Tampere University

SERGEI GLOTOV

Film Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue

Focus on Cultural Representation

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION
To be presented, with the permission of
the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences
of Tampere University,
for public discussion in the auditorium D11
of the Main Building, Kalevantie 4, Tampere,
on 31 March 2023 at 12 o'clock.

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION
Tampere University, Faculty of Information Technology and Communication
Sciences
Finland

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Cover design: Roihu Inc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I began this doctoral research in the summer of 2019, prior to which I had been working different jobs, including being a cleaner, which helped ensure my residence permits. Most of my coworkers were foreigners, coming from various corners of the world. Working together, we often talked, shared our personal stories and discussed our cultures, along with how they shaped who we are. All in all, we were practising intercultural dialogue, exchanging our cultural knowledge and broadening one's own understanding.

Although I understand the potential of intercultural dialogue, based on the existing research and policy documents, it was truly eye-opening to experience it on a personal level. With my doctoral research I wanted to incorporate intercultural dialogue into film literacy education, the field that I have been professionally involved in. Combining my educational background in film studies and media education, my teaching experience and the outcomes of my cleaning job, I began to investigate the possibility of linking film literacy and intercultural dialogue.

This research took more than three years, and luckily, I was not alone in doing it. First and foremost, I want to thank my main supervisor, Professor Sirkku Kotilainen, who guided me through my master's degree studies, provided me with teaching opportunities and supported my research at every step of the way. She directed me towards conferences and academic journals, provided constructive criticism to my writing, assisted in conducting the research, cowrote the first article and continuously encouraged me to keep on working.

I also want to thank the people at Koulukino, especially executive director Outi Freese and producer Marjo Kovanen. This research has gone through several stages, and Outi and Marjo were always there to support and provide encouragement. Marjo's work was also instrumental in completing literature review for this dissertation and understanding the educational context in Finland.

I wish to also thank Yonty Friesem and Grace Choi, who provided me an opportunity to be a part of a large international study. I am grateful for them contacting me, guiding throughout the research and writing process and inviting me to participate in intercultural dialogue between international researchers.

ABSTRACT

Audio-visual media such as films, series and online videos have become increasingly accessible over the past few years because technological advancements and the COVID-19 pandemic that locked us indoors but connected us online. On top of being a source of entertainment that provides various emotions, these media also quite often offer insights into foreign cultures, people, spaces, customs and general ways of living. With audio-visual media consuming an increased amount of our time, more audiences can be exposed to various cultural representations.

Unfortunately, when it comes to cultural representation, the media continuously relies on stereotypes or focuses only on a few basic and vivid characteristics, simplifying people and cultures because it offers familiar codes to the larger audiences and eases media production. Nevertheless, there have been calls for developing a critical attitude towards such a cultural misrepresentation because its continuous use may promote racist and nationalist views.

The aim of this dissertation is to address cultural misrepresentation within audio-visual media by a) reconceptualising film literacy to address the recent changes in media production and consumption and b) linking film literacy with intercultural education that can support open and respectful intercultural dialogue between people of different cultural backgrounds. Hence, the idea of intercultural film literacy education is introduced as the link between film literacy and intercultural education and then conceptualised and developed over the course of four different studies.

Based on the findings, the concept of film literacy is broadened to include audio-visual social media, such as YouTube and TikTok, and the development of a critical attitude towards this form of media consumption, while the concept of intercultural education is argued to move beyond nation-based cultures towards LGBTQ+ people and their experiences. At the same time, the findings reveal the need to promote the discussion of cultural representation in open educational resources while also making these resources accessible for teachers worldwide. The dissertation also suggests six practical solutions for teaching intercultural film literacy education: inspiring cultural exchange and dialogue, reflecting on one's own culture, analysing cultural representation, discussing the nature of filmmaking, embracing global cultural context and discussing the role of algorithms.

Overall, the research advocates for looking closely at the messages of cultural representation we receive from audio-visual media and being critical and reflective about them, by studying how these messages are created and broadcasted, as well as challenging them through intercultural dialogue and the actual experiences of other people.

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ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

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Article 2   Glotov, S. (2021). Intercultural Film Education Online. *Academic Mindtrek, 2021*, 5–11. https://doi.org/10.1145/3464327.3464333

Article 3   Glotov, S. (2022) TikTok political participation supporting Alexey Navalny during the COVID-19 pandemic in Russia. In Y. Friesem, U. Raman, I. Kanižaj, & G. Y. Choi (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook on media education futures post pandemic.* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003283737-60

Article 4   Glotov, S. (2022) Intercultural film literacy education against cultural misrepresentation. Finnish visual art teachers' perspective. *Journal of Media Literacy Education.* (Accepted)

RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Article 1   I developed and taught the university course that was the basis of the case study. Sirkku Kotilainen acted as the course supervisor. Later, I completed all the data analysis and composed most of the text, with Sirkku Kotilainen commenting, editing and writing a small part on the research ethics.

1   INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically changed the way we consume film and series. When people around the world were forced to lock themselves indoors and limit their communication, theatres, festivals and other public venues shut their doors, which boosted the development of nontheatrical mode of distribution and growth of streaming services (Akser, 2020). American streaming services, such as Netflix or Amazon Prime Video, were the winners in the pandemic and increased their worldwide subscriber base (Mikos, 2020).

The advanced competition, dubbed the streaming wars, has pushed forward the expansion of content libraries be it original or existing titles (Verheul, 2020). For example, Disney+ was able to gain success because of their rich catalogue, as well as because of the original shows that tie to existing franchises such as *Star Wars* (Luo, 2020). The expansion of catalogues results in old and modern content becoming more accessible, being just a click away.

At the same time, American streaming services have sought a way to expand to other countries. Netflix, a pioneer in streaming, leads the way in becoming both global and regional, reaching foreign markets and producing local content in partnership with national media companies (Rodríguez Ortega, 2022). In early 2022, Disney+ announced plans for expanding to 42 countries in the summer (Rahman, 2022). Even though copyright laws might prevent content from being available everywhere, such global expansion connects people in their watching experience.

This global reach also allows for the contents' ideas, art, and culture to be consumed by people around the world, especially when it is an original release, to which a streaming service owns the rights. This was the case for German series *Dark* (2017–2020), which was Netflix's first German-language original series. The show was available on Netflix around the world and told a captivating story, while also showcasing German art, language, culture, and people.

Although *Dark* represented Germany, there were also globally accessible shows that misrepresented cultures, presenting them as cliché stereotypes. One of the most notable cases was Netflix's hit series *Emily in Paris* (2020–), which was criticised for

its representation of Paris and French people, forcing the main star and producer of the show, Lily Collins, to respond and make changes (Wignall, 2021).

Overall, American streaming services and their expansion during the COVID-19 pandemic, transformed media consumption, offering an abundant original and existing content produced in different countries, while transforming audiences into users, here on a global level. It is this transformation that highlights the need to reconceptualise film literacy, to address how audio-visual media is being consumed nowadays and to explore what kind of messages it broadcasts.

Film entered education in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and while in the United States the efforts were done to protect children from what was seen as a harmful influence of film (Watson, 2003), in Europe, the goal was to make heritage accessible to youngsters (Reia-Baptista et al., 2014). At the same time, Europe aimed to actually kerb the influence of American cinema in both production and consumption practices (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018).

Joan and Louis Forsdale (1966) are among the first to discuss the concept of film literacy, in which they describe it using the metaphor of a ladder. The first step is to be able to recognise familiar objects and actions and make sense of what is shown on the screen. The further up the ladder a person goes, the more they can read subtle film messages and contextualise it within a genre and other pictures. Although the Forsdale's paper has been criticised for using anecdotal data collected among cinema-naive non-Western cultures to illustrate film illiteracy (Smith et al., 1985), its value rests in conceptualising film literacy with reference to reading film messages.

As Watson (2003) reports, the ability to read film, as well as television messages and ask important questions—Who is saying what? To whom? How? And why?—were recognised by the British Film Institute in their educational advisory services in the late 1970s; however, as he continues, those efforts were focusing only on the content of the messages pushing the artistic qualities aside. This marked an ideological shift in using film in education, when film was employed to make sense about society (Ruby, 1976).

The concern on ideological overemphasis of film messages has also been shared by Hart Wegner (1977), who states that American students have been denied a strong visual education, having a poor understanding of film history, aesthetics and techniques. As Watson (2003) summarises this as follows:

> To learn to read this language, and write it, and understand who is really saying what, and what it is they're really saying, we must learn to read camera positions, angles and movements, compositions, lighting, and how all these elements are built up for the duration of a narrative; the choice of colour or the tonal range of

black and white photography; the way music and other kinds of sounds are used; the actors, their acting, and the dialogue—whose effects can be subtly modified by all the preceding elements. (p. 9)

Nevertheless, in the 1980s, film has been largely used as an illustrative tool for other disciplines (Champoux, 1999), with major changes happening during the 1990s (Verdoodt et al., 2010). The pioneer works of Henry Giroux (1994), who talks about cultural stereotypes in Hollywood films, and David Buckingham (1996) regarding children's understanding of television, as well as technological advancement that eased self-expression through film (Clarembeaux, 2010), made critical understanding of film messages and the acquiring of creative production skills key competences of the twenty-first century (Verdoodt et al., 2010).

Film literacy has been defined as the ability a) to analyse various elements of film language, b) to interpret the meaning of films and c) to produce a film of one's own (Reia-Baptista et al., 2014). Although film literacy is conceptualised on its own, it is often seen as a part of broader media literacy, at least on the European level (Soto-Sanfiel, et al., 2018). Media literacy '*refers to the knowledge, skills and competencies that are required to use and interpret media*' (Buckingham, 2013, p. 36).

The recent changes in media production and consumption have prompted reconsidering the definition of film literacy provided by Reia-Baptista et al. (2014). Streaming services entered the global film industry and transformed film production and distribution while also dictating new consumption patterns, such as 'binge-watching' (Merikivi et al., 2020; Castro et al., 2021), the act of consuming several episodes of a single show in one sitting, which was further escalated by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the global reach of streaming services, especially the American ones, and the expansion of content towards existing titles, created what can be called a marketplace of cultures (Vacker, 2000), a digital space where various cultures are represented simultaneously.

To adjust this concept to streaming services, the marketplace of cultures illustrates the online space that offers audio-visual content from a specific culture and uses that culture to categorise and advertise that content. Think of all the British crime series, Nordic noir, Korean dramas or French comedies, to name but a few. Such content is not only seen as representative of its genre, but also as of its culture. Usually, this content is available on demand, but in some cases, for example, with Finnish Yle Areena, the content is also available for free.

To take the recent example of the Korean hit show *Squid Game* (2021) distributed on Netflix, Huang (2022) describes how the series highlights poverty and class inequalities in Korean society, while referencing South Korea's transformation from

an impoverished country scarred by war to one of the most prosperous economies. Netflix's distribution of the show allowed its representation to be seen globally, while the success of the show stimulated more Korean content to be added to the streaming service (McDonald, 2022).

On top of that, there are shows, such as the already mentioned *Emily in Paris* or successful American reality show *RuPaul's Drag Race* (2009-), which has been stereotyping contestants from Puerto Rico and evoking linguistic imperialism (McIntyre & Riggs, 2017). In the case of Finland, Németh's (2015) study describes how crime, prostitution and drug dealing are often the subjects of films and series about Russia. And still, these subjects continue to be present, for example, in the acclaimed crime series *Sorjonen* (2016–), which is globally distributed by Netflix under the name *Bordertown*.

These recent examples showcase the global prevalence of cultural stereotypes that misrepresent a certain culture in audio-visual media. Even though the use of such stereotypes has been recognised as harmful, it continues to prevail because of space and time constraints on media, producers' limited understanding of a foreign culture and the need to include familiar codes that larger audiences can identify and interpret (Hyde-Clarke, 2008). Even though cultural stereotypes are ever present, there is still a need to develop a critical agency towards them (Castañeda, 2018) or else they have potential to promote wider nationalism and racism (Sayer & Meadows, 2012; Silvestrini, 2020).

With its emphasis on the development of a critical understanding towards film's messages, film literacy has the potential to combat the power of cultural misrepresentation and encourage the development of critical agency towards the use of stereotypes. However, to do so, film literacy as a concept needs to be reconceptualised to address the challenges of the modern day posed by the development of streaming services, which offer ever-expanding libraries of cultural content on a global level.

So far, I have problematised the need to return to the concept of film literacy because of the recent changes in media production, distribution and consumption, as well as the issue of cultural representation and misrepresentation that stems from abundant and accessible audio-visual content. The current study addresses these theoretical and societal problems by reconceptualising film literacy and linking it with intercultural education, which emphasises open and respectful intercultural dialogue (Elias & Mansouri, 2020).

The present research introduces the idea of intercultural film literacy education and approaches it by discussing and evaluating the connection between film literacy

and intercultural dialogue while focusing on contemporary film literacy and intercultural education understanding and practices in schools and on the internet. Thus, the current research poses this main question: How can film literacy be supported by an intercultural dialogue? (**RQ1**).

At the same time, the present study asks two subquestions.

RQ2: How is intercultural film literacy education understood in practice?

Intercultural film literacy education can be linked with intercultural education and film literacy, and in the current research, one of the goals is to study if this link already has been practised by professional schoolteachers and, if so, how. On top of this, asking such a research question provides the opportunity to hear the experiences and opinions of the schoolteachers related to intercultural education and film literacy independently. Therefore, this subquestion connects intercultural film literacy education to actual teaching strategies and stimulates an inquiry into experiences of practising educators.

RQ3: How can film literacy educational resources promote cultural representation?

By asking this subquestion, the goal is to broaden the scope of the research towards open educational resources that are freely available online. The resources are designed for the purpose of being used at the schools and educational environments; thus, they have the potential to affect the way cultural representation is taught and studied. Although these resources provide insights into the current state of film literacy education, in the current research, the focus is on critically analysing the presence or absence of the discussion about cultural representation in films the resources are based on.

Answering these one main question (RQ1) and two subquestions (RQ2, RQ3) allows for conceptualising intercultural film literacy education as a link between film literacy and intercultural dialogue, covering the modern understanding of film literacy and intercultural education in practice while seeing the current state of cultural representation in film literacy education.

This doctoral dissertation comprises four substudies, the results of which were published as peer-reviewed articles. In short, Article I tests the proposal of intercultural film literacy education; Article II looks at existing film resources from an intercultural perspective; Article III highlights the increasing role audio-visual media play in expressing oneself and engaging in politics and activism; while Article IV looks at how intercultural education and film literacy are practised in Finnish schools. Together, these articles support the reconceptualisation of intercultural education and film literacy and the introduction and development of the idea of

intercultural film literacy education. The table below (Table 1) provides a summary of each article, including their research questions, data and methods:

Table 1.   Summary of each article

Article/Title	Research Question	Data and Methods
I: *Teaching Intercultural Film Literacy* (Glotov & Kotilainen, 2021)	How can film literacy be taught from the perspective of intercultural education?	Case study, 23 final essays + 4 interviews. Thematic Analysis.
II: *Intercultural Film Education Online* (Glotov, 2021)	How film education open educational resources adopt intercultural perspective?	160 open educational resources. Content analysis.
III: *Russian Political Participation on TikTok in Navalny's Supports During the COVID-19 Pandemic (Glotov, 2022)*	How do Russian people engage in participatory politics on audio-visual social media?	200 TikTok videos. Content analysis.
IV: *Intercultural Film Literacy Education against Cultural Misrepresentation. Finnish Visual Art Teachers' Perspective (Glotov, 2022)*	How do Finnish visual art schoolteachers view and practise intercultural film literacy education?	Interviews (N=8). Thematic analysis.

As the table illustrates, the current doctoral dissertation is qualitative in nature and combines different methods, as well as types, of research data. In short, the first study aimed to test intercultural film literacy education practices, the second analysed existing resources from the intercultural perspective, the third looked at audio-visual social media and their role in self-expression, and the fourth investigated Finnish visual art schoolteachers' perspectives on intercultural film literacy education. Each article will be discussed further in detail, with their full texts available as appendixes.

Following this chapter, the current dissertation continues to Chapter 2 Conceptualising the Field, in which I look at the previous research on intercultural education, film literacy and cultural (mis)representation. The chapter conceptualises intercultural education through its main components: intercultural dialogue, culture and intercultural competence. It then progresses to film literacy and looks at it via neoformalism film theory, before linking film literacy to intercultural education. Finally, the chapter broadens the discussion on cultural (mis)representation and discusses the role of stereotypes.

Chapter 3 Methods provides a theoretical background for each of the methods used and describes how each substudy was conducted. The chapter conceptualises qualitative research before diving into case study, content analysis and thematic

analysis methods. Finally, the research process for each of the articles is described in detail.

Chapter 4 Findings summarises the results of each substudy and provides answers to the current dissertation's research questions. Chapter 5 Discussion explores the main findings and elaborates on the main research question, RQ1, before providing theoretical and practical conclusions. Chapter 6 Evaluating the Study provides a critical reflection on each of the methods used during the study and reviews its research ethics. Finally, the dissertation ends with a Conclusion that summarises the main findings, discusses future research and presents the final thoughts.

2 CONCEPTUALISING THE FIELD

The aim of this chapter is to conceptualise the key concepts of the study. The first one—intercultural film literacy education—links intercultural education and film literacy; hence, both are conceptualised in separate subchapters, followed by a summary that establishes the link between them. The second concept—cultural misrepresentation—is conceptualised by discussing the concepts of representation and stereotyping, which is the main act of cultural misrepresentation. From the literature, the current study draws mostly from Fred Dervin and Ashley Simpson's ***Interculturality and the Political Within Education*** (2021), Kristin Thompson' work ***Breaking the Glass Armor: Neoformalist Film Analysis*** (1988) and the book ***Representation*** (1997), edited by Stuart Hall.

2.1 Intercultural Film Literacy Education

First, intercultural education will be conceptualised by discussing its key concepts, such as intercultural dialogue, culture and intercultural competence, along with the significance of including the political into the discussion. Second, the film literacy concept will be addressed by looking at the existing definitions and expanding them based on a neoformalism approach. Finally, intercultural education and film literacy are linked with intercultural film literacy education.

2.1.1 Intercultural Education

The notion of 'intercultural' has occurred throughout history under different guises but came into shape in research and education in the mid-twentieth century (Dervin & Simpson, 2021). Since then, the development of intercultural education has largely been in response to migration occurring either in real (immigration, refugees, students, researchers, tourists) or in virtual (internet mobility) spaces (Portera, 2011). Intercultural education is linked with visions of equity, ethnic/cultural identity, the multicultural society and the role of schools in all these (Leeman & Ledoux, 2005).

Elias and Mansouri (2020) theorise intercultural regarding its aims to critically address how people relate to one another, how these interactions are framed, shaped and enacted in everyday situations and how people from different cultures interact with one another, how they live together despite differences in language, religion or ethnicity and how they resolve conflicts of cross-cultural misunderstanding. This is a broad and general overview, but it makes clear how intercultural focuses on the interactions and interrelations between people of various cultural backgrounds.

The prefix 'inter' relates to this focus, separating intercultural from other similar concepts: multicultural, transcultural, polycultural or cross-cultural, though some view them are synonymous (Dervin, 2021). The 'inter' comes from interactions and concerns the promotion of dynamic engagement between cultures or cultural exchange through open and respectful dialogue (Järvelä, 2005; Bleszynska, 2008; Betro, 2014). This dialogue allows people to question, but not reject, the perceived natural conventions and values of certain groups in which they were born and socialised into (Alred et al., 2003).

The idea of dialogue is central to the intercultural concept, as described in a large literature review by Elias and Mansouri (2020), who showcase how it ties to the promotion of common/shared values/culture/identity. The Council of Europe (2008) defines intercultural dialogue as a process that '*fosters equality, human dignity, and a sense of common purpose. It aims to develop a deeper understanding of diverse world views and practices, to increase cooperation and participation (or the freedom to make choices), to allow personal growth and transformation, and to promote tolerance and respect for the other*' (p. 17). This definition acknowledges that intercultural dialogue goes beyond simple respect for different cultures, allowing for the development of an understanding of the Other and Self because it stimulates getting to know others' experiences while critically examining one's own values and beliefs (Alasuutari & Jokikokko, 2010).

Elias and Mansouri (2020) provide an overview of the purpose of intercultural dialogue and its conceptualisation in intercultural scholarship. Based on the three most common purposes identified, intercultural dialogue is about fostering a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; recognising, respecting and accepting the differences; and searching for common, shared values. It is more often conceptualised as open dialogue/exchange/interaction based on mutual understanding and respect that supports talking/thinking about diversity and differences (Elias & Mansouri, 2020).

However, these common definitions lack an attempt to engage with uncomfortable, sensitive and political issues, the absence of which limits the scope of intercultural dialogue to a discussion on how people perceive each other to be

culturally different, hence not making it possible to achieve any meaningful change (Phipps, 2014). This chapter is being composed at a time when Ukraine is defending itself against Russian military aggression that has destroyed people's lives and homes. What type of open and respectful intercultural dialogue is possible between the Ukrainian and Russian people? Phipps (2014) asks the similar question when looking into conflict between Palestine and Israel. In these cases, the political is present through war, and it cannot be ignored because it greatly influences and shapes people's lives and worldviews.

In addition to the clear acts of military aggressions that pit nations and cultures against each other, the political in intercultural education, at least for Dervin and Simpson (2021), also addresses issues of inequality, economic domination, business-driven politics and capitalist mistreatment of individuals. Our socioeconomic environments are shaped by the politics that influence how we perceive ourselves and how we encounter others.

It is strange that intercultural dialogue ignores the political when it has been conceived largely in response to migration, which is often motivated by political reasons (war, armed conflicts and economic crisis; Schaeffer, 2010; Kapur, 2014). At the same time, it is necessary to address how international migration is founded in global inequality, be it in terms of labour opportunities, wages or lifestyles (Black et al., 2005). Before fostering equality through intercultural dialogue, it is crucial to acknowledge, address and examine the existing inequalities. As Alison Phipps (2014) states, intercultural dialogue requires the spaces and structures of equitable relations, where multiple identities can be held together.

The issue of inequality also comes up when discussing the concept of culture. Fred Dervin (2021) passionately describes how the notions of cultural habits as natural and 'part of one's DNA' creates hierarchies between different cultures, with one placing itself higher in comparison, claiming to be 'more civilised', 'more punctual' and so on. Dervin (2021) continues that, in education, students and teachers are made to believe that, through possessing knowledge about the Other, they can also 'govern' the Other.

Virkama (2010) describes two approaches to culture: essentialist, which views cultures as separate from each other and as having fixed containers of characteristics, and nonessentialist, which pays attention to the constructed and contextualised nature of cultures. Intercultural education offers a dynamic perspective of cultures (UNESCO, 2006), thus adopting a nonessentialist approach of evolving, shifting and always in contact with each other cultures. In this broader understanding, '*speaking of culture implies recognition of values, lifestyles and symbolic representations that individuals and*

groups refer to in their relationships to others and in their understanding of the world' (Rey-von Allmen, 2011, p. 33).

In the song "Esperanto" from their recent electro-pop album *Topical Dancer* (2022), Charlotte Adigéry and Bolis Pupul, Belgium artists with an immigrant background, reference and poke fun at the question heard by many, including themselves: *'Where are you really from?'* (2022). Fred Dervin (2021) describes his own experience hearing this question, which, combined with similar inquiries such as 'In what language do you dream?', prevents the intercultural from happening because these questions look for a mechanical, singular and simple answer that is challenging to provide in a complex world.

Apart from intercultural dialogue and culture, another key concept of intercultural education is intercultural competence. Dervin (2021) strongly opposes existing models of intercultural competence (see Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009) because they treat the intercultural as a product or service that one can control and/or benefit from; in addition, they reveal ideologies related to success, productivity and usefulness. For him and Kaisa Hahl (2015), intercultural competence is more about developing a critical ability to question cultural claims and the power dynamics within them.

Based on interviews with teacher graduates Katri Jokikokko (2005) separates intercultural competence in three categories: ethical orientation (when certain morally right ways of being, thinking and acting are emphasised), efficiency orientation (focus on ability to act and successfully cope with different situations, and pedagogical orientation (a skill to guide and encourage different learners). Thus, she concludes that intercultural competence is '*less related to specific skills and knowledge, but more of a holistic approach to issues*' (Jokikokko, 2005, p. 80).

With intercultural education continuously being reconceptualised, some teachers struggle to actually practise it because they feel uncertain in their own abilities (Hajisoteriou, 2013; Roiha & Sommier, 2021). Roiha and Sommier's (2021) research on international school teachers' perceptions and experiences of intercultural education in the Netherlands showcases how some of the teachers emphasise differences over similarities and express essentialist views on cultures while failing to acknowledge structural power issues, such as racism and gender inequalities. Hence, the move towards effective intercultural education that truly challenges existing inequalities and hierarchies also requires specific training for teachers.

This subchapter conceptualises intercultural education through several key aspects: intercultural dialogue, culture and intercultural competence. It also reveals the challenges in providing a clear definition of intercultural education. Intercultural

dialogue is seen as nonpolitical and political, culture is seen as a fixed and ever-evolving construct, and intercultural competence can either be about developing skills or critical ability.

Nevertheless, in the current doctoral dissertation intercultural education is understood as teaching the complex notion of intercultural through a dialogical approach. Although the present study acknowledges and uses an understanding of intercultural education with a focus on open and respectful cultural exchange, it also moves it further towards the inclusion of the political and existing power structures to address the issues of racial, gender, class and sexuality inequalities while also challenging existing hierarchies. However, such a complicated definition of intercultural education requires strong support in professional training and educational resources for those who actually practice intercultural education.

2.1.2 Film Literacy

From a strictly technical point of view films are moving images that communicate information and create experiences and that evoke emotions and feelings driven by stories, characters, sounds and visuals (Bordwell et al., 2017). Films are the product of filmmaking—a process that involves making various creative decisions (shot composition, framing, editing, sound design, etc.) to which audiences will respond (Bordwell et al., 2017). These broad definitions include not only big budget motion pictures showcased in movie theatres or on streaming platforms, but also home videos, recordings of summer holidays and, for example, cat videos. In each case, the people responsible for the production make conscious and subconscious creative decisions: the music put in the cat video, a zoom in on a face of the bride or the visual presentation of galaxies far, far away. Hence, these creative decisions are what eventually define filmmaking and films.

Film literacy can be seen as a part of broader media literacy, which includes practices of critically analysing and creating media messages in a wide variety of forms (Hobbs, Deslauriers, & Steager, 2019). Media literacy provides us with tools to be critical of popular media and to be able to participate in it, film literacy does the same but in regard to film. This is acknowledged by the British Film Institute (2011) in their broad definition of film literacy as '*the level of understanding of a film, the ability to be conscious and curious in the choice of films; the competence to critically watch a film and to analyse its content, cinematography and technical aspects; and the ability to manipulate its language and technical resources in creative moving image production*' (p. 8).

However, there is more to film literacy than critical analysis and production, and I believe that it should include awareness and knowledge of film history because it provides the necessary context for production and analysis. In terms of analysis, it brings an understanding of how films were perceived at the time of their release, were they part of a tradition, were they breaking any grounds, what technology was available. In terms of production, it allows us to make references and homages and/or to see them in other films, giving a wider perspective on different film industries.

When talking about film history, I connect it with global sociopolitical and economic contexts because the history of film has been continuously influenced by those. For example, World War II transformed film industries around the world into propaganda vehicles, while the nuclear bombardment of Hiroshima and Nagasaki resulted in the rise of horror films with mutated creatures. Another example is the famous French New Wave, the development of which was stimulated by governmental support for debut pictures and the rise of cheaper and more portable cameras (Thompson et al., 2003). Indeed, film history is not separate from world's history and has been greatly influenced by that.

Additionally, the definition of film literacy provided by the British Film Institute (2011) mentions the competence to critically analyse films' contexts, that is, the ability to decipher films' meanings. The construction of meaning depends on each viewer's point of reference. There are various film theories that provide the necessary critical lenses for examining films and deciphering their messages, for example, semiotic, feminist, queer or Marxist film theories. The current study adopts a neoformalism approach for two reasons: first, neoformalism acknowledges the audiences' agency in construction and interpretations of meanings, and second, it looks at films as a whole, offering a universal outlook with a focus on the relations between various film devices (techniques).

Neoformalism has its roots in the Russian Formalism movement of the 1910–1930s (Thomspon, 1981) and adopts its key concept of defamiliarisation (Schklovsky, 2004), which describes how everything in the artwork is different from the way we see it in reality because of being placed in the new context (Thompson, 1988). Even the most ordinary films support defamiliarisation because their presentation differs from reality. A movie can present a single scene from various perspectives, come back to it a few times, show it from different angles and provide new sounds and effects. Such is impossible in everyday life. Thus, Kristin Thompson (1988) argues that defamiliarisation is always present in film, making an object to be seen and understood as art by the audiences.

For example, imagine a shot of a forest. Its colour palette, sound choices and camera position transform and give meanings to the forest. Darker colours, children's laughter in the distance and a tilted camera angle make the forest look dangerous and creepy. However, brighter colours, sounds of bird chirping and a straight camera position present the forest as a place of adventure and wonderful life. However, in both cases, the forest is defamiliarised because of the cinematic presentation.

Defamiliarisation allows one to understand the meaning of a film as a part of its formal components because filmmakers build their work out of meanings (Thompson, 1988). Thus, meaning is not only what the audience constructs, but also what filmmakers want the audience to grasp. There are four types of meanings: referential, explicit, implicit and symptomatic (Bordwell et al., 2017). Referential is related to the plot's summary, and explicit is the meaning that is clearly stated in the film, for example, '*There is no place like home*' in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). Implicit meaning is more abstract, relating to interpretations and focusing on one or a few scenes, instead of on a film as a whole. Symptomatic meaning takes interpretation to a larger level and connects it with social ideology (Bordwell et al., 2017).

Defamiliarisation and, by extension, its meanings are supported by formal and stylistic choices. Film form relates to the unfolding of film's narrative (story, plot, characters), while film style encompasses the audio-visual decisions related to cinematography, editing, mise-en-scène (setting the scene) and sound. Each of the film devices has its function (how the element is used) and motivation (why it is used), both of which differ from film to film (Thompson, 1988). Thus, for example, a red colour can indicate danger in one film, passion in another, expressing characters' feelings while, in a different film, the use of red could simply be motivated by the overall aesthetic presentation.

Finally, the neoformalism approach emphasises viewing films within a historical context, with Thomspon (1988) stating that '*for neoformalism the film's functions and motivations can only be understood historically*' (p. 22). The context matters for several reasons; first, it dictates which film techniques were available to filmmakers; second, it binds a film within certain norms, values and cultural traditions prevalent at the times; and third, in puts a film in a larger sociopolitical content, which is relevant for developing symptomatic meanings. Hence, it is significant to provide a historical overview and always be aware of the time and place a film was produced and released in.

The current research adopts a neoformalism approach of film literacy to provide the theoretical background for analysing films, their messages and the use of creative

decisions regarding the formal and stylistic dimensions of film. Overall, thus far, film literacy has been conceptualised as being about a) knowledge of film history, b) ability to critically examine films' content, to decode original meanings and to construct meanings of one's own, c) understanding of various formal and stylistic creative decisions that go into filmmaking and d) the competence to make those creative decisions in practice.

2.1.3   Linking Intercultural Education and Film Literacy

The current research proposes the idea of intercultural film literacy education, which links intercultural education and film literacy. Films are largely produced with the goal to engage audiences and create an empathetic parasocial bond between viewers and characters (Grodal & Kramer, 2010). These notions of connection and empathy are also essential to intercultural dialogue (Alred, 2003). Films stimulate the ability to emphasise and, thus, can be used to promote intercultural education and broadening one's knowledge and understanding of other people, while film literacy helps develop a critical outlook towards exactly how those people are represented within a film.

Films have been used in film resources produced by different nations to spark conversations about various cultures, their histories, traditions, customs, and representation. For example, the British Film Institute, the California Newsreel, and Finnish Koulukino all produced resources that promote diversity and cultural awareness and discuss cultural inequalities through cinema. The idea of intercultural film literacy education builds upon the work done by these organisations, by highlighting audio-visual cultural representation within films, promoting intercultural dialogue. Additionally, this idea is about teaching film literacy via intercultural dialogue, hence, it aims to provide an approach that can be adapted to any audio-visual media that includes any cultural representation.

At the same time, films allow us to engage the political in intercultural dialogue because they are the products of specific historical, social, economic and cultural contexts, and film literacy stimulates the knowledge of these contexts. For example, one cannot discuss American horror films without touching upon misogyny, racism, ableism in portrayals of women, people of colour and those with mental and physical disabilities or leaving out larger political events, such as communist witch hunts, the rise of serial killers or, as was previously mentioned, the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Finally, film literacy supports a nonessentialist understanding of culture in intercultural education. Films are part of our cultures, and they showcase its constant change and development. Films also surpass national borders and are more often than not coproduced by many people of different backgrounds, whose dynamic interactions and collaborations result in a final product. Thus, when teaching film literacy, one cannot look at cultures from an essentialist perspective, understanding it as something stagnant and fixed.

Overall, the present research links intercultural education and film literacy, as conceptualised above, into intercultural film literacy education. While film literacy supports the development of critical thinking about cultural images, and the production of one's own, intercultural education acknowledges a film's cultural contexts and uses it as a starting point for intercultural dialogue and the development of intercultural competence (Glotov & Kotilainen, 2021).

2.2   Cultural Misrepresentation

To conceptualise cultural misrepresentation, we first need to form an understanding of representation. Stuart Hall (1997) defines representation as '*the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language, <...> which enables us to refer to either 'real' world of objects, people, or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people, and events*' (p. 17). In this representation is a complex notion that describes how we observe and make sense of the world around us. We can say that the object we encounter is a chair when that object refers to our mental representation of what a chair is. Or when we hear meowing, we understand it as being representative of a cat.

As Hall (1997) notes, we can form concepts of physical things, but also of abstract notions, such as love and hate, of the things we cannot encounter, such as dinosaurs, or of completely made-up notions, such as mermaids or ghosts. At the same time, we always arrange and classify concepts, establishing complex relations between them, for example, when using metaphors—train as a bullet—because they are both fast. Overall, Hall (1997) concludes, '*Meaning depends on the relationship between things in the world - people, objects and events, real or fictional - and the conceptual system, which can operate as mental representations of them*' (p. 18).

A conceptual system differs from person to person and is largely influenced by the environment they grew up and were developed in, as well as the language they spoke or, in other words, by a person's culture. Hall (1997) proposes that to belong

to a culture is to possess roughly the same conceptual and linguistic universe and to know how language can be interpreted to reference the world. However, as we already established, culture is a dynamic and ever-evolving concept; thus, representation of objects, people and events can evolve with time, especially when it refers to abstract notions, for example, freedom or sexuality.

All in all, representation is about the meanings we form in our minds that enable reference to either real or fictional objects, people or events. The way we refer to the world is shaped by our cultures and, simultaneously, allows us to form a sense of belonging to said culture. Hyde-Clarke (2008) highlights how representation claims to represent some aspects of reality to make sense of our world, while also distinguishing that representation images are the result of a process of selection and, thus, do not necessarily reflect actual things and people.

Following this logic, misrepresentation occurs when the selected images do not reflect the actual things. In a similar way, Lenard and Balint (2020) define misrepresentation as an act or statement that gives false or misleading accounts of something. However, this is a surface-level definition because it does not acknowledge the intent or context of misrepresentation. John Berger (2008) describes the depiction of livestock in European oil painting when the goal was not to realistically portray animals but to present them as a proof of value and social status of their owners, thus making them look like furniture. Hence, the painters misrepresented the animals to represent the owners.

This example also reveals a power relation that is a part of misrepresentation: when the one who broadcasts or selects the images is in control of representation. Sentient animals lose their agency and simply become a metaphor for the owner's success. Hence, it is necessary to go deeper than just stating what is and is not representative of reality, moving towards the context of misrepresentation to critically acknowledge who selects the images and for what purpose.

For the present dissertation, misrepresentation occurs in a specific context and offers a different perspective on objects, people and events, aiming to present it as the right or correct one. Cultural misrepresentation is a form of misrepresentation that focuses on what we perceive as cultures with certain objects, people and events that we see as a part of them.

The most common way of cultural misrepresentation is stereotyping (Lenard & Balint, 2020), which is also indicated by the previous research of cultural misrepresentation in media focusing on the use of stereotypes (e.g., Sylvester et al., 2020; Anand & Hsu, 2020). Stereotyping involves the practices of constructing one's identity, ranging from humorous teases to petrifying value judgements that may lead

to acts of discrimination and violence (Cambridge, 2018). Stuart Hall (1997) provides three points about stereotyping. First, stereotypes hold few vivid, memorable and recognisable characteristics about a person, reduce everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them and cement them without a change.

Second, stereotyping adopts the act of division to practice exclusion. It divides normal from abnormal, acceptable from unacceptable, us from them, excludes everything that does not fit and, finally, creates set boundaries. Third, stereotyping occurs in places of great inequality of power. Those in power command what appear normal, natural and inevitable (Hall, 1997, pp. 258–259). Thus, it is necessary to reflect upon the existing hierarchies when discussing cultural stereotypes.

Stereotypes can never be destroyed, and although one stereotype can be surpassed, another will soon emerge (Dervin, 2021). We often rely on stereotypes because it saves us worrying about thinking deeply about others and furnishing person-related information without the troublesome necessity of social interaction (Falbén et al., 2019). However, the harmful effects of stereotyping make it impossible to turn a blind eye towards it and accept it as it is. There is a need to promote critical reflection on the use of stereotypes, as well as to emphasise how people and cultures are more diverse and complex than the stereotypes about them.

Overall, cultural misrepresentation most often appears through cultural stereotypes, reducing people, cultural objects and events to few simple and vivid characteristics that are fixated in time and presented in the opposite way from what is natural and normal.

2.3   Summary

This chapter has conceptualised intercultural education, film literacy and cultural misrepresentation by providing existing definitions and presenting arguments for their expansions based on contemporary scholarship (in the case of intercultural education) and on theoretical approaches (in the case of film literacy). The idea of intercultural film literacy education, which is central to the present doctoral dissertation, links intercultural education and film literacy to a) teach film production and develop a critical and analytical attitude towards films' messages, b) use films to foster intercultural dialogue and stimulate the development of intercultural competence and c) address existing political, social and economic issues and the inequalities that impact people's lives, influence production of films and affect their contents.

Additionally, the present dissertation aims to use intercultural film literacy education to combat cultural misinformation in the form of cultural stereotypes in audio-visual media. Film literacy may inspire a critical examination of cultural representation while encouraging people to rely less on stereotypes in their own productions. Intercultural education has the potential to challenge the power structures that shape and reinforce stereotypes while highlighting via intercultural dialogue that people and cultures are more diverse and complex than a few vivid, memorable and exaggerated traits.

This chapter has provided a theoretical overview of concepts used in the current study. The following chapter presents the methodological context of this doctoral dissertation, describing the research methods used for each of the studies (articles 1–4).

3 METHODS

This chapter provides an overview of the research and data analysis methods used during the current doctoral study. Because the research is primarily qualitative in nature, the chapter begins by defining qualitative research before proceeding into a discussion of methods used throughout the studies: case study, thematic analysis and content analysis. After a brief overview of each method, the chapter continues with short summaries of how each method was used for each article while also describing their datasets.

3.1 Qualitative Research

The present doctoral study is qualitative in its research approach, focusing on a variety of textual data, including written documents, interview transcripts and educational resources. Qualitative research can be described as '*an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help us to understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible*' (Merriam, 1998, p. 5). Margrit Schreier (2012) provides eight key characteristics of qualitative research:

1. Interpretive (concerned with symbolic materials that require interpretation),
2. Naturalistic (preserves real-life context),
3. Situational (context must always be considered),
4. Reflexive (acknowledgement of both researchers' and participants' reflexivity in cocreating data),
5. Flexibility (all aspects of the research can be adapted during the study process),
6. Inductive (using open measures for data collections and having key concepts emerge from the data),
7. Case-oriented (in-depth study of the case),
8. Focused on validity (overall quality of the study).

Hence, qualitative research looks at a particular case, acknowledges its context and does not manipulate the research setting. The research data are cocreated by the

participants who provide it, and a researcher, who interprets these data, reports the key concepts, ensuring the validity of the study.

Qualitative research is a common method in various disciplines, including, but not limited to, communication, education, sociology and health care. Depending on the purpose of the project, the goals of qualitative research are multiple and most often are composed of essential representation and presentation of the principle findings from the analytic data synthesis (Saldaña, 2011). Qualitative research provides comprehensive, expansive and richly descriptive data that reveal how various component parts of a phenomenon work together to form a whole (Merriam, 1998). Thus, qualitative research is descriptive and representative of a studied phenomenon.

Overall, the current doctoral dissertation is a qualitative study because it is a study of a specific case—intercultural film literacy education—through an analysis of various 'texts' in their broadest meaning, using interpretive perspective and aiming towards understanding humans' attributes to that specific case (Davidson, 2018). There are a variety of methods available for qualitative research, but the present doctoral study centres on three: case study, content analysis and thematic analysis.

3.1.1   Case Study

The case study has been a significant feature of qualitative research since the past century (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). However, defining a case study is a challenging task, as proven by Cohen et al. (2017), who provide a list of definitions and metaphors, some of which contradict each other. The key question for defining a case study is to understand what a case is. Cohen et al. (2017) state that case studies are set in temporal, geographical, institutional and other contexts that enable boundaries to be drawn around the case that is defined through the people involved.

Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) also look at a case as a bounded unit, arguing that the case study is about capturing the complexity of relationships, beliefs and attitudes within it. Thus, a case in case studies is a clearly defined unit within certain boundaries that involves people and/or is defined by them. Merriam (1998) provides examples of what can constitute as a case: '*The case can be a person such as a student, a teacher, a principal; a program; a group such as a class, a school, a community; a specific policy; and so on*' (p. 27).

There are many variables operating in a single case, and the researcher's task is to catch their implications (Cohen et al., 2017). Hence, as Denscombe (2008) states, the

aim of a case study '*is to illuminate the general by looking at the particular*' (p. 36). This means that the case study approach is holistic in nature, referring to the concept of holism that comes from the Greek word '*holos*' (whole). For Yin (2003), a holistic case study examines only the global nature of an organisation or a programme; however, his view is not universally shared among the researchers. As Verschuren (2003) observes, although some argue that holism means looking at a single or a small number of cases, others argue that it is a study of a whole object instead of the object as whole. Despite the ambiguity, holism is recognised as one of the distinctive features of case study because it, in general, directs and narrows the study of a particular case.

In qualitative research, case studies get close to the subjects of interest by means of direct observation in natural settings and by access to subjective factors, such as thoughts and feelings (Bromley, 1986). Hence, a case study allows one to develop a subjective understanding of people, situations and key episodes (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Although the researcher might be close to its subjects, in general, a case study is noninterventive and empathic because the researcher is interested in understanding how the people involved experience things (Stake, 1995). Thus, the case is studied by looking at it through the eyes of the participants.

To achieve this, case study researchers usually rely on a variety of data. Yin (2003) provides the strengths and disadvantages of six sources of evidence, which include documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artefacts. Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) articulate that case studies use a variety of data collection tools, as well as different perspectives, for example, child, parent, students and teachers, to provide more depth. Using at least two forms of data collection tools and/or perspectives will reinforce the legitimacy of the findings (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013).

Because a case study looks at units within certain boundaries and uses the data collected from people involved, which is later analysed and interpreted by a researcher, there has been a long-lasting debate concentrating on the issues of validity, reliability and generalisation (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Yin (2003) dismisses the argument against generalisation and notes that case studies do not aim to generalise to populations or universes. Denscombe (2008) provides an explicit defence for generalisation, stating that a single case does not exist separately and is a part of a broader class of things, so it is the researcher's responsibility to identify significant features on which a comparison can be made and to show how the study compares with others in the class in terms of these features. Case studies provide the

basis for generalisation within the class of the selected cases if the researcher conveys the necessary information to the reader.

Addressing the criticism surrounding the issues of validity and reliability, Cohen et al. (2017) recognise that case studies may not have the external checks and balances of other forms of research, which does not stop them from abiding by the canons of validity and reliability. The authors provide a list of such canons, as follows:

1. Construct validity–adopting accepted definitions and constructions of concepts and terms.
2. Internal validity–ensuring agreements between different parts of the data, as well as transparency of findings and interpretations.
3. External validity–clarifying domains to which generalisation can be made.
4. Concurrent validity–using multiple sources to address research questions.
5. Ecological validity–fidelity to the context of the study.
6. Reliability–replicability and internal consistency.
7. Avoidance of bias–reflexivity and external reviews (Cohen et al., 2017).

Overall, similar to other research methods, it is each author's responsibility to follow validity canons, ensure the reliability of the research and provide enough information for a reader to suggest possible generalisations.

To conclude, a case study is a distinctive research method that looks at the concrete case to generate '*an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in the process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation*' (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). The current research has adopted a case study method for article 1 because it has allowed for better understanding the unique features of certain cases, as well as the experiences of the people involved in it.

3.1.2   Content Analysis

Although the concept of a content analysis is relatively modern, it originated more than 200 years ago as a method of analysing trends in mass communications, be it newspaper, political speeches or hymns (Harwood & Garry, 2003). Krippendorff (2004) traces the history of content analysis even further, looking into a systematic analysis of texts by theologians in the 1690s and then to a Swedish study on church hymns completed in the eighteenth century. For a while, content analyses were purely quantitative, but, during the 1950s, these were criticised for a misplaced desire

for objectivity that simplifies texts and fails to reveal their inner dynamics (Kracauer, 1952). Thus, qualitative content analysis was proposed as an alternative.

The two methods of content analysis are not evidently distinct from each other; as Margrit Schreier (2012) states, there is no clear line separating qualitative content analysis from quantitative one. Nevertheless, Schreier (2012) provides a few characteristics that can help in distinguishing one from another. Qualitative analysis focuses on latent meaning, instead of manifest meaning, and in doing so, it often has to take context into account (e.g., depending on the context the same sentence can be either serious or ironic). Another difference is that qualitative content analysis is usually partly data driven, using the method to describe the materials, while quantitative content analysis is concept driven, using the method for hypothesis testing (Schreier, 2012).

However, the insistence of keeping content analysis either quantitative or qualitative is misleading because, as Krippendorff (2004) asserts, '*reading is fundamentally a qualitative process, even if it results in numerical accounts*' (pp. 19–20). The word reading here does not particularly refer to text only. As Stemler (2000) notes, the data for content analysis can be of various types, including texts, videos, drawings and so forth, the only condition is that the data are durable in nature for the technique to be reliable. In the case of the present doctoral study, content analysis was performed twice, during the work on articles 2 and 3; however, in the first instance, the data were textual and audio-visual in the second instance.

Content analysis usually consists of four stages: preparation (collecting the data), organisation (creation of categories), analysis or coding and reporting (interpreting and presenting the findings; based on Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Schreier, 2012). Stemler (2000) describes two approaches to coding: emergent and priori. Emergent coding uses the categories established after preliminary examination of the data, while priori coding uses the categories that are established prior to the analysis and that are based on some theory. Both articles 2 and 3 adopt a priori coding.

In case of article 2, the content analysis conducted is not strictly qualitative or quantitative. Although it uses existing theory and counts how often the data corresponds to different coding categories, the study is largely interpretive, looking for lament meaning within the dataset, instead of manifest ones. In contrast, the content analysis adopted for article 3 is closer to being quantitative. Although it also holds a certain degree of interpretation, it uses a priori coding, counts how often the data corresponds to each category and looks for manifest, explicit meanings. Nevertheless, the use of different types of content analysis not only showcases the

extensive functions of this method, but also permits for studying the topic at hand from a broader perspective.

Before moving forward, it is important to address the issue of subjectivity in content analysis. Harwood and Garry (2003) note that researcher's bias may affect all the stages of content analysis, from data collection to analysis to an interpretation of the results. Hence, content analysis requires a researcher to be reflexive of oneself and own coding frame and to make the grounds for interpretations transparent (Schreier, 2012). It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure credibility of the study by thoroughly preparing for the study, collecting appropriate and well-saturated data and carrying out trustworthy reporting results and discussion (Elo et al., 2014).

Nevertheless, although the limitations of content analysis are obvious in that it reduces the data and presents interpreted findings, it is beneficial for working with large quantities of data, for being context sensitive and for providing insights and expressions about the phenomena (Harwood & Garry, 2003; Prasad, 2008).

Overall, the current doctoral study uses Krippendorff's (2004) definition of content analysis, which states, '*Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use*' (p. 18). When using the word inference, Krippendorff means an abductive inference that proceeds across logically distinct domains from the particulars of one kind to those of another, for example, when one can refer to the age of a child by the sounds they make (Krippendorff, 2004). This definition provides insights into how articles 2 and 3 used content analysis, even though not strictly quantitative or qualitative, along with how these articles have referenced different forms of data (texts and videos) and highlighted the context the data came from (educational website and audio-visual social app).

3.1.3   (Reflexive) Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a common data analysis method in qualitative research; it focuses on identifying and describing manifest and latent ideas within the data, that is, themes (Guest et. al., 2012). It recognises the patterns within the data, which become the categories for analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). A theme '*captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set*' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 10).

Thematic analysis usually involves six phases: 1) familiarising yourself with the data, 2) generating initial codes to simplify and focus on specific characteristics in

data, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing themes, 5) defining and naming themes and 6) completing a report (Nowell et al., 2017). The analysis can be done alone or in teams and with others' support and can also include various quantities of different types of data. Overall, thematic analysis allows for an in-depth look into the data, offering insights into things and experiences while providing understanding of similarities and differences within data.

Recent years have seen an introduction of an updated concept–reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2022) explain the adjective reflexive recognises a subjective, situated, aware and questioning researcher who performs critical reflection on their role, research practice and process. Similar to other research methods in qualitative research, thematic analysis has been often criticised for its subjectivity. Braun and Clarke (2022) suggest subjectivity as a key aspect of reflexive thematic analysis because the identity of a researcher, their values and disciplinary perspective are an integral part of the analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis embraces subjectivity but does not leave it without questioning and critically reflecting on it.

Braun and Clarke (2022) provide a list of 10 core assumptions of reflexive thematic analysis that deal with the role of the researcher and definition of themes:

1. Researcher's subjectivity is a resource for doing analysis.
2. Analysis and interpretation of data cannot be accurate or objective, they can be either weaker (unconvincing, shallow) or stronger (insightful, nuanced).
3. Coding can be achieved alone or through collaboration.
4. Good quality codes and themes result from immersion and giving the developing analysis some distance.
5. Themes are patterns anchored by a shared idea, meaning or concept.
6. Themes are analytic outputs.
7. Themes do not passively emerge from the data, but rather they are actively produced by the researcher engaged with the dataset.
8. Data analysis is underpinned by theoretical assumptions, which need to be acknowledged and reflected on.
9. Reflexivity is key to good quality analysis.
10. Data analysis is conceptualised as an art, creativity is central to the process, situated within a framework of rigour.

Reflexive thematic analysis can vary from being either inductive (coding driven by data) or deductive (coding driven by theories), semantic (surface meaning) or latent (hidden meaning), experiential (focus on people's own perspectives) or critical

(unpacking an issue) and realist (aims to capture the truth) and relativist (aims to unpack the realities) (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Thematic analysis has been used twice for articles 1 and 4 when dealing with qualitative data (written students' assignments and interviews). Although the approach to thematic analysis varies from one article to another, they both are experiential and realist in nature and aimed to study participants' own perspectives, experiences and understandings, as well as capture a reality that is expressed through the dataset. At the same time, the researcher employed thematic analysis instead of reflexive thematic analysis, so the data collection, analysis and reporting will be reflected upon against personal bias in Chapter 6 – Evaluating the Study.

Overall, the current doctoral research has adopted thematic analysis to study the perspectives of research participants by systematically analysing the data and producing the common themes between different accounts. The idea of reflexivity is included in the thematic analysis, here following the current developments in the method, embracing and reflecting upon my own subjectivity.

3.2 Publications

The table below provides a short summary of each article's research data and methods. Each article is explained in detail further in this subchapter.

Table 2.   The data type and method of each article.

	Data Type	Method
Article 1	Written students' assignments, interviews	Case study, Thematic analysis
Article 2	Open educational resources	Content analysis
Article 3	TikTok videos	Content analysis
Article 4	Interviews	Thematic analysis

3.2.1 Article I

This article is a case study of a single international degree course Workshop on Film Education at Tampere University, Finland, conducted during Autumn 2018. The

course provided 5 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System credits), which is equivalent to 140 hours of study load. The article was cowritten with Sirkku Kotilainen (Glotov & Kotilainen, 2021), who also served as a course supervisor, overseeing the implemented teaching strategies, why I acted as the main lecturer, who also communicated with students and managed the online page of the course on e-learning platform Moodle.

The course had 23 international participants (17 females and 6 males). There were four students from Finland; three from China; two students from each Germany, the US and Slovenia; and one student from each from Bulgaria, Turkey, Malaysia, Japan, Bangladesh, Spain, Mexico, Czech Republic, France and Poland. Here, 12 participants were exchange students, while 11 participants were studying for different master's degrees.

The course had seven meetings that included lectures, group works, discussions and a seminar, which all together lasted for 21 hours. The teaching materials encompassed PowerPoint presentations full of audio-visual materials, short clips from the films illustrating various points on YouTube, quizzes and a collection of articles and book extracts for further reading available on Moodle. The course topics were based on neoformalism film theory (Thompson, 1988) and consisted of film history, film style, film narrative, sound and film analysis. Most film examples were from Europe, the US and South Asia (mostly, Japan, China and South Korea).

An important feature of the course was the seminar, for which students were tasked to prepare a presentation on any topic of their choice related to their own film culture. The seminar lasted for two lectures and was designed to support intercultural education and provide a space for an open and respectful dialogue that uses film as a starting point to discuss cultures. Each presentation was followed by a discussion round moderated by the teacher.

The course had three major assignments, excluding the seminar: film topic analysis (analysis of a representation of a chosen topic in several films), short video (group task to create a video and to practice some editing techniques) and final reflective essay (a free-form text to reflect on the course, its teaching approach and own learning outcomes). The collection of essays, which was submitted by all 23 students, became the primary data for the research.

Additional data included four online interviews conducted with randomly chosen course participants nine months after the course ended. The questions throughout the interviews were the same, apart from one question related to each participant's final essay. The students were asked about the overall course perception, change in watching habits, intercultural aspects of the course and future suggestions.

Although the students were encouraged to share their perspectives without any fear of repercussions in the form of bad grades, it is important to acknowledge that my dual role as the main lecturer and the researcher could have potentially influenced students' opinions. To avoid such influence, students were continuously reminded throughout the course to be their authentic selves, and voice their own opinions no matter positive or negative.

Thematic analysis was used as a data analysis method. Thematic analysis of the final essays was deductive because it was driven by the theoretical concepts of film literacy and intercultural understanding. The aim of the case study was to test the pedagogical strategies for teaching film literacy from an intercultural perspective; thus, during the analysis, specific attention was paid to the places where students discussed their thoughts on the strategies, as well as the learning outcomes. The analysis also focused on semantic meanings that were on the surface in the dataset to minimise the level of interpretation. Two main themes that were produced—Film literacy skills outcomes and Intercultural understanding outcomes—the final names of which were finalised with the help from a peer review.

The findings helped in understanding which pedagogical strategies were the most impactful to achieve the development of film literacy skills and intercultural understanding.

3.2.2 Article II

The second publication concentrates on examining existing film literacy open educational resources from an intercultural perspective, here using five pedagogical practices from article I for the content analysis (Glotov, 2021). Open educational resources (OER) are defined as often digitised free materials available to teachers and learners to use and reuse for educational purposes (OECD, 2007; Atkins et. al., 2007). OERs grant access to more educational materials and resources, while also offering educational cost savings (Georgiadou & Kolaxizis, 2019).

The study focused on film literacy OERs available on IntoFilm.org, which is a website that supports teaching and learning about film across four nations in the UK. This website was chosen for several reasons: it is regularly updated, it offers a wide selection of OERs for different ages, and it provides many materials in English. It also allows for anyone outside of the UK to register and download the materials for free. Thus, I could access the OERs and analyse them without having to resort to translation.

The amount of the resources available on the website was approaching 1000 as of June 2022. These materials can be separated into three groups: film guides (OER about a specific film), topical material (OER about a certain topic on the example of many films) and filmmaking materials. Each group can be separated further by ages with groups: 5–7, 7–11, 11–14, 14–16 and 16+; however, often, the age groups are merged, for example, 5–11 or even all ages.

The study focused on the first category, film guides, because it is the largest group of OERs; also, the resources share the same goal (exploring key topics and themes of a film through informal discussion and activities), structure (synopsis of a film, prewatching discussion, discussion points, extension activities and watch next) and format (PPT, i.e., PowerPoint, or PDF files). The research data included 160 film guides published across several years for various age groups: 5–11 (60 OERs), 11–16 (60 OERs) and 16+ (40 OERs). The data included only textual OERs that were either PPT or PDF files in English. The OERs were selected in chronological order, starting from the earliest before then being downloaded and stored on the researcher's private computer.

The groups 5–11 and 11–16 include two smaller ones (the first one has 5–7 and 7–11, while the second has 11–14 and 14–16), which explains the larger number of OERs collected in these two groups compared with the latter one at 16+. This decision has been motivated by the website itself, which quite often combines the groups. Instead of excluding or separating them, I presented the larger groups for clarity reasons.

In total, 160 OERs were analysed using content analysis. Priori coding was based on the five pedagogical practices that resulted from article 1. These five categories were cultural exchange and dialogue; reflection of own culture; nature of filmmaking; diversity and inclusion; and global cultural and film context. Each OER was coded against these five practices in search for latent meanings because no OERs explicitly stated if they were or not intercultural in nature. The coding was done three times to minimise possible mistakes. The results showcased which aspects of intercultural education are the most prominent and most absent in different OERs for each age group.

3.2.3   Article III

The third article examines the state of participatory culture and politics on Russian TikTok in support of opposition politician Alexey Navalny during the COVID-19

pandemic (Glotov, 2022). The outbreak of the COVID-19 and ensuing lockdowns across the world happened in the middle of the present doctoral dissertation project. The article looks at how the pandemic increased the popularity of TikTok among the Russian people and how the app was transformed into a space for political expression following the arrest of Alexey Navalny in early January 2021.

TikTok is an audio-visual social media, where users upload their own short videos, accompanied by all types of music. The app had experienced a rapid growth in numbers of Russian users during the pandemic (Williamson, 2020; Iqbal, 2021). The lockdown, which started in Russia on March 30th, 2020, and lasted for six weeks, supported the active use of the internet and social media; however, there are other possible reasons for TikTok's popularity. For example, it offers a shot at internet fame, which can be encouraging, especially for people from far corners of such a vast country as Russia.

For a while, Russian TikTok was filled with typical content for the app: dances, pranks, reactions and memes. However, in January 2021, it changed, following the arrest of leading Russian opposition politician Alexey Navalny upon his arrival in Moscow from a recovery after a poison assassination attempt in Germany. The arrest of Navalny, who had a strong internet presence with millions of followers on Instagram and Twitter, became a highly publicised event. Soon, his team announced nationwide demonstrations in Navalny's support on January 23rd. These events were immediately referenced on TikTok, and several hashtags, such as #23january, started trending on the platform.

The article looks at political expression of Russian people on TikTok through the prism of participatory politics, which is a political dimension of participatory culture, when, as stated by Henry Jenkins (2009), people have opportunities to build communities, express themselves, collaborate and circulate information. Here, as an app, TikTok is designed to support participatory culture with various features for creating and exhibiting videos, as well as for reacting and communicating.

The research data consist of the 200 most popular TikTok videos based on the number of hearts (equal to likes) produced between January 17th—the return of Navalny—and February 4th—the suspension of the protests. The research focuses on two hashtags—#navalnylive and #23january—with 100 videos representing each. Three videos that used both hashtags were counted only once for #navalnylive because it was browsed the earliest. The hashtags were chosen for their popularity. In June 2021, when the study was conducted, videos with #navalnylive had a total of 104 million views, while those with #23january had 690.5 million views.

Out of the 200 videos, 191 were in support of Navalny, five were supportive of Putin's government, and the other four were not political, which excluded them from analysis. The data were analysed using the content analysis method. A priori coding was based on Joseph Kahne et al.'s (2015) five defying acts of participatory politics: investigation (collection and analysis of information); dialogue and feedback (discussion and engagement with others); circulation (sharing information with political impact); production (creation of original content); and mobilisation (rallying others to accomplish political goals). The coding was done twice to minimise possible mistakes when reporting the findings. The result was a table that documented how many videos were tied to each category and what type of acts of participatory politics were more and less common among Russian users.

3.2.4 Article IV

The final study investigates Finnish visual art schoolteachers and their own understanding and practices of intercultural film literacy education (Glotov, 2022). The research data consist of eight online semistructured interviews with professional visual art teachers in Finland. Data collection was done August–September 2021 at the beginning of the new school year in Finland. In total, 104 personal emails were sent to teachers across different Finnish and international schools (preprimary, basic and upper secondary education levels). The contact details were obtained from the schools' websites.

The email invitations had information about the research and its aims, methods and details about how the data would be collected, stored, analysed and reported. Additionally, the invitations informed that there would be no material compensation for participation. If a teacher expressed an interest, they were guided to reply to the researcher and to suggest appropriate time and suitable software for an interview.

Out of 104 emails sent, 14 emails received a reply. Six turned down the invitation for different personal or professional reasons, while eight teachers agreed to be interviewed. Each interview was done in a one-on-one fashion between me and the teacher, and each teacher was interviewed only once. All the interviews were done online and lasted for 30 minutes, excluding small talk. All the interviews were recorded with the participants' permissions, and verbal consent was obtained from each participant.

During the interviews, the teachers were asked to share examples of intercultural education and film literacy education in their schools, to discuss how they integrate

intercultural education into film literacy, to describe any challenges that they have encountered while promoting intercultural film literacy education and to give suggestions on how intercultural film literacy can impact students' media use and understanding of media content.

Six participants were from Southern Finland (that includes the capital area), while two were from Northern Finland. There were four women, three men and one person who preferred not to disclose their gender. Years of teaching experience ranged from 3 to 28. Also, six participants were native Finns, while two came from foreign countries. Finally, four teachers worked in high school, two in preschool and one for each of junior high school and junior high school/high school. Thus, although small, the interviewed group represents teachers with different professional and personal backgrounds.

The collected interviews were transcribed and analysed using a thematic analysis method. The researcher adopted inductive coding, meaning that the coding process was driven by the data. It took almost two months to complete the coding because, following the initial coding, I gave some distance to the developing analysis before returning and doing it again. The coding words were added to a separate Microsoft Word document where, later, they were manually assigned to categories. These categories were refined and eventually became the themes. After reviewing them, three themes were produced: lack of cultural representation in teaching materials; inclusion of LGBTQ+ culture; and development of critical thinking.

4 FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of findings from all four publications included in the current doctoral dissertation. The chapter opens by answering one of the subquestions—*How is intercultural film literacy education understood in practice?*—based article 3 (TikTok Political Participation Supporting Alexey Navalny During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Russia) and article 4 (Intercultural Film Literacy Education against Cultural Misrepresentation. Visual Art Teachers' Perspective). This is followed by the discussion on the second subquestion: *How can film literacy educational resources promote cultural representation?* To explore this, I look at the findings from article 2 (Intercultural Film Education Online) and article 4. Finally, the chapter will outline the findings for the main research question: *How film literacy can be supported by intercultural dialogue?* with the help from the findings of article 1 (Teaching Intercultural Film Literacy), 3 and 4.

Overall, the findings reveal a new understanding of intercultural film literacy education based on broadening the concepts of intercultural education and film literacy, as well as the current state of cultural representation in existing teaching resources.

4.1 Representation in Intercultural Film Literacy Education

In Chapter 2, I discussed intercultural film literacy education by looking separately at intercultural education and film literacy based on the literature and then by developing a link between these two concepts. The current research revealed how intercultural film literacy education is understood by actual education professionals. This subchapter discusses these findings and, based on articles 3 and 4, answers the following subquestion: *How is intercultural film literacy education understood in practice?*

4.1.1   Intercultural Film Literacy Education with LGBTQ+ Voices

The interviews with visual art teachers for article 4 revealed that, from their point of view, intercultural film literacy education should go beyond national borders and include the voices of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and other gender nonconforming, nonbinary) people. Half of the teachers interviewed for article 4 advocated for such inclusion to promote diversity, tolerance, acceptance and understanding; however, they noted that available educational resources are largely heteronormative and do not support cultural representation of LGBTQ+ people.

One of the teachers focused on LGBTQ+ people by discussing various sexual orientations, encouraging students' gender expression and showcasing support for Pride-month activities. Two other pedagogues aimed to provide more lessons that could create a welcoming and supportive environment for transyouth, with an aim of assisting them in finding and shaping their own identity and sense of belonging. The teachers' focus on transyouth is significant in the Finnish context and can be motivated by it, since in Finland transgender people are still being forced to undergo sterilisation before acquiring legal gender recognition, despite Finland being an advanced democracy that supports LGBTQ+ rights.

So far, there is limited scholarship on the inclusion of LGBTQ+ voices into intercultural education, despite many topics in intercultural education touching upon sexualities, such as families, political opinions and hobbies (Dervin, 2015). LGBTQ+ people continue to be discriminated against, silenced and isolated, which is especially difficult for younger people, who are only beginning to form their social, sexual and gender identities (Sherriff et al., 2011).

Rita Betro (2014) recognises intercultural education as one of several possibilities for creating a welcoming school environment, to challenge dominating heteronormativity and to affect existing discrimination by emphasising the need for giving a platform to those who were previously silenced. Cerezo and Bergfeld (2013) suggest increasing the LGBTQ+ representation of students and staff, with the potential to make LGBTQ+ lived experiences a part of a school culture and policies.

The interviewed teachers stated that they try to include LGBTQ+ voices into intercultural education; however, as showcased by Harris et al. (2021), what teachers perceive as supportive of LGBTQ+ people might not actually be helpful for students. Harris et al. (2021) suggest to increase the encounters with relevant role models both for LGBTQ+ and heterosexual students, thus assisting the first ones in developing their sense of identity and helping the latter to see LGBTQ+ issues as normal.

The development of own identity and normalisation of LGBTQ+ issues can be also done in visual art classes through expanding the number of queer media and discussing the representation of LGBTQ+ people in it. At the same time, teachers need more guidelines, training and educational resources that would assist them in these activities and increase the cultural representation of LGBTQ+ people. Also, teachers would need support when dealing with some religious members who might oppose the inclusion of LGBTQ+ issues into education (DePalma & Jennett, 2010; Betro, 2014).

Although all four teachers who discussed the inclusion of LGBTQ+ voices into intercultural film literacy education did not mention any resistance against their actions, there is a possibility that religion might affect such advancement, given that it is already influencing the way the visual art teachers work. Two of the interviewed teachers discussed how some parents asked to limit their youngsters' exposure to film, television and music for religious reasons. As one teacher said, it is a challenging situation without a clear solution.

All in all, the teachers recognised the importance of including LGBTQ+ voices in intercultural film literacy education, which is one of the necessary steps to include the political into intercultural education on the practical level. However, their efforts were small and individual, and as previous research has suggested, the change can only happen when educational experts provide supportive guidelines and materials for schoolteachers, while the schools themselves need to increase LGBTQ+ representation in both the teaching and learning processes.

4.1.2   Intercultural Film Literacy Education towards Social Media

The findings of articles 3 and 4 showcase the role audio-visual social media play in students' lives from consuming various types of content to voicing their own political opinions. Hence, the results suggest that intercultural film literacy education needs to be broadened towards audio-visual social media to encourage critical thinking and stimulate students' agency.

Already, in the late 2000s, media education researchers acknowledged how the rapid pace of technological advancement shifted the lines between what is public and private (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). Fast and accessible internet, powerful portable mobile devices and a variety of popular applications stimulated the rise of 'produsing' people that both consume and produce the content (van Dijck, 2013). The COVID-

19 pandemic only increased the time spent online (Lemenager et al., 2021), and especially boosted were the number of TikTok users (Su et al., 2020).

Article 3 focused on TikTok and showcased how the people in Russia use the app to broadcast own political opinions, to encourage protests and, overall, to be a part of participatory politics, which is a political dimension of participatory culture (Jenkins, 2012) that can be defined by social connection, strong support for creating by oneself and with others and low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement (Jenkins, 2009).

TikTok supports participatory culture through creative and artistic production of content by the in-app video editor, as well as through various guidelines. The duet function allows users to coproduce or react to certain videos with one user broadcasting their own video next to the other one. It also develops social connection through the hearts (similar to likes) and comments section, while the autoplay feed 'For You' supports intrapersonal connection that is algorithmically determined and uniquely tailored to each user's interest content (Bhandari & Bimo, 2020; Vijay & Gekker, 2021).

The results of article 3 describe the ways Russian users engaged in participatory politics on TikTok in support of Alexey Navalny. One of such ways was the act of investigation, which describes the collection and analysis of information (Kahne et al., 2015). The users collected information on Navalny's political activities and presented them with pictures and music; they provided examples of corruption and lies of Russian politicians and questioned the truthfulness of official statements on protests and protestors. However, none of these videos (19 or 9% of the collected 195) provided any sources yet presented all the information as factual.

The most common act of participatory politics was the circulation of relevant information, for example, videos from protests, footage of Navalny in court, during old interviews, or with his wife, Yuliya, as well as snippets of his investigations. By doing so, Russian TikTok users were engaged in representation. First, they represented the protests as large events that were violently suppressed by police, which was opposite to official media coverage. Second, by selecting specific clips of Navalny, they represented him as a truth-telling politician and a loving husband. However, as the article concludes, this representation is a simplified version of Navalny's political agenda and personal life, one reduced to few characteristics to distribute it quicker and broader. Kahne et al. (2016) warns of such simplification because it strips down any of the nuances of an issue to the point of misrepresenting it.

Moreover, the article notes that, when discussing TikTok, it is necessary to acknowledge the role recommendation algorithms play in content consumption. First, TikTok's algorithms create a seemingly endless 'For You' feed, one of the purposes of which is to keep users staying longer on the app and consuming more content. Second, this tailored feed to each user based on their preferences, limits their exposure to other types of content and creates filter or information bubbles (Pentina & Tarafdar, 2014). Although the article's results reveal videos aimed at encouraging people to participate in protest, the question is if any of those videos found its target audience.

Overall, the article showcases the significant role audio-visual social media plays in people's lives. Apart from being a source of entertainment and artistic expression, TikTok can be also used for circulation of political information and for mobilising others and broadcasting political thoughts and opinions. However, these actions create a potential for misrepresentation, with the app's recommendation algorithms limiting the sources of content. All of these aspects highlight the importance of including social media into intercultural film literacy education and supporting critical thinking towards one's own social media consumption.

TikTok was also referenced by one of the visual art teachers interviewed for article 4, who discussed the practices of implementing the app into intercultural film literacy education, especially during the lockdown in 2020, when students could use it to produce videos. This teacher also expressed worries regarding the spread of deepfakes (when a video is manipulated to replace a person by someone else, thus completely misrepresenting them), highlighting the importance of developing a critical attitude towards social media consumption.

Two more teachers discussed the use of YouTube, another audio-visual social media. They found themselves often including it into education because students are already accustomed to YouTube videos and watch them daily on their own. One of the preschool teachers described a small conflict that included mocking a student for eating using hands, as the child was accustomed to in their culture. After explaining why laughing at eating with hands is wrong, the teacher showed a YouTube video that presents different ways various cultures consume food and then later discussed it. Hence, a YouTube video was used to promote an intercultural exchange.

Overall, the findings from articles 3 and 4 showcase that audio-visual social media play a big role in a way people's lives, while offering entertainment, education and a place for political expression. The teachers who participated in this study already were using such media in education, assisting in supporting intercultural dialogue and promoting critical awareness of their own media consumption.

4.2 Cultural (Mis)representation in Film Literacy Resources

This research has two studies that enable a discussion of the current state of cultural representation in existing educational resources. The first study is article 2, which directly focuses on 160 film literacy OERs and performs a content analysis of them from an intercultural perspective. The second study is article 4, which is based on the interviews with visual art teachers who share their understanding and practices of intercultural film literacy education. Among the three themes that were produced during the thematic analysis of the interviews was one that offered teachers' perspectives on cultural representation in existing resources. This subchapter presents the combined findings of these two studies and answers the following question: *How can film literacy educational resources promote cultural representation?*

As article 4 showcases, Finnish visual art schoolteachers recognised the importance of cultural representation; however, they stated that the teaching resources available to them largely lack the discussion of cultural representation because they do not support the inclusion of LGBTQ+ voices and occasionally reproduce cultural misrepresentation via stereotypes. For example, one teacher recalled the case when one of the resources had an outdated representation of Native Americans, which resulted in a complaint from students.

The teachers emphasised that the resources seem to be largely heteronormative, made by White people about White people, which significantly limits discussion on cultural representation. On top of this, the teachers made note of how challenging and time-consuming it is to find suitable resources and then adapt them to the classroom, especially when working with preschool students.

A teacher with 28 years of experience described their own efforts to increase cultural representation but remarked that it is a challenging task, here considering the lack of accessible materials and their outdated nature. Similar statements were provided by most interviewed teachers, who noticed not only the lack of resources that support cultural representation, but also the gargantuan effort it takes to find suitable resources, review and adapt them for the inclusive teaching that promotes cultural awareness and dialogue.

However, the research for article 2 showcased that there are existing film literacy resources that promote cultural representation, though they are available in English. In the article, 160 film literacy OERs within three age groups (5–11, 11–16 and 16+) on the British website IntoFilm.org were analysed from the intercultural perspective. Among various aspects that were discussed in the article, one was directly linked to cultural representation. The analysed OERs discuss cultures and their representation

if a) one of the main characters has roots in another culture or b) a big part of the action happens in a foreign setting. For example, the animated film *The Breadwinner* (2017) follows an Afghan girl searching for her father as she takes care of her family. An OER based on *The Breadwinner* prompts students to discuss how Afghan culture is established in the film from narrative and visual perspectives.

An OER for a documentary film *Your Turn* (2019) that depicts the student protest movement in modern Brazil inspires students to research of Brazilian society and its people, to look at how their voices are represented in the film and to analyse how the film's visuals (shaky camera, front-line filmmaking) affect audiences' perceptions and viewing experiences. Such OERs include the political into discussions of different cultures, suggesting students research more about the topical issues and familiarise themselves with it.

IntoFilm's OERs encourage students to research cultures portrayed in historical films, for example, an OER for the British political satire *Death of Stalin* (2017) asks students to discuss how the film introduces the postwar period of the 1950s in the Soviet Union and how it portrays the country and its people. In addition to discussing foreign cultures, the OERs stimulate critical reflection on representation of cultures that exist within the UK. For example, an OER for the film *Paddington* (2014) introduces the main character, who is a talking bear from Peru, navigating London. This OER puts students into the main character's shoes to look at cultures in the UK from the eyes of the Other. Another OER for the film *Wonder Woman* (2017) suggests discussing gender roles and inequalities of twentieth-century London that the main protagonist (the outsider from a different culture) observes and experiences.

The OERs for the youngest group discuss cultural representation in a slightly different manner affected by the films themselves. Because films that are aimed at children quite often feature talking animals and fictional cultures, the OERs cannot connect those to existing cultures. Nevertheless, they still support discussions on characters and settings representation within the films. An OER for the film *Zootropolis* (often also titled as *Zootopia*) (2016) introduces the idea of cultural stereotypes using the example of animals. The characters that populate Zootropolis behave differently from our expectations of them; for example, the main character is a rabbit, who, contrary to popular beliefs, is brave and fearless. The OER asks students to design their own characters for Zootropolis and consider how they would behave. Such a task, as well as the discussion surrounding it, provides an understanding that one cannot be defined by the stereotypes about them and that

each character, as well as their cultures (or in case of the Zootropolis species) are unique, which contributes to the overall diversity of society.

However, as article 2 states, the number of OERs discussing cultural representations is not particularly high across all the age groups. There are cases when an OER looks at a film that introduces a certain culture but only encourages students to research more about it instead of additionally analysing how it is represented in a film. This is the case for an OER about *Berlin '36* (2009), which tells the story of Jewish track and field athlete leading to the Olympic Games in 1936. Instead of provoking the discussion of the representation of Jewish people or German people within the film, an OER only suggests researching the 1936 Olympic Games.

Another moment is that most films that are discussed in the OERs are in English and produced by or coproduced with the UK and US. Such focus is understandable with IntoFilm being a British website aimed towards British schools. However, it could be beneficial to expose students to more of the foreign cinema. Overall, although there is a room for improvement, existing OERs promote cultural representation in films and offer discussions and activities across all ages of schoolchildren.

Although article 2 suggests that there are educational resources that address cultural representation, teachers from around the world might have difficulties in accessing them. First, they are not familiar with the various online platforms that provide educational resources. Second, there is the issue of the language barrier. Most OERs are in English, which excludes people who do not speak it well enough, thus preventing them from realising the full potential of an OER (Amiel, 2013; Cobo, 2013).

As Richter and McPherson (2012) state, '*OER will be of value for learners only if they fit the learners' own context and are thus genuinely reusable or at least fully adaptable*' (p. 202). Hence, language barrier issues can be overcome by not only simply translating OERs, but also by considering and incorporating cultural and educational context. Richter and McPherson (2012) also propose creating short abstracts that can allow teachers to quickly understand if an OER matches their needs.

All in all, this research paints a contrasting picture. On the one hand, there are Finnish visual art teachers, whose pedagogical practices of emphasising cultural representation and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ voices do not correspond with the available resources, which have been accused of outdated cultural misrepresentation. On the other hand, there are film literacy resources that address cultural representation and inspire conversations about how a culture is portrayed within a

film, in addition to discussing the said culture in general. The barrier between the two can be transformed into a bridge by improving teachers' familiarity with various educational platforms and developing the resources that consider possible language, cultural and educational contexts.

4.3   Integrating Film Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue

This subchapter answers the main research question*: How can film literacy be supported by intercultural dialogue?* It uses the results of article 1 and relies on findings of articles 3 and 4 to provide a theoretical outline for an intercultural film literacy education framework that uses intercultural dialogue to support the development of film literacy.

Article 1 is based on a case study of an international film survey degree course in a university setting. One of the tasks that students had to participate in was the seminar, for which they were asked to prepare a short presentation about anything related to their own film cultures. The aim of the seminar was to provide time and space for students to engage in intercultural dialogue. Each presentation was followed by a discussion moderated by the teacher to stimulate more questions, comments and general information exchange. In the end, almost all the students had reported that they experienced cultural exchange and broadened their knowledge and understanding of other cultures, largely because of the seminar.

In their final reflective essays, which were the primary research data, the students mentioned the excitement they felt when getting a sense of global film production and discovering local customs and traditions. One student compared the seminar with a trip around the world, while another highlighted own interest in discovering differences and similarities between various cultures. Apart from the seminar, the students also complimented constant discussions and group tasks that featured members of different cultures, thus facilitating open dialogue and cultural exchange. Eventually, some students clearly described the development of an intercultural understanding in their final essays.

The inclusion of intercultural dialogue into the film literacy course helped students not only broaden their perspective on various cultures, but also to appreciate and learn more about their own culture. For example, a Mexican student described a sense of happiness seeing Mexican films and filmmakers being recognised internationally. A Czech student learned more about the country's film

history, while a Malaysian student reported that the most important thing for them was a developed appreciation for their own film culture.

Several students mentioned how they felt responsible for representing their own culture and, thus, put an effort into their research and presentation, which eventually resulted in a growing sense of pride and appreciation. The students were able to recognise themselves as cultural representatives and combine personal knowledge and experience with broader traditions and customs of their own cultures.

With Hollywood continuing its world dominance in distributing and exhibiting their films and series, it is important to recognise national film industries, learn their histories and develop a sense of appreciation for them. Here, intercultural education has the power to do so. It inspires open dialogue between different culture representatives, who not only broaden their understanding of other cultures, but also reflect on their own cultures, potentially developing a sense of appreciation for something that a person might not have noticed before.

Overall, an understanding of one's own culture is intertwined with intercultural education and serves as a starting point for intercultural dialogue. Although it can promote appreciation for one's own culture, it can also help to critically reflect on its values, beliefs and traditions when discussing it with the Other and taking on their perspective.

When conceptualising film literacy, the current research centred on the neoformalism approach with its attention to historical and cultural contexts to link film literacy to intercultural education. Article 1 describes how intercultural dialogue was used to strengthen the neoformalism approach to film literacy in practice, concluding that it assisted students to both develop intercultural competence and improve film literacy skills.

The article offers an example from the lecture on film history when discussing the German Expressionist movement of the 1920s. Apart from introducing its stylistic and formal conventions, as well as analysing key works of the movement, we examined how the sociopolitical and economic climate of the Weimar Republic influenced the Germans' worldview at the time, while referencing the proposition of Lotte Eisner (2008) that German people are predisposed to daydreaming and contemplations on mysticism and magic. Then, because the classroom had two German students, they were asked to share personal views on this statement, as well as on the movement's place in the country's history and film tradition.

The findings from articles 3 and 4 stimulate a broader neoformalism approach from films towards audio-visual social media and recommendation algorithms. Social media videos also exist within historical and cultural context. Recent years saw

a rise of independent channels that create videos from leftist and/or socialist perspectives, often as a response to alt-right use of digital media (Kuznetsov & Ismangil, 2020). This development is closely connected to Donald Trump's presidency and escalated right wing rhetoric both online and offline (Mniestri & Gekker, 2020). At the same time, as article 3 illustrates, the change in Russian TikTok's landscape was motivated by political conflicts and the fact that social media is one of the few available resources to voice one's political opinion in Russia.

Therefore, looking at the videos on social media is also looking at the historical and cultural context they are produced in. Intercultural dialogue can stimulate an understanding of different trends on social media, as well as the way they are manifested. It can also introduce people to national audio-visual social media, such as VKontakte in Russia, Kakao Story in South Korea or Kuaishou in China, to name but a few. At the same time, it can promote a critical evaluation and reflection of one's own media use.

Understanding one's own media consumption promotes critical thinking towards the consumed content, while understanding one's own culture is necessary for intercultural education. The current research has shown that both can be used to support and promote intercultural dialogue in film literacy education.

5   DISCUSSION

This chapter further discusses the answer to the main research question: *How can film literacy be supported by intercultural dialogue?* First, it explores the role of recommendation algorithms for intercultural film literacy education, which is brought up through articles 3 and 4. Next, the chapter discusses how film literacy supported by intercultural dialogue can combat cultural misrepresentation in audio-visual media. It also emphasises the importance of promoting such education from an early age, recognising how much of children's animation rely on cultural stereotypes and symbolic annihilation (Klein & Shiffman, 2006). The chapter uses Hummelstedt et al.'s (2021) ideas for supporting teachers in intercultural education to discuss the potential of intercultural film literacy education and its possible outcomes. Finally, the chapter ends by drafting practical solutions for intercultural film literacy education, while updating the theoretical background of neoformalism.

5.1   The Role of Recommendation Algorithms

The findings from articles 3 and 4 showcase that audio-visual social media such as TikTok should be included into intercultural film literacy education because these apps enjoy a significant presence in people's lives, with them being designed to support active participation. This inclusion is already practised by some of the interviewed teachers. One pedagogue talked about organising a filming class based around TikTok, while two others discussed how often they use YouTube in their teaching, showcasing both educational and entertaining videos. All in all, as the findings clearly state, there is a place for social media in intercultural film literacy education.

The expansion of intercultural film literacy education towards social media inspires the discussion on the role of recommendation algorithms that shape online media consumption. Although article 3 examines the ways of engaging in participatory politics, it acknowledges the difficulty in measuring their actual impact on TikTok users because the users are unlikely to be exposed to anti-Navalny

content if they engage with pro-Navalny videos and vice versa. This is because recommendation algorithms create filter bubbles that limit one's exposure to alternative perspectives and sources of information (Conroy et al., 2012; Kahne et al., 2016).

The recent study by Hussein et al. (2020) showcases that social media, such as YouTube, attempt to tackle the role of algorithms in encircling users with similar content; however, this action is done selectively. For example, users who consume 9/11 conspiracy videos will be limited to comparable content, while users who watch videos about flat earth will not (Hussein et al., 2020). Thus, although there are certain harmful topics exempted from recommendation algorithms, they continue to surround users with similar content that users engage with even if it largely misrepresents the reality.

Algorithms surround us and assist in our everyday internet browsing experience, and each day, our lives become more interconnected with them (Koenig, 2020). The growing concern over the impact of algorithms on internet users has resulted in calls for the development of a critical understanding towards the role of algorithms and the expansion of literacy practices, here with focus on how algorithms shape the information and entertainment we receive (Hobbs, 2020). Film literacy needs to be broadened to include discussions on the role of algorithms not only because of such calls or the inclusion of audio-visual social media, as previously discussed, but also because of the changes in films' exhibition models brought by online streaming services.

There are two types of film exhibition: theatrical and nontheatrical (Bordwell et al., 2017). Online streaming services belong to the latter; however, in contrast to other nontheatrical modes, such as home video or cable, they offer an ever-expanding buffet of content only a few clicks away. Recommendation algorithms help users to navigate through the rich archive of films, shows and series while simultaneously encouraging them to spend more time on a streaming service (Rodríguez Ortega, 2022). The growing number of streaming services further accelerates the importance of algorithms because, as studies have shown, users will abandon the service if they fail to find something interesting within 60 to 90 seconds of choosing (Gomez-Uribe & Hunt, 2015). Hence, unless algorithms recommend suitable content fast, a streaming service risks losing its customers to a growing number of competitors.

One major streaming service is Netflix, which offers a multitude of existing and original content that targets both local and global markets (Rodríguez Ortega, 2022). Netflix's recommendation algorithms rely on a collaborative filter approach

(Pajkovic, 2021), which uses a user's information (rating, location and preferences) to first select other users or neighbours with similar preferences before then suggesting an item based on the preferences of neighbours (Choi et al., 2012). As Pajkovic's (2021) experiment showcases, in just a few days, Netflix algorithms recognise patterns of users' behaviour and recommend them as suitable content; however, the algorithms struggle when the user's data are chaotic and do not result in a clear set of preferences.

In recent years, Netflix's algorithms have been called out for misrepresenting the content as well. Gaw (2021) provides two such examples: one involves racial targeting of Black Americans when the artwork promoting Netflix content featured minor Black characters in titles with a predominantly White cast, and another describes how the sequence of episodes in one show was based on perceived sexual orientations of users, with queer audiences getting a lesbian episode first while straight viewers started with a heteronormative episode. In doing so, Netflix creates an illusion of larger representation when it only fosters misrepresentation, giving wrong ideas about the content.

All in all, recommendation algorithms are largely present in our lives and dictate which audio-visual content we consume on social media and streaming services. The broadening of intercultural film literacy education towards the discussion on the role of algorithms has the potential to assist students in considering their own levels of agency when making media choices (Dezuanni, 2021) and to help them become active and autonomous citizens by being reflexive and critical of their own interactions with recommendation algorithms (Jacques et al., 2020).

5.2   Combating Cultural Misrepresentation

Previously, it has been established that cultural misrepresentation takes shape in cultural stereotypes. Plenty of audio-visual media rely on these stereotypes to reach wider audiences, communicate information quickly and provoke some emotional response, for example, laughter or fear. Cultural stereotypes present a simplified version of a culture, focusing only on the most memorable characteristics and reducing everything towards them. Although it would be challenging to completely eradicate cultural stereotypes, it is possible to develop a critical attitude towards them and stimulate a reflection on their usage.

Intercultural film literacy education has the potential to combat the use of cultural stereotypes because it focuses on cultures in their complexity and encourages critical

analysis of how cultures are represented in a certain media. Thus, when a certain culture is portrayed in a film, a teacher can stimulate not only the in-depth discussion about said culture with references to people representing it, as well as their views and experiences, but also the critical reflection on how the culture is showcased in a film from narrative and audio-visual perspectives (e.g., is the character hero or villain, what kind of items exist in the character's space, how the lighting, editing, cinematography or sound affect our understanding of the character).

Although the examples of cultural misrepresentation in audio-visual media provided in the Introduction section are centred around media for an adult audience, there is also a need to recognise cultural misrepresentation that happens in children's media, for example, in animated series. Children consume content in a repeated and frequent way (Klein & Shiffman, 2009), sometimes watching a specific show, film, or an episode repeatedly. This repetition, as well as the lack of cognitive ability to evaluate the use of stereotypes (Katz, 1976), may result in children viewing misrepresentation as normal. As Keys (2016) states, children construct their identities and sense of gender, race and class through animation, so it serves as a form of cultural pedagogy that teaches children how to conform to the dominant system of norms and values.

Animated films offer children the opportunities to dream and fantasise while offering an antidote from boredom and brutality of everyday life; however, these dreams are generated by someone in power and promote their values, write Henry Giroux and Grace Pollock (2010) as they discuss the role of Walt Disney Studios in producing children's media. Another point is that older animated films are continuously broadcasted and rerun (Klein & Shiffman, 2006) on television and nowadays on streaming services, presenting the values and norms of the past without any critical framing.

To illustrate this, I grew up in the late 1990s and early 2000s in Saint-Petersburg, Russia, and one of my most watched animated series was the *Scooby-Doo Show,* which was produced and released in the US from 1976 to 1978. Similar to other popular media of the time, as well as to the original animated series with Scooby-Doo character released in 1969, that show perpetuated White supremacy (Leonard, 2020). The series used plenty of cultural stereotypes, as well as misrepresented the US as a monolithically White nation because the cast barely included any people of colour; however, at the time, I lacked critical perception and constructed my idea of the US, partly based on that cartoon.

However, animation can go further than cultural misrepresentation; as Klein and Shiffman (2006) conclude, it can be found guilty of symbolic annihilation, meaning

that by presenting certain characters at the expense of others or by never even showing them, the media reflects and reinforces social values of the preferability of some groups over others. Symbolic annihilation happens when the media ignores and excludes minorities or presents them from a one-sided perspective. Hence, symbolic annihilation is about underrepresentation (Klein & Shiffman, 2009). To return to the example of the *Scooby-Doo Show*, it misrepresented the US in part by underrepresenting cultural minorities.

In a way, underrepresentation is a side effect of misrepresentation because, by relying on stereotypes, the media refuses to broaden the portrayal of various minorities and present them in their diversity (Merskin, 1998). If viewers never or rarely see LGBTQ+ characters that are not flamboyant, they may start believing that such people do not exist (Klein & Shiffman, 2006). This highlights the importance of addressing cultural stereotypes in audio-visual media, here by developing a critical attitude towards the use of stereotypes and emphasising the global diversity and complexity of the human world to combat cultural underrepresentation. And intercultural film literacy education, with its emphasis on cultural diversity in the world and in films, has the potential to achieve this.

All in all, it is necessary to begin developing a critical outlook towards cultural representation in audio-visual media already at the school level. The interviewed teachers for article 4 recognise the importance of fostering critical skills and emphasise their goals to make students understand how information and audiences can both be manipulated. However, the teachers state that these efforts are largely individual and require a lot of preparation. Although it is easy to tell teachers what to do, it is more challenging to provide actual practical solutions that would be suitable in their work.

Hummelstedt et al. (2021) showcase the difficulties of incorporating intercultural education in a six-grade Finnish classroom and present how gender, race and nationality intersect in the teaching/learning process. During the observed classes, some White boys continuously categorised others to maintain or achieve status, fostering the notion of Finland as a homogeneous and ethnically Finnish country, with Russian or Somali pupils seen as potential invaders. At the same time, they commented on girls and controlled what is appropriate for them, even though some girls demonstrated resistance towards it. Regardless, the classroom teacher did not challenge how Finnishness is understood in a class in close connection to whiteness but legitimised the use of migrants and Finns as separate groups (Hummelstedt et al., 2021).

Hummelstedt et al. (2021) conclude that teachers require a) insights into manifestation of othering and normativity, b) understanding how processes of gender, sexuality, race, nationality, class and ability operate within society and school and c) the realisation that most fixed and commonly used categories, such as, Finnish, are the ones that need to be broadened and deconstructed to challenge a hegemonic order. These requirements are challenging, and much work is required to address them; however, it is my belief that intercultural film literacy education, with its reliance on intercultural dialogue and a critical view of audio-visual media, might be one of the helpful tools for promoting such activities.

Intercultural film literacy education encourages examining the representation of otherness in audio-visual media and challenges normativity as dictated by those in power. Film can build an empathic connection between its characters and the audience, which can be used to diffuse the barriers between the Self and Other. It can also inspire critical reflection about how the Other is represented in a film and examine the reasons for it, no matter if the representation is positive or degrading.

Intercultural film literacy education allows for a reflective look at the influence of gender, sexuality, race and other norms on audio-visual media production and reception because it views a media product within specific historical and cultural context. How many names of women can one spot in credits for Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937)? Why is there a trope of male characters vomiting when other characters come out as transgender, as seen in the critically acclaimed *The Crying Game* (1992)? How come only one Black woman has won an Academy Awards for the best leading actress? These questions are uncomfortable and complicated, but as established in Chapter 2, it is necessary to ask and critically discuss them to have an impactful education.

Finally, intercultural film literacy education has the potential to challenge the commonly used categories such as Finnish or any other of the same nature and to examine them in oneself and in audio-visual media. Both intercultural dialogue and critical analysis of cultural representation stimulate deconstruction and re-examining of the fixed cultural categories and present culture as a complicated, nuanced, layered and ever-evolving phenomenon that relates differently to everyone.

Overall, intercultural film literacy education can be used to combat fixed, stereotypical and far-removed-from-reality categories of culture and their manifestations in different forms of audio-visual media, including film, television and social media. Although it cannot eliminate those categories of cultural misrepresentation or replace them, it can stimulate critical examination, reflection and deconstruction with references to power inequalities and global hierarchies.

5.3   Intercultural Film Literacy Education Solutions

This subchapter presents theoretical and practical solutions for teaching intercultural film literacy education by using the results from all the studies included in the current doctoral dissertation, as well as the discussion on the neoformalism approach for film literacy, the role of algorithms, and cultural misrepresentation.

5.3.1   Neoformalism Approach for Film Literacy

The course described in article 1 was structured around a neoformalism approach. Apart from the seminar and introduction to film production, the course had five lectures based on the key concepts of neoformalism. The first lecture was titled 'Film History' and provided an overview of film's evolution in countries around the world, emphasising changes in production and consumption of films. The second lecture, 'Film Form', discussed narrative, plot and story, as well as investigated conventions of various genres. The third lecture, 'Film Style', centred around visual devices of film from mise-en-scène to cinematography to editing. The fourth lecture, 'Film Sound', discussed dimensions of sound, its function, motivation and artificial construction. The final lecture, titled 'Film Analysis', introduced students to various ways of film evaluation, as well as to the four meanings.

Because neoformalism understands the film by looking into the relations between various devices, it can be taken a step further from just films towards audio-visual social media. Social media offers new context for familiar objects or ideas, thus supporting the key concept of neoformalism—defamiliarisation (discussed in detail in Chapter 2). Social media videos also use similar devices as films: cinematography, editing, shot composition and sounds; however, their relations vary. For example, sound plays a fundamental role in TikTok, often supporting the construction of meaning. Also, many users can use the same remix, thus creating a sense of connection between each other that is central to participatory culture. For example, many TikTok videos collected for article 3 used few similar tracks, which could have fostered users' political expression and mutual solidarity.

Neoformalism also allows us to understand the Netflix recommendation system as a film device. The artwork that Netflix changes based on what algorithms perceive as users' preferences challenges audiences' preconceptions of the art itself. Pajkovic (2021) shows how a series about teenagers looking for a legendary treasure was advertised with an action artwork of two surfers for a user who mostly watched

sports-related content, while a user who preferred romantic films had an artwork with a kiss. Thus, users can assume the series to be something it is not, which has potential to affect their engagement with the content.

Overall, the neoformalism approach provides an outline for teaching film literacy focusing on films' devices while highlighting the importance of historical and cultural context, which is important for intercultural education. Neoformalism does not rob the audience or filmmakers of their agency, instead viewing each film as a unique art object. It provides the theoretical background for using audio-visual media in intercultural film literacy education.

5.3.2 Six Practical Solutions

There are six major strategies: inspiring cultural exchange and dialogue; reflecting on one's own culture; analysing cultural representation; discussing the nature of filmmaking; embracing global cultural context; and discussing the role of algorithms. Each strategy is described by giving its aim and presenting possible practices.

1. Inspiring Cultural Exchange and Dialogue

This strategy calls for the stimulation of mutually respectful and open cultural exchange and dialogue. It includes various discussions, activities and group tasks in which students of various cultural backgrounds can communicate their experiences with others. Films, especially foreign ones, can be used as a tool to inspire cultural dialogue, even if the classroom lacks the representativeness of the portrayed culture. In such a case, a teacher can inspire students to search for information on the internet or in the libraries, for example, by looking into how a certain film was received in the countries it portrayed and the countries it was produced in.

When discussing film exhibition, a teacher can provoke a discussion on different ways various cultures consume films. Is dubbing more prominent than subtitles? Are the movies censored in any way? Are there any film festivals and how popular are they? Another approach is to organise pre- and postscreening discussions based around certain cultures or people portrayed in the film. Before the screening, a teacher can ask students to share what they know about a specific culture; then, after the screening, a discussion can commence on how a film reinforced, challenged, enriched the students' prior knowledge.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the inclusion of the political into intercultural dialogue. IntoFilm's OERs showcase how films can be used to discuss

complex topics of gender, class inequalities, and racism. This research also highlights the need to support LGBTQ+ voices in intercultural education. Different films can support critical discussions on such topics, highlighting how various power structures in place affect our lives while focusing on the need to challenge this.

If using TikTok, a teacher can encourage students to create duets with each other based on a cultural exchange. Or students can critically reflect on cultural representation through the eyes of YouTube vloggers. Finally, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, a teacher can rely on personal experience to begin or stimulate cultural exchange and dialogue.

2. Reflecting on One's Own Culture

This strategy's goal is to encourage critical reflection of self and one's own culture, see it from the perspective of the Other, as well as discover more about that culture. One of the ways to promote a reflection of one's own culture is to organise a seminar on film cultures. The seminar can be based around short visual students' presentations on different topics of their choice related to one's own film culture. Students can discuss major figures, genres, trends and movements or provide a historical overview. The important moment is them choosing what to present. At the same time, a teacher needs to ease the stress from representing their own culture by explicitly stating that the seminar does not have a goal of objective, correct and truthful representation; instead, it welcomes students' own personal perspectives.

Additionally, students should not be limited to discussing media separately from larger social, political, economic and historical contexts. In the seminar done during the research for article 1, an American student discussed gender inequalities in Hollywood, while a Polish student focused on comedies produced during the communist period and how the political ideology affected the films.

A presentation can last from 5 to 10 minutes and be followed up by a discussion, as moderated by the teacher. In preparation for the seminar, a teacher needs to familiarise themselves with some aspects, traditions, norms and values of the cultures represented in the classroom as a way to assist students in presentation and discussion, hence fostering intercultural dialogue. The focus of the seminar is not only highlighting the differences between different film cultures, but also in establishing similarities. The successful seminar has the potential to broaden people's knowledge and awareness of other cultures, as well as developing an appreciation of and sense of pride in one's own culture.

Other strategies presented by IntoFilm's OERs include a critical examination of a culture's past, their political institutions and how society's attitude towards minorities (racial, gender, sexual) have changed throughout the time. Another type

of activity that can be used to promote reflection on one's own culture is to look at it from the perspective of the Other, and audio-visual social media can be a great tool for this.

3. Analysing Cultural Representation

The aim of this strategy is to critically examine and reflect on how certain cultures are represented or misrepresented in audio-visual media. Apart from discussion points, teachers can incorporate some practical tasks that allow for such reflection, for example, a comparative analysis. The idea is to select a single culture and compare how it is represented in three or more films, series or social media videos from formal (story) and stylistic (overall audio-visual presentation) perspectives. For example, a student can choose LGBTQ+ culture and focus specifically on transgender people. Then, they select three films from any period and from any country and comparatively analyse how transgender people are represented there. Later, the papers can be presented by students in person or online. Teachers and students can comment on the analysis and further discuss the topic of cultural representation.

One of the visual art teachers interviewed for article 4 described their practices for analysing cultural representation in media. The first practice involves an analysis of representation in video advertisements for big companies and how they portray different people. This activity echoes Hall's work (1997), in which he provides a detailed analysis of representation in popular ads. The second practice is about asking students to watch a film and then analytically select specific pieces where, in students' opinion, there are representational issues. This is followed by a discussion, in which students explain their choices and discuss how a film represents people.

4. Discussing the Nature of Filmmaking

Films are collaborative efforts between a diverse group of people. Modern films are often coproduced by several countries and include international cast and crew. The aims of this strategy are to discuss how modern films are produced, to highlight international collaborative effort that goes into filmmaking and to encourage students to shoot videos in teams. Teachers can mimic international production by arranging students into international groups and tasking them with creating a short video of various types and genres. Teachers can also use these practical tasks to explore the various techniques of film production, including camera movement, angles and position and editing approaches or to reproduce conventions of some genres and artistic movements.

Another type of activity involves a discussion of different locations presented in an audio-visual media and their purpose. For example, how location contributes to the story, why a character is positioned there, the emotional or physical state

reflected in the location or the reason for this specific location to be in the film. Also, a teacher might ask to imagine if the events of a film moved from one place to another and then discuss how it would have impacted the story. Finally, students can compare how different films shot on the same location represent it.

IntoFilm's OERs for the film *Wajida* (2012) uses the fact that this is the first film in Saudi Arabia to be directed by a woman to discuss why it is such a significant moment for Saudi culture. It connects cultural, political and cinematic contexts to inspire critical analysis of a film culture, as well as prompting a larger discussion on women in cinema. The OER also highlights the location of the story, inspiring an analysis of its purpose for the film.

The discussion on the nature of filmmaking can stimulate conversation about larger issues within film industries, for example, a lack of women and queer filmmakers, pay gaps or lack of professional recognition for media produced by people of colour. A teacher can also discuss the financial benefits of producing films in certain places and how it affects the industries. Finally, one can assess how the international nature of filmmaking affected the real perception of some countries, with the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy transforming the New Zealand economy and tourism sector being the most obvious example.

5. Embracing Global Cultural Context

The fifth strategy concerns an inclusion of global cultural context when discussing audio-visual media. To begin with, a teacher can welcome global cultural context by introducing film industries around the world and by including examples of audio-visual media that go beyond narrow geographical contexts. When discussing umbrella-like film genres (e.g., comedy, horror or action), it is advisable to include some subgenres that are unique to a specific culture. For example, a conversation on horror can include Italian *giallo*, while a discussion on historical drama can be enriched by Japanese *jidaigeki*. A similar approach can be done with audio-visual social media. Although there are some popular applications that have users across the world, there are also those that are either unique to a single country or specific region. Discussing them, especially with the help of someone who is their active user, supports the establishment of global cultural context.

A comparative analysis practice, which has been suggested for the previous strategies, is also welcomed here. IntoFilm's OERs quite often encourage drawing comparisons between different films across cultures, for example, by comparing films that centre around similar holiday or by looking at how the conventions of the same genre differ from culture to culture. Article 2 suggests a comparison activity for Germany and Kenya coproduced film *Supa Modo* (2018), which introduces a

Kenyan girl in a small village diagnosed with a terminal illness. The girl dreams of being a superhero, and her sister joins the community to make the girl believe she is actually a superhero. Although IntoFilm's OER provides some great discussion topics, it can go further and compare the idea of superheroes in *Supa Modo* to the one presented in Hollywood films, asking students to think of differences, similarities and the reasons behind those.

6. Discussing the Role of Algorithms

This final strategy has emerged after conducting the research for articles 3 and 4, which emphasises the updated understanding of film literacy that includes a discussion on the role of recommendation algorithms. When discussing film exhibition, teachers can ask students how they consume the content and how much agency they have when selecting it. Do they follow the algorithms, or do they spend time browsing through the content? Do they feel that algorithms accurately represent their tastes and preferences? Have they ever noticed something strange recommended to them? Do they take any steps to disrupt recommendation algorithms, for example, disabling search and watch history on social media?

The main idea is to inspire students to be aware of the recommendations algorithms and be more selective about the content they consume. Teachers can use students' existing knowledge of algorithms to expand this further, here by discussing their roles in social media, as well as streaming services. For example, a teacher can ask students to critically look at their feed pages and see how it changes over time depending on which content they consume.

One practical task is inspired by how Netflix changes the artworks of their titles to correspond to each users' personality, as perceived by their algorithms. A teacher can ask students to check for themselves what they see as the artwork for a specific title. However, this requires all students to have access to Netflix accounts, which might not often be the case; thus, a teacher can use some existing examples that showcase those differences (see Pajkovic, 2021; Gaw, 2021).

6 EVALUATING THE STUDY

6.1 Reflecting Upon Methods

The current research is a qualitative study that uses three methods: case study, content analysis and thematic analysis. In Chapter 3 it has been shown how the existing research reflects upon the methods using concepts of reliability and validity (Krippendorff, 2004; Cohen et al., 2017). However, in qualitative research, there are several limitations in adopting these concepts (Golafshani, 2003) because qualitative research is not about measuring anything (Eneroth, 1984) and it is impossible to differentiate between the researcher and method (Stenbacka, 2001). Instead, I will use the concept of trustworthiness to reflect upon the research methods.

Trustworthiness refers to a degree of confidence in the quality of the methods, data and interpretations (Connelly, 2016). Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability and authenticity as the key aspects of trustworthiness. The credibility of the present study is in using established methods of qualitative research, as well as in following a triangulation strategy (Patton, 2001; Golafshani, 2003) of combining several kinds of methods or data.

The current research has adopted three distinctive research methods: case study, content analysis and thematic analysis. Article 1 is a case study that also combines written text and interviews as the research data, which are analysed using thematic analysis. Article 2 and article 3 adopt content analysis, but article 2 uses neither strictly qualitative nor quantitative content analysis, while article 3 is closer to being quantitative. Finally, article 4 uses interviews as its research data and adopts thematic analysis.

On top of this, the credibility of the research has been ensured by peer reviews of each of the articles; by presenting and discussing each study at conferences; and by describing research methods in detail.

Dependability refers to stability of data over time (Connelly, 2016). Each article describes in detail the context in which the research has been completed. For example, article 1 offers much information about the case of the university course, including teaching practices, tasks, course aims and students' backgrounds. Article 2 references OERs publicly and freely available on the website IntoFilm.org. When

discussing the findings, the article continuously provides the examples and titles of each referenced OER.

Confirmability refers to the avoidance of bias and striving for objectivity. Elo et al. (2014) suggest collecting appropriate and well-saturated data and trustworthy report results and discussions. Article 2 justifies the focus on IntoFilm.org by it being one of the biggest and most regularly updated, freely accessible, English-language websites. The article focuses specifically on Film Guides OERs because it is the largest group that has the same structure throughout all the materials.

Article 3 focuses on two hashtags reported to be the most common among the politician's supporters. The videos were all accessed on the same day to ensure that their parameters (number of hearts, shares, comments and the position among top videos) did not change.

The final article adopts thematic analysis to analyse its research data, here consisting of eight interviews with professional educators. Chapter 3 has described how the concept of thematic analysis has evolved in recent years into reflexive thematic analysis to recognise a subjective, situated and aware researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Therefore, subjectivity in thematic analysis is understood as a valuable resource for producing themes, instead of being an obstacle. Nevertheless, the researcher should reflect on personal bias throughout all the stages of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

To ensure the transparency of thematic analysis, article 4 provides a detailed explanation of how the data were gathered, transformed into text, coded and analysed. Because the work was done solely by the researcher, who also acted as an interviewer, it was important to provide clear information on all the stages of thematic analysis, including the topics discussed during the interviews. During the interviews, attention was paid towards an intercultural film literacy education idea, which is central to the current research; therefore, the themes produced are connected to this. Despite this, the study's goal was to hear visual art teachers' perspectives, and the produced themes also reflect this, especially the broader understanding of intercultural education that includes LGBTQ+ culture. Therefore, although the researcher's interests were the starting point, it was ultimately about the participants: their feelings, experiences, and knowledge.

Transferability brings up the discussion of generalisation and the extent to which the findings can be adopted in other settings (Connelly, 2016). Although the articles discuss the transferability of their findings, this category is further explored in subchapter 6.3 Limitations and Future Research.

Finally, authenticity is about the selection of appropriate people for the study and providing their detailed description (Connelly, 2016). Both articles 1 and 4, which utilised research participants, present a relevant selection of people (university students and professional working visual art teachers) and offer details of their background.

6.2   Research Ethics

Apart from being its own academic discipline, research ethics are understood as a set of guidelines for conducting research (Shamoo & Resnik, 2015). In Finland, such guidelines are provided by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK (2019). In general terms, ethics refer to doing good and avoiding harm (Orb et al., 2001). Johnson and Altheide (2002) describe that research ethics are about asking how a researcher gains access to a setting, how they gain the trust from members of that setting, how they ensure their privacy and how they report the results.

Based on the literature, the current study understands and adopts research ethics as a set of conducts of good research that ensure safety and privacy of its participants, as well as transparent and trustworthy reporting on the data and results.

Shaw (2008) emphasises the role of informed consent when conducting qualitative research. In two articles, the researcher worked with human adult participants: article 1—university students—and article 4—visual art schoolteachers. To ensure an understanding of the research and guarantee anonymity and data protection, all the participants were provided with consent forms. The participants for article 1 were handed physical copies of formal consent prior to the start of the course. The forms stated the purpose of the research, modes of data collection and analysis, as well as a guarantee of privacy protection. None of the students were pressured into signing the form.

Data collection for article 4 was done via digital tools. At the beginning of each session, I asked permission to record the interview, following which I would read slowly and clearly the consent form and obtain verbal confirmation from the participants on record. Again, none of the teachers was pressured into providing their consent.

In both studies, the goal was to use qualitative research methods to understand students' and teachers' perspectives and hear their opinions and voices. Therefore, the participants were recognised as autonomous people sharing information at their

own volition (Orb et al., 2001). For example, during the research for article 1, my goal was to test certain pedagogical strategies and understand them from the students' perspectives; hence, the students were encouraged to directly voice their opinions without fear of repercussion, for example, in the form of bad grades. To ensure the validity of those opinions, the follow-up interviews were conducted almost a year after the course.

When discussing the results, the identity of the research participants in both articles was hidden behind random pseudonyms, with the real identities known only to me. At the same time, I tried to use as many quotes as possible to provide the reasoning behind my interpretations, as well as to ensure visibility of the participants' voices.

Articles 2 and 3 use priori content analysis, meaning that the coding categories used were established prior to the analysis and based on previous research. Article 2 examines film literacy OERs from the intercultural perspective. Because none of the OERs explicitly state that they are intercultural, the content analysis was interpretive and looked for hidden meaning within the dataset. Therefore, it was important to cite each of the referenced educational resources and provide their description to ensure the study's trustworthiness.

Article 3 looks at 200 TikTok videos using politically charged hashtags to analyse how the users supported the opposition politician. Because that research focused on manifest or explicit meaning, the degree of interpretations was low. Nevertheless, when reporting on the findings, I offer various examples to illustrate what is being discussed in the text. All the examples of TikTok videos were reported without any references to their users' nicknames, and no screenshots of the videos were used in the final paper.

6.3   Limitations and Future Research

The current research faced two limitations: the amount of collected data and the restrained research settings that challenge the possible transferability of the findings. The biggest challenge I encountered was during the work on article 4. The original plan was to connect with visual art teachers through personal emails and the visual art teachers' union monthly newsletter. The union agreed to distribute the information about the research, but when the time came, they did not follow up on their promise.

More than 100 emails were sent out to practising visual art teachers, but only a few responded. Eventually, eight teachers were interviewed, which is a small number. The reasons for such a limited dataset might be because the interviews were to be done in English, a foreign language for most of the teachers contacted, as well as the fact that there was no compensation for participation because the research did not have any funding.

Added to this is the fact that six out of the eight interviewed teachers came from the capital area, limiting the geographical scope of the study. However, despite the fact that only eight teachers participated in the research, I believe that the final study still provides valuable insights into the pedagogical practices of visual art pedagogues and showcases how they implement intercultural education and film literacy at the different levels of school education.

Therefore, further research is needed to include a larger number of participants and allow them to communicate in their native language. Another direction of future research that came from article 4 stems from teachers' voiced insecurities about the actual impact they have on students. While the teachers strive to develop students' critical thinking and change their patterns of media consumption, the teachers do not know if their efforts are successful. Finally, because that research has been done only in Finland, there is the possibility to conduct similar studies in other countries to see the similarities and differences in teachers' perspectives and further develop intercultural film literacy education.

Article 1 examines the impact of intercultural film literacy education on students in an international master's degree course. The course participants were open to international communication because most of them voluntarily chose to study in a foreign country. Throughout the course, the students did not exhibit any prejudices and offensive behaviour in the classroom. No such things were also reported to the teacher or the course supervisor. Overall, the students were eager to engage in intercultural dialogue and participate in discussions and group activities.

However, not every classroom can consist of students who are open to intercultural dialogue. There might be students who consciously or subconsciously rely on prejudices and stereotypes, exhibit offensive behaviour and actively build distance between themselves and the Other. Hence, more research is needed on how to promote intercultural film literacy education in classrooms that resist rather than support it, which can provide more guidelines and directions for the teachers.

Article 2, which discusses film literacy OERs, concludes with another suggestion for future research. OERs exist on digital platforms or host websites, the user experience of which needs to be consistent and friendly to stimulate users to get

access to OERs, as well as to return to these OERs in the future. User experience is defined by the International Organisation for Standardisation (2009) as one's perception and responses resulting from the use or anticipated use of a product, system or service.

A poor user experience can prevent teachers from accessing OERs or any other digital educational resource, for example, through a complicated account set-up, inconsistent and inaccessible design, broken links and unfamiliar icons. Hence, the experience of browsing host websites may directly influence the eventual use of OERs in education. Hence, another suggestion for future research is to conduct a user experience study of OERs digital platforms or host websites.

7   CONCLUSION

The aim of the current study has been to answer the following question: *How can film literacy be supported by intercultural dialogue?* Based on the findings, it can be concluded that intercultural dialogue supports a critical discussion of cultural representation by challenging the use and over-reliance on cultural stereotypes through communication with various culture representatives. From a young age on, we use media to construct an understanding of the world around us; however, this understanding can be based on outdated stereotypes, misrepresentations and symbolic annihilation. The inclusion of intercultural dialogue to film literacy has the potential a) to increase one's agency when consuming audio-visual media content, especially when it is algorithmically recommended and b) foster one's critical thinking skills while also broadening their understanding of other cultures (their customs, traditions, language, politics and struggles).

Intercultural film literacy education combines critical understanding with cultures and their depictions in films and, thus, can be used to address cultural misrepresentation in audio-visual media, be it film, shows on streaming services or short videos on social media. It encourages more agency for students when consuming media and stimulates them to be critical not only of the messages, but also of the stylistic and narrative ways the messages are broadcasted.

Based on the findings, it can be suggested that intercultural film literacy education is a pedagogical idea that encourages a critical understanding of cultural representation in audio-visual media through open intercultural dialogue between people of various cultural backgrounds.

Overall, the present research has contributed to the field of media education by 1) conceptualising intercultural film literacy education idea that education links intercultural education with its emphasis on dialogue, cultural exchange and developing of intercultural competence and film literacy that encompasses critical, analytical band practical skills for film evaluation and production and by 2) suggesting practical solution for teaching intercultural film literacy education: inspiring cultural exchange and dialogue, reflecting on one's own culture, analysing cultural representation, discussing the nature of filmmaking, embracing global cultural context and discussing the role of algorithms.

At the same time, the current study argues for the inclusion of the political into intercultural education and, by extension, to intercultural film literacy education. The findings of the present study showcase that modern visual art teachers already expand the concept of intercultural beyond nations and borders to include LGBTQ+ people, their voices, experiences and challenges they face. Added to this are the global conflicts—especially with the Russo–Ukrainian war that escalated in February 2022—that pits people against each other, questioning even the possibility of beginning an intercultural dialogue. The political shapes our cultures and experiences and, thus, should be included in intercultural education not only on the conceptual, but also on European and national policy levels.

From a practical point of view, the current research examines the state of cultural representation in existing educational resources and suggests potential improvements that can inspire conversations on how certain cultures are portrayed in a film from story and audio-visual perspectives. Additionally, the present research conceptualises intercultural film literacy education as a pedagogical framework, hence offering theoretical and practical suggestions for its teaching. The research centres on the neoformalism approach to film literacy, emphasising the active role of the teacher in establishing a welcoming environment free of offensive behaviour that supports cultural exchange between students and between students and the teacher.

In Europe films are recognised as an integral part of building cultural and national identities (School Education Getaway, 2017). At the same time, films could be used to develop an understanding of other cultures. Intercultural film literacy education provides a pathway for establishing intercultural dialogue and cultural exchange while developing a critical outlook toward cultural representation in films and other audio-visual media. Moreover, as this research showcases, there is a need to acknowledge LGBTQ+ voices present in the classrooms and support their identity formation. Hence, intercultural film literacy education can support teachers in working with internationalised and increasingly diverse European classrooms.

In Finland, film literacy is a part of media education, and is usually taught within other subjects, for example, mother tongue and visual arts, even though some schools offer optional courses on film. However, it is time to provide more hours for film literacy education, since streaming services and social media make audio-visual media more accessible than ever, not only entertaining people, but also serving as a vehicle for action, political engagement, and identity formation (Hobbs et al., 2019). Could film literacy become a subject of its own? Audio-visual media is a huge part of our everyday life from young to old age, and it is crucial to develop literacy

skills for engaging with it. Intercultural film literacy education with its broader understanding of film literacy and the attention towards (mis)representation can support the development of such skills.

Although the current study has used the research data generated in Finland, the UK and Russia, all in all, the present research has been completed in Finland. Hence, it has been heavily influenced by this multicultural country that pioneered media education, advanced teachers education and embraced intercultural education. There is the potential for future research that would implement the idea of intercultural film literacy education in a different cultural and educational setting than Finland. This research might allow us to revisit the idea and expand on it conceptually.

Most of us interact with audio-visual media daily. It shapes our tastes and worldviews, it gives us ideas and inspiration, and it comforts us and offers escapism, while also providing us with an understanding of others and other places. The current research has advocated to look closely at the messages we receive from audio-visual media, be critical and reflective about them and use them to further expand our views and understanding of others through intercultural dialogue.

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PUBLICATION
I

Teaching Intercultural Film Literacy

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MERJ

Teaching Intercultural Film Literacy

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Abstract
Film literacy encompasses the abilities to consciously select, analyse and produce films. Previous research has established the required knowledge, experience, and strategies for teaching film literacy. However, the research to date has mostly focused on classes with students of similar cultural backgrounds. Ongoing immigration in Europe and internationalization of education prompt the development of film literacy teaching practices that are suitable for international environments. This study aims to present a connection between film literacy and intercultural education, and thus develop pedagogical solutions to teaching film literacy from an intercultural perspective.

This paper is based on a case study conducted at Tampere University in the form of an international film literacy class of 23 students. The research data includes students' assignments and four follow up interviews completed a year after the course. Thematic content analysis of data justified the teaching methods and indicated that students had developed intercultural understanding and improved their film literacy skills.

Keywords: film literacy; intercultural education; neo-formalism; case study

Introduction
The first commercial screening of films took place in Paris on December 28th, 1895. Since then, in a relatively short time film cemented its place within our lives. As Vítor Reia-Baptista (2012) states, film has enormous power in the construction of people's collective and cultural memories. We quote films, form our behaviour based on them, and judge unfamiliar
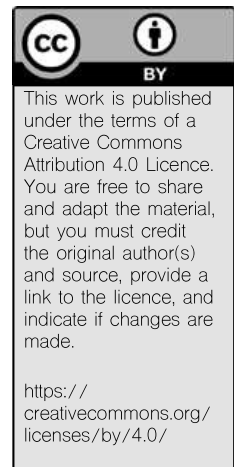
environments and situations through films. They transmit knowledge, cultures, and values, and may be used as an expressive-creative vehicle for developing communicative competences (Ambrós & Breu, 2008). Films are made up of moving images that communicate information, which create experiences, often driven by stories and characters that evoke certain emotions and feelings from the viewers (Bordwell et al., 2017). By this definition both big-budget Hollywood movies and someone's wedding videos are films: they comprise moving images, communicating information, and evoking emotions. However, if we were to judge Hollywood movies and someone's wedding video, we would use different standards, because films exist within contexts (artistic, historical, industrial etc.) The knowledge of those contexts enables deeper analysis and understanding of film, which in turn helps us to grasp the power of film.

Film literacy is about developing a set of skills that allows one to understand the different aspects of film (film history, film industry, film language), to critically analyse film and its contexts, and to participate in creative film production. Film literacy enables us to put a film in various contexts, to derive meanings from a film, and to see how various formal and stylistic decisions determine those meanings. Being film literate may influence the development of not only the personal taste, skills for describing and analysing films, but also the film industry in general (McCann, 1971). But how does one teach film literacy?

The concept of film literacy was developed in the late 1960s (Schillaci & Culkin, 1970), since which time research has established the required knowledge, experience, and strategies for teaching film literacy. Researchers have discussed the qualifications of film educators (McCann, 1971; Marcus & Stoddard, 2007) and suggested various teaching practices (Mamber, 1997; Tomasulo, 1997; British Film Institute, 2015). Renee Hobbs (1998) recognises the challenges of teaching film literacy, as it puts teachers in a position of stimulating the changes in students' watching habits and patterns, nevertheless, she strongly advocates for teaching film literacy, since being film literate is an essential skill for the digital age. Although extensive research has been carried out on teaching film literacy, there is a lack of studies that pay attention to teaching it in an international environment and from an intercultural perspective. The exceptions include Audrey Rorrer and Susan Furr (2009), who examine how to use film to increase the awareness of other cultures, as well as Marjo Kovanen and Sirkku Kotilainen (2018), who focus on teaching children's horror films in mixed culture environments and showcase how cultural background influences one's attitudes and perception. Additionally, a recent British Film Institute study (2019)

used intercultural perspectives in film classes for European children. Nevertheless, there are specific requirements for broadening the intercultural perspective and developing concommitant teaching practices, which have not been the primary focus in the previous studies.

It is important to acknowledge the likelihood of international classes with students of various cultural backgrounds, especially when ongoing migration and increase in global contacts make our societies more diverse (Alasuutari & Jokikokko, 2010; Ranieri, 2016); the number of students seeking higher education abroad has increased considerably in recent years, resulting in a melting pot of different cultures in same classrooms (Manikutty et al., 2007). Additionally, film itself is an international phenomenon that exists in cultures around the world – it crosses national borders (British Film Institute, 2019), which makes it natural to study it in an international environment.

This article explores how to teach film literacy within an international environment. The objective is to understand the connections between film literacy and intercultural education for conceptual and practical development in the field. Thus, the originality of the study is in its focus on international environments and the use of an intercultural perspective in teaching film literacy. The article is based on a case study of a master's-level course on film education at Tampere University, Finland, conducted in Autumn 2018 and involving the researchers as the teachers. The first author acted as the main teacher in the course, while the second author had a supervisory role as the responsible teacher. The course was offered as an option for all students in English. There were 23 international participants (17 female and 6 male) from: China (3), Finland (4); the USA (2); Germany (2); Slovenia (2); and one student from each of Bulgaria, Turkey, Malaysia, Japan, Bangladesh, Spain, Mexico, Czech Republic, France, Poland. 12 participants were exchange students, while 11 participants were studying for a master's degree. The course featured a variety of teaching practices to teach film literacy from an intercultural perspective. These practices were retrospectively reviewed by the course's participants in the form of a final essay. The essays are the primary research material for the study. Additional data includes short interviews with four students completed online in September 2019.

Finally, the article discusses the concept of film literacy based on students' essays, as well as the practices of film education from an intercultural perspective. The conclusion presents a suggestion for film literacy educational practices from an intercultural perspective.

Conceptualizing the Study: Intercultural Education and Film Theory

When dealing with a class from various cultural backgrounds, the

main challenges are to recognise and appreciate the diversity and complexity of the identities, to be aware of one's own prejudices and to be able to interact with and learn from the others (Martins, 2008). These challenges make an intercultural education approach the most suitable. As distinct from multicultural education (the paradigm that pre-dates intercultural education and emphasises cultural diversity, aiming to develop an awareness of cultural differences) intercultural education is based on a dynamic engagement between cultures, contributing to the development of cooperation and solidarity (Bleszynska, 2008; Portera, 2008). In this it is suitable for teaching film literacy since films are usually a result of international work and collaboration across cultures. At the same time, intercultural education encourages group work, discussions and, especially, open dialogue, all of which are important in international classrooms.

Intercultural education aims at analysing one's own values and beliefs as well as those of others through dialogue (Alasuutari & Jokikokko, 2010). This dialogue widens one's horizons and opens new perspectives on oneself and others. A commitment to such a dialogue is an essential part of interculturalism (Järvelä 2005). Hence, intercultural education encompasses openness to cultural diversity, awareness of other cultures, ability to interact across cultural contexts and sense of identity and belonging to humanity (Ouellet, 1991; Bennett, 2009). It goes beyond the mere recognition of other cultures towards development of a sustainable way of living together through the understanding of, respect for and dialogue between various cultural groups (UNESCO, 2006). The role of the teacher in intercultural education is to serve as a "cultural mediator" (Lehr & Thompson, 2000), to provide necessary background and information to students (Sanders et al., 2009) and to influence students' awareness and inspire them to strive for a more equal and sustainable world (Alasuutari & Jokikokko, 2010). Finally, teachers should always reflect on whose cultures and values they transmit, as well as be aware of their own cultural beliefs and presumptions.

Nevertheless, there is a certain level of vagueness regarding practical implementations of intercultural education (Ogay & Edelmann, 2016; Roiha & Sommier, 2021). Teachers may have conflicting perceptions of intercultural education, which influence the range of roles they play in its promotion (Hajisoteriou, 2013). The current research aims to address this issue by developing and evaluating practical strategies for teaching film literacy from an intercultural perspective. Intercultural education would enable film literacy students to exchange their knowledge, introduce new ideas, and present film as an international multifaceted phenomenon.

Although there is a huge variety of theories that provide frameworks for analysing film language and interpreting the meanings of films (e.g., semiotics film theory, feminist film theory), this study focuses

specifically on neo-formalist film theory, which has its roots in the Russian Formalism movement and concerns film narrative with formal and stylistic aspects of film. However, it represents a significant departure from aesthetic formalism, by, firstly, understanding film form within a historical context, and, secondly, claiming that meanings can be constructed by films' audience, rather than being determined by its formal features (Gaut, 1995). Thus, neo-formalism views the audience as active participants in the construction of meanings, it encourages spectators to engage with film and form their own understanding, instead of enforcing meanings and interpretations. Kristin Thompson (1988) suggests that the meaning of any film derives from its use of devices, which she takes to be different elements of film: camera movement, story, motifs, costumes, music, lighting etc. Interactions between the devices highlight any single element that plays a role in a film, while stimulating audiences' engagement with an artwork. The devices represent some elements of two important aspects of neo-formalism: film form (story, narrative) and film style (all the audio-visual aspects). The relation between form and style creates an overall film experience and assists in construction of meanings.

Films are perceived in different ways in different times (Blewitt, 1997), which increases the importance of historical and cultural contexts. Although neo-formalism has often been criticized for focusing too heavily on film form (Salvaggio, 1981), it still recognizes the relevance of historical and cultural context, noting that in certain periods of time and in certain places specific formal and stylistic conventions are dominant. As Henry Jenkins (2018) explains, neo-formalism requires us to move beyond the individual film to look at the system of norms, institutional practices, technological infrastructures, and cultural influences that shaped films' production during a specific moment in time.

Overall, neo-formalism provides knowledge of various film devices, emphasises their interrelations and looks at them within historical and cultural contexts. As such, neo-formalist analysis can be conducted with any film without losing an appreciation for its uniqueness. Additionally, neo-formalism does not force any meanings or interpretations and treats the audience as active participants, who draw on their film exposure, cultural backgrounds, and life experience in order to construct the meanings. These reasons make neo-formalism useful for the current study and provide the foundations for developing the course. In short, then, this research uses neo-formalist film theory to complement teaching intercultural film literacy. Neo-formalism accentuates the importance of knowing and understanding the historic and cultural contexts of a film. At the same time, if a film portrays a certain culture, one can analyse its formal and stylistic depiction, relying on various film devices, to critically examine this representation. Neo-formalist film analysis can broaden knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and thus benefit intercultural education.

An example of how this was carried out for the current research is the discussion of the German Expressionist movement of the 1920s. When introducing the movement, we examined how the socio-political climate of the Weimar Republic, hyperinflation, and conditions of the Treaty of Versailles, influenced the way German people saw and interpreted the world around them. We also referenced the proposition of German film critic Lotte Eisner (2008), who argued that during those times German people with their eternal inclination to daydreams and contemplations indulged in ideas of mysticism and magic; and, finally, those claims were put to two German students present in the classroom to hear their personal experience and understanding, and then discuss them with other students. Overall, this research focuses on two theoretical concepts: film literacy (using neo-formalist film theory) and intercultural education, to study how their combination can foster the development of film literacy skills and intercultural understanding among international students.

Therefore, this study's research question is: How can film literacy be taught from the perspective of intercultural education? The study suggests a pedagogical framework for teaching intercultural film literacy and evaluates its film literacy and intercultural outcomes from students' point of view.

Case Study: University-Level Course

The research used a qualitative case study approach, which is "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (Stake, 1995, p. xi). Case study work seeks to examine a bounded phenomenon to portray, analyse and interpret the uniqueness of the case through accessible accounts (Cohen et al., 2000). This research focuses on a single case of the university-level course Workshop in Film Education (5 European Credit Tranfser System credits) and analyses its teaching strategies and learning outcomes using participants' observations delivered in the form of reflective essays and interviews.

In this case study, the researchers acted as teachers with the first author organising and conducting the lectures, communicating with students, and running the course's page in Moodle, and the second author overseeing the implemented teaching strategies and commenting on the course's plan. Students knew from the start that the course was a case study for research with voluntary participation. They all agreed to participate, and signed research consent forms which had a description of the study. Ethical aspects, for example, anonymity, of the research process were discussed in the course. Participants in the study were adults and capable of understanding the nature of this study .

The course was designed for 5 ECTS and entailed seven meetings

with a total of 21 hours of contact teaching, including group as-signments, discussions, and a seminar. The structure of the course was based on neo-formalist film theory with lectures on film histo-ry, film form and style, sound, and film analysis. Each lecture com-bined traditional teaching with PowerPoint presentations full of audio-visual examples and group work or/and discussions. For the group work the students were encouraged to form groups of dif-ferent nationalities and to provide everyone with an opportunity to present their ideas. The teacher monitored the groups during their work, assisting in any questions, and asking about the progress.

The course featured a seminar, during which students presented some topics of their choice about their own film culture. It lasted almost two sessions and was specifically designed to promote intercultur-al education. There was a discussion round after each presentation, during which the students were encouraged to reflect on what they just learnt through their own cultural experience. For example, a presentation on the gender gap in Hollywood inspired the conver-sation on this issue in other film cultures, while the presentation about Mexican filmmakers inspired the comparison of Mexican films with American and European cinema from a cultural standpoint.

The learning outcomes for the course were to learn "the basics of film history, theoretical and practical aspects of filmmaking, tools and cri-teria for critical analysis of films" (Tampere University, 2018-2019). Additionally, the course aimed to introduce different film cultures, to talk about cultural diversity through film and film through cultures.

The course materials included PowerPoint presentations, a large collection of short clips from YouTube, recordings of film scores and scientific articles available as reading materials after each teaching session. Clips of films were used to illustrate each topic that was discussed, for example, an extract from *Children of Men* (2006) to illustrate the long take, discussed during the lecture on film style. The majority of the films included were from Europe, the USA, and South Asia including Japan, China, South Korea.

The course had four major assignments, in which every student par-ticipated: 1) Seminar on Film Cultures: student presentations on any topic of film cultures of their origins, 2) Film Topic Analysis: analy-sis of how a chosen topic is presented in three different films from formal and stylistic perspectives, 3) Short Video Assignment: group task in which students filmed a video with some editing techniques of their choice that were discussed in the class, and 4) Final Reflec-tive Essay: free-form text in which students reflect on the course, its teaching approach and their own learning outcomes. For the essay students were provided with some general guidelines. The collection

of reflective essays (N=23) became the primary research materi-
al for this study, since it offers students' perspective on the teach-
ing practices and helps to evaluate the significance of those practices
in achieving the course's learning outcomes. The students had one
month to complete the task and then submit it online to Moodle.
In this study a thematic analysis was adopted to analyse the re-
search material, as "a form of pattern recognition within the data,
where emerging themes become the categories for analysis" (Fereday
& Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p.82). A theme in thematic analysis "cap-
tures something important about the data in relation to the research
question and represents some level of patterned response or mean-
ing within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.10). The themat-
ic analysis for this study was done semi-anonymously, meaning that
the information of each students' identity was coded by the research-
er, leaving only a number and a country as identifiers, for example,
Student 1, USA. The analysis of reflective essays revealed two major
patterns: Film Literacy Skills Outcomes and Intercultural Understand-
ing Outcomes. The first pattern recognises students' reflections on
the generated knowledge and skills related to film language and the
concept of film literacy itself. The second pattern includes the reflec-
tion on intercultural knowledge and experiences during the course.

This study also includes supporting research data, which is a set of
online interviews completed by the course participants in Septem-
ber 2019, almost a year after the course took place. Several ques-
tions were repeated throughout the interviews: about the overall
perception of the course; change in watching habits; the success
of intercultural education; and future suggestions. One question
varied in each interview and was related to students' final essays.
Eight student profiles were chosen on Facebook, five responded,
but only four completed the final interview. In one case the ques-
tions were asked through Facebook Messenger, while the others
employed email to communicate. The interviews were thematically
analysed and reflected with two already established patterns: *Film
Literacy Skills Outcomes* and *Intercultural Understanding Outcomes*.

Research Findings

Film Literacy Skills Outcomes
There are three distinctive aspects that amount to film literacy from
the data: 1) knowledge of film language or film devices, 2) critical
thinking towards film's content and visuals, and 3) content creation
or film production. The students had reflected on personal learn-
ing experiences regarding each of those aspects in their final essays.

The data analysis reveals that almost every student had expanded their
knowledge of film language with each person deriving something spe-

cific and unique for them. The course had covered film history, form and style, and film sound, and each topic was mentioned in one or another essay. Students welcomed the information on various editing techniques and mise-en-scene, as well as genre conventions. However, the most eye-opening topic proved to be film sound, especially the art of foley. During the lecture, students saw a short documentary about the foley process, which shows that almost every sound we hear in films is artificially created, as well as how it is created. Students mentioned the lecture helped them to realise the importance of sound, and few of them suggested that from now on they will pay attention to sound in films.

The development of critical thinking is a significant aspect of becoming film literate. Several students had reported that they were able to improve their critical thinking skills, especially by completing the Film Topic Analysis assignment. One student mentioned that this assignment was one of the most enjoyable parts of the course, because they could put theoretical knowledge about film language into practice. Another student confirms this by stating how abstract terminology from lectures on film language became more understandable and vivid upon doing the assignment.

In their assignments several students had reflected on the chosen topic in the context of our societies. One student had focused on the depiction of rape in films, discussing who is the centre of the scene (victim or abuser) or how filmmakers represent the horror of such an act. Another student focused on the topic of drug use and analysed how film is partly responsible for how we view drug addicts. A third student focused on the scenes of childbirth, which is a natural event, but, as the student says, they usually have an "ick factor". That student analyses scenes of childbirth in different genre films and sees how often it feels as if there is something shameful and taboo in childbirth. In these examples, the students selected a topic, analysed how it is presented and then critically reflected on it through the values of our society.

A final aspect of film literacy is the ability to produce one's own moving image text. During the course, students were put in groups and asked to make a short video that represents a specific editing technique. This assignment proved to be quite useful and memorable for the students. It showed students that film is collaborative art that involves many people and a lot of work and gave them the opportunity to use theoretical knowledge about film language in practice. One student wrote:

> Next time when I am shooting a video, I would realize the usage of camera and the lightning may affect visual impression and adjust in the best way that meets the expectation. (Student 3, China)

Overall, the course had increased the students' levels of film liter-
acy by broadening their knowledge of film language, develop-
ing critical thinking, and providing an opportunity to make cre-
ative decisions in their own video productions. In addition to that,
students had also reflected on the concept of film literacy itself
and the role it might play in their lives. Plenty of course partici-
pants had not encountered the concept of film literacy prior to the
course, however, afterwards, not only were they able to generate
their own interpretations of it, but also able to elaborate on its sig-
nificance in modern education, and connect film literacy with their
own lives. One of the students wrote about the meaning of film lit-
eracy, and how film literacy skills are essential for every one of us:

> Film literacy could educate a cultured person who knows
> their values, will stand behind them and can share them with
> their surrounding world through different expressions and
> symbols. These skills are undoubtedly important not only to
> the students of the media and educators but to each of us.
> (Student 20, Czech Republic, Reflective Essay)

Other students who spoke about film literacy shared the same sen-
timent. They mentioned the significance of being film literate, that
it helps to critically examine the messages of films and to appreci-
ate them as an art form. The course participants also indicated
how film literacy knowledge can be helpful in their future careers.
A Malaysian student wrote that as a language teacher they would
plan to use films as pedagogical tools. An anthropology student
from Japan stated that they intendend to use films as a reflection
of society. A Spanish journalism student reported that they intend-
ed to use generated knowledge to form editorial groups with a fo-
cus on film reviews and reports. Finally, a Slovenian student reflect-
ed on how film literacy may be useful in their career in marketing:

> As a marketing and public relations student I see a huge
> potential in the usage of the gained knowledge in advertise-
> ment production. The content and the quality of ads I will
> be contributing to in the upcoming years will benefit hugely
> from this course. I would have never thought this much about
> the usage of for example the light, shadows and the contrast
> that can be achieved with them. Nor would I take into con-
> sideration how much different camera angles can affect the
> image. (Student 13, Slovenia, Reflective Essay)

To conclude, the findings suggest that students had improved their
levels of film literacy by studying film language, developing critical
thinking towards film and, at the end, making a video of their own.
The course resulted in generating the understanding of the concept of

film literacy and its importance in popular culture and private lives.

Intercultural Understanding Outcomes

The course aimed to introduce different film cultures, inspire an open cultural dialogue, and foster overall intercultural experience. Almost all students had reported that they experienced cultural exchange and broadened their perspectives on various film cultures. Students highlighted the significance of the seminar during which the participants made short presentations on the topic of their choice related to the film culture of their country of origin.

In the course, the seminar proved to be an eye-opening experience from an intercultural perspective. Several students mention how exciting it was to get a sense of global film production and discover local film industry traditions. One student said that they would never have found out information about popular actors of Bangladesh, Poland or Slovenia, and another said that the whole seminar felt like a trip around the world. A Japanese student mentioned that both differences and similarities between cultures were interesting to explore. In a way the seminar showcased that although there are plenty of differences between each film industry, the language of film itself is universal.

In the short interviews conducted in September 2019, the students were given information about the aims of the course and the meaning of intercultural education, and then later asked if they felt that the aim was achieved. Finnish and Polish students agreed that they developed intercultural understanding, and that the seminar was one of the biggest factors for that. Additionally, a Finnish student also complimented constant discussions and group tasks that were done between members of different cultures. Discussions and group tasks were also positively welcomed by some students in their reflective essays.

Another part of intercultural experience for students was that while learning about other cultures, they had expended the knowledge and developed an appreciation of their own culture. A Mexican student reported about the sense of happiness due to Mexican films being recognised internationally, while a student from the Czech Republic was able to expand their knowledge of the country's film history. A student from Malaysia wrote in their reflective essay that the most important thing was the appreciation for the film culture of one's country:

> [The] presentation assignment also brings me to what I believe to be the most important thing I learned, on a personal level, during this course; which is a deeper understanding and appreciation for the film past and present of my own country. What I have learned, which has impacted me the

> most as a direct result of this course, is about Malaysian film. (Student 9, Malaysia, Reflective Essay)

Overall, during the course students had developed their intercultural understanding due to the specifically designed seminar and constant discussions within international groups. The adoption of intercultural education perspective in teaching film literacy proved to be fruitful since students broaden their understanding of film around the world and learnt something about film industries, cultural values, and traditions of other cultures.

Summary

Table 1 below summarises the findings of this study. The first column presents the topics of thematic analysis, the second is about summaries of the skills outcomes decoded from the data, and the third lists the teaching practices that fostered such outcomes.

Theme	Skills Outcomes Summary	Teaching Practices
Film Literacy Skills Outcomes	Broadening the knowledge of film language Development of critical thinking Practical creative filmmaking Understanding of the concept of film literacy Implementation of film literacy in one's future career	Audio-visual materials from films, short documentary films about the filmmaking Film Topic Analysis Short Video Assignment.
Intercultural Understanding Outcomes	Expanding the knowledge on various cultures and their film industries Developing an appreciation of own film culture	Seminar on Film Cultures, Discussions and group work within international groups.

Table 1: Outcomes and Teaching Practices

The summary of findings shows which were the most impactful teaching practices for developing film literacy skills and intercultural understanding. They were the practical tasks that included the film topic and short video assignments, as well as the seminar on film cultures. Course materials that included a great number of video snippets and short documentary films helped students to expand their knowledge of film language. The Film Topic Analysis and Short

Video Assignment put their knowledge into practice, allowing them to critically approach film and filmmaking. Finally, the in Seminar on Film Cultures, group work and discussions influenced their awareness of other cultures and customs, fostered intercultural exchange, and inspired a reflective look at their own culture. These tasks allowed students to practise their knowledge of film and film language, to exercise critical thinking about film, and, finally, to open themselves up to other cultures, while broadening the understanding of their own culture. By the end of the course, students not only had expanded their film literacy skills, but also were able to grasp the meaning of film literacy and its importance in education and their future careers.

Discussion

The findings show that the course achieved its aims in developing film literacy skills and adopting an intercultural perspective in teaching film. One positive outcome is that by the end of the course students had generated their own meanings of film literacy and were able to understand its importance, although the concept itself was rarely brought up during the lectures. This reinforces the results presented in Kovanen and Kotilainen (2018), where the participants had also developed an understanding of film literacy concept by the end of the course.

One of the most significant outcomes is that the students were able to experience intercultural education together with film literacy and develop an intercultural understanding. Group discussions, student-student and student-teacher interactions and the Seminar on Film Cultures had succeeded in creating an atmosphere of intercultural exchange throughout the course, the benefits of which were recognised by students in their reflective essays. While group tasks were highlighted in several reflective essays as beneficial to learning about other cultures, it was the Seminar that proved to be the most fruitful activity. The group tasks and discussions usually separated students into small factions, however the Seminar was *for* everyone and *by* everyone: it allowed everyone to witness a great variety of different cultures and their film industries.

At the same time, the Seminar helped the course participants not only to expand their understanding of other cultures, but also to develop an appreciation of their own culture. While preparing for the Seminar several students felt responsible for how they represented their own culture and put an effort into their research, which resulted in a growing sense of pride and appreciation. They were able to recognise their roles as cultural representatives and to combine personal experience with broader traditions and customs of their own cultures.

However, it needs to be acknowledged that although students had reported the broadening of cultural knowledge, it is hard to measure exactly what they had learnt of the other cultures. As Irja Pietilä

(2010) points out, in intercultural exchange people interpret the information they receive and select what they feel is important. This interpretation and selection of information may alter the original information and create a misleading image of another culture.

Additionally, this study was conducted in Tampere University, a place which welcomes people from around the world having a variety of English-language courses for international students. The course had exchange students, international degree students, who by the virtue of willingly being in a foreign country, might have been predisposed to the idea of intercultural dialogue. Due to this, the results of this study cannot be generalised to every possible classroom, so further research is needed in implementing intercultural education among people who might resist cultural exchange and hold on to cultural prejudices and stereotypes.

Nevertheless, this research was able to advance students' understanding of film, and to use film as a window to other cultures. Intercultural education allowed us to utilise the cultural diversity of the course participants in a pedagogical process, while creating a safe space for self-expression. At the same time, the students developed their film literacy skills, by learning how different film devices were used in various historical and cultural contexts.

Overall, this study contributes to the research on teaching film literacy by focusing on international study environments and adopting intercultural education to shape a pedagogical strategy that welcomes cultural diversity and emphasises the multifaceted world of film.

Practical Pedagogical Implementations

Based on the findings, these educational practices can be listed as suggestions for teaching film literacy from an intercultural perspective:

> 1. Inspire cultural exchange and open dialogue. This can be achieved by provoking various discussions and group tasks where students from various countries can compare their own experience with others. For example, when teaching about film distribution, one can ask students to discuss the ways they watch films in different parts of the world, or to talk about their country's film festivals. Additionally, the teacher may foster the dialogue by engaging in it and sharing something from their own experience.
> 2. Seminar on film cultures. The main task is to create a short visual presentation about any topic related to one's own film culture. It can be about a director, a genre, censorship, a historical topic, for example. A seminar like this broadens people's horizons on film and gives a glimpse into someonee else's culture.

3. Content creation tasks. The main recommendation is to arrange students into international groups, and to give them specific direction. In this course, students were asked to focus on and illustrate an editing technique of their choice. In other cases, students could be asked to explore the possibilities of camera movements, or to create a story within particular generic conventions, or to make a black-and-white silent movie.

4. Film Topic Analysis. The main idea is that students choose any specific topic (a kiss, suicide, car chase, shopping) and then analyse how it is displayed in three various films from formal and stylistic perspectives by focusing on certain creative decisions that helped to achieve the result. The feedback can be generated by either the teacher or by other students if they are comfortable with sharing the work. This can be done online, by having students comment on each other's works, or in class, where students can discuss what topics they had chosen and what were the results of their analysis.

5. Embracing the cultural differences. This final recommendation means that teachers should not only make use of the cultural differences in the classroom, but also embrace and adapt towards them. It is better to have more visual examples of theoretical aspects (scenes from the films, screenshots) and less text on the presentation slides (to overcome possible language barriers), as well as to find these examples from films across the world which go beyond American or European films (to increase representation). When talking about film genres, it is also advisable to discuss some sub-genres unique to a specific culture, for example, Italian *giallo* or Japanese *Jidai-Geki*. Additionally, the teacher should welcome students' opinions, questions, and suggestions, and encourage them to speak up without the fear of being judged.

These suggested practices may be used in various contexts, for example, in classes with multi-ethnic origins, where students can introduce their own cultures and customs and learn about others. Also, intercultural education may ease the assimilation process and foster the understanding of unfamiliar cultures. Similarly, the listed educational practices may be adopted for teaching film to adults in any adult educational contexts. Some of the practices may be used for teaching film to youth and children, especially if the classes have students with different cultural backgrounds. Studying film literacy at a young age may positively affect the development of film tastes and watching habits and inspire them to try filmmaking on their own.

Conclusion
Overall, this study has the potential to improve the quality of film education by applying an intercultural perspective to teach-

ing film literacy. Still, this study has been a small step, since it is based on a single film course as a case study. The findings may be used to influence education in Europe and beyond by incorporating intercultural education for teaching film literacy. This can be achieved globally by displaying the teaching methods used for the course online as a digital open educational resource. In conclusion, while film literacy celebrates films, intercultural education celebrates cultures and their customs, and together they provide an opportunity to grasp how rich and wonderful the world (of film) is.

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PUBLICATION
II

Intercultural Film Education Online.

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Intercultural Film Education Online

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ABSTRACT

Film education is a concept that encompasses the ability to analyse the content and the context of films, to interpret and critically examine their meanings, and to produce a film of one's own. The research in film education has resulted in the development of various teaching practices and strategies, many of which are available online in the form of free and reusable open educational resources. Currently, the ongoing migration, expansion of online/distance education and internationalisation of schools and universities are influencing the way open educational resources about films are designed. This paper aims to understand pedagogic practices of the online open educational resources within the intercultural film education context. This research focuses on a single film education website IntoFilm.org and explores its open educational resources from an intercultural pedagogic perspective. The research data includes 160 Film Guides, which are analysed through qualitative content analysis. The findings of this study reveal that, although the website's open educational resources succeed in some of the aspects of intercultural education, they lack activities and discussion based on the international nature of filmmaking and cultural exchange and dialogue, which are fundamental aspects of interculturalism.

KEYWORDS

Film education, Open educational resources, Interculturalism, Film, Intercultural education

1 INTRODUCTION

Digital technologies have become a facilitator for a change in education, potentially improving it and enhancing the teaching/learning process [1]. Declining costs of information-computer technologies and the widespread access to the Internet have been major influences in the expansion of open educational resources (onwards: OERs) [2]. OERs can be defined as often digitised materials offered freely to educators or learners to use and reuse for educational, non-profit purposes [3]; [4]. OERs can include textbooks, materials, tests, videos, and full courses. The main idea is that they are open for people and can be used and reused, meaning they can be altered

according to specific needs of each educator [5]. However, there are challenges in using OERs: it requires software, human and time resources to produce and modify [6].

OERs are beneficial for both developing countries, by granting access to more educational practices and materials, and wealthy industrialised countries, since they may offer educational cost savings [7]. As such, OERs play an important role in internationalisation of education, providing a common course material in various locations and establishing internationally accessible programs [8]. Still, OERs need to be adapted to one's own pedagogical style and cultural context [9] which mostly creates a problem of contextualisation.

The majority of OERs are in English, which excludes people who do not speak it well enough [10]; [5]. Although OER aims to bridge different countries, there is a form of exclusion (based on language or culture) that prevents it from achieving this aim. These problems appear in film education OERs as well, however the language exclusion can be surpassed by translation of OERs, or simplification of big common languages (English, Spanish etc.) [10].

OERs is one of the methods of distributing knowledge and teaching strategies within the field of film education (e.g., TheFilmSpace.org; BFI.org.uk; FilmCentralen.dk; Koulukino.fi; PrimaryFilmLiteracy.org, LearnAboutFilm.com, and TheFilmCorner.eu). Several European countries with long-lasting film and media education traditions (e.g., the United Kingdom, Finland, France, Denmark, Germany) run websites with OERs that are free for educators and include class materials, instructions, short films, and videos in English or other European languages.

The nature of film education OERs is dictated by the audio-visual artistic nature of film. While film is an art form that has its own history, specific techniques, and unique language, it is also a form of media that broadcasts certain messages and ideas that should be critically evaluated. It is also an international phenomenon that exists across the borders [11] and can be used to advance one's understanding of other cultures [12]. Therefore, what makes film and, thus, film education unique is the combination of audio-visual and textual materials, practical information and theoretical knowledge on filmmaking, critical content analysis and evaluation skills, and various cultural contexts.

While the previous research on OERs acknowledges the possible challenges of using them by international educators, there is a lack of studies that focus on how to use OERs in international classrooms. For the past years European classes have been becoming more diverse [13], due to migration and increase in global contacts [14], [15]; internationalisation of education [16]; and the recent shift towards internationally accessible online education due to the COVID-19 pandemic [17]; [18].

This paper focuses on existing film education OERs and evaluates how they can be used for teaching film in international classes from the perspective of intercultural pedagogic practices. The study

introduces an intercultural framework for analysing OERs, and surveys 160 OERs in the category Film Guides on the widely used film education website IntoFilm.org.

2 INTERCULTURAL FILM EDUCATION

Film education is about providing the skills to analyse the usage of various elements of film language, to interpret the meanings of films and to produce a film of one's own [19]. In this study film education is understood as a combination of media education and neoformalism film theory connected to the concept of interculturalism (see [20]). Film is an international phenomenon, and film education has the potential to be as such through the intercultural perspective.

A single genre, for example, horror, may vary from culture to culture: what is scary in China might not have the same impact on the American audience. The censorship, cultural customs, religion, economic, and social norms influence the way people produce, consume, exhibit, and interpret the films. This makes interculturalism necessary for teaching film. Additionally, interculturalism can fight misinformation, offensive stereotypes, and prejudices by critically examining films' content and broadening one's knowledge of another culture through open dialogue [14].

Interculturalism means openness to cultural diversity, awareness of other cultures and ability to interact across cultural contexts with understanding of and respect for various cultural groups [21]; [22]; [23]. It celebrates cultural diversity and encourages open dialogue between the cultural representatives. It rejects any discrimination based on differences and can be characterized by integration and intercultural dialogue [24]. This dialogue opens a new perspective on oneself and the others and is assisted by reflection. Reflection of one's experiences and actions for the reasons of transformation is decisive in interculturalism [14].

Intercultural dialogue is one of the important tasks of intercultural education, among facilitation of adaptation and integration, shaping the mindsets of equality and respect, and development of civic attitudes and one's sense of belonging [25]. Intercultural education promotes not only social cohesion and appreciation of different cultural groups, thus challenging discrimination, and exclusion, but also equal academic achievements for students from marginalised communities [26].

While film is used to stimulate intercultural education [27], [28], it does not promote interculturalism on its own. Films may broadcast negative and outdated stereotypes and be used to promote misinformation; thus, it is crucial to adopt interculturalism for film education in order to support diversity and inclusion and encourage cultural exchange and critical reflection.

However, there is a lack of studies focusing on teaching film from the perspective of intercultural education and in international classrooms [13]; [29]. Recent British Film Institute (onwards: BFI) research report [11] belongs to those few as a large cross-country study in which European films were screened for school children of refugee backgrounds and discussed later with teachers. The report concluded that children were able to understand themselves and others better, to learn more about film language, and to broaden their world knowledge. Moreover, the study specified how intercultural learning can be promoted through film and its accompanying

learning material. Overall, that report concluded that film can be used as a language without borders, but it requires the support of teachers and teaching materials to make it happen [11].

While the BFI report [11] provides some reflection about the nature of teaching materials as well as the critical examination of those from teachers' perspective, the current study takes a deeper look at the available teaching resources for film education, being the first of its kind that focuses specifically on film education OERs and examines them thoroughly from the intercultural perspective.

In their study on film education, Sergei Glotov and Sirkku Kotilainen [20] have focused on intercultural teaching practices, which they developed and tested in the international university environment. Similar to the BFI [11] report, their students expanded their knowledge about and developed an appreciation of various cultures including their own, as well as broadened practical and theoretical knowledge about filmmaking. The study suggested five intercultural film teaching practices among international students: 1) inspire the cultural exchange, 2) seminar on film cultures, 3) content creation tasks, 4) film topic analysis and 5) embracing the cultural differences. These suggestions can be adapted to create practical analysis framework for evaluating OERs with the following five questions:

1) How does an OER inspire cultural exchange and dialogue?

This question focuses on the suggested tasks to see if they inspire students to share and compare personal cultural experiences, or to study and learn the experiences of other cultures from browsing different resources be it literature or the web ([20], practice 1).

2) How does an OER encourage reflection of one's own culture?

It is important for an intercultural perspective to encourage the critical look at one's own culture, to analyse what a film says about it, how it portrays it. The exercises of this type open the possibility to critically examine what kind of cultural ideas a film projects and analyse them from the perspective of one's experience ([20], practice 2).

3) How does an OER acknowledge the international and collaborative nature of filmmaking?

Films are a result of a collaborative work, quite often, across the borders of one country. For example, many European films are often co-produced by different states. An OER might acknowledge this, and ask, how does it influence the film? An OER can also focus on different locations represented in a film and analyse their purpose and the way they are presented ([20], practice 3).

4) How does an OER discuss topics of cultural diversity, representation, and inclusion?

If a film features international characters, an OER might prompt not only to acknowledge the cultural diversity on the screen, but also to reflect the way it is presented visually and narratively within the story. These types of tasks prompt to examine possible prejudices or stereotypes, as well as inspire to learn more about others ([20], practice 4).

5) How does an OER put film within global cultural and film context?

Films from one culture can be put in a global cultural or film context by comparing them with similar films from the other countries, discussing differences and similarities within the genres, analysing

how the same topic, for example, wedding, can be represented in films of different cultures ([20], practice 5).

Together these five questions form the intercultural pedagogic framework within the field of film education that would be used to analyse existing OERs on IntoFilm.org website.

3 METHODOLOGY

This research focuses on the IntoFilm.org website (Figure 1), the mission of which is "to inspire dynamic ways of learning with and about film, and connecting with cinema, that reach the widest possible youth audience across the UK" [30]. This website supports teachers and educators across all four nation of the United Kingdom, although their materials can be freely downloaded from any part of the world. The current research focuses on this website, because 1) it is one of the leading OERs platforms in the fields of film education (143,736 teaching resources downloaded during the year 2018/19 [30]), 2) it is continuously updated, 3) it offers a wide variety of educational materials for different age groups, and 4) it is in English language, which creates a possibility of usage for a wider audience outside of the UK.

IntoFilm.org presents various types of teaching resources that can be separated into three groups. 1) Film Guides, the biggest group that provides some discussion questions and activities for a specific film. 2) Topical Resources, which explore a specific topic (Women in Cinema, Musicals) on the example of several films. 3) Filmmaking resources, which focus on various stages of film and animation development. The resources are created for different age groups (5-7, 7-11, 11-14, 14-16 and 16+), however, quite often, the age categories are blended, for example, when a film guide is targeted for ages 5-11, or when a filmmaking resource is suitable for all ages. Overall, by April 2021 IntoFilm.org hosts 839 OERs.

To be able to use the services of IntoFilm.org new users need to register and create an account. After registering an account, the user can search and download the resources for free and participate in other services provided by the website. There are three search options: one for the website, available at the top right corner, and two for the search within the website's services (with and without categories). When the information about the materials is presented, the details are clearly visible to a user: the type (article, resource), the length (8 minutes to read), the age group, the type of the file (PPT or PDF) and the number of files. The website also presents related materials to the one a user has selected, assisting in easing the search.

The research primarily focuses on Film Guides OERs (Figure 2), since they are the largest type of resources available, and they share the same goal (exploring key topics and themes through informal discussion), structure (synopsis of the film, pre-watching discussion, discussion points, extension activities and watch next) and format (PowerPoint or PDF - files). The research data includes 160 Film Guides for various age groups: 5-11 (60 OERs), 11-16 (60 OERs) and 16+ (40 OERs). Although some resources also include bonus videos, for example, interviews with film crew, this research focuses only on the actual OERs that are either PDF-files or PowerPoint presentations in English language.

It should be noted that the first two age groups include smaller ones: 5-7 and 7-11, as well as 11-14 and 14-16, which explains the

Figure 1: The front-page of IntoFilm website

Figure 2: A webpage with Film Guide OER for ages 5-7

larger number of OERs in those groups compared to the 16+group. The age groups are combined, because quite often they are combined on the website itself (there are many instances of OERs suitable for ages 5-11 or 11-16). Instead of excluding them, or separating them into a group of their own, the researcher decided to stick with larger age groups for clarity reasons.

This research adopts qualitative content analysis, which is "subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" [31]. During the qualitative content analysis, one combines one's own perception of the material with personal background (knowledge of the topic, feelings, environment) [32]. The result of the analysis is concepts or categories that build up a conceptual model or map of the analysed phenomenon [33]. Qualitative content analysis includes four stages: preparation (data collection, selecting the material), organisation (creation of categories or concepts), analysis and reporting (interpreting and presenting the findings) (based on [32]; [34]).

160 Film Guides were analysed with qualitative content analysis from a pedagogic intercultural perspective. The five questions, based on Glotov and Kotilainen [20] research, became the identifying patterns. Their short versions were incorporated into the table

Table 1: Intercultural aspects in OERs

Question/Age Group	5-11	11-16	16+
Cultural Exchange and Dialogue	4	9	5
Reflection of Own Culture	4	16	7
Nature of Filmmaking	2	7	3
Diversity and Inclusion	9	10	6
Global Cultural and Film Context	5	22	12

as the rows. Q1: *How does an OER inspire cultural exchange and dialogue?* became **Cultural Exchange and Dialogue**. Q2: *How does an OER encourage reflection of one's own culture?* became **Reflection of Own Culture**. Q3: *How does an OER acknowledge the international and collaborative nature of filmmaking?* became **Nature of Filmmaking**. Q4: *How does an OER discuss topics of cultural diversity, representation, and inclusion?* became **Diversity and Inclusion**. Q5: *How does an OER put film within global cultural and film context?* became **Global Cultural and Film Context**. The columns of the table represented the age groups.

The data analysis was completed in the form of qualitative content analysis when the researcher read through the materials (its tasks, discussion points, teachers' notes, practical exercises) and highlighted when a specific OER corresponded with any of the five identifying patterns. Each time an OER was related to the patterns was recorded into the table together with OERs' titles. Once the data analysis was completed, the results were transferred to another table with the titles of the OERs omitted for clarity reasons. The results of the data analysis are featured in the Table 1.

4 FINDINGS

During the data analysis 160 OERs in the category Film Guides were studied according to the framework of qualitative content analysis from an intercultural perspective adopted for this study. Table 1 represents how often OERs in each age group corresponded with one of the five questions from the intercultural pedagogic framework. The table is followed by a closer analysis of how IntoFilm's OERs relate to each one of the five identifying patterns to describe how those OERs support intercultural film education.

As seen from Table 1, the OERs from IntoFilm.org promote interculturalism the most in the 11-16 age group, with a strong emphasis on discussions and activities that encourage the reflection of one's culture and put a film within global cultural and film context. The numbers across four out of five categories are lower for the age group of 5-11, which might be explained by the fact that OERs in this age group usually do not deal with topics related to cultural diversity, instead focusing on the importance of friendship or the strength to never give up. From the age of 11 OERs tackle more serious societal issues and inspire critical analysis, which can explain the bigger numbers in the table.

Cultural Exchange and Dialogue. There is a significant lack in discussions and activities that inspire cultural exchange and dialogue. One of the reasons might be that OERs do not acknowledge the possible international nature of the classrooms. In addition to the fact that the United Kingdom is a multicultural country, at the end of 2019, it hosted 6,2 million people with nationality from different countries [35]. And even if the classroom lacks representatives of various cultures, OERs may inspire pupils to look for information outside on the Internet or the libraries. For example, pupils can look at how a certain film was received in a different country (e.g., The Death of Stalin (2017) in Russia).

Despite that, there are still examples of OERs that inspire cultural exchange and dialogue, for example, those for the films Paddington (2014) and Coco (2017) both in the 5-11 age group. Paddington is a film about a talking bear from Peru, who arrives in London and explores the British culture. The film itself is centered around cultural exchange. The OER acknowledges it and provides discussion points to explore this topic further, for example, by asking to re-watch the film's opening and discuss the history of Peruvian talking bears. OER for the film Coco, which is heavily embedded in Mexican-Spanish culture, asks pupils to discuss said culture, share what they know about it, its traditions, language, and food prior to the film's screening.

In the 11-16 age group, an OER for Japanese animated film Your Name (2016) asks students to research Japanese history, the difference between its urban and rural areas, as well as the country's relationship with environmental issues and natural disasters. Such an activity brings Japanese culture closer to the students and broadens their understanding and overview of it. A similar activity is present in an OER for Hotel Rwanda (2004), a story of a man who saved thousands of refugees fleeing the civil war. The OER asks students to share their knowledge of the 1994 Rwanda civil war and research more of it and its aftermath from the perspectives of its refugees.

An OER for the film The Last Tree (2019) that is aimed for the 16+ age group, emphasises how the film's protagonist struggles to adapt to London's life, torn between his mother's Nigerian heritage and the culture of inner-city living. In one of the discussion points, the OER asks students to consider how different cultures and social environments influence him and his decisions. This opens a discussion on cultural exchange and dialogue, and such an activity may be especially useful if the classroom has pupils that have experienced something similar to the film's protagonist.

Reflection of Own Culture. In general, IntoFilm's OERs succeed in inspiring the reflection of one's culture, which might be explained by the strong film tradition in the United Kingdom, and the fact the country is a multicultural land that can be represented in different ways from one film to another. The selected OERs invite to critically examine the past of the United Kingdom, the institute of monarchy, and how society's outlook towards the minorities (racial, sexual, gender) have changed throughout the time.

The previously mentioned OER for the film Paddington encourages students to look at British culture from a foreigner's perspective. An OER for 16+ students about The Favourite (2018), which is a fictionalised story about royal life in early 18th century Great Britain, combines the reflection of one's own culture with film education, suggesting choosing some historical figure and developing a biographical film about them within its genre conventions.

An OER for the 11-16 age group about Persepolis (2007), a story of a young Iranian girl growing up amidst country's political turmoil, puts a strong emphasis on critical self-reflection, encouraging students to look at their own culture from an outsider's position. In general, OERs in this age group provide a lot of activities to reflect on their own culture. An OER for Wonder Woman (2017) asks to reflect on gender inequality in previous century London, while an OER for Captain Marvel (2019) inspires students to examine their pop culture and consider what elements of it would be relevant 30 year later. An OER based on another superhero film Spider-Man: Far from Home (2019) encourages to research major crime issues facing one's own country and what could be done to solve them.

Nature of Filmmaking. The OERs lack almost any mention of the international and collaborative nature of filmmaking. Although each film guide lists the countries that contributed to the film production, they rarely base a discussion or an activity on that. The international nature of filmmaking may be completed by analysing different locations presented in the film and their purpose, asking questions such as why a character is there, how the location contributes to the story, is there a reason for exactly this location to be in the film? Very few of the OERs encourage such conversation, for example, The Lion King (1994) or All About My Mother (1999).

The first discussion point in the OER for The Lion King, aimed for the youngest age group, asks to describe where the story is set and to reflect both on the geography and the fauna of African wilderness. The locations chosen in the animated film are not accidental: in some scenes the environment plays an important role, for example, the gorge in the scene of Mufasa's death.

All About My Mother is a Spanish film that focuses on a mother, who, following the sudden death of her son, moves to Barcelona to reconnect with the boy's father. The film's OER, which is within the 11-16 age group, connects the main character's emotional state with how the surrounding environment is represented. Therefore, it asks to reflect how we see Barcelona and why we see it in such a way.

Another OER within the same age group for the film Wajida (2012) goes further in discussing the nature of filmmaking. For the discussion before the film, it mentions that this is the first film in Saudi Arabia to be directed by a woman and asks why it is such a significant moment for a Saudi film culture? This type of discussion incorporates the cultural and film context, encourages a critical analysis, and may prompt a larger discussion on women in cinema in general. After the screening, the OER suggests discussing the location of the film, its importance to a story, as well as learning more about the modern-day Saudi Arabia and comparing it with what is presented in film.

Diversity and Inclusion. The OERs that succeed in this intercultural aspect inspire discussions on cultural diversity within the film, as well as on how the cultures are presented visually and narratively. The OERs in the 5-11 age group explore the topics of diversity and inclusion, however, most often than not it relates to talking animals or fictional cultures. Despite that, they still inspire children to look at how certain characters are portrayed and why. An OER for the film Zootropolis (2016) acknowledges that the animals populating the world of film behave differently from our expectations of them. This OER asks students to develop their own character into this world and consider how they would act. Such a conversation provides an understanding that one can be a complete opposite to stereotypes about them, and that each creature is individual, which contributes to the overall diversity of the societies.

From the age of 11 and upwards the OERs are more direct about discussing diversity, inclusion, and cultural representation. An OER for The Breadwinner (2017), a movie about an Afghan girl searching for her father, while taking care of her family, asks students to examine how Afghan culture is established in the film from story and visual perspectives. An OER for the film Selma (2014), that focuses on Martin Luther King and the fight against racial injustice in the USA, inspires students to reflect on the Civil Rights Movement, racism, and the different ways that African Americans protested the inequalities (Martin Luther King and Malcolm X perspectives).

Your Turn (2019) is a documentary film that depicts the student protest movement from 2013 to the election of the right-wing president Jair Bolsonaro in 2018. An OER based on this film is targeted for the 16+ age group. It inspires students to research Brazilian society and its people, how their voices are represented in the film, and how film's presentation (the frenetic camerawork and front-line filmmaking) affects our perception and viewing experience.

Global Cultural and Film Context. In general, IntoFilm's OERs succeed the most in discussing global cultural and film context. Quite often, the OERs ask to compare festive films from different countries, its genre conventions, and cultural traditions, discuss various issues of discrimination (racial, gender, sexuality), research notable historical events and figures, and investigate their impact and representation in film (for example, Civil Rights Movement, Rwanda Civil War from already mentioned OERs).

However, sometimes there are instances of an unrealised potential for an intercultural discussion, for example, in the case of Germany and Kenya co-produced film Supa Modo (2018). In this film, a young girl who lives in a small Kenyan village and dreams about being a superhero is diagnosed with a terminal illness. Her sister joins with the village community to make the girl believe she is an actual superhero and, thus, make her happy. While the OER provides great discussion topics, it could benefit from asking, for example, to compare how the idea of superheroes differs from the one represented in big Hollywood films, if it even differs, or to research more the lifestyle, customs, and communal traditions of Kenya.

5 DISCUSSION

Film is an international phenomenon that is present in various countries around the world. The culture in which the film industry exists influences film production, distribution (the way films are sold), exhibition (the way films are screened), and future evaluation. It is important to consider this international and intercultural nature of film, especially in film education. Some aspects of intercultural

education are already present in IntoFilm's OERs for any age group from 5 till 16+.

However, the findings reveal notable absence of activities based on the international nature of filmmaking, critical discussions over the depiction of cultural diversity, and the lack of exercises, discussions and activities based on cultural exchange and dialogue. In times of globalisation, increased internationalisation of education and rapid development of online education [15]; [16] it is crucial to consider the possibility of teaching film to an international group of people, and to provide teaching practices, materials, and guidelines online for film educators around the world.

This possibility of international classes became even more apparent with the ongoing coronavirus epidemic that increased the development of online education and distance learning and shifted the education online [17]; [18]. Nowadays, people can join various courses from around the world using the Internet connection. This, in turn, highlights the necessity of developing teaching methods that acknowledge and utilise cultural diversity.

It is not to say that current OERs that are available on Intofilm.org lack intercultural perspective. They succeed at inspiring discussions and activities that put a film within global cultural and film context and provoking a critical reflection about one's own culture. Despite that, there is a place for improvement. There are various ways interculturalism can be utilised even in the case when all students share a similar cultural background. As an example, the screening of a foreign film may encourage the research into traditions and customs of that culture, which would lead to analysis of how they are portrayed in film as opposed to what the pupils have discovered.

International nature of filmmaking may be incorporated into discussion points or practical activities. For example, a teacher may suggest imagining if the events of the film moved from one place to another and then compare the possible differences. Another comparing exercise can be done by focusing on different films shot in the same location. OERs can also look at the cast and crew of the film to see if there are any international people and then focus on their contribution.

Since interculturalism aims to analyse one's own values and beliefs as well as those of others through the dialogue [14], there is a need to develop the OERs that not only offer a reflection of one's own culture, but also inspire the cultural exchange and broadening of cultural knowledge. In this regard, this research looks hopefully into the development and proper launch of the Film Corner project, which is a collaborative initiative of five European institutions, that would provide film education pedagogical resources with focus on a number of EU national and non-national films.

To sum up, the findings reveal that currently there are OERs on IntoFilm.org that support teaching film education from the intercultural perspective among every age group from 5 till 16+, however, despite the noticeable shift towards the international classroom or educational environments [13], [14], their amount is relatively lower than it has a potential to be. In promoting intercultural education OERs should look for inspiration not from the films, but from the international nature of classrooms and our nations.

6 CONCLUSION

The current study explores film education OERs on IntoFilm.org website, which has successfully and continuously uploaded various OERs for years. 160 OERs were examined from the intercultural perspective to discover how many of them are suitable for educators teaching in an international classroom. The findings suggest that although IntoFilm's OERs inspire critical reflection of own culture and often put a film within global cultural and film context, they lack activities and discussion topics based on the one of the most important aspects of interculturalism – cultural exchange and dialogue, as well as the international nature of filmmaking.

This research has a potential to highlight the importance of intercultural perspective when developing film education OER, and to suggest a possible way of doing so, by following the five questions that were used for the qualitative content analysis: **Q1:** How does an OER inspire cultural exchange and dialogue? **Q2:** How does an OER encourage reflection of one's own culture? **Q3:** How does an OER acknowledge the international and collaborative nature of filmmaking? **Q4:** How does an OER discuss topics of cultural diversity, representation, and inclusion? **Q5:** How does an OER put film within global cultural and film context?

Thus, this study provides a framework for developing and analysing film education OERs. While this framework was tested on the example of 160 Film Guides produced by a IntoFilm.org website, further research is needed that would utilise the framework on the larger scale that includes more OERs and other websites similar to IntoFilm.org.

Another direction for the future research concerns the user experience evaluation of the OERs hosting websites. User experience can be defined as "a person's perceptions and responses that result from the use or anticipated use of a product, system or service" [36]. As much as an intercultural OER needs to inspire cultural exchange, dialogue, and self-reflection, the OERs hosting website needs to inspire its continuous use by designing smooth, consistent, pleasing, and helpful user experience.

Website's design can showcase visual expressions of marginalised identity [37], while the experience of browsing host websites may directly affect eventual use of OERs in teaching. Conducting such a user experience of OERs hosting websites is the next step for the researcher.

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PUBLICATION
III

TikTok political participation supporting Alexey Navalny during the COVID-19 pandemic in Russia.

Sergei Glotov

53

TIKTOK POLITICAL PARTICIPATION SUPPORTING ALEXEY NAVALNY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN RUSSIA

Sergei Glotov

Introduction

The outbreak of COVID-19 had reached Russia by late January 2020 when the first two cases were reported, and by April 16th, the infection was recorded in every single region. On March 30, the country's borders were officially closed, while numerous regions had announced lockdowns. Distance working and learning became a norm, public spaces were closed, and people were encouraged to stay in their homes. In total, the lockdown lasted for six weeks, ending on May 11th. These restrictions resulted in an increase in digital activity and the use of social media (Tagiev, 2020).

Among different popular social media (Facebook, Twitter, VKontakte (Russian alternative to Facebook), and Instagram), it was TikTok that had experienced massive growth in numbers of Russian users during the COVID-19 pandemic (Iqbal, 2021; Williamson, 2020). One of the reasons for such popularity could be its uniqueness in presenting intrapersonal connection, that is, informed by and directed toward the individual user (Bhandari & Bimo, 2020), especially considering "For You" page, which is an algorithmically determined auto-play feed unique for each user (Vijay & Gekker, 2021). Not to mention an extensive music library, video effects, and such unique features as a duet that allows users to film alongside someone else's video (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021). Another reason for TikTok popularity especially in Russia is that it allowed people from far corners of such a vast country, outside of major cities, to become Internet-famous and gain some following (VC, 2019). All in all, TikTok encourages people from different places to produce, consume, and react to content with its various features, unique feeds, and a chance of Internet fame.

The pandemic increased the user base of TikTok worldwide (Su et al., 2020), and Russia was not an exception. For a while, Russian TikTok mostly featured dancing and funny videos, however, it changed, due to Alexey Navalny. Navalny is Russia's leading opposition politician with a strong internet presence (he is followed by 4 million on Instagram, 2.1 million on Twitter, and 790.5 thousand on TikTok). On January 17, 2021, he was arrested at Moscow airport following his return from recovery from a poison attempt in Germany. Soon his team announced nationwide demonstrations in his support on January 23rd and released a two-hour-long investigation of an actual palace secretly built for Vladimir Putin, which by June 2021 has 117 million views on YouTube. The arrest and the investigation, as

well as the call for demonstrations, were immediately referenced on TikTok, where #na-valnylive, #23january, and #freedomtonavalny started trending with the clips that promote the protests, increase awareness of the investigation, or share videos of Navalny in court (Sivtsova, 2021). Thus, in a few days, TikTok was transformed into a space where Russians upload their political content.

The Russian Government financially threatened the app and ordered it to delete videos that called to participate in pro-Navalny protests, which TikTok did (Deutsche Welle, 2021; Zverev & Tétrault-Farber, 2021). TikTok also witnessed an influx of antiprotest videos, or-dered by the so-called public organization for youth's rights that shared #notorevolution and identical statements about the danger of protests and just imprisonment of Navalny, however, most of these videos were soon deleted by their creators. Thus, witnessing the rise of political expression on TikTok, the Russian government moved to regulate the app.

This chapter views the political expression of the Russian people through the prism of participatory politics, which is a political dimension of participatory culture, in which peo-ple have opportunities to build communities, express themselves artistically, collaborate, and circulate relevant information (Jenkins, 2009). As a social media, TikTok is designed to stimulate participatory culture: it supports creative and artistic production of content, as well as its circulation, by showcasing the content to those users, who, according to the algorithm, would be interested in it. While hearts (similar to likes) and comment sections develop a social connection, the duet supports a unique app form of collaboration.

Theoretical Framework

The participatory nature of TikTok provided its users with opportunities for a new type of political engagement. After analyzing the political expression on TikTok during the 2020 United States presidential election, Medina Serrano et al. (2020) concluded that TikTok us-ers do not just share and comment on content, they become the content, since they are active presenters of political communication, externalizing personal political opinion in pursuit of a wider audience. Hence, participatory politics on TikTok combine politics and entertain-ment, encouraging users to be active participants.

In general, social media has offered more opportunities for participatory actions and stim-ulated political engagement online (Mihailidis & Thevenin, 2013). It allows users to publicly exert their voices on political issues with no regard to age, education, or citizenship. At the same time, users may create and distribute political information with greater independence from traditional gatekeepers of information (Cohen et al., 2012; Lee & Chan, 2015). Thus, social media provide an opportunity for marginalized people to influence and participate in politics; however, the level of this participation can be regulated by the state, such as the case in Russia.

In December 2011, motivated by dissatisfaction with the fraud in parliamentary elections, Russians took to the streets in what became a series of the biggest antigovernment demon-strations. These protests were marked by the active use of social networks to unite, discuss, and coordinate the protests (Nikiporets-Takigawa, 2013; Spaiser et al, 2017). Information, videos, and opinions circulated on YouTube and Twitter, while demonstrations were orga-nized on VKontakte and Facebook (Enikolopov et al., 2020; White & McAllister, 2014).

Following the protests, the government began tightening Internet legislation (Akbari & Gabdulhakov, 2019; Denisova, 2017), punishing selective Internet users, and spreading false information online (Lonkila et al., 2020). Despite that, Russian Internet space has remained semi-free, since keeping it as such provides some benefits for the regime, such as citizen

feedback and an illusion of democracy (Litvinenko, 2020). While the pandemic increased the popularity of TikTok, the semi-regulated Internet control allowed participatory politics to take place on this relatively new and, thus, not strictly monitored app.

There are several ways that people can be engaged in participatory politics: spreading or reacting to information or recruiting like-minded people. Joseph Kahne et al. (2015) includes these five practices as defying acts for participatory politics:

1   Investigation (collection and analysis of information, for example, its veracity),
2   Dialogue and feedback (discussions and engagement with others),
3   Circulation (sharing information or content with political impact),
4   roduction (creation of original content to advance one's perspective),
5   Mobilization (rally others to accomplish political goals).

This set of actions constitutes participatory versions of agenda-setting, opinion formation, and action-taking, which are at the core of all political life (Ibid., 2015). This chapter uses these five actions to analyze the state of participatory politics on Russian TikTok during Navalny's arrest and subsequent demonstrations in his support. Overall, the chapter's main research question is how do Russian people engage in participatory politics on TikTok in support of Alexey Navalny? To answer it, the study aims to analyze, which of the five actions of participatory politics are the most common on Russian TikTok and how these actions are manifested.

Although TikTok was started as a playful platform with music and dances, in recent years, it gradually transformed into a place of political expression. The researchers have studied the political content of American, Lebanese, and Indian TikToks (Bandy & Diakopoulos, 2020; Lujain et al., 2020; Vijay & Gekker, 2021). The app was also analyzed as a place, where users advocate for social change, increasing awareness of climate change (Hautea et al., 2021), or spreading public health information and promoting the use of masks (Basch et al., 2021; Unni & Weinstein, 2021). The current chapter contributes to this research by exploring the political expression on Russian TikTok and the state of political participation stimulated by Alexey Navalny's arrest.

Method

This research gathered the 200 most popular TikTok videos (based on the number of hearts) produced between January 17th (Navalny's return) and February 4th (suspension of protests in Navalny's support announced by his team). The research focuses particularly on two hashtags: #navalnylive and #23january with 100 videos representing each, since they were reported to be the most popular ones among Navalny's supporters (Sivtsova, 2021). By June 2021, #navalnylive had 104 million views, while #23january had 690.5 million views.

The data were collected on June 11th, 2021. The videos were searched for using the hashtag, and then analyzed based on the number of hearts. The videos that used both hashtags ($n = 3$) were counted only once for #navalnylive, since it was browsed the earliest. The table below (Table 53.1) provides some descriptive information about the collected data, including the ratios and mean average for hearts, comments, and shares.

As seen from the table, the collected videos were very engaging for TikTok users, gathering, on average, tens of thousands of hearts, thousands of comments, and shares. The following table (Table 53.2) presents the political spectrum of the videos gathered.

Table 53.1 User engagement with the collected videos

Hashtag		Hearts	Comments	Share
#navalnylive	Ratio	6,547–859.9 K	49–30.6 K[a]	10–24.1 K
	Mean	48,302.77	1,266.87	1,085.73
#23january	Ratio	75.4K–908 K	365–22 K	114–37.9 K
	Mean	196,952	4,164.47	4,877.79

a   Two videos had comments disabled

Table 53.2 Political spectrum of the collected videos

Political Leanings	Number of Videos
Supportive of Navalny, his investigation and pro-Navalny demonstrations	191
Against Navalny, supportive of the current government	5
Other (no relation to politics)	4

The majority of the videos were supportive of Alexey Navalny; however, five videos were either critical of him and pro-Navalny demonstrations or supportive of the current Putin's government. The other four videos, although used the hashtags, were not political: one with #navalnylive suggested being an herbalist for a summer, while another with #23january was a sketch with a pee joke.

These four videos were excluded from the content analysis, during which each of the remaining 196 videos was assigned to one of the five actions of participatory politics: investigation, dialogue and feedback, circulation, production, and mobilization. The small size of the dataset means that the analysis is not exhaustive, but representative of major trends in participatory politics on TikTok during the specific timeline of Navalny's case. In addition, it is important to remember that TikTok deleted some of the videos in Navalny's support in January 2021 on the government orders; therefore, the collected data represents only the remaining videos on the app.

Results

The results of the data analysis are shown in Table 53.3, which presents the number and proportion of videos that corresponded to each of the five core acts of participatory politics. The table is followed by a closer analysis of how each of the acts manifested itself on the app, starting from the most common one.

Table 53.3 showcases that the two most common acts of participatory politics include circulation (sharing various information with a political impact) and production (creation of original content to advance one's perspective). The least common act is dialogue and feedback (discussion and engagement with others); however, it might take place in the comment sections of various TikTok videos or in communities outside of the app. Nevertheless, the Russian people were engaged in all five acts of participatory politics.

Circulation. The advancement of digital media made the practice of sharing information with a wide public quicker and easier (Rundle et al., 2015). Users can distribute the

Table 53.3 Number and proportion of videos corresponding to the core acts of participatory politics

Act of Participatory Politics	Number of the Videos	Proportion (%)
Investigation	19	9.5
Dialogue and feedback	14	7
Circulation	76	38
Production	63	31.5
Mobilization	24	12
Other (no relation to politics)	4	2

information through social media tools, by giving likes, retweeting, sharing, or, in the case of TikTok, broadcasting a remixed clip, edited differently from the original and/or having a new soundtrack. From January 17th to February 4th, Russian people were mostly engaged in circulating the existing information on the app. Such information includes:

- Footage from the pro-Navalny demonstration on January 23rd, recorded by media outlets or other participants, showcasing a great number of people gathered, individual acts of resilience, and instances of police brutality.
- Countries and celebrities that support Navalny's release.
- Videos of Navalny's speeches at various political rallies, as well as snippets from his old interviews to independent cable and online channel TVRain.
- Snippets of Putin's palace investigation.
- Videos of Navalny in court, especially the footage of him drawing a heart in the air for his wife, Yuliya.
- And compilations of short videos of Navalny and Yuliya, that showcase their support for each other.

Overall, these videos can direct people to the investigation, attempt to create a personal connection to Navalny, or showcase the horrors of police brutality to instigate an outrage; however, together, they are evident of the support for Navalny and his cause.

Production. Producing allows TikTok users to actually exert their voices and agency on political issues, by recording themselves either expressing their own opinions out loud, through the text or in their actions. The majority of the videos showcase antigovernment sentiment or support for Navalny, however, there are four (out of 60) videos, which express loyalty to the current political regime or criticize Navalny and his supporters.

There were several similar videos made by different creators, where a person stands next to an empty chair with their Russian passport. When they toss the passport away, the image of Navalny appears in the chair. This type of video can be interpreted as a person deciding to stand by Navalny, even if it means going against the motherland. This pattern was also used in a pro-government and the only duet video collected, where a person catches the tossed passport and has an image of Putin appear in the chair next to them.

There were several videos recorded from the demonstrations, showcasing other participants nearby. Two different people published their original songs in Navalny's support, while another person presented a drawing, inspired by Navalny's investigation. Apart from serious videos, there were also humorous ones. For example, in one video, a person jokes that Putin is like a mandarin, in the beginning, it is very beneficial, but if eaten a lot, it will provoke an

allergy. The punchline is delivered with a cut to the person's face with an allergic reaction. Another humorous example is where a TikToker put faces of Navalny, Yuliya, and Putin on characters of popular children cartoon *Dora the Explorer,* so that it seems that Navalny and his wife tell "*Swiper, no swiping*" to prevent Putin from stealing.

Mobilization. Out of 24 videos assigned to this category, only one was done by Putin's supporter, who attempted to gather like-minded people. The rest encouraged participation in pro-Navalny demonstrations. Usually, TikTok users would provide their reasons for participating in demonstrations, and then close the video with a call to join them. For example, there were three videos with a similar pattern, where a person would face the camera, while the text appeared on the screen: "*Get out on the streets, don't be afraid. Let us fight for our future*". There were also other three videos, in which, people presenting themselves as children of policemen, express their willingness to participate in the demonstrations, and encourage others to follow.

Investigation. Digital era allowed for a wide range of information to be available online, which can be collected, analyzed, and distributed by Internet users independently of traditional gatekeepers of information (Kahne et al., 2016). In the current case, there were three ways of doing an investigation among 19 assigned videos:

- Collecting information on various achievements and deeds of Navalny and his team and presenting them in a digestible way with pictures and music,
- Providing examples of corruption and politicians lies to its citizens (e.g., about not raising the age of retirement), and
- Questing the accuracy of official information about the number of protestors and the behavior of police.

To give an example, one user shows their face with a text: "*news: National Guard was protecting people and serving them tea*", and then cuts it with footage of police brutality, intending to contrast the official narrative with what actually happened. One example is a TikTok video that provides information about Putin's corruption simply with white text against black background. However, it is important to note that all videos assigned to this act lack mentions of their sources, while presenting the information as factual.

Dialogue and Feedback. In 14 videos that were assigned to this action, people would usually respond to some question or comment that would be visible on screen. In an interesting example, one user, whose content is related to divination by tarot cards, was asked to tell the future of the protests, to which they replied. Another person noticed that others ask online what exactly Navalny offers. They put the question as a text in a video and then provided a response.

Discussion

While the COVID-19 pandemic increased the popularity of TikTok in Russia, it was the arrest of Alexey Navalny and subsequent demonstrations in his support that transformed TikTok from the app with sketches and dancing videos to a place of participatory politics. This transformation was also assisted by semi-regulated control of the Internet by the Russian state that for a while did not impose any restrictions on the app. The data analysis revealed that although TikTok users were engaged in all five acts of participatory politics (investigation, dialogue and feedback, circulation, production, mobilization), the majority of them participated in the circulation of relevant information without directly voicing their opinion online.

By circulating various types of information, including footage from demonstrations, videos of Navalny and snippets of his investigation, Russian TikTok users were celebrating the protest and cementing an image of Navalny as a truth-teller politician, who is also a caring husband sharing an incredible bond with his wife. However, this image was a simplified version of Navalny's political views, personal life, as well as the whole case. Kahne et al. (2016) warns that one of the potential risks of circulation as a core practice of participatory politics is simplification of information in order to distribute it quickly and broadly. For example, Navalny's political views and the agenda of his party were reduced to only a few slogans.

At the same time, it is hard to measure the actual impact that circulation and other types of participatory political actions had on other app users. Since TikTok "For You" page is based on each user's preferences, how common pro-Navalny videos would be among the feeds of those who oppose him, and vice versa? Circulation can limit one's exposure to alternative viewpoints and information sources (Conroy et al., 2012), and TikTok algorithms may stimulate that.

Nevertheless, the pandemic supported the acceleration of political participation on TikTok since many people were isolated at home with their digital devices. The app allowed Russian citizens not only to express their political opinions, but also to share political information that could be censored by the Russian government, such as investigation of Putin's palace, footage from pro-Navalny demonstrations, and various examples of corruption. The case of the unjust arrest and trial of Alexey Navalny provoked the Russian public to be vocal about their political opinions, and TikTok proved to be a great place for doing that since it was relatively new, but already popular social media in Russia.

Overall, TikTok was able to politically empower Russian people, by providing digital tools and the outlet for sharing, creating, discussing political information, and expressing their own views. Hence, social media can be an important tool for political participation, especially in the oppressed states, and TikTok with its short audio-visual content provides a fresh and engaging way of doing so.

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IV

Intercultural film literacy education against cultural misrepresentation. Finnish visual art teachers' perspective.

Sergei Glotov