

Migration Narratives of Filipino Migrants in Nuuk

Master's thesis



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Abstract

Immigration in Greenland has been under-researched, as opposed to touristic developments and opportunities in Greenland. The number of Filipinos who moved to Greenland especially has been rising prominently in the past few years, and people with Filipino citizenship make up approximately 1,5 percent of the population in Greenland today. As the labour markets in Greenland rely on foreign workforce, this indicates a gap in a highly relevant research field that this master's thesis aims to start filling. The aim of the thesis is to investigate the experiences and stories of Filipinos who live and work in Nuuk.

The data collection uses ethnographic methods in Nuuk, the core of which consists of 9 qualitative in-person interviews with Filipino immigrants in Nuuk. Due to the lack of previous research, this thesis takes an explorative approach. The interviews are semi-structured, giving the interviewees space for telling their story and including their individual key points. An inductive narrative analysis of the interviewee transcripts gives insight into recurring themes and highlights the issues that the interviewees seem to find most relevant, using identity-related theories for interpretation. The theories provide insight into the perceived power-structures, social negotiations, cultural encounters and language-related narratives of the interviewees.

The analysis of the data shows that the interviewees take an active role in shaping their lives. They came to Nuuk because they saw opportunities in the city that allowed them to follow their priorities, which are mostly family-related. The interviewees actively engage in home-making practices, and therefore, most interviewees do not feel restricted to living in a specific geographical area but are open to future developments and priorities. They notice cultural differences and actively create and shape in-groups and out-groups based on cultural reasoning. Furthermore, the interviewees interpret the lack of a common language in a community as a social barrier. Through their position as newcomers, they notice their lack of local knowledge, which they make an effort to learn and become empowered in the Nuuk society and workplaces.

The opportunities for development are concluded to be a characteristic of countries with a lack of workforce, which benefits the Filipinos as migrants in Nuuk, and it therefore is the foundation of the interviewees' narratives. In the light of the colonial history between Greenland and Denmark, the interviewees have a less privileged role than Danish newcomers in Nuuk, but in contrast to the Danes, the cultural barriers in Nuuk seem easier to overcome.

This thesis can serve as a basis for future research of Filipinos and other immigrants in Greenland. Furthermore, the results of the analysis provide valuable insights for institutions that have an interest in knowing about the experiences and challenges of Filipinos in Nuuk, such as employers and government agencies.

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1. Introduction

Greenland is a country with a population of roughly 56'000 inhabitants in 2023 (Grønlands Statistik, 2023). The percentage of the population living in the smaller towns in Greenland stayed roughly the same over the past years, while the total population in the country almost doubled from 33'000 in 1960 to 56'000 today. (Dahl, 2010, p. 129). Therefore, it can be said that the population has been concentrating in the capital over the years, which has been investigated by several researchers (Roed Abrahamsen, 2019, p. 4).

Although islands are geographically isolated, they are internationally connected (Clark, 2004, p. 287), especially in the light of globalisation. Globalisation is characterised by the international interconnectedness. It is “the development of closer economic, cultural, and political relations among all the countries of the world as a result of travel and communication becoming easy.” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). Historically speaking, the oldest form of globalisation is migration (Cheney, 2009, p. 99). and “people today relocate greater distances more frequently than ever before in human history” (Nail, 2015, p. 1). It has become easier and cheaper to relocate faster and travel longer distances. This does affect movement of people in general, among others tourism, business trips and migration (Czaika & de Haas, 4.13, p. 30). Greenland meets the consequences of the development in human displacement and globalisation with building new airport infrastructure (KAIR, 2023; Tanner, 2024).

In the past few years, Greenland has gained an increased popularity among Chinese tourists (Lee, 2020). It has been observed that the Arctic holds a big potential for Chinese tourists and several studies have investigated this matter (M. M. Bennett & Iaquito, 2023; Cai et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2017; Martin & Ren, 2020).

While the growing potential of tourists is under investigation, the developments in the sector of immigration are mostly unexplored. Meanwhile, Greenland depends on foreign workers (M. Bennett, 2017; Bjerregaard, 2023; Preisler, 2019). The country lacks workforce in numerous sectors; in the tourism and fishery sectors (Preisler, 2019), hotel, automobile industries as well as in the office and administration sector (Naalakkersuisut, 2024). Greenland even has an internationally low unemployment rate with just over 3 percent (Dyvik, 2023). The issue of lack of workforce can be investigated in connection to migration (Joppe, 2012), and labour shortage is described as a possible opportunity for migrant workers. This is especially interesting when considering that - as elaborated in the literature review in chapter 2.1 - employee exploitation is not uncommon among employed migrants in their host countries.

Looking at the constantly rising number of migrants all over the globe (Triandafyllidou, 2018, pp. 1–2) and the need of foreign workforce in Greenland makes migration research in Greenland highly relevant. This thesis aims to mark the start of filling this research gap. In fact, Greenland had more immigrants than emigrants in the measurement time 2010 to 2021 (Grønlands Statistik, n.d.-b). In Greenland, most people with a foreign citizenship are from the Philippines (Dyvik, 2024), which is approximately 1,5 percent of Greenland's population. This is visible in the total numbers of Philippine citizens who live in Greenland (ibid.) as well as in the number of Philippine immigrations in Greenland in 2023 (Preisler, 2019).

1.1 Problem formulation

This thesis investigates the critical links between the lack of workforce in Greenland and the increasing migration from the Philippines to Greenland. The research takes a qualitative approach and focuses on individual narratives. It aims to discuss the experiences from the points of view of Filipinos in Nuuk about their stories of migrating to Greenland.

Migration has been discovered to be a transforming experience when adapting and responding to a new environment (Altinyelken, 2009, p. 155; Foner et al., 2018, p. 4; Kawakami, 2009, p. 30). Although personal identity is under constant development (Tabouret-Keller, 2017, p. 316), migration is a relevant factor in identity formation (Tedeschi et al., 2022, p. 605), due to the changing social network and relationships, “regardless of the type (cultural, social, political, economic, etc.) of relationships involved” (ibid.). Furthermore, stereotyping and integration are often part of the migration discourse (cf. Jensen, 2011; Lerpold et al., 2023).

In the early beginnings of the thesis and research design process, the aim was to focus on the identity transformation among migrants, based on the knowledge presented in the previous paragraph. However, during the research, the interviewees denied any conscious experience of identity transformation connected to their migration to Greenland. Instead, other relevant topics became apparent, which provided the researcher with a more explorative approach. Furthermore, there are no studies yet about immigrants in Greenland, which enhances the explorative character of the research. Based on that, the following research question has been developed:

RQ1: What is the dominant migration narrative among Filipinos moving to Nuuk, Greenland?

This serves as the basis on answering the following questions:

RQ2: What role does the Greenlandic lack of workforce play in the Filipino narrative?

RQ3: How does the migration narrative of the Filipinos differ from other migration narratives?

In order to explore the research questions, the question of identity remains relevant: Theoretical frameworks such as the social identity theory, cultural encounters and the significance of language use are used to interpret the collected data. The explorative character of the research asks for an inductive data analysis. In consequence, the theoretical background has been developed simultaneously and with the analysis, taking an iterative approach (Tracy, 2018, p. 62) to the thesis as a whole.

Methodologically, the data for this thesis is collected through ethnographic methods. The core of the data consists of semi-structured interviews with Filipinos who live and work in Nuuk. Additional data are collected as field notes and pictures, which provide a diversity in

collected data and therefore enhance the research with internal validity. The detailed methodology is presented in chapter 4.

This thesis explores the individuals' narratives, which can shed light on e.g. the following: the interviewees' perception of power structures, their placements as protagonists in their own stories, factors that influenced their decisions in the migration process, as well as the opportunities and challenges that come with migrating to a new country. Eventually, it will be possible to create a hypothesis about which role the lack of workforce in Greenland takes in Filipinos' migration narratives. Having said this, it needs to be clarified that this thesis takes a cultural approach, which focuses on personal narratives, experiences and encounters. Political aspects, while providing frameworks for migration, are not part of this research.

When exploring immigrant narratives, it is furthermore relevant to take the colonial history in Greenland into consideration. Danish colonialism has left a lasting impact on Greenlandic culture, language, and societal norms (cf. chapter 2.3). Immigrants in Greenland encounter a society where these colonial influences create tensions in e.g. language use (Huppert Karlsson, 2021, pp. 195–196) and a continuous debate about identity and independence (UN, 2021). Examining how colonial history has shaped Greenlandic society can help contextualise the discovered Filipino narratives. Taking the relationship between Greenland and Denmark into consideration furthermore allows to contrast the Filipino immigrant narrative in Greenland with other migration narratives, specifically with the Danes' narrative in Greenland.

This thesis is highly relevant since it provides an insight into the immigrant community in Greenland, and it gives migrants a voice and a platform from where to tell their personal stories (cf. Fina & Tseng, 2017, p. 382). Although it has to be underlined that this thesis does not cover the whole immigrant community in Greenland, it marks the start of a relevant research area. This thesis can serve as a basis for employers to be more aware of the nature of integration and wellbeing among their new or future Filipino employees. Furthermore, the results highlight what makes Greenland and its labour market attractive in order to frame future job advertisements directed towards Filipinos more attractive. Moreover, it can provide stakeholders such as the Government of Greenland as well as the Embassy of the Philippines to Denmark with awareness of challenges that often occur among Filipinos in Nuuk.

1.2 The international and intercultural dimensions

The intercultural and international dimensions of the thesis are covered by connecting national and international workforce and their culture within one geographical region. Additionally, this thesis is written as part of the specialisation in Arctic Studies, which is visible choosing the Greenlandic cultural, political, social and geographical environment as the base of the research.

2. Literature review

2.1 Migrant workers

2.1.1 The migrant

This chapter about migrant workers aims to contextualise and define the term ‘migrant’ as well as highlight why the use of the term is problematic.

The dictionary describes a migrant as “a person who travels to another place or country, usually in order to find work” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). A more elaborate definition is provided by The International Organisation of Migration (IOM): A migrant is described as “a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.” (International Organization for Migration, n.d.). However, as it is mentioned by the IOM, the term ‘migrant’ is an “umbrella term”, which is not defined by law but by a common understanding (ibid.).

The definition of the dictionaries clarifies that a movement of a person is involved. However, it does not provide any other characteristics such as the purpose and motivation of movement, citizenship, social or political status, or the planned length of stay at the new place. This leaves space for different interpretations and uses of the term depending on context. One interpretation is omnipresent: The use of the word ‘migrant’ holds the connotation that the migrant is a foreigner in the population of the current residence. This connotation can be misleading, when considering that the term ‘migrant’ does not have a defined length of stay in the new place. Therefore, the use of the word itself can be misleading and cause a feeling of exclusion on a personal level and invalid research results on an academic level. This makes the use of the term problematic. In order to minimise these issues that accompany the use of the term, the term ‘migrant’ is going to be clearly defined in this chapter in order to develop a solely factual term that distances itself from potentially biased descriptions and their connotations.

As the broad definitions of the ‘migrant’ term suggest, there is more than *‘the migrant’* but rather a diverse reality of different migrants (Nail, 2015, p. 15), with different purposes, wishes, financial situations, educational backgrounds, citizenships, social backgrounds and political statuses. Therefore, it invites to *describe* the figure of the migrant for the context of each academic research, instead of taking the limiting approach of *defining* the term (cf. Crawley & Jones, 2021, p. 3226). However, in order to provide a broad basis and simultaneously define a limiting background for this thesis, and in order to avoid potential biases that are based on descriptions, the researcher chose to provide a clear definition of the ‘migrant’ rather than mere descriptions from academic sources. Therefore, the researcher decided to consult the Cambridge Dictionary and the glossary of The International Organisation of Migration in order to develop a definition in this subchapter:

In this research, the term ‘migrant’ is used for a person who lives and works in a country where they did not have national citizenship when moving to this country.

This definition focuses on internationally moving persons. Since characteristics such as length of stay cannot be specified due to variability among migrants, it is important that their main residence is in the host country, which usually requires a work contract or an employed family member.

2.1.2 Migrant workers

Closely connected to the earlier developed definition of a migrant, a migrant worker “refers to a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national”, as it has been established by the UN (UN, 1990) and quoted by the International Organisation for Migration (International Organization for Migration, n.d.).

Migrant workers are a vulnerable part of society as they are an easy target to be exploited by their employers in terms of work hours, salary, insurance coverage and health (Moyce & Schenker, 2018, p. 352).

Migrant workforce is typically divided into skilled and unskilled migrants, which is an evaluation from the perspective of the receiving country. As a result, “some migrants are considered more desirable than others” (Vigouroux, 2017, p. 313), which places them with different connotations in the public discourse (ibid.). As education, physical abilities and other kinds of knowledge are valued and acquired differently between cultures and countries, ascribing the migrants as skilled or unskilled is a reflection of the receiving country rather than a truth about the migrants’ educational backgrounds.

2.1.3 Global migration

While ‘migration’, just like ‘the migrant’, has several definitions, ‘migration’ is often accompanied with a negative connotation in the public discourse. The movement of humans, going back centuries in history, is described as a problem. (Castles, 2010, p. 1567). Meanwhile, thanks to technological advancements and globalisation, it has become easier and faster to travel and to move to a different country or even an entirely different continent.

The connotation of migration is shaped by the perspective and framing in the discourse. Part of the framing are the reason for migration, the perceived level of education as well as the position of the own country. “International recruitment of highly skilled personnel was considered valuable, while lower-skilled migrant workers were seen as out-of-place in shiny new post-industrial economies” (Castles, 2010, p. 1567). In case of labour shortage in a country, migration is welcome due to demand in the labour market (Joppe, 2012, p. 665). From there, it can be concluded that the mere matter of terminology shapes the narrative of migration.

2.2 Labour market and migration in Greenland

Greenland’s population has been relatively stable since 1990 (Grønlands Statistik, n.d.-a; Heleniak, 2014, p. 14) until today. However, this is only possible due to immigration into

Greenland. In fact, Greenland is confronted with the problems of outmigration and urbanisation, as elaborated in the following paragraphs.

There is a concentration of the Greenlandic inhabitants in the bigger cities to be observed (Dahl, 2010, p. 129; Roed Abrahamsen, 2019, p. 3). The inhabitants in Qaqortoq in South Greenland, for example, feel stuck due to the lack of connection with the rest of Greenland. "It's a dying community" (Nielsen, 2020, p. 52). Many leave the place in hope for better education and employment elsewhere, and due to friends moving away (ibid. p. 52–53). Whether the airport in Qaqortoq, which is to be finished in autumn 2025 (KAIR, 2023), will bring any change to the matter is yet unknown.

Many Greenlanders leave their towns to settle in Nuuk. This provides the city with the challenge of providing all resources for the increasing number of inhabitants, such as accommodation, infrastructure and personnel for covering the needs of the population (Roed Abrahamsen, 2019, p. 4).

Some Greenlanders do not only leave their settlements for bigger cities in Greenland but leave the country altogether. This is a possibility that emerged due to globalisation. Most of them move to Denmark, for education, which involves especially young people (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 18). Less than half of them return to Greenland within 10 years, which presents Greenland with a phenomenon called 'brain-drain' (ibid.).

As a result of the outmigration and the Greenlandic brain-drain, there are free jobs in Greenland that cannot be occupied by the local workforce, even though not all the inhabitants are occupied with work. In fact, one third of the young adults (16-24 years) is neither employed nor in education (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 23). While the unemployment rate in Greenland is among the lowest in the world, (Dyvik, 2023), the level of school-based education among the working-age population is low, with part of them not finishing the nine-year long primary school and retaking the final exam after taking extra education (Høgedahl, 2021, pp. 48–49). While some of the 'low-skilled' workers with primary school education are self-employed, others struggle to find a job, even though there are open positions available (ibid. p. 86). Meanwhile, "unemployment among people with further education is almost non-existent in Greenland" (ibid. p. 112).

Greenland is essentially described to lack skilled labour, a possible answer to which is attracting foreign labour: "Greenland is currently in a position where it must attract foreign labour despite idle local labour, showing that the problem is not shortage of jobs but lack of qualifications, mobility and job-search incentives" (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 128). In fact, research has shown that companies in Greenland prefer foreign employees for their position due to efficiency, stability and education (ibid., p. 68). While this is problematic for Greenlanders, this situation of the labour market presents opportunities to foreign workers.

When taking a closer look at the statistics, it is visible that the immigration is in fact higher than the outmigration (Grønlands Statistik, n.d.-b). In order to answer to the demand for foreign workers, Denmark - responsible for the immigration policies in Greenland - has, in accordance with the Government of Greenland, lowered the immigration barrier for some foreigners, which allows a faster processing of residence and work permits (Government of Greenland, n.d.; SIRI, n.d.) under the condition that they are "employed by a pre-approved

company in Greenland” (Government of Greenland, n.d.). This agreement was implemented in 2021 (Lindstrøm, 2023).

With the increasing internationality of Greenland due to immigration and international airports, new challenges arise. Greenlanders are historically used to relying on fishing and hunting in order to make a living. Only when unable to do so, e.g. due to seasonal changes or unfavourable weather conditions, do they take up paid work, leading to a high turnover rate (cf. *ibid.* p. 83). Although the colonial impact of Denmark promoted a “wage-earner mentality” (*ibid.* p. 127), hunting and fishing is still a crucial part of many Greenlanders’ everyday lives today (*ibid.* p. 131). The Greenlanders’ attitude towards work and their skills are therefore historically different to what is considered relevant for the current labour market (cf. Huppert Karlsson, 2021, p. 2). Furthermore, Greenlanders with skills that are highly relevant for the labour market might not have an interest in looking for a job (*ibid.*). Another explanation for the high turnover rate is that the workplace expectations of employers differ from those of the employees (Huppert Karlsson, 2021, pp. 3, 193–203). There is a significant discrepancy regarding preferences such as work environment, what it means to care and commit to a job, and how problems and tensions at work are approached (*ibid.*).

The earlier-mentioned local brain-drain is replaced by an influx of high-skilled workers from abroad, resulting in a “brain turnover” (Huppert, 2016, p. 32). Meanwhile, foreign workers and international companies bring new standards from their cultural backgrounds to their Greenlandic workplaces, such as stability, foreign education and efficiency. The difference in historically and culturally shaped work attitudes (Huppert Karlsson, 2021) consequently presents the Greenlandic labour markets with challenges, while potentially providing the foreign workforce with advantages.

2.3 The Danish ‘migration narrative’ in Greenland

This chapter explains the relationship between Danes and Greenlanders today, and explains how the relationship was shaped through colonial history. This can then be used to describe the Danish ‘migration narrative’ in Greenland. The use of this expression will be explained and argued for in subchapter 2.3.2.

2.3.1 The colonial history

In 1721, Danish-norwegian missionary Hans Egede arrived in Greenland, which marked the beginning of the Danish colonisation of Greenland (Berg, 2015). When the United Nations called for decolonisation in the 1950’s, Denmark adjusted Greenland’s constitution for it to become an “formally equal province” of Denmark in 1953 (Volquardsen, n.d., p. 7 - official translation of Volquardsen, 2023). This resulted in a “Danification” of Greenland (Kočí & Baar, 2021, p. 193), the Danish language becoming the official language in Greenland (UN, 2021), and an “experiment” placed a group of Greenlandic children in Danish homes to get ‘little Danes’ with Danish education, with disastrous consequences for their mental health (Volquardsen, n.d., p. 7 - official translation of Volquardsen, 2023). Additionally, a birthplace criterion was introduced, which defined the salary ranges according to birthplace (Høghendahl, 2021, p. 40). Danes and other foreigners were “entitled to higher salaries,

bonuses, and better working conditions than [...] employees born in Greenland in the same occupation” (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 40).

In 1979, Home rule was introduced in Greenland (Berg, 2015, p. 28; Volquardsen, n.d., p. 7 - official translation of Volquardsen, 2023), which gave Greenland power over economy and infrastructure (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 409). With the *Selvstyre Act* of 2009, Greenlandic became the official language (Kočí & Baar, 2021, p. 199), and the country’s right to claim independence is part of the law (ibid., p. 194). Today, Denmark pays Greenland an annual ‘block grant’, which contributes to Greenland’s income (ibid., p. 195).

However, there are still remnants of colonial history visible today (Pettersen, 2012, p. 39). As this topic provides the scope large enough for another thesis, the example of the language is presented for illustration purposes. Danish language use is still prominent in Greenland, even though today the official language is Greenlandic, and in 2017, 70 percent of the population in Greenland speak only Greenlandic (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 76). Another 15 percent speak only Danish - roughly 10 percent of the inhabitants being Danish (Heleniak, 2014, p. 15) - and another 15 percent are bilingual (Høghendahl, 2021, p. 76).

Organisationally speaking, knowledge of the Danish language is relevant, as the public sector is still dominated by Danish (UN, 2021) as well as the complete upper secondary education (Valijärvi & Kahn, 2020, p. 268) and the majority of the courses at the University of Greenland (Ilisimatusarfik) (Valijärvi & Kahn, 2020, p. 268; Berg, 2015, p. 41). Furthermore the “knowledge of Danish is a de-facto prerequisite for professional development and advancement at the expense of West Greenlandic” (Valijärvi & Kahn, 2020, p. 270).

However, the Greenlandic language stands politically for Greenlandic autonomy from Denmark and for the Greenlandic identity, to contrast the imposed ‘Danification’ of the 1950’s and 1960’s. The political significance of Greenlandic for the Greenlandic population was highlighted during a Danish parliamentary debate in Copenhagen in spring 2023, where Greenlandic representative Aki-Matilda Høegh-Dam delivered her speech in Greenlandic and declined to translate it into Danish (Kontos, 2023; Reuters, 2023). The gap between the organisational use of languages and the political meaning creates tensions and reveals the remnants of the colonial past.

Research about the job attribute preferences in Greenland shows that language is a current barrier at three investigated companies in Greenland (Huppert Karlsson, 2021, p. 195) and cultural differences are perceived to be part of language differences. The survey to collect this data was aimed at Greenlandic and Danish-speaking recipients (ibid. p. 34) and therefore unveils the tensions that occur in a Danish-Greenlandic workplace in Greenland, as well as the hesitancy in addressing the problem openly in those workplaces (cf. ibid. p. 195, 196).

2.3.2 The Danish migration narrative

Before diving into the main purpose of this chapter, this first paragraph explains the use of the expression ‘Danish migration narrative’ in the title of this chapter. According to the definition of a migrant developed for this thesis by the researcher, a migrant is “a person who lives and works in a country where they did not have national citizenship when moving to this

country” (cf. chapter 2.1.1). According to that definition, describing Danes as migrants in Greenland is not accurate because they do indeed have the same citizenship as Greenlanders. Meanwhile, Greenland is its own country, despite being politically linked to Denmark, which provides grounds in favour of the use of ‘migrants’ when talking about people that move between Greenland and Denmark. These conflicting arguments for labelling and for not labelling Danes as ‘migrants’ in Greenland are the result of the colonial history described above in chapter 2.3.1, which blurs the line between migrants and non-migrants. The complexity increases further when considering that some people in Greenland and in Denmark have both Greenlandic and Danish roots due to how historically intertwined the two countries are. The lack of a clear differentiation is furthermore rooted in the following part of the above-cited definition: “[...] the country where they did not have national citizenship [...]”. It presupposes that the people of two different countries have two different citizenships, which is not the case in Greenland and Denmark. Therefore, depending on the perspective, Danes who live in Greenland can be investigated from either of two different angles: either from being part of Greenland, or from immigrating as migrants. Since Danes are both part of Greenland and foreigners, both angles are equally valid, each in their specific context and purpose. In this thesis, the term ‘migration narrative’ has been chosen to be used because it allows to contrast the narrative with the results of the analysis in chapter 5.

In the past, Greenland used to be a “dreamland” for Danes (Berg, 2015, 33–34), as they used to receive high salaries in Greenland (cf. chapter 2.3.1), were guaranteed housing, and often came to Greenland as seasonal workers (Berg, 2015, p. 30). They saw the place as a place for “missionary work, resource exploitation, trade and adventure” (Berg, 2015, p. 34)¹. Berg (2015) investigated the belonging of Danish newcomers in Greenland today by doing fieldwork for approximately 6 months in Nuuk (Berg, 2015, p. 14). Berg sought to explore the connection and belonging of Danish newcomers in Nuuk (ibid, p. 2). This subchapter presents and discusses the findings and observations of the study that are considered most relevant in context of this thesis, specifically in the light of the upcoming analysis of the Filipino narrative (cf. analysis chapter 5).

Berg describes several reasons for Danes moving to Greenland, such as family, economic aspirations, career goals as well as the hunger for adventure (Berg, 2015, p. 36). In the interviews with Danes in Greenland, the career development is prominent (ibid., p. 38): Danes who lack experience to find a job in Denmark after finishing their education are likely to find a job in Greenland due to the lack of skilled workers in the country. At the time of the study in 2015, this was especially the case in the law sector in Greenland (Berg, 2015, p. 38).

It was furthermore noted that many Danes stay in Greenland for a limited period of time. As an explanation, it was stated that Greenlandic experience makes Danes attractive in the Danish labour market, but if they are there for too long, they are thought to miss the pace and developments in Denmark, which disqualifies them as a good workforce (ibid., p. 38–39). Furthermore, Danish newcomers in Greenland avoid making local friends, because it would make it difficult to move away again to be close to the people (Berg, 2015, p. 69).

¹ The citation was translated from Norwegian to English. The original quote is the following: “[...] et sted for misjonering, ressursutnyttelse, handel og eventyr.” (Berg, 2015, p. 34)

Most of the Danes who live in Greenland and who were interviewed for Berg's research mentioned their initial wish to learn Greenlandic, but they did not end up studying the language (Berg, 2015., p. 42–44). Mentioned reasons were not having time, lack of priority due to their stay being temporal, and the possibility of fulfilling their job tasks entirely without relying on the Greenlandic language (ibid.).

The Danish interviewees noticed that their presence in Greenland had a higher meaning than their personal contribution. Apart from their individual presence, they additionally represented the presence of the colonial power, marked in every space they shared with Greenlanders (Berg, 2015, p. 54). Furthermore, at the job, it was the Danish person the Greenlanders seemed to perceive primarily, rather than the professional competences and education (ibid.). As a result, there is an act of distancing of the Danes discovered by Berg, such as a Danish interviewee complaining about all those newcomers from Denmark that stay only temporarily, while later elaborating to have been there only for 6 months herself. (ibid., p. 54). Furthermore, the interviewees avoided phrasing the aim to 'help' Greenland, or they negated that reason being part of their aim altogether. Berg relates this to the colonial past, where the main aim was to 'help' (ibid., p. 38).

Greenland is a 'dreamland' for many Danes, as opposed to belonging there, because it is explained to take time in order to belong (Berg, 2015, p. 80). A dreamland is a place for adventures (ibid., p. 66), a place to enjoy the often praised nature and quietness (ibid, pp. 58, 60), and it is inviting to use its remoteness to escape from stress and social responsibilities in Denmark (ibid., p. 58–59). This makes Greenland a place that Danes can access and leave again whenever they wish to do so, whenever they have had enough of the 'dreamland'.

3. Theoretical considerations

3.1 The concept of identity

This chapter about identity aims to define and simultaneously limit the scope of the research. The chapter establishes the base and arguments for diving deeper in specific identity theories in chapters 3.2 to 3.5.

Identity is "the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2016, p. 276 in Norton 2013). In consequence, one can state that identity is formed by self-perception, transformed over time and developed into an understanding of one's own capabilities and opportunities.

It is crucial to understand that identities are socially constructed (cf. Reyes, 2014). It means that identity categories or descriptions and associations are not naturally given. Instead, they reflect the position of a person in contrast to their social environment. This means that an expression of self-perception is a way of contrasting, comparing and associating oneself with the surrounding society. It furthermore means that the same self-description can have different meanings depending on the historical time of a statement, the addressed audience and the perceived attitude of the surrounding society. Research about identity can therefore give an insight into the self-perceptions of a person in the context of interpersonal relations and societal values, and said research is simultaneously restricted by the same context of the investigated individuals.

Consequently, language is a crucial aspect when communicating one's identity: "One of the fundamental tasks of talk is to refer to something in the world - a person, place, thing - in a way that will not only capture our own sense of what something is, but will also allow our hearers to adequately recognise what we are talking about." (de Fina et al., 2006, p. 103). When we talk, we create relationships between characters, places and a plot: a narrative (ibid. p. 103-104) In other words, narratives are one crucial way of communicating one's identity as they represent how a person sees oneself in relation to the world; i.e. the plot, other people and a place.

Furthermore, identities are negotiated and contrasted through interaction with other people in the surrounding society (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 24; Foner et al., 2018, p. 4). They are therefore not a mere product of self-reflection but are built through constant inputs in everyday life (Bond, 2019, p. 661). Especially migration is understood to transform a person (Tabouret-Keller, 2017, p. 316) and their personal identity due to the change in society and surroundings, through which migrants identities are negotiated.

As identities are related to the social surroundings and communities, they are multi-layered (Bond, 2019, pp. 658–661; Hua, 2017, p. 117). Different characteristics dominate in different settings as they are considered more or less relevant by the individual, and therefore, different characteristics develop in different settings. This can lead to varying, contrasting, or even conflicting aspects and layers of one's identity. The fact that identities are constantly under formation and re-construction makes it impossible to define one person's absolute

identity. Instead, one can describe and recognise recurring pattern characteristics and the system that lies behind them.

In a migration context, another level of complexity is added to the understanding of one's identity due to its "hybridity, double belonging, or hyphenatedness" (Hua, 2017, p. 119). Flexible moving options, the possibility to be digitally present anywhere anytime, and the option to connect with communities online or even trace their identity through heritagging (ibid.) allow access to a variety of sources for identity building. As a result, migrants are "often reported to share narratives of events and display material goods that come from both home and host countries as well as assess and critique the social practices in one country by referencing what they have experience[d] in another place" (ibid.).

3.2 Home

The place called "home" exists, for migrants, often in several places simultaneously. It is a word that, firstly, is not bound to one single geographical place but can be related to many. "The challenge, we argue, is to conceptualise the simultaneity of home as sedentarist and as mobile." (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 518). Secondly, home "emerges out of the regular, localising reiteration of social processes and sets of relationships with both humans and non-humans" (ibid. P. 519).

Due to globalisation and social media, it has become possible to be part of several communities at once, despite geographical distances. "This means that boundaries and borders are becoming increasingly fluid and geographic spaces are no longer separate" (Capstick, 2020, p. 7).

However, Ralph and Staeheli highlight that "some migrants do desire to pin-down their identities in a discretely defined home, and this desire is often expressed in a desire to 'return' home." (ibid. P 522) This can be a sign for the "search for a stable sense of self in a world often characterised as in flux" (ibid p. 522).

While Ralph and Staeheli (ibid. p. 519) and Boccagni (Boccagni, 2017, p. 2) mention materials and humans as both an important aspect of home, neither dives into the social aspect. While familiarity, security and control are mentioned as characteristics of a home, (Boccagni, 2017, p. 9), one neglects that humans are always socially interconnected with each other. Numerous studies (cf. Kazem Khajeh, 2022; Tedeschi et al., 2022) have investigated how migrants stay in touch with their family members in other countries, which has been facilitated by globalisation and technological progress. It is therefore important to highlight the significance of social relationships in relation to calling a place a home.

Home, on another note, is not restricted to a migrant's country of origin, because home itself is "all but natural and pre-determined." (Boccagni, 2017, p. 9) Home is, instead, "a matter of home-making, or of setting specific social relationships that are negotiated and reproduced over time, more or less successfully, against a variety of material backgrounds." (Boccagni, 2017, p. 12). In other words, home-making is creating and reinforcing practices that form specific relationships with places and people, and the result is a creation of one or several

homes. This process can happen in several places and over time, or in several places simultaneously.

Based on the connections a migrant maintains, reinforces and creates with old and new surroundings, a migrant is free to choose where to make a home or several homes. Therefore, the new destination of a migrant could be an 'in-between place' (cf. Crawley & Jones, 2021), with the migrant being flexible in moving back to where they emigrated from, or staying in the current country, or migrating further, based on the conditions and personal priorities (Regan et al., 2015, p. 290). This creates a sense of "double belonging" (Hua, 2017, p. 119).

3.3 Social identity theory and power negotiation

Already Cooley discovered the connection between the identity formation and social interactions (Cooley, 1964, first published in 1902), and it has been used and developed by researchers ever since. Migrants are therefore not only confronted with a new static environment, but also with the dynamic process of identity negotiation with the surrounding society. With negotiation, the following meaning is meant: the "exchange of verbal and nonverbal messages between the two or more communicators in maintaining, threatening, or uplifting the various socio-cultural group-based or unique personal-based identity images of the other in situ." (Ting-Toomey, 2015, p. 1).

It has been long known that individuals and their surrounding society cannot be separated from each other, and they therefore shall not be analysed without the context of each other (Turner & Oakes, 1986, p. 239). In connection to the social identity theory developed by Tajfel and Turner (ibid.), group memberships are associated with positive experiences: "Part of the reason a person may be incorporated into any particular group or community stems from the fact that s/he shares certain criteria of similarity or 'sameness' with other members of that collectivity." (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 523). A collective identity narrative plays a crucial part in negotiating a person's belonging to a community. People seek to be part of one or several groups as it supports their understanding of self: "People are motivated to seek positive social identity by comparing in-groups favourably with out-groups." (Turner & Oakes, 1986, p. 240) Thus, a person's understanding of self is closely connected to the other in-group members.

Turner and Oakes extended the social identity theory by vertically differentiating different sub-categorizations (Turner & Oakes, 1986, p. 141): While we are all humans on a superordinate level, we can be categorised into different groups that we share certain personal or biological characteristics with. Another subcategory presents the individual, which makes one different from everybody else. Incorporating the earlier mentioned fact that individuals and the surrounding society are in constant exchange, individuals can describe themselves as part of in-groups, contrast themselves with out-groups, and additionally mention their personally identifiable characteristics.

Being an in-group member or being understood as one can lead to a higher self-esteem and provide security in terms of identity and belonging. However, since group memberships exist

on a superordinate level to the individual identity, group memberships and descriptions can neglect and ignore the individual identities, which can lead to prejudice and stereotyping. This can happen among in-groups as well as towards out-groups.

3.3.1 Power relations

When talking about identity and the social negotiation of it, one cannot ignore that there is always a distribution of power that is part of the negotiation. Power is to some extent “systematically distributed in society” through economic advantages or social prestige (Jr & Noblit, 2018, p. 4). In a migration context, there are structural elements of power - such as language skills, rights and citizenships of migrants - that open a gap between the host society and the immigrant society.

However, power is not naturally given. The current power distribution is a result of negotiations that go back thousands of years and are rooted in the beginning of human existence. Power is negotiated and constructed every day through every interaction and non-interaction on a micro-level. Those actions, through negotiations over centuries, become structural elements (Schiller-Merkens, 2008, p. 130) and have therefore an influence on the macro level. Colonising a country is an example of power negotiation (cf. Jr & Noblit, 2018, p. 13), which ended in a power imposition of Western countries on other countries and nations. On the upper end of the power imbalance, people have the power to impose classifications, labels and rules on others.

As deduced above, power and power imbalance can be visible on a macro level as well as on a micro level. On a micro-level, it can be recognized in individual narratives. A dominant cultural group has a direct impact on the expression of out-group individuals, which is visible in the narrative about use of language as well as when analysing the tone as well as the confidence of the interviewees in context of the narrative (Raghuram, 2013, pp. 1479–1480).

The challenge for migrants is that they are both out-groups to the national culture of the host country as well as on the low side of the power asymmetry. This often leads to othering (Jensen, 2011, p. 63). Othering is understood as dominant in-group members imagining others as different, exotic, and therefore imposing the categorisation as out-group onto those others (cf. Holliday et al., 2021, p. 2). As it has been discovered by scholars, migrants tend to be faced with descriptions of a collective identity such as a reduction to nationality or lack of proficiency in the local language (Bond, 2019, p. 651). Those collective identities do not necessarily represent an individual accurately.

Ralph and Staeheli understand the source of this to lie within the fact that norms and rules of a group are unknown to out-groups. “Individual migrants often fail to meet normative expectations of behaviour, language, appearance, dress, eating habits, and countless other materialities and context-dependent etiquettes, and are in consequence perceived and discursively constructed as a group as being different to dominant others” (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 524). The norms and rules have to be actively learned in order for migrants to know them, which is a fact that is enough for othering, and in-group members categorising the immigrants as out-groups.

3.4 Integration and cultural encounters

This subchapter aims to describe the relationship between the migrant and the host society. A term that is often used for discussing the degree a migrant is part of a society, is the term and concept of 'integration' (cf. Lerpold et al., p. 3, 2023; Hamberger, 2009, p. 4).

In a wider sense, integration is indeed a complex process of migrants becoming a part of society (Lerpold et al., 2023, p. 3). However, in academic contexts, the term 'integration' has been used for various meanings. While some sources use it as an umbrella term, others use it as part of a concept, such as opposed to 'acculturation' or even as a synonym with 'acculturation' (Hamberger, 2009, pp. 3–4; Zick, 2010, p. 35). Often, integration is furthermore framed specifically and 'integration' - in this case understood as 'assimilation' - is promoted as something to strive for: "The 'well integrated migrant' is the one who has assimilated functionally into ways of speaking, thinking, and behaving in the host society" (ibid., p. 4, quoting Schierup and Ålund, 1986).

In order to make integration a measurable process, numerous acculturation models by various researchers have been developed in the past decades, the most known of which is Berry's model (Berry, 1992). Berry's acculturation model divides cultural encounters in assimilation, separation, integration and marginalisation. Within the model, 'integration' stands for an individual living both its own culture as well as the host culture. In this thesis, the word integration is connected to the meaning that is attached to Berry's model, i.e. a bicultural approach of a person.

Berry's acculturation model suggests that there is an objective and clear distinction between two (or more) cultures. It neglects the subjectivity of experiencing and negotiating culture. Cultural encounters are indeed never neutral, and they can therefore not be described objectively (Gunn, 2017, p. 11). In fact, the own description of a different culture reflects the own cultural values more than it describes the other culture (ibid.).

While Berry's acculturation model concentrates on the relationship between national cultures, the term 'culture' by itself is in fact not restricted to a national culture. Parekh (Parekh, 2001, p. 143) describes 'culture' as follows:

"A historically created system of meaning and significance, or, what comes to the same thing, a system of beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of human beings understand, regulate and structure their individual and collective lives."

In consequence, culture can be used to describe various in-groups and their corresponding sub-cultures. Each in-group has its own culture, and its members have the cultural identity of their in-group. Therefore, a culture is multi-layered and has to be investigated from an approach that takes the complexity of cultures, subcultures and the fluidity into account. This leads to focusing on cultural encounters.

Cultural encounters are moments, where actors with different "cultural denominators" (Eckersley & Vos, 2022, p. 5) meet and can become aware of their own 'denominators'. While the investigation of integration and acculturation seeks to answer, to which extent a person has interacted and become part of a culture, investigating cultural encounters seeks to find out, "how the cultural (i.e. Cultural meanings, practices, objects, identities, and

subjectivities) is made and remade in everyday life” (Faier & Rofel, 2014, p. 364). The investigation of cultural encounters therefore takes the constant construction of a common reality into account, which Berry’s acculturation model lacks, as well as the complexity and layers of cultures and subcultures. Cultural encounters are not restricted to interaction between humans but can also be between places and objects, and the related feelings (Kaalund, 2023, p. 82).

3.5 Language

Already Coulmas (Coulmas, 2017, p. 304 - originally published in 1997) described why multilingualism can be necessary for a country: for political, social, cultural and economic reasons (ibid.). Culturally, multilingualism shall “facilitate cultural maintenance” (ibid.). Coulmas writes about official languages and language groups within a country, which enables the maintenance of the sub-cultures connected to a language.

In connection to a nation-state and a community, a common language is crucial (Park & Wee, 2017, p. 48) because a language carries “culture, transmitting historical memories, collective values, and the inherited wisdom of ancestors to current and future generations, as well as serving as the basis for unified government of the state” (ibid.). Park and Wee point out that a nation-state is often assumed to have one common language that serves as the national language, but they argue that it is rather the symbolic importance, connotation and narrative that connects a language to a nation (ibid.). This shows how closely connected language and identity are, as well as language and belonging. Language can make the difference between being considered part and not being part of a specific in-group - either on a national level or any other size of a community. An extreme case is illustrated by Coulmas, where the pronunciation of a word made the difference between friend and enemy on the battle-field and therefore was a matter of life and death (Coulmas, 2017, p. 317 - originally published in 1997).

Transposed to an intercultural and international setting, language is essential when forming intercultural relationships between migrants and the host society. A common language enables communication and therefore a cultural exchange. It thus enables migrants to become part of the language in-group of the country. In contrast, lack of language skill can act as a barrier (Tsang, 2022, p. 106). For a successful cross-cultural exchange, language proficiency in a common language is understood as a crucial factor (ibid.), because a common language acts as a “vehicle for intercultural communication” (Tsang, 2022, p. 106).

From the perspective of a receiving country, language is directly related to the understanding of how integrated a migrant is into the host society (Vigouroux, 2017, p. 320). This is prominently visible e.g. in the fact that a proof of language competency in the national language is needed when applying for citizenship (Park & Wee, 2017, pp. 53–54). “The idea of language testing, although superficially innocuous, is therefore based on the rather more dangerous precept that there is one specific language that embodies the national culture and community” (ibid., p. 54). Meanwhile, there are regional differences of a language as well as the language backgrounds that a migrant brings with them (ibid., p. 54). Integration through language - here understood as ‘assimilation’ is therefore an essentialist perspective that

disregards linguistic diversity within a nation as well as the linguistic background and diversity of migrants. Furthermore, when finding a job, speaking the required language can be crucial for migrants, even in cases where the language competence is not the focus of the relevant job tasks (Del Percio, 2018, p. 256).

4. Methodology

While migration is a complex phenomenon with various facets and different forms around the globe, this study focuses specifically on the migration of Filipino migrants in Nuuk. The group of 'migrants' is based on and limited by the definition developed in chapter 2.1.1, according to which the citizenship at the time of entering Greenland for residence is decisive. The Filipino migrants in Nuuk are therefore a distinct group. This group is relevant, because Philippine citizenship is not only the second-most common in Greenland but also the group of foreigners in the country with the biggest growth in 2023.

The fact that neither the Filipinos in Nuuk nor the general immigration in Greenland have been previously investigated gives this research an explorative character. Therefore, the research is qualitative in order to go in-depth. The aim is to describe the narrative of the Filipinos as they describe themselves as well as to describe the observations and topics that they address.

4.1 Ontology

This research follows the theory of phenomenology. Phenomenology focuses on an individual's own perspectives and experiences rather than trying to describe what is 'real' (Liamputtong, 2020, p. 6) This is particularly relevant when taking a qualitative approach to this subject, as it is the case in this research. The aim of the qualitative interviews is to explore the community by diving into the personal experiences and narratives and to find out, "how does the person experience the phenomenon" (Liamputtong, 2020, p. 6).

The collection of data is based on a constructionist understanding, because the interviews create a reality above what happened. "Instead of seeing [it] as an external reality that acts and constrains people, it can be taken to be an emergent reality in a continuous state of construction and reconstruction. [...] It suggests that the social world and its categories are not external to us, but are built up and constituted in and through interaction." (Bryman, 2016, p. 30). This applies to the researcher's position in the coding process and analysis as well as the process and means of collecting data. Therefore, any verbal recollection is not reality itself but the description of reality. This description of reality can highlight it, interpret it, limit it, imitate it - and it always constructs it (ibid.)

4.2 Data collection

The data collection is based on fieldwork during the researcher's 12 days long stay in Nuuk in March 2024. The core data consists of nine personal interviews with Filipinos who live and work in Nuuk. They all came to Nuuk as Filipino citizens. One of the interviewees is a Danish citizen today while still referring to herself as a Filipino, and the other eight interviewees are still Filipino citizens. The interview participants differ in gender, age and amount of time of living in Nuuk. The occupations of the interviewees range between different occupations in stores, in the hospitality sector and as self-employed, while some have several jobs. Many of the interviewees currently occupy leading positions at their workplaces. Five participants are

female, four are male. They are between 33 and 67 years old, while most of them are in their thirties.

The interviewees were contacted by the researcher through third parties - companies that operate in Nuuk and a personal contact - as well as directly through the Facebook group 'Internationals in Nuuk'. These ways of finding interviewees were the most accessible, considering that the researcher did not have any previous connections to Nuuk and its people.

The interviews are semi-structured (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 31) and therefore ensure a red thread in the data collection while leaving space for personal stories in order to embrace the explorative character of the research and the narrative character of the analysis.

The interview guide was adapted according to the interviewees' inputs between the interviews in order to be able to capture all the relevant data. This included eliminating irrelevant questions, elaborating it by questions about topics that were discovered by coincidence and rephrasing certain questions to match the tone of the interviews. This aligns with the explorative character of the research and gives the process a hermeneutic character. A hermeneutic approach is a "continuous back-and-forth process between parts and the whole", which results in "a continuously deepened understanding of meaning." (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 238).

The interviews are considered the most suitable means of data collection due to various reasons, listed in the following: They allow the researcher to go in-depth and let the interviewees explain their stories, reasonings and context in order to do justice to the explorative character of the research. Additionally, they contain rich data, which allows to capture the complexity and multi-layered-ness of human nature. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews leave room for follow-up questions and summarising statements of the researcher to avoid misunderstandings and ensure that all relevant data are gathered (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 33). Moreover, new questions can come up during the interview process, which are implemented for future interviews, as it has been the case with this research as well. Lastly, interviews are a personal form of data collection, which is more effective in providing the interviewees with an environment of trust and ownership of their data than other means of data collection (cf. Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 35). This does not only fulfil moral standards of data collection, but also supports an authentic conversation with the interviewee, which ensures data validity and reliability.

The nine interviews allow the researcher to identify patterns among the different interviewees. Due to the phenomenological approach, the number of interviews is sufficient as depth is the focus rather than quantity. Saturation was accomplished as soon as major topics were recognised as reoccurring.

4.2.1 Data authenticity

All the interviews were conducted in person in Nuuk in March 2024. Each interview lasted 20 to 40 minutes and were recorded for later conversion into text-format. The in-person meetings do not only enhance and ensure the authenticity, but moreover, the personal interactions build trust and therefore allowed the interviewer more access to the

individuals' worlds. Furthermore, the research on-site allowed the researcher to collect ethnographic data, such as personal experiences with being a guest to one interviewee, note down reflections about meetings, and take pictures. This adds another layer of authenticity to the data.

It has to be highlighted that research interviews create a setting which holds power asymmetry between the interviewer and the interviewees (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 37). Firstly, the interviewer and the interviewees each have their roles of either asking or answering questions. Secondly, the interviewer determines the setting and topic of the interview. Thirdly, the interview is an "instrumentalized dialogue", where the researcher follows a more or less hidden agenda according to the research (ibid. p. 38-39). Fourthly, the researcher has the control over the interpretation, which interviewees can try to countercontrol by withholding information. (cf. ibid.) This power asymmetry has been actively chosen to minimise by the interviewee in order to create a comfortable interview setting. Firstly, the setting itself is ideal as both the interviewer as well as the interviewee have a migration background and the interview language as their second language, which provides the interviewer and the interviewees with similar challenges. This supports creating a common ground and therefore facilitates the creation of a positive, trusting atmosphere between the interviewer and the interviewees. Secondly, the interviewer provided the interviewees not only with a consent form about their participation, but also explained their rights as research participants. Furthermore, as audio recordings can intimidate interviewees during the interview, the interviewer offered that the interviewees may read the transcript of the recording in order to be able to correct any misunderstandings. Finally, the interviewees can choose to have the final thesis sent to them. This inclusion of the interviewees in the process aims to improve data authenticity and accuracy.

The interviews have been transcribed by the researcher herself. Non-verbal, paraverbal information as well as sounds such as "umm" and "oh" were not transcribed. When overcoming a language barrier through reformulating an answer, words or questions for mutual understanding, or when restarting the formulation of a sentence, those fragments were not transcribed either. Essentially, everything that served to answer a question was transcribed and resulted in 42 pages of transcribed interview text. Since the data analysis focuses on the structural level and not a language level, as explained and elaborated in detail in the next chapter, this way of transcription provides appropriate data for the analysis. Incidentally, as part of interviewee confidentiality, their names and the name of their workplaces were replaced by the following placeholders: [...], usually filled with information about what kind of detail has been left out such as '[name]'.

4.3 Data analysis

3.3.1 The narrative analysis

As described in the methodology chapter 4.1, interviews and other verbal expressions do not represent any reality but construct a subjective description of the interviewee's reality within the interview setting. Storytelling does not only hold knowledge about a situation, but it also holds information about the personal perception, the subjective judgement of what is

important, values and norms (cf. Fina & Tseng, 2017, p. 381). In other words, a narration is a subjective meaning-making of events (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015, p. 28). Therefore, a narrative analysis is ideal as it does not seek to describe reality but allows to identify and describe a person's understanding of their own story. It aligns with the phenomenological stance of the research, depicting individuals' self-perceptions. A narrative analysis of a data set based on numerous interviews therefore allows the researcher to identify dominant subjective narratives among a specific group of people.

As the interviewees were only informed about the general topic and did not have access to the concrete questions in advance, the stories told in the interviews were not consciously constructed. Therefore, the narrative analysis can provide insight into the unconscious perception of the interviewees in their surroundings.

The narrative analysis aims to explore and describe the way the Filipinos understand themselves as part of the inhabitants of Nuuk. The goal is to develop a description of the story structures of the interviewees. The analysis shall show, where the narratives align, and where they differ (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018a, pp. 16–17). Essentially, the narrative analysis aims to find out how the interviewed Filipinos in Nuuk see themselves in relation to their environment. From there, the discovered narratives can be compared and contrasted with the context in Greenland, such as the Greenlandic labour market, and the colonial history between Denmark and Greenland that is defining for the Danish narrative in Greenland.

The narrative analysis provides the researcher with an elaborate understanding of the narratives and the most relevant aspects in the life of the interviewees. This serves as a basis for answering the research questions: With a narrative analysis, the dominant Filipino migration narrative in Nuuk can be identified, which can then be contextualised in the lack of workforce in the Greenlandic labour markets as well as contrasted with the Danish migration narrative in Nuuk.

3.3.2 Coding and analysis

The approach to the analysis is inductive, i.e. procedure is open coding based on the data itself (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018a, p. 7), based on which categories were developed in order to sort similar codes (Saldaña, 2021, p. 18). The process is hermeneutic, inviting for change of codes and categories throughout the coding process. This aligns with the explorative character of the research. This approach asked for re-reading the transcript numerous times, while developing codes, categories and possible interpretations. The detailed procedure is presented in this sub-chapter.

During the transcription process, the researcher noted observations and themes that seemed recurring and prominent in order to gain an overview over some of the relevant themes. Furthermore, when transcribing, any information that makes a person identifiable was replaced by square brackets, which hold a description of which information has been removed (e.g. [name]).

In a second step, the researcher read through the complete transcript again, coding the document for all relevant information. The type of coding aligns with the researcher's constructionist point of view, i.e. the facts themselves were not relevant, but the narration of

the facts is, as it depicts the subjective truth. This means that e.g. the quote “an apartment is really difficult to find” leads to the code “apartments are difficult to find”. There was no interpretation added by the researcher regarding whether it is true that apartments are difficult to find in Nuuk. Meanwhile, linguistic details were corrected where they were possibly misleading. This was considered necessary for the clear development of the categories, and possible in terms of data authenticity because linguistics is not part of the analysis. For example, where the wording was vague or ambiguous, it was specified in the code, such as the following quote: “I try to speak the local language”, was therefore coded with “trying to speak Greenlandic”.

The codes allowed a thorough knowledge of the data and served as a base to create categories (Saldaña, 2021, p. 18), which group common narratives together. During the categorisation process of the 42 pages of transcript, the categories were under constant development. Eventually, each category was assigned its own colour. Examples of categories are places, e.g. ‘the Philippines’, where anything the interviewees say about the Philippines classifies for.

Furthermore, words like ‘past’ and ‘present’ were added directly into the text in bright pink, marking the temporal elements of a sub-narrative. Those aimed to help the researcher navigate through the data later during the analysis.

After the categories were ready, the researcher started analysing. In order to compare the statements of each category, the researcher used tables to group the categories and collect quotes (cf. annexe 4). During the process, it was sometimes necessary to develop the categories further into sub-categories by using several tables. In a few cases, earlier developed colour-categories merged together into one. The observations about each table were translated into text and discussed in the analysis section of this thesis. The chapters within the analysis section represent the categories that were identified in the document. Where considered necessary, the researcher divided the chapters into sub-chapters in order to improve the overview for the reader.

The theoretical background of the analysis was developed simultaneously with the analysis, which characterises the process as iterative (cf. Tracy, 2018, p. 62). Recurring themes that were identified during the analysis process were researched and developed into the theoretical background. The theory was then applied to contextualise and further interpret the data.

4.4 Positionality

As a social scientist doing ethnographic fieldwork, it is important to be aware and reflective about the role of the researcher and their specific traits during the research. A crucial point of reflection was the interaction with the interviewees. As elaborated in detail in chapter 4.2.1, the researcher had actively decided to reduce the power asymmetry between the interviewees and the interviewer in order to create a comfortable research field. However, the researcher was once again reminded of the continuously existing power asymmetry by

the interviewees highlighting their wish to be anonymous, and by the fact that the researcher has power of distribution over the audio files, transcripts and anonymity.

The researcher has since the beginning sought to provide data security by creating a consent form that aims to not only fulfil the university's ethical requirements, but especially aims to guarantee that the data is in good hands, while providing an overview of which data is used for which purpose. In hindsight, it seems that the existence and scope of this document did possibly increase the perceived power asymmetry between the researcher and the interviewees.

On the other hand, there was an additional factor that added to the power dynamics between the researcher and the interviewees, which positioned the researcher on the lower end of the power imbalance: The researcher relied on the interviewees because their time and openness were the researcher's main access to the data. In case interviewees did not answer messages or emails (anymore) or decided to cancel their participation in the research, they would not owe the researcher anything, but the researcher would lose a valuable source. As most of the interviewees frequently asked to reschedule the interview during the researcher's limited length of stay in Nuuk, or they preferred to agree on a time on short-notice, the researcher became acutely aware of this power imbalance. It resulted in the researcher becoming more flexible herself in terms of arranging appointments, adapting to the local pace, while considering alternative data sources, in case not enough interviewees would end up being available. However, only a small number of interviewees that had agreed to the interview were eventually not able to meet, and the researcher instead found other interviewees who matched the interviewee criteria and who spontaneously agreed to participate.

The given conditions for the contact between the interviewees and the interviewer are in several ways considered favourable by the researcher. The researcher had the impression that the interviewees looked at the researcher in the first place as an outsider. She did not live or grow up in Greenland, nor was she a Filipino. The interviewees were all clearly older than her, and the interviewees' children (if mentioned) were either clearly younger or clearly older than the researcher. This lack of connectedness could be a reason why the interviewees were open about providing personal experiences. Some even elaborated off the record.

When reflecting and reading up on the positionality during the research (cf. Bourke, 2014), it becomes apparent that the author of this thesis did actively look for similarities between herself and the interviewees during the interviews. The aim was to provide a common ground for the conversation. This aim was furthermore supported by the fact that English - the language of communication during all the interviews - was neither the mother tongue of the interviewees nor the mother tongue of the interviewer. This approach of highlighting similarities lead to instances, where the interviewer could personally relate to explanations and issues that were described by the interviewees. This challenged her understanding of her own position as a researcher, and it contributes to the ethnographic method of the thesis.

The interview settings differed widely, from café meetings to invitations at home and visits at the workplace. The place of meeting is understood to have an impact. While the researcher was a guest of the interviewee in the apartment of an interviewee, the researcher was a

guest of the company during the visit at the workplace, and at the café meeting, the interviewees were the guest of the researcher. Therefore, the dynamics between researcher and interviewees varied between meeting places.

The researcher still wonders about the reasons why the participants made time during their working hours, free days or evenings for a stranger arriving from abroad. It has been observed that most of the interviewees made - apart from the mere participation in the interview - an effort to be of help for the research during the interview. One interviewee said: "I always hope that with this kind of studies that I participate in, I can at least inspire one or two persons." Several interviewees gave recommendations about where to find more Filipinos as potential interviewees. One interviewee recommended an institution for the researcher to reach out to and offered to establish contact. Their contributions are therefore understood as partly aiming to support a student with her thesis, but also partly in hoping to reach a wider audience through the thesis, and making a change with their participation. Overall, the meetings with the interviewees have been a very positive experience for the researcher, and they took place in friendly, hospitable atmospheres.

While expressing thanks to the participants, the researcher experiences an inner bias that can create potential conflict in the data interpretation during the analysis. It has been mentioned in this chapter that the interviewees do not owe the researcher anything, while the researcher relied on their participation to be able to conduct this research. Furthermore, the previous paragraph highlighted how eager to help the researcher experienced the interviewees to be. In return, the researcher feels obliged to take all their data into account. It is understood as a trade: "They give me their story, I owe them the 'truth' in return", the 'truth' being understood as an authentic retelling of their data. While this makes sense on an academic level, the problematic part is that the line of thought follows a personal reasoning rather than an academic one. Therefore, the researcher recognises an inner conflict in cases where something might be perceived important by the interviewee, while it might not be relevant in the light of the applied theories and scope of the thesis. As the researcher is aware of this during the analysis, she makes conscious decisions in favour of academic uses where this inner conflict appears, while ensuring that the data is embedded in a way that reflects the narratives in the data authentically.

4.5 Limitations

As this study is the first one to investigate the immigrant community in Greenland, the scope of the research cannot cover all relevant aspects. Instead, it opens a relevant research field by highlighting the Filipino community in Nuuk and their experiences.

In this research, the sample does only cover certain fields of employment and it only covers Nuuk. Employees working in factories with long working hours were not accessible for research interviews. It is likely that their stories differ from the stories of the interviewees who were accessible for interviews. While this limits the generalisation possibilities in this thesis, the strong focus increases the accuracy of the carved-out narrative among the participants. This invites contrasting and comparing future research about the Filipinos in Greenland with this thesis.

Furthermore, the interviews were conducted in English. However, it has to be underlined that English is neither the interviewer's nor the interviewees' mother tongue. This poses the research process with obstacles regarding understanding. The use of words can be inaccurate, or a question can be interpreted differently than intended. The choice of data analysis has been impacted by the intention to remove weight from such cases of impreciseness. A narrative analysis does not rely on formulations but on a concept in mind, which can be expressed in various ways and words. While the linguistic barrier hinders analyses that include linguistic details such as a linguistic analysis of transcripts, analyses of structure and content are less subject to linguistic impreciseness. Therefore, the main issue is presented by lack of understanding. The interviewees understand English to an extent that has made the interviews possible. Where necessary, questions were reformulated and explained during the interviews.

4.6 Ethics:

All interviews are subject to informed consent (Liamputtong, 2020, p. 43) Each participant signed a document before the interview, which informed them about the purpose of the research, the interviewee's rights and the use of the provided data. Furthermore, the researcher ensures that all interviewees are anonymous and not identifiable by third parties, in order to prevent the participants from facing judgements and other consequences caused by this research. Furthermore, while the content of the interview transcript can be freely quoted in this document, the complete transcripts are confidential and accessible solely to the examiners. The audio recordings are not accessible to anyone but the researcher herself as they contain most interviewees' names.

The challenge of guaranteeing anonymity to the participants is the size of a place like Nuuk. Where there are only a handful of businesses in each branch, exposing the name of a company or the position of an employee can easily reveal the identity of a research participant. As the researcher prioritises anonymity, it was decided that, in a case of doubt, an interesting but possibly revealing piece of information shall be left unmentioned in order to make a person's identity untraceable.

The Government of Greenland developed the country's first national research strategy in 2022 in order to ensure that the internationally conducted research about Greenland aligns with the country's ethical standards (Ministry for Education, Culture, Sports and Church, 2022, p. 7). It is specified that educational research projects - i.e. under a PhD level - such as this master's thesis are exempted from the obligation to follow the strategy (Ministry for Education, Culture, Sports and Church, 2022, p. 11). Nevertheless, the researcher follows the guidelines as closely as possible. The research is anchored in Greenland through "closer cooperation with local stakeholders" (ibid.). The interviewees and the researcher met in person in Nuuk, where the interviewees live and work (ibid. p. 18). Furthermore, this thesis aims towards finding solutions for future challenges (cf. ibid. p 34) by identifying issues among the Filipinos in Nuuk.

4.7 Quality:

The data collection as well as the analysis aim to be unbiased. The researcher is aware that complete objectivity is not achievable due to the interaction between the researcher and the subjects. Instead, the concept of intersubjectivity is applied, which lies between subjectivity and objectivity (cf. Bae, 2017). The term “intersubjectivity” is used to describe a situation, where all subjects present negotiate a common reality. Within this negotiated reality, observed facts are understood as objective, but they are not necessarily considered objective outside of this context. In (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018b, p. 3), this is referred to as “dialogical intersubjectivity”.

Furthermore, the researcher includes an ethnographic method in the research, which is visible in the personal meetings of the researcher with the interviewees in their environment, as well in the recording of field notes to guarantee a reflected interpretation of data. The field notes contain descriptions of interviewees, own judgements of situations, descriptions of the environment and atmosphere as well as other reflections and details about the interviews. The combination of various means of data collection shall counteract biases and therefore enhance the validity and reliability of the results.

The results of the research were not influenced by financial incentives or favouritism towards any parties.

5. Analysis

The aim of this chapter is to identify and analyse the interviewees' narratives, based on the coded transcript data. The theories that have been introduced in chapter 3 were developed simultaneously with the analysis, and are used for interpretation of the data.

The sub-chapters of the analysis are based on the categories that have been established in the inductive coding process. Each category and therefore each sub-chapter analyses and discusses one dominant theme that has been discovered in the data.

Any identifiable characteristics of interviewees have been removed from quotations, marked with the following [...] brackets. Quotes of interviewees are referred to in those brackets (...) which refer to the transcript, with the individual participant number; e.g. '(Transcript, P14)'.

5.1 "Tell me about yourself"

The participants were asked to introduce themselves to the researcher as an introduction to the interview. Although the researcher had asked to "tell me a bit about yourself", which is broadly interpretable, the interviewees usually answered in the same way. Based on the answers, the interviewees connect their self-presentation strongly with their names as well as with their nationality, names and migration story. It has to be mentioned that the interviewees were informed prior to the interview that the research was about Filipinos who live and work in Nuuk. Therefore, they were already prompted for their introduction.

However, there are a few interesting observations to make, nevertheless. Most of the interviewees, when they were asked about who they were, mentioned their name before listing other characteristics. This is especially interesting as they had been given the informed consent form for participating just before, where they were informed about being anonymous, and they were furthermore informed that all the information recorded for the interview was allowed to be used and quoted for the thesis. The researcher, having guaranteed anonymity, does of course not mention any names or other identifiable details in this thesis. However, it is interestingly prominent that almost everyone, despite the desired anonymity, stated their (usually the full) name as a very first thing in the interview. This shows that the most important part of their understanding of who they are is connected to their name.

Furthermore, when the researcher asked them to "tell me about yourself", most of them described themselves through prominent events and life choices both in Nuuk and in the Philippines. Frequent information was name, age, family status, work occupation(s), when they came to Nuuk. There were practically no personal adjectives or anything that was connected to themselves as persons. Only when asking the same question again, elaborating "can you tell me who you are as a person", the interviewees elaborated with adjectives on their personality.

In order to make sense of this observation, one needs to take the interview context into account. The question had the aim of a warm-up, setting the scene for the interview.

Moreover, as part of introducing the interviewees to the interview, they were informed that the researcher interviews Filipinos who have come to live and work in Nuuk. Therefore, the fact-sheet mode of the interviewees' introductions can be understood as a self-categorisations in context: a short list of facts that are important to mention for a Filipino that came to work and live in Nuuk. In a different context, such as a job interview, or when talking to a new potential friend, the interviewees are most likely to introduce themselves differently.

It has been furthermore observed that interviewees who have been living in Nuuk for a handful of years tended to mention parts of their life in the Philippines as well. Interviewees who have been in Nuuk for 10 years or longer tended to focus on their life in Nuuk. In relation to the social identity theory, it can be suggested that the researcher - by stating the aim of the research - provided the context for a self-categorisation of the interviewees within the group of Filipino migrants in Nuuk. This is especially relevant when interpreting other data that are connected to any self-categorisation or context.

Two interviewees furthermore mentioned in their introduction, where and how they met their partner, to whom they are married today, and one other interviewee elaborated on their work colleague.

5.2 The Philippine narrative

5.2.1 Why to leave the Philippines

In order to understand the relationship of the interviewees with their surroundings, one needs to understand their relationship with the Philippines. The interviewees' life in the Philippines was not explicitly planned to be part of the interview, however, several interviewees brought up the country as part of talking about themselves and their lives, reasons and background. Therefore, the country and its connotation plays a crucial role in understanding the Filipino's story of migrating to Nuuk.

“If you work at private companies, you only get a low salary, which is not enough if you are supporting your family and your parents. [...] That's why other Filipinos want to work abroad to earn a living.” (Transcript, P1)

I don't want to leave my country if I have good work and can provide for my family. (Transcript, P2)

In the interviewee's narrations, it is a recurring theme that the Philippines are understood as a challenging country for earning money. The challenge is especially hard when providing for a wider family such as parents or children. Challenges are visible in finding a job in the Philippines, the low salary range, and difficulties providing the family. One interviewee furthermore mentions that the climate was too hot for their liking: “It's hell.” Overall, it can be said that the Philippines have, whenever the country is described in the research interviews, a negative connotation to them. Meanwhile, only one out of nine interviewees said that they owned a company in the Philippines.

It has to be noted that concrete places in the Philippines were not specified in the interviewees. One interviewee mentioned the name of their university, while otherwise, the

Philippines were only referred to as a country but not specified in cities or regions. There was no difference made in observations about living or working in different areas or professions. Considering the interview setting being in Greenland, and the main topic being life in Nuuk, it is likely that it was not considered necessary to specify.

When looking at the personal relationship that the interviewees have to the country, it can be surprising to find that the Philippines are given a negative connotation. Many call the country their home, and some mention that they are sometimes homesick, one interviewee calls the Philippines “our safe haven” (Transcript, P1). The understanding of ‘home’ is therefore discussed and analysed in the following sub-chapter.

5.2.2 The where and what of home

There are three different countries that are called “home” by the interviewees: Greenland, the Philippines, and Denmark. In some cases, it was the same interviewee that mentioned both as their home, such as the following:

“But then again, you long for home, a little homesick. [...] Warm jackets will do, heaters at home will solve the problem.” (Transcript, P5)

There are two meanings of home that can be developed based on the interview quotes. Firstly, there is a ‘home’ that stands for an apartment in Nuuk, which is a place opposed to ‘work’ or ‘shopping’. That kind of home is a functional place. The second meaning of ‘home’ carries a feeling of belonging, such as “there is no place like home” (Transcript, P2), and it is a home to which homesickness is connected. It is related to aspects of a place that are defining for a person’s identity and sense of security (cf. chapter 3.2). Therefore, home is in several places simultaneously to the interviewees.

The fact that the Philippines were mainly mentioned in combination to (mostly financial) difficulties, while often referred to as the interviewee’s home of the heart, suggests that there is an inner conflict within, between the reason to leave the Philippines and the reasons to go back there.

Furthermore, it stands out how prominent the aspect of family is in the everyday lives of the interviewees. Many of them have come to work in Nuuk to be able to financially provide for the family. Others say: “The best place is together with my family.” Others highlighted aspects of their culture, and how important the family is to them: “Filipinos are really close-knit in terms of family. We want to be close to our families” (Transcript, P5). “Culturally, we don’t like to be alone. So, it’s good to have your families with you here” (Transcript, P6). Another interviewee had their partner move to Greenland first, with the promise that the rest of the family would move to Greenland as well.

There are two narratives that can be observed within the discussion about family. Firstly, there is the situation of being in Greenland alone, in order to provide for the needs of the family in the Philippines. Those interviewees tend to be homesick, and miss their family daily, but they have the well-being of their family as a high priority, in some cases higher than their own happiness. The second situation is living in Nuuk with their close family (either married to a Greenlander or a Dane, or having moved to Nuuk together with their Filipino family). They value having the family around and they prioritise family when making future

decisions, such as “I said I want grandma to be with the kids and with us as long as she lives.” (Transcript, P4).

About the question, how long the interviewees are going to stay in Greenland, reunification with the family depended highly on that. Interviewees with family abroad considered moving back abroad in order to stay with the family, or having the family move to Nuuk. Interviewees with the family in Nuuk aim to stay, unless the family moves away:

“Indefinitely. As long as there is no reason to leave, I don’t think I am going to leave.
Maybe my son, if he transfers to Denmark [...] So if he moves to Denmark,
and [if] we find an opportunity, we might also move near him.” (Transcript, P5)

Another interviewee is not married and will love to stay in Greenland, but she considers moving away for family purposes as well:

“Greenland is already a part of me. How long I am going to stay: long-term.
Unless I get married next year and live somewhere, then I will probably
live somewhere [else], but in the seasons I’m needed, I’ll probably
be here [in Nuuk]. I would most likely be here.” (Transcript, P6)

Based on the interview quotes, it can be concluded that the social aspect of family plays a crucial role in the lives of the interviewees. With the background of the theory about home in chapter 3.2, one can conclude that the family plays a major part in home-making. The interviewees that lived in Greenland without their family have a strong urge to (re)connect with their family one day. Others, who have their family in Nuuk, are happy to stay. It is the family, that is the factor, upon which the above mentioned ‘home’ in terms of belonging is defined, and where the interviewees aim to live in the future.

5.3 Reasons to move to Nuuk

5.3.1 What Greenland represents

The reason for coming to Nuuk was often related to other factors than the city itself. One interviewee’s wife came to Nuuk first, others had relatives in Nuuk. However, most of the interviewees mentioned the opportunities they saw in moving to Nuuk:

“I thought about the future. If there is more demand in supply, you have more possibilities to be taken or given an opportunity instead of being in Belgium, where there are so many Filipinos already.” (Transcript, P4)

The opportunity is mentioned in context of a possibility, with a positive connotation, as demonstrated in the quote above. When looking at the purpose of moving to Nuuk, it can be understood what is actually meant, when the interviewees use the word ‘opportunity’.

For many, the idea of moving to Nuuk was one way to leave the Philippines. As mentioned above, financial difficulties were the reason for several interviewees to leave the country. Greenland was one of several destination possibilities. The interviewees ended up choosing to come to Nuuk for numerous reasons:

For one, several of the interviewees already had acquaintances in Nuuk, some of which were family members, or friends, while others had their partner move to Nuuk first. The interviewees reached out for their Nuuk acquaintances in order to find a job in Nuuk. Secondly, Greenland was easier for them in terms of visa requirements, as one interviewee explains. Said interviewee and their family had acquaintances on the American continent, but due to the financial requirements in order to have their visa accepted, they chose Nuuk as their new destination. Another reason was to choose a cold country. Two interviewees mentioned that they wanted to live in a cold country and experience snow.

Some interviewees did not specifically depend on finances. However, they wanted to move together with their partner, who was already in Nuuk. Others saw in Nuuk a higher chance to find a job they liked.

“It was an open door. It was a door of opportunity. I planned to be in London, I tried to apply for a job. I didn’t get the job that I wanted. You know, you can be a nanny, you can be a cleaner, but I know my capacity, I know I can do more.” (Transcript, P6)

It has to be highlighted as well that not all the interviewees moved directly from the Philippines to Nuuk. Instead, some of them lived in different countries in Europe or Asia in the years before moving to Nuuk. However, the narratives about Nuuk coincide between the Filipinos who left the Philippines in order to come to Nuuk, and the Filipinos who had already left the Philippines before.

It can be concluded that Nuuk represents a place of opportunities for development, where one has the possibility to start to build their life around one’s personal priority - prominently mentioned were financial reasons, family-reunification and career. At the same time, as discussed in the previous chapter, it means to leave a part of the family behind in another country.

According to the narrative, opportunities are something that the interviewees tended to lack in other countries, before migrating to Nuuk. Therefore, the opportunities that have been mentioned among the interviewees are dependent on a geographical place and its existing structures. In chapter 3.1.1, power asymmetries and negotiations were discussed, which are the precondition for advantages and disadvantages of certain sections of the population. In this case, the interviewees seem to have discovered their own advantages to be higher in Nuuk than in other cities, and higher in Greenland than in other countries. Especially when comparing the prominence of opportunities in Nuuk to the difficulties in the Philippines, the interviewees seem to see more potential in Nuuk to live their priorities.

5.3.2 The character of Nuuk

Apart from the discussed opportunities, Nuuk is described as a quiet, simple and peaceful place. One interviewee mentions that it is not possible to drive more than 20 or 30 minutes out of the city by car, while in Denmark one can drive from town to town. Some interviewees appreciate the remoteness and the simplicity:

“Compared to the Philippines, which is very warm, here it’s very cold, and I fell in love with nature, its simplicity. I come from a complex city, which everyday is busy, busy life. Here, I take one day at a time.” (Transcript, P7)

The fact that the interviewees take one day at a time was also noticed by the researcher during the interview period, and it stands out in contrast to her organised calendar and carefully scheduled thesis checkpoints. There was frequent rescheduling of the interviews, during the limited time the researcher spent in Nuuk. While the researcher would have preferred to arrange the interviews two weeks in advance, it appeared to be common in Nuuk to agree on a time only on short notice, and to reschedule to a different day due to work emergencies.

While some interviewees appreciate the simplicity in Nuuk, others find the quietness challenging. Some miss the interaction with people, others think that the place is too small and too quiet:

“There are not as many social places, right, because it's a small population [...] I think, in general, there's openness. Have I felt this communicated? No, I didn't.” (Transcript, P6)

Furthermore, almost every interviewee mentioned the weather. Many said that it was one of the biggest changes to adapt to when they came to Nuuk, since most of them had lived in the Philippines with 30 degrees celsius before. Other interviewees mention how dark it is in winter, and that they are challenged by depression due to lack of sunlight.

These observations seem to be something that has been imposed on the interviewees by Nuuk and its atmosphere, the characteristics of which some interviewees enjoy while others do not. The reaction of the interviewees on how to deal with those circumstances is to be discussed in analysis chapter 5.6.

5.4 Cultural encounters

When the interviewees described Filipino culture, they usually described themselves in comparison to the surrounding Greenlandic society. As discussed in theory chapter 3.1, an identity - a personal identity or a group identity - can only be narrated and described in relation to the society or several societies because a reference point is needed.

Most of the interviewees mentioned the Filipinos' work culture, and described Filipinos as hard-working.

“As a Filipino, we are always working-hard people. I think our impact on society, the community that we are in, is really great. We are showing how we allow the culture to air in, and I am really proud of it, as always.” (Transcript, P7)

The Filipinos were, in tendency, understood as more hard-working and reliable than Greenlanders. Some interviewees mentioned that it was difficult to rely on young Greenlandic colleagues who appear 2 hours late for work. Some interviewees mention it as an opportunity for Filipinos, who can cover what the Greenlanders - in their opinion - lack in work attitude.

Several interviewees mentioned the difference in work-culture as an opportunity to combine strengths of Greenlanders and Filipinos:

“I try to group them up - local and Filipino. The Filipino look [make sure] that it can be stable, but they still have locals [Greenlanders] at the time, so someone can communicate directly with the customers.” (Transcript, P4)

It can be observed that Greenlanders and Filipinos were described as two different groups with different kinds of work attitude, stemming from different, separate cultures. In the interviews, there is some pride noticeable that comes with the work attitude of Filipinos. This is a known phenomenon in relation to describing an in-group (in this case the Filipinos) in contrast to an out-group (cf. theory chapter 3.3). However, several interviewees mentioned that the benefits were mutual, such as the following interviewee, who takes inputs from their Greenlandic colleagues:

“I like meeting a lot of locals. I learn from them, they give me ideas and experiences. That's what I am happy for - all the experiences and learnings that I get from these jobs. I think it's really good.” (Transcript, P7)

In their contrasting of different cultures, the interviewees narrate the two cultural groups as homogenous cultures. While the individual Greenlanders or Filipinos can differ from this observation, the interviewees focused on assigning characteristics to a whole cultural group in order to make them comparable to other cultural groups. In other words, the interviewees found the ‘common denominator’ (Eckersley & Vos, 2022, p. 5) of their culture through cultural encounters in a work-setting (cf. theory chapter 3.4).

As a result, they expect all Filipino coworkers and other fellow Filipinos to have a specific, work-positive attitude, because these Filipinos are part of their assigned in-group. Consequently, the ‘hard-working Filipino’ narrative does not only give an insight into the current situation but also suggests that this image is reinforced and expected to be maintained in the future as a characteristic of the Filipino working culture. The daily cultural encounters between Greenlanders and Filipinos at the workplace therefore act as constant inputs for reinforcing the current narrative. Based on that observation, the interviewees seem to understand their culture as fixed and separate from others, which stems from an essentialist point of view.

The fact that the interviewees describe their work-attitude as a complete opposite from their Greenlandic colleagues is especially interesting when taking additional cultural encounters into consideration, such as in the following: Equally prominent to the work-related observations are comparisons about values, looks and foods between Filipinos and Greenlanders. Firstly, several interviewees mentioned the similarity in foods between the Greenlanders and the Filipinos, such as eating rice, the similar figure and possible similarities in DNA. Another interviewee mentioned similarities in being quiet and not always saying what one thinks, and contrasts it to the “western countries” (Transcript, P6).

The fact that the interviewees look for similarities can be related to the process of home-making, because it establishes familiarity and therefore security in a new place (cf. Boccagni, 2017). The interviewees seem to try to create a home in Greenland by looking for home while they are far from home. They do so by including the Greenlanders in their Filipino in-group. While wanting to keep their own history, cultural identity and understanding of the in-group they have always understood to be part of, the interviewees look for the familiar in unfamiliar surroundings. As a result, the creation of a common cultural narrative

can be observed within the narration of the interviewees. Through mentioning similarities between Greenlanders and Filipinos, they create a new in-group with 'Asian DNA' or 'Filipino DNA' (both versions are mentioned in the interviews), which stands in contrast to the European out-group.

Furthermore, there is one aspect that stands out in this mentioning of similarities. When talking about the similarities between Filipinos and Greenlanders, the interviewees always, without exception, described the Greenlanders as Asian: "Greenland[...] is also like the Philippines" (Transcript, P3), and: "They're almost in a way Filipino." Meanwhile, none of the interviewees described themselves as Greenlandic based on those similarities, even though it would be a mere rational consequence of describing Greenlanders as Filipinos.

It is irrelevant for the narrative to explore whether the DNA and migration history of Filipinos and Greenlanders do in fact coincide. Instead, the focus lies on how observed similarities are perceived and narrated. The conclusion that the interviewees make based on similarities between Filipinos and Greenlanders shows the multiple layers of their identities, as explained in the following. Pointing out a possible Asian origin of Greenlanders allows the interviewees to maintain their own distinct cultural identity as Asians and as Filipinos. This would not be the case if they described themselves as Greenlandic. As a result, the interviewees can maintain the understanding of who they are and where they come from, and they maintain the possibility to contrast themselves from Greenlanders. This contrast between the Filipino in-group and the Greenlandic out-group seems to be relevant to the interviewees, as it was highlighted in the difference between work attitudes. This distinction between Filipinos and Greenlanders also holds the culture as fixed to a specific group of people (here related to nationality). On a subordinate level, many have chosen to highlight the similarities between Greenlanders and Filipinos, to such a big extent that some interviewees call the Greenlanders 'almost Filipino'. This creates a new in-group of Greenlanders and Filipinos. There, the culture seems to be understood as dynamic, and in constant development and construction through the encounters with Greenlanders.

The cultural encounters therefore seem to not only allow two different cultures to interact - which would be an essentialist description criticised and developed in theory chapter 3.4 - but rather develop both the Filipino and the Greenlandic culture in Nuuk. This is also visible in all the quotes in this subchapter, where the mutual influence and inspiration result in a change in behaviour, thoughts and the resulting benefits.

Other interviewees mentioned cultural differences in terms of music and the cultural dances. Furthermore, one other interviewee described the difference in consequences when one breaks the law. The punishment in the Philippines was described as stricter and the government as less tolerant than in Greenland. However, the interviewee who described this observation governments' varying strictness immediately highlighted that it is not their intention to change anything or to criticise, and that it was a mere observation. This highlights the placement that the interviewee sees themselves in: as part of an out-group to the local population that - being on the lower end of power - should not intend to change the system of the country or the city.

5.5 Workplace narrative

5.5.1 Workplace satisfaction

For many interviewees, the outlook for a better job or a better salary was the reason to migrate to Nuuk. The relationship with their current workplace, its narratives and connotations are therefore a crucial part in understanding their migration story.

First and foremost, 100 percent of the interviewees said that they were happy with their workplace. Someone mentions as a reason that their education was acknowledged, which allowed them to follow their dream job, and which had not at all mattered at their previous job. For most of the interviewees, the reason they are happy is the passion they have for their role and what they are doing.

“I like the work, because it has been my profession since I started college.
It is my dream to work abroad, outside the Philippines. So, I love
my job because I am happy with what I am doing.” (Transcript, P2)

Furthermore, some interviewees mention the workplace culture and human interaction as positive factors at a company. Someone is happy about being able to decide and build their own team, and they value their independence and the trust they are given. Someone else mentions the relationship with customers, that they have an impact on the customer's purchasing behaviour. Another interviewee describes how important the colleagues, the environment, and the validation of their effort is.

“Me and my colleagues have worked together for a long time. I am always excited to
learn something new. We help each other here. [...] My leader gives me motivation.
In [company name], they value personnel, they always give you
motivation if you do something, and I think that's also very important.
If you work, you feel value, you see you're important, everybody likes it.” (Transcript, P3)

There is one interviewee that took a more philosophical approach to describing their job satisfaction, which was the following: “Happiness is a choice. If you decide to be happy, it's a win-win solution. If you decide not to be happy, you have a problem. You create your own luck.” (Transcript, P5)

One interviewee mentioned “happy” in a way that seems to have the meaning of ‘relieved’, in contrast to the other eight interviewees. The person mentioned that they are happy because they were provided an apartment by the company, with a low rent, which is why they are still ‘happy’ working at the place. Being relieved makes the power imbalance visible at the workplace. In fact, during the interviews, there were numerous examples mentioned that provide an insight into the power imbalance at the workplace. In the following paragraphs, it is to be investigated, where power imbalances are perceived, and how they are narrated.

5.5.2 Workplace power

Power is much about one's place in society, and, in this case, about the place in the workplace. As discussed in the literature, migrants are a vulnerable target group for exploitation at the workplace in their host country (cf. literature chapter 2.1.2). Whether or not this exploitation takes in fact place is not the concern of this analysis, but rather whether

and how a structural power imbalance is perceived by the interviewees, and whether they feel exploited.

Most interviewees are not allowed to speak about their salary with fellow employees, and therefore, they did not know with certainty whether they were compensated fairly. One interviewee points out that the first payslip was not understandable for them, as it was in Danish.

“When I tried to open my payslip, and I asked them because it was written in Danish. They told me “You have a really good salary, higher than me”. I was shocked, because as far as I know, the locals have a higher salary than me. [...] If you compare cleaners, so it's normal that I am higher. If you compare me and a local [in the same job], I think they have a higher salary.” (Transcript, P2)

Some other interviewees, like the previously quoted, pointed out that their salary was higher than others' salaries due to their role being a better position than others. Meanwhile, one interviewee said that they were and have been compensated fairly in both of their jobs since coming to Nuuk. To conclude, there is no common or dominant narrative to be observed, especially since a lot of the interviewees are not allowed to compare salaries with their colleagues. The perceived fairness narrative tends towards a fair compensation. Neither of them mentioned the salary negatively.

Furthermore, it has to be taken into account that several interviewees mentioned that they were offered housing by the workplace, which was always mentioned positively, due to the difficulties in finding housing in Nuuk, and the rent of provided housing was usually lower than the average rent. Furthermore, one interviewee mentioned how the provided housing gave them the possibility of their own home rather than having to share it. Therefore, the housing offer played a pivotal role in home-making. The positive reception of housing offers that often came with employment could have an impact on how content the interviewees are with their salary. One interviewee said that the offered housing was an important reason to keep working for the company.

In the role of employees, the interviewees' narratives show furthermore a hierarchical power imbalance. That was visible through an offer for promotion that the interviewee was confronted with and that the interviewee almost did not dare to accept. Furthermore, when there was a change in managers, another interviewee and their colleagues were worried whether the new manager would be able to live up to the positive experience they had with the previous manager:

“We got used to the other [manager] for so long, and we were a bit scared, hoping he is not racist to be honest. We have been there. We have some employers that only look down on you and that is very hard. But here, they treat us equally, and he appreciates what we do, and compliments you, and that's very good because sometimes you need to hear those things.” (Transcript, P4)

There are two power imbalances visible in the previous quote, one of which is the hierarchical difference between the employer and the employee, while the other is the possibility of racism and unfair treatment due to the foreign background of the Filipinos.

Furthermore, there is a common narrative that the interviewees do not feel validation about having a rightful place in Nuuk as employees. Some of them described the need to prove themselves to their employers; to prove that they are good enough to work their job. In consequence, several interviewees take frequent double shifts. One of the interviewees considered declining a promotion due to two reasons: Firstly, although this interviewee was one of the interviewees that take double shifts, the interviewee did not believe to deserve the position. Additionally, the interviewee feared that their colleagues would think that a foreigner stole their job.

While it is not possible to find out what the colleagues thought in reality, the stories show that there is a common, prominent concern among the interviewees about not being accepted by the receiving work environment in Nuuk.

This narrative is especially interesting when comparing it to the work attitude which was described in chapter 5.4. Many interviewees describe Filipinos - and thus themselves - as hard-working, in tendency noticeably more hard-working than Greenlanders, and they are proud of it. Nevertheless, it is a prominent narrative that the interviewees have the impression that they might not be good enough workers to keep a job or to be promoted. It can only be ascribed to their status on the lower level of the perceived power imbalance.

5.5.3 Work-life balance

Interestingly, in terms of work-life balance, a common narrative cannot be observed. There are different arrangements, perceived in various ways. Firstly, some enjoy being busy and not being alone too much. Others make an effort to have the time they need for relaxing to ensure having a balance. Secondly, the arrangements with their companies are different. Several interviewees are in the position of being able to influence how many hours they work, either through arrangements with the companies they are employed at, or through being self-employed. One interviewee mentions that their work-life balance is more important to them than to get a high salary:

“There are other jobs with higher pay, but I don’t want to jump from the pan to the fire. You don’t only have to consider the pay, you also have to consider the workload. If you earn less here, but are more comfortable with the workload, why jump to the fire?” (Transcript, P5)

However, there are also interviewees that have several jobs, which make them busier. One interviewee mentions that juggling between jobs is very stressful to them:

“I came to the point where I don’t have enough sleep. There are some times that, after my night shift, I have to go [to work], because I don’t have enough workers. I think it’s not healthy, because a lot of workload can also be stress, and lack of sleep. Some will break down, but I haven’t come to the point of breaking down, but I am trying to be strong because of my daughter. ” (Transcript, P7)

It seems that, for some interviewees, the work attitude that they call part of the Filipino culture in chapter 5.4 is related to *how* they work during work hours (e.g. reliably), while others see it in *how many hours* they work. Therefore, the interviewees do not necessarily connect or compare their work-life balance with the fact that they describe themselves as hard-working. In other words, having a healthy work-life does not necessarily contradict the

interviewees' understanding of Filipinos as hard working, because the meaning of hard-working depends on their personal interpretations of it.

The narratives do not show any common pattern regarding work-life balance. Some actively focus on being balanced, while others find it hard to navigate due to having other priorities. Therefore, the work-life balance seems to be a predominantly individual issue rather than a pattern.

5.6 Personal developments

This chapter investigates the personal developments that become visible in the interviewees' migration stories. Eventually, this analysis aims to identify, which part the interviewee characters play in their own stories, and how they changed since they arrived in Nuuk.

5.6.1 Identities

The early beginnings in Nuuk were experienced in various ways. One interviewee mentions, how unhappy they were when starting their first job in Nuuk:

“I was crying during my first few weeks. It was a really tough job compared to my previous work. I was crying. I realised that working abroad, away from your comfort zone is not that easy.” (Transcript, P1)

Another interviewee had the opposite experience, in the sense that moving to Nuuk did not challenge them, apart from the weather:

“You don't notice you have been in Nuuk for long. I only realised when someone asked me 'how long have you been in Nuuk' and I was 'oh'. If you are busy.” (Transcript, P9)

There are some observations and changes to be observed regarding whether the interviewees changed since they arrived in Nuuk. When asked directly, the interviewees mostly said that they have not changed as people, but that they are still the same persons. Meanwhile, the narration of the interaction between the interviewees and Nuuk and its people and challenges reveals that there is a personal development nevertheless, as elaborated in the following paragraphs.

Many interviewees mention obstacles that they faced when coming to Nuuk. One interviewee used to work a job they didn't like. Another interviewee wakes up in the morning and does not have any energy. Two interviewees mention that being out of their comfort zone is difficult. Several interviewees mentioned their lack of knowledge in terms of residence permit procedure. Furthermore, some interviewees were challenged by the quietness of Nuuk and the climate. (cf. analysis chapter 5.3.2).

In many cases, the environment of the interviewees triggered them to do something about their obstacles. Examples were the support of colleagues, someone introducing them to fellow Filipinos, or suggestions of friends to search for a different job. However, the interviewees becoming active was most prominent: Whether or not there was any trigger in

the environment to make them start, all interviewees mentioned their own initiatives as an answer experiencing obstacles. Some call with their families, others looked for a new job, and create a new friend group. One interviewee mentions prayer as a way to feel better.

It can be summarised that the interviewees actively changed something about their circumstances. As a result, some of them mention that they feel stronger due to taking initiative in changing their situation, while having to count on their own strength. Others feel empowered.

Changes and the interaction with obstacles in the surroundings seem to have a significant impact on the interviewees' self-perception, which result in e.g. feeling stronger. One interviewee highlights that they already knew about their inner strength before moving to Nuuk. "I know I have it. I was reminded that I have it [in Nuuk]" (Transcript, P6). The migration context therefore seems a catalyst within the natural, constant identity development that every person passes through in life (cf. chapter 3.1). The experienced identity formation might have become more intense, but did not become prominent enough to become conscious. This could explain why most interviewees say that they haven't changed as persons since moving to Nuuk.

Meanwhile, there are two interviewees, where no identity development at all was visible in connection to their migration to Nuuk. These interviewees describe themselves as flexible persons. Their flexibility is described as part of their personality, and in consequence, they described that personal adaptations were not necessary. Major changes such as the migration to a different country therefore seem to be naturally woven into the lives through those interviewees' personalities. This can be explained using the expression 'comfort zone' from a few paragraphs ago. The flexibility of these people seems to be part of their comfort zone already. The many changes and new surroundings that came with the migration seems to have happened within that comfort zone, which did not present the interviewees with additional change as a result.

This mechanism is not only visible in the two interviewees who didn't narrate any personal development. The other interviewees also described some individual comfort zones that they naturally found in Nuuk, without any grand personal effort. For example, this was visible in a few interviewees' stories who mentioned that they are 'a homebody':

"I am a type of person that is a homebody, I like to go to work, home, work, home. So, for me, it's not a problem if it's an isolated place or country. I just focus on the basics that I need in my life and I am happy to have fresh water and fresh air." (Transcript, P4)

Although being a 'homebody' in Greenland and in the Philippines happens in culturally and geographically different environments, such a shift seems to be within the comfort zone of the interviewee, and is therefore not understood as a change.

Where the interviewees were not content with their situations, they made an effort to change something about the specific situation, which resulted in a feeling of strength and empowerment in some cases. Meanwhile, where the differences in new surroundings fall within the comfort zone of a person, the interviewees do not describe any personal development.

The described development or lack of development can be ascribed to the interviewees' identities and the comfort zones resulting from those identities. While they encountered challenges and took initiative, the understanding of who they are did not change as a result of migrating to Nuuk. This stands in contrast to the understanding of migration being a transformative experience that can impact personal identity. However, it does align with the fact that different surroundings bring out different personal identity traits (Bond, 2019, p. 661; Tabouret-Keller, 2017, p. 316), such as the mentioned flexibility, the 'homebody' attitude and being reminded of one's personal strength. While the interviewees mention that they already had those traits before moving to Nuuk, the interaction with the new surroundings highlight those traits in their migration narrative.

Meanwhile, the initiatives that the interviewees took to challenge their obstacles resulted in the creation of a new comfort zone. One interviewee's initiative was to build a social network, since they missed the close community in the Philippines. Another interviewee mentions calling with their family. This creation of a new comfort zone can be understood as part of home-making, by creating and recreating their habits within the new surroundings and with the people living in it (cf. chapter 3.2).

5.6.2 Interviewee learnings

While the previous chapter highlighted the the personal development, the following quote has to be highlighted, as it suggests that there is another development, in addition to the one that has been discussed so far:

"I adapt, of course, to the culture. But I'm a flexible person, so it's not that hard. [...] I would say I changed. For me, it's normal. Where you are, you need to adapt. [...] You know you adapt and in the future, I can get another job, better than the first one." (Transcript, P4)

This interviewee mentions flexibility as a personal trait, just like the two other interviewees that were mentioned in chapter 5.6.1. Meanwhile, this interviewee mentions a cultural adaptation. The interviewee does not seem to understand this adaptation as a contradiction to their identity but rather as an incorporation of new knowledge. While the core identity did not change, the interviewee acquired and used new knowledge on the surface.

Many interviewees mentioned knowledge they acquired during their stay in Nuuk, such as about who to trust and who not to trust, learning Greenlandic, learning Danish, and learning about the Greenlandic culture. Some described the acquisition and appliance of their newly gained knowledge using the term 'adapting':

"Then I came here, it was very hard. The culture is not the same in the Philippines. In the long run, we adapt." (Transcript, P3)

However, this kind of 'adaptation' seems to be on the surface of the person, and did not seem to influence the understanding and the narration of their own identities.

This distinction between personal identity development and personal learnings can be compared to the observation about Greenlanders being "almost in a way Filipino" (Transcript, P4) in chapter 5.4. Already in chapter 5.4, the interviewees seemed to identify as Asian and the narratives do not show any cultural identity struggles connected to moving to Nuuk. The same can be observed here. While they create a comfort zone in their new home,

they do not incorporate any Greenlandic identity. In other words, what they have learned during their life in Nuuk is part of superficial knowledge, which does not become part of a core identity.

When it comes to learning knowledge, the interviewees clearly perceive it as their responsibility to learn and adapt their knowledge to Nuuk. As highlighted in theory chapter 3.3 (and Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 524), norms and rules in a new country have to be actively learned, and the migrants' perceived 'other-ness' causes the receiving population to look at the migrants as out-groups. In acknowledging this expectancy of learning the new rules of a country - regardless of whether this behaviour is reasonable - the interviewees acknowledge their position at the lower end of the power balance between themselves and the local population. However, by doing so, they actively aim to learn and adapt to the knowledge and norms in Nuuk in order to minimise the reasons to become part of the out-group, determined by the dominant receiving population (ibid.).

Incidentally, it has to be taken into consideration that a few interviewees lived in other countries before moving to Nuuk. This could have an impact on the understanding of how much one single country can influence or become part of a person's identity. However, there is no difference visible in the narratives between the interviewees who have lived in several countries or only in the Philippines before migrating to Nuuk.

5.6.3 Taking initiative

Previously in this chapter, a personal initiative to induce a change has been described and analysed as the result of a negative or uncomfortable situation, which led to creating a new comfort zone. However, there are numerous additional initiatives that result from a positive experience.

Most of the interviewees mention that they make a difference through their work. Some mention that they have an impact on their customers and they love to see that their work makes the customers happy. Meanwhile, other interviewees describe how they inspire their colleagues to work differently, or that they happen to like taking shifts at a time of the day where nobody else wants to take them. One interviewee describes their own impact as reassuring their colleagues by taking responsibility:

"I'm here, I can work. Minus one problem. [...] S/He's here, so there's nothing to worry about" (Transcript, P5).

One interviewee furthermore describes how they make a difference among Filipino acquaintances by helping them with organisational tasks and inspiring them to be strong. Another interviewee mentions that they sometimes console young Greenlanders with psychological problems aside from working:

"Sometimes I help them. [...] Young people, they go to me, then I care with them, comfort them. I talk to them nicely, and give good advice to them. So, in this country, I hear that they can't understand their mind. Mostly, here in Greenland, there's news, the girls have depression. I don't know for now, if it is happening suicide or something." (Transcript, P8)

Not only do the interviewees take initiative in contributing something in their everyday lives on a micro-level but they also take initiative on a meso-level. Several interviewees mention a

business that they have established or that they would like to establish, mostly on the side of their main occupation. Even among the interviewees that are not self-employed, a relatively high percentage of interviewees is in leading positions.

What makes this positive-rooted initiative particularly interesting is the contrast to their own expectation to ‘adapt’ in the previous chapter 5.6.2, which was concluded to locate the interviewees at the lower end of the power imbalance in Nuuk. In taking initiative to improve the current situation in Nuuk, in contrast, the interviewees actively contribute part of their individual personalities and culture to the Nuuk population. This is furthermore supported by their pride in their work-attitude that they like to share with their co-workers (cf. chapter 5.4). This available scope for initiatives suggests that the interviewees do indeed have the power to make a difference. However, the success of their initiatives is limited to the acceptance of those initiatives in society. In other words, the Greenlanders are free to be or not to be inspired by the Filipino work-attitude, without facing social consequences. On the other hand, the interviewees need to adapt and learn about the local customs in order to be accepted.

Overall, it can be observed that the narrative of personal development resembles a ladder within the system they are located in:

“It’s a stepping stone for us. [...] You know you adapt and in the future,
I can get another job, better than the first one.” (Transcript, P4)

Roughly summarised, the interviewees came to Nuuk, they experienced obstacles, and felt empowered by taking on those obstacles and rebuilding their comfort zone. From there, it was then possible to furthermore contribute to the workplace and the surrounding society.

5.6.4 Anti-home

One interviewee is particularly interesting when it comes to taking initiative in home-making in Nuuk. Earlier, relevant factors for home-making have been discussed, such as creating a social network, reunifying with family and creating a comfort zone. The goal was to create and maintain relationships and spaces that make them feel at ease.

Meanwhile, one interviewee seems to use those means to make an ‘anti-home’. The interviewee prominently describes themselves as “full of sacrifice” for the family in the Philippines, and they mention a lack of personal network in Nuuk. They mention how Nuuk is too cold and dark for them. While they do make an effort to create comfort in their everyday life, living and working in Nuuk mainly seems to be part of their personality as in sacrificing themselves for the wellbeing and financial security of the family in the Philippines. The choices they make seem to be rooted in the Philippines rather than in Nuuk. The interviewee uses the same initiatives and commitment as other interviews in order to form specific relationships with the Philippines as well as with Greenland. However, the result is different: The interviewee seems to be creating an anti-home, that differs from a home in the purpose of stay and the nature of relationships with the place and the people. Just like the home of the other interviewees, an anti-home is created through active effort and commitment.

5.7 Language and racism

5.7.1 Why language barriers are communication barriers

Many interviewees mentioned language challenges when navigating their life and relationships in Nuuk. Both Greenlandic and Danish were mentioned as barriers when communicating with the people who live in Nuuk, due to their own lack of proficiency in those languages. The interviewees expressed an interest in learning at least one of them, ideally both.

The perceived language barrier in Greenland exists due a variety of difficulties experienced by the interviewees. Some interviewees mentioned the fact that they are expected to know Greenlandic in some social settings and Danish in other social settings.

“My colleagues told me that I need to speak Greenlandic because we’re in Greenland.
My employer, he is Danish, obviously, some big boss, and he told me:
Why do you learn Greenlandic, and if you come to Denmark, nobody will understand you.
But most Greenlanders understand Danish. [...] If you speak Danish, some people
don’t like it. They only like speaking Greenlandic, because you’re in Greenland.
I learned both, not fluently, but I understand a little bit.” (Transcript, P3)

Most of the interviewees say that they ended up gaining a bit of knowledge in both of them, while prioritising one of the two languages as their focus. Some of them have been taking language classes, others simply concentrate on the vocabulary they can acquire in their everyday lives.

There is no differentiation visible between the importance of Greenlandic or Danish language acquisition. Most interviewees actively make an effort in both of them, at least through everyday encounters. During the research interviews, some elaborated more on their interactions with Greenlanders, where they lack vocabulary, and others focused on talking about taking a Danish course. Others mention both the same amount. There is only one interviewee who mentions being fluent in both Danish and Greenlandic.

In the use of language, and the narrated expectation of language acquisition, the power imbalance between the interviewees and the Greenlanders and the Danes becomes once again visible. While the Greenlanders and the Danes are not required to learn the Filipino language, the Filipinos are expected to learn Greenlandic, respectively Danish. In the narratives, Greenlandic and Danish have been equally prominent, and they are therefore understood as both of equal importance and power from the perspective of the interviewees. It suggests that the interviewees see the language as an essential part of integrating part of the Nuuk inhabitants (cf. Vigouroux, 2017, p. 320 in theory chapter 3.5) and being part of the local in-group.

Two interviewees furthermore mentioned their own English skills as another barrier. Their English used to be (or is still) not good enough for proper communication in their everyday lives, according to their own description. At this point, the researcher highlights that all the interviewees were proficient enough to enable communication between the interviewee and the researcher for all the interviews to be suitable as data. Some of them seem to understand their skills as lacking and therefore to act as a barrier nevertheless.

The interviewees notice the impact of the language barriers in various aspects of their lives. One interviewee mentions that the language is connected to understanding a culture, which is a frequent association, as previous research shows (cf. theory chapter 3.5):

“I learned the Danish language, the Greenlandic language, for being able to communicate with the locals. For me, it’s better to understand the community if you understand the language.” (Transcript, P7)

Another interviewee mentions how it is more difficult to make friends when you don’t speak their language. However, most of the interviewees mention the language challenges in relation to their jobs, especially the difficulties that customer interactions hold when there is a language barrier. Someone furthermore says that their colleagues don’t talk much with them because there is no common language. A common language in sufficient proficiency is therefore crucial for establishing social connections, which has not been mentioned in the theory chapters.

Moreover, some interviewees mention language barriers in connection to job applications. Proficiency in language is understood as important in their job, especially when promoted. Two interviewees that are currently in leading positions say that they don’t understand how they got that position without being fluent in Danish or Greenlandic. Two other interviewees highlight that applying for jobs has been difficult because of their lack of language skills. This is an essentialist correlation often made by both migrants as well as employers (Del Percio, 2018, p. 256).

Only one interviewee mentions the language without calling it a barrier. They talk about how they lacked the language knowledge they thought to be important for obtaining employment, but it eventually did not matter for their application:

“There were two gentlemen that were ... I saw in an announcement they were looking for [company name], and then, I just talked to them, I didn’t even send an application: “Do you have this job? Can I work with you?” I didn’t even speak Danish. The next day, they gave me a contract. And that’s it.” (Transcript, P9)

This interviewee expressed surprise about their lack of language knowledge not being an issue, which confirms the narrative that language proficiency is understood as crucial in a work environment.

5.7.2 The narrative of experienced racism

As many interviewees mentioned themselves adapting, they were asked whether the society around adapted to them in return as well, and how. With the answers, the researcher gained insight about whether the cultural encounters were perceived as a one-sided effort or as mutual.

There was an interesting disparity between the following two interview questions: “How do other people see you?” was usually answered with a selection of personal adjectives that friends and colleagues assigned them, such as helpful, friendly, flexible, funny. This happens on an individual, personal level.

However, the question: “How do people adapt to you?” tended to be answered on a macro-level. The interviewees mentioned how they have the impression that Greenlanders are not used to foreign workers, that they are not used to English speakers, and that Asians

are appreciated in Greenland because they work hard. In other words, the interviewees moved above the individuality level onto a group categorisation level in order to answer whether the people around them adapt to them as well.

A little portion of people adapt. Most of them - I don't know if they're used to adapting to foreign workers. (Transcript, P5)

Several interviewees mention that the Greenlanders adapt 'a bit' or 'a few of them'. Some of them mention as well that they could see a change: While they were met with scepticism when they started the job, they have noticed a change over time. They describe that the Greenlanders have become more accepting of foreigners or English-speakers. However, the narrative shows that there is still not an equal exchange, according to the narrative, which results in a barrier between the interviewees and the Greenlanders. This adds to the fact that the Greenlanders are not forced to adapt - they have the power to choose to do or not to do so.

In short, there concepts visible in the narratives of the interviewees: Firstly, they describe themselves as being received as a cultural out-group that does not focus on individuals but rather a group that has been imposed with a collective identity. Secondly, there is a power imbalance regarding language use and knowledge between the interviewees and the Greenlanders. This combination of power imbalance and being an out-group that has been imposed with a collective identity results in the 'othering' phenomenon (cf. theory chapter 3.3.1), which the researcher identifies to be part of the relationship between the Greenlanders and the interviewees.

The fact that the interviewees feel that they are 'othered' could provide an additional explanation to why the interviewees actively look for similarities between Asians and Greenlanders. In the analysis chapter 5.4, the looking for similarities was described as part of home-making of the interviewees. However, it could be an attempt of the interviewees to reshape the Greenlanders' views of them in order to reduce othering.

Despite othering, the term racism was not prominent in the interviews. However, it was surprising that, when the topic of racism arose, the interviewees usually understood it as a consequence of the language barrier.

"In my observation, people who are racist here, don't know how to speak English, so maybe it comes from that incapability of communicating. That's why they don't like foreigners, because they cannot communicate. Because I had an experience when I was a [previous job], and I was trying my best to speak the local language. Just like a foreigner, I tried to speak the local language, and after everything, she said "very good!" Okay. It somehow validates my suspicion that it's really the inability to communicate, that's why they don't like people they don't understand." (Transcript, P5)

Another interviewee mentions as well that the Greenlanders do not seem to like foreigners because of not understanding English. One interviewee highlighted as well that people can be racist, but when the interviewee makes an effort and smiles, it is received positively by the Greenlanders.

Learning the language and making an effort to facilitate understanding therefore seems to be the general interest of the interviewees. One interviewee even describes it as their special

skill” to communicate past a language barrier, and they have made a lot of acquaintances by being friendly, and making an effort. In return, people are nice to the interviewee.

“I appreciate them. They appreciate me, I appreciate them.
That is give and take, giving back.” (Transcript, P8)

One interviewee furthermore wants to highlight that there are also many people that are open to working and collaborating with foreigners, even though there is a language barrier.

“I don’t want to discredit the people who are very open to working with us, and that’s actually a good thing as well. I guess there’s just some barriers as well, one is language.” (Transcript, P6)

The interviewees therefore interpret racism as a result of the existing language barrier, which results in a communication and understanding barrier. The language can therefore be concluded to be a determining factor when categorising between in-groups and out-groups. This is an essentialist approach of both the interviewees and the Greenlanders.

Earlier in the language chapter, it was described that the interviewees consider both Danish and Greenlandic as important to learn. Interestingly, in the discussion about othering and racism, the interviewees focused on the relationship between themselves and Greenlanders. Danes were not mentioned. At this point, the researcher does not have an explanation for this.

5.8 Future plans

5.8.1 Migration plans

When the interviewees were asked about their future plans regarding how long they are going to stay in Greenland, many interviewees said that it is likely for them to leave the country again one day. However, none of them is planning to leave anytime soon. Most of the interviewees are waiting to see, depending on other factors that will influence their decision.

When the interviewees talked about leaving Greenland, some mentioned reasons to leave Greenland, while other mentioned reasons to go to a specific country. In other words, some focus on factors within Greenland, others focus on factors outside of Greenland. Thus, there are different forces of varying prominence that influence the perspective on future plans.

One interviewee mentions that it is difficult to stay in Greenland when living on a pension, which they see as the main reason to leave Greenland one day:

“When we reach the pension at 67, it’s expensive to live here.
If we get a pension from 67, it is not the same as what we earn now, we need to pay for the house, we need to pay for food, internet. It’s so expensive to live here. I have also been to Denmark. I saw it’s cheap there. Sodavand, things for everyday are cheap, here it’s almost double the price.” (Transcript, P3)

Meanwhile, two interviewees are sure that they would like to stay in Greenland until they get old. Some think that they will stay, simply because there is no reason to leave. The choice of staying in Greenland is therefore not an active commitment but a passive outcome in those cases.

However, there are also interviewees that actively choose one or another country to live in, for various reasons. Three interviewees think that they will stay in Greenland. These interviewees mention that Greenland is part of them, because of their commitment to their job, or because of family, or because they love the simplicity of the country.

Coming back to the process of home-making, it has been discussed throughout the analysis that family, finding similarities and creating a comfort zone are crucial when creating a home among the interviewees. It is the result of building “relationships with places and people” (theory chapter 3.2). In conclusion, calling a place a home seems to have become a matter of choice rather than coincidence. This gives the interviewees the option to embrace this choice and take initiative in creating a home or re-evaluate and decide to invest into home-making at a different geographical place later in their lives.

In fact, three other interviewees know that they want to move back to the Philippines one day. One of them wishes to move back because of career plans in the Philippines, while the other interviewee describes the Philippines as the “safe haven” (Transcript, P1). The third interviewee first says that there is a plan to go back to the Philippines, but then elaborates and says “it depends on what happens” (Transcript, P3).

However, leaving Greenland does not necessarily mean going back to the Philippines. Some interviewees mention the possibility of moving to Denmark if they move away from Greenland. As the reason, they mention having family in Denmark. This aligns again with the observation of how important family is in the decision-making process of the interviewees, which several interviewees describe as part of the Filipino culture (cf. chapter 5.2.2).

According to the information in the narrations of the interviewees, the interest in moving away is not related to whether the interviewee has lived in several countries before moving to Nuuk.

Overall, the reasons for staying in Greenland or moving away align with the reasons for migrating to Greenland in the first place. Some of the interviewees who wish to stay in Nuuk mention having family in the area, career wishes and having a better and safer life than in the Philippines. Meanwhile, financial issues due to pension would be a reason to leave Greenland again. Finally, reasons to move away to a specific other country - Denmark or the Philippines - are reunification with family and career plans. Interestingly, although the same reasons are mentioned for moving to Greenland as for moving away, the reasons changed among the individual interviewees: One interviewee might have come for family reunification and now considers leaving for financial reasons. Another interviewee came to Nuuk for financial reasons but now wants to move away for career opportunities.

Based on the narratives about future plans, Greenland as a destination is not a final destination in the interviewees’ migration story but rather a place ‘in between’ (theory chapter 3.1). The interviewees do not see themselves as having to choose between ‘here’ and ‘there’. Instead, they are open for moving again, if appropriate. This is a result of seeing home-making as a practice to do geographically anywhere.

5.8.2 The outlook on career developments

Regarding their careers, some interviewees have specific ideas of what they want to achieve in the future, while others do not have specific career wishes, and some are not sure what they are capable of.

Two interviewees provide their age as a reason to not have career wishes. One interviewee sees themselves as too old and rather thinks about how to spend the retirement years. The other interviewee has a son in education, and he is the interviewee's main focus and priority, rather than their own career. Furthermore, a third interviewee says that they are content with what they currently have, as they have been able to build what they were hoping for in Nuuk.

Several interviewees mention building a business themselves, or expanding the businesses they have established. Most interviewees talk about Nuuk, when they talk about their business dreams, and becoming part of Nuuk's growth, being able to contribute something to the community. As mentioned previously in the analysis, numerous interviewees mentioned having their own business, either as a full-time or a part-time occupation, or they are planning to start a business in the future.

In terms of career, there is no common narrative that seems to be dominant. If anything, age and family priorities seem to determine their career aspirations. However, the observation that most interviewees have the idea of their own businesses in their head or are already involved in real life, stands in prominent contrast to the fact that they tend to not feel like they are 'enough' to be appreciated and welcome in their workplaces (cf. analysis chapter 5.5.2). The interviewees' wishes to build their own businesses could be an answer to counteracting the current perceived power imbalance. By building their own businesses, they are and will be in charge in contrast to now being subject to the goodwill of new managers. However, this is a hypothesis created by the researcher, as there is not enough evidence in the narratives to support this assumption. It is also likely that Nuuk - being seen as a place of opportunity - attracts personalities with a lot of initiative and will to create, which results in plans to start businesses. This prominence of taking initiative is also observed in the cultural encounters in chapter 5.4, where most of the interviewees describe themselves as hard-working. Greenland therefore becomes a place where their hard work stands out and therefore could lead to the urge to create a business, as opposed to a place like the Philippines, where everyone works hard, since working hard is described as part of Filipino culture.

6. Discussion

6.1 The dominant Filipino migration narrative

This subchapter presents the dominant migration narrative among the interviewed Filipinos in Nuuk, based on the analysis in chapter 5. This answers RQ1.

‘Home’ seems to be in two places for the interviewees; both in the Philippines and in Nuuk. Most of the interviewees have chosen to live in Nuuk for rational reasons such as finances, and consequently some of them long for their emotional ‘home’ in the Philippines while living in Nuuk. This suggests that these interviewees feel torn between where they currently are and where they feel drawn towards. According to the narrative, the interviewees are not bound to one place, such as Greenland or the Philippines, but they are open to relocating again, according to potential shifts in preferences and migrating family members over the years. The narrative reveals that the family is crucial in the decision-making process of the interviewees, because, for them, ‘home is where the family is’. This confirms that social factors do in fact play a pivotal role in home-making, which was already argued for with theory in chapter 3.2.

During their stay in Nuuk, the interviewees have been engaging in various home-making activities, which include creating a local social network, finding a better job, and creating comfort zones. This aligns with literature (Boccagni, 2017, p. 9) that ascribes familiarity, security and control to a ‘home’. Housing provided by the workplace is furthermore always mentioned positively by the interviewees, as it supports their home-making practices.

Another part of home-making is the interviewees actively looking for similarities between Greenlanders and Filipinos. By creating an in-group of Asians and Greenlanders in contrast to the European out-group, they build a home far from home. Being part of an in-group through similarities is known to be experienced positively (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 523) and to support the understanding of self (Turner & Oakes, 1986, p. 240).

However, the culture is also used by the Filipinos as an argument to distinguish between the Filipino in-group and the Greenlandic out-group on a superordinate level. They describe the Filipino ‘work culture’ as opposite from the Greenlandic work attitude. The interviewees implicitly described the Filipinos therefore as homogenous in terms of work attitude, consequently expecting fellow Filipinos to have a specific work attitude. Culture is therefore used by the interviewees however it is considered suitable by them. It can be an instrument for home-making, a reasoning in setting expectations or a valuable trait that can be contrasted and combined with the Greenlandic work attitude. Furthermore, this narrative shows that the Filipino interviewees do not only experience stereotyping and othering from the Greenlanders (elaborated in the second-to-last paragraph in this subchapter), but they actively participate in it as well through reducing reasoning to culturally explained attitudes and setting of expectations.

In terms of power relations, Nuuk is understood as a place where they find more opportunities than in the Philippines or other countries. Therefore, the presence of ‘opportunity’ seems to lie in existing political, administrative and cultural structures (Schiller-Merkens, 2008, p. 130), and these allow the interviewees to be able to focus on

their individual priorities, in contrast to other countries. Their priorities in migration are career wishes and / or family-related, such as family reunification, creating a safer and better life (for the family) as well as better finances (to help the family). Furthermore, together with the opportunities that Nuuk offers, there are challenges that interviewees encountered - predominantly in the beginning of their life in Nuuk - such as lack of a social circle, climate-related adaptation like lack of sunlight and difficulties, being far away from the family, as well as the search for a fulfilling job and lack of knowledge in residence permit procedure. These are perceived as imposed on the interviewees and facing them is understood as catalysts for their natural identity developments.

Not only Nuuk but also the workplaces are perceived as given structural elements (Schiller-Merkens, 2008, p. 130) that the interviewees do not have any influence on, which means that they see themselves at the lower end of the power imbalance. The interviewees describe hierarchical structures as well as the potential of racism that place them at the lower end of the power imbalance at the workplace, which makes them aware of how dependent they are on their managers and they are thankful for good experiences. As a result, many of them take extra shifts and responsibilities to prove that they are good enough for their job. Meanwhile, having a role that comes with responsibility is mentioned as a positive experience, and they value praise and jobs that take their education into consideration as well as work agreements that consider their individual needs, although some of them doubt whether they deserve leading positions. This dynamic suggests that the opportunities they describe to see in Nuuk do not only allow the interviewees to support their priorities but also develop themselves, without being stuck in the low end of power balance as 'immigrants' but to use stepping stones to climb higher.

The interviewees engage in learning the local language(s) and culture in Nuuk in order to become part and to be able to communicate with the local community (cf. Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 524). They understand the language as the basis for a variety of connections with the Danish- and Greenlandic-speakers; i.e. not only cultural exchange (Park & Wee, 2017, p. 48; Tsang, 2022, p. 106), and finding a job (Del Percio, 2018, p. 256) but also building social connections and friendships. Meanwhile, not knowing the language(s) of the receiving society is experienced as excluding, experienced through racism. This connection has not explicitly been made by literature, but as language is understood as a requirement for communication (Park & Wee, 2017, p. 48), it eases cultural encounters, while a lack of common language can complicate cultural exchange between individuals.

Many interviewees furthermore take active initiative to contribute to Nuuk with their ideas, professional goals, work attitude and culture. However, it is up to the receiving society to accept or not accept these (Raghuram, 2013, pp. 1479–1480). Therefore, while the interviewees might see more 'opportunities' in Nuuk, there are limits to that given by the society in Greenland, who lives and reinforces its practices every day (Schiller-Merkens, 2008, p. 130). Possibly related to these limitations, many interviewees have established or aim to establish a business. They describe their career path from mainly unskilled jobs in the beginning to learning and using various stepping stones on the way to reach their goals.

6.2 Filipino migrants in the light of the lack of workforce in Greenland

This subchapter presents the role that the lack of workforce in Greenland plays in the narrative of the interviewees, which answers RQ2. Chapters 2.1, 2.2 and 6.1 provide the knowledge base for this subchapter.

The lack of workforce in Greenland facilitates foreigners moving to Greenland, as there is an interest in finding a solution to the local 'brain-drain'. This is also visible in the establishment of a fast-track agreement that allows an easier and faster processing of residence permits. Replacing skilled local workers that move abroad with foreigners that move to Greenland, is called a 'brain turnover' (Huppert, 2016, p. 32). As this tends to come with a cultural shift regarding work attitude and qualifications that are needed, companies in Greenland tend to prefer foreign workers (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 68).

The narratives formulated by the interviewees show that companies - despite companies being on the high end of the power imbalance - are experienced positively. This is due to respectfully communicating colleagues and managers, managers expressing the value of the employees' work, companies taking their education into consideration, providing housing and being open for individually suitable work agreements. Based on the interviewees' narratives, they perceive the companies to actively make an effort to retain the employees by making them feel welcome and valued, and by supporting their professional development.

The interviewees have been concluded to find Nuuk an attractive place to live and work, due to opportunities to focus on their priorities. Meanwhile, Greenlanders move away from their towns and even from Greenland, as they find limited possibilities for development in Nuuk, such as socially due to dying communities (Nielsen, 2020) as well as professionally due to the need to follow education in other towns or even abroad (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 18), while not prioritising their engagement in the Greenlandic labour markets (Høgedahl, 2021, p. 128). As a result, companies in Greenland find it difficult to retain the Greenlandic employees, resulting in a high turnover rate (cf. Huppert Karlsson, 2021), as the companies' retention efforts do not align with the Greenlanders' priorities (Huppert Karlsson, 2021, p. 209). However, according to the narrative of the interviewees, the retention efforts of the companies do align with the interviewees' priorities, as they are "more desired than others" (Vigouroux, 2017, p. 313) since their skills and work attitudes are in demand in Greenland. The interviewees do not only recognise the companies' retention efforts but understand them as opportunities, take these opportunities and take initiative in shaping something new, such as the cultural combination between Greenlandic and Filipino work attitudes.

Judging based on the company's active efforts to retain Filipino employees, it is therefore understood that the Filipino interviewees are part of the solution to Greenland's demand for labour. On a macro perspective, as employees are hard to find, the employers in Greenland are dependent on them and therefore find themselves on the lower end of the power imbalance in contrast to their employees. Migration to Greenland is welcomed and therefore framed in a positive way (cf. literature chapter 2.1.3). As a result, the lack of workforce acts advantageous for the interviewees, as it provides them with opportunities. In a more competitive job market without a lack of workforce, the power imbalance between employer and employees would shift and it would hold less space for development possibilities among

immigrants. The literature review in chapter 2.1.3 suggests that immigrants in Nuuk would be less welcome in a more saturated labour market.

As a result, it is relevant to highlight that the lack of workforce does therefore not only play a role but is a main condition for the interviewees' described narrative. In other words, it is likely that immigrants - such as the interviewees - are only invited and supported as long as they present a solution to the local problem (cf. Joppe, 2012, p. 665). This has a possible consequence that they might lose privileges if, at one point in the future, the interviewees no longer present a solution to the country's lack of workforce, or in case the problem becomes less relevant.

6.3 The Filipino migration narrative compared to the Danish migration narrative

This subchapter compares the narrative of the Filipino interviewees with the Danish migration narrative, which answers RQ3. The two narratives (presented in chapters 2.3 and 6.1) are compared based on the theories that have been introduced in chapter 3.

The author of the study about Danish newcomers in Nuuk (Berg, 2015) describes Greenland as a 'dreamland' for most Danes (cf. chapter 2.3.2). They actively make this place their dreamland, by focusing on positive aspects that they do not have in Denmark, such as peace and quiet, nature, adventures and distance from social responsibilities. It is not a homeland, but rather an anti-home. This observation is supported by the fact that most Danes who live in Greenland only stay for a short time, and avoid making Greenlandic friends. Sustaining local relationships, in contrast, would be part of home-making (cf. chapter 3.2). In the Filipino narrative among the interviewees, the tendency is the opposite: While only one interviewee engages in making an anti-home (cf. chapter 5.6.4), most of the interviewees actively engage in home-making to build a second home in Greenland - they work their way up professionally, engage with Greenlanders and Danes, and create their comfort zones. Meanwhile, the Danish newcomers focus on the adventurous aspect of their stay in Greenland (cf. chapter 2.3.2), and adventure is the opposite of a comfort zone due to lack of familiarity, security and control (cf. Boccagni, 2017, p. 9).

Berg (2015) did not investigate or describe any personal development of the Danish newcomers in Greenland, which is why there cannot be comparisons with the Filipino narrative.

In terms of social identity categorisation, the investigated Danes in Greenland (Berg, 2015) described themselves as being different: some focus on the difference between Greenlanders and Danes due to the coloniser mark that the Danes carry anywhere they meet Greenlanders in Greenland. Another way Berg's (2015) Danish research participants set themselves apart from others was by underlining that they are 'not like others' by criticising the short stay of other Danes, when it turned out later that they were one of them who stayed for a short time as well (cf. chapter 2.3.2). In combination with avoiding making local friends, the Danes seem very separated from the Greenlandic population. Meanwhile, the Filipino interviewees assigned themselves to different groups, which were sometimes contradicting, such as the Greenlandic-Asian in-group and the European out-group, which

layered with the Filipino in-group and the Greenlandic out-group. However, while the Filipinos actively made an effort to ease cultural encounters and facilitate understanding with Danes as well as Greenlanders, the Danish newcomers' narrative reinforces the barrier between the Greenlanders and the Danes, creating a Danish in-group and a Greenlandic out-group. When talking about other Danish newcomers in Greenland with Berg, the Danish newcomers did not hesitate to distance themselves from the Danes. Looking at it from the perspective of cultural encounters, the Danish migration narrative suggests that two worlds meet in Greenland (the Danish and the Greenlandic), but they do not mix. Greenlanders know about Danes and Danes know about Greenlanders, but the knowledge is not updated in everyday interactions. This is supported by the fact that language barriers at the office exist, and they are not discussed (cf. chapter 2.3.1; Huppert Karlsson, 2021, p. 195, 196). Danes furthermore do not learn Greenlandic (cf. chapter 2.3.2), and many Greenlanders are politically against speaking or learning Danish (cf. chapter 2.3.1). In contrast, the Filipino interviewees actively engage in a cultural and language exchange, in order to facilitate the cultural and social exchange with Greenlanders and Danes in Nuuk. They have difficulties deciding between learning Greenlandic or Danish, because they seem to notice that the two worlds (Danish and Greenlandic) both have their own language, and their own demands that their world is important.

Furthermore, for the Danish newcomers in Nuuk, Greenland seems to present an opportunity to develop their career. When looking at it more closely, the reason for going to Greenland is because many of Berg's interviewees had difficulties finding a job in Denmark, especially after graduation. In Greenland, it was easier due to the lack of workforce. This positions the Danish interviewees at the upper end of the power balance. This is supported by the observation that most of the Danish newcomers that Berg investigated (Berg, 2015) indeed preferred to stay in Nuuk for only for a short time, as it would otherwise negatively impact their professional reputation in Denmark. Moving to Nuuk therefore is an opportunity because it's easy to work, and it therefore positions them at the upper end of the power imbalance in Nuuk. They do not even need to learn Greenlandic, as their job tasks in Nuuk are possible to complete in Danish. Therefore, in contrast to the Filipinos, their success does not rely on the acceptance of the receiving societies, because the acceptance of the Danish part of society in Nuuk is already given. Furthermore, the language barrier is not impactful enough to work as a barrier to what they came to look for in Nuuk. Meanwhile, for the Filipinos, Greenland is a place of opportunities because it allows professional development and for following their priorities. They see it as a place to grow within the power imbalance structure, taking extra shifts, learning the language and working hard in order to advance. By making an effort and learning about the culture(s) in Greenland, they aim to become part of a local in-group. This perspective has been discussed to position them at the lower end of the power imbalance, as it relies on the acceptance of the existing group.

6.4 Research contributions

The knowledge about the Filipino narrative in Nuuk that this thesis provides marks a relevant research field. It shows the challenges and opportunities that the Filipino interviewees see in their professional and private environments in Nuuk. Furthermore, it shows how Nuuk and its history have an impact on how Filipinos feel received by the people in Nuuk. This exploratory

investigation can serve as a basis for quantitative research about Filipinos in Nuuk, or Filipinos in Greenland in the future. The number of rising Filipinos in the recent years (cf. introduction chapter 1) suggest to continue rising in the future. This is supported by the fact that the interviewees considered Nuuk as a possible destination due to personal acquaintances and family members in Nuuk. With the interest in foreign workforce among the employers (cf. chapter 6.2) and the rising number of Filipinos, this thesis does not only open a new research field in Greenland but also highlights its increasing importance in the future.

This research furthermore underscores the relevance of a narrative analysis as a basis for this thesis. The researcher herself got in touch with a group of Greenlanders through a personal contact in her free time. The researcher experienced the Greenlanders completely differently than what the interviewees described in their narratives. The difference may be rooted in context, such as that the researcher was a tourist to them, or the fact that they met through leisure activities, or simply that 'the Greenlanders' are not a homogenous group, just like neither 'the Filipinos' or 'the Danes' are homogenous groups. This discrepancy highlights the importance of the conducted narrative analysis: It allowed the researcher to identify prominent patterns among the defined group of interviewees, which could not have been discovered otherwise. This provides valuable insight into their perception. It can help employers, who are likely to have a different perspective as well, recognise and understand the potential hopes and challenges of their Filipino employees.

7. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore the dominant narrative of Filipino migrants who live and work in Nuuk, how the narrative is related to Greenland's labour markets, and how it compares to other migration narratives. In order to answer this, literature about the Greenlandic labour market, the Danish-Greenlandic relationship as well as a study about Danish newcomers in Nuuk were used as a basis. The core of the thesis is the analysis of the Filipino narratives in Nuuk, based on 9 personal interviews, and interpreted with theory about identity, power and social relations, cultural encounters and languages. This thesis is relevant as it sheds light onto the perspective of a so far under-researched part of society in Greenland, which makes up between 1 and 2 percent of Greenland's population and is therefore of relevant size and local impact.

The results show the challenges and opportunities that Filipino migrants in Nuuk tend to face. Employers are recommended to learn about these in order to understand their Filipino employees, and so are government agencies. This is relevant because it facilitates communication at the workplace, and can be understood as inputs for facilitating successful encounters with the Danish and Greenlandic population in Nuuk. Regarding implications for practice, it has to be highlighted that not all Filipinos have the same experiences. The results of this thesis are based on similarities among a set of interviews in a specific context. Therefore, the results are ideal to serve as a basis for employers to find the right questions and approaches at the workplace, but they do not provide a description of every individual's mind and personality.

This thesis furthermore shows that differences between people in the Nuuk society are often understood to be of cultural origin. This is visible in the analysis of the Filipino narratives, as they connect their identity, their in-groups and language to cultural reasoning. While this reasoning among the interviewees might be facilitated through the framing of the interview setting (cf. analysis chapter 5.1), the cultural reasoning is considered too prominent to be assigned solely to that factor. Furthermore, it becomes apparent that not only the Filipino interviewee narratives show this but also Huppert Karlssons's study (2021) about the workplaces in Greenland as well as the discussion of the Danish narrative in Nuuk that describes a separation of Greenlanders and Danes in discussion chapter 6.3. This kind of focus on culture-based explanations shows an essentialist tendency of all parties, which can promote racism and othering. In order for successful intercultural communication on a personal level, it is recommended to actively look past the cultural differences, with employers taking an active part in navigating and negotiating issues from a personal perspective.

This thesis opens a new research field, as it is the first to explore Filipino immigrants in Greenland. The immigration in Greenland is severely under-researched and this thesis aims to mark the start of filling this research gap. Based on the sources and data investigated in the scope of this thesis, the researcher recognised potential for further research, and has formulated recommendations for that research in the following. Firstly, this thesis explored the influence of the Greenlandic labour markets on the Filipinos in Nuuk. Another relevant study would be to switch the focus on this topic and investigate the impact that Filipinos have on the Greenlandic labour markets. Secondly, this thesis has explored the prominent

narrative of Filipino migrants in Nuuk. These results can be used to develop a quantitative study of Filipinos in Nuuk (or Greenland), in order to gain insight into the big picture. Thirdly, this thesis can be used for a comparative analysis with other Filipino migrants in other countries. Comparing the Filipino narrative with a narrative of Filipinos in e.g. the United States can provide valuable contributions to the field. Last but not least, this thesis focuses on the Filipinos and their perspective. Complementary studies to this are recommended to investigate other actors, such as the employers and their narratives of working in an intercultural setting with Filipinos, as well as the Greenlandic or Danish co-workers' narratives regarding Filipinos and immigration in Nuuk.

8. List of annexes

Annexe 1 - Consent Form

Annexe 2 - Interview Guide

Annexe 3 - Transcript

Annexe 4 - Analysis Tables

9. Bibliography

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