the “linguistic landscape” of textbooks for eight school subjects, including Finnish but not foreign languages. The analysis focuses on which languages are represented in textbooks and how multilingualism is represented. Their findings show a significant mismatch between the textbooks and the directives in the core curriculum of that country. While the official languages of Finland are included consistently, other minority languages are “hardly visible”. Moreover, none of the 34 textbooks contain texts and tasks that encourages students to use their language repertoires as a learning resource.

The findings presented above indicate that multilingualism is still a rare feature in language textbooks. Bredthauer and Engfer (2016), based on a review of research on language subjects in Austria and Germany, observe that there is an awareness on the part of textbook publishers about the increasing focus on multilingualism. However, they also note that the scope is mostly narrow,

focusing almost exclusively on lexical features, such as cognates, and not encouraging students to make their own analyses of similarities and differences between languages. German and English are, for the most part, the only languages textbooks refer to, thereby ignoring the diverse language profiles present in most classrooms (c.f. Marx, 2014). In his seven principles for developers ELT learning material, Kiczkowiak (2020) addresses this common neglect in English textbooks, arguing that textbooks should contain “examples of . . . multilingual language use” and that learners should be “encouraged to reflect on the multilingual resources they already have at their disposal and how these can help them communicate more effectively in ELF contexts” (Kiczkowiak, 2020, p. 6-7). He further underlines the importance of activities that trigger learners to reflect on “the value and communicative potential of the other languages already at their disposal”.

The fact that publishing houses tend to update textbooks or launch new series in the context of curriculum reforms highlights the role textbooks can play in translating important developments in the subject area, such as fresh insights from educational research, into practice. Language textbooks communicate values as well as views about language learning, which means that they can play an important role as “agents for change” (Hutchington & Torres, 1994; cf. Vikøy, 2021). Clearly, a textbook analysis does not reveal how the subject is taught. The degree to which teachers modify textbook content or combine textbooks with alternative materials varies considerably. To underline these two dimensions, Littlejohn (2011) draws the distinction between “materials as they are” and “materials in action” (p. 181). He highlights the importance of teachers’ ability and willingness to employ textbooks critically, to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to adjust their use based on learners’ needs and the guidelines of the subject curricula. However, “materials as they are” nevertheless set an important premise in “codifying” the subject (Selander, 1994), aiming to present an authoritative interpretation of the curriculum for practitioners.

2.4 Educational context and multilingualism in the national curricula in Austria, Norway and Spain

The three countries chosen for this study are characterised by a linguistically diverse population. In addition to having a larger share of foreign-born inhabitants than the EU average (Eurostat, 2023), all three countries have several regional or minority languages with official status (Table 1). Due to these factors, it is estimated that more than 20% of students in Austria and Spain speak other languages than the language of schooling at home, while the percentage is 10-14.9% in Norway (European Commission, 2023, p. 31-33).

Table 1*State languages and languages with official status in the three countries*

	State language(s)	Regional and/ or minority languages with official status
Austria	German	Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, Romany, Slovak, Slovenian
Norway	Norwegian (two forms: Bokmål and Nynorsk)	Finnish, Kven, Sami
Spain	Spanish	Catalan, Valencian, Basque, Galician, Occitan

While English is a compulsory foreign language in Norway, it is not defined as such in Austria and Spain, where alternative languages may be offered instead as the first foreign language. Aims for the English subject are thus described in a separate curriculum in Norway (“English curriculum”) and as part of the foreign language curriculum in Austria (“Erste lebende Fremdsprache”) and Spain (“Primera lengua extranjera”) (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020; Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Schule, 2012; Ministerio de educación, cultura y deporte, 2015).¹ Despite the non-compulsory status of English in Austria and Spain, 99-100% of students in these countries study English, from year 1 (European Commission, 2023, p. 41, 83).

In the curricula of the three countries discussed in the present study, cognitive and affective aims relating to the categories presented in 2.2 are addressed to varying degrees. The Austrian Curriculum for foreign languages highlights both cognitive and affective aspects, stating:

A conscious and reflection-oriented approach to languages (also in relation to the language of instruction and mother tongue) is to be promoted. Comparative and contrastive methods are first and foremost to be applied in situations where they can lead to increased language awareness in the foreign language and stronger learning achievement. Positive attitudes towards individual multilingualism and linguistic diversity should be promoted in a wide range of ways. (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Schule, 2012; Author’s translation).

¹ Note: A new curriculum is gradually being implemented in Austria starting from Autumn 2023 (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Schule, 2023). The present study refers to the curriculum in force for year eight at the time the textbook analysis was carried out. The new curriculum will come into force for this school year in 2027-2028.

A companion volume specifically addressing multilingualism was commissioned by the Austrian Ministry of Education in 2011 (Krumm & Reich, 2011). This *Multilingualism Curriculum* supplements the subject curricula with the aim of increasing attention to multilingualism across the entire curriculum. It is specifically targeted at teachers, teacher educators, and developers of teaching material.

The Norwegian curriculum, last revised in 2020, similarly highlights both cognitive and affective aspects of multilingualism. The general part of the curriculum describes multilingualism as a “core value”, stating that “all pupils shall experience that the ability to speak several languages is an asset at school and in society in general.” In addition to this, specific competence aims for English at different stages of primary and lower secondary school (year 4, 7, and 10) contain variations of the aim that learners should “explore and describe some linguistic similarities and differences between English and other languages the pupil is familiar with and use this in one’s own language learning” (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020).

In contrast to the Austrian and Norwegian curricula, the Spanish curriculum for foreign languages does not address the cognitive aspect of multilingualism explicitly. It describes in general terms the personal and social benefits of attaining a “multilingual and intercultural profile”, pointing to the increased opportunities language learning gives for communication across different context as well as for broadening the learner’s cultural horizon:

The effective use of foreign languages necessarily involves an open and positive view of such relations with others, a view which entails attitudes that value and respect all languages and cultures... (Ministerio de educación, cultura y deporte, 2015, p. 422, Author’s translation).

Although the importance of valuing languages is highlighted here, the curriculum does not explain what value the students’ linguistic repertoire can have in connection to their language learning.

As the excerpts from the three countries’ curricula indicate, English teachers in all three countries are expected to adopt a multilingual approach to some extent. The Austrian and Norwegian curricula go further than the Spanish curriculum in highlighting the cognitive benefits of such an approach through its aims on contrastive reflections across languages. All three curricula address affective aspects by including aims about positive attitudes towards languages, implying that affective aims should be explicitly addressed and developed as part of the students’ language learning.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Selection of textbooks

In this section, the units of analysis selected will be presented along with the selection criteria

before detailing the analytical procedures employed. A total of six textbooks, two from each of the three countries, were selected for this study:

Table 2

Textbooks selected for analysis

Country	Title, authors and publication year	Publisher
Austria	<i>More! 4</i> (Gerngross et al., 2018)	Helbling
	<i>Prime Time 4</i> (Hinterberger et al., 2021)	Österreichischer Bundesverlag Schulbuch (ÖBV)
Norway	<i>Enter 8</i> (Diskin et al., 2020);	Gyldendal
	<i>Stages 8</i> (Pettersen & Røkaas, 2020)	Aschehoug
Spain	<i>New English in Use 2</i> (Marks & Addison, 2016)	Burlington Books
	<i>Dynamic 2</i> (Pelteret et al., 2019)	Oxford University Press

For the purpose of comparison and to avoid too wide a scope for the analysis, I chose textbooks from each of the three countries for the same year of schooling. Although other levels of schooling could have been relevant for the study, I chose year 8 (age range 14-15) because it belongs to obligatory school in all three countries and because of my familiarity with English instruction at this level from my own teacher education for lower secondary school. Year 8 corresponds to “Mittelschule, Stufe 4” in Austria, “Grunnskole, 8. Trinn” in Norway, “Enseñanza Secundaria Obligatoria 2” in Spain (EU, 2020).

The textbooks analysed were selected based on their representativeness, i.e. textbooks that are widely used in the respective countries and that a large number of teachers and students work with on a daily basis. Several steps were taken in order to identify representative textbooks, including informal interviews with English teachers and teacher educators in all three countries, information collected from publishers, and school syllabi available on the internet. It should be noted that the textbook market differs significantly across the countries, as does the marked share of individual textbooks. In Austria, one company (Helbling) is dominant in secondary school, with a marked share of over 90% for their English textbook series *More!*.² However, alternative textbooks exist, and the most widely one used among these were selected for this study. In Norway,

² Norte: The estimate was provided in private communication with the Publishing Company. The other Publishing Companies included in this study declined to share information about their marked share.

four national publishing companies offer textbooks for lower secondary school, with no one publishing house dominating the market to the same extent as in Austria. In Spain, the market for English textbooks is significantly more diverse and international. In contrast to Austria and Norway, large British-based publishing houses such as Macmillan, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press and Pearson have a large market share, and there are, as far as I could identify, no national publishing companies that publish only for the Spanish market. The Spanish publishing company Burlington Books, one of the publishers included in this study, produces English textbooks for the Spanish as well as Greek education sector.

All six textbooks selected are part of packages of learning material, typically supplemented by workbooks, additional audio and video material available digitally, as well as teachers' guides. However, as the textbooks are in every case the main component of this package, these have been used as basis for the analysis.

3.2 Analysis criteria

The analysis focused on texts and tasks addressing the two aspects of a multilingual pedagogical approach presented in 2.2. "Text" here refers to all content that contains information or presents samples of language that students are supposed to read and work with. For the most part, texts encompass factual and literary genres either derived from authentic sources or written especially for the textbooks by the authors. "Tasks", in accordance with definitions in previous textbook studies, refer to activities or questions directed at learners and requiring them to carry out specific actions (cf. Bakken & Andersson-Bakken, 2021). These are usually presented either in connection with texts or in separate sections that focus on developing specific skills, such as practicing features of grammar or vocabulary.

The texts and tasks were analysed based on the two categories presented in 2.2. For the sake of clarity, the cognitive dimension was divided into two distinct categories focusing respectively on comparison between languages (1) and learning experiences and strategies (2):

Table 3*Categories for analysis*

Cognitive and metacognitive aims			Affective and attitudinal aims
1a) Explicit and implicit comparisons with the language of instruction	1b) Explicit and implicit comparisons with languages other than the language of instruction	2) Learning experiences and strategies	3) Knowledge about and attitudes towards languages

In the first round of the analysis, all tasks which encourage comparison between languages were categorised. These include:

- a) explicit and implicit comparisons between English and the language of instruction (German, Norwegian, Spanish)
- b) explicit and implicit comparisons with languages other than the language of instruction

The distinction between explicit and implicit tasks was made following Haukås (2017). Explicit tasks contain clear instructions to readers about the purpose of the task or instructions that highlight linguistic similarities or differences, such as the following task in *Enter 8* (p. 89): “What are the differences between the English and the Norwegian alphabet”. Implicit tasks, in contrast, ask learners to make use of a different language but without making the objective clear. Examples include activities that require students to translate English texts or vocabulary into the language of instruction. In the second round of the analysis, all texts and tasks that encouraged reflection on previous language learning experiences and learning strategies were categorised. This category could for example include questions about languages students have learned in the past and how they learned them as well as advice on learning strategies such as the use multilingual online dictionaries or looking for transparent vocabulary. In the third round of analysis, all texts and tasks promoting knowledge about and attitudes towards languages were categorised. Examples of texts within this category could include texts about multilingualism in English-speaking countries, such as India or the British Isles, texts about multilingual people or about benefits of learning several languages.

4. Results

The following sections present the results of the analysis according to the overall categories Cognitive and metacognitive aims (4.1) and Affective and attitudinal aims (4.2)

4.1 Cognitive and metacognitive aims

Table 4

Summary of findings

	Cognitive and metacognitive aims		
	1a) Explicit and implicit comparisons with the language of instruction	1b) Explicit and implicit comparisons with languages other than the language of instruction	2) Learning experiences and strategies
Austria			
<i>Prime Time 4</i>	2	2	-
<i>More! 4</i>	2	0	-
Norway			
<i>Enter 8</i>	12	6	-
<i>Stages 8</i>	18	2	1
Spain			
<i>Dynamic 2</i>	-	5	-
<i>New English in Use 2</i>	-	-	-

As table 4 indicates, there are significant differences between the individual textbooks concerning the degree to which they make references to other languages than English. Comparative perspectives are almost completely absent in the two textbooks from Spain, which on the whole reflect a pure English-only approach.

The two textbooks from Norway contain the highest number of comparisons with other languages. Most of these make reference to the language of instruction. *Enter 8* contains 12 instances of comparisons with Norwegian, all of which are explicit. *Stages 8* contains 18 instances, of which only four are explicit. Most of the tasks in *Enter 8* ask students to think about similarities and differences of morphological, syntactical and phonological features between the two languages, for example: “What are the question words in Norwegian? Are there any similarities between the English and the Norwegian question words?” (*Enter 8*, p. 71). Tasks in *Stages 8* frequently ask students to translate words and sentences from English to Norwegian. Specific

language features are often highlighted, as in the following task, where a is provided by the authors as an example sentence:

Translate these sentences. Underline the verb in each sentence.

a *Hunden min elsker å spise sko. My dog loves to eat shoes.*

b Tante Petra mater fuglene hver dag.

c Katten spiser alltid på kjøkkenet.

(*Stages 8*, p. 120)

The implied aim is presumably for students to notice the difference in conjugation patterns in English and Norwegian, more specifically the consistent inflectional “s” in the third person in English where Norwegian does not have a special verb form. However, the objective could also encompass noticing the different placement of the verb in relation to the adverbial phrases in these statements. While the aim of these tasks thus seems to be to encourage students to draw comparisons between the languages, the instructions do not make this objective clear. In addition to translation tasks such as these, *Stages 8* contains two comparative notes on language features in English and Norwegian, one on the verb “to be” and one on the pronunciation of the phoneme /v/: “The English v is pronounced exactly like the Norwegian v. When saying the English word “victory”, just start in the same way as when you say the Norwegian word “viking”. (*Stages 8*, p. 170)

Each of the Austrian books makes two comparisons to the language of instruction. *Prime Time 4* points to a difference in the use of reflexive pronouns in the two languages (p. 140): “We don’t use reflexive pronouns in English as often as we do in German”. Furthermore, one info box notes that English and German have some words in common (p. 12): “Did you know that some words are the same in English and German? *Wanderlust* is one of them.” Similarly, *More! 4* contains one comment comparing the use of question words in English and German (p. 65): “Um die deutschen Fragen oder? bzw. nicht wahr? zu bilden, verwendest du im Englischen sogenannte *question tags*...” (“In order to answer the German questions oder? or nicht wahr? you use so-called *question tags* in English”). The second comparison with German concerns the differing use of the word “diet” in these languages (p. 56). It is worth noting, moreover, that both books use German extensively for the purposes of explaining linguistic features, in the case of *More! 4* often combining German and English (Figure 1).

Figure 1*More! 4* (p. 25)

GRAMMAR

Past perfect

Du verwendest das Past perfect, wenn du betonen möchtest, dass eine Handlung vor einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt in der Vergangenheit geschehen war.

*Nobody else was in the building. All the other employees **had left**.*

How to form it:
Person + *had* (n't) + *past participle* des Verbs

Look at the sentences below. Circle the verbs in the past simple. Underline the verbs in the past perfect.

- The killer had escaped through a window. He was an excellent climber.
- It was an orang-utan. It had escaped from



When Harry got up in the morning, he realised that he had put up his tent in the wrong place.

In both *More! 4* and *Prime Time 4* German is used to develop understanding of grammar, presumably with the view of making complex topics more accessible to learners. German serves only as a tool to mediate information, not as a linguistic point of reference to raise awareness about similarities or differences between the languages.

Comparisons with languages other than the language of instruction in the six textbooks are much rarer and their objectives are often unclear. The Norwegian textbook *Enter 8* is the only textbook which explicitly asks students to make use of their entire language repertoire. Five out of the six instances in this book relate to specific points of grammar and ask students to draw on the languages they know, as in the following example concerning conjugations of the verb ‘to be’:

Translate to be into Norwegian and another language that you know, for example French, Polish or Urdu. What is the present tense of the verb in Norwegian and in the other language? Why do you think Norwegian pupils find it difficult to work with verbs in English? (*Enter 8*, p. 45)

The last question asks students to think of words for summer and flowers in other languages they know but does not comment on the objective of the task (*Enter 8*, p. 45).

The second Norwegian book, *Stages 8* and the Austrian book *Prime Time 4* each contain two texts and tasks that involve comparison with languages other than the language of instruction in cursory ways. One task in *Stages 8* asks students about the meaning of the compound elements “kinder” and “garten” in German (p. 12), and a second task presents sounds made by ghosts in different languages (Norwegian, Japanese, Spanish, French), asking students to match the onomatopoeia with the language (p. 86). *Prime Time 4* contains one text box explaining the Latin root of the adjective “lunar” (p. 132), while a second text box advises students to practice consonant phonemes in English which are difficult “for speakers of your first language” (p. 217).

Of the two Spanish textbooks, only *Dynamic 2* contains tasks which open up the possibility of including other languages than the language of instruction. The following example is one of six tasks introduced by the same question:

How do you say the sentences ... in your language?

What **is he like**?

He's really friendly.

What **does she look like**?

She's got brown hair. (*Dynamic 2*, p. 16).

Although the phrases marked suggest that readers should pay attention to specific linguistic features, in this case verb constructions in questions, the instructions are not explicit about the objective of these tasks. It is unclear, moreover, what the reference to "your language" entails, especially considering the fact that students in regions with several co-official languages are likely to speak several languages (cf. Table 1).

Strategies related to the use of language resources and previous language learning experiences are almost completely absent from all textbooks. Only one instance occurs in the Norwegian textbook *Stages 8*, which contains a recommendation about bilingual word lists: "her skriver du nye gloser på engelsk med norsk oversettelse" (here you write down new vocabulary in English with Norwegian translations) (p. 71). As in the rest of the tasks in this book, reference is only made to the language of instruction.

4.2 Affective and attitudinal aims

Table 5

Summary of findings

	Affective and attitudinal dimension
	3) Knowledge about and attitudes towards languages
Austria	
<i>Prime Time 4</i>	-
<i>More! 4</i>	-
Norway	
<i>Enter 8</i>	3
<i>Stages 8</i>	6
Spain	
<i>Dynamic 2</i>	1
<i>New English in Use 2</i>	-

As Table 5 indicates, affective and attitudinal aims receive some attention in the Norwegian textbooks. All texts and tasks in this category relate to information about multilingualism in English-Speaking countries. Both *Enter 8* and *Stages 8* mention indigenous languages on the British Isles, with a small number of examples of Celtic words and phrases from Wales, Scotland and Ireland such as the following statement in *Enter 8* (p. 80): “In Wales many people speak Welsh (dwi’n siarad Cymraeg = I speak Welsh) and in Scotland some people speak Gaelic (falo Gaélico = I speak Gaelic).” Both of these books, moreover, contain chapters on India which draw attention to the country’s rich linguistic diversity. *Stages 8* (p. 220) contains one task that draws attention to linguistic relationships between English and other languages, specifically loan-words from Hindi in English, asking students to match definitions with terms in a list including words such as “cot”, “yoga”, “chutney” and “jungle”. This perspective is absent from the textbooks in Austria and Spain. While the Austrian and Spanish books also contain chapters with informative texts on English-speaking countries such as Ireland, New Zealand and Australia, they do not refer to the linguistic profiles of these countries. The only informative text about other languages in these books is a brief note on Braille in the Spanish book *Dynamic 2*.

Finally, the analysis showed that none of the textbooks from the three countries contain texts and tasks that encourage students to reflect on benefits of learning languages or their own multilingualism. The absence is especially striking in tasks that ask students to talk about or present themselves. *Enter 8* (p. 11), for example, includes an activity where students are required to introduce themselves based on a lengthy list of personal features and interests that includes favourite colours, sports, food, animals etc., but not languages spoken or motivation to learn languages.

5. Discussion

Overall, the textbook analysis indicates a clear discrepancy between the national guidelines and the textbooks in all three countries. This relates to both dimensions described in section 2.2 as cognitive and metacognitive aims and affective and attitudinal aims. These will be discussed in turn in the following two sections.

5.1 Cognitive and metacognitive aims

The gap between the aims of the curriculum and the textbooks is most marked in Austria. While a multilingual approach is strongly endorsed in the national curriculum (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Schule, 2012), and this approach is further extensively detailed in an

official companion volume (Krumm & Reich, 2011), the textbooks do not contain any texts and tasks that encourage students to make comparisons with other languages. The isolated references to other languages can be described as marginal “side dishes” that do not encourage students to apply a consistent comparative approach consistently, corroborating the findings of Kofler et al. (2019) and Haukås (2017). The use of the language of instruction to explain linguistic features in the textbooks from Austria reflects a belief that students benefit to some extent from learning English through the students’ first language. Although the language of instruction is considered a form of scaffolding, this applies only to the majority language and not other language resources the students may have, even though at least one in five students speaks languages other than German at home (European Commission, 2023, p. 31-33). This share of the student population, the textbook analysis suggest, does not form part of the authors’ conception of the “implied learner” engaging with this learning material.

The fact that the two Norwegian textbooks show greatest interest in inter-lingual comparisons most likely reflects the increased attention to multilingualism in the recent revision of the national curriculum (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). Both textbooks analysed in this study were published in 2020 to incorporate updates in line with the curriculum revision of that year. However, the analysis shows significant differences in the extent to which they incorporate the aim that students should “explore and describe some linguistic similarities and differences between English and other languages he or she is familiar with” (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). While *Enter 8* explicitly encourages students to compare English with Norwegian as well as other languages, *Stages 8* appears to interpret “other languages” as only relating to Norwegian. *Stages 8* in this way projects an image of the student as a monolingual Norwegian speaker, a tendency highlighted in several previous studies of language textbooks (Haukås, 2017; Kofler et al., 2020; Vikøy, 2021; cf. Bredthauer and Engfer, 2016).

Of the three national curricula, the Spanish curriculum places the least explicit emphasis on multilingualism. It describes in broad terms the benefits of a “multilingual and intercultural profile” and the importance of “attitudes that value and respect all languages” (Ministerio de educación, cultura y deporte, 2015), but does not contain explicit aims encouraging the activation of the students’ linguistic repertoire. Despite this, the total absence of comparative approaches in the two Spanish textbooks is nevertheless striking. Both books analysed subscribe to a monolingual “English-only” approach that is not in line with European framework documents such as the CEFR (2001) or educational research perspectives of the past decades. The emphasis on involving learners’ language repertoires and mediating between languages is also emphasised in

the fields of Global Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca, which have strongly influenced EFL and ESL research over the past two decades (Rose & Galloway, 2019). The approach displayed in the Spanish textbooks appears to reflect what Villacañas de Castro (2017) identifies as the persistence of traditional views of language learning, such as the native-speaker ideal, in many aspects of English teaching in Spain. This accounts among other things for the enduring high prestige of UK-based language courses, exams and certificates, as well as textbook publishers (Villacañas de Castro, 2017).

Considering cognitive and metacognitive aims, the textbook analysis points to many missed opportunities where a multilingual perspective could have been integrated in natural and practical ways. For example, while all textbooks contain texts with highlighted vocabulary, the accompanying tasks nowhere ask students to look for relationships between new vocabulary and words they know in other languages, even though German, Norwegian and Spanish are linguistically closely related to English, and many English words and expressions have roots or cognates in these languages. Moreover, while most books contain learning strategy sections, none of these describe basic multilingual strategies such as looking for transparent words or using multilingual learning resources. The almost complete absence of attention to learning strategies involving the students' language repertoire identified in this study corroborates previous findings in textbook research (Kofler et al., 2020; Marx, 2014; Thaler, 2016; Haukås, 2017).

5.2 Affective and attitudinal aims

Texts and tasks dealing with knowledge about or attitudes towards multilingualism are largely absent in the textbooks analysed, although this aspect is highlighted in the curricula of all three countries. The small number of texts about indigenous languages and isolated examples of inter-language borrowing, though informative, do not encourage students to reflect on the role of these minority languages within the respective societies or the students' own attitudes. They amount at best to brief "excursions" that do not encourage a deeper engagement with historical or political aspects of multilingualism (cf. Kofler et al., 2020).

The stereotypical impression projected in five out of the six textbooks of the implied learner as monolingual speaker of the state language may contribute to influence learners' attitudes towards multilingualism. Vikøy (2021) shows how representations of students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds in textbooks play a significant role in mediating norms and values in the social context in which they are used. She discusses textbooks in Norwegian in which individuals who do not belong to the monolingual stereotype are described as "the others" and thus not normative. One textbook in the present study, *Stages 8* (p. 195), similarly draws an explicit line

between what its authors consider the normative student and “the others”. Under the heading “Nationality adjectives”, the instructions read: “You are from Norway, so you are Norwegian”, followed by a task asking students to write the appropriate adjectives for people from a range of countries, including Somalia, Pakistan, and Poland. All of these countries in fact are represented among the largest immigrant communities in Norway, and students from these countries form a significant part of the “you” the authors address.

It is noteworthy, finally, that even though the curricula in all three countries highlight social aspects of multilingualism, i.e. the value of multilingualism and the importance of positive attitudes towards languages, none of the six textbooks contain texts or tasks about multilingualism as a resource for the individual and society more broadly. In these respects, too, the curricula in all three countries can be said to express good intentions which are not implemented in the textbooks (cf. Haukås, 2017; Marx, 2014; Thaler, 2016; Vikøy 2021).

6. Conclusion and implications

This article has sought to answer two related questions concerning the awareness of multilingual pedagogical approaches in English textbooks in Austria, Norway and Spain. The findings corroborate previous studies from different national contexts that have pointed to a significant gap between curricula and textbooks when it comes to objectives about multilingualism (Vikøy, 2021; Suuriniemi & Satokangas, 2021) and a persistent view of students as mono-lingual language learners (Bredthauer & Engfer, 2016; Haukås, 2017). Of the six textbooks analysed, only one encourages students to draw on their entire language repertoire. This discrepancy between curricula and textbooks is a shared pedagogical challenge, a finding which reinforces the need to address the critical application of textbooks in pre-service and in-service teacher education in all three countries (cf. Littlejohn, 2011).

It is important to emphasise that the textbook analysis in itself does not give an impression of what actually goes on in English classrooms in these three countries. Even though none of the textbooks encourage students to reflect on the benefits of multilingualism, this does not mean that teachers do not talk about this with their students. More research is needed that describes teachers’ implementation of textbooks, not least how teachers assess and cover gaps in the learning material they use (Canale, 2020; Haukås, 2017).

However, it seems reasonable to assume that the less attention given to a topic in the learning material used by teachers, the more depends on the teachers’ own awareness of the topic and strategies to work with it in their classrooms, what García et al. (2017) refer to as *stance* and *practice*. In view of the fact that teachers in many empirical studies referred to in the present article

report a lack of resources for working with multilingualism (e.g. Heyder & Schädlich, 2014; Myklevold, 2021), it seems clear that many do not feel able to fill this gap by themselves. Textbooks can play a critical role as agents of change by providing necessary support for teachers, not least concerning new developments in curricula and educational research more broadly (Vikøy, 2021). If they fail to do so over time, textbooks present an obstacle to pedagogical advances promoted in educational research and curricula rather than a mediator of these (cf. Meier, 2016).

7. Limitations and recommendations for future research

The current study has analysed a selection of English textbooks from three European countries. Furthermore, one specific year was chosen to limit the scope of the study. The results can thus not be taken as representative of textbooks in these countries in general. This is especially the case for Norway and Spain, which have a higher number of competing textbook publishers than is the case in Austria.

More comprehensive textbook analyses are needed to provide a broader impression of tendencies within specific countries. Comprehensive analyses of English textbooks in Norway published after the 2020 curriculum reform could provide a more thorough impression of the degree to which the new emphases on multilingualism are reflected in newly developed teaching material. However, further textbook studies across national contexts would also be useful to offer a broader comparative view of how core principles of the CEFR and developments in educational research shape language learning and teaching in different countries. A study examining positive pedagogical approaches to multilingualism with a focus on shared pedagogical opportunities could, for instance, be a valuable resource for textbook developers across national borders.

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