

Pragmatic Competences in Oral Textbook Tasks



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ABSTRACT IN NORWEGIAN

Selv om språkbrukere kan anvende det engelske språket på en grammatisk korrekt måte, betyr det ikke at det nødvendigvis passer kommunikasjonssituasjonen. Kommunikasjon vil alltid være en del av et større bilde og en sosial kontekst. Å kunne vurdere omgivelser med dens deltagere, sosiokulturelle kontekst og målet med kommunikasjonen før en uttaler seg, er viktig for å kunne delta i vellykket kommunikasjon. Dette er sentrale deler av pragmatisk kompetanse.

I likhet med andre språkferdigheter trenger elever veiledning i tilegnelsen av også denne type kompetanse. Lærebøkers sentrale plass i den norske skolen har mulighet til å bidra i denne utviklingsprosessen. Hensikten med denne studien har vært å kartlegge hvordan muntlige oppgaver i tre lærebøker for fellesfaget engelsk (Vg1) inneholder muligheter for å utvikle pragmatisk kompetanse. Jeg har sett på hvor mange ganger de ulike delkomponentene av pragmatisk kompetanse blir etterspurt. Jeg har også undersøkt hvilken type, mengde og plassering av metapragmatisk informasjon som blir formidlet til elevene i disse oppgavene.

Studien er basert på *Det felles europeiske rammeverket for språk (2001)* sin presentasjon av pragmatisk kompetanse. Verket har lagt grunnlaget for den kvantitative analysen. Ved hjelp av utviklede kriterier for pragmatisk kompetanse og muntlige oppgaver har det blitt utført en tekstbokanalyse, med en tekstanalyse som en del av metoden. De tre lærebøkene er *Targets*, *Access to English* og *New Experience*.

Muntlige ferdigheter er listet som en av de fem grunnleggende ferdighetene i *Kunnskapsløftet (2013)*. Denne ferdigheten er trolig den viktigste hvis man vurderer hvilke ferdigheter flest elever kommer til å bruke i løpet av livet. Pragmatisk kompetanse utgjør en tredjedel av hvordan det europeiske rammeverket forstår kommunikativ kompetanse. Likevel kan det ta tid før forskning reflekteres i læremateriell. Denne studien viser at pragmatisk kompetanse har blitt en del av den norske læreplanen og lærebøker. Det er likevel rom for forbedring.

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LIST OF ABBRIVIATIONS

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESC	English Subject Curriculum
ESL	English as a Second Language
LK06	National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion from 2013
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
Vg1	First Year Upper Secondary School

1 INTRODUCTION

Due to globalization, the English language has entered several spheres of everyday life. Being able to handle the language is often required in higher education, when gathering information and when travelling. Within different communication situations users encounter different contextual factors to which language should be appropriated for meaning to get across successfully. Knowledge¹ about how meaning is dependent on context and how to use language accordingly, is what makes up pragmatic competences. My interest lies with how textbooks deal with the development of pragmatic competences. The aim of my thesis is to map aspects of pragmatic competences across oral textbook tasks for the first year of upper secondary school in Norway (hereafter referred to as Vg1). The introductory chapter presents reasons for studying pragmatics and textbooks, in addition to presenting the research question, aims and purpose of the thesis. Finally, a brief guide to the structure of the thesis is presented.

1.1 Why Study Pragmatics

Most people have heard funny stories of communication gone wrong due to a misunderstanding between a foreigner and a native speaker of English. Such situations could, however, also have negative consequences. Interlocutors could end up feeling embarrassed, or even worse, perceived as rude. Knowledge about what type of language is suitable for different language situations and how context affects the meaning of language, decreases the frequency of such misunderstandings taking place. Such competences are recognized as pragmatic competences². The importance of learners having and being able to use such knowledge is raised in official documents such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment* (2001, hereafter referred to as CEFR), and the *National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion* (2013, hereafter referred to as LK06). These are central documents to this thesis.

¹ The concept of *knowledge* here includes both conscious and more unconscious aspects of knowledge.

² I will refer to pragmatic competences in the plural as I use the CEFR's (2001) definition of the competences.

It could be argued that the term, *pragmatics*, is mystified and ungraspable for many. Personally, I experience few people managing to explain the word. In relation to the field of language teaching, several attempts have been made to define pragmatics and pragmatic competences. According to the CEFR (2001):

Pragmatic competences are concerned with the user/learner's knowledge of the principles according to which messages are:

- a) organised, structured and arranged ('discourse competence');
- b) used to perform communicative functions ('functional competence');
- c) sequenced according to interactional and transactional schemata ('design competence'). (p. 123)

Pragmatic competences enable students to consider contextual factors and choose appropriate language for successful communication. If pragmatically competent, learners know what language is suited for different situations. They are also able to draw on a repertoire of language functions to eliminate ambiguity, and are familiar with what turns and verbal exchange patterns belong to different situations.

Even though learners could transfer some of their pragmatic competences from Norwegian to English, such knowledge has not proved to be sufficient when interacting in a second language (L2³) as learners do not always take advantage of their pragmatic competences (Bardovi-Harling, 2001, 2013; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Rueda, 2006). Another reason for its insufficiency relates to how pragmatic rules might vary according to language and culture. Explicit instruction on pragmatic competences has therefore been raised for discussion within the field, and findings indicate positive aspects of including it in education (e.g. Kasper, 1997, 2001; Vallenga, 2004). Most of the discussion of L2 pragmatics in my thesis concerns English, but it may also be relevant for learners of a third language, or L2 learners of another language than English.

The importance of focusing on oral language is raised in the *Threshold Level* (1991), which presents important communicative needs and language forms required for learners to pass the threshold of succeeding in everyday situations where English is

³ In my study L2 refers to English as a second language, in the sense that it is the first foreign language Norwegian learners study at school. Foreign and second language will, however, be used interchangeably in this thesis. See Rindal (2014) for further discussion of terminology.

needed. Not every language user will practice English writing or reading, but most people will encounter situations where they will need oral communicative language skills. As a student in upper secondary school, I often heard fellow classmates complain about language courses neglecting to engage students in oral tasks to prepare them for real life communication. Such experiences could make education feel irrelevant for some students.

Teacher talk and textbook texts can serve as language models to exemplify speech acts in context. They can also illustrate how mistakes can occur and how misunderstandings might arise. Bardovi-Harling (2001) does, however, argue that such models are not good enough as they lack authentic materials and language functions. This issue is also raised by Vallenga (2004) who points to several studies which show that English language teaching (hereafter referred to as ELT) texts do not manage to portray a realistic picture of conversations with norms and practices. Tateyama (2001) has made another interesting finding. Her study illustrates that students get tired of examples provided as models, and rather prefer to engage in language production themselves. Tateyama (2001) says that “communicative practice improves most aspects of learners’ pragmatic ability...” (p. 220). In other words, there is reason to claim that student engagement in communication will be beneficial as to developing pragmatic competences.

Pragmatic competences, like any other type of competence, are argued to be something that learners “possess, develop, acquire, use or lose” (Kasper, 1997, unpaginated). In other words, it cannot be taught through blackboard instructions, but instead requires practice, experience, and direct focus. Pragmatics can be understood as how meaning comes to be in relation to context. In interaction, meaning comes to be as a result of negotiation of meaning between interlocutors. Meaning is created somewhere in-between what the speaker intends to express, and how the listener understands the utterance. By engaging students in oral social interaction activities, students are provided with opportunities for practicing negotiation of meaning.

Task-based language teaching, builds on the consumption that language learning is best facilitated when students are engaged in contextualized language activities (Ellis, 2009). The successfulness of language activities is dependent on textbook designers creating

meaningful tasks, and involving students in a range of different language functions, aspects of discourse and patterns of verbal exchange. Such focus will prepare students for communication situations that await them in real life. Naturally, informative and descriptive task instructions are also crucial to this process.

1.2 Relevance of Studying Textbooks

A textbook can be defined as “a published book, most often produced for commercial gain, whose explicit aim is to assist foreign learners of English in improving their linguistic knowledge and/or communicative ability” (Sheldon, 1987, p. 1). Even though teaching aids/mediums have changed considerably due to digitalization, the textbook still holds its grounds in teaching. This section will present research on textbooks’ status in school, and relevance of studying this type of material.

The textbook has been visualized as “the visible heart of any ELT program” (Sheldon, 1988, p.237). For many, it has been considered the most important instructional tool used in classrooms teaching English as a foreign language (Summer, 2011; Vallenga, 2004). Gilje (2016) points to the current trend of blended learning as regards teaching aids. Blended learning can be understood as “a language course which combines a face-to-face (F2F) classroom component with an appropriate use of technology” (Sharma & Barrett, 2007, p. 7). In relation to teaching aids, blended learning can be understood as a classroom practice which uses both paper-based material (such as textbooks) and digital resources.

Today, most textbooks have additional digital tools, and are themselves presented in digital versions. Despite digitalization, the central role of textbooks in Norwegian classrooms has been documented in a report presented on behalf of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training⁴. The report states that teachers consider textbooks to be an important resource in the process of planning lectures (Juuhl, Hontvedt & Skjelbred, 2010). Learners also report high usage of textbooks, especially in reference to preparations for tests. In addition, the report reveals that students spend a great amount of time working with tasks from their textbooks. Another set of information that supports the central role of textbooks in the Norwegian ELT

⁴ In Norwegian: *Utdanningsdirektoratet (UDIR)*.

classrooms, is sales statistics on relevant textbooks, which have kept stable since 2009 (the Norwegian Publishers Association, 2015).

There are few restrictions and guidelines available for textbook writers, other than to follow LK06 (2013) and other official documents (e.g. reports to the *Storting*). The government might sometimes decide on a national basis what topic areas should be in focus, but the influence stops here. Earlier, every textbook used in school had to be approved by an official body before being published and sold⁵. This regularization ended in 2000, and since then, there has been no official body checking the quality of textbooks. Today, any person can develop textbooks and have them published anywhere. Naturally, there has been a growing interest in content, form and use of textbooks. Research on textbooks could raise their quality. A textbook should be an aid that is well created, to guide students on their journey to becoming proficient users of English. The central role of textbooks makes them an important element of research.

1.3 Previous Research

Research has documented pedagogical grounds for including pragmatics in language teaching (e.g. Kasper, 1997). How to facilitate the process of developing L2 pragmatics in the classroom remains a question unanswered. Its importance and relevance is, however, stated by the Council of Europe and is reflected in LK06 (2013). To my knowledge, there is no research performed in Scandinavia on mapping how pragmatic competences are dealt with in textbooks, taking the CEFR's (2001) specification of pragmatic competences as a point of departure. In general, there is a limited amount of research performed in Norwegian classrooms and on Norwegian teaching material in relation to pragmatic competences.

Studies related to Norwegian English classrooms in terms of pragmatic competences is, to my knowledge, limited to speech acts and grammar tasks. As regards Norwegian master's thesis there are studies on students' knowledge and ability to express politeness (Brubæk, 2013), and on how Norwegians express gratitude in English (Johansen, 2008). Another Norwegian study has examined compliment responses in a comparative analysis between non-natives and Norwegian learners (Talleraas, 2014).

⁵ I am referring to *Godkjenningsordningen*.

There is also a masters' thesis on grammar tasks in textbooks (Askeland, 2013). This analysis was based on an older set on material compared to mine, and contextualization of tasks only served as a minor part of her overall aim of analyzing grammar tasks. Two studies from abroad present findings on conversational closings in textbooks (Grant and Starks, 2001), and textbook analysis on explicitly mentioned speech acts across textbooks (Vallenga, 2004).

Differences between native and non-native speakers of English have been mapped in terms of understanding and practice of pragmatic knowledge (Bardovi-Harling, 2001). In another study, differences in awareness of grammatical and pragmatic errors have been examined (Niezgoda and Röver, 2001).

Research has also shown documented effect in terms of focus on explicit teaching of pragmatic competences (Bardovi-Harling, 2013; Tateyama, 2001) and importance of considering pragmatics for textbook designers. Vallenga (2004) points to the positive effect of including metapragmatic instructions in textbooks to facilitate the development of L2 pragmatics. In terms of textbooks, studies have concluded that textbooks do not provide learners with adequate opportunities for developing L2 pragmatics (Bardovi-Harling, 2001; Grant & Starks, 2001; Vallenga 2004). A study similar to mine is presented by Nguyen (2011), who presents a study of how three textbooks in Vietnam facilitate pragmatic competences. Nguyen's (2011) study has examined how speech acts are linguistically presented in textbooks, and whether contextual and metapragmatic information is included to facilitate the process of learning these speech acts. Finally, in terms of tasks and pragmatics, Bardovi Harling (2013) performed a study of pragmatic tasks as stimulations for conversations (e.g. role plays and discourse completion tasks).

1.4 Thesis and Research Question

My thesis is based on the following research question:

What aspects of pragmatic competences are reflected in oral textbook tasks?

I propose to map the potentials for developing L2 pragmatics in oral tasks across three Vg1 textbooks. My understanding of pragmatic competences is based on the Council of Europe's understanding, presented in CEFR (2001). For this reason, I aim to map

discourse features, language functions and interaction schemata in tasks. In addition to these aspects, I will examine potentials for having a debate and giving a presentation due to their centrality across the textbooks.

Another topic of interest is level of metapragmatic instruction included in relation to oral tasks. By metapragmatic instruction I refer to information, discussion and explanation of how context should affect choice of language and what language is appropriate in different situations. Such information is explicit and enables learners to make pragmatically appropriate language choices.

I have performed a theoretical textbook analysis on the number one best-selling textbook from the three largest publishers in Norway (Opsahl & Johannessen, 2012): *Targets*, by Aschehoug, *Access to English* by Cappelen Damm, and *New Experience* by Gyldendal. The information about sales-statistics⁶ was provided by the publishers themselves, distributed to me through e-mail. For this reason, these books should reflect the English textbook variety used in Vg1 classrooms today. English in Vg1 is mandatory for all students at upper secondary level.

Regarding methodological options, mixed methods were applied for the theoretical textbook analysis. Quantitative methods allowed me to collect data in numerical form whereas qualitative data were gathered on task instructions and amount of metapragmatic information related to textbook tasks.

1.4.1 Aims and purpose

The purpose of the analysis is to reveal strengths and weaknesses in task design as well as how many opportunities are given for practicing different aspects of pragmatic competences. Such findings could be of interest to textbook designers as there is no similar study carried out on this set of materials. Personal reasons for carrying out such an analysis have been to develop my understanding of how pragmatic competences can be facilitated in oral textbook tasks. The analysis might also benefit both future and experienced teachers in uncovering what aspects of pragmatic competences are facilitated in oral textbook tasks.

⁶ Sales statistics are based on the last three to five years.

To contribute in the process of developing learners' pragmatic competences, teachers need language awareness in addition to general awareness on the components of communicative competences. Such knowledge is especially important in relation to pragmatic competences as it contains difficult terms and information. If the concept of pragmatics is neglected in teacher education, many teachers might not go into literature on their own, to broaden their understanding of pragmatics. For this reason, I hope that this thesis will make pragmatic competences graspable for teachers, and serve as a guide to finding relevant tasks and metapragmatic information.

Hopefully, the study will reveal what aspects of pragmatics students have potentially practiced while working with the oral textbook tasks in question. Although, this is not a comparative analysis, the study will present differences and tendencies across the books. The qualitative analysis will also include a discussion of explicit versus implicit instruction on pragmatics in relation to tasks, and how research on the topic is reflected in the textbook material. How to develop pragmatic competences is not a direct part of my research question, but elements related to the process will be discussed. Examples collected from the textbook material will illustrate the main findings.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of five chapters. The chapter following the introductory chapter will present the theoretical framework of the thesis. Chapter three includes a presentation of materials and methods applied in the study. The next chapter, on results and discussion, presents key findings and discusses them in light of the theoretical framework and research question. Finally, chapter five sums up the main findings, discusses implications and offers suggestions for further research.

2 BACKGROUND

This chapter aims to create a theoretical framework for the analysis carried out in terms of providing the reader with theoretical background on pragmatics and pragmatic competences. First, pragmatics will be discussed in a historical perspective. Next an attempt will be made to explain and define the term. Then a presentation of pragmatic competences will follow with reference to the CEFR (2001). The importance of learners developing pragmatic competences raised by the Council of Europe, leads to a discussion on pragmatic transfer, meta-talk, oral use of language, and contextualization of textbook tasks. The notion of tasks will also be discussed, followed by an examination of how pragmatic competences are reflected in LK06 (2013).

2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics first gained its grounds in linguistics before making its way into language pedagogy. This interest in pragmatics started as researchers within the field of linguistics eventually grew curious with the rules governing grammar in use (Kramsch, 1981). Views of language are central both in linguistics and in language pedagogy. Hence, this chapter takes changing views of language through history as its point of departure.

2.1.1 Historical background

Language teaching in the 19th century was for a long time influenced by society's interest with science. As a result, language was considered a phenomenon of nature science, and was to be studied and handled accordingly (Mey, 2011). Eventually there was a change in focus, from considering logical aspects of language to the actual use of it. The world was changing, and the approaches to language teaching with it. As the world grew more global, a need for communicative competent language users arose. Language teaching started to move towards an understanding of language as meaning in use, with a growing interest in how meaning is created by the language user. Earlier, meaning was thought to be held in words themselves, whereas the modern understanding is that interlocutors themselves assign meaning to words (Johnstone, 2008). Among others, the philosopher Austin, was central in the change (Mey, 2011).

He considered language a medium for action in the sense that language is assigned meaning and can do something to the world.

Due to the focus on communicative competence, communicative language teaching (hereafter referred to as CLT) arose in the 1970s. This approach to teaching has influenced language teaching for a long time. Today, “the communicative label” is one which many teachers in European countries identify with (Newby, 2006, p. 18). The term communicative competence was coined by Hymes, who saw the need for a term which took sociolinguistic and sociocultural factors into account. Widely cited for their framework are Canale and Swain (1980), who specified three elements of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Pragmatics is not listed as one of these components, but is included under sociolinguistic competence. In 1983, Canale expanded communicative competence to include discourse competence. Van Ek followed in 1986 and added sociocultural and social competences. The CEFR (2001) presented by the Council of Europe in 2001, did however include pragmatics as one out of three parallel components making up communicative competence. The latter document will serve an important role in this thesis, and will therefore be discussed in greater detail in section 2.2.

2.1.2 Defining pragmatics

As stated by Levinson (1983), a definition of pragmatics is “by no means easy to provide” (p. 5). Even so, Levinson (1983) aims at presenting a general definition and says that pragmatics is “the study of language usage” (p. 5). Pragmatics contain several aspects of language. Actually, it makes “almost any aspect of language, context, interaction, setting, or consequence... relevant for measurement” (Bardovi-Harling, 2013, p. 77). Due to the vagueness of Levinson’s definition, I find Crystal’s (2008) definition more adequate:

The study of LANGUAGE from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the CONSTRAINTS they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in an act of communication. (p. 379)

In this sense, pragmatics could be considered a social science as it is dependent on context and participants. It can be understood as “the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context” (Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 2). The focus on language users and their choices is central in most definitions presented within the field of pragmatics. Pragmatics is therefore about making appropriate linguistic choices (e.g. choosing appropriate functional language) dependent on the intended purpose of the utterance. Regarding meaning, Leech (1983) defines pragmatics as “the study of how utterances have meaning in situations” (p. x). This aspect is also stressed by Littlewood (1981) who refers to the social meaning of language, in addition to its functional meaning, in the way that the speaker must consider both the knowledge of the listener and the social situation in which the communication takes place. Focusing both on the social and functional aspect, Simensen (2007) considers pragmatics as: “the study of language in its social, situational, and functional context” (p. 67). It is not words alone that define the outcome of the utterance, but the situation (context and participants) in which the words are uttered.

Pragmatic rules operate differently according to cultures and language communities as social norms and expectations differ. Vallenga (2004) points to the need for a certain level of cultural awareness to be able to make appropriate choices when communicating in a target language. Understanding pragmatics as “how-to-say-what-to-whom-when” (Bardovi-Harling, 2013, p. 68), one must remember that language is context dependent, and therefore also culture dependent. What is the appropriate linguistic form in one culture might differ across other cultures. How language is context dependent can be visualized as an image of gift wrapping. The same content can be wrapped in different types of paper, much like how meaning can take different forms in language. Successful communication is relative to social context. Having dinner with good friends, the request for someone to pass the salt might be realized through a simple word (*salt*) or maybe a hand gesture. In contrast, to do so when dining with your future parents-in-law for the first time, this might not suit the more formal setting. Here: *Could I please have the salt?* or *Would you be so kind and pass me the salt?* might be more appropriate.

2.2 Pragmatic Competences

In the present study, pragmatic competences will be interpreted as the ability to take context and setting into consideration when choosing language to express a meaning. In addition, it is about understanding how and when it is appropriate to interact in a conversation. It is about understanding discourse roles, and meeting expectations present in conversation. In addition, it is about being able to formulate and organize discourse in a meaningful manner to be understood. This section will present research on pragmatic competences, with an emphasis on the CEFR's (2001) presentation of pragmatic competences.

Since 1971, the contributors to the CEFR (2001) have worked to provide teachers, curriculum designers, and learners (among others) with a common basis for “the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc.” (CEFR, 2001, p. 1). The aim of the framework is to describe what language skills and knowledge a language user should master to communicate effectively. Communicative competences are defined as skills which “empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means” (CEFR, 2001, p. 9). Pragmatic competences are listed as one out of three components that make up this type of competences, together with linguistic and sociolinguistic competences.

According to the framework, pragmatic competences:

are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources (production of language functions, speech acts), drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges. It also concerns the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the identification of text types and forms, irony and parody. For this component even more than the linguistic component, it is hardly necessary to stress the major impact of interactions and cultural environments in which such abilities are constructed. (CEFR, 2001, p. 13)

The latter point about considering the communication situation in order to produce context sensitive utterances, sticks out in the definitions of pragmatic competences. A pragmatically competent person should be able to adjust his or her vocabulary, body language and discourse features according to style, language and participants in the

conversation. Such factors should be raised for consideration, to facilitate successful communication. According to Bialystok (referred to in Rueda, 2006), pragmatic competences include speakers' ability to use language for different purposes in addition to understand the rules and functions of language to interpret what is communicated. In other words, it is about being able to look beyond the grammar of the linguistic utterance and catch the meaning of what is said.

The CEFR (2001) states that pragmatic competences are concerned with the user/learner's knowledge of the principles according to which messages are:

- a) "organised, structured and arranged ('discourse competence');
 - b) used to perform communicative functions (functional competence');
 - c) sequenced according to interactional and transactional schemata ('design competence')
- (p. 123).

Next, I want to describe the three aspects of pragmatic competences presented in the CEFR (2001). This presentation will also be influenced by findings from other relevant researchers.

2.2.1 Discourse competence

Discourse competence is defined as "the ability of a user/learner to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce coherent stretches of language. It includes knowledge of and ability to control the ordering of sentences..." (CEFR, 2001, p. 123). The CEFR (2001) presents illustrative scales on four central aspects of discourse competence which are reviewed below (pp. 124–125).

1. **Flexibility to circumstances:** The learner can show flexibility in the way that linguistic forms are appropriated to suit the situation (circumstances, interlocutors etc.). This entails understanding the style of the conversation and adjusting to the level of formality.
2. **Turn-taking:** The learner is able to select appropriate language to gain and hold the floor in a conversation.

3. **Thematic development:** The learner can develop a description/narrative and present it with a logical structure including points and arguments to back it up, before summarizing in a suitable conclusion.
4. **Coherence and cohesion:** The learner presents his or her language in a well-structured manner with the overall impression of flow in the language. The relationship between ideas is evident, with the mastering of organizational patterns and different types of cohesion.

The CEFR (2001) states that the components and skills listed above become more important as learners reach higher levels of proficiency. It is natural for learners to begin focusing on shorter stretches of language before handling them in a more holistic manner. In short, discourse competence, is about being able to handle language at a higher level than the sentence, and take the linguistic context of the utterance into consideration. Instead of focusing on the grammar and the word itself, discourse competence concentrates on larger chunks of language and how they relate in different communication situations. Next, I will briefly explain the different aspects listed above.

Flexibility to circumstances is about being able to take context of language use into consideration when communicating. Contextual factors include interlocutors, style of conversation, level of formality, intended meaning, etc. One example is that doctors should not use medical discourse when presenting a prognosis to a patient. If the recipient of this message does not have a certain level of medical knowledge, the utterance could misfire. The term “misfire” was used by Austin (referred to in Mey, 2011), to categorize utterances that do not reach their goal. A doctor using medical discourse when communicating with a patient has therefore failed to adapt the language adequately to the communication situation. The same goes for language learners; they need to be provided with rich context information on which to base their linguistic choices. Learners need a repertoire of language functions suitable for different contexts, and knowledge about what language functions are appropriate to express certain meanings. They also need knowledge about social contextual factors and how they should affect choice of language. This way they can express their intended meanings successfully and eliminate ambiguity.

Turn-taking is another important aspect of discourse competence. The process of showing that one wants to engage in conversation or wants to end a turn, can be expressed by using different signals. The process itself can take several shapes, but according to Simensen (2007), turn-taking is mostly indicated by phonological, syntactic, and semantic signals. Speakers can use such signals to indicate a wish to enter or interrupt a conversation, hold the floor while thinking etc. When it is appropriate to engage in a conversation can be indicated by a break or pause in the interlocutor's flow of language. At such a point, the interlocutor might find it appropriate, and possibly as an invitation to enter the conversation. On the other hand, eager speakers might not want to wait until the speaker is done, and can therefore use signals to engage earlier in communication. If eager to engage, the speaker could use signals such as *Well... But...* or *I see*, to express their wish to speak. To avoid such interruptions, however, signals such as *Umm...*, or *I mean*, could be used to hold the floor.

When it comes to the aspect of thematic development, I will present the CEFR's (2001) illustrative scales on the different levels of thematic development (the lowest and the highest). The illustrative scales range from being able to "tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points" to "give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion" (CEFR, 2001, p. 125).

Coherence and cohesion is about being able to present language in a well-structured manner to suit the meaning of what is communicated. In discourse, there is a certain relationship between sentences and utterances that is made overt by interpretation carried out by the hearer (Simensen, 2007). This relationship can be referred to as coherence. The aspect of coherence and cohesion is also about being able to present language in a fluent manner by using organizational patterns (e.g. presenting elements in a chronological order, comparing and contrasting, presenting advantages and disadvantages), and cohesive devices. Cohesion can be understood as linguistic devices used to connect different parts of a text⁷ (Simensen, 2007). Cohesion can also be understood as "internal cues as to how the parts of a text are linked together" (Johnstone, 2008, p. 118). The cues serve as connectors making sure that things connect

⁷ The concept of *text* is here referred to in the elaborate meaning.

both within and between sentences/utterances. Some examples of the different types of cohesion are: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and collocation (Simensen, 2007). In upper secondary school, linking words are often referred to, and will be the aspect of focus in this thesis. These are common examples of cohesion. Some examples are: *next, so, therefore, but, however, and, in other words* etc.

Finally, the cooperative principle of Grice (1975) is also listed in the CEFR (2001) as an important aspect of discourse competence. When participating in interaction, there are four principles that Grice considers crucial for successful communication: quantity: “give the right amount of information”, quality: “try to make your contribution one that is true,” relation: “be relevant”, and manner: “be perspicuous” (Leech, 1983, p. 8, adapted from Grice, 1975, pp. 45–46). As previously stated, learners could benefit from repertoire of language functions to successfully take part in discourse. Therefore, an explanation of functional competences follows.

2.2.2 Functional competence

Functional competence is concerned with “communication for particular functional purposes” (CEFR, 2001, p. 125). It contains a division of micro and macrofunctions, in addition to the component of interaction schemata. Starting with micro and macrofunctions, the length of the utterances is the phenomenon that distinguishes the two. Microfunctions include categories for the use of single (normally short) utterances, whereas macrofunctions deal with a sequence of sentences. When carrying out a conversation one needs to know what language functions to use, in addition to understand what turn the conversation might take, based on what happens in conversation. Interaction schemata are about being aware of when and how to use patterns of verbal exchange in social interaction, as well as recognizing them.

When it comes to microfunctions, the CEFR (2001) presents the six most common functions. The list presented below is created with reference to CEFR (2001, p. 126), and *Threshold Level* (1991, pp. 22–47), for the purpose of providing the reader with examples of the different categories. The functions are categorized accordingly:

1. **imparting and seeking factual information:** identifying, reporting, correcting, asking, answering
2. **expressing and finding out attitudes:** factual (agreement/disagreement), knowledge (knowledge/ignorance, remembering, forgetting, probability, certainty), modality (obligations, necessity, ability, permission), volition (wants, desires, intentions, preference), emotions (pleasure/displeasure, likes/dislikes, satisfaction, interest, surprise, hope, disappointment, fear, worry, gratitude), moral (apologies, approval, regret, sympathy)
3. **suasion:** suggestion a course of action, requesting, warning, advising, encouragement, requesting assistance, inviting, making offers
4. **socializing:** attracting attention, addressing friend/acquaintance/stranger, greetings, introductions, toasting, leave taking
5. **structuring discourse:** opening, hesitating, turn taking, correcting oneself, enumerating, emphasizing, closing, summarizing, interrupting
6. **communication repair:** signaling non-understanding, asking or repetition of sentence/word, asking for confirmation or understanding, appealing for assistance, paraphrasing

The microfunctions are presented in detail with concrete linguistic examples in the *Threshold Level* (1991). They are expected to meet the most likely and urgent needs of the learners. Macrofunctions, however, are “categories for the functional use of spoken discourse or written text consisting of a (sometimes extended) sequence of sentences” (CEFR, 2001, p. 126). It is about being able to spot processes in conversation, preparing oneself for what comes next, and knowing what is expected of a participant in conversation. Some examples relevant for the thesis are persuasion, argumentation, instruction, description, summarization and narration.

The last component of functional competence is interaction schemata. The CEFR (2001) lists knowledge about patterns of social interaction as a necessary part of functional competence. Learners should be able to recognize such patterns in certain contexts and be able to interact in them. I have mainly relied on the *Threshold Level* (1991) for this section, as I find it illustrative. Some examples of communicative events

that often follow certain combinations of language functions are: making purchases⁸, ordering food and drinks, meeting people, asking for information, asking and showing the way, having a discussion etc. (*Threshold Level*, 1991). Such communicative situations are complex and might therefore involve several micro or/and macrofunctions. Learners are expected to be able to play a part in verbal exchange patterns. The order in which the steps are performed is not fixed, even though most of the schemata mentioned by the *Threshold Level* (1991) have proved to be similar in most European societies. Such schemata are normally embedded in longer transactions and interactions.

2.3 Developing Pragmatic Competences

As pointed out in the introduction, how to develop pragmatic competences is not a main part of my research question. I have not tested how such knowledge develops through observing learners, but performed a textual analysis of tasks. Such considerations are, however, important for textbooks designers when creating tasks. For this reason, I have included this section for the benefit of the discussion.

How do learners of the English language gain such competences? Pragmatic competences are without doubt important skills to acquire when learning a foreign language, as it makes up a big part of communicative competences. As pragmatic competences have proved crucial, it has lead researchers to pose certain questions: can pragmatics be taught? Are there grounds for instruction in pragmatics, and if so, how should it be done? The CEFR (2001) is no exception, and asks their readers to consider whether the development of pragmatic competences should be “assumed to be transferable from education and general experience in the mother tongue (L1)”⁹, or facilitated in teaching (p. 154). Ways of facilitation are suggested:

- a) by progressively increasing the complexity of discourse structure and the functional range of the texts presented to the learner?
- b) by requiring the learner to produce texts of increasing complexity by translating texts of increasing complexity from L1 to L2?

⁸ See CEFR (2001, pp. 127–128), for elaboration on “General schemata for purchase of goods or services”.

⁹ L1 is an abbreviation for first language.

- c) by setting tasks that require a wider functional range and adherence to verbal exchange patterns?
- d) by awareness-raising (analysis, explanation, terminology, etc.) in addition to practical activities?
- e) by explicit teaching and exercising of functions, verbal exchange patterns and discourse structure? (CEFR, 2001, p. 154)

How textbook designers consider this question will be reflected in textbooks. The same goes for teachers as to how they plan their teaching. For this reason, the question of facilitation or not, will be discussed throughout the thesis. In general, there does, however, seem to be a general agreement on the fact that pragmatic competences need to be facilitated to some extent. The next section will therefore present related theory to the topic. This entails a discussion of different levels of pragmatic transfer, metacognition, use of oral language, social interaction activities and classroom activities.

2.3.1 General aspects

Regarding the question raised in the CEFR (2001), it can be argued that some pragmatic competences are transferable from learners' L1, but that such transfer is limited as languages most often have different rules of language use. This takes us to the discussion of transferrable pragmatics. Kasper (quoted in Bardovi-Harling, 2001), defines pragmatic transfer as the "use of L1 pragmatic knowledge to understand or carry out linguistic action in the L2" (p. 29). When learning a language, it is natural to spring on pragmatic knowledge about one's L1, when engaging in the L2. If the rules of the languages are similar, the transfer is referred to as positive. If not similar, and the meaning does not come across that easily, the transfer is referred to as negative. In other words, the label of the transfer depends on how it relates to the target language.

Negative transfer is discussed to a greater extent in literature as such transfer is easier to spot. In such transfer, there is a bad relationship between the pragmatic feature of the L1 and L2. A relevant example is given by Kasper (2010) who points to Danes transferring their L1 strategy to express requests (modal verb + interrogative + negation) to English. The syntactic request strategy is identical to how Norwegians could express requests,

although in English it might not work so well. One example of such a request is: *can't you walk the dog?* Whereas a Norwegian would most likely understand this as a request for someone to walk the dog, a native speaker of English might consider it a question of ability. Such strategies of act realization are therefore an example of a negative transfer. Another example is how *Jeg mener*, translates into *I think* or *I believe*, and not *I mean*. The direct translation (*I mean*) could instead of expressing an attitude, serve as an act of clarification, such as *What I mean to say is....* Negative transfer experiences could result in funny stories about misunderstandings, but also unfortunate communication breakdowns leaving the language user feeling helpless or being perceived as rude.

Some pragmatic knowledge is universal, which means that pragmatic features work similarly in different languages. It comes for free in the sense that it does not have to be learnt. In other words, understanding is created through similar ways of communicating. An example of universal pragmatics is turn-taking and how to contribute in conversations (see section 2.2.1 on the cooperative principle), as it seems to be performed in similar ways across different cultures. Universal pragmatics do, however, require some experience with how language works, and might therefore come easier for older people. Despite universal pragmatics, students might encounter other obstacles which make it hard to put their pragmatic knowledge into use. Such obstacles can be linguistic, contextual or cultural. It could also be a matter of unawareness.

Some aspects of pragmatic competences might not transfer by itself from L1 to L2, but can be dealt with in educational settings. Referring to the question in the CEFR (2001), on whether pragmatic competences develop naturally or if they should be facilitated in education, I would argue for them to be facilitated. It is empirically proven in educational psychology that learners do not necessarily use what they know about strategies and linguistics, when handling another language (Kasper, 1997; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Rueda, 2006). When interacting in a new language, learners sometimes forget to transfer available knowledge and strategies, even though they would use these in their L1. Rose and Kasper (2001) point to the examples of underusing politeness markings and context information. In relation to the latter, Kasper (1997) also points to the dismissal of context-sensitivity (social distance and social power) when interacting in the L2. If such a consideration is left out in a communication situation with a native

speaker, it can have negative consequences as the native speaker might not consider the background of the foreigner when interpreting what is said. Instead it might leave the foreigner feeling embarrassed and misunderstood. To avoid such feelings among students, I believe there are grounds for including instruction in L2 pragmatics.

2.3.2 Facilitation of L2 pragmatics

Findings indicate positive effects of pedagogical intervention in developing pragmatic competences in education. Underlining the possibility of pragmatic competences being stimulated and developed in the classroom, Rueda (2006) argues that students will benefit from participating in carefully planned activities engaging them in situations and challenges they might encounter when using their L2 outside the classroom. This point was also stressed in the introductory chapter with Kasper's (1997) claim that pragmatic competences cannot simply be taught. Instead students must engage in the processes to acquire the competences. The same point is stressed by Richards (2006) in the way that "language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those involving language analysis and reflection" (p. 22).

Rose and Kasper (2001) opt for creating activities to raise students' awareness and "encourage them to use their universal or transferrable L1 pragmatic knowledge in L2 contexts" (p. 7). Such awareness raising activities are also suggested in the CEFR (2001, see section 2.3). The goal of such activities is to make learners realize how things might work correspondingly in L1 and L2. A possible way to reach such awareness is through meta-talk. In the present study, *meta-talk*, will be interpreted as an activity where students are required to consider the reasoning behind their actions and choices as regards communication. By asking students to consider why language is used in a certain manner and what effect it has, one is activating students' metacognition. This way they become aware of their personal reasoning behind actions and the perceived effect certain choices have.

To define metacognition, Haukås (2014) presents the first definition of the term to be made: "one's knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them" (p. 2). By developing students' metacognition, they could

become aware of their pragmatic knowledge and manage to transfer knowledge from the L1. They might also become aware of negative transfers. Such skills can develop autonomous learners as they become aware of their language usage. Considering transferable pragmatics, consciousness raising activities can be beneficial in the way that students become more aware when making pragmatic choices. Such insight can therefore help students avoid unproductive language habits.

When a pragmatic feature is explained or discussed, one would say that it is a matter of explicit information being handled. Such instruction, compared to implicit instruction, has been a topic of discussion within the field of language teaching for a long time. Kasper (1997) points to findings indicating that skills are developed no matter which methods are chosen, but that students who are given explicit instruction do better in terms of pragmatics (discussion will follow in section 2.3.4). Metapragmatic instruction includes the presentation of metapragmatic information, which is defined as “when, where, and to whom it is appropriate to perform a particular speech act and what expression would or would not be appropriate in a particular context of culture and context of situation” (Nguyen, 2011, p. 22). The importance of such instruction is raised by Kasper (2001) as she refers to numerous studies comparing metapragmatic instruction (input on pragmatic features) versus “practice-only” conditions (p. 53). Findings indicate that explicit focus on pragmatic features, getting them explained and having to discuss them, is beneficial for language learners. The same point is also stressed by Vallenga (2004) who says that: “implications suggest that textbook developers could include ... sufficient metapragmatic explanations to facilitate acquisition of pragmatic competence” (unpaginated). She considers such competences necessary for students to take cultural norms into consideration to make appropriate language choices.

Newell, Beach, Smith, VanDerHeide, Kuhn and Andriessen (2011) present a review of research, focusing on teaching and learning argumentative reading and writing. They present research findings which also hold interest for the present study. Some of the studies reviewed show that oral use of the language could improve students’ arguments, and have transfer value to other competences, such as writing skills. In relation to metacognition, research findings show that learners benefit from “being able to

metacognitively identify and reflect on their use of argumentative strategies to determine the effectiveness of those strategies” (Newell et al., 2011, p. 284). Another reviewed study, showed that if students were provided with explicit instruction on for example audience in a communication situation, they were more likely to create “counterarguments and direct references to audiences” (Newell et al, 2011, p. 281). Such findings support the claims made in the previous paragraph about the positive effects of developing students’ metacognition and including explicit metapragmatic instruction in education. The findings are also interesting in the sense that they document the importance of considering audience as to acting pragmatically appropriate (see section 3.2.4 for a broader discussion of audience considerations).

2.3.3 Oral use of language

Studies show that teachers dominate classroom talk, and that such a trend is unfortunate for students’ personal language development (Fisher, 2008). Research findings also demonstrate a connection between higher achieving students and student talk (Fisher, 2008). Even though many European teachers identify with the label of CLT, Newby’s (2006) findings indicate that classroom practice diverges from what might be expected from teachers identifying with such sets of beliefs and principles. One such example is how “group work activities to practice oral language were by no means as common as might be expected” (Newby, 2006, p. 18). The importance of letting students use their language is raised by Vygotsky (quoted in John-Steiner, 2007), who considers the process between thought and language as a process of several steps, but initially as a process dependent on each other:

The complex movement from the first vague emergence of the thought to its completion in a verbal formulation...Thought is not expressed but completed in the word... Any thought has movement. It unfolds... This flow of thought is realized as an internal movement through several planes. As a transition from thought to word and from word to thought. (p. 136)

Based on the understanding of talk serving as a representation of thought, Fisher (2008) suggests that “classrooms should be filled with talk, given that we want them filled with thinking” (p. 5). Language is a major factor in separating humans from animals, and

being able to express one's beliefs and ideas are considered important for democratic citizens. The aspect of *Bildung*, which can be considered a lifelong process where the individual develops towards a broader understanding of the world, is a central part of the Norwegian education system. Hoff (2014) points to *Bildung* being associated with concerns such as "the cultivation of human moral virtues and personal identity, critical thinking and democratic commitment" (p. 509). ELT can influence this process through introducing students to foreign "perspectives, interpretations and world views" (Hoff, 2014, p. 509). Considering *Bildung* in education could therefore be beneficial as to developing democratic individuals, who are able to show respect and ability to interact with other cultures and individuals. Such competences could enable students to take part in dialogic encounters with an open mind to things foreign to their own language, ways of thinking and attitudes.

Textbook tasks often encourage students to reflect on topics, with the purpose of expanding their understanding of the topic, or/and becoming aware of their opinion on the matter. In relation to Vygotsky's idea of thought and language being interwoven, language is crucial for the realization of thoughts. According to Bardovi-Harling (2001), "the role of instruction may be to help the learner encode her own values (which again may be culturally determined) into a clear, unambiguous message" (p. 31). The importance of letting students practice using language, to get familiar with the foreign language and making it their own, is also present in Bakhtin's reflections (quoted in John-Steiner, 2007):

The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that a speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word and make it one's own. (p. 147)

It is therefore not sufficient that students are provided with language input. They also need to participate using language to make it their own. Learning a foreign language,

students might perceive the language as something owned by the foreigners, and might therefore experience tongue-locks or embarrassment when interacting in L2. Even though the classroom may be perceived as an artificial situation for social interaction, Kasper (1997) argues that “classroom discourse is just as authentic as any other kind of discourse” (unpaginated). The value of classroom talk should therefore be reflected in how students are provided with opportunities for oral interaction.

Collaborative reasoning in groups, where students discuss and develop arguments together, has proved to have positive effects (Newell et al., 2011). Skills and ways of thinking during oral discussion, can transfer from oral to for example written skills. According to Newell et al. (2011) collaborative reasoning in groups can make students rethink their argumentative claims as they are challenged on them and have to challenge other learners on their claims. This indicates that oral language can be used to develop critical thinking and benefit development of students’ pragmatic knowledge.

2.3.4 Classroom activities promoting pragmatic competences

In his book, *Communicative Language Teaching Today*, Richards (2006) points to the value of effective classroom-learning tasks giving students opportunities to “negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful interpersonal exchange” (p. 22). The importance of student talk is also underlined by Szecsy (2008), who claims that: “the primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication” (p. 3). For students to understand how discourse works, they should be provided with illustrative models of language in use, and participate in interaction (Cunningsworth, 1987). Newell et al. (2011) also point to reforms which have often been based on “efforts to engage students in debates that echo the controversies and discussions in their daily lives, popular culture, the workplace, professions, and academic disciplines” (273). Active student participation in the classroom is therefore central in language teaching.

Letting students participate in discourse has, however, not always been a priority in language teaching. Cunningsworth (1987) points to periods of grammar translations and audiolingual methods where conversational skills to fit the process of naturally-occurring conversations were neglected as a part of foreign language teaching.

Pragmatic competences include being able to handle several communicative situations, and recognize certain patterns of repetition in social interaction situations. For this reason, students should be provided with opportunities for interaction in purposeful communication situations. This way, students get to experience how language works and how interlocutors react to their utterances. Such experiences encourage learners to put language knowledge into use, and might therefore facilitate the process of developing pragmatic competences.

The same point is stressed in a study by Jadallah and colleagues (quoted in Newell et al., 2011) as to how:

collaborative reasoning appears to provide a social context in which children are able to repeatedly and spontaneously of [*sic*] use tools for thinking and appropriate new tools from one another and from their teachers. As children improve in argumentation, they reach a level of independence and consciousness in using these tools. (p. 280)

Even though this study is about developing argumentative skills, the value of the study is transferrable to pragmatic development in how group talk creates context, allows for learners to learn from each other, and develops thinking. Skills, or *tools*, acquired or learnt through discussion, have the potentials to be incorporated into learners' personal language repertoire and competences.

How to go about such activities in the English language learning classroom is a challenging issue. In a critical-pragmatic classroom, learners are expected to present a full range of communicative forms, however, not all at the same time (Young, 1997). They should be guided through scaffolding and with opportunities for the different forms to be developed and practiced. Concerning activities, Littlewood (1981) considers both pre-communicative and communicative language activities as important parts of developing communicative ability. He claims that in order to become communicatively competent, one has to start focusing on the smaller parts (the connection between language forms and meaning) to develop a learner's repertoire and independence. Pre-communicative tasks "aim to equip the learner with some of the skills required for communication" (Littlewood, 1981, p. 8). This way, the learning is better prepared for

real situations to communicate meanings. By relating forms to meanings, students are able to bridge the gap between linguistic and communicative competence. Eventually, students could therefore be introduced to more complex situations, and be expected to handle them.¹⁰

The same point is stressed by Young (1997) who claims that language functions should initially be practiced within limited spheres, before eventually expanding the amount of competences being dealt with in a communication situation. Another important aspect is presented by Cunningsworth (1987) who argues that grammatical awareness of language is not enough for students to successfully participate in conversations. He questions the role of learning isolated sentences of speech acts, as they are a part of the bigger picture.

2.3.4.1 Small group talk

One way of engaging students in discourse is through small group talk. Such talk allows for insight in the organization and management of conversation, and contextualizes social interaction situations. With reference to the cooperative principle (see section 2.2.1), group talk creates opportunities for experiencing the collaborative art of a conversation. This point is also stressed by Cunningsworth (1987) who says: “a conversation is interactional and the participants work together in its development, mutually defining and evaluating each contribution; it is essentially a collaborative process and must be seen as such for teaching purposes” (pp. 45–46). Such talk allows for the use of several functional competences in addition to aspects of discourse competence.

The importance of engaging students in such activities is also raised in LK06 (2013), which states how learners should understand and be able to use the English language by “listening, speaking, conversing...” (Ministry of Education and Research, p. 3). Social communication allows for such skills to be practiced in the two-sided process of conversations (listening/interpreting and speaking). Both manners are important skills when participating in conversation and small group talk is assumed to be the most appropriate way to develop such skills (Westgate, 1997). The number of group

¹⁰ See section 2.4 for more information of Littlewood’s discussion of task.

participants seems to vary; Westgate (1997) opts for three members, whereas Green, Christopher and Lam (2002), argue that four is a better number of group participants, considering the flow of the conversation.

2.3.4.2 Considerations for textbook authors

To foster the development of pragmatic competences, it is not enough for learners to simply engage in communication situations. Both teachers and textbook authors have to consider how they present and scaffold students in communication situations. In order for small group talk to work successfully, Westgate (1997) and Cunningsworth (1987) point to the importance of students acquiring the skills necessary for carrying out group talk, and that they are familiar with group processes and the expectations involved. The form (group talk) should also suit the learning purpose well, and not be used to maximize the time spent on oral use of the language.

Cunningsworth (1987) points to the relative absence of teaching material to develop discourse competence which could result in teachers relying on “an assumption that conversational skills are directly transferable from L1” and “that learners will in some way ‘pick it up’ through the exposure to the language in contexts of use” (p. 46). A similar trend is reported by Shumin (2002) who says that language educators believe that as long as learners are provided with enough speech promoting activities, they will become better speakers. This is unfortunate, as negative transfers do occur when engaging in a foreign language if not pragmatically competent. Another important aspect is expressed by Vallenga (2004) who points to the missing element of explicit discussion of conversational norms in textbooks, whereas Crawford (2002) reports how some textbooks fail to contextualize language tasks.

For this reason, there are several elements that textbook designers should have in mind when designing oral textbook tasks. When it comes to teaching conversational skills, Cunningsworth (1987) points to the aspects of style, interpretation and inference to be dealt with. Starting with style, he states that: “the most important variables in the speech situation are the physical context (setting), the social roles of the participants *in that context* and the goals of the participants” (p. 47). Students should be provided with information rich enough to understand the context of the conversation. Such

information could allow for an understanding of what stylistic choice and level of formality is appropriate for different language situations. In order to engage in effective communication, interlocutors must consider context to successfully present meaning. As an example of a suitable activity, Cunningsworth (1987) suggests letting learners experience how to refuse a request without causing offence. This way, students must consider the goal of refusing a request. The learners must also consider the social roles of the interlocutors to avoid offending them, when choosing language.

In relation to social roles, it can be argued that being able to evaluate them and choose appropriate language thereafter can define one's social skills. If one can choose a suitable conversation opener, one has successfully entered the social sphere of the conversation. Shumin (2002) says: "the ability to get along with people in society may correlate somewhat with how well a person can engage in brief, casual conversation with others or in an exchange of pleasantries" (p. 208). Newell et al. (2011) also argue for the importance of challenging students to participate in small group talk to develop social interaction skills. Textbook designers should consider letting students engage in interaction on issues of daily life, as this type of interaction is an important aspect of social life. Newell et al. (2011) state that "in both informal settings such as sports bars and more formal academic settings, understanding the appropriate social practices for engaging in an argument is important, because those who do not follow the appropriate practice may be viewed as outsiders and become marginalized" (p. 288). Such skills are therefore crucial for learners' success in using English and participating in social spheres.

Contextual information is crucial when developing pragmatic competences as these are factors to which language is to be adjusted. If students, however, are aided with information necessary for the interaction activity, it allows for what Littlewood (1981) defines as social interaction activities where:

the learner is encouraged to take account of the social context in which communication takes place. He is required to go beyond what is necessary for simply 'getting meanings across', in order to develop greater social acceptability in the language he uses. In the first instance, this may simply mean greater

grammatical accuracy; later, it may also involve producing speech which is socially appropriate to specific situations and relationships. (p. 86)

Such activities encourage learners to activate their pre-communicative skills and use them in conversation. Group talk can be considered social interaction tasks if provided with enough information. Littlewood (1981) describes the efficient communicator of a foreign language not always being the one who is best at manipulating language structures, but the one who successfully takes the entire situation into consideration. This person considers shared information and context before deciding how to communicate his or her message effectively. This relates to how Leech (1983) understands pragmatics to be an interpersonal rhetoric as he talks about “a goal-oriented speech situation, in which s(peaker) uses language in order to produce a particular effect in the mind of h(earer)” (p. 15)¹¹. In other words, being a social actor one must consider the relationship to the hearer, to reach the goal of the utterance. The importance of considering the audience of the utterance is also raised by Kramersch (1981). She refers to a study carried out by Sajavaara, on differences in fluency between non-native and native speakers of English. He found that native speakers were perceived as more fluent even though they had more grammatical mistakes compared to the non-native speakers. Kramersch (1981) quotes Sajavaara to stress that: “it is not the good language competence that is an indicator of fluency, but the perception of the hearer, what sort of attitudes various elements in a speaker’s performance trigger in the hearer” (p. 21).

In addition to focusing on style, when teaching conversational skills, Cunningsworth (1987) also points to interpretation and inference, which is about understanding norms of conventions. He raises the question of “how explicit the contributions to a conversation should be, and to what extent the participants rely on inference to interpret what they hear” (p. 48). In answer to his own question he says that “course books should be able to produce conversational materials that embody relatively inexplicit exchanges which call for inference and interpretation” (p. 49). In relation to interaction schemata presented in the CEFR (2001), student knowledge about schemata associated with certain communication situations support students’ prediction skills.

¹¹ The quote does not originally include the parentheses, but these are included as additional information to the reader.

Such skills enable students to interpret what lays ahead in a conversation and makes them better prepared. Such knowledge also secures a natural flow in conversations. Under the aspects of organization of conversation, Cunningsworth (1987) includes the discussion of turn taking, and how it “illustrates the collaborative nature of conversations” and the norms in speech communities (p. 49). In other words, learners should be able to follow the cooperative principle. Teaching materials should therefore provide learners with activities to practice turn-taking, in addition to interruption techniques.

2.3.4.3 Aims of group talk

What is a successful small group task, and how does the task make sure not to undermine creative thinking and unpredictable discussions? Does such talk always have to end with consensus? How should tasks be formulated to engage student talk? An unfortunate trend is reported by Westgate (1997) as he points to observations of how “some critical observers of small group talk in practice, ...found pupils doing little more than sitting in groups and using talk for lower level ‘procedural’ transactions, rather than learning to manage interaction or establish dictionary” (p. 189). How learners perceive the teaching environment in terms of what is expected of them depends on the signals sent by teachers and how textbook tasks are formulated.

To avoid what Westgate (1997) considers students’ and teachers’ unfortunate understanding of talk as aiming to reach a consensus similar to the one intended by the teacher, the purpose of talk needs to be made clear to the learner. The expected purpose of small group talk is argued by Westgate (1997) to be “more an engagement in a process, valuable for its own sake, than a consensual ‘right answer’, seen as product. Aims and ‘ground rules’ will need to be explicit, and the latter may benefit from prior teaching” (p. 191). Such learner awareness on the purpose of classroom talk might prevent students from growing passive in fright of saying the wrong thing. Conversations are “relatively unpredictable and certainly is not a pre-determined series of perfectly-formed sentences” (Cunningsworth, 1987, p. 51). Students should be aware of the unpredictable aspect of conversations, that making mistakes is normal, and that there is no underlying blue-print answer to how a conversation should end. Based on CLT theory it could be argued that learners feel more confident in using L2 when

failing is considered a natural component of learning a language (e.g. Richards, 2006). This consideration is also important in how textbook tasks are presented to the learner.

2.4 Task

Task is a term used in many aspects of life. Therefore, the way it is defined depends on the context of use. In foreign language teaching, there is a complex variety of definitions on tasks. They vary when it comes to task goal, focus, complexity and elements. There does, however, seem to be a consensus in that tasks are essential as means to engage students in the process of learning a language.

Personally, I find Samuda and Bygate's (2008) definition of task to suit the purpose of developing L2 pragmatics well: "a task is a holistic activity which engages language use in order to achieve some non-linguistic outcome while meeting a linguistic challenge, with the overall aim of promoting language learning, through process or product or both" (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 69).

Samuda and Bygate (2008) separate holistic activities from analytical activities. When it comes to holistic activities, they refer to tasks as one such kind. They write: "use is 'holistic' in the sense that it involves the learners' knowledge of the different sub-areas of language – phonology, grammar, vocabulary and discourse – to make meanings" (2008, p.7). When dealing with such tasks learners must integrate different aspects of language to convey their meaning. First, they should find out what (meaning) they want to express, and then take linguistic, cultural and pragmatic accounts into consideration for communication to be successful. Samuda and Bygate (2008) state that it is through holistic language work that "key language learning processes take place, and tasks are invaluable in achieving this purpose" (p.8). The opposite of a holistic activity is analytical activities where the sub-areas, mentioned in the previous definition, is "taught and studied separately, and not used together" (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p.7).

Also, central to this thesis, is Willis' communicative definition of task (referred to in Littlewood, 2004): "tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome" (p. 321).

The communicative goal of language teaching seems to stand strong according to the definitions available on tasks. Littlewood (2004) refers to Ellis in how the communicative definition represents “a broad consensus among researchers and educators” (p. 321). Suitable to the textbook context is also the definition of task presented by Bygate (2015): “Tasks are classroom activities in which learners use language ‘pragmatically’, that is, ‘to do things’, with the overriding aim of learning language” (p. 381).

In order for a language activity to be referred to as a task, Ellis (2009) argues that it must fulfill four criteria: there needs to be an information gap, learners should mainly have to rely on their own resources, the tasks should have a clearly defined outcome and meaning should be primary. I further want to discuss three of these aspects. Starting with information gap, Ellis (2009) claims that there should be a reason for learners “to convey information, to express an opinion or to infer meaning” (p. 223). This criterion is also listed in Lee’s (2000) book *Tasks and Communicating in Language Classrooms*, as one of the features they expect to see in a language task. Task designers should make sure that the participants do not hold the same information, so that there is a need for communication. If there is no information gap, Lee (2000) argues that one cannot say that communication really takes place. When it comes to task aims (outcome), helpful instruction should be included. This point is stressed by Hackman (1969) who says that tasks should contain elements of instructions (about operations and/or goals). Such goal orientation in language tasks “provide learners some purpose for communicating with each other” (Lee, 2000, p. 34). Elaborative instructions on goals and purpose have proven beneficial in terms of student performance, in several studies referred to in Newell et al. (2011). Relevant for the discussion of my findings, is also Littlejohn’s (2011) recommendations on what to consider when analyzing tasks:

- “How: a process through which learners and teachers are to go.
- With whom: classroom participation concerning with whom (if anyone) the learners are to work.
- About what: content that the learners are to focus on” (p. 189).

The previously listed analysis criteria derive from theory within task-based learning with the overall aim of tasks as negotiation of (pragmatic) meaning. Even though not all tasks are meaning-focused, Ellis (2009) lists meaning as the primary focus and says that “learners should be mainly concerned with processing the semantic and pragmatic meaning of utterances” (p. 223). Also, stressing the focus on meaning is Skehan, (referred to in Johnson, 2003), who defines a task as “an activity in which: meaning is primary...” (p. 5). CLT also aims to develop learners who create communicative meanings, instead of studying language as separate skills. One can argue that focusing on meaning in tasks, instead of functions, is a more appropriate way of working with language as it relates to real-life communication.

Three principles that underline the importance of tasks dealing with communication similar to real life (e.g. using several skills at the same time), are the communication principle, the task principle, and meaningfulness principle presented by Richard and Rodgers (2014). These principles underline the importance of activities involving real communication and using the language for carrying out meaningful tasks to promote learning. The learner should also find the language meaningful for it to support the learning process. The focus on meaning is also central in the field of pragmatics. In terms of appropriate utterances, Canale (1983) elaborates on the concept, and explains it by pointing to two components deciding its level of appropriacy: “appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form” (p. 7).

Ellis (2009) argues that teaching should aim at creating context where language learners can engage in natural communication, similar to what they might encounter in real life. He considers this to be the most successful way of teaching a language, in contrast to the more traditional form of focusing on one language function at a time. Such context could enable students to make pragmatically appropriate choices. When it comes to the pedagogic value of task focus, he underlines that contextualization should be a goal.

Littlewood (1981) neither agrees nor disagrees with Ellis (2009), but considers the process of learning a language as consisting of several steps. He uses the image of a swimmer to exemplify his point: a swimmer must learn the strokes (part-skills) before learning to swim. As previously mentioned, Littlewood (1981) opts for instruction on part-skills (tasks dealing with focus on form), in addition to tasks focusing on meaning.

The part-skills can be considered as pre-communicative building blocks on the way to becoming communicatively competent. CLT has been criticized for focusing too much on communication. Even though communication is the goal, Littlewood (1981) points to the focus on form, as a part of the process in becoming communicatively competent. In 2004, Littlewood presented a model including five categories, on how task definitions move along a continuum from non-communicative (focus on form) to communicative tasks (focus on meaning). He does, however, point out that it is a matter of emphasis, and that there is no clear-cut distinction between the categories¹². It simply represents a difference in goal orientation. I have not used this model in my analysis, as I did not find the categorization of “non-communicative learning” helpful.

How to label the activities used for learning a new language has been discussed in terms of using exercise or tasks. Littlewood (2004) distinguishes the two by describing exercise as activities that do not have any communicative purpose, but instead focuses on linguistic aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, functions, and discourse. Task, however, involves communication in the target language, used for the purpose of reaching an outcome.

2.5 LK06

LK06 (2013) is the guiding document for teaching from primary school-level to upper secondary school-level. Even though the Council of Europe also provides guidelines, LK06 (2013) is more important as to aims for Norwegian teachers and textbook designers. For this reason, I want to present how the English Subject Curriculum (hereafter referred to as ESC) deals with pragmatic competences, considering the parts: purpose, main subject areas (oral communication), basic skills (oral skills), and competence aims in the ESC for Vg1 English general studies. This document is also the leading document for students in the vocational training program, who spend both Vg1 and Vg2 to reach the goals listed.

The ESC focuses on how English is a universal language and raises the importance of considering the context in which language is used, and how this influences the language. It also discusses how the language has certain systems that should be familiar

¹² See Littlewood (2004) for a specification of the continuum of focus on form and focus on meaning.

to the learners. Students are also expected to recognize language styles that influence the level of formality. In other words, learners are expected to “adapt the language to different topics and communication situations” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 2).

Cultural knowledge, including norms and conventions, are also raised for consideration. Such focus aims for a more respectful world community by decreasing xenophobia. Using English as a lingua franca may enable such understandings and information to be communicated between cultures. Similar aspects of pragmatic competences are also raised in the subject area of oral communication:

General politeness and awareness of social norms in different situations are also an important element. This also involves adapting the language to purposeful objectives and adapting the language to the recipient, i.e. by distinguishing between formal and informal spoken language.

(Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 2).

The five main subject areas of the ESC are: language learning, oral communication, written communication, and culture, society and literature. In addition, basic skills and competence aims (regarding the subject areas) are listed and explained in the ESC.

I would, however, argue that it is in the section of basic skills, under oral skills, that the most obvious traces of pragmatic competences are present: “*Oral skills* in English means being able to listen, speak and interact using the English language. It means evaluating and adapting ways of expression to the purpose of the conversation, the recipient and the situation” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013 p. 4). Finally, within oral communication, under competence aims, there are at least three points that raise the focus of pragmatic competences:

- evaluate and use suitable listening and speaking strategies adapted for the purpose and the situation
- express oneself fluently and coherently in a detailed and precise manner suited to the purpose and situation

- introduce, maintain and terminate conversations and discussions about general and academic topics related to one's education programme

(Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 10)

Being able to adapt language to the purpose of the situation, and consider context such as cultural norms, structures of language and participants, are all elements mentioned in LK06 (2013). Even though pragmatic competences are not explicitly mentioned, I would argue that there are several traces of pragmatics present in the national curriculum.

3 RESEARCH MATERIALS AND METHODS

As mentioned in chapter one, this study was designed to map potentials for developing pragmatic competences across three textbooks. This chapter will first present the material creating the base of the analysis. Second, a presentation of rationale for choice of research methods will follow. It will provide insight to methods of data collection, an explanation of theoretical textbook analysis and the procedures performed in carrying out the analysis. The latter includes an explanation of how oral tasks were counted, and how I evaluated opportunities for L2 pragmatic development. Finally, possible limitations of the study are discussed.

3.1 Presentation of Material

As previously mentioned in chapter one, the material analyzed consists of the three best-selling English textbooks for Vg1, issued by the largest publishers in Norway. I have chosen to analyze the textbooks, and will therefore not consider any additional teaching aids that might come with the books, such as digital resources. The books are based on the educational guidelines presented in LK06 (2013). A presentation of the material will follow.

3.1.1 *Targets*

Targets, was first published in 2009 by Aschehoug, but a fourth edition was published in 2015. Consequently, the latest edition was chosen for this study. The book is written by Lillian Balsvik, Øivind Bratberg, James Stephen Henry, Julia Kagge and Rikke Pihlstrøm. The textbook consists of 328 pages and six chapters. The first five chapters are thematically divided, followed by a chapter on “Words, Sentences and Rules of English”. There are tasks following each text in the chapters, indicated by a colored page with headings such as: “Reading”, “Writing”, “Speaking”, “Language work”, “Find out more”, and a combination of several skills such as “Writing/speaking”. In addition to these task-pages, there are some tasks listed after shorter texts and before texts (referred to as: “Before your read”). The first five chapters include two sections called “Target your skills” and “Language work”. The former part aims to develop specific language skills (giving a presentation, persuasion etc.), whereas the latter

contains grammatical tasks for learners to learn and practice using their grammatical skills (punctuation and capitalization, conjunctions etc.). Aschehoug also offers a digital version of the book, in addition to digital resources for teachers and students. According to the bookstore chain Norli, this book is the absolute best seller among their collection of textbooks for vg1 (personal communication with Norli).

3.1.2 Access to English

Access to English was published by Cappelen Damm in 2013 and is written by Richard Burgess and Theresa Bowles Sørhus. It consists of 329 pages and five chapters. The textbook also contains a final section with a glossary of grammatical terms and a toolbox meant to serve as a resource for students and as an aid in working with textbook texts. The book provides learners with tasks presented under the heading “Activities”, with the following sub-headings: “Asking and answering”, “Writing”, “Talking”, “Understanding the story”, “Talk about it”, “Improve your language”, “Reading charts and tables”, “Research” etc. There are also tasks presented more directly in relation to texts such as “Understanding the poem” and “Points of departure”. In addition, sections targeting specific skills with explicit information on different topics are included, followed by activities. Some examples are: “Improve your oral skills”, focusing on the subtopics on the phone, the art of small talk, the art of presentation, dialogue, argument, debate, and “Improve your writing”, focusing on aspects such as introduction, paragraphs, coherence, sources and linking strategies. These sections are placed within the different chapters, and the numbers of such sections vary in the different chapters. A teacher’s CD is also available, in addition to websites created for both students and teachers.

3.1.3 New Experience

Gyldendal’s textbook from 2009, *New Experience*, makes up the third textbook in this study. The textbook is written by Bente Heian, Gro Lokøy, Brynjulf Ankerheim and Ion Drew. The book has 351 pages and is divided into five chapters. The book is wrapped up with a final section called a “Tool Box” containing LK06’s competence aims in addition to several how-to-instructions and learning strategies. Some examples are “How to give an oral presentation” and “How to write a short story”. In-chapter activities are divided into subgroups such as: “Speaking”, “Mini-talk”, “Language”,

“Choices”, “Listening”, “Computer skills” and “Reading”. These are indicated by a colored base line, and are found following texts. There are also activities prior to the texts referred to as “Pre-reading”. The teaching material has the following components in addition to the textbook: an online teacher guide, CDs and online web pages for learners.

3.2 Methods

The methodology applied in this study has benefited from mixed methods. This has been used to carry out a theoretical textbook analysis. To secure objectivity and consistency in carrying out the study, criteria for oral tasks and pragmatic competences have been developed and will be presented in the present chapter.

3.2.1 Mixed methods research

Within the field of research methods there seems to be a great deal of discussion on what distinguishes qualitative and quantitative research methods. Holliday (2007), for example, states that both methods contain elements of the other, and vice versa. To separate the two methods can, however, be helpful as it “represents a useful means of classifying different methods of social research...” (Bryman, 2012, p. 35), and will therefore be used in this analysis. The two methods include different tendencies in respect to research processes and results, but Bryman (2012) acknowledges that they might also include similar strategies as the distinction is not set in stone. Paltridge and Phakiti (2015) say: “The key distinction between quantitative and qualitative research lies in types of data collected by the researchers” (p. 12). Qualitative research presents findings through descriptions and discussion illustrated in words, whereas quantitative research presents numerical data. Research which includes tendencies of both research methods are therefore increasingly referred to as mixed methods research (Bryman, 2012). Paltridge and Phakiti (2015), similarly, define such research as a study that combines quantitative and qualitative research. As I found it beneficial for my study to apply strategies within both fields of research, I decided to do a mixed methods research. Such methodology might strengthen the quality of the study as they complement each other.

The rationale for including quantitative methods has been that such methods are beneficial when working with a larger set of data. This study might benefit from a methodology that gives insight into the distribution of tasks that deal with pragmatics numerically. Such a representation has made it easier to compare the findings across the textbooks. Quantitative research is interested in investigating trends (Bjørndal, 2011), which has served my research question well as I have studied certain aspects across three textbooks. I want to explicitly stress that this study is not primarily a comparative analysis. Comparisons are, however, made as I present the findings separately in the quantitative analysis. Quantitative methods also make it easier to stay objective in carrying out the research, which increases the reliability of the study. I decided to use a quantitative method to map and count the oral tasks in the textbooks. It allowed me to illustrate how much material I have worked with in carrying out the project, compared to other types of task. It also helped me pick out the data for the analysis.

I have created a set of criteria for systematically mapping aspects of pragmatic competences present in tasks. I find it interesting to reveal what aspects of pragmatics the tasks potentially engage students in, and a quantitative method allows me to categorize the different aspects of pragmatics dealt with in the tasks, and consider their distribution across textbooks. It will allow me to discover tendencies of frequency of for example different language functions encouraged in tasks. The consistent manner of carrying out the analysis through criteria enriches the validity and objectivity of the study. I do, however, want to point out that the quantitative results are to some extent based on a subjective analysis as I consider the tasks' *potential* for developing certain aspects of pragmatic competences.

According to Paltridge and Phakiti (2015) “qualitative researchers allow themselves to be involved in formulating meanings and interpretations of what they have observed” (p. 13). They also separate this method from quantitative methods by referring to the fact in that qualitative research analyzes data “collected through interviews, observations, texts or pictures, rather than in numbers” (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015, p. 12). In addition to performing an in-depth analysis of the quantitative findings (discussing positive and negative aspects of the tendencies), I am interested in how these aspects are presented to students through task descriptions and aims. This part of

the analysis will therefore not be based on numbers alone, but on textual analysis carried out when going through the oral tasks.

3.2.2 Textbook analysis

The analytical results have derived from a theoretical textbook analysis. Summer (2011) distinguishes between experimental and theoretical textbook analyses. The experimental version of the two considers textbook-use in practice by a teacher in a specific contextual setting, and it evaluates the effect of materials applied in the classroom. Theoretical textbook analysis, on the other hand, sticks to examining textbooks exclusively through an evaluative framework. The choice of theoretical textbook analysis allowed me to work with a concrete set of materials, which is likely to influence the teaching of pragmatic competences. In addition, it allowed for a consideration of both negative and positive features of the material.

The centrality of textbooks (see section 1.2) highlights the importance of quality across teaching materials. Textbooks represent sources of language input and knowledge, in addition to creating opportunities for oral interaction among students. It would, of course, be interesting to consider how teachers and students perceive the textbooks tasks in practice. Due to choice of topic and time limits of this project, such data has not been collected.

3.3 Criteria for Data Collection

According to Sheldon (1988) “it is clear that coursebook assessment is fundamentally a subjective, rule-of-the-thumb activity, and that no neat formula, grid, or system will ever provide a definite yardstick” (p.245). I will, however, do my best to provide an organized and neat presentation of the criteria used for my data collection. Hopefully this will help the readers reach an understanding of how the analysis was carried out and the results achieved.

3.3.1 Oral tasks

In order to locate the tasks that create opportunities for oral interaction/production, explicit criteria had to be selected. In addition to the criteria (created with reference to Hackman,1969; Littlejohn, 2011, see section 2.4), the communicative task definition by

Willis (quoted in Littlewood, 2004), was taken into consideration when mapping the oral textbook tasks: “tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome” (p. 321).

To consider the tasks’ possibility of raising students’ pragmatic competences, all oral tasks were studied with their components: title of tasks, task directions and sub-questions. I found this beneficial, in contrast to using textbook designers’ categorization of tasks as they use different categorization systems in terms of labeling tasks. I also found how textbook designers have chosen to group tasks as misleading. How tasks are to be carried out is for example, not necessarily explicitly mentioned in the task title. Some of the authors place oral tasks under textbook headings such as “Choices”, “Improve your language”, and “Make a presentation”. If I had followed textbook authors’ categorization, I might have missed a lot of oral task, such as pre-reading tasks, and written tasks with an oral end-result.

To present quantitative findings on the number of oral tasks, I based my analysis on the following criteria:

1. Key words indicating process/operations/goals resulting in oral production of language, such as *talk about it, present, discuss, perform an interview, holding a classroom debate, explain, compare, act it out, sing, instruct, expressing opinions, analyzing, starting a conversation, speaking, practice conversations, read them out loud, brainstorming, report, comment, sound production, pronounce, sum up, ask, present*
2. Key words indicating an oral product, such as *oral presentations, carry out a debate/discussion*
3. Key words indicating cooperation, such as *sit in pairs, work in pairs, sit in groups, brainstorm together, discuss in class, ask a partner*

The keywords were mostly found in task headings or instructions. Identifying such key words is a form of textual analysis. A straightforward description of textual analysis is presented by McKee (2003): “when we perform textual analysis on a text, we make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text” (p. 2). I find this methodology relevant as I am interested in tasks that are

perceived as oral, in the eye of the learners who consume the textbook. In the data-gathering process every task had to include one or more of the listed criteria to be counted as an oral task. All tasks with potentials for oral production are therefore included in quantitative tables in chapter four, despite how much and what type of communication is encouraged from the speaker. Some tasks instruct students to discuss or make a presentation, whereas others are mainly writing or research activities that end with an oral component. The amount of oral production encouraged from the speaker is therefore variable, but all sorts of oral use of the language are considered in this analysis. In addition to the fact that the textbook authors present and organize tasks differently, the length of the tasks also varies. Based on practicality, the tasks were counted as a unit, irrespective of number of sub-tasks. Even though the tasks were made up by a-c or questions 1-6, they were counted as one unit as the sub-questions are often similar in manner.

To sum up, I have analyzed any task that is meant to be carried out in an oral manner. Oral communication skills are listed in the LK06 (2013) and by the CEFR (2001). Textbook tasks should therefore give opportunities for oral communication practice. In addition to eliminating the material for the analysis, the criteria for locating and counting the oral tasks presented, allows the reader to perceive what counts as oral tasks in my study. It will also give the reader an understanding of the amount of material processed in this analysis, compared to other activities in the books.

3.3.2 Pragmatic competences

To be able to consider oral tasks' potential to raise students' pragmatic competences, and what aspects the different tasks contain, I have based my analysis on the elements of pragmatic competences outlined in the CEFR (2001). The different skills that make up such competences are listed in section 2.2. In addition, I have used the *Threshold Level's* (1991) lists of language functions to identify the different criteria. I aim to map the frequency of the different criteria in oral tasks, i.e how many times the skills are required to be used when solving them. I am also interested in the explicitness of metapragmatic information present in tasks. The questions below have guided the analysis (the questions are adapted for the purpose of studying textbooks, based on questions for consideration, presented in the CEFR, 2001, p. 130.)

1. What discourse features is the learner required to control?
2. What microfunctions and macrofunctions is the learner required to produce?
3. What interaction schemata is required of the learner?

In my case, the questions opt for considering what aspects of pragmatics students are required to practice using, while working with their textbooks. The analysis has been carried out by going through the oral tasks, studying them independently to map the frequency of discourse features, type of micro or macrofunctions and interaction schemata. The *Threshold Level* (1991) was used to identify and recognize language functions and communicative events to spot the dialogue types. In addition to the previously mentioned aspects of pragmatics, I have included two social communication situations, due to their centrality in the textbooks: having a debate and giving a presentation. These are not explicitly referred to in the CEFR (2001) in relation to pragmatic competences, but are all mentioned as central communicative activities. Due to LK06's (2013) focus on students being able to adjust their language according to the language situation, I found these necessary to include. As interaction schemata are not always complete communication situations, I found it beneficial to include these situations. Table 3.1 presents the criteria used in the analysis (see section 2.2).

Table 3.1 Criteria for pragmatic competences

Discourse competence	Micro-functions	Macro-functions	Interaction schemata	Communication situations
Thematic development	Imparting and seeking factual information	Persuasion	Making purchases	Having a debate
Turn taking	Expressing and finding out attitudes	Argumentation	Ordering food and drinks	Giving a presentation
Flexibility to circumstances	Suasion	Instruction	Asking for information	
Coherence and cohesion	Socializing	Description	Meeting people	
	Structuring discourse	Summarization	Asking and showing the way	
	Communication repair	Narration	Asking and telling the time	
			Inviting and reacting to invitation	
			Arranging accommodation	
			Proposing a course of action and reacting to such proposals	
			Having a discussion	

To illustrate my way of action, I will present two examples of how the analysis was carried out. I wish to illustrate how I went about marking the skills based on the criteria and a textual analysis. The examples are also provided to illustrate some of the issues I

have encountered in carrying out the analysis, such as the subjective aspect in carrying out such an analysis.

For or against

What makes football so fascinating?

Many people claim that there is too much football on the television, that football players earn too much money, and that the problem of hooliganism is not taken seriously enough.

In groups of 3-4, **discuss** these statements. Try to find facts that support them and facts that prove them wrong. Then have a **discussion** where a group of people, for instance family, friends or colleagues, discuss the importance of football. Act out this **debate**.

*Example 3.1 New Experience, p. 104.*¹³

In the analysis, I marked this task as creating opportunities for considering *thematic development, turn taking, flexibility to circumstances, coherence and cohesion, imparting and seeking factual information, expressing and finding out attitudes, structuring discourse, argumentation, having a discussion and a debate*. When deciding on what criteria the task fulfilled, I performed a textual analysis identifying what words were most important in indicating student actions.

The first word indicating expectations of student actions is *discuss*. This word is actually mentioned twice in the instructions. To carry out a successful discussion, students are also asked to find facts to *support* or *prove them wrong*. Next, the act of carrying out a *discussion* is requested, before it should develop into a debate. Such a textual analysis therefore led me to consider what aspects of pragmatic competences students might engage in. When it comes to discourse competence, the discussion about football encourages *thematic development* in terms of following a logical structure presenting points and arguments where/when appropriate. *Coherence and cohesion* is also relevant as learners have to produce meaningful contributions to the conversation using cohesive devices and organizational patterns. As they are provided with discourse roles in a context such as family members, they have to adjust to their roles, hence *flexibility to circumstances*.

¹³ The example is modified in terms of including underlining and bold letters.

The microfunctions are: *imparting and seeking factual information, expressing and finding out attitudes and structuring discourse*. These are relevant in the way that students are asked to “find facts” (hence *seeking information*), but also discuss them among themselves (hence *attitudes*). Next, students are supposed to interact which might encourage the use of *structuring discourse*, such as: correcting oneself (*No, sorry, I mean, that is to say*), expressing an opinion (*I think*), etc. The macrofunction of *argumentation* is also included as learners are asked to seek arguments that favor the statements or prove them wrong when engaging in discussion /debate. Finally, discussion is encouraged as they first are to discuss the input provided in the task, before performing a topic-related debate. It is, however, evident that such an analysis is based on a subjective opinion as the results are dependent on my understanding of the task instructions. Next, I will include an example from *Access to English*, to illustrate the problems I encountered when categorizing the tasks:

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

- a)** Imagine that you are preparing a radio interview with Archie Roach about his experiences of being a “stolen child”. Write down six questions that you would ask him, using the songs as your source of information. For example: “How did your father react when they came to fetch you?”
- b)** Now sit in pairs and do the interview.

Example 3.2 Access to English, p. 264.

This task was marked for all the components of discourse competence in addition to *imparting and seeking factual information, expressing and finding out attitudes, socializing, structuring discourse, description and asking for information*. The task allows for students to create their own questions, which makes it difficult to analyze it any further as it might have an even greater potential depending on what the students ask. Such information would, however, only be available to me if I carried out an experimental textbook analysis, but this is not the case. Instead my analysis shows the potential of the tasks. Low achieving students would most likely not be able to see all opportunities presented to them by the textbooks, because of restricted task instructions (see section 2.4). Whereas higher achieving students might have more strategies and experience to go on and could therefore start a grand discussion and manage to keep the conversation going.

Due to time limits, I will not discuss every criterion in depth, but instead focus on a few criteria with reference to the findings. I am interested in the amount of information provided for the students in order to make them consider contextual factors, in addition to the level of explicitness when it comes to metapragmatic instructions.

3.4 Possible Limitations

Something that could have complemented this project is teachers', students' and textbook designers' reflections. I do not know how teachers instruct students when it comes to tasks, what additional texts or information they incorporate with the textbook or how they supplement in terms of pragmatics. In relation to additional pragmatic information, Vallenga (2004) points to teacher surveys revealing the limited amount of outside materials related to pragmatics, taken into classrooms to complement textbooks.

I have no empirical research of how students understand and perceive the tasks they are given, and how they perceive their education regarding pragmatics. Such information would have contextualized the thesis even more. I did, however, choose not to perform such an analysis as all students understand things differently. For this reason, I find a textual analysis of textbook tasks as relevant as any other aspect listed above.

Most schools in Norway are public and therefore have a diversity of students. There is no blue-print to how students experience tasks. Low achieving students might not be able to see opportunities created in tasks, whereas other students might grasp the potential of tasks easily. Due to the centrality of textbooks in Norwegian classrooms, I do, however, find the quality of textbooks alone, necessary to consider. Textbooks writers should be aware of the diversity in classrooms, levels of motivation and interests among students. It is therefore interesting to see how they handle this in the way they construct teaching materials.

Categorizing the different aspects of pragmatic competences in the textbooks has been a challenging procedure. Ambiguous task instructions have made it hard to map the potential of the task in raising pragmatic competences. The quantitative nature of this analysis is to some extent weakened as it relies on my subjective understanding of tasks' potential. This could be a limitation as someone who carries out the same analysis, might end up with different quantitative results. The variations in quantitative

findings should, however, not be critical for the overall results as the aim of the thesis is to map the possibilities a task has for developing pragmatic competences. The criteria used enabled me to approach the tasks with the same set of analytical tools, to reduce variations in findings. Another restriction to the thesis is the fact that I have chosen to leave out the online tasks due to time limits. This is unfortunate as I lose some of the essence of the textbooks as the online tasks are a part of the teaching material.

The fact that I only investigate oral tasks in terms of pragmatics, could be considered a limitation. Textbook writers have probably planned for students to work on developing pragmatic competences through other types of tasks as well. This thesis does, however, only focus on oral tasks as I believe that learners need to practice using what they have learned, also orally, to make it their own (see section 2.3.3).

The analysis performed does not provide the reader with information on the amount of oral production demanded from the students. Does it demand a simple yes or no answer, a sentence, or does it demand students to produce a paragraph-length of an utterance? I will not be able to present any quantitative findings on this, with the exception of the aspect of *coherence and cohesion* dealt with in the tasks. The amount of oral production is, however, touched upon in the qualitative analysis of pragmatic development.

4 RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to present and discuss findings of the current textbook analysis performed in mapping opportunities for developing L2 pragmatics in oral textbook tasks. Quantitative findings are presented in tables and discussed along with qualitative findings related to the research question presented in section 1.4 and theoretical background in chapter two.

4.1 Oral Textbook Tasks

By calculating the percentage of oral textbook tasks, I want to account for how many opportunities students have to use their oral skills. Student centered activities and use of oral language has proved beneficial in terms of language learning, and is therefore relevant for this thesis. As already mentioned in section 3.3.1, I have included all tasks containing oral interaction possibilities. Table 4.1 illustrates the number of oral tasks across the material.

Table 4.1 Number of oral tasks in the textbooks

Textbook	Oral tasks	Other tasks	All tasks	% of oral tasks
<i>Targets</i>	116	264	380	31%
<i>Access to English</i>	92	126	218	42%
<i>New Experience</i>	115	202	317	36%

Findings reveal that *Access to English* has the highest percentage of oral tasks (42%) followed by *New Experience* (36%) and *Targets* (31%). Based on criteria used to map oral tasks, the tasks accounted for in table 4.1, secure oral participation in English. Findings indicate that these textbook designers considered oral interaction in English to be an important part of developing skills and knowledge within the subject. This is interesting as learner centered tasks with opportunities for oral interaction have not always been a priority in school (see section 2.3.4). Fortunately, society's turn towards a global world and language community is reflected also in textbook tasks. Being able to

communicate orally allows learners to participate in the international society, gaining knowledge about different cultures and ways of life.

Democratic citizens should be able to develop and express personal attitudes. Regarding Vygotsky, learner talk is considered crucial as it completes the process of thinking: a thought is not realized before it is transferred into language (see section 3.3.1). As previously mentioned, this relates to Bakhtin (referred to in John-Steiner, 2007), Fisher (2008), and Bardovi-Harling (2001), who point to the importance of making language one's own through use, and by transferring personal ideas into words. Based on theory presented in chapter two: Newby's (2006) findings on limited oral production in CLT classrooms, Westgate's (1997) report on students not engaging in talk, and lacking instructions in textbooks to develop pragmatic competences (Vallenga, 2004), create grounds to consider how learners in Vg1 are engaged in oral tasks. Textbook designers should provide learners with well created tasks which have the potential of developing communicative competences. The present analysis is therefore based on the oral tasks accounted for in table 4.1.

4.2 Pragmatic Competences

As already mentioned, the main aim of the thesis is to map the potentials for developing pragmatic competences. The discussion of tables with quantitative findings will also benefit from qualitative findings on metapragmatic instruction. For organizational purposes, the findings are presented thematically according to criteria presented in chapter three.

The tables present the frequency of potentially different linguistic output demanded by learners. The quantitative tables are provided to assist readers in seeing what aspects of pragmatic competences students are introduced to, and therefore might be ready to encounter in real life tasks. In addition, the tables reveal situations and language functions with which learners will have little experience. The results are based on task description, instruction, and amount of information/aids provided for the learners when approaching the task.

When studying the tables, I want to draw the reader's attention to the diverging overall task number present across the textbooks. This naturally reflects the numbers presented.

Also, there are some tasks that are not accounted for in the tables, as they do not have the potential of developing pragmatic competences. In these tasks, students were asked to repeat a word after the teacher to learn the correct pronunciation, or read something out loud. These tasks do, however, not make up a large number, and for this reason, I will not elaborate on this.

Even though pragmatic competences were not explicitly mentioned in the books, similarly to the absence in LK06 (2013), textbooks do create opportunities for developing such competences. Which textbook does best in terms of developing pragmatic competences is, however, difficult to project due to the different structures across the textbooks. As I have only studied oral tasks, I do not wish to make such claims. I do, however, consider a relatively high number in each category (in the tables) to be positive findings as every opportunity created is a positive experience for the learner.

4.2.1 Discourse competence

Discourse competence was considered in light of four aspects: *flexibility to circumstances, turn-taking, thematic development, and coherence and cohesion*. Table 4.2 presents the potentials for student engagement in the different aspects.

Table 4.2 Discourse competence

Discourse competence	Number of tasks		
	<i>Targets</i>	<i>Access to English</i>	<i>New Experience</i>
Flexibility to circumstances	9	11	24
Turn-taking	17	11	30
Thematic development	58	50	60
Coherence and cohesion	93	75	109

The category with the highest number of opportunities is *coherence and cohesion*, followed by *thematic development, turn-taking, and flexibility to circumstances*. According to the CEFR (2001), these criteria are considered necessary skills when

engaging in successful communication. The document encourages gradually providing learners with more challenging situations, in terms of language functions and discourse skills. The importance of discourse competence is reflected in LK06's (2013) aims for students to "be able to adapt the language to different topics and communication situations," (Ministry of Education and Research, p. 2) and the competence aim of being able to "express oneself fluently and coherently in a detailed and precise manner suited to the purpose and situation" (Ministry of Education and Research, p. 10).

In general, discourse competence is about being able to present elements of language in a structured, meaningful and logical manner. Findings indicate that students are provided with opportunities to practice such competences. In addition to the quantitative results, qualitative findings show that students are engaged in group talk through discussions, debates, interviews, and other interactions schemata. As mentioned in chapter two, several researchers opt for group work when it comes to developing conversational skills. One such researcher is Cunningsworth (1987) who points to the necessity of letting students experience how discourse works by engaging them in interaction.

These types of task are also pointed to by Westgate (1997), who clearly states that group work is the most successful way of engaging students in conversation. Interactional tasks let students experience the cooperative principle of Grice and how interactions depend on cooperation to develop (see section 2.2.1). Students are also engaged in the dual purpose of group talk, in having to both listen and speak for the conversation to be successful. Students' contributions in conversation should be based on previously shared information and influence how the student intervenes in conversation. Such experiences provide insight into how conversations are organized and managed. A discussion of discourse features will follow in the next section.

4.2.1.1 Flexibility to circumstances

This criterion was marked when learners were instructed to consider contextual information before engaging in communicative situations. *New Experience* has the highest number with 24 instances of letting students illustrate flexibility to circumstances. *Access to English* has 11 instances, closely followed by *Targets* which

has 9. The numbers in this category are relatively low, considering the importance of contextual considerations related to developing pragmatic competences. The low number might originate from the fact that most oral tasks instruct the learner to “discuss this with a partner”. Going through questions with a partner or discussing a topic, demands a style and register most likely routinized for most students by the time they reach Vg1.

Still, there are tasks allowing students to use language appropriately to show emphasis, avoid ambiguity and select appropriate language according to interlocutors, situation etc. (CEFR, 2001). Both social and cultural contexts are therefore important factors, and how this affects the style of the conversation should be familiar to the students. The importance of context is reflected in Simensen’s (2007) definition of pragmatics as “the study of language in its social, situational, and functional context” (p. 67, see section 2.1.2). LK06 (2013) explicitly points to the importance of learners being able to adapt language to different purposes and situations. This includes being able to show politeness, being aware of what levels of formality is suited to different purposes, reformulating language according to language situation and type of conversation.

In order to illustrate flexibility to circumstances, students need to adapt to the different styles of conversations. Quantitative findings illustrate that students are engaged in different types of conversations such as debates, discussions etc. (see table 4.5 and 4.6) An important finding from the qualitative analysis is the limited amount of information in terms of outcome, purpose, context and suitable phrases, in relation to the different communication situations.

A TELEVISION TALK SHOW

Act out a television talk show on the following topic: Teenage gangs – a menace to society or just friends taking care of each other? Characters present:

- a) Stephen Cox: The presenter who introduces the topic and leads the discussion
- b) Jenny Fraser: A white girl living in a Hispanic neighborhood
- c) Oscar Hijuelos: A former gang member who has spent 5 years in prison
- d) Judy Miller: The mother of a boy who was killed in a drive-by shooting
- e) Shawn Binchy: A New York officer
- f) Barbara Duff: A student counselor at a Washington D.C school

Example 4.1 New Experience, p. 111.

A striking feature in example 4.1 is that there are no instructions on what the communication situation expects from learners. There are no indications on how the talk show is expected to develop. In order for this to become a successful communication situation, it is dependent on teachers engaging students in meta-talk on what functional language is appropriate for talk shows and what the purpose of such shows are. The style and register use of talk shows could also have been discussed prior to solving the task. More information about the social roles could also have been included to scaffold student actions, which could make it easier for students to adjust their behavior to their assigned roles.

A suggestion is to engage students in a pre-activity, letting them discuss style, context, expectations and norms related to their assigned roles and task-context. Student reflection is an important element of developing L2 pragmatics (see section 2.3.2). Newell et al. (2011) report findings on how collaborative reasoning (oral discussion of a topic in groups) helps students develop a greater understanding of context in the communication stations. Through sharing perspectives, it is argued that learners “acquire social perspective-taking that is essential for considering audience characteristics” (Newell et al., 2011, p. 289). In relation to example 4.1, learners must consider their audience (see section 2.3.4.2), their role, what expectations come with it, and what language to use when creating good arguments. Collaborative reasoning about the situation could make it easier for students to act pragmatically correct. Spending time getting to know their character could lead to increased metacognition, which could help them engage successfully in communication. Consequently, it might be easier to present well formulated and appropriate arguments related to the assigned roles.

Referring to chapter two, student centered activities allow for learners to work with several language functions and experience how conversations work. Holistic language tasks challenge students’ competence to appropriate language to context by engaging them in different styles of conversation. Textbook tasks also provide learners with assigned social roles (characteristics and attitudes) to adapt, in for example debates and interviews. Assigned roles require students to handle language that has not been routinized prior to the interaction situation. Such tasks engage students in expressing new points of views in conversations and situations different from what they are used

to. The roles presented in example 4.1, represent a variety of characters creating room for different considerations to be made. The different roles provided for the learners present a need to “convey information, to express an opinion or to infer meaning” (Ellis, 2009, p. 223, see section 2.4). As a consequence to the assigned social roles, an information gap is created, which provides learners with a purpose for interaction.

Another positive finding on assigning roles to such language activities, is reported by Newell et al. (2011):

There is a widespread agreement that school teachers often try to maintain a conflict-free zone when it comes to learning (...) such that maintaining the peace takes precedence over fostering disagreement and other possible sources of conflict that may arise when teaching argumentative reading and writing. (Newell et al., 2011, p. 277)

To avoid disturbing the peace, and students becoming afraid of how the discussions might damage their social relationship with others, assigned roles could be beneficial. This way, they step out of their personal character, and take on another mask separating them from the social role they normally have in the classroom.

The importance of engaging students in tasks with conflicting parties is stressed by Newell et al. (2011) who say that “one primary purpose for engaging in rival hypothesis thinking is to allow for the open sharing of competing perspectives on an issue so that different parties can collaboratively work together to develop solutions to those issues” (p. 294). Such experiences might prove beneficial as they resemble everyday discussions and issues in communities across the world. The same point is also stressed by Hoff (2014) who says that “according to Bakhtin and Ricoeur, the potential of communication lies in conflict and the confrontation of ideas, rather than mutual understanding” (p. 513). Such conflicting ideas are (potentially) present in both example 4.1 and 4.2 below, as learners are provided with roles taking different stands on issues.

Scholars have indicated that some textbooks fail to contextualize their tasks (e.g. Crawford, 2002), which I found to be the case in these textbooks as well. Sometimes, tasks are contextualized as they are linked with texts. Other times, when students are

required to engage in a social language activity, I find contextual information to be lacking. A task that sticks out, compared to example 4.1, is the following:

ACT IT OUT

An Aboriginal community area of Australia applies for “native title” to Anganga territory, an area about 50 square miles. There are storms of protests from farmers and industrialists. The two sides in the dispute are invited to discuss the issue in a radio programme called “Confrontation”. Sit in groups of three, give each person one of the roles below – and perform the program.

Role 1: A spokesperson for farmers and industrialists. Tests have shown that Ananga territory is rich in minerals like uranium, bauxite and zinc. What is more, some geologists believe these resources belong to all Australians, not just one small group. It is vital that the land is used for the benefit of everybody.

Role 2: A spokesperson for the aboriginal community of Ananga. Ananga territory has been inhabited by your forefathers for 40,000 years and is of great religious importance to you. Mining and drilling here would be like bulldozing a cathedral.

Role 3: The interviewer. Your role is to introduce and round off the programme. You should also try to keep the discussion going. You should, of course, be neutral, but that doesn't mean that you can't ask pointed questions.

Example 4.2 Access to English, p. 260.

Example 4.2 includes information about roles, and some expectations related to each role, such as the interviewer's role of introducing, rounding off, and keeping the discussion going. This way, students can relate to their roles. If such information is not provided together with the roles, explicit instructions on seeking information elsewhere or engage in collaborative reasoning, should be included (as in example 3.1). Such instructions could facilitate successful communication.

In terms of students being able to adjust their language according to language situations, they need knowledge about what conversation styles and social interaction situations require different levels of formality. The amount of metapragmatic instruction is also restrictive on this aspect. Only a limited amount of metapragmatic instruction is found in *Access to English* and *Targets*. This is noteworthy in relation to the discussion of how learners tend to underuse politeness marking and show context sensitivity when interacting in L2 (see section 2.3.1).

Access to English does, however, include metapragmatic information related to dialogue, argument and debate. The textbook lists appropriate functional language:

making suggestions, expressing an opinion, expressing agreement and disagreement (p. 127). Within each category there are neutral and formal suggestions: *we could always* vs. *may I suggest that*, in addition to examples of language used to emphasize: *that's true* vs. *I couldn't agree more*. This relates to the aim of students being able to provide emphasis to their language, listed in the CEFR (2001). In these cases there are tasks following the information for students to develop arguments to prepare for discussion. *Access to English* also includes examples of language related to different levels of formality in small talk (see section 4.2.2.2). Presentations of isolated sentences might help develop learners' understanding of the different levels of formality, but as previously stated, Cunningsworth (1987) points to its limited effect as there are no explanations for what makes such sentences more or less formal.

Targets, does not include any metapragmatic information on the different levels of formality, but includes a model, separate from the tasks, with traits separating informal from formal language. One such example is the use of incomplete sentences. The information is not referred to or included in relation to tasks. I find this unfortunate, based on an action research project that I previously performed on learning strategies in a Vg2/Vg3 classroom (Norenberg, 2016). A student questionnaire revealed that only three out of 14 students knew that they had a section on "Learning strategies" in the back of their book. In other words, if this kind of information is not explicitly referred to in tasks, it is not likely that students themselves start looking for information.

If provided with such information, however, learners can also answer to why they act a certain way and what factors contributed to their choice of language (meta-talk). In addition, they are more likely to be open for interpretation in communication situations, as they have experienced using language in different situations and for different purposes. Such tasks also prepare students to further consider contextual factors in interaction. For this reason, I would argue, that students should be provided with explicit (but also implicit) contextual information when practicing using their oral language also in textbook tasks.

4.2.1.2 Turn-taking

In relation to *turn-taking*, there is no metapragmatic information included in the textbooks. There are, however, opportunities for students to draw on skills handling turn-taking in discourse. *New Experience* includes 30 such activities, *Targets*: 17 and *Access to English*: 11. Compared to the overall number of tasks, this number is also low. *Turn-taking* was only marked when there was a need for students to use turn-taking techniques. For this reason, tasks that express a desire for students to impart factual information, express attitudes, describe a character in the book etc. do not require such skills as no more than one or two turns are required to carry out the task.

The criterion was marked for social interaction activities requiring learners to draw on turn-taking skill in tasks such as debates, structured discussions and role plays. Both examples 4.1 and 4.2 were marked for *turn-taking* with the interviewer and talk show host monitoring turn-taking and other participants having to use turn-taking techniques to gain the floor to express one's meaning. When it comes to group work, research shows that students often sit quietly, and do not engage in discussion (see section 2.3.4.3). If learners do not know how to, or when to engage in interaction, he or she might drop trying. According to the CEFR (2001) students are dependent on a large range of discourse functions to be able to hold the floor to gain time while thinking. They also need knowledge on when it is appropriate to intervene, in terms of being able to read signals (see section 2.2.1) and knowledge on what functions to use to ask for attention.

Even though several elements of turn-taking can be considered universal pragmatics (necessity of cooperation, contribution and signals), linguistic phrases differ in Norwegian and English. Handling turn-taking is necessary to fulfill LK06's (2013) aim to be able to "introduce, maintain and terminate conversations and discussions about general and academic topics related to one's education programme" (Ministry of Education and Research, p. 10). Even though learners are not provided with information on how to do this, they are provided with opportunities that could enlighten the teacher on necessary input the learners might need.

Role plays include potentials for practicing turn-taking, and occur several times throughout the textbooks. In CLT, role plays have been a popular way to engage students in oral communication activities. They have proved to be a popular way to equip students with skills necessary for oral interaction (e.g. Cunningsworth, 1987). For this reason, I wish to further discuss the notion of turn-taking in relation to role play. Also, role plays require similar turn-taking skills to other situations, such as debates (see section 4.2.3). Having a debate is a communication situation where the person with the best turn-taking techniques is most likely to be heard and win the discussion. In order for a conversation to be considered successful, interlocutors should know when and how it is appropriate to intervene in the discussion. Such skills are important in order to avoid offending interlocutors, and to be able to get one's point across successfully.

Returning to role plays, Kasper and Dahl (quoted in Bardovi-Harling, 2013), claim that role plays “represent oral production, full operation of the turn-taking mechanism, impromptu planning decisions contingent on interlocutor input, and hence negotiation of global and local goals, including negotiation of meaning” (p. 71). Role plays allow for students to figure out what turn-taking functions suit the purpose of the situation better, or they might experience how some functions misfire. Even though role plays take place within the walls of the classroom for pedagogic reasons, Kasper (1997) argues that classroom discourse is as authentic as any other form of talk. I think such talk can at least prepare students for situations where turn-taking is necessary in real life communication.

Role plays differ in terms of working method across the textbooks. Sometimes students are asked to act out a scripted play, write one before carrying it out, or simply act out a situation spontaneously. I believe that all methods, whether it is spontaneous or not, serve students well. In earlier teaching paradigms, such as the audio lingual, scripted responses were most common. Such role plays can provide students with language models on how turn-taking could take place. It might also introduce students to new ways of getting or holding the floor in conversations, by presenting linguistic forms to use in order to appropriately interrupt in the conversation. Based on qualitative findings from the textbook analysis, there is an evident trend of not providing students with scripted language.

Spontaneous use of self-created role plays requires learners to search through their repertoire of phrases in order to achieve what they want to accomplish with the situation. As already mentioned, Tateyama (2001), whom I referred to in the first chapter, experienced that learners actually asked for “more opportunities to role-play different situations in class” (p. 220). Two students stated that they got tired of examples provided as models, and considered personal engagement in communication situations to activate their thinking.

Role plays have the potential of involving students in authentic turn-taking situations. Learners have to interpret when it is natural to engage in conversations based on interlocutors’ pauses, drop in intonation or phrases indicating that a turn is over. They also get to consider the cooperative principle of Grice (1975) stressed in CEFR’s (2001) description of discourse competence. Learners are also let to experience how other people might have different understandings of when turns are over or how they behave in relation to turn-taking. Also, how it might feel natural to express agreement, and confirmation that one is paying attention to what is said.

SPEAKING

It’s Saturday night and you are supposed to be home by midnight. Your cellphone has been turned off and your parents have tried to contact you. Act out the dialogue that takes place when you finally get home – at 2 am.

Example 4.3 New Experience, p 78.

Example 4.3 is what Samuda and Bygate (2008) refer to as a holistic language activity. Students are asked to focus on getting their meaning across, and consider appropriate language to achieve it. The aim of the task is language learning through processes. In general, most tasks throughout the textbooks are meaning focused, opposed to form focused. Students must draw on several language skills to carry out the role play, and turn-taking skills might become crucial for learners to defend coming in late. They might have to fight for the floor in order to present their explanation. I do, however, miss the element of meta-talk and preparation time prior to the role play. Referring to the previous section on contextual factors, this situation is probably relatable for students as they are familiar with the context of breaking a curfew and interacting with their parents. This creates context to the task. Knowledge about context might therefore

make it easier for learners to take part in a discussion on what language would suit the purpose.

4.2.1.3 Thematic development

Table 4.2 shows that *New Experience* has 60 instances requiring thematic development, *Targets* has 58, whereas *Access to English* has 50. *Thematic development* was mostly marked in relation to macrofunctions, interaction schemata, and communication situations. Instances were recorded in terms of tasks requiring students to include introduction, developed points and concluding remarks (e.g. in presentations). Also, in tasks encouraging learners to participate in communication situations requiring them to be aware of and follow the thematic development in situations (e.g. debates). Thematic development is also reflected in LK06's (2013) aim to enable students to: "introduce, maintain and terminate conversations and discussions about general and academic topics related to one's education programme" (Ministry of Education and Research, p. 10).

To handle this skill one needs knowledge about the topic of discussion and/or awareness of personal opinions. Another important consideration is the order of information presented. For this reason, students need to be aware of the different internal structures of different communication situations. Being able to follow such structures is crucial in order to observe and act according to the norms related to different situations. To be understood, taken seriously and present a strong case, students must present well developed thematic arguments. Structure is key, but is also something that students are struggling with. They should therefore be provided with opportunities to engage in processes that demand them to develop a line of arguments, summarize and conclude. Such practices are important in developing such skills.

Telling a story based on a list of points, which is recognized as the lowest competence level within this aspect, is not a frequent type of task across the textbooks. This might be because the Vg1 level, should be considered a quite advanced level as it might be the last year that learners study English at school. There are, however, instances of summarizing texts, telling short stories, and tasks requiring students to develop short arguments by sub-questions: *why do you think this?* The number of tasks that encourage

students to back up their opinions with arguments, is also limited. If less motivated students are not explicitly asked to back up their argument, they will most likely not do it. The sub-question of “why” following a question, could however ensure that students are able to defend their argument, and for it to eventually become a routinized procedure.

When it comes to oral presentations (see section 4.2.3), a lot of task instructions require students to simply find information and present it. Tasks do not explicitly require students to consider the thematic development in the process. I believe that more informative task instructions could better secure the handling of thematic development. Such instructions should include information on structure of the conversation, be a reminder to include points and arguments for or against different matters, and to conclude in a logical manner. This way, I believe thematic development would come natural for more students.

4.2.1.4 Coherence and cohesion

The aspect of *coherence and cohesion* relates to thematic development as it is essential in terms of securing flow in the language, illustrating relationship between ideas, discourse patterns and types of cohesion. The criteria were marked in tasks if students were asked to produce longer stretches of sentences, and therefore would have to consider how to link the utterance together in a meaningful manner. Table 4.2 presents relatively high numbers as regards this aspect; *New Experience* range highest with 109 potentials, followed by *Targets* with 93, and finally *Access to English* with 75. Compared to the total number of tasks, most activities demand more than one sentence as an answer.

Students must produce language where structure and connectors should be considered to secure flow in the utterance. The importance of students handling this aspect of pragmatic competences is reflected in LK06’s (2013) aim of developing students who are able to express themselves “fluently and coherently in a detailed and precise manner suited to the purpose and situation” (Ministry of Education and Research, p. 10). Based

on personal experience¹⁴, linking words are often referred to in classrooms. They are, however, not naturally acquired and used by students without explicit focus on implementing them. One task that does focus on linking words is presented in example 4.4 below.

Linking words

Bobotie is a traditional South-African dish made with minced meat, white bread and eggs. In the recipe below, the cooking directions have been jumbled. Place the directions in the correct order, using the linking devices below instead of the letters a-e. Explain why you think this must be the right way to make the dish.

Firstly/first- secondly/second- next- then- finally

- a) Beat the eggs with the milk and pour over the meat. Garnish with the leaves.
- b) Mix in all the other ingredients except the butter, eggs, milk and bay leaves.
- c) Bake in the oven at 180 degrees Fahrenheit until set, about 50 minutes.
- d) Soak the bread in milk, squeeze to remove the milk and mix the bread with the minced beef.
- e) Melt the butter in a frying pan and brown the meat mixture lightly in it. Turn out into a casserole.

Example 4.4 New Experience, p. 55.

Such a task draws students' attention to the function of linking words. It might introduce new words, engage them in the process of using them and raise awareness on the matter. Learners get to see how crucial the function of linking words can be, and the importance of them. This task also trains students in the discourse pattern of presenting elements in chronological order. Similar tasks that could increase students' understanding of the importance of coherence are realized in tasks such as "showing people the way", and figuring out the order of the different steps of CPR¹⁵. In both examples learners get to experience the crucial role of making sure that elements are presented in the correct order. But, how to do this is not included in the textbooks.

Linking words are referred to other places across the textbooks, but not in relation to oral tasks. *Targets*, includes a section on the matter with metapragmatic instruction (see p. 223), but this is not referred to in oral tasks. There is reason to believe that a reference to this section would benefit students as it includes information about the importance of cohesion. In addition to a short informative paragraph, *Targets* provides

¹⁴ My personal experience is based on teacher training time spent in class, and from part time jobs in both lower and upper secondary school (two years).

¹⁵ CPR is short for Cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

the readers with examples, followed by explanations of what signal each of the linking words send to the listener. *Access to English*, also includes metapragmatic information about coherence, but only links it to written English (see p. 159).

4.2.2 Functional competences

These kinds of competences make up learner ability in knowing and using functional language for different communication purposes. Table 4.3 and 4.4 present quantitative findings of what language functions students are provided with opportunities to practice using. Table 4.5 shows the number of times students are engaged in certain patterns of verbal exchange. In relation to these opportunities, students have to draw on their linguistic resources and pragmatic knowledge to produce suitable utterances. Other times, students are provided with metapragmatic instruction on which to base their choice of language. This section will provide the reader with a discussion of findings and examples to illustrate this.

4.2.2.1 Microfunctions

This category represents what functional purposes learners are required to handle when using the English language orally.

Table 4.3 Microfunctions

Microfunctions	Number of tasks		
	<i>Targets</i>	<i>Access to English</i>	<i>New Experience</i>
Imparting and seeking factual information	93	65	81
Expressing and finding out attitudes	75	57	80
Suasion	8	10	1
Socializing	5	8	15
Structuring discourse	6	12	21
Communication repair	0	1	0

Findings indicate that *imparting and seeking factual information* and *expressing and finding out attitudes*, are the most frequent functions required in oral textbook tasks. Following, ranged high too low, are *structuring discourse*, *socializing*, *suasion* and *communication repair*. The latter categories are considerably minor in terms of opportunities created.

Starting with *imparting and seeking factual information*, this functional purpose is often required in relation to questions following literary texts, performing research on different themes, creating questions for interviews, and making presentations. In addition to handle factual information, the Norwegian education system aims to participate in the process of *Bildung*, by scaffolding learners' intellectual development as democratic citizens. For this reason, education should provide learners with opportunities to develop their opinions through reflection tasks, and functional language to suit the purpose of expressing, but also finding out attitudes. Such tasks enable students to transfer their meaning into English without losing its essence. With reference to Vygotsky and Bakhtin, tasks within this category are beneficial to provide learners with opportunities to discuss such facts. As a result, learners can develop an opinion on the matter (see section 2.3.3).

This takes us to the second language function category of *expressing and finding out attitudes*. An interesting finding is that all three textbooks include explicit language functions suited to this purpose. Most of the metapragmatic instruction included is related to functional language used in Norwegian to express an opinion. This is an example of negative transfer, as it does not work so well in English. Norwegians might easily use the directly transferred expression, and consequently, *Access to English* makes an attempt at providing explicit language functions:

SPEAKING

When we are asked to give our opinions it is easy to translate directly from Norwegian and say “*I mean that...*”. This is, of course, incorrect and can make a native speaker cringe. Look at the following alternatives and practice using them when you are asked for an opinion.

I think that...	I'd say that...
In my opinion...	Speaking for myself I'd say that
The way I see it...	As far as I'm concerned...
I personally believe that...	I believe that
In my experience...	

Now get into groups and pick a few of the following topics to discuss, trying to use these different ways of expressing yourself.

- The death penalty for violent crimes
- The necessity of learning two variants of Norwegian - bokmål and nynorsk.
- Forbidding Facebook on school pc's
- Limited access to national parks like Jotunheimen to avoid damage to nature
- Back to pen and paper; limiting the use of pc's in regular classwork
- Extraterrestrial life
- Fortune telling

Example 4.5 Access to English, pp. 55–56.

In addition to engaging students in oral use of language, example 4.5, also provides students with explicit examples of language suited to the functional purpose of expressing attitudes. I do, however, want to critique the task instruction on the wording: “This is, of course, incorrect...”. I do not find this statement justifiable for textbook designers, as they have not included any information on what makes it wrong in this task. Also, it might result in students feeling embarrassed as they did not know this. The textbook does, however, include metapragmatic instruction on when *I mean* is appropriate to use, later in the book:

IMPROVE YOUR LANGUAGE

Does *mean* mean what you think it means? Sometimes the verb *mean* can be translated to Norwegian *mene* and sometimes it can't.

We can use the verb *mean* in the following contexts:

- å bety, å innebære (om et ord, et tegn, et saksforhold) : *What does the word apartheid really mean?*
- å ville si, presisere en betydning: *What do you mean by calling me "boy", officer?*
- å ha i sinne, å ha til hensikt: *He means to have his revenge.*

When we are referring to having an opinion (å ha en mening), we cannot use the verb *mean*. Instead we must use verbs like *think* or *believe*- or we use a different construction altogether.

Jeg mener at regjeringa bør gå av.
I think the government should resign.
I believe the government should resign.
In my opinion the government should resign.

Example 4.6 Access to English, p. 203¹⁶

The information is disguised as a task, but as it does not require any oral production from the learner, it is not counted as a task in this thesis. It is, however, listed before a role play task which demands such functional language to be used. Personally, I think students would benefit more from this information if it was linked to a task (such as in example 4.5). *Access to English*, also includes another similar task to example 4.5, with ten examples of how to express an opinion, followed by eight examples of expressing agreement and eight on expressing disagreement¹⁷, which is to be used in discussing listed topics. In relation to how *Access to English* includes explicit language functions and metapragmatic instruction on *expressing and finding out attitudes*, I also wish to refer to the metapragmatic information on appropriate language exemplified in relation to having a dialogue, argument an debate, presented in section 4.2.1.1, with different degrees on formality and emphasis.

Compared to *Access to English*, the other textbooks do not provide adequate metapragmatic instruction (see section 2.3.2). *Targets* includes a task with 3 explicit linguistic sentences to express opinions¹⁸, and *New Experience*, a textbox with 10

¹⁶ The example only presents the *bokmål* version of the Norwegian words, whereas the original includes *nynorsk* as well.

¹⁷ See *Access to English* for full example, p. 158.

¹⁸ See *Targets* for full example, p. 42.

utterances in relation to expressing agreement or disagreement: *I think, in my opinion, the way I see it, I agree with you, you're right about that, good point, absolutely* etc.¹⁹

A positive aspect of including explicit information and examples are learners' possibility to expand and improve their language repertoire and pragmatic competences. Even though meaning is the primary focus in tasks, I find it beneficial that textbook designers also include focus on form. With reference to Shumin (2002), oral language skills are dependent on explicit teaching, just as any other language skills. This point is also raised by Littlewood (1981) and Young (1997) who consider it necessary to present learners with aids (forms) in the process of learning a language (see section 2.3.4).

Another positive aspect is low achieving students' improved possibility to participate in interaction when provided with structural crutches for communication. I find it beneficial that textbooks include such functions, as teachers do not have time to personally guide every student in using these functions. According to Crawford (2002), some people consider textbooks as deskilling teachers and placing mistrust in the language instructors. On the other hand, some people consider textbooks as an aid and a tool for developing autonomous learners.

The microfunction of *expressing and finding out attitudes*, is frequently required in everyday talk. Being able to take part in social discussion situations is an important part of participating in social communities. Engaging students in tasks, such as example 4.5, can prepare them for similar group talk where they have to use this microfunction. Such microfunctions are often a part of a bigger conversation, and group talk is for this reason a good way to practice using them. This way, students must relate to other peoples' ideas, consider how and when to interfere in conversation and adjust to the formality of the setting. Insight into what is appropriate to do in such situations is important to be considered a part of the social sphere and avoid being marginalized (see section 2.3.4.2).

Tasks that deal with this type of functional language, includes an information gap in terms of asking for someone's personal attitude. To such a question, it is only the learner who holds the answer. Such a gap is requested by Ellis (2009) to create a

¹⁹ See *New Experience* for full example, p. 77.

purpose and a necessity for communication. Such tasks are also beneficial as learners are left to rely on their own resources and in the way that there is no “incorrect” answer to the task. The message sent to learners through such tasks, shows that there is no wrong answer. This can serve as a motivational factor.

Another microfunction is *suasion* and includes functional purposes of making suggestions, requests, warnings, advice, to encourage etc. In other words, it is about making a change. The number of opportunities throughout the textbooks is relatively low. Referring to chapter two, Cunningsworth (1987) opts for students to experience trying to apologize without causing offence. *Access to English*, which has the most opportunities for students to practice suasion (10 marked tasks), includes a similar activity in example 4.7 below.

ROLE PLAY

Work in pairs. The scene is a restaurant in the small town of Bigotsville.

Role A

You are a stranger to this town. You are just passing through and you have been on the road for a long time. You are very hungry and delighted to have found this restaurant, the only one in the town with your favourite dish – roast duck – on the menu. Make your order.

Role B

The restaurant you work at is reserved for people with brown eyes/blue eyes (whatever colour your partner does not have). There is a perfectly good (and slightly cheaper) restaurant for people with the other eye colour just across the street. Persuade your unwanted customer to leave, in the nicest possible way. After all, you have your regular customers to take into account.

Example 4.7 Access to English, p. 204.

An important aspect of pragmatics is how interlocutors experience utterances in conversations. Such considerations are crucial in terms of pragmatics (see section 2.1.2). Example 4.7 explicitly encourages learners to persuade a person in the nicest way possible to leave the restaurant. The interlocutor (role B) must consider how he or she can ask the guest to leave and avoid that the guest is feeling embarrassed and disrespected. This way, the learner has to consciously consider how to create a “particular effect”, as Leech (1983, p.51, see section 2.3.4.2) put it, in the mind of the unwelcomed guest. The elaborated purpose and goal of the role play is evident in this

task. Such a task also allows for the speakers to experience how effective their choice of wording is, as they see how participants react.

Another microfunction is *socializing*, which includes purposes such as getting attention, addressing, greeting etc. The low number recorded in table 4.3, is striking as its relevance could be argued to be high for all students. Most learners will experience a need for such functional language at a later point when interacting in English. This microfunction will be discussed in more detail in relation to the interaction schemata: *meeting people* (see section 4.2.2.2).

When it comes to the microfunction of *structuring discourse*, the numbers vary greatly across the three textbooks. *Targets* has six opportunities, *Access to English* has double the amount with 12 instances, and *New Experience* has almost three times the amount with 21 instances. Two tasks which explicitly require such functional language are examples 4.1 and 4.2. Both examples include a person who is responsible for structuring the discourse of the talk show and the interview. These roles require competences on how to structure discourse and are in need of functions for opening, closing, emphasizing, creating summaries and turn-taking.

The last microfunction is *communication repair*, which was only identified once. Even though it might occur more times than marked, it was not explicitly demanded in tasks. There were no explicit language examples or information included on the matter either.

4.2.2.2 Macrofunctions

Macrofunctions were marked if students were asked to produce a sequence of sentences. The different discourse areas, require different skills, and can therefore be separated into macrofunctions. The potentials of the different functions are outlined in table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Microfunctions

Macrofunctions	Number of tasks		
	<i>Targets</i>	<i>Access to English</i>	<i>New Experience</i>
Persuasion	3	3	0
Argumentation	36	29	49
Instruction	1	2	4
Description	30	20	21
Summarization	12	2	3
Narration	1	0	1

The first communication purpose listed in the table is *persuasion*. In terms of this, *Targets* and *Access to English* each contain three opportunities, whereas *New Experience*, does not explicitly require students to take part in this macrofunction. Being aware of how people use persuasive language is important as language has proved powerful, for example in terms of rhetoric. *Targets* includes metapragmatic information in relation to tasks, in addition to referring to metapragmatic information further back in the book. Here is how *Targets* presents information on persuasive speech in relation to a role play:

Role play: the art of persuasion

Online, Hannah has seen a lovely Louis Vuitton handbag. Since her eighteenth birthday is coming up, she decides to talk her father into giving her this hand-bag as a birthday present. Usually, Hannah would have settled with something more affordable. However, last night she overheard her dad telling her mum that he has just been promoted, which will involve a significant pay rise. Yet, when Hannah approaches her father, he declares that the handbag is a waste of good money.

In pairs, act out the scene. Before you start, write down 3-4 arguments to support your character's claim. Afterwards, discuss the persuasive techniques that each of you used. Were they successful?

In persuasive speech or writing, the key is to make an effective argument.

Pathos (emotion): Use words and examples that appeal to the emotional side of your audience.

Logos (logic): Use facts, statistics, examples.

Ethos (credibility): Make your audience believe you are an expert, or refer to someone who is.

Read more about persuasive techniques on page 136.

Example 4.8 Targets, p. 31.

The textbox listed below the task, helps learners to understand how persuasion is created and could raise students' awareness on persuasive techniques. As previously pointed out, the information might facilitate the role play better if explicitly referred to in the task instructions. Such knowledge is beneficial for learners to interpret situations when such techniques are used towards them. Also, it helps them engage in using the techniques when needed. Pragmatics is not only about how to use language, but also being aware of how other people use it. A discussion on meta-talk will follow (see section 4.2.2.2), but an example of this is also raised here in example 4.8.

Students are engaged in meta-talk on how their persuasive techniques worked in the conversation which might develop students' metacognition. In other words, *Targets* includes both awareness raising and practical activities on the matter, in relation to the question raised for consideration in the CEFR (2001) on whether pragmatic development should be facilitated "by awareness-raising (analysis, explanation, terminology, etc.) in addition to practical activities?" (p. 154). I find such ways of working beneficial as learners might have a greater chance of acquiring the knowledge as they practice using the information through different mediums. First, they read the

information, and then they try to use it in a context, before discussing the effect of the techniques. Being able to metacognitively identify and reflect on language strategies have proved beneficial for learners when evaluating effectiveness of them (see section 2.3.2). For this reason, it is beneficial that *Targets* encourages students to reflect on the effectiveness of their persuasive techniques.

Moving on, *argumentation* is the most frequent macrofunction across the textbooks. The importance of creating opportunities for students to develop argumentative skills is recognized in the article of Newell et al. (2011). Here direct links are drawn from being able to produce good arguments to general academic success. Argumentation is often encouraged in relation to discussion of textbook texts, and goes hand in hand with the microfunctions: *imparting and seeking factual information and expressing and finding out attitudes*. *Argumentation* has been difficult to map, as there are many potentials across oral tasks, even though it is not explicitly asked for. Especially higher achieving students might include it more often as a follow up to stating an opinion, whereas lower achieving students might not. When going through the textbooks, I noticed that *New Experience* includes the sub-question of *why?*, after questions ensuring that students back up their answers. This textbook also has the highest number of potential for developing argumentative skills.

Targets, on the other hand, does not always include this additional sub-question of *why?* One example is: “Do you think Lou is too fussy about the kind of job she wants?” (*Targets*, p. 95). In other words, this is a yes/no-question. A suggestion might be to include *and why do you think this?* to encourage argumentation taking place. In the same question, students are asked to discuss what different jobs (bus driver, nurse etc.) entail, and which they would have chosen, if they were in the character’s shoes. In relation to telling what profession they would have chosen, students are not asked to present arguments for their choice. In contrast to example 4.8, where students are explicitly asked to prepare arguments before entering the discussion, this task does not include instructions for preparation.

The three following macrofunctions are low in numbers. When it comes to *instruction*, there are only a few opportunities provided for the students. Within these opportunities are tasks asking students to use oral language on how to carry out CPR, explaining the

way etc. *Description*, however, has more task potentials (average of 23 opportunities). Recorded examples are descriptions of characters in texts previously studied. The macrofunction of *summarization* stands out in *Targets* with 12 provided opportunities, in contrast to the low numbers in *Access to English* with two opportunities, and *New Experience* with three opportunities. This macrofunction is often used to summarize textbook texts.

The criterion of *narration* was marked if tasks asked students to tell stories. It is only marked in one task, across the textbook material. As discussed in the methods section, I found several tasks to be borderline cases. This was also the case when it comes to *narration* as several tasks had the potential for students to answer the task by telling a story if they wanted to. The following example is such a case, but because it does not explicitly instruct learners to tell a story, it is not included in the quantitative analysis.

PRE- READING

Have you ever experienced what it is like to tell your parents about something bad or unwise that you have done? In groups, share these experiences with each other, How did you feel and how did your parents react?

Example 4.9 New Experience, p. 68.

In example 4.9, learners are asked to *share experiences*, and describe *how did you feel and how did your parents react*. The last part could result in students telling a story of how parents reacted, what they said etc. If not highly motivated, and maybe a bit shy, this is a scenario not likely to happen. Even though students could use narrative discourse to answer the task, it might not include the structure of a narrative: orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda²⁰. To present the reader with an example illustrating how narration could take place, I have included the task which was marked for this macrofunction:

Telling a story

You may have read about or experienced a similar story where people meet with dangers while they are out in the wilderness. Tell this story to your classmates.

Example 4.10 New Experience, p. 236.

²⁰ See Labov and Waletzky (1967) for additional information.

In this example there is a clear indication for learners to use the macrofunction of *narration* to answer the task. Considering that there is one opportunity created for narration to be practiced in this task, I believe it would be beneficial to change the wording in some tasks to create more opportunities for student narration. On the other hand, telling stories is a focus area in lower levels of the Norwegian school. Therefore textbook designers might consider this a skill already acquired by students.

4.2.2.3 Interaction schemata

Interaction schemata are about understanding what comes next in conversation, and what is expected of participants in the situation. Learners should be aware of situations known to include repetitive patterns of verbal exchange. This way they would avoid misunderstandings and it would facilitate higher fluency in conversations. Table 4.5 presents the potentials for student engagement in handling the schemata.

Table 4.5 Interaction schemata

Interaction schemata	Number of tasks		
	<i>Targets</i>	<i>Access to English</i>	<i>New Experience</i>
Making purchases	0	0	1
Ordering food and drinks	0	2	0
Asking for information	9	9	21
Meeting people	3	5	7
Asking and showing the way	0	0	1
Asking the time	0	0	0
Inviting and reacting to an invitation	0	0	2
Arranging accommodation	0	0	0
Proposing a course of action and reacting to such proposals	3	3	5
Having a discussion	33	27	31

Findings indicate a great variety in terms of opportunities created across the categories. The numbers are relatively low, with some exceptions. *Asking for information, meeting people, proposing a course of action and reacting to such proposals, and having a discussion*, are four interaction schemata that stand out in terms of frequency. A discussion of interesting findings will follow.

In relation to the interaction schemata of *making purchases*, there was only one task recorded to engage students in such talk. *New Experience* includes a task asking students to act out the process of buying theatre tickets.

<p>Booking theatre tickets Study the advertisements and decide which play you would like to see. Then, in pairs, act out a conversation where one of you calls a booking office to order theatre tickets for the play.</p>	<p>How to book a theatre ticket The Cashier will probably ask about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - which performance you prefer (day and hour) - which seats you would like (stalls, dress circles, upper circle) - when you will pick up the tickets <p>The Customer will probably ask about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - which prices are offered (possible reductions for students and groups) - which seats are available and recommended - where the tickets can be picked up - how and when to pay (via, cash, one hour before the start of the performance)
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Example 4.11 New Experience, p. 288.

In this case, students are explicitly presented with the interaction schemata related to the social event of buying theatre tickets. Such information, where interaction schemata are explicitly described is a rare case across the textbook material. Such information could, however, make it easier for learners to produce appropriate functional language, and get familiar with the schemata of making purchases.

In relation to the previous situation, *ordering food and drinks* includes a similar pattern of verbal exchange. These interaction schemata are required two times in *Access to English*, asking learners to act out ordering food at a restaurant. Just like in the previous example, the schemata are transferable from Norwegian pragmatic knowledge, except for the linguistic obstacles.

Asking for information is accounted for nine times across *Targets* and *Access to English. New Experience*, on the other hand, includes the schemata 21 times. In the social communication situation of carrying out an interview where students are asked to create questions and engage in question-answer activities, such interaction schemata is practiced. This type of activity is recorded once in *Targets*, twice in *Access to English* and seven times in *New Experience*.

Considering what language to use when *meeting people* was included three times in *Targets*, five times in *Access to English*, and seven times in *New Experience*. As the subject of English aims to prepare learners for life following education, such an interaction schemata is important to include as it is one that most students will encounter. For this reason, I will discuss the schemata further.

The first linguistic exchanges made in interaction are crucial to setting the tone and style of the conversation, in addition to distributing social discourse roles. For learners it is therefore helpful to be aware of norms related to such situations, and be provided with tools (such as language functions and turn-taking skills) to handle them. One way of developing this aspect of pragmatic competences is exemplified in *Access to English*. Prior to providing learners with appropriate tasks related to the topic, learners are aided with metapragmatic instruction on the notion of small talk. The example is to be found within one of the “Improve your oral skills”-sections and is referred to as “The art of small talk”. The interaction schemata could vary from two verbal exchanges such as saying *hello*, replying, *how are you* and answering. Small talk does, however, most times include more set conventions, which are accounted for in *Access to English*. The section containing metapragmatic instruction and tasks will be discussed below.

The section starts by introducing the purpose of small talk and describes it as “not to give or receive information, but simply to put each other at ease, to prevent awkwardness and sometimes to lay the foundation for further conversation” (*Access to English*, p. 27). It also discusses situations where such talk is appropriate: when meeting people for the first time, running into people you barely know, or even friends. In this section, students are also asked to consider the context of the situation before choosing language of expression. The textbook states that in Norway, most situations are of a less formal character. Interviews and business meetings should still be recognized as formal

events. In relation to level of formality, students are provided with suitable functional language for informal and formal greetings: *Hello, hi, how's it going?* vs. *How do you do? Pleased to meet you.*

Body language is also considered an important factor when meeting people, and students are instructed to make sure that their body language is appropriate in terms of cultural differences (intimate context between genders). It should be comfortable for all parts in the interaction. Another culture dependent factor is how *please* is not used similarly in Norwegian, which could lead to Norwegian speakers of English appearing as rude, if they drop using *please*. As previously pointed to, L2 speakers of English, tend to underuse politeness markings (Rose & Kasper, 2001). By raising student awareness of the aspect, their metacognition develops and the tendency could turn (see section 2.3.2). Finally, the textbook designers have included some considerations on the main conversation and the parting aspect of small talk. When having a conversation it is important to find something that is easy to discuss, and possibly something that interlocutors have in common (e.g. the weather). Learners are also asked to consider interlocutors' signals used to end conversations such as *well, anyway, all right etc.*

Following the metapragmatic instructions, the textbook provides learners with two tasks to practice using the skills. Cunningsworth's (1987) list of important variables in a speech situation: consideration of physical context, social roles (in that context), and the goals of participants, are all included in task instructions (see section 2.3.4.2). This should provide learners with information solid enough for a good outcome.

1.THE ART OF SMALL TALK

In the following dialogue, one of the speakers is clearly not an expert in small talk. Sit in pairs and perform the dialogue. Then discuss where the problems are. Finally, perform the dialogue again, but this time abiding the “rules” of small talk:

Joe: Hi Sally, I haven't seen you for a long time.

Sally: How do you do?

Joe: What? ... Yeah, well anyway, how are you these days?

Sally: My body temperature is currently 37.5 degrees Celsius, that's 99 degrees Fahrenheit, due to a slight inflammation of the throat, presumably a viral infection. However, I am now eating normally again after a prolonged period of indigestion.

Joe: Oh, well that's good... And otherwise? It hasn't been much of a summer has it?

Sally: How can you make such claim? Statistics show clearly that average temperatures have been higher than normal.

Joe: Really, I didn't know that... Well anyway, it was nice talking to you.

Sally: Rainfall, however, has been slightly above the national average, but that is only to be expected after a prolonged period of drought in the spring.

Joe: I am sure you're right. Well, I have to dash. Give my regards to your mother.

Sally: Give *my* regards to *your* mother.

Joe: I will.

Sally: And your father and your brother and your sister.

Joe: Indeed I will. Bye Sally!

Sally: Good afternoon.

2.ROLE PLAY: THE COCKTAIL PARTY

Everyone in class stands up and walks about the classroom. When your teacher gives a signal, you must stop and engage the person closest to you in small talk. Each conversation must last two minutes (you teacher will time it). When your teacher gives the signal that time is up, you should move on and repeat the process.

Example 4.12 Access to English, p. 29.

The first task engages students in meta-talk on how the conversation fails as Joe does not know the conventions of small talk. Due to the information presented prior to the task, learners should be able to explain why the talk goes wrong. This way, students are asked to discuss information in light of a practical example, which could be a good way to make the information their own. Such results are interesting in relation to Vallenga's (2004) findings on explicit discussion of conversational norms being a missing element in textbooks, as discussed in chapter two.

The second task, asks students to put theory into practice. When engaging in personal small talk students have to make sure they obey the rules of small talk. Students will experience having to interact with interlocutors in which their social relationship might differ. The social relation between the interlocutors will naturally reflect their choice of language. Joe's choice of formality was, for example, not suitable to the context as the

characters seemed to know each other well enough for an informal tone. Choice of conversational topic might also differ in students' interaction. Students are taught that the goals/purpose of small talk is not to exchange information or engage in deep discussions (at least not to begin with), but simply to get the conversation flowing, acknowledge the interlocutors, and avoid awkward silence. If interlocutors, like Joe, diverge from these norms, it can easily confuse other interlocutors. Similar activities are opted for by Shumin (2002) and Newell et al. (2011) who point to the relationship between being able to engage in causal and brief conversation (such as small talk) and getting along in a language community (see section 2.3.4.2).

Targets, has three instances requiring students to interact in this pattern. It includes a similar set of metapragmatic information provided prior to a task on conversations in general. The textbook designers have included how to start a conversation, keep it going, end it, what to do if one doesn't understand/hear, and what to do if you can't find the right word (p. 34). This information might be more descriptive than in *New Experience*, as it also includes examples of how to turn the conversation back at the other person etc. The task following the information is, however, of a simple manner, and does not include any meta-talk.

Practice conversations in class:

- between two people who have just met for the first time.
- on a topic you are not familiar with, for example the North American jackrabbit.

Example 4.13 Targets, p. 34.

Both examples provided within this category are described as social interaction activities and create opportunities for students to produce "speech which is socially appropriate to specific situations and relationships" (Littlewood, 1981, p. 86). In general, I find these tasks good as they contain explicit information and metapragmatic instruction which could raise students' metacognition and foster their pragmatic competences.

New Experience, has the largest number of instances of engaging students in these schemata. It does not include any metapragmatic information on the matter, but includes linguistic examples related to the tasks. This is also done in relation to small talk. Based on textual analysis, learners are presented with a social context and asked to invent

social roles. The purpose is also mentioned in how they are to use small talk to introduce themselves and try to keep the conversation going.

Language making conversation.

In the story there are some examples of ways to start and keep a conversation going. In a large group, imagine that you have been invited to the British Embassy in Oslo. Invent characters and circulate around in the room, introducing yourselves and trying to keep up a conversation with the other guests.

SMALL TALK

Useful expressions

- Excuse me, are you...?
- How do you do?
- Nice to meet you.
- May I introduce...
- I am sorry, I didn't quite catch your name...
- What is your opinion about...
- Do you know...
- Give my very best regards to...
- I look forward to seeing you in/at...

Example 4.14 New Experience, p. 311.

Compared to the previous example, students are provided with a more formal setting, and language to go with it. There are, however, no metapragmatic information included on what considerations to be made, conventions of small talk, or what actually makes this type of language relevant for the situation. Another noteworthy matter, is students' possible inability to relate to the situation. The relevance of performing the task might therefore feel limited as learners might never experience such a situation. A positive finding is, however, how the task instruction refers to conversational openings and techniques to keep it going in a text previously studied. This might illustrate textbook designers' idea of texts serving as models for language functions. Whether students are able to catch up on this is another question. To sum up this section, these patterns of verbal exchange will be relevant for most students. Being familiar with conventions of small talk might enable learners to avoid awkward situations, and to further engage in conversation as the first turns in interaction are successful.

The next interaction schemata are low in number of opportunities created for student interaction. In relation to *asking and showing the way*, *New Experience* is the only textbook which includes an opportunity to practice using the schemata. Moreover, there are no opportunities for students to engage in *asking the time* and *arranging accommodation*. *Inviting and reacting to an invitation* is realized two times in *New Experience*. The schemata of *proposing a course of action and reacting to such*

proposals is required in three tasks in *Targets* and *Access to English*, and five tasks in *New Experience*. Accordingly, there is no metapragmatic instruction related to the schemata.

The last type of interaction schemata is *having a discussion*. This is the most frequent interaction schemata. In terms of opportunities created in the textbooks, the number of tasks marked for this is similar (around 30). What is special about this type of interaction schemata is that the different combinations of speech acts can be put together in so many ways. The repetitive turns in *having a discussion* do, however, include being able to express agreement or disagreement, sharing opinions etc. For this reason, learners need functional language suited to the purpose. This type of interaction schemata also allows for learners to experience the cooperative aspect of language, as if they do not contribute, the discussion will not go forth.

The importance of handling such schemata is raised in LK06's (2013) aim of learners being able to "introduce, maintain and terminate conversations and discussions about general and academic topics related to one's education programme" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 10). The skill of engaging in discussion is also important with reference to the social aspect of language, knowing how to take part in daily life discussions, as well as more formal and structured versions. Small group talk is considered beneficial for students to develop thinking and conversation skills.

Unfortunately, discussion skills are reported to be underdeveloped in English language learning classroom (Green, Christopher & Lam, 2002, p. 225). To facilitate discussion in the classroom, tasks should be informative in terms of instructions (see section 2.4). This is not always the case. One task that I suspect will not lead to a good discussion is example 4.15.

Expressing opinions

Work in groups and discuss the following:

- a) How many hours do you spend online every day?
- b) Have you ever come across the term *catfish* in the context of social media?
- c) Study the table from SSB. How does the use of mass media on an average day as presented by SSB compare to your life?
- d) Apart from the words already mentioned in the text, what other words have come into the language as a result of modern technology?
- e) Do social media sabotage communication? If so, in what way?
- f) According to Edudemic, a leading education technology site, the most common targets of cyberbullying are 16-17- year-old girls. Edudemic also refers to studies which show that 51 per cent of all young people say they have been bullied online, whereas 49 per cent of young people admit that have been the online bully. Is cyberbullying a problem in your town?

Example 4.15 Targets, p. 18.

My impression of the task is that it requires highly motivated, skilled and autonomous learners for it to turn into a discussion. This is noteworthy as textbook tasks are reported to be frequently used in Norwegian classrooms (see section 1.2), in which there are a diversity of students. My argument is based on Littlejohn's (2011) criteria for analyzing tasks (see section 2.4). His first criterion is about what process is to be carried out in the task. This is presented in the task instruction as *discuss*. Even though the task encourages students to discuss, the outcome of the task might consist of limited oral production. Students might not know the different steps and expectations related to such a communication situation, and it might therefore result in a simple exchange of words. As pointed to in chapter two, this could result in inactive students not participating in the discussion, a trend reported by Westgate (1997). Textbook designers should therefore consider how to adequately facilitate discussions. A majority of the oral textbook tasks are simple question-answer tasks demanding only a restrictive amount of oral production, most times only a microfunction. This is also the case in example 4.15.

The task instructions encourage students to work in groups, which meets Littlejohn's (2011) criteria of *with whom* the task is to be performed. The task does not say anything about number, and therefore depends on further directions added by the instructor. On the positive side, the task does specify that it should be carried out in groups, whereas other tasks leave out such information. A positive consequence might, however, be that students can choose themselves, or the teacher can consider what works best in that particular classroom. Even though Westgate (1997), Green, Christopher and Lam

(2002) suggested 3 – 4 group members for the conversation to flow well, this might not be the case in all group dynamics. The textbook tasks vary in terms providing students with instructions of cooperation and in number of group members (normally around 3 – 4).

Littlejohn's (2011) last criteria of what content is to be worked with, is not relevant for this thesis. Then again, how the questions are formulated affects how the discussion develops. Even though the task is meant to lead to a discussion carried out in groups, the questions are turned towards the individual reader. This does not send a cooperative signal. Instead, it could result in learners expressing their opinions, for the simple purpose of doing so. Example 4.16, presented below, is included to provide the reader with an example of how tasks can be formulated to scaffold oral production in group discussions.

Group discussion

- a) What differences and similarities are there in the stories of Jesse Owens, Cathy Freeman and Usain Bolt.
- b) Why do you think winning an Olympic gold medal holds so much prestige for sportsmen/women?
- c) Discuss your favorite sports and give reasons why you like them.
- d) Discuss the issue of doping in sports. Is enough being done to stop it?
- e) Whose achievement do you think was the greatest- Jesse Owens', Cathy Freeman's or Usain Bolt's? Why?

Example 4.16 New Experience, p. 146.

This task provides learners with guided questions to carry out a discussion and is therefore more scaffolding in the process of creating a good discussion. The discussion is related to a text, but asks for personal opinions and includes questions continuously pushing the discussion forward. The last example also bases its questions on personal attitudes which could prevent learners from feeling like they are seeking a blue print answer held by the teacher. As previously discussed, Westgate (1997) stresses the importance of this, as he says that: "talk isn't simply a more sociable way for students to arrive at a point previously decided by the teacher" (p. 192). Students should be aware of this matter, and that the goal of such conversations is the talk itself, in which one for example negotiates meaning and experiences. Based on qualitative analysis, a lot of tasks do ask for learners' personal opinions.

As I criticized how some students do not engage in classroom discussion, I feel the need to include that I have experienced students above Vg1 level mastering the interaction schemata of *having a discussion* successfully. This class mastered, for example, thematic development well and could basically discuss anything with good arguments backing up their case, if they wanted to. These students were, however, trained in such skills. In a discussion, their teacher would constantly ask follow-up questions to develop students' arguments and understanding on how discussions work, routinizing their pragmatic competences on this area. In relation to textbooks, I would argue that explicit instruction on the conventions of discussions and linguistic examples to express opinions, should be provided.

An interesting finding based on the qualitative analysis is that there are little instructions on how to carry out a discussion, and even less meta-talk on what the purpose of a discussion is. Such findings are noteworthy especially considering that *having a discussion* is marked so many times in the textbooks. Sometimes it seems like textbook designers throw in the word *discuss* to maximize the oral use of language. The only information I could find in the textbooks on what a discussion really is was in *Access to English* where it says that a discussion is a type of conversation in which two or more people engage. Talk turns into a discussion as "the conversation becomes serious and focused on a particular topic... In a discussion people may agree or not agree. If a discussion becomes heated, though, we call it an *argument*" (*Access to English*, p. 127). Even this is not very descriptive. The border line between a discussion and a debate is dependent on how the discussion develops and arguments are presented. For this reason, a discussion of having a debate is included in the next section.

An argument for including metapragmatic instruction and descriptive task instructions to scaffold students at Vg1, is the diversity in terms of student abilities in Norwegian English-classrooms. As touched upon earlier in the thesis, classroom environment and social relations might influence how tasks are carried out. Other factors are group-dynamics, teacher response, student motivation and language skills. To make my point, the amount of oral production and pragmatic competences practiced in each task, depends on how confident the speaker feels. Also, pointed out earlier, textbook designers and teachers have a crucial role of sending signals of expectations in terms of

conversational goals. In relation to the central role of CLT, making mistakes should be normalized to avoid learners fearing to talk English.

Another important reason for including metapragmatic instruction is the Norwegian classroom situation. When engaged in social interaction activities, students should consider what aspects of their pragmatic knowledge are transferrable from Norwegian to English, to draw on acquired knowledge. When interacting in a Norwegian classroom, other interlocutors will most likely also be Norwegian. For this reason, they might be unable to spot negative transfer, if it is not pointed out explicitly. For this reason, textbooks could include metapragmatic information to raise students' awareness of pragmatics in English.

4.2. Communication situations

Communication situations presented in this section differ from the interaction schemata discussed above as presentations and debates include a more formal structure and set expectations. How textbooks create tasks and instruct students in the process, in terms of *giving a presentation* and *performing a debate*, is discussed in this section. Table 4.6 presents the quantitative findings across the textbooks.

Table 4.6 Communication situations

Communication situations	Number of tasks		
	<i>Targets</i>	<i>Access to English</i>	<i>New Experience</i>
Having a debate	2	2	4
Giving a presentation	9	8	13

Table 4.6 reveals that *Targets* and *Access to English* has two potential for engaging students in debates, whereas *New Experience* has double the amount (4). As mentioned in the previous chapter, *Access to English*, presents definitions of different types of conversations. Debates are defined in the following way: “a *debate* is a discussion between opposing viewpoints that follows certain rules” (*Access to English*, p. 127). For

this reason, there seems to be blurred lines between *having a discussion* and *having a debate*, as some of the tasks accounted for under discussion could develop into debates.

Following the definition presented in the previous paragraph, *Access to English* includes linguistic examples of how to do different things with our language such as making suggestions, expressing an opinion, expressing agreement, expressing disagreement etc. (p. 127). *Access to English* includes a modelling example which leads up to student engagement in a similar debate. It begins to explain the aim of formal debates, before moving on to the role of the chair (keep order, and be the neutral moderator), the proposers (present arguments) and the speakers (critical questions and comments). The aims of formal debates are also included in terms of how the debate should end in a vote to decide which side of the matter “won” the debate. It also asks students to prepare arguments. Similar instruction (to prepare arguments) was also present in example 3.1 on discussing and debating (in a less formal manner) what makes football so fascinating. I believe that explicitly asking students to prepare arguments and get to know their point of views on the matter before getting engaged in the debate is beneficial. These preparations facilitate a better debate as students are less likely to run out of arguments. Such activities might also raise students’ awareness on their roles and therefore act more pragmatically correct in the given situation.

Another example in which students are asked to prepare arguments through research is found in *New Experience*. The task is related to a text, creating context and information about the issue of disagreement in the debate.

GROUP DEBATE

Find out as much as you can about either the Protestant or Catholic point of view in Northern Ireland. Work in groups of four to six. Conduct a debate in which half the group sympathizes with the one point of view and the other half with the other point of view. Summarize your arguments for the rest of the class.

Example 4.18 New Experience, p. 185.

The importance of guiding instructions referred to in chapter two, is however of concern here. Also, what is the aim of the debate? I believe example 4.18 aims at engaging students in talk, rather than reaching a consensus. An interesting study would be to investigate if this knowledge is held by the learners as well.

Even though students are not asked to discuss arguments prior to engaging in the debate, there is potential for collaborative reasoning taking place within the two parties of the groups: Protestants and Catholics. As previously mentioned, such a preparation activity might prove beneficial for the outcome of the communication situation. Newell et al. (2011) point to research findings which verified that “participation in the collaborative reasoning resulted in a significantly higher number of arguments and rebuttals” (p. 283). Such findings underline the effectiveness of providing time for oral discussion prior to engaging in a debate.

Being able to consider the audience of a communication situation is important to act pragmatically appropriate. Example 4.18 includes task instructions which encourage learners to *find out as much as possible* about the different directions within Christianity. An interesting finding is, however, that the task only encourages learners to seek information about one of the directions, instead of two. Even though the task is preceded by an informative text on the matter, it would be beneficial for students to get familiar with both sides of the discussion as this could enable them to predict counterarguments that might be useful in the discussion. This way they would be prepared, and have well developed arguments ready.

Engaging in a debate requires both listening and speaking. Every utterance is important in how the debate develops. Shumin (2002) quotes Mendelsohn and Rubin, to describe the double role that interlocutors have in such communication situations: “while listening, learners must comprehend the text by retaining information in memory, integrate it with what follows, and continually adjust their understanding of what they hear in light of prior knowledge and of incoming information” (p. 205). Well prepared debates are good exercises for learners as they may experience the collaborative framework of conversations. Such a task allows for participants to experience the effect as well as others’ reaction to their arguments. This way they can evaluate the efficiency of their claims. Another noteworthy claim is raised in one of the reviewed studies in Newell et al (2011). This research, carried out by Richard Anderson and colleagues, reported a so-called *snowball phenomenon* to express how learners learnt from each other when participating in argumentative language usage, and eventually acquired argumentative schemata.

The second and final communication situation that will be discussed is *giving a presentation*. There are nine such examples in *Targets*, eight in *Access to English*, and 13 in *New Experience*. The amount of information provided is minimal. In general, the tasks simply ask students to go deeper into a thematic topic and present it. Do textbook writers assume that students know what it takes to make a good presentation? Even though the books contain information on how to carry out a presentation, there is only one textbook (*Access to English*) that refers to sections dealing with metapragmatic instruction on how to carry out a presentation. A typical example of a task that does not include instructions is taken from *New Experience*:

<p>PRESENTING AN ARTIST Give a mini-talk about your favorite artist.</p>

Example 4.19 New Experience, p. 83.

This might be a good task for high achieving learners as they are given creative freedom to use their imagination in solving the task. They can choose relevant elements to include and are provided with opportunities for showing that they can handle the language with its multiple functions and aspects. Even though the task has a great potential for creative minds, it might not engage all learners in the opportunities created. Less able students could have benefited from more descriptive instructions. The latter type of students might understand this task as a request for them to gather some simple facts on the artist and present them. In other words, there is nothing preventing minimum effort on behalf of the learners. Also, if students are not trained in giving presentations, they might end up reading from their manuscript word by word. There are no conscious language processes taking place as students are tied up to their manuscripts. Before revisions were made to LK06 in 2013, it included a division between spontaneous and prepared communication. Prepared speech could benefit the outcome of oral presentations in terms of more well-structured and planned presentation. The disappearance of this distinction from official documents is something I consider unbeneficial for classroom communication, if the result is that spontaneous communication is neglected. There are also textbook tasks asking students to present their hobbies. Such topics can increase motivation and hopefully make it easier to talk freely during the presentation.

Carrying out the textual analysis, I marked example 4.19 as fulfilling the following criteria: *thematic development, coherence and cohesion, imparting and seeking factual information*. I also included the communication situation of *giving a presentation*. These are what the task actually asks for, while if the task had asked the students to consider their audience it could have fulfilled *flexibility to circumstances* as well. *Expressing and finding out attitudes* could also be relevant if students explain why they like this artist. In addition, *argumentation* could follow, and *description* if the student chooses to explain style, looks or the artist's musical traits. If formulated differently, the task could scaffold students to include such considerations when creating their mini-talk. This is yet another example of the difficulties I encountered in performing the analysis as some students might touch upon several aspects of pragmatic competences.

Targets has nine tasks resulting in oral presentations. As already stated, the textbook does not include any information on how to carry it out, connected to tasks. *Targets* does, however, include a short table on key elements in a presentation: *Welcome your audience, introduce yourself and your presentation, start your presentation, move on, summarize, and thanking* (p. 136). It also includes useful phrases to suit the different elements. Such information can help learners structure their presentations. The linguistic representations of speech acts are, however, of a formal character. In comparison, there are no formal presentations requested in oral tasks. Textbook tasks are instead directed to be presented in class, which makes the formal information chart irrelevant and unsuitable for the textbook tasks. I believe it is reasonable for students to feel awkward if they should start their presentations in the classroom with *Good morning, and welcome to our school* and *First of all, I'd like to thank you for coming here today* (p. 136). The formal character of the presentation is not explicitly mentioned. As learners are required to appropriate language to the context, it is reasonable to expect textbooks to do the same, or at least explain the function of the language presented.

Access to English includes three pages of explicit information on how to give a presentation. The section is followed by two tasks including meta-talk about aspects of oral presentation, and to experience how body language, tone of voice and intonation influence the meaning of an utterance (pp. 106–108). In terms of meta-talk, students are asked to watch a video provided online, and discuss the important aspects of an oral

presentation. The pages present the different purposes of oral presentations: inform, instruct or persuade. The textbook also points to the importance making entertaining and engaging presentations. The importance of body language is mentioned together with the aspect of keeping a moderate pace. Also, there is a part on “Your English,” where textbook designers tell students not to worry about pronunciation or grammar, but to focus on the meaning. As previously stated in chapter two, research shows that accurate grammar is less important compared to choosing the right words to make listeners understand (Kramersch, 1981).

Students are explicitly asked to consider the audience and show context sensitivity as the audience might not know all the difficult words. Different elements of a presentation are also presented and their individual purpose explained. The textbook also encourages learners to involve their personal experiences, which I find beneficial. In addition, learners are provided with appropriate ways to start the different parts, which facilitates a coherent presentation. Compared to *Targets*, these phrases are more appropriate suggestions related to textbook tasks on how to start and end a presentation: *Today I am going to talk about, the topic of my presentation is, that brings me to etc.* The phrases are of less formal character and are better suited to the classroom situation. I also want to point out that textbook designers refer to these pages in several tasks on oral presentations, to scaffold the learners in the process.

5 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study has been to map the potentials for developing pragmatic competences in three textbooks for Vg1. The research has been carried out through a theoretical textbook analysis of oral textbook tasks. The framework used to carry out the analysis has relied on a set of criteria based on the CEFR's (2001) outline of pragmatic competences. In addition, relevant literature within the field of pragmatics and CLT has been used to discuss qualitative findings on metapragmatic instruction. This chapter sums up the main findings, regarding the research question presented in section 1.4. It also suggests further research.

5.1 Potentials of Developing Pragmatic Competences

To my knowledge, there is no research performed on how Norwegian textbooks facilitate the development of pragmatic competences in oral tasks. Textbooks are central in education, and textbook tasks have been reported to be actively used in classrooms (see section 1.2). Pragmatic competences enable learners to participate in successful communication and therefore as participants in the global world community. Oral practice in handling communication situations similar to real life could therefore be beneficial in language learning classes. According to my findings, pragmatics seem to have made its way into LK06 (2013) and Norwegian textbooks used for teaching and learning English. However, the present study identifies central aspects where there is room for improvement in relation to oral textbooks tasks.

In general, textbooks touch upon most aspects of pragmatic competences mentioned in the CEFR (2001). Students are engaged in practicing oral language related to different aspects of discourse competence and functional competence. They are also engaged in giving a presentation and having a debate. Despite the potential opportunities created for practicing pragmatic competences in oral tasks, simple task instructions with few directions and encouragements might limit the effect of the tasks. In other words, tasks could have been better facilitated in terms of providing guidelines of actions and steps regarding how they should be carried out to better scaffold the process.

Insufficient task instructions are reflected in the low numbers across the tables presented in chapter four. Due to simple task directions, the amount of pragmatic aspects touched upon in each task is limited. In general, tasks that only require microfunctions as a response, account for approximately half of the oral tasks presented in the textbooks, and allow for minimum effort from students. These tasks are in most cases related to discussing information or expressing opinions related to texts.

More complex tasks, that engage students in handling a larger range of language functions, could relate more to real communication situations, and thus feel more relevant for students. This could provide learners with experience in trying to handle and consider the different factors in a conversation. *New Experience* stands out in the tables as it has a relatively high number in most categories, compared to the other books. Based on qualitative findings, this originates in task design as textbook designers engage students in using several functions in one task. This textbook includes more tasks involving students in communication situations not related to texts. In other words, they have less “state your opinion” and “understand the text”- type tasks, compared to the other textbooks.

The lack of task instructions leads to an interesting question: are textbook designers afraid of making tasks too complex and decrease student motivation? Regarding his distinction of task and exercise, Littlewood (2004) points to the negative associations often related to the terms, as something boring and laid upon the learner. So, are textbook designer avoiding complex tasks to avoid negative associations in the minds of the learners? If learners are involved in tasks that do not encourage students to take part in complex language situations, I dare to state that the development of general language and discourse skills will be limited. One cannot expect students to successfully engage in complex language situations if students are not taught how to handle them.

In short, there may be reason to claim that the tasks are created for highly motivated and pragmatically competent students, considering the inadequate amount of metapragmatic instructions and informative task instructions. It may be the case that textbook designers expect learners to use texts as models for pragmatically appropriate language, and for this reason they do not include such instructions in the task. Researchers do, however, point to this unfortunate tendency as the lack of metapragmatic information in textbooks

could lead to teachers believing that students can transfer pragmatic knowledge from their L1 (see section 2.3.4). As previously stated, all pragmatic knowledge is not transferred by itself, and should therefore be facilitated. Due to the reported centrality of textbooks in school, textbooks should include scaffolding task instructions and metapragmatic information. A further discussion on this notion follows.

5.2 Amount of Metapragmatic Instruction

An interesting element of the qualitative analysis has been how textbook designers consider the question raised in the CEFR (2001) on whether pragmatic competences should be developed “by explicit teaching and exercising of functions, verbal exchange patterns and discourse structure” or expected to be develop from their L1 (p. 154). In relation to this, I find textbook designers to be situated somewhere in between the two alternatives. I base this argument on textbook designers neglecting to include appropriate scaffolding instructions in tasks and the limited amount of metapragmatic instruction in relation to tasks. For this reason, students have a limited potential for developing their pragmatic competences on the basis of oral textbook tasks. Overall, textbook tasks are not a reliable source of pragmatic information by itself. There may be reason to conclude that textbooks are dependent on good language instructors who can provide adequate metapragmatic instruction to develop learners’ pragmatic competences.

In general, findings reveal that there are few instances of tasks including metapragmatic information to further develop students’ pragmatic competences. It is, however, necessary to point out that there are some instances of metapragmatic instructions included in the textbooks. The amount and type does, however, vary. Especially, *Targets* and *New Experience* could benefit from more metapragmatic instruction in relation to their oral tasks. *Access to English*, includes the largest amount of metapragmatic instruction, but could also benefit from the inclusion of more information of this type, discussions on conventions and language examples. This is grounded in students’ documented inability to transfer pragmatic knowledge from their L1 to L2 (Bardovi-Harling, 2001, 2013; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Rueda, 2006). Explicit focus on developing pragmatic competences in textbooks, would allow for more beneficial communication situations giving students grounds for making successful

linguistic choices. Textbook tasks have the potential to raise student awareness on pragmatics, engage them in meta-talk, and aid them with appropriate language functions. Metapragmatic instructions introduce learners to norms and conventions of communication situations, and may potentially develop their ability to adjust language according to context.

As already stated, the book that contains the most descriptive metapragmatic instruction is *Access to English*. This textbook explicitly discusses conventions of conversation: the art of small talk, oral presentation, giving an opinion, and what to consider when having a debate and developing an argument. The book also refers to separate sections on relevant conventions in relation to tasks. It also engages students in meta-talk related to pragmatic competences.

Targets also includes sections with explicit metapragmatic information, in addition to suitable language functions related to tasks. It contains some information regarding what language is appropriate to use in different situations (e.g. persuasion) and what expectations are present in relation to having a conversation. Other types of pragmatic information which could develop students' pragmatic competences are not referred to in task instructions (e.g. level of formality and linking words). Instead, information is included in the form of lists of traits in tables separated from tasks, with no further explanations.

New Experience includes the least amount of information as it only provides simple language functions suitable for different communicative situations. The textbook includes useful expressions related to asking for and giving directions, stating your opinion and linking words.

So why are there not more metapragmatic instruction included in textbooks, as such explicit focus has proved beneficial. One reason may be that textbook designers expect students to have well developed pragmatic competences by the time they reach Vg1. Qualitative findings, in relation to amount of metapragmatic instruction, might indicate that textbooks follow the trend pointed out by Shumin (2002) above. Textbook designers might also believe that communicative competence naturally develops if students are engaged in enough communication activities. This issue was also raised in

the CEFR (2001) when asking whether pragmatic competences should be expected to develop naturally or through facilitation. I would, however, argue for the inclusion of metapragmatic information in relation to textbook tasks, to gain maximum effect of the tasks.

5.4 Implications

As stated in the introduction chapter, further research related to classroom practices could provide answers as to methodologies and approaches for developing pragmatic competences. This study purposes to present findings relevant for teachers and textbook designers.

First, this study aims to raise teachers' awareness of the importance of pragmatic competences. It could also prove beneficial as means of understanding how pragmatics are tied to communicative competences, and its importance to engage in successful communication. Such competences are central in terms of successful participation in discourse communities.

Second, the present study could also help teachers to better understand the complex concept of pragmatics. This study may enable teachers to improve their understanding of pragmatic competences presented in the CEFR (2001) and how these are reflected in textbooks and LK06 (2013). The Council of Europe's presentation of pragmatic competences might become too theoretical for many, for which, I find it beneficial to present theory linked together with practical textbook examples to illustrate the relevance of the concept in textbooks. Also, the thesis aims to guide teachers in terms of central research within the field of pragmatics.

Third, the findings and discussion presented in chapter four, might also make teachers aware of what elements could be included in tasks, and what types of task might benefit the purpose of developing pragmatic competences better. Since some teachers become textbook writers, future contributors to the field of learning materials could also benefit from this study in terms of reflecting on what aspects are emphasized or ignored in oral textbook tasks. This study might also serve as a guide to metapragmatic information related to oral tasks, which could be used in education. It might also raise teachers' understanding of the importance of metapragmatic instruction.

5.4 Further Research

This theoretical textbook analysis has revealed what aspects of pragmatic competences textbooks potentially engage students in. It allows for an understanding of how pragmatic instruction is included in relation to textbook tasks, and what aspects of pragmatic competences tasks create potentials for developing. The analysis does not account for learner outcome and processes in working with the oral textbook tasks. To provide research on tasks' effect, an experimental textbook analysis could be carried out on instructions of L2 pragmatics in the classroom. Such research is also called for in literature on L2 pragmatics (e.g. Kasper, 2001; Niezgodna & Röver, 2001). It would be interesting to study learners' negotiation in group discussions and how learners consider themselves as creators of meaning. Information about classroom procedures in terms of pragmatics could assist textbook designers and teachers in developing learners' L2 pragmatics.

In addition to learners' processes and outcome to be of interest, I also find learner and teacher experiences related to the process of developing pragmatic competences to hold interest. Considering how learners perceive education on the matter, in addition to how they understand the concept of pragmatics, could benefit the field of research.

I chose to look into oral textbook tasks as oral language skills are listed as a main skill in LK06 (2013), and are likely to be relevant for most learners in today's global language community. When interacting orally in English, learners should be aware of what factors to take into consideration in order to act pragmatically appropriate and have the tools needed to engage in successful communication. Compared to written English, learners have less time to pause communication, but must draw on their pragmatic competences as it is in oral interaction. For this reason, oral skills should be well developed. How tasks facilitate spontaneous vs. non-spontaneous oral production in relation to pragmatic aspects would also be interesting to map.

Due to the limited amount of research performed on pragmatics in Norwegian textbooks, another suggestion is to extend my research question to cover all tasks and metapragmatic instruction in textbooks for the teaching of English. To present a final research perspective, also blended learning in terms of developing pragmatic

competences would be interesting to study. Such research could complement the bigger picture of how textbooks engage in the process of developing pragmatic competences.

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