

## Historical linguistics as a key to in-depth learning

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In the last decades, scholars have been addressing the lack of explicit L1 grammar teaching in Norwegian primary and secondary education (Hertzberg, 2014, 2004; Hognestad, 2013, 2019), a lack which appears to be an international trend (van Rijt, Wijnands, & Coppen, 2020). This lack of grammatical knowledge in turn results in problems for the teaching of L2 (English) and L3 (usually, French, German or Spanish) (Askland, 2018; Hansejordet, 2009), subsequently creating a large gap when students begin studying languages in tertiary education (Toresen, 2020). Among teacher educators at our institution, mending the lack of integration between the linguistic research forefront and the way languages are taught in secondary school has been a priority for the last five years, uniting researchers and educators from both the majority language discipline (Norwegian) and the foreign languages disciplines taught at the college (English, French, German, Spanish). Because of the relatively small size of the institution, there is extensive collaboration between the different language departments, and a multilingual approach, which is stressed in the Norwegian curriculum *Knowledge Promotion* (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019) and in CEFR (Council\_of\_Europe, 2001) is very visibly present in the pedagogical research. One example is particularly relevant for the present purposes, namely Bjørke and Hagemann (2020), who advocate etymology as a didactic tool to enhance vocabulary learning in the foreign languages.

In August 2021, the trial project *A flying start in languages* ('Pangstart i språk') was held at our institution, especially developed to endow the students with the necessary knowledge for studying languages in tertiary education. The two-day 'inspirational seminar' brought up a range of linguistic subjects, and one session was almost entirely dedicated to language historical topics: the evolution of language, the history of the Indo-European languages, etymology and sound laws, and historical changes in language typology. The intention was to create interest and increase students metaknowledge by approaching language from several angles at the same time. To empirically assess the effects the course had on the students who attended it, we followed up with a research project connected to the course ('*Pangstarteffekter*'). In our talk we would like to present the results from the focus group interviews we had with the students who attended the course and discuss the positive effects knowledge about language history may have on linguistic awareness in general and on students' in-depth learning in particular. The results also have implications for secondary school curriculum, as the course is intended to give the students what one might argue that they should have been given at an earlier stage.

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