

# Interactive Qualifying Project: Examining Icelandic Language Instruction and its Role in the Integration of Immigrants and Refugees: A Case Study

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## **Abstract**

We examined Icelandic as a second language (ISL) instruction in three language schools in Reykjavík: The Tin Can Factory, Mímir, and MúltíKúltí. These three schools teach Icelandic to adult immigrants and second language learners. At each school, we interviewed directors, students, and teachers and conducted classroom observations. Using an approach derived from grounded theory, we analyzed our qualitative data and developed conclusions on how the needs of ISL learners are addressed. In this paper, we describe the different teaching and assessment methods used at these schools and how each of these methods can address the needs of ISL learners with diverse backgrounds and motivations for learning Icelandic. We also created an infographic to inform immigrants of these language schools.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Icelandic Historical Significance and Immigration Trends.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Historical Significance of the Language.....	9
Icelandic Language Test for Citizenship.....	9
Icelandic Immigration: Trends and Experiences.....	10
<b>The Development of Icelandic Language Courses.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Financial Support.....	12
ISL Curriculum Standardization.....	13
<b>Second Language Teaching Methods.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Direct Method.....	13
Communicative Method.....	13
Grammar-Translation Method.....	14
Eclectic Method.....	14
Use of the Mother Tongue in Second Language Courses.....	14
<b>Assessment Methods.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Self-Assessment.....	15
Peer Assessment.....	16
Exams.....	16
<b>Assessment in Icelandic as a Second Language.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Assessment in the Icelandic as a Second Language Course Curriculum Guide.....	16
Student Opinions on Assessment in ISL Courses.....	17
<b>Grounded Theory.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Our Case Study: Three Language Schools.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Interviews with Language School Directors.....	18
Interviews with Teachers and Students.....	18
Teacher Interviews.....	19
Student Interviews.....	19
Classroom Observations.....	20
Data Analysis.....	20
<b>Student Motivations and Goals for Learning Icelandic.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Work Opportunities.....	21
Family.....	21
Integration.....	22

<b>The Tin Can Factory</b> .....	<b>23</b>
Overview.....	23
Student and Teacher Population.....	23
Course Offerings.....	23
Cost and Duration.....	24
Language Use in the Classroom.....	24
Teaching Methods.....	24
Classroom Materials.....	25
Specific Teaching Strategies.....	25
Interaction Strategies.....	26
Non-Traditional Teaching Methods.....	26
Assessment Methods.....	27
Perspectives on Assessment.....	27
Formative Assessment.....	27
Summative Assessment.....	27
Conveying Progress to Students.....	28
Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic.....	28
Perspectives on Teaching Strategies.....	28
Obstacles to Learning Icelandic.....	29
Addressing Student Needs.....	29
Preparatory Classes.....	29
Adjusting Class Material.....	30
Societal Circumstances.....	30
Feeling of Integration.....	30
<b>Mímir</b> .....	<b>31</b>
Overview.....	31
Student and Teacher Population.....	31
Course Offerings.....	31
Cost and Duration.....	32
Language Use in the Classroom.....	32
Teaching Methods.....	32
Materials Provided by the School.....	32
Materials Created by Teachers.....	33
Assessment Methods.....	33
Summative Assessment.....	33
Formative Assessment.....	34
Teacher Perspectives on Assessment.....	34
Conveying Progress to Students.....	34

Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic.....	35
Teaching Methods.....	35
Assessment Methods.....	35
Addressing Student Needs.....	35
Adjusting Class Material.....	35
Teaching and Practice.....	36
Practice at the Workplace.....	36
Curriculum Development.....	36
<b>MúltíKúltí.....</b>	<b>38</b>
Overview.....	38
Student and Teacher Population.....	38
Course Offerings.....	38
Cost and Duration.....	38
Language Use in the Classroom.....	38
Teaching Methods.....	39
Class Materials and Resources.....	39
Specific Teaching Strategies.....	40
Assessment Methods.....	40
Summative Assessment.....	40
Formative Assessment.....	40
Conveying Progress to Students.....	41
Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic.....	41
Effectiveness of Homework Assignments.....	41
Obstacles to Learning Icelandic.....	41
Addressing Student Needs and Challenges.....	42
Adjusting Classes to Students.....	42
Using Icelandic Outside of the Classroom.....	42
Linguistic Immersion.....	42
Virtual Attendance.....	43
<b>Developing and Distributing the Infographic.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>45</b>
Limitations.....	45
Language School Summaries.....	46
The Tin Can Factory.....	46
Mímir.....	46
MúltíKúltí.....	47
Future Directions.....	47
Potential Further Uses of the Infographic.....	47

Expanding the Research Scope.....	48
Assessing and Improving ISL Effectiveness.....	48
<b>References.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>53</b>
Appendix A: Language School Director Interview Questions.....	54
Appendix B: Teacher Interview Questions.....	55
Appendix C: Student Interview Questions.....	57
Appendix D: IRB Consent Form and Oral Script.....	59
Appendix E: Email to Language Schools.....	62
Appendix F: Infographic.....	63
Appendix G: Authorship List.....	64

## Executive Summary

### **Overview**

We conducted a case study of three language schools in Reykjavík: The Tin Can Factory, Mímir, and MúltíKúltí. At each language school, our project aimed to determine the teaching and assessment methods used in Icelandic as a second language (ISL) instruction and how these methods address the different needs of immigrants and second language learners.

### **Methodology**

At each school, we conducted classroom observations and interviewed school directors, teachers, and students. The qualitative data was analyzed using a method that is similar to grounded theory, where key themes were extracted from the data collected at each school and used to create categories of analysis.

### **Results and Conclusions**

The Tin Can Factory is a language school with a great emphasis on culture; the goal of the school is not only to teach students Icelandic as a second language, but to immerse their students in Icelandic society. With a mission to incorporate history and culture into their educational model, The Tin Can Factory aims to make the language learning experience positive and enriching.

Mímir is an organization that provides educational opportunities, with a focus on vocational training, for individuals who have limited formal education.

MúltíKúltí Language Center focuses on using traditional teaching methods to provide a practical education for those seeking to learn Icelandic.

A variety of teaching methods are used at each of the schools to keep students engaged; specific strategies include group discussions, repetition practice, games, and individual practice in workbooks and worksheets provided by the school. Teachers assess students based on their class participation and individual work. End-of-course exams are also given to students at Mímir and MúltíKúltí, and occasionally at The Tin Can Factory.



## **Introduction**

Culture is inextricably linked to language. Mutual understanding and connection within a society are built upon the conversations and stories exchanged between leaders, neighbors, and friends. For any foreigner hoping to integrate into a new culture, acquiring the culture's language is a necessary step.

In recent years, a rapid increase in the Icelandic population has immersed more people into the country's culture and traditions, leading to a rising demand for Icelandic as a second language (ISL) classes. The Icelandic language is an essential tool for social interaction and is key to cultural participation in a nation with a rich history and culture (Skaptadóttir & Innes, 2017). The Icelandic government has made efforts to preserve the language in response to the influx of immigrants and refugees, such as establishing Icelandic language schools to encourage language acquisition among newcomers (Hilmarrsson-Dunn & Kristinsson, 2010).

While some immigrants and refugees hope to seamlessly integrate into Icelandic society, others arrive with the purpose of working until they can move back to their homelands (Garðarsdóttir & Skaptadóttir, 2020). Different motivations to learn the language benefit from different approaches to ISL instruction (Hoffmann et al., 2021). The team's sponsors, Dr. Pamela Innes and Dr. Sarah Stanlick, are investigating pedagogical approaches to teaching Icelandic and the impacts of different evaluation methods used in the classroom.

The goal of this project was to perform a case study of three language schools in Reykjavík to determine their teaching and assessment methods for ISL instruction. We also sought to examine how these methods address the different needs of immigrants and second language learners. There are three primary components of the study: determining ISL teaching and assessment methods, determining the different needs of immigrants and refugees, and analyzing teaching and assessment methods as they relate to the needs of ISL learners.

## **Icelandic Historical Significance and Immigration Trends**

### **Historical Significance of the Language**

The Icelandic language is one of the Scandinavian languages, with others including Danish, Faroese, Norwegian, and Swedish. This group of languages is part of the Germanic dialect spoken in the Northern parts of Europe (Cinque & Kayne, 2005).

The ancient texts and writings of Iceland were written in a language that was once common among all Scandinavians (Ottosson, 2008). This language eventually became native Icelandic, and it has since remained well-preserved and relatively unaltered to the extent that ancient sagas and stories can still be read by Icelanders today (Ottosson, 2008). While pronunciations have evolved since the Middle Ages, the structure and grammar of the language have remained unchanged (Holmarsdottir, 2001). Meanwhile, the vocabulary has increased dramatically. As technological advancements flourish worldwide, the Icelandic language has continued to grow alongside them (Andersen, 2020). Icelanders find pride in the fact that their ancient language has remained preserved in its foundation while continuing to grow as society progresses (Holmarsdottir, 2001).

There is an overwhelming response by the Icelandic community to protect and promote the Icelandic language, and those who reside in Iceland with a lack of language proficiency face difficulty being fully accepted into society (Rögnvaldsson et al., 2012; Skaptadóttir, 2011).

### **Icelandic Language Test for Citizenship**

To obtain Icelandic citizenship, immigrants must pass a language test (Icelandic Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, 2008). Immigrants are tested on a variety of language skills, including speaking, listening, writing, and reading comprehension (Námsmatsstofnun, n.d.). These exams aim to test linguistic understanding rather than knowledge of Icelandic customs (Icelandic Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, 2008). There is no limit to the number of times the test may be taken; however, if a candidate fails the exam, they will not have the opportunity to retake it until the next time it is held. Language tests are held twice annually (Icelandic Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, 2008).

## Icelandic Immigration: Trends and Experiences

The immigrant population of Iceland has been steadily increasing since the 1990s. In 1990, the immigrant population consisted of 4,812 people, which correlated to 1.9% of the total Icelandic population (Statistics Iceland, 2022a). As of the second quarter of 2023, the population of Iceland was at an all-time high of 394,200 inhabitants, and immigrants comprised 17.9% of this population, corresponding to 70,540 people (Statistics Iceland, 2023a; Statistics Iceland, 2022a; Statistics Iceland, 2022b). Figure 1 illustrates the trends in Iceland's immigrant population as a percentage of the total population from 1990 to 2023.

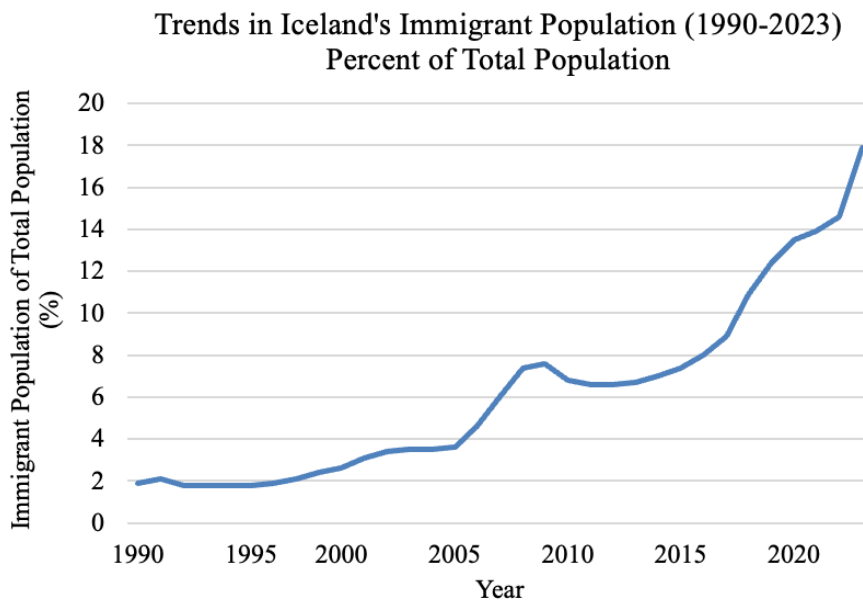


Figure 1: Trends in Iceland's Immigrant Population (1990-2023), Percent of Total Population. Dataset from Statistics Iceland (2023a) and Statistics Iceland (2022a).

According to the International Organization for Migration (2018), immigrants often come to Iceland for opportunities in work, study, and a new way of life. The economic development of Iceland in the 1990s led to labor shortages in several industries, including fishing, construction, sales, and more recently, tourism (Skaptadóttir, 2011; Wojtyńska & Zielińska, 2010; Heleniak & Sigurjonsdottir, 2018). The demand for foreign labor continues to be present in low-skilled occupations, such as manufacturing, food and retail services, care and cleaning, and fish processing (Heleniak & Sigurjonsdottir, 2018). Most of these jobs were filled by Polish

immigrants, who account for 35% of all immigrants in the country in 2022 (Statistics Iceland, 2022c). According to the International Organization for Migration (2018), the demand for immigrant labor will likely continue to rise in the coming decades.

Some immigrants arrive in Iceland as refugees in search of asylum (International Organization for Migration, 2018). In 2022, the primary countries of origin for refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Iceland were Ukraine (2,335 people), Venezuela (1,511 people), Afghanistan (317 people), and several Middle Eastern countries (1,072 people total), such as Syria, Iraq, and Palestine (Statista, 2023).

Not all immigrants who come to Iceland plan to stay. Ólöf Garðarsdóttir & Unnur D. Skaptadóttir (2020) report that Poles typically intend to return to their country of origin. Immigrants who come to Iceland looking for work generally leave when work becomes a scarce resource (Wojtyńska, 2012). However, some immigrants come to Iceland with the intention to stay. As reported by Garðarsdóttir & Skaptadóttir (2020), 86.5% of Filipinos obtain Icelandic citizenship within 10 years of living in Iceland, compared to only 29.9% of Poles. Furthermore, since 2012, the number of immigrants entering the country exceeds the number of immigrants leaving, as illustrated in Figure 2. For example, in 2022, 15,438 immigrants entered the country, with only 5,097 immigrants leaving that year (Statistics Iceland, 2023b).

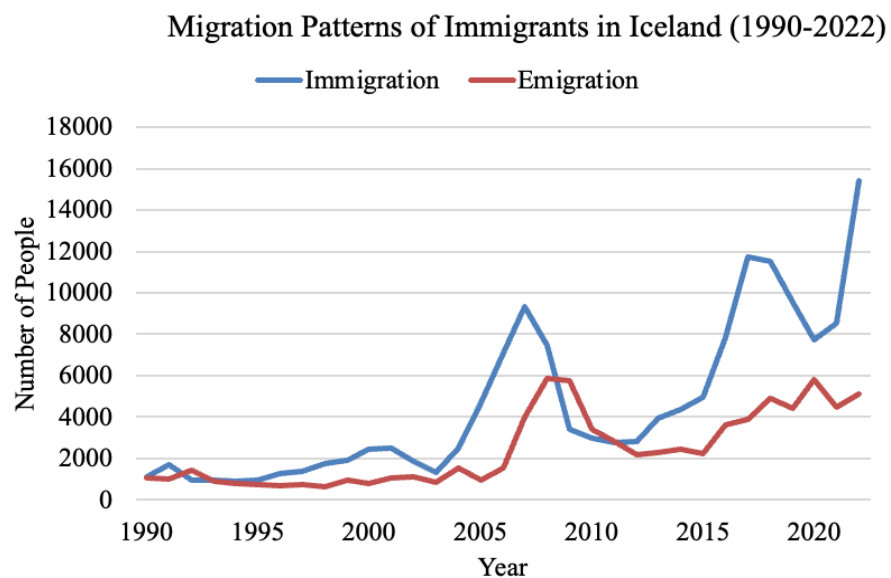


Figure 2: Migration Patterns of Immigrants in Iceland (1990-2022). Emigration from Iceland is shown in red. Immigration to Iceland is shown in blue. Dataset from Statistics Iceland (2023b).

According to Unnur D. Skaptadóttir & Pamela Innes (2017), those who sought to work in Iceland temporarily did not tend to prioritize learning Icelandic. This was possible because many immigrants had jobs where they worked with other people from their country of origin who could speak their mother tongue (Skaptadóttir & Innes, 2017). Furthermore, Katarzyna D. Zaorska (2012) reports that Icelandic immigrants use English more often than Icelandic. English speakers are able to rely on the language in activities such as work, shopping, or socializing (Zaorska, 2012).

Although immigrants can rely on other languages, Skaptadóttir & Innes (2017) state that there are drawbacks for those who do not learn Icelandic. For example, caregivers may find it challenging to communicate effectively with the children or elderly individuals that they care for, and foreign shop workers may struggle to engage in discussions about the products they are selling. Skaptadóttir & Innes (2017) report that immigrants start taking ISL courses soon after becoming employed, with all immigrants in their study having attended at least one course. Immigrants in Iceland recognize that learning Icelandic allows for increased opportunities for participation in Icelandic society and culture (Skaptadóttir & Innes, 2017).

### **The Development of Icelandic Language Courses**

Starting in the 1980s, informal conversational courses were offered in Icelandic for immigrants learning the language (Hoffmann et al., 2021). In the 1990s, the Adult Education Centre and various companies started to offer ISL courses (Hoffmann et al., 2021). Then, in the 2000s, the first ISL schools were established (Hoffmann et al., 2021). Second language courses provided adult immigrants a new opportunity to develop their understanding of cultural norms and to be immersed in Icelandic society (Casey, 2014; Heinemann, 2017).

### **Financial Support**

Students learning Icelandic must pay for ISL courses, but costs can be partially or fully reimbursed through labor unions. Unemployed students can request that the Directorate of

Labour pay in full for two ISL courses per year from a list of selected schools (Directorate of Labour of Iceland, n.d.).

### **ISL Curriculum Standardization**

The Icelandic language test required for citizenship has fostered the development of textbooks aimed at addressing the skills tested in this exam, though these textbooks and curriculums are not universally used (Innes & Skaptadóttir, 2017). A guide for ISL education has also been released by the Icelandic government; however, it is not enforced or required of all programs (Icelandic Ministry of Education and Children's Affairs, 2010).

### **Second Language Teaching Methods**

The manner in which teachers structure and organize language courses can influence a student's success (Colliander et al., 2018). There are a number of different teaching methods used globally to help students acquire a second language, with different methods addressing different student needs or experiences (Colliander et al., 2018).

#### **Direct Method**

One of the primary methods used to teach second languages is the direct method. In this approach, speaking skills are emphasized over other aspects like spelling and grammar (Delbio et al., 2018). This method aims to teach the target language without linking it to the learner's native language (Delbio et al., 2018). When used in ISL education, an instructor would teach their students the Icelandic language while creating minimal connections to the students' native languages. In the direct method, speaking and conversational skills are greatly emphasized, and reading, writing, and complex grammar skills are given less importance but are still practiced (Delbio et al., 2018).

#### **Communicative Method**

The communicative method is very similar to the direct method in that verbal communication skills are emphasized over other aspects of the language (Delbio et al., 2018). While the direct method places students as active participants who self-correct mistakes and work on perfecting skills, the communicative method allows mistakes to be seen as a natural part

of the language acquisition process, and the teacher is the facilitator (Liu & Shi, 2007). According to research done by the American Research Institute for Policy Development, the communicative method consists of interactions in the target language that relate to real-life experiences, and the goal is for language to be acquired in a way that will allow for students to find success in situations relevant to their lives (Mordaunt et al., 2019).

### **Grammar-Translation Method**

One of the oldest and most traditional approaches to second language instruction is the grammar-translation method (Lewis, 2019). In this approach, an instructor translates each individual word or phrase to or from the target language, and grammar rules are given importance over other aspects (Delbio et al., 2018). Techniques such as repetition and drills are used to help students memorize grammar rules and vocabulary. This method emphasizes words and phrases as their own individual units to teach vocabulary and specific grammar rules (Delbio et al., 2018). In this method, the instructor uses students' native language and the target language (Delbio et al., 2018).

### **Eclectic Method**

The eclectic method utilizes components from numerous teaching methods in a dynamic manner to address the varying needs of students (Mwanza, 2017). Second language instructors can find themselves limited in the bounds of particular teaching methods. The eclectic approach allows for unforeseen needs to be addressed and for language instruction to be individualized to students of different linguistic and educational backgrounds (Mwanza, 2017).

### **Use of the Mother Tongue in Second Language Courses**

A topic of interest in second language learning courses is the use of the mother tongue within the classroom. Language researcher at the University of Iceland, Evan Lewis, reports disagreements within the language teaching community over whether a student's native language should be present in the classroom (Lewis, 2019). Some teachers prohibit students from using their native language within the classroom; this is to maximize time and exposure using the target language and to fully immerse a student in their target language (Majeed & Ilankumaran,

2022). Others argue that using a student's native language is essential to learning and understanding concepts in a new language, especially for beginners (Lewis, 2019).

### **Assessment Methods**

Course-based assessment can be defined as “the systematic collection and analysis of information to improve student learning” (Fisher, 2017). As described by the Icelandic Ministry of Education in their curriculum guides for Iceland's compulsory school system, assessment is necessary to understand a student's skills (Icelandic Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 2014). Assessment serves to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching material used and to assess whether the teacher's goals for their students need to be adjusted (Icelandic Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 2014).

Two primary types of assessment exist across education: formative assessment and summative assessment (Fisher, 2017). Formative assessment evaluates student learning over time by providing frequent feedback during the teaching and learning processes (Bandy, 2020). Examples of formative assessment include discussion questions, low-stakes assignments, and classroom activities (Bandy, 2020). Formative assessments are typically conducted over the entirety of a course and allow students to identify gaps in their knowledge and abilities. Meanwhile, summative assessment acts as a comprehensive evaluation of student knowledge and is typically implemented at the end of a course (Fisher, 2017). Examples include exams, papers, and presentations given at the end of a course or unit (Bandy, 2020). Summative assessments are concerned with learning outcomes and providing feedback on students' readiness for higher levels of study (Kizlik, 2012).

Specific methods of assessment include self-assessment, peer-assessment, and exams. Any method can be implemented as a form of formative or summative assessment (Fisher, 2017).

### **Self-Assessment**

Student evaluation can take the form of a self-assessment, where students evaluate the quality of their own work and their experiences with class material. A common benefit attributed to self-assessment is that students can have a more direct impact on their learning by taking the role of learner and assessor; however, the method is limited by students' willingness to critically



and objectively evaluate their work (Fisher, 2017). Specific examples of self-assessment include portfolios, reflection logs, and journals (Reynisdóttir, 2016; Fisher, 2017).

### **Peer Assessment**

Peer assessment involves evaluation of a student's work by peers and classmates. Peer assessment shares with self-assessment the characteristic of allowing students to play a more direct role in their education. In addition, it encourages interaction between students by requiring that they share and observe each other's work. A potential issue with this assessment method is that students can misrepresent the performances of their peers due to personal bias or favoritism (Fisher, 2017). Peer assessment can take the form of student-led discussions, peer editing of essays, and study groups (Wride, 2017).

### **Exams**

An exam format is a prominent form of assessment, where students' abilities and knowledge on a given subject and learning goals are assessed through a test (Fisher, 2017). Exam effectiveness is dependent upon the prompts and questions selected or written by the teacher (Fisher, 2017). When creating an exam, teachers must consider the specific learning objectives they are testing, the difficulty level of the questions, and how prepared students are to meet the exam expectations (Fisher, 2017).

## **Assessment in Icelandic as a Second Language**

### **Assessment in the Icelandic as a Second Language Course Curriculum Guide**

Four main language skills are identified in the ISL Course Curriculum Guide published by the Icelandic Ministry of Education and Children's Affairs (2010): reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The curriculum recognizes assessment as a key factor in helping students understand their strengths and weaknesses in the aforementioned skills and guiding students in their language studies (Icelandic Ministry of Education and Children's Affairs, 2010). The curriculum explains that teachers must clearly describe learning goals, and students' achievement and progress towards these goals must be monitored using a variety of methods (Icelandic Ministry of Education and Children's Affairs, 2010). The curriculum lists several methods of assessment that teachers can use in ISL courses, including projects that students work on during

and outside of lessons, class participation and performance in class, oral and written final exams, guidebooks with exercises students can work through, and self assessment (Icelandic Ministry of Education and Children's Affairs, 2010).

### **Student Opinions on Assessment in ISL Courses**

Hoffmann et al. (2021) report that many immigrants attend language schools where routine assessment is rare. Students reported wanting teachers to test them in order to better understand their progress, as well as for proof of the students' proficiency that can be provided to employers prior to taking the citizenship test (Hoffmann et al., 2021). Suggestions from students included implementing pre-tests and post-tests into the courses, which would better allow students to track their progress, and using clear marks to indicate which questions a student got right and wrong (Hoffmann et al., 2021).

### **Grounded Theory**

Our data analysis method is derived from grounded theory. First developed by sociologists Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss in 1967, grounded theory is a qualitative data analysis method that is often used in social work to identify patterns and use these patterns to develop theories that are empirically derived from studies (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Birks & Mills, 2015). This theory relies on deriving theories "grounded" in data, where researchers can learn from qualitative research methods such as interviews or observations (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2019). In grounded theory, the process of data collection is performed simultaneously with data analysis, and both are iterative processes (Birks & Mills, 2015). During analysis, individual interview transcripts are divided into excerpts, which are then grouped into themes or codes (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Birks & Mills, 2015). Connections between themes are then established, and additional data is analyzed and compared in terms of these connections and themes. The categories and connections are refined according to additional data that is collected, ultimately resulting in the development of a central, or grounded, theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Birks & Mills, 2015).

## **Our Case Study: Three Language Schools**

Three language schools in the city of Reykjavík are cited by the Directorate of Labour: The Tin Can Factory, Mímir, and MúltíKúltí (Directorate of Labour, n.d.). These language schools became the subjects of our case study. The three schools teach the Icelandic language to adult immigrants and are approved by the Icelandic government for residency permits and citizenship requirements. At the end of our case study, we developed an infographic to summarize and outline the qualities of each school that can help students decide which school to attend.

## **Methodology**

### **Interviews with Language School Directors**

The first step in data collection was contacting the three language schools involved in the case study: The Tin Can Factory, MúltíKúltí, and Mímir. The schools were first contacted via an email that can be found in Appendix E. Interviews were then scheduled and conducted with the directors of each school to obtain an overview of the schools' educational philosophies and curriculum organizations.

Interviews conducted with the language school directors began with an explanation of the project's goal and a general discussion of each school, followed by a series of specific questions that our team wrote prior to the interview. The list of questions that we asked the school directors can be found in Appendix A. Directors were asked about their experience working at the language school, the school's teaching and assessment strategies, the classes offered by the organization, their perspective on ISL education as a whole, and the types of students at their school. All four group members attended each director interview, with one group member taking notes on the topics discussed. Classroom observations and student and teacher interviews were scheduled at each director interview.

### **Interviews with Teachers and Students**

Once connections with directors were established, we needed to assess the state of ISL instruction at each school. This involved interviews with teachers to obtain professional perspectives on classroom management, as well as interviews with students to understand their first-hand experiences in ISL education and integration into Icelandic society. We aimed to

interview as many individuals as we could at each language school, though the specific number of interviews varied due to interviewee interest and availability. Interviews were conducted one-on-one, with one team member interviewing one teacher or student at a time, and interviews took about 15 minutes on average. All individuals were asked to provide informed consent, and all personal information was kept confidential. If personal identifiable information, such as names or home cities, were mentioned in the audio recordings, we did not write them in the final transcripts of the recordings. The information collected through the teacher interviews was used to gain an understanding of the teaching environment and the role of teachers in helping immigrants and other second language learners further their development in Icelandic. The information collected through student interviews was used to gain an understanding of the learning environment from the students' perspectives and their motivations for taking the courses.

### *Teacher Interviews*

In the teacher interviews, we asked about teachers' educational and linguistic backgrounds, as well as their training and education as it related to second language teaching. We also inquired about their approaches to teaching and what strategies they have found to be useful while teaching Icelandic. We asked questions about common problems that teachers found students facing and how the teachers overcame those obstacles in students' learning, in addition to their views on the purpose and importance of assessment. A list of interview questions for teachers can be found in Appendix B. We aimed to interview teachers at multiple course levels in each school. Interviews were conducted in English, recorded using the Voice Memos app, and later transcribed. In total, 5 teachers were interviewed at The Tin Can Factory, 2 teachers were interviewed at Mímir, and 2 teachers were interviewed at MúltíKúltí.

### *Student Interviews*

Students were asked about what teaching strategies best help them to learn Icelandic, why they want to learn Icelandic, and their experiences integrating into Icelandic society. A complete list of interview questions for students is included in Appendix C. The team conducted student interviews in a conversational manner, so questions were adapted depending on the flow of a given conversation. The institutions that interviews were conducted at had ethnically diverse

students, and not all students spoke fluent English. To resolve this language barrier, interviews were conducted in English, Spanish, Arabic, Urdu, and Russian. Interviews were recorded using the Voice Memos app and later transcribed into English. When students felt uncomfortable with being recorded, they had the option of opting out. If this happened, the interviewer took notes on their computer while the student spoke. In total, 22 students were interviewed at The Tin Can Factory, 17 students were interviewed at Mímir, and 14 students were interviewed at MúltiKúlti.

### **Classroom Observations**

We observed the classroom environment and teacher-student dynamics at each school by watching behaviors, interactions, and student successes and struggles during classes. Prior to starting our observations, teachers were given notice of our group's participation in their class. Each group member had the task of recording their findings during their time in the classroom. We took note of phrases teachers used to give feedback, along with students' responses to these phrases. Additionally, we noted the specific activities and exercises used by teachers in the classrooms. We made these observations in different levels of courses to better understand the level-specific issues that relate to teaching methods and student experiences. In total, our group observed 8 classes at The Tin Can Factory, 3 classes at Mímir, and 3 classes at MúltiKúlti.

### **Data Analysis**

An approach similar to grounded theory was used to analyze the data we collected. After transcribing all interviews and classroom observations, each member of our group read each interview transcript and classroom observation. The team then collectively developed categories of analysis based on key patterns that appeared in our collected data. Once recurring themes were established, we broke down each interview response and classroom observation into individual statements to organize them in terms of these themes. We then found connections between the themes we initially established to create primary categories of analysis.

## **Student Motivations and Goals for Learning Icelandic**

A topic of interest in this study was the different motivations students have for learning Icelandic, which may influence the types of teaching methods they find helpful. Our findings indicated that some students are learning Icelandic to find a job or to advance within their workplace, some hope to integrate into Icelandic society, and others want to learn the language to enable better communication with spouses, children, or other relatives who speak Icelandic. Some students reported a combination of reasons for learning the language.

### **Work Opportunities**

Out of the 22 student interviews conducted at The Tin Can Factory, 8 students reported that work opportunities were their primary motivation for learning Icelandic. Some students said that they sought to advance within their workplace, while one student said they were currently unemployed and wanted to know basic Icelandic to obtain more work opportunities.

A group of 9 students at Mímir reported working as bus drivers and said that they ran into issues communicating with people who only spoke Icelandic. This group was motivated to learn Icelandic to improve their communication with Icelandic citizens who cannot speak English. Another 2 students at Mímir wanted to learn Icelandic to obtain jobs.

Out of the 14 students interviewed at MúltíKúltí, 4 students emphasized the importance of learning the language to work. One student elaborated that they needed Icelandic speaking skills for their job and were hired on the basis that they would acquire the language. Another worked at a university, where he taught in English but sought to reach a larger audience by learning the Icelandic language.

### **Family**

Having Icelandic-speaking family members commonly arose as a motivation for students to learn the language. Out of 22 students interviewed at The Tin Can Factory, 7 people mentioned learning for their family or children who were raised in Iceland and can speak fluent Icelandic. A mother who is currently attending the school said that she wanted to learn Icelandic because both of her children spoke the language. She noted that she sought to become more included in their lives by speaking the language they spoke fluently. She also wanted to be able to communicate with her children's friends and their teachers.

One student at MúltíKúltí reported that she wanted to learn Icelandic so she could better communicate with her Icelandic husband's family and live a life in Iceland with minimal friction due to language barriers.

None of the students our team interviewed at Mímir reported learning Icelandic for the sake of family.

## **Integration**

The most frequently reported reason for learning Icelandic was integration. Students had differing definitions of integration, and while some mentioned that they already felt integrated into Icelandic society, they hoped that learning Icelandic would help them further integrate into the different areas of society that are relevant to their lives. For some, integration included finding ease in interactions with coworkers, friends, and family, and for some it included having conversations in Icelandic with people they met in stores and restaurants. 19 out of 22 interviewees at The Tin Can Factory reported that they wanted to learn Icelandic to integrate. One interviewee worked in film and wanted to be able to speak Icelandic with his coworkers on set, as the ease in communication in the workplace represented successful integration for him.

All 17 interviewed students at Mímir had goals that related to integrating and finding success in society. 8 students reported wanting to be more included and accepted in society and that this goal could be achieved by learning or improving their Icelandic.

Out of the 14 students interviewed at MúltíKúltí, the 4 students that emphasized the importance of learning the language to work also mentioned how difficult it was for them to fit in as an outsider. Many students highlighted that knowing the language would provide more significant social opportunities. It was also stated by 7 interviewees that their reason for attending classes was simply that they had moved to Iceland, with the decision to build a life in the country being sufficient motivation to learn the language.

## The Tin Can Factory

### Overview

The Tin Can Factory is a language school that places great emphasis on culture; the goal of the school is not only to teach students Icelandic as a second language, but to immerse their students in the Icelandic culture and the culture of the students around them. This school creates a welcoming environment where students take their shoes off at the door and are welcome to cook in the kitchen with their teachers. With a mission to incorporate history and culture into their educational model, The Tin Can Factory aims to make the language learning experience positive and enriching.

### *Student and Teacher Population*

Over the course of 2022, about 1350 students took ISL courses at The Tin Can Factory, as reported by the school's director. Students are taught by full-time teachers, contractors, and assistant teachers. 10 teachers are currently full-time employees at The Tin Can Factory, with an additional 9 to 12 teachers working as contractors. There are also 4 to 7 teacher's assistants, with the number of contractors and assistants fluctuating in accordance with the number of courses offered at any given time. Class sizes typically range from 5 to 16 students. If a class size exceeds 16 students, assistant teachers are also present in the class to help the primary teacher and enhance the students' learning experiences.

While all five of the teachers we interviewed had a university-level education, none had degrees specifically in pedagogy. Instead, teachers were reported to have backgrounds in Icelandic as a second language, translations, psychology, philosophy, and art.

### *Course Offerings*

The Tin Can Factory offers multiple levels and types of courses. These include general ISL courses, speaking courses, and advanced courses in grammar and literature. In addition to these, there are preparatory courses for students who are not ready to begin the general ISL courses. These preparatory courses teach students the Latin alphabet in addition to basic classroom conduct for students who are not literate in their mother tongue or may have not undergone formal education. Finally, there are online courses for students who are unable to attend in person. For the purpose of our case study, we focused on in-person classes.



There are 8 levels of general ISL courses, in addition to a “half-speed” course that teaches the same content as Level 1 but at a slower rate. The school’s “Spoken Icelandic” courses have three levels: A, B, and C. The school offers 8 levels of preparatory courses: levels A, B, C, D, E, Þ, Æ, and Ö. Not all course levels are taught year-round. Levels 1-5 of the general ISL courses, all of the “Spoken Icelandic” courses, and levels A-E of the preparatory courses are taught regularly. The other courses are taught about one to two times per year, based on interest and demand from enrolled students. Our group observed two Level 1 courses in the morning, two Level 1 courses in the evening, a Level 2 course, a Spoken Icelandic Level A course, and Levels A and B of the preparatory courses.

### *Cost and Duration*

Courses vary in total length from 40 to 60 hours and take place over multiple weeks. Most in-person courses cost 51,900 Icelandic Króna (ISK). The exceptions are Levels 6 to 8 of the general ISL courses, which cost 47,900 ISK. 75% to 90% of the school’s prices are typically covered for students that are union members.

### *Language Use in the Classroom*

The Tin Can Factory solely uses Icelandic in the classroom to fully immerse students in the language during their time at the school. In the classes we observed, students would occasionally ask clarifying questions in English, but all activities were conducted in Icelandic. The directions for completing activities were also explained in Icelandic.

### **Teaching Methods**

In the different teaching strategies used at The Tin Can Factory, pieces of the communicative method of language teaching can be clearly seen. Teachers prioritize using the Icelandic language over the students’ native languages. Additionally, courses at The Tin Can Factory relate to real-life experiences through interactions in the target language, allowing students to acquire the language in a way that is applicable to relevant situations in their lives. This was observed in a Level 1 class taught by an instructor who was showing his students the names of streets and bus stops, along with phrases students could use to aid them in the successful use of public transportation. Additionally, mistakes made during classes are viewed as

a natural part of the learning process. One of the interviewed teachers stated that he makes a point to avoid correcting mispronunciations due to accents, as well as mistakes that do not hinder the listener's understanding. The use of the communicative method can be seen in lectures, games, and other activities.

Another primary teaching method used at The Tin Can Factory is the eclectic method. Teachers make a point to individualize their teaching methods based on the different needs and backgrounds of students. Some teachers reported that when they notice some students learning at a slower pace than others, they will change the way they approach a certain subject in order for everyone to understand the material being discussed. One teacher reported that, for students who have not had formal education, she breaks down subjects into the most basic components possible to formulate simple explanations. Teachers will also change the pace at which they teach, and the games and activities they use based on their students' responses.

### *Classroom Materials*

A variety of physical materials are used in classrooms at The Tin Can Factory. These include workbooks, whiteboards, and worksheets. Workbooks and worksheets contain exercises for students to complete in class and for homework. Teachers can create and use their own material alongside the materials provided by The Tin Can Factory.

### *Specific Teaching Strategies*

Teachers at The Tin Can Factory use several different activities to teach students Icelandic and help them practice. All teachers emphasized that they use a combination of individual exercises and whole-class activities that allow for interaction. During our interviews, teachers reported that mixing up activities throughout classes or between days created a more interesting and "fun" environment for students, which kept students engaged and comfortable in the classroom. Teachers cited games as the most useful strategy, as games allowed for students to learn while being entertained and engaged. Additionally, our group observed activities such as echoing, group discussions, individual exercises in workbooks, and lectures. Each of these activities could address any of the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening, although speaking and listening were consistently prioritized.

Echoing activities consisted of a teacher pronouncing a letter or a word and the students repeating after them. This exercise was done with each sound or word several times. Group activities included games like Go Fish, in which students were asked to construct sentences using the words, such as nouns or verbs, on labeled cards. The sentences involved word conjugation based on the gender of the card. Another example of group activities was seen in students collectively answering workbook exercises. These activities could be done in small groups or with the whole class. Individual exercises in workbooks were also used as a strategy to practice the material. Examples of exercises included fill-in-the-blank questions, multiple choice questions about audios or short readings, and paragraph-length writing exercises in response to prompts. Lectures are used infrequently at The Tin Can Factory. In one of the Level 1 classes our team observed, the teacher explained the various genders in Icelandic grammar. This lecture lasted around 5 minutes and ended with students individually practicing the grammar in workbooks.

### *Interaction Strategies*

Teachers emphasized that they try to have students interact with each other as much as possible. One teacher described how she tries to connect less proficient students with more proficient students in a given class so that they can help each other in their learning.

Another aspect emphasized in teacher interviews was building trust. Teachers use the first week of their courses to build trust with students, which they found leads students to respond better to the instruction and participate more. Building trust also allows teachers to better understand the obstacles students face, educationally and personally. Teachers are able to connect students with the people and resources that can help them, in the case of students struggling with obstacles outside of the scope of language teaching. To create trust, one teacher explained that she tries to be welcoming and accepting of all students in her class. This is corroborated by our observations in classes, where teachers tended to have a kind, patient, welcoming, and positive demeanor throughout the lessons.

### *Non-Traditional Teaching Methods*

The Tin Can Factory implements cooking projects and field trips into its courses. At the end of each course, students are asked to prepare a dish from their home country and present it to

the class. Field trips include classes going to locations such as grocery stores, coffee shops, and restaurants to practice speaking with Icelandic locals. Other locations include museums, the Icelandic Parliament, and botanical gardens.

## **Assessment Methods**

### *Perspectives on Assessment*

The teachers our team interviewed at The Tin Can Factory had a general apprehension towards formal assessment, a perspective that is reflected in the methods of assessment used at the school. All of the teachers we interviewed emphasized that assessment should be conducted in a way that does not add stress to the learning experience or make students feel pressured. As one teacher explained, students should not feel like they need to learn the material so they can pass a test. This mindset, according to him, builds anxiety and insecurity. Instead, students should recognize that mistakes are part of the learning process.

### *Formative Assessment*

Formative assessment is given frequently and informally at The Tin Can Factory. Teachers reported that they can fully assess if students understand the material based on the quality of their class participation and individual work, which. This was reflected in our observations of classrooms. When students do individual work in workbooks, teachers check each student's work by walking around the room and working with students individually. Teachers also regularly call on individual students to answer questions asked of the class. In the Level 2 class our group observed, starting at one end of the class of students and going to the other, each student named an object in the room and classified its gender, an aspect of Icelandic grammar. Students can also self-assess their understanding of class material through the practice exercises.

### *Summative Assessment*

Summative assessment is occasionally given in the form of placement tests. An initial placement test is taken by all students, and teachers may choose to have individual students take an exam at the end of their course as well. These exams are intended to help teachers determine if individual students are ready to move to the next course level. If the teacher feels confident

about which course level the student should be enrolled in and the student agrees with the teacher's decision, the exam is not given. If there is disagreement between the student and the teacher, or the teacher wants additional student evaluation before making a decision, students take the test outside of class. These tests are based on reading comprehension and fluency. Additionally, dictation is tested to help with placement in higher-level courses.

### *Conveying Progress to Students*

Teachers convey their evaluation of student proficiency through verbal feedback. The results of the initial and subsequent placement exams are explained to students through a conversation after the exam. During these conversations, teachers tell students which level they will be placed in and discuss any questions from the student about this decision. During courses, verbal feedback is given during group and individual exercises. For example, when students work individually in workbooks, teachers go to each student one-by-one to check their work and help them correct any wrong answers. During group discussions, teachers may ask questions for individual students to respond. Teachers allow them to answer and then indicate whether their answer was correct.

## **Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic**

### *Perspectives on Teaching Strategies*

In the process of interviewing students at The Tin Can Factory, we found that particular learning strategies were repeatedly mentioned as being effective in the language acquisition process. Using exclusively Icelandic in the classroom was helpful to 20 out of the 22 students interviewed. In beginner level classes, this was shown to be difficult for some, as students at this level knew little to no Icelandic. However, many said that it was still extremely helpful, along with its challenges. One student stated that, even when he did not completely understand what was being discussed, he was still encouraged to use context clues to try to understand as much as he could. When students are not yet at a level where they can understand every word spoken, an effort to understand the basic ideas of phrases and sentences is still encouraged. According to the student, this strategy encouraged him to think in Icelandic and “bend” his mind to try to understand the language, even when words that were not in his vocabulary were used.

### *Obstacles to Learning Icelandic*

Of the 22 students interviewed at the Tin Can Factory, 12 students reported having issues with the grammatical and phonetic structure of the language. As mentioned by a student, the Icelandic alphabet differs from that of any other language, and trying to adapt to the constant use of different phonetic sounds has been a challenge. However, 13 of the 22 students interviewed considered that knowing the Western alphabet made their language learning experience easier; teachers also reported that knowing more than one language activates a cognitive ability that is helpful for learning a new tongue, with many of these students progressing to higher levels in a shorter period of time.

Beyond the linguistic struggles, students may also confront general difficulties that can range from demanding work schedules to childcare responsibilities. 11 out of the 22 students we interviewed expressed concerns about the balance between attending classes consistently and tending to their jobs or family responsibilities. These time constraints often discourage students as they must prioritize certain aspects of their lives, like jobs and childcare, over language classes. Many students were observed arriving late or leaving early from class due to different circumstances. Nonetheless, 14 students expressed their willingness to overcome this challenge by practicing outside of class. Going to restaurants, malls, or even barber shops has proven to be beneficial in their language learning experiences. A student recalled the benefits of communicating with the locals and the great cultural understanding you gain from these conversations. One student remarked that the unwavering commitment to their goal and employing resourceful strategies is the best way to repay what the country has done for her and her family.

### **Addressing Student Needs**

#### *Preparatory Classes*

The Tin Can Factory offers preparatory courses for students who are not ready to start in Level 1 of the general courses. These courses were created for students who do not know the Latin alphabet or lack formal education, which were growing issues at the school due to rising immigration from countries where formal education was not accessible.

### *Adjusting Class Material*

The instructors at The Tin Can Factory utilize many teaching methods to effectively cater to the different needs of their students, as they recognize the varying proficiency levels of students within a singular class level. Teachers teach material slowly and patiently for students who cannot learn easily and have difficulty retaining knowledge due to traumatizing experiences. Furthermore, in addition to required material, teachers incorporate vocabulary based on their students' interests to foster a more engaging and personalized learning experience. Such a dynamic and interactive approach ensures that the educational experience is inclusive and tailored to each student's unique learning requirements.

### *Societal Circumstances*

One of the reasons speaking is emphasized in The Tin Can Factory's curriculum, in addition to helping with linguistic immersion, is that it addresses the difficulty for students to practice speaking the language in public settings. The school focuses on real-life situations and conversations in its exercises and activities.

### *Feeling of Integration*

Course activities such as field trips and cooking classes are intended to help students connect with Icelandic society and learn about cultural traditions. Students who felt that they did not benefit from the regular classes found value in these activities. These activities provided students with more opportunities to practice the concepts they had been learning in regular class periods.

## Mímir

### Overview

Mímir is an organization that provides educational opportunities, with a focus on vocational training, for individuals who have limited formal education. Mímir's ISL courses aim to address the needs of those in the workforce.

### *Student and Teacher Population*

The director of Mímir estimates that 1200 to 1300 students take ISL courses at the school per year and that classes typically range from 8 to 15 students in size. All of the school's class instructors are currently employed as contractors and have a university education, though degrees specifically in adult education or language instruction are not required. Some teachers worked with elementary or upper secondary level students before teaching adults. Some teachers have taught languages other than Icelandic, an experience that the school views as more valuable than degrees in Icelandic or language instruction.

### *Course Offerings*

Courses offered at Mímir include general Icelandic courses based on the National Curriculum for Foreigners, speaking courses, and courses focusing specifically on reading and writing Icelandic. Additionally, the school collaborates with companies to offer "Icelandic in the Workplace" courses that focus on teaching Icelandic in a way that is tailored to the subjects present in a student's workplace. The school offers five levels of general Icelandic classes and four levels of "Icelandic Spoken" courses. "Reading and Writing in Icelandic" is a single level and is currently offered in languages such as Arabic and Vietnamese. Besides offering traditional in-person classes, the school provides online courses with digital resources, enabling students who cannot attend physical classes to access education remotely. A book club is also available for students who want to read and discuss short stories written for their skill level to improve their vocabulary and overall Icelandic proficiency. Our group observed Levels 1, 2, and 3 of the general Icelandic courses.



### *Cost and Duration*

Courses at Mímir range in length from 20 to 80 hours, with all general courses being 40 hours long and taking place over the course of several weeks. Students are required to attend 75% of classes to receive a certificate of completion for a given course. General Icelandic courses cost 52,000 ISK, speaking courses cost 32,000 ISK, and reading and writing courses cost 31,000 ISK. Grants from trade unions can reduce the cost for eligible students.

### *Language Use in the Classroom*

Levels 1 through 3 of the general courses at Mímir are taught in students' native languages, while higher level courses are taught exclusively in Icelandic to groups of students with a mix of different native languages.

### **Teaching Methods**

The grammar-translation language teaching method can be found in Mímir's language instruction. Teachers use native languages in the classroom in beginner level courses to help students understand instructions and the grammatical concepts of the Icelandic language. In an observed class, one teacher explained the rules of a game in English and then switched to Icelandic once the game began. Another instructor taught her students phrases about how they were feeling by saying "my stomach is upset" first in English and then in Icelandic for the students to repeat. This is an example of a phrase being taught as a singular unit with an emphasis on correct pronunciation and grammar.

Another teaching method seen at Mímir was the eclectic method. In many of the classrooms, teachers tailor their methods of instruction to the students in the class. One teacher reported that, when she noticed that repetitive exercises to practice grammar were not being received well by the students, she switched to using games and interactive activities to help her students practice.

### *Materials Provided by the School*

Teachers at Mímir use a variety of teaching techniques, which include utilizing school-published workbooks, engaging in speaking exercises, facilitating group discussions and games, and assigning homework.

Each course at Mímir has a syllabus that outlines learning goals for the class. Workbooks for each level accompany this syllabus. The school also makes lists of strategies and exercises, such as specific games to play for students to practice, that teachers can use in their classrooms. A list is available for each course. The lists are intended to encourage teachers to use a variety of teaching methods in addition to the workbooks.

During classroom observations, our team observed the use of both workbooks and other materials created by the school. For example, the Level 3 class we observed had students take turns reading a passage from the school's book. The class concluded with students playing a board game that had students converse in Icelandic.

Students are also provided with access to Inna, a website where Mímir distributes practice and work materials for each class.

### *Materials Created by Teachers*

Teachers at Mímir are able to create their own additional materials for the classroom. For example, one teacher reported using popular songs as an exercise with her students. She would play the song for students or show the lyrics on the screen, and the class would translate the lyrics together. This teacher also uses exercises from her university textbooks, which she herself used to learn Icelandic. Another teacher reported that she developed her own strategies based on research she did on teaching and language acquisition. For example, she has adapted board games and card games like Go Fish to incorporate practice with verbs and grammar rules. It was agreed upon by both teachers that we interviewed that having creative teaching methods and activities helps students learn and stay interested. They found that students do not respond well to traditional lectures or repetitive exercises. Other methods teachers reported using in classrooms and that our team observed included group discussions, having students converse with one another or read out loud to the class, and playing online games such as Quizlet Live.

## **Assessment Methods**

### *Summative Assessment*

Teachers at Mímir assess student progress using standardized end-of-course evaluations. Standardized placement tests are also given to students who are unsure about what level course

they should take. Exams test reading and writing skills. Teachers can choose to give additional exams and quizzes throughout their courses. Additionally, students have the opportunity to evaluate their teachers and classes at the end of each course, and student feedback is used to develop curriculums and resources for teachers.

### *Formative Assessment*

In addition to final exams, teachers report that they can understand student progress and comprehension of the material based on their participation in class and on the quality of their homework assignments. In one class we observed, the teacher called on students one-by-one to read sentences of a passage shown on the board. In another classroom, students played games like Quizlet Live and Kahoot, which provide immediate feedback to students on their performance. Additionally, homework is assigned and may involve watching videos, writing in response to prompts, listening to audios, or recording their verbal responses. Homework assignments are collected by teachers for evaluation.

### *Teacher Perspectives on Assessment*

Both teachers we interviewed at Mimir expressed that formal exams may not provide a comprehensive view of a student's progress. One teacher described that she could understand how a student is doing in the class based solely on their class participation, although she admitted that this can be difficult with larger class sizes. The other teacher explained that standardized exams are not always an accurate indicator of what a student needs to work on. The teacher described that exams are mostly useful for understanding students' knowledge without help from translators or other materials. She also finds that the final exam helps motivate students to learn all of the class's material, but she does not think additional tests or quizzes are necessary.

### *Conveying Progress to Students*

Feedback on learning goals is given to students verbally and in written form. Some teachers have conversations with each of their students at the end of courses to discuss how the students are doing. Following this conversation, the student and the teacher come to a conclusion on what the student needs to work on and which course level they should take next. Other

teachers write notes for each of their students describing the progress they have made and what they need to work on. Additionally, students can self assess their progress based on their performance on specific class activities and homework assignments.

## **Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic**

### *Teaching Methods*

Interviewed students reported positive opinions on the teaching strategies their instructors used in the classroom. Four students explained that starting their language learning process with basic topics like the alphabet and learning short, conversational phrases greatly aided them in their language acquisition. Building a foundation using simple concepts helped the students sequentially acquire more information.

### *Assessment Methods*

Two students mentioned that they found periodic quizzes helpful in seeing how they were progressing throughout the course, stating that the quizzes helped them pinpoint specific topics they understood well and the topics they needed more practice in.

## **Addressing Student Needs**

### *Adjusting Class Material*

A class syllabus is provided to students, however, teachers can implement changes in the syllabus to address the particular expectations and goals students have for the class. In course descriptions on Mimir's website, it is explained that each course is adapted to each group of students, so the focus of classes may change. For example, one teacher explained that when she first starts working with a given group of students, she asks them what they hope to learn. She then teaches them the material they are interested in alongside what they need to know for the next course level. Additionally, the teacher adjusts the speed and intensity of the course depending on the class she teaches. She explained that she teaches classes to students of a certain profession at a different rate and intensity than students of another profession, based on her perception of how well they are learning and progressing.

### *Teaching and Practice*

The teachers we spoke to emphasized the importance of balancing learning new concepts with practicing. Teachers make sure to provide time where topics can be practiced alongside time spent on the introduction of new words and concepts. Teachers explained that allowing ample time for practice addressed one of the problems students face in learning Icelandic: lack of interaction with Icelanders.

As one teacher explained, Icelanders tend to have “closed personalities,” making it difficult for ISL students to practice their skills in the real world. Emphasizing practice in her classes, especially speaking exercises, allowed students to be immersed in the language and have opportunities to speak and converse as they would in the real world. Additionally, due to difficulties in pronunciation and grammar, some teachers encourage students to practice at home using flashcards or by making their own materials to practice.

### *Practice at the Workplace*

The recurring issue of outside-the-classroom practice is also addressed through Mimir’s collaboration with certain companies. For work-based courses, Mimir holds informal meetings with employers of students on what the employer can do to help their workers continue to learn and practice Icelandic. For example, instructors contact workplaces like the local hospital, which employs many of their students, and request lists of vocabulary be posted in common areas. They also have students complete assignments at the workplace, such as having a 5-minute conversation in Icelandic with a coworker about an assigned topic.

### *Curriculum Development*

At the time of our group’s research, Mimir was in the process of updating the school’s approach to teaching based on feedback from students. Based on questionnaires that students filled out after courses, the school concluded that students need more variety in courses, more focus on speaking, and more focus on Icelandic as it is relevant to the lives of immigrants. Mimir was also in the process of surveying its students on the types of methods and changes that they would like to see, with the intention of creating handbooks for teachers based on the results. The school plans to create short videos to advise instructors on online teaching practices. The school

is hopeful that these changes to the curriculum will better address the needs of students at their school.

## MúltiKúlti

### Overview

MúltiKúlti Language Center focuses on providing practical education for those seeking to learn Icelandic. Additionally, the school emphasizes a virtual attendance option for those who cannot attend in-person classes due to time constraints and personal obligations.

### *Student and Teacher Population*

The director of MúltiKúlti estimates that the student population of the school is about 1200 to 1400 students per year, and classes have a size limit of 14 students. All teachers have university degrees. One of the teachers we interviewed had degrees in sociology and English language and literature, while another teacher had degrees in anthropology, journalism, and literature. The school's website describes that other teachers have degrees in areas such as pedagogy, language teaching, and primary school teaching.

### *Course Offerings*

MúltiKúlti offers six levels of general Icelandic courses, with the first five levels utilizing MúltiKúlti's textbook materials and the last level directed at more advanced and independent learners of the language who seek to expand their vocabulary and fluency. In addition to the six levels of general courses is a speaking course.

### *Cost and Duration*

Short-term and standard versions of courses are available, with standard courses taking place over six to seven weeks. All Icelandic courses at the school are 40 hours in length and cost between 36,000 and 49,000 ISK, although unions can partially refund these costs for eligible students.

### *Language Use in the Classroom*

Classes are initially taught to students in their native languages, however, all teaching is done in Icelandic in higher level courses. Native languages offered include Spanish, Polish, English, Ukrainian, Serbian, Russian, Croatian, Arabic, and Portuguese. Students can take all courses, Levels 1 to 6 and the speaking course, in English. Levels 1 to 4 are available in Spanish,

Ukrainian, and Portuguese. Levels 1 to 3 are available in Polish, Serbian, Russian, and Croatian. Levels 1 and 2 are available in Arabic. Our group observed Level 2 courses in Spanish and English, and a Level 3 course in English.

### **Teaching Methods**

Teachers at MúltiKúltí emphasized using a variety of activities involving both independent and interactive work. Since courses at the school are hybrid, all activities are compatible with online platforms. For example, instead of in-person board games, teachers use online games like Kahoot or Quizlet Live.

Elements of the grammar-translation method for language instruction are frequently used in MúltiKúltí's educational model, where the teacher uses students' native language and the target language in the classroom. In an observed class, a teacher would say a phrase or explain an activity in Icelandic and then repeat it in English. She would also periodically ask in English if her students are following along. Using native languages to explain concepts and activities is a strategy used in many classrooms at MúltiKúltí.

### *Class Materials and Resources*

Lessons and practice materials are provided to students in the form of a textbook that was developed and provided by the school. These textbooks contain level-specific exercises. QR codes in this book also link students to a MúltiKúltí YouTube channel in which videos explain Icelandic genders, numbers, nouns, and vowel sounds. Teachers can also use other materials in their classes, such as news articles and movie review sites, to help students practice the Icelandic language.

Observed classrooms featured screens at the front of the room where teachers would type out class notes and materials on a document. These documents were shared with students, allowing students to review material outside of class without needing to take notes during class time.

In addition to classwork, homework, and what is provided by the school, teachers at MúltiKúltí give students lots of resources that students can use to practice. For example, students are encouraged to read Icelandic news articles, watch Icelandic movies with subtitles, and use online dictionaries.



### *Specific Teaching Strategies*

Activities teachers use in the classroom at MúltíKúltí include lectures, reading and writing exercises in workbooks, speaking exercises, and games. These activities involve interaction amongst students, as well as interactions between teachers and students. The lectures our team observed involved teachers typing out Icelandic words and defining their meanings, and, in the case of verbs, writing out their conjugations for different genders. The Spanish-based Level 2 class also taught colloquial Icelandic words in a similar manner. During all classes observed, students completed exercises in the workbooks provided by the school. Furthermore, all classes included time for students to converse with their classmates in Icelandic based on prompts given by the teacher. Teachers also reported using games like Kahoot and Quizlet Live for additional, fun practice.

### **Assessment Methods**

#### *Summative Assessment*

Each course at MúltíKúltí has a single exam which occurs at the end of each course. However, students do not need to pass the test to continue to the next level. The test is intended to help the students better understand what they have learned and what they need to work on. Students also evaluate their teachers at the end of each course on the teacher's preparedness and the class's effectiveness.

#### *Formative Assessment*

Formative assessment at MúltíKúltí occurs through self-assessment and class participation. One teacher explained that she makes participation required of every student in every class. To enforce this, she calls on students individually to respond to questions. The teacher also explained that, due to the small class sizes at MúltíKúltí, it is easy for her to understand how each of her students are doing. For example, she is able to know when a student is struggling with a particular pronunciation, and thus she will have them read passages containing that sound out loud.. Additionally, online games like Kahoot allow students to test their knowledge and understand what they need to further practice.

### *Conveying Progress to Students*

Teachers convey their evaluation of student progress verbally and in written form. An example was observed during group exercises, where teachers spoke to students individually to check their work and provide verbal feedback. Graded exams also provide feedback to students in a written format.

## **Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic**

### *Effectiveness of Homework Assignments*

Students at MúltiKúltí receive assigned homework in each of their classes. While 2 students reported speaking Icelandic in public or with coworkers to get additional practice, all 14 students mentioned that their learning strategies outside of class involved homework. Homework assignments included written work, conversational practice, watching YouTube videos, practicing with flashcards, and practicing vocabulary and grammar rules. Although courses are typically 3 days a week, MúltiKúltí makes a point for students to practice Icelandic at least 5 days a week with their homework assignments.

### *Obstacles to Learning Icelandic*

Due to the intricate grammar and pronunciation of the Icelandic language, students reported having a hard time understanding the locals. One student explained that, despite getting used to understanding Icelandic since arriving in the country, he still finds it challenging to understand people from other parts of the country, such as Keflavik, where people speak slightly differently. One Spanish-speaking student and one French-speaking student, who also spoke English, reported that the Icelandic vocabulary could be challenging. They stated that they often could decipher words in other Latin languages due to their exposure to English, however, they could not do so in Icelandic because of difficult words and complicated pronunciations. 8 out of the 14 students had only ever spoken one language prior to learning Icelandic, making it more difficult for them to relate to other tongues

## **Addressing Student Needs and Challenges**

### *Adjusting Classes to Students*

Teachers are able to be flexible in the materials and activities they use to teach students. For example, one of the teachers our group interviewed adjusts her lesson plan for a given day depending on the energy levels of her students. This teacher teaches classes that end as late as 10 pm, and many of her students have jobs and childcare responsibilities. If she notices that her students seem tired and unengaged, she adjusts her lesson plan to be more interactive with games such as Kahoot. Alternatively, she will conduct lessons on historical and cultural subjects. This allows for the students to still hear Icelandic and learn about related matters, but does not force them to engage as much as they would on a regular day of instruction. If her students seem more focused, then she may lecture on grammar or have conversational activities where the students converse in Icelandic.

### *Using Icelandic Outside of the Classroom*

Teachers at MúltiKúlti asserted that there is a mental obstacle between knowing information and using it. As one teacher described, some of her students arrived in Iceland yesterday, while others have been here for several years. She feels the need to build her students' confidence so that they practice and use what they learn in her classroom. At the beginning of each course, teachers try to build trust with their students through conversations, both as a class and individually. She also encourages her students to create a Whatsapp group chat so they can communicate with each other and build connections, which the teacher found has helped students progress more quickly in their learning.

### *Linguistic Immersion*

Both of the teachers our team interviewed explained that it is difficult for students to practice outside class. The teachers noticed that students need to actively seek out immersion because most Icelanders can speak English. Also, many of the students work in occupations where they only communicate with other foreigners, which increases the difficulty for those seeking cultural immersion. To address this issue, teachers reported that they encourage their students to practice on their own. The teachers also make sure students practice speaking in the

classroom, regularly asking students questions and having conversations about topics such as their weekend plans.

### *Virtual Attendance*

MúltiKúltí offers a virtual attendance option for all of their courses. While students are encouraged to attend classes in person, the school allows students to attend in-person courses virtually. This option was made available to students as a response to the COVID pandemic and remained a core feature of the school to make it easier for students to attend classes. This can particularly benefit those who cannot consistently commit to in-person attendance due to childcare responsibilities, work obligations, and other time constraints. While interaction is more difficult for students online, teachers engage the students attending virtually by having them leave their cameras on and participate along with the rest of the class.

### **Developing and Distributing the Infographic**

The research presented in this case study was used to develop an infographic, which is intended to be a resource for adults seeking ISL education in Reykjavík. All three language schools approved this infographic. While our team attempted to distribute the infographic to multiple different Facebook groups, including “Learn Icelandic” and “Icelandic Learners - læra íslensku!”, these attempts were not successful. Some groups declined the post and others left it pending. Possible future distribution channels for the infographic are described in the conclusion of this report.. The information listed in the infographic is outlined in Table 1. The infographic itself can be viewed in Appendix F, and a digital version can be accessed through the following link: [https://www.canva.com/design/DAFu\\_HvTIp8/view](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFu_HvTIp8/view).

Table 1: Key information in our infographic.

	The Tin Can Factory	MúltiKúltí	Mímir
Location	Skeifan 11B, 108 Reykjavík	Bolholt 6, 2nd. floor, 105 Reykjavík	Höfðabakka, 110 Reykjavík
Cost	47,900 - 52,900 ISK	36,000 - 49,000 ISK	31,000 - 52,000 ISK
Typical Class Sizes	5 - 16 students	7 - 14 students	8 - 15 students
Total Student Body	~1350 students	1200 - 1400 students	1200 - 1300 students
Course Offerings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Preparatory courses</li> <li>■ Standard Icelandic courses</li> <li>■ Speaking courses</li> <li>■ Advanced courses (literature and grammar)</li> <li>■ Online courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Standard Icelandic</li> <li>■ One speaking course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Standard Icelandic courses</li> <li>■ Speaking-focused Icelandic courses</li> <li>■ Reading and writing courses</li> <li>■ Vocational courses</li> <li>■ Online courses</li> </ul>
Class Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All courses are conducted in Icelandic</li> <li>■ Classes focus on speaking</li> <li>■ Field trips, cooking, and outdoor activities are part of the curriculum</li> <li>■ Continuous evaluation process (no end-of-course exams)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Offers virtual attendance to in-person classes</li> <li>■ Lower course levels are conducted in students' native languages</li> <li>■ Screens in classrooms</li> <li>■ End-of-course exams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lower course levels are conducted in students' native languages</li> <li>■ Smartboards and screens in classrooms</li> <li>■ End-of-course exams</li> </ul>

## **Conclusion**

In completing this case study, the team was able to develop an understanding of the teaching and assessment methods used at The Tin Can Factory, Mímir, and MúltíKúltí. The data we collected allowed us to formulate conclusions on how different teaching and assessment methods address the different needs and goals of immigrants and other second language learners.

Across the three language schools, several themes highlight their similarities in teaching approaches. A notable characteristic is that teachers are not required to have formal degrees in education or pedagogy. Moreover, all three schools emphasize that teachers create their own materials, fostering a sense of ownership and creativity in the learning process. All of the schools utilize formative assessment techniques, encouraging students to self-assess their understanding and identify areas that need improvement during the course. End-of-course exams are also given to students at Mímir and MúltíKúltí, and occasionally at The Tin Can Factory. The absence of frequent tests or quizzes is compensated for by teachers' observations of students' participation and classwork performance, allowing for an understanding of each student's progress.

Teachers at the three language schools are able to adjust their material to address student needs, such as by teaching additional vocabulary to match the expectations that students have for the class.

## **Limitations**

In conducting research at each language school, our team encountered limitations. We had seven weeks to establish collaborative relationships, interview directors, teachers, and students, and observe classes at each school. Due to these time constraints, our team was not able to interview statistically significant sample sizes of students or teachers or observe a statistically significant number of classes. For example, we interviewed 22 out of approximately 1350 students at The Tin Can Factory, 14 out of approximately 1200 students at MúltíKúltí, and 17 out of approximately 1200 students at Mímir. For classroom observations, we were only able to observe classes at three levels and at one given time at the other two schools. The individuals we interviewed and the classrooms we observed are not necessarily representative of any of the three schools. Furthermore, due to the nature of a case study, our findings are not representative of the state of ISL instruction in other language schools or regions of Iceland.

Another limitation was the response rate of each language school. The team contacted each school via email, and The Tin Can Factory provided the quickest response and welcomed our team to their school for the longest period of time. The school's director invited our team to conduct interviews and classroom observations on multiple days for the first 3 weeks of our research, while other schools had a smaller amount of time allotted for our team. This meant that more data was collected on students, teachers, and classes at The Tin Can Factory. The team avoided developing comparative conclusions to amend the issue of having different amounts of data from each school. We instead focused on formulating independent conclusions about each of the three schools in our study and made predictions about where an adult seeking ISL education may fit well based on anecdotes and experiences from students and teachers we spoke to at each school.

### **Language School Summaries**

#### **The Tin Can Factory**

The Tin Can Factory's warm and welcoming environment would benefit students looking to have a fun and comfortable learning experience. The instructors at The Tin Can Factory are experienced in teaching those with little to no educational background, as well as working with refugees who have come to Iceland to escape dire living situations. They strive to be kind and patient, and make efforts to individualize their teaching in order to help the students learn in whatever way they need most.

Students at this school emphasized the kindness of their teachers and their enjoyment of the games used in the classrooms. Based on our team's observations and conversations with students at The Tin Can Factory, the school may appeal to those prioritizing speaking abilities over other skills. The emphasis on history and culture would interest those who want to be immersed in Icelandic society.

#### **Mímir**

Mímir demonstrated a language teaching philosophy that is built around addressing the specific needs and goals of students. The executives at this school explained their research and strategies to update their curriculum to address the needs of immigrants and those in the workforce.

Mímir offers work-related courses and classes in specific vocational fields. Based on our interviews with students at Mímir, our team concluded that anyone seeking to dedicate time and effort into their ISL education would likely find success here. Those hoping to succeed in a job or a particular field of work would benefit from Mímir's specific, occupation-based language instruction.

## **MúltiKúltí**

MúltiKúltí emphasizes a practical education for those looking to work or build a life in Iceland. The moderately sized classrooms allow for personalized and individualized teaching. MúltiKúltí emphasizes course accessibility for those who are busy with jobs and families; to help accommodate these students, the school's hybrid model allows students to join in-person classes virtually. While teachers encourage students to attend in person, the virtual option allows for virtual attendance when in-person attendance cannot be achieved. As the school is for adult language learners, flexibility in attendance benefits students who work, have childcare responsibilities, or experience any other time constraints.

Based on the interviews and observations our team conducted at MúltiKúltí, we concluded that students who are balancing their ISL education with work and family would likely find MúltiKúltí's curriculum suitable.

## **Future Directions**

### **Potential Further Uses of the Infographic**

The research conducted at the three language schools allowed the team to understand the educational philosophies, teaching methods, and student experiences at each school. The team has developed an infographic illustrating information about each school to act as a resource for individuals searching for a language school. A future direction for this project could concern the distribution of this infographic via Icelandic Facebook groups, multicultural centers, and the Icelandic Government's Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation. Additionally, the team hopes that a more comprehensive list of the resources available for immigrants to learn Icelandic can be created and distributed.



### **Expanding the Research Scope**

For future research, it is essential to extend the focus beyond the institutions covered in the case study. While these schools provide valuable insights, many other schools in Reykjavík and throughout Iceland cater to the educational needs of immigrants. Exploring these diverse educational settings can offer a better understanding of language learning experiences among immigrant communities. Furthermore, research should be conducted on the other resources and institutions immigrants utilize to learn Icelandic, including libraries, community centers, online platforms, and various local initiatives. Studying the efficacy and inclusivity of these resources can help acquire information on how language acquisition programs foster a more integrative environment for immigrants in Icelandic society.

### **Assessing and Improving ISL Effectiveness**

One key direction for future research is to critically examine the existing pedagogical approaches as they relate to the diverse needs of learners from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Studies could investigate the effectiveness of immersive learning experiences, digital language learning platforms, and teaching materials. Additionally, it is essential to explore innovative teaching techniques that integrate language skills with real-life situations, ensuring practical applicability and relevance for learners. Understanding the challenges immigrants face during their language acquisition journey can inform the development of targeted support programs. Moreover, the adaptation of teaching strategies based on research findings will be essential in creating a more effective and responsive Icelandic as a second language education system.

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## **Appendix A: Language School Director Interview Questions**

Question 1: How long have you been working in Icelandic as a second language education?

Question 1.1: Did you have training in adult education or second language education? Or both?

Question 2: What types of teaching strategies are used at your school?

Question 3: What types of assessments are used at your school?

Question 4: How do you determine the class level each student is assigned to?

Question 4.1: How many different levels of classes do you have at your school?

Question 5: What are some issues you have noticed with the current state of Icelandic as a second language instruction?

Question 5.1: How do you address these issues at your school?

Question 5.2: What do you think is the most important aspect of student learning?

Question 6: How many students go to your school?

Question 6.1: What languages do these students typically speak?

Question 7: What is your process for evaluating teachers?

## Appendix B: Teacher Interview Questions

Hello! Our names are [insert interviewer and notetaker names]. We are part of a research team that is investigating how Icelandic is taught to immigrants. We would like to ask you a few questions about your experiences as a language teacher if that is alright with you. You can skip any question you'd like to skip, and is it alright with you if we take an audio recording of this interview? [Proceed if they answer yes].

Question 1: Are you a native speaker (of Icelandic)? If not: What is your native language and how did you learn Icelandic?

Question 1.1: What other languages, if any, do you know?

Question 2: How long have you been teaching Icelandic as a second language?

Question 2.1: Do you have training in adult education or language education?

Question 2.2: Can you give us an estimate of how many different classes you have taught in this time?

Question 2.3: Which classes do you teach at [language school]?

Question 3: What methods have you used to teach Icelandic to non-native students?

Question 3.1: How are your classes conducted? For example, are they all in Icelandic or is some instruction given in the native languages of the students, do you have students work with each other or more independently, do you do lectures and/or hands-on activities?

Question 3.2: How did students respond to these methods? Which did they seem to appreciate?

Question 4: What, over the course of your experience, have you found to be useful strategies in teaching Icelandic?

Question 4.1: Why do you feel these strategies were useful? Were they useful for every group of students or did they help some more than others?

Question 4.2: Were most of these strategies provided by the school or did you have to create them yourself?

Question 4.3: If you created your own strategies/curriculum/activities, how did you develop them? If you used the strategies/activities provided by the school, were you able to adjust it to students? And if so, how did you do that?



Question 4.4: What are your teaching philosophies? For example, do you try to focus on what the students need, on having them actively learn in the classroom, do you set high expectations for the students? How do you motivate students?

Question 5: What are some difficulties that students often face when trying to learn Icelandic?

Question 5.1: When you notice that some students are struggling, do you work to develop methods that will help them?

Question 5.2: What kind(s) of things have you done in your experience? If you can, it would be really helpful to tell us about the particular problem you noticed the student(s) having and then what methods you used to help them succeed.

Question 6: What methods have you used to evaluate student progress?

Question 6.1: Did students need to take a test to begin in the courses you teach?

Question 6.2: What types of assessments do you think are most important?

Question 6.3: How do you know that a teaching or assessment strategy is working? Do you ever adjust assessment strategies based on how students are doing?

Question 6.4: How did you give results back to the students? When giving them back, did you offer explanations or guidance about what they could do to improve?

Question 6.5: How did students seem to respond to getting this kind of feedback?

Question 6.6: How do you view assessment? What do you think the purpose of assessment is?

## Appendix C: Student Interview Questions

Hello! Our names are [insert interviewer and notetaker names]. We are part of a research team that is investigating how Icelandic is taught to immigrants. We would like to ask you a few questions about your experiences learning Icelandic. Can we take an audio recording of this interview? Also, you do not need to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. [Proceed if they answer yes].

Question 1: How long have you been studying Icelandic?

Question 1.1: How has this [time] period been for you?

Question 2: What is your native language?

Question 3: Do you speak any other languages? If you do, what other languages do you speak?

Question 4: Why did you decide to go to this school?

Question 4.1: Which course levels have you taken here?

Question 4.2: Have you been to other schools?

Question 4.3: If not, what do you hope to learn?

Question 5: What things have teachers done to help you learn Icelandic?

Question 5.1: What did you think of these strategies?

Question 5.2: Did you know the Latin alphabet prior to starting here and do you think that helped you learn Icelandic?

Question 5.3: What changes would you like to see, or is there anything that would have helped you more with learning Icelandic?

Question 6: What challenges have you faced in learning Icelandic?

Question 6.1: Have you found ways to overcome these challenges?

Question 7: Did you take any tests during the course?

If yes: Can you describe the tests? For example, did you use only reading and writing, or were you asked to speak?

How did you feel when you got the results of the tests - did they motivate you to do better or did they make you want to stop taking the course?

If not: How was your understanding assessed by the teacher?

Did you agree with your teacher's assessment of your progress? Why or why not?  
Do you have any recommendations for ways teachers might test the progress of people learning Icelandic?

Question 8: What did you do outside of class to practice the language?

Question 8.1: Do you go to restaurants, work, or other places?

Question 8.2: How did other people react to you practicing Icelandic?

Question 9: Do you feel that you are integrating into Icelandic society and why?

Question 9.1: What does integration mean to you?

Question 9.2: Do you feel that learning Icelandic is essential to integrate into society?

## **Appendix D: IRB Consent Form and Oral Script**

### **Consent Form**

#### **Introduction:**

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you decide on your participation, we want to make sure that you have all of the necessary information to make an informed decision. This form provides you with details about the study's purpose, the process of the interview/survey, and any potential risks you may encounter. This information is provided to help you make a fully informed decision on your participation in the study.

#### **Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of our research is to better understand how non-native speakers learn the Icelandic language at different Icelandic language schools. At the end of the study, we intend to produce information about the different teaching and assessment methods utilized at different language schools and how they relate to the experiences of students learning Icelandic.

#### **Procedures to be followed:**

For this research, you will be asked a series of questions about your experience related to learning Icelandic. You may skip any questions or stop the interview at any time. An audio recording of the interview will be taken for record-keeping and reference. You may also choose to not have your voice recorded and instead to have notes taken on your responses.

#### **Risks to study participants:**

The risks associated with participation in this study are minimal. You may experience social discomfort due to certain questions. You may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering.

#### **Benefits to research participants and others:**

This project seeks to contribute to the development of Iceland's second language education program and to aid in the selection of a language school by second language learners in Iceland. Participation in this study will help achieve this goal.

#### **Record keeping and confidentiality:**

All recordings and notes taken during this interview will only be accessed by the researchers and their advisors, and will be kept confidential. Your name and contact information will not be included in any published documents. Your responses may be quoted or paraphrased in the final report, though you may opt out of having your direct quotations being included in our report.

Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the sponsor or its designee and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.

#### **Compensation or treatment in event of injury:**

You do not give up any of your legal rights by signing this statement.

**For more information about this research or about the rights of research participants, or in case of research-related injury, contact:**

Researchers: Halim Faker, Alina Potashinsky, Henry Sica, Inaya Siddiqui (gr-Iceland-A23@wpi.edu)

Research Advisors: Herman Servatius (hservat@wpi.edu), Brigitte Servatius (bservat@wpi.edu)

IRB Manager: Ruth McKeogh (Tel. 508 831- 6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu)

Human Protection Administrator: Gabriel Johnson (Tel. 508-831-4989, Email: gjohnson@wpi.edu)

**Your participation in this research is voluntary.** Your refusal to participate will not result in any penalty to you or any loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You may decide to stop participating in the research at any time without penalty or loss of other benefits.

**By signing below,** you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above.

**By checking the box below,** you permit the researchers to audio record you as part of this study. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. We have provided you with a copy of this consent agreement.

If you consent to your voice being recorded during this study, please mark this box

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Study Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Study Participant Name (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person who explained this study

All the information provided will be kept confidential until the extent allowed by the law. The access to this personal information will be restricted to the study team and authorized personnel. The name presented will not be associated with any results of this project.

## **Oral Script**

Before we begin the interview, are you ok with us recording your consent?

*[Start audio recording after receiving permission]*

We would like to thank you for considering participating in our research study. Before we begin, we want to make sure you understand the nature, procedures, and potential risks of the study. The purpose of this form is to make you aware of this information and to help you decide on your involvement.

This study will help us better understand how non-native speakers in Iceland learn the Icelandic language and how different teaching methods can be implemented to benefit their learning.

As part of the research project, we would like to ask you a series of questions about your experiences with second language education. You may skip any questions or stop the interview at any time.

This research will be published by Worcester Polytechnic Institute and will be available online following its publication. Your responses may be quoted or paraphrased in our final report, but any identifiable information, such as your name, contact information, or location, will not be published or accessible to anyone other than the project's researchers and advisors.

The interview is estimated to take 30 minutes to an hour, though you can stop the interview at any point. Is it ok if we take an audio recording of the interview for our records?

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If at any point you decide to no longer be part of this study, your responses will be removed from our records.

Before you sign, do you have any questions about the study or the interview? We will be providing a copy of the form to you.

*[Give time for questions]*

## Appendix E: Email to Language Schools

Hello,

We hope you are well. We are a group of university students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the United States that are working on a project related to Icelandic as a second language acquisition and education.

We are reaching out to you because we would love to work with you on our project! If it would be acceptable, we hope to interview your teachers and students about their experiences teaching and learning Icelandic, along with their experiences living in Iceland. We also hope to distribute a survey through your organization, where it would be posted around the building or otherwise advertised, about similar topics.

Please let us know if either of these options sound acceptable to you, or if you can help us in any other way.

Please contact us ([gr-Iceland-A23@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-Iceland-A23@wpi.edu) or reply directly to this email) if you have any questions. We would also be more than happy to meet with you.

Virðingarfyllst,  
Alina Potashinsky, Halim Faker, Inaya Siddiqui, and Henry Sica

## Appendix F: Infographic

# Learning Icelandic

## COMPARING THREE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS



The following schools offer Icelandic language courses to adults. All courses are approved by the Icelandic government for residency permits and citizenship requirements. Some course costs can be reimbursed through unions or through the Directorate of Labour.

### The Tin Can Factory

- **Location:** Skeifan 11B, 108 Reykjavik
- **Cost:** 47.900 ISK - 52.900 ISK
- **Typical Class Sizes:** 5 - 16 students
- **Total Student Body:** ~1350 students per year
- **Course Offerings:**
  - Preparatory Courses
  - Standard Icelandic Courses
  - Speaking Courses
  - Advanced Courses (Literature and Grammar)
  - Online Courses
- **Class Characteristics:**
  - All courses are conducted in Icelandic
  - Classes focus on speaking
  - Field trips, cooking, and outdoor activities are part of the curriculum
  - Continuous evaluation process (no end-of-course exams)



For more information, click [here!](#)

### Múltíkúltí

- **Location:** Bolholt 6, 2nd. floor, 105 Reykjavik
- **Cost Range:** 36.000 ISK - 49.000 ISK
- **Typical Class Sizes:** 7 - 14 students
- **Total Student Body:** 1200 - 1400 students per year
- **Course Offerings:**
  - Standard Icelandic
  - One Speaking Course
- **Class Characteristics:**
  - Offers virtual attendance to in-person classes
  - Lower course levels are conducted in students' native languages
  - Screens in classrooms
  - End-of-course exams

Múltí Kúltí

For more information, click [here!](#)

### Mimir

- **Location:** Höfðabakka, 110 Reykjavik
- **Cost Range:** 31.000 ISK - 52.000 ISK
- **Typical Class Sizes:** 8 - 15 students
- **Total Student Body:** 1200 - 1300 students per year
- **Course Offerings:**
  - Standard Icelandic Courses
  - Speaking-Focused Icelandic Courses
  - Reading and Writing Courses
  - Vocational Courses
  - Online Courses
- **Class Characteristics:**
  - Lower course levels are conducted in students' native languages
  - Smartboards and screens in classrooms
  - End-of-course exams



For more information, click [here!](#)



### Appendix G: Authorship List

<b>Section</b>	<b>Original Author(s)</b>	<b>Primary Editor</b>	<b>Secondary Editor(s)</b>
Abstract	IS	AP	HS
Executive Summary	HF	HS	AP
Introduction	AP & HF	IS	HS
Historical Significance	IS	AP	HS, HF
Icelandic Immigration: Trends and Experiences	AP & HF	IS	HS
Icelandic Language Test for Citizenship	AP	HF	IS
The Development of Icelandic Language Courses	AP & HS	HF	IS
Second Language Teaching Methods	IS	AP	HF
Assessment Methods	AP & HS	IS	AP, HF
Assessment in Icelandic as a Second Language	AP	HF	HS, IS
Grounded Theory	IS	HF	HS
Our Case Study: The Three Language Schools	HS	AP	IS
Interviews with Language School Directors	HS	AP	IS, HF
Teacher and Student Interviews (Introduction)	AP	IS	HS, HF
Teacher Interviews	IS	HF	AP, HS
Student Interviews	AP & HF	HS	IS

Classroom Observations	HF	AP	HS
Data Analysis	AP & IS	HF	HS
Student Motivations and Goals for Learning Icelandic	IS & HF	AP	HS
The Tin Can Factory			
Overview	HS & IS	AP	HF
Teaching Methods	AP	HF	HS
Assessment Methods	AP	IS	HF
Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic	HF	HS	AP
Addressing Student Needs	IS & HF	AP	HS
Mímir			
Overview	HS & IS	AP	HF
Teaching Methods	AP	HF	HS
Assessment Methods	AP	IS	HF
Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic	HF	HS	AP
Addressing Student Needs	IS & HF	AP	HS
MúltíKúltí			
Overview	HS & IS	AP	HF
Teaching Methods	AP	HF	HS
Assessment Methods	AP	IS	HF
Student Perspectives on Learning Icelandic	HF	HS	AP
Addressing Student Needs	IS & HF	AP	HS
Conclusions			
Conclusion Introduction	HF	AP	HS

Limitations	IS & AP	HF	HS
Language School Summaries	IS	AP	HS
Future Directions	HF	AP	HS