Peer-Led Group Dialogues between Majority and Language Minority Students in the Norwegian Upper Secondary EFL Classroom.
A Case Study.

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Abstract in Norwegian

Noreg har blitt eit multikulturelt samfunn, noko som også kjem til uttrykk i dei framtidige læreplanane. Til dømes blir tilsynelatande interkulturell kompetanse eit eige kjerneelement i den nye læreplanen i engelsk (UDIR, 2018), og ein må difor ta stilling til korleis dette elementet skal inkorporerast i undervisninga. Utgangspunktet til denne masteroppgåva er at minoritetsspråklege elevar kan vere ein ressurs i klasserommet, og at denne gruppa saman med majoritetselevar kan lære mykje av og med kvarandre.

Målet med denne masteroppgåva i engelsk fagdidaktikk er å undersøke fordelane og utfordringane ved å bruke elevleia gruppedialog mellom minoritetsspråklege elevar og majoritselevar i engelskundervisninga på vidaregåande nivå. I fokus står utvikling av interkulturell kompetanse, transformativ læring, og munnlege ferdigheiter.

Studien er eit case-studium, der ein minoritetsgruppe i engelsk og ei vanleg VG1 engelsk-klasse vart blanda i grupper for å gjennomføre tre gruppedialogar om utfordringar ved demokratiet. Dialogane vart gjennomført i tre dobbelttimar i løpet av ein periode på tre månadar. Empirisk data vart i hovudsak samla inn frå ei fokusgruppe som tok lydopptak av dialogane og deltok i gruppeintervju. I tillegg vart det gjennomført ei spørjeundersøking for alle deltakarane.

Funna tyder på at gruppedialogar mellom desse to elevgruppene blir opplevd som ein noko ustabil situasjon, som ofte kjenneteiknar interkulturelle møter. Deltakarane takla i stor grad denne ustabiliteten godt, og utvikla i så måte sin interkulturelle kompetanse. Nokre funn indikerer også at enkelte elevar fekk auka sjølvtillit til å snakke engelsk, også i andre undervisningssituasjonar. Vidare var det indikatorar på transformative læringsprosessar som følgje av dialogane. Nokre av utfordringane ser ut til å vere å gi nok nivådifferensiering og tilstrekkeleg støtte til elevane i forkant av og etter gjennomføring av dialogane. Dette vil truleg auke læringsutbyttet.

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List of Key Abbreviations

MA student – Majority student
In this thesis defined as a student who was born in Norway or has lived here for a long time.

LM student – Language minority student
In this thesis defined as a student born in another country and with few years of residence in Norway.

IC – Intercultural competence
Supporting Dervin's (2016) fluid understanding of culture, this thesis will not suggest a concrete definition of intercultural competence. However, for operational purposes, it is necessary to locate elements that are involved in this form of competence, e.g. values, attitudes, (language) skills and critical reflection (Council of Europe, 2016). Section 2.2.1. gives a thorough deliberation of IC.

EFL – English as a foreign language
The learning of English by a speaker whose first language is not English.

ESL – English as a second language
The learning of English by a person who lives in a country where English is the main language spoken, but who has a different first language.

ELF – English as a *lingua franca*
English used as a common language between two or more speakers who do not share the same first language.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The present chapter provides the background of this master's thesis in English didactics. It discusses previous research that is relatable to the current study, examines the current English curriculum in Norway, as well as on-going changes to the curriculum. The chapter offers an over-arching thesis question and three hypotheses that serve as common threads in the exploration of peer-led mixed group dialogues.

1.1. Aim and Scope

Taking a critical look at the Norwegian EFL upper secondary level classroom, one could characterise it as a fairly homogenous educational setting. Granted, all classes consist of students with rural or urban affiliations, different socio-economic backgrounds, different ethnic origins, and so forth. However, in my experience from the classroom, most of these students speak Norwegian fluently, are of the same age, live in the same general area, and have chosen the same educational programme. Research also shows that students tend to attain similar levels of formal education to their parents (Ekren, 2014). When students speak English in class, they do so in a setting that looks very different from any situation in which they will use the language later. They will not meet their friends at the cinema and start talking English, nor will they likely engage their family around the dinner table in said language. They will probably use English when going on holidays, when giving directions to a tourist, when studying abroad or in their future professions. During these interactions, they will also have to consider different traditions, values and experiences that may to some extent differ from their own.

One can therefore ask whether we are preparing our students well enough for the future if they engage with the same people in the same setting, every lesson. By changing the scene, students could, as Fred Dervin proposes, learn to *navigate* between different simple and complex social structures (2016, p. 81). This master's thesis in English didactics explores a different setting for EFL teaching in which students from different classes engage in group dialogues, and asks:

What are the didactic benefits and challenges of using peer-led group dialogues in mixed EFL upper secondary level classrooms?

More specifically, mixed EFL classroom will in this thesis mean students from two different classes; one consisting of mainly majority students (shortened MA students), and the other consisting of language minority students (shortened LM students). In the Norwegian school system, the term *language minority student* is used for students born in other countries and with few years of residence in Norway. The term shifts focus away from ethnicity and culture, and is therefore less politically charged. It also emphasises the key educational challenge for these students, which is language proficiency; oftentimes in both Norwegian and English. This is also a common characteristic of an otherwise greatly heterogenous group with different backgrounds, traditions, world views, etc. For these reasons, the thesis utilises the term *language minority student*, while *MA student* will be used for the other students who were born in Norway or have lived here for a long time. The less neutral term *majority* was opted because it is relevant to point out power inequality between the two groups in the context of this thesis.

To answer the research question, this thesis reports on data from a mixed-methods case study carried out at an upper-secondary school in Eastern Norway. 26 students from two different classes participated in an educational project labelled *Let's Talk* over a four-month period, during which three dialogues were conducted. Since the study investigates a highly specific and limited didactic context, it can offer no generalisations on the use of peer-led mixed group dialogues in EFL teaching. However, the aim is to provide in-depth knowledge that is relevant to both researchers and teachers. The present thesis relies heavily on theories of transformative learning, intercultural competence (IC) and linguistics.

1.2. Background and Rationale of the Study

Without question, Norwegian schools have in general become more multicultural in the course of the last decades. In addition to a growing number of second-generation immigrants, we have received new waves of immigration, especially from Poland, Lithuania and Sweden as employment searchers, but in recent years also refugees from especially Eastern Africa and the Middle East (Statistics Norway, 2016). Integration is high on the Norwegian political agenda, and the question of how we welcome immigrants stirs constant debate. For example, a committee founded by the think tank Agenda has proposed ten directives to promote better integration in Norway (Tankesmien Agenda, 2016, p. 38). One of these directives emphasises schools as the most important arena for integration, although it is not clearly stated how this integration should be facilitated. Thus, it is up to each school, or at least each county, to create

good practices for integration. This thesis proposes that integration does not only have to take place in school corridors or the cafeteria, but could be a positive biproduct of our didactic choices in the EFL classroom.

For my exam paper in English didactics in the Autumn of 2016, I carried out a small research project to explore how topics related to culture are taught in VG1 English classes with a mix of LM and MA students. As part of the project, I interviewed two teachers and conducted two group interviews with LM students who had taught and participated in mixed classes. Through the interviews, I wanted to find out if and how EFL teaching can be a suitable arena to promote intercultural competence for LM students.

The teachers responded that they mostly taught culture in an objective sense, where facts about different groups were in focus far more than discussing issues of culture. The interviews also revealed that the two teachers did not teach differently in classes where LM students were present. The LM students interviewed rarely related what they learned about culture to their own situations, and responded in line with the teachers' descriptions of culture as a factual topic instead of something that was discussed and problematised. Furthermore, the LM students described that they often held back even though they would like to voice their opinions on cultural issues. This was despite believing that English class was the best place to interact with MA students, since they were levelled linguistically.

My very limited study made me re-evaluate my own teaching practice. I contemplated how the English classroom could become an arena where cultural issues were discussed and problematised. Moreover, the role of the LM students needed closer consideration in my lesson planning, as well as how culture and democracy could become natural and unintimidating topics to address for LM and MA students alike. From these questions, the idea of group dialogue teaching emerged as a possible classroom method to explore in my master's thesis.

1.3. Previous Research

Attempts were made to locate studies or theoretical discussions concerning LM and MA students in EFL teaching, wanting to draw on existing research. Even if there apparently is no study that directly examines mixed group dialogue teaching, there are numerous academic publications on the topics of intercultural competence and dialogue teaching. The present section discusses some of the publications that are relevant to this thesis.

Tornberg (2004b) sees a shift from traditional language pedagogy with heavy emphasis on linguistics skills, to language teaching addressing "issues of meaning making processes, intersubjectivity and communicative action, and relating language education and its political implications to questions of sociocultural context, identity, personal experiences and democracy" (p. 5). This change is also evident in the international and national educational policy documents discussed in section 1.4. Mixed group dialogue teaching could potentially touch upon many of the elements Tornberg sees in the recent shift.

In his master's thesis, Krakhellen (2011) studied the promotion of intercultural competence in a class of adult minority students. One of the findings was that a great variety of cultural experiences in a multicultural classroom can contribute in the development of intercultural competence. Krakhellen's participants also included a Norwegian woman, and he concludes from her experiences that it is "enriching to be a student in a multicultural classroom", and that it can be even more so if culture is addressed more specifically in the classroom (p. 91). The present thesis will explore if similar outcomes can be found for younger students in a classroom setting with an approximately equal number of LM and MA students.

A well traversed area within the field of second language learning is collaborative dialogue, premised upon sociocultural learning theory. Collaborative dialogue is defined by Swain (2000) as "dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem solving and knowledge building"" (p. 97). Swain, Brooks and Tocalli-Beller's (2002) review of studies related to the use of such dialogue in second language teaching shows that learning through collaboration can have a positive effect on all aspects of language learning (p. 181). Hoffstaedter and Kohn (2015) have conducted a study using online collaborative dialogue between English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) speakers. They found that the participants engaged in ELF communicative actions that were transferrable to situations beyond school. Another relevant finding, for the current thesis, was that the students explored a "common intercultural ground (…) of views, opinions and attitudes" (p. 18). Thus, there seems to be much potential to be explored by studying collaborative dialogue in a mixed classroom setting.

Collaborative dialogue has also been utilised by several scholars in studies related to intercultural competence and literature reading. Peer group discussions are a significant focus in Hoff's (2017) empirical study on classroom practice related to intercultural competence and literary reading. One of the findings was that the peer group social interaction both enhanced and undermined the learning outcome of the project. Similarly, Thyberg (2012) has conducted a study of literature reading in the EFL upper secondary classroom, using peer-led deliberative dialogues. The results of this study indicate that the social interaction within the

groups facilitated a transformation in the individual, but in some cases also reinforced differences between the members. The present thesis will attempt to offer additional insight into the potential challenges and possibilities of peer-led dialogue on a general lever, as well as in the specific context of mixing MA and LM students.

1.4. A New Course for Culture Teaching

Important policy documents from international and national agents mirror the public perception of democracy and interculturality, and give schools and teachers instructions for what intercultural education should be. This subsection discusses some of these important documents and recent developments for Norwegian school policy documents.

A key agent in international school policy making is the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); probably most known for the PISA survey which evaluates students' competence in science, reading and mathematics in member countries. The OECD is also involved in the topic of interculturality, and in 2016 it published a document called *Global competency for an inclusive world*, in which global competency is defined as a combination of skills, knowledge and understanding, and attitudes (pp. 5-6). Values are described as guides to "individuals' attitudes, judgments and actions" (p. 5), and the OECD suggests "valuing human dignity" and "valuing cultural diversity" as such guides.

The Council of Europe's document *Competences for Democratic Culture* (2016) identifies 20 competences that are similar to the ones suggested by the OECD, although values are defined as a separate category, juxtaposed with attitudes, skills and knowledge, and critical understanding (p. 11). Many of the competences listed in the document are relevant to this thesis, and among these are valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices, skills of listening and observing, and knowledge and critical understanding of the world (p.12). More importantly, the document shows that democracy and interculturality are intertwined, which suggests that teaching of democracy should entail teaching of interculturality and vice versa.

In Norwegian educational policy making, a committee led by Professor Sten Ludvigsen wrote two reports between 2013 and 2015 that aimed to help legislators make educational reform adapted to the future needs of the country. Based on the works of the Ludvigsen Committee, as well as other documents, The Ministry of Education and Research made a report on behalf of the Solberg Government to present to *Stortinget* (2015-2016), marking the start of a reform of the Norwegian school system. It proposes that a set of common values

should be the foundation of future school policy, identified as respect for humanity and nature, freedom of speech, intellectual freedom, compassion, forgiveness, equality and solidarity (p. 20). It also points out that Norway has become more diverse in the last 20 years, and that open-mindedness and inclusiveness should be emphasised in future policies (p.21). Furthermore, the document points out particular attitudes and skills:

> The teaching should enable the students to reflect on and assess generally accepted truths, question and oppose on behalf of themselves and others. To live together in a community requires democratic understanding and respect for differences. But it can also require that one stands up for core values (p. 21, my translation).

It appears that values and attitudes linked to interculturality will be a central part of future educational policies in Norway. Still, the task at hand for educational researchers and teachers will be to find out how policy translates into didactic choices and the learners' outcome from what and how they are taught. The different subject curricula will of course also help make sense of the grand language of over-arching policy documents.

The introduction to the current English curriculum emphasises the importance of developing cultural competence through the English subject:

> Development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between persons with different cultural backgrounds. Thus, language and cultural competence promote the general education perspective and strengthen democratic involvement and co-citizenship. (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013a)

The introduction sets a tone of openness, respect and tolerance, which suits more contemporary European educational policy documents (e.g. OECD, 2016; The Council of Europe, 2016) and the latest developments in academic IC discussion (Dervin, 2016). However, when looking at the curriculum aims for VG1 English, students are expected to "discuss and elaborate on culture" and "discuss and elaborate on cultural expressions from different media" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013, p. 11). This corresponds to what Dervin (2016) calls the solid approach to IC, where culture is treated as something fixed and generalisable (p. 78). It seems that the *inter* in intercultural is missing in the present curriculum, as there is no wording that suggest e.g. that students must also relate

what they learn about the Other[1] to themselves, or critically examine their own assumptions. This can perhaps explain the findings of my small study from 2016, explained in section 1.2.

UDIR is presently developing core elements for the new English curriculum. Although this process is unfinished, the final draft which is currently presented as an official hearing document at the very least offers the contours of a new curriculum (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2018). There are four suggested core elements, of which the most relevant for this thesis are *communication* and *intercultural competence*. Communication has been a key element in previous curricula as well, and like before, the new core elements require students in secondary education to learn to use English in a variety of complex situations. The suggested core element of intercultural competence, a term which has not been present in Norwegian curriculum documents before, states that students must learn how language is used differently, both with first language speakers and when using English as a "contact language" (i.e. *lingua franca*). The draft also states that "students will develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to relate to other people's way of thinking, way of living, forms of communication and cultural expressions in an appropriate manner" (my translation). Something that needs to be clarified is the phrase "relate to", whose meaning can range from simply talking about the Other, or engaging with the Other directly.

Although still a draft, the document gives an impression of the direction English education in Norway will take in the future. Communication and IC will likely be central components in the next English curriculum, and depending on the intention behind the phrase "relate to", English teachers might have to adapt and find new ways to implement e.g. *lingua franca* usage in various settings. Similarly, we will likely have to shape students' attitudes, making them critically examine some of their existing views, in accordance with the Ludvigsen Committee's recommendations. In other words, the *inter* in intercultural appears to be central in the next English subject curriculum.

Thus, it seems that both international European school policy documents and recent and future official Norwegian educational documents align when it comes to intercultural competence and language teaching. Culture is no longer seen as static and factual in nature, but rather fluid and explorative, and corresponding changes will have to be made in the EFL classroom. It is in this context that this thesis examines group dialogue teaching in a mixed classroom, hoping that it can shed light on some of the didactic benefits and challenges of such a teaching method.

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[1] In this thesis defined as someone perceived to be fundamentally different from oneself, often in terms of e.g. traditions, values, world view, ethnicity or nationality.

1.5 Group Dialogue Teaching

Developing intercultural competence is not the sole responsibility of English teachers. However, one could argue that the role of the world's leading *lingua franca* (Crystal, 2003) makes English the most likely medium for our students' intercultural encounters outside the classroom. Furthermore, English has a unique position in Norway, somewhere in between a foreign language and a second language, making Norwegians highly proficient in English (EF, 2017). The combination of these two factors makes it both relevant and possible to engage in meaningful group dialogues in the EFL classroom.

Dialogue will here be defined as open and unbiased conversation, based on respect and tolerance, and with the goal of exploring different views to reach a consensus. Consensus does not mean that participants upon completion are required to agree with each other, but rather that, through the exploration of various viewpoints, they can come to a mutual understanding of conflicting and aligning opinions. In this sense, the groups can serve as *disagreement communities,* coined by Iversen (2014) to mean "a group of people with different opinions who in a shared process try to solve a problem or challenge" (p. 12, my translation). Moreover, dialogue distinguishes itself from regular conversation or debate through its core ideals of mutual respect, openness to new perspectives and critical (self-) reflection.

This thesis proposes the use of mixed group dialogue teaching in the EFL classroom for three reasons. Firstly, by uniting LM and MA students in a discursive setting with clearly defined guidelines, there could be a unique space to engage controversial topics from a plurality of perspectives. As Iversen (2014) explains, "discussion and disagreement can provide greater insight into other people's world view, and thereby make these less threatening and more comprehensible" (p. 13, my translation). The group dialogue could make students address their assumptions of the Other, and reposition themselves on the basis of new experiences, thereby developing their intercultural competence.

Secondly, this thesis does not only consider the development of intercultural competence, but also hypothesises that dialogues can foster students' critical reflection. Critical reflection is a natural component of intercultural competence, as international and national educational documents clearly state (cf. section 1.3). Furthermore, it is often connected to *Bildung* as educational objective, defined by Pieper (2006) as "developing and bringing out the full potential of a human being, based on his/her nature, but stimulated and structured by education (nurture)" (p. 5). By developing their critical reflection skills, students can apply

this way of thinking to other areas than issues of culture. For example, they can critically examine political systems in different English-speaking countries or see social issues from new perspectives to find new ways of understanding the world around them and the people who live in it. This is a key idea in transformative learning theory, where critical perception is considered a prerequisite for overcoming prejudice and biased thinking (Mezirow 1998; Cranton, 2002). Furthermore, critical reflection is not contained to one subject only, and can have positive effects in other subjects as well.

Lastly, the present thesis explores if mixed group dialogue between LM and MA students can constitute a discursive situation through which oral communication skills are developed. As most of the LM participants of the study did not speak Norwegian fluently, students had to rely on English to communicate successfully, differing greatly from regular oral practice in the classroom. The group dialogues do, however, share traits with English usage outside the classroom. For example, one can seldom rely on another shared language when English is used as a *lingua franca* (ELF). Moreover, as one cannot anticipate all the future interaction forms students will encounter, Baker (2016) suggests that students must build a linguistic repertoire that will enable them to successfully communicate in various situations (p. 84). Mixed group dialogues can hopefully help develop such repertoires as part of a wider oral communication skillset.

On the basis of the three focus areas indicated in this section, three hypotheses have been crafted to be tested in the study. Since the hypotheses are derived from relevant theoretical perspectives, they focus on the potential *benefits* of using peer-led mixed group dialogues in EFL teaching. However, as the overarching research question states, this thesis will also explore the didactic challenges of using such dialogues. The hypotheses are as follows:

1. By serving as a disagreement community, the peer-led mixed group dialogues can develop students' intercultural competence.
2. The peer-led mixed group dialogue can serve as a suitable arena for developing critical reflection.
3. The peer-led mixed group dialogue promotes oral communication skills that are useful in coping with ELF situations outside the classroom.

1.6. Outline of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. After this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides a theoretical discussion related to intercultural competence, transformative learning theory and

linguistic theory. The last section of this chapter established five common principles for mixed group dialogue teaching to show some of the commonalities in the theories discussed. The five principles also helped guide the study and the analysis of the data.

The third chapter explains the methodological choices made in the effort to construct a valid and reliable research project for this thesis. In the same chapter, a thorough presentation of participants, setting and implementation of the research steps is provided, as well as a discussion of the study's limitations.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study in a thematic structure, based on the five theoretical principles coined in the second chapter. The qualitative and quantitative data are integrated in a discussion of the didactic benefits and challenges of mixed group dialogue teaching. The last section explores other didactic angles than the five principles. The fifth and final chapter summarises this thesis and points to key findings. It also discusses implications this thesis might have on didactic practice and makes suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background

The present chapter will present and discuss theoretical frameworks relevant to interactive learning between LM and MA students in the English subject in upper secondary education. Bildung theory is presented in section 2.1., whereas section 2.2 explores approaches to culture and intercultural competence in education. In section 2.3, transformative learning is discussed in relation to upper secondary education, before the role of language in intercultural learning is considered in section 2.4. Based on the theories explored, the concluding section tries to establish common principles for promoting intercultural competence through peer-led mixed dialogue teaching between LM and MA students in the EFL classroom.

2.1 *Bildung*

Before discussing intercultural competence, it is relevant to look at *Bildung* theories, as it sheds important light on the learner's relationship to different types of knowledge. As previously stated, Pieper (2006) defines *Bildung* as "developing and bringing out the full potential of a human being, based on his/her nature, but stimulated and structured by education (nurture)" (p. 5). This definition fits with Klafki's (1996) term categorial *Bildung,* as it encompasses both the subjective and objective sides of human development in a learning environment.

Klafki (1996) sees two distinct traditional views of *Bildung*. The first is material *Bildung*, which focuses on factual knowledge. In the English classroom this could be topics like the US electoral system or the history of African Americans. Klafki claims that this material form of learning comes from the "scientification" of education, by which he means that information is presented as having "absolute validity" (p. 173, my translation). In the sciences it might be appropriate to treat some information simply as truth, but e.g. in dealing with challenges of culture and ethnocentrism it is hardly suitable to present views as facts. In contrast to material *Bildung*, formal *Bildung* embodies the learner's development of reflection and independent thinking, and the methods that lead to such development. However, the challenge with formal *Bildung* only is that reflection must be *about* something, especially in school subjects with unique topics set out in the curricula. Klafki proposes the term categorial *Bildung,* which includes both material and formal aspects of learning to make up for the weaknesses the two different views.

To promote a learner's categorial *Bildung,* Klafki (1996) proposes that learning must be *exemplary* (pp. 194-195), which means that it facilitates both material and formal *Bildung.* In

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order to do so, it must grab the learners' interest and encompass a living function in their lives (p. 189). Consequently, *exemplary* learning about culture must involve the students' personal engagement in the given topic. This can of course be a challenge, since if teachers only aspire to meet the students' preconceived interests, the education would rarely introduce students to new ideas and issues. Therefore, Klafki also proposes that categorial *Bildung* must open the students' "question horizon" (p. 189, my translation), exploring new ideas about the world they live in.

Using the same examples from the classroom as the ones discussed above, categorial *Bildung* would focus on the student's knowledge of and reflections about an unfair electoral system and the consequences of this, or the understanding that African American history influences racism and inequality, even today. By having students read a factual text about the US political system, the teacher can expect them to reproduce facts about the three different branches of government. However, to have them debate the significance of Checks and Balances requires a different approach. Similarly, promoting intercultural competence is not just about knowing the traits of different cultures; it also entails an understanding of the relationship between cultures and the individual's place in this relationship.

2.2. Culture and Intercultural Competence (IC)

2.2.1. *Defining* culture *and* intercultural

A typical definition of culture, which I have often taught, is "norms, values, language, history, traditions, rituals etc. which a group of people have in common, and which changes over time" (Holgersen et. al, 2013, my translation). The students have been supplied with abundant examples of cultures and subcultures, such as a Southern American culture, Native American culture, punk culture and football culture. It struck me, as I educated myself on the topic, that I have seldom problematised the use of the word culture with my students, and thus my approach to this topic has been quite objective. Likewise, the approach to cultural meetings between people has focused too much on the negative. This section examines the meaning of culture and the intercultural, as the understanding of these terms will shape the discussion of intercultural competence in education later in this thesis.

In the Council of Europe's *Competences for Democratic Culture* (2016), material resources, socially shared resources and subjective resources are defined as part of culture (p. 19). Material resources are objects used by a culture's member, such as a Bible, a car or a piece of clothing, whereas the socially shared resources can be a language, social norms or

holidays. Subjective resources, on the other hand, are more personalised, as each member can choose their own values, beliefs, life style, etc. Together, these three aspects of culture compose the culture of a group, while at the same time, group members "belong simultaneously to and identify with many different groups and their associated cultures" (The Council of Europe 2016, p. 19). Furthermore, cultural affiliations are not only complex, but also fluid "as individuals move from one situation to another, with different affiliations – or different clusters of intersecting affiliations - being highlighted depending on the particular social context encountered" (ibid, p. 20). This is what Dervin and Gross (2016) label *diverse diversities*, which entails that "everybody is diverse regardless of their origins, skin colour, social background and so on" (p. 5).

For Dervin (2016), the term culture is a misnomer which does not even truly exist, and he makes the point that "[o]ne cannot meet a culture but people who (are made to) represent it – or rather represent imaginaries and representations of it" (p. 9). He also warns that culture can become a lazy excuse in challenging intercultural encounters, where individuals' actions are explained by their culture, or perhaps as a culture clash. As Dervin notes, however, cultures cannot clash, but people can (2016, p. 10). If we as educators are not aware of this danger, we risk teaching our students an idea of culture that loses focus of the individual and gives agency to an arguably empty concept.

 A second danger proposed by Dervin (2016), is the need to compare cultures to each other (p. 11-12). This can easily lead to ethnocentrism, where one culture is viewed as better than others, and ideas of good/bad, and normal/unnormal are used to assess the perceived differences. Dervin calls this "obsession" *differentialist bias,* and believes that it "denies interculturality beyond difference" (2006, p. 35). Especially in a situation involving majority and minority members, shallow differences in e.g. language proficiency, skin colour and customs can speedily become the centre attention, and the outcome might be a greater distance between the two groups. This issue will be addressed later in this thesis, both when discussing ethical implications of the research project, but also in the discussion of findings in Chapter 4.

Because the word culture has so many different meanings, and because it has so many potential negative effects, Dervin (2016) proposes to discard of the term completely (p. 13). He proposes, citing Eriksen (2001), that instead of using the word culture, we can use more precise words to describe artistic expressions, language, ideology, food habits, etc., and concludes that "[t]he more precise and explicit we are when using certain words like culture,

the better and fairer it is for those whose voice(s) we (re)present when dealing with interculturality in education" (2016, p. 14).

Another term which needs clarification is *intercultural*. What happens between people in intercultural settings, and how do our ideas of culture affect intercultural encounters? And not least, what is an intercultural encounter? Starting with the last question, we should look at people's perceptions of each other when exploring how and what they understand as a meeting between cultures. If one perceives the interlocutor (here defined as a participant in a conversation) as culturally different from oneself, there is an understanding of an intercultural encounter. However, as Dervin and Gross (2016) point out, there is a diversity of diversities, in which all groups are internally heterogenous, and as such, the meeting between two MA students in the cafeteria can be just as much an intercultural encounter as a MA and a LM student discussing the use of hijabs.

Dervin (2016) proposes that there is a "potential creativity" in the *inter-* in intercultural competence, but that there is a "contemptible approach to culture in education" which tears down its potential (p. 13). He gives several examples, one of them being an instruction for international students at a Finnish university, which clearly shows an ethnocentric attitude toward Finnish culture (Finnish students are encouraged to think for themselves) and against many other cultures at the universities (students from many other cultures are less independent and responsible) (p. 12). For Dervin and Gross (2016), "[t]he prefix *inter-* in intercultural competence hints at transformations, *mélange,* reactions *not* cannibalistic behaviours through which one of the interlocutors swallows the other by imposing their 'better' and 'more civilized' culture" (p. 4). A challenge for educators thus seems to be twofold: to criticise our own understanding of culture which is explicitly or implicitly passed on to our students, and to help students face their own (mis)conceptions of culture. The result may be transformation, which is a central term in transformative learning theory, presented in section 2.3.

2.2.2. Intercultural competence through different lenses
By looking at official documents, it might seem as if intercultural competence is a clearly defined term. However, Dervin (2016) has made a meta-analysis of IC research, and has identified four different approaches, revealing a complex and evolving academic discussion in the field of interculturality (pp. 77-85). This section presents the four approaches identified in Dervin's analysis: the solid, Janusian, liquid idealistic and liquid realistic approaches.

The solid approach is connected to the work of Michael Byram, whose ideas have heavily influenced guiding educational documents from e.g. the Council of Europe (Dervin 2016, p. 78). Byram (2008) defines being intercultural as an activity, and defines it through five different but strongly interrelated behavioural objectives:

- Attitudes (*savoir être*)
- Knowledge (*savoir*)
- Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*)
- Skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*)
- Critical cultural awareness/political education (*savoir s'engager*) (p. 69)

Working to fulfil these objectives develops a learner's intercultural competence. The learner must explore his or her own, as well as others' attitudes towards other cultures (*savoir être*), as well as acquire specific knowledge about social groups and cultures (*savoir*) to gain this competence. Furthermore, intercultural competence entails interpreting what Byram calls "documents" of other cultures and relating it to our own culture (*savoir comprendre*), whereas the next objective (*savoir apprendre/faire*) involves more of an interactive skill. The last *savoir* shows "an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (p. 69).

Hoff (2014) critiques Byram's model in light of *Bildung* theory. According to her view, Byram emphasises too strongly the reconciliation of opposing or conflicting cultural perspectives (pp. 511-515). She proposes that "Byram's definition of ICC may in fact undermine, rather than promote a central aspect of *Bildung*" (p. 512), by which she means the Klafki's formal aspect of *Bildung*. In other words, by focusing on a one-dimensional cultural encounter between cultures where reconciliation is the goal, the critical thinking that is an important part of Klafki's categorial *Bildung* is lacking. Hoff's critique mainly concerns Byram's *savoir être,* and she admits that *savoir s'engager* "adds an essential dimension to Byram's model to counter the above concerns" (p. 515).

The Janusian approach to intercultural competence is described by Dervin (2016) as somewhat ambiguous, as it tends to swing between the solid and a more postmodern position (p. 79). Dervin refers to an example from a book titled *Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence: A guide for language teachers and teacher educators,* in which the authors first suggest a transnational culture, suggesting a postmodern view, and later

address culture-specific features, corresponding to a solid approach. Dervin's criticism of this approach mainly concerns the incoherence and contradictory fashion that "Janusianists" seem unaware of themselves (p. 79). He does not suggest that contradictions in themselves are necessarily negative, but that the lack of awareness by Janusianists of the ambiguity of their model poses potential issues when put into use.

The two liquid approaches are critical responses to the two previous models, and show how IC in fact can lead to reproducing and reinforcing prejudice (Dervin 2016, p. 79). The first of these liquid approaches is the idealistic model, in which *diverse diversities* is a central idea (p. 80). This approach proposes a non-essentialist and non-culturalist way of implementing and developing IC, but at the same time warns about the dangers of such non-essentialism, as it can "hide discourses of discrimination, power, and superiority, and can easily serve as excuses and alibis" (Dervin 2016, p. 80). As the name implies, the liquid idealistic approach sets unreachable goals of non-essentialism. Dervin points to the fact that any approach is in itself ideological in some respect, and thus, the idealist approach is no better than the rest. Another issue with this model is that, however noble the sentiment, there are situations where non-essentialist IC cannot be obtained because of human factors like emotion or experiences of inferiority. Lastly, Dervin makes the point that in educational settings, it will be challenging to make students accept that the ideals of non-essentialism cannot be reached, and that this can lead to frustration.

Finally, the liquid realistic approach, which seems to be a revision of the idealistic approach, recognises the position of non-essentialism, but at the same time accepts social and linguistic devices like clichés, generalisations and social conformity (Dervin 2016, p. 81). To further explain these seemingly contradictory ideas, Dervin, himself a proponent of the realistic approach, introduces the term *simplexity*, composed of the words *simple* and *complex.* He makes the following effort to explain simplexity:

> We all need to navigate between simple and complex ideas and opinions when we interact with others. It means that we often end up contradicting ourselves, not being sure about what we think, adapting our discourses to specific situations and interlocutors, using 'white lies' to please the other, and so on. (…) 'Simplexifying' IC consists in recognizing and accepting that one cannot access its complexity but one can navigate, like Sisyphus rolling up his boulder up a hill, between the 'simple' and the 'complex'. (Dervin 2016, p. 81)

Although simplexity might seem contradictory, it could resonate strongly with educators who see it not as a contradiction, but as a natural course of development for students. One could argue that teenagers start out relying on generalisations, but through their education develop

the critical reflection needed to adapt their previous viewpoints. Creating simplex learning situations for students might help develop the navigational skills needed to succeed in other intercultural encounters. As such, this thesis will incorporate some of the ideas from the liquid realistic approach when exploring interaction between MA and LM students in the English classroom.

2.2.3. IC in the classroom

Young and Sachdev (2011) have studied teachers' beliefs and practices of teaching intercultural competence in France, the UK and the USA. The results indicated that teachers from all three countries had adequate knowledge of IC and believed in its importance, but in spite of their knowledge and attitude, Young and Sachdev found that the participating teachers lacked the ability or willingness to put IC into classroom practice. Some of the reasons for this was perceived to be "lack of learner interest, a lack of curricular support, a lack of suitable textbook material, a lack of ICC testing, and concern about engaging with controversy" (2011, p. 95). The authors propose that a lack of teacher training can be one of the reasons for the discrepancy between attitudes and practice among teachers. In any respect, there seems to be a number of challenges that need to be investigated regarding the promotion of IC in the classroom. Dervin (2016) also brings up a number of issues that need to be discussed regarding IC in education, like the role of dialogue in IC teaching, how to incorporate instability and ambiguity, and how ideas of simplexity can be introduced in the classroom in a meaningful and constructive way.

In Dervin's view, most IC models are too centred on the individual, and he advocates that the fluid realistic approach takes the collective into account (2016, p. 83). He further claims that "IC is co-constructed by individuals in specific contexts, which means that dialogues need to be central to any approach to IC" and that "[p]utting an end to individualistic perspectives can allow us to examine the interdependence between I and others when interculturality takes place" (ibid., p. 84). If educators take this into account, our task will be to facilitate IC by establishing a collective in the classroom and introduce dialogue as a tool in this collective.

Another point Dervin (2016) makes about IC is that instability and ambiguity are essential components in intercultural activities (p. 82). Perhaps too often, we create overly "safe" learning environments for our students, in which they do not have to come to terms with this sense of instability. This was also one of the reasons why the teachers in Young and Sachdev's study did not engage IC fully in the classroom. Dervin proposes that "[a]wareness

of instability can help people to accept that the world, and especially self and other, are neither programmed nor better than others and urge them to revise their power relations" (2016, p. 83). Still, matters of culture and identity can be challenging to face for students who have experienced racism and negative stereotyping of their group, be it on the grounds of religion, skin colour or sexual orientation. On the other hand, if one sees stability as seeing the world in a fixed way, e.g. that Norwegians in general are homophobic, it might be good to "shake the foundation" a bit by challenging such ideas. Instability and ambiguity are also proposed to be central components in transformative learning, presented in section 2.3.

It seems by Dervin's recommendations that educators must allow students to feel a certain amount of discomfort in the classroom. In my experience, feelings of apprehension and uncertainty are normally frowned upon in educational settings, and teachers, including myself, go to great lengths to shield students from discomfort, and carefully nudge them towards overcoming such negative, but completely natural feelings. Still, we must acknowledge that as teachers, we often put students in uncomfortable situations, when e.g. giving a test, asking a student to speak in class, or making students work with peers they are not overly fond of. One way of helping students come to terms with feelings of apprehension and discomfort is to give room for failure. In fact, Dervin (2016) suggest that we should *celebrate* failure, and that it "should be a 'natural' component of IC in a world obsessed with selective success only" (p. 85).

2.3. Transformative Learning Theory

How does one promote intercultural competence? The easy answer is that which develops the students' knowledge and critical understanding, skills, attitudes, values listed in policy documents on the topic, like the Council of Europe's *Competences for Democratic Culture* (2016). It would be hard to take the stance that there is only one way to teach intercultural competence, since teachers always must consider a range of variables in their teaching. Still, it could be relevant to look at learning theory that can help educators find some useful direction when planning teaching to promote intercultural competence. In the preparations for the lessons included in my research project, I found it useful to include ideas from transformative learning theory.

2.3.1. What is transformative learning theory?

Jack Mezirow, the founder of transformative learning theory, developed his ideas by combining different academic theories, models, etc. (Cranton 2002, p. 65). The basis of his

theory is constructivist, as the aim is to make the learner aware of socially constructed truths, and by applying critical thinking, the learner will be able to transform his mindset in correspondence to new ideas and experiences (Mezirow 1997; 2003). Mezirow's definition of transformative learning is "the process of effecting change in a *frame of reference*" (1997, p. 5). Frames of reference are the sum of experiences, attitudes, values, feelings etc. which shape people's view of the world. These internalised concepts guide everyday actions without the individual being aware of their existence. Therefore, the process of effecting change in these frames of reference is contingent on making the individual aware of their presence.

Mezirow further explains frames of reference as consisting of two dimensions: habits of mind and points of view (1997, p. 5). Strongest of the two dimensions are habits of mind, which are habitual sets of codes that can be cultural, social, educational, economic, political, or psychological (ibid, p. 6). If an individual is brought up from a young age to believe that whites are superior to other races, and her experiences support this belief, it can create a strong social and cultural habit of mind. A point of view is the *articulation* of a habit of mind, and it is more easily subject to change than habits of mind. If the individual described in the example above learns about a black Nobel Laureate, her view may be challenged. She would have to change her point of view and acknowledge that there are some non-whites who are just as intelligent as whites, but might still believe that in general, whites are superior in intellect. Thus, her point of view would be modified, but not her habit of mind. If the individual has many experiences that challenge her points of view, it could eventually transform her habit of mind.

Central to transformative learning theory is Jürgen Habermas's communicative theory and the distinction between instrumental, communicative and emancipatory knowledge (Cranton 2002, p. 64). Instrumental knowledge is objective, and can in many ways be compared to the outcome of material *Bildung*. Communicative knowledge is the understanding of ourselves and others, and gives insight into the socially constructed world we live in. As the name implies, communicative knowledge is created in the interpersonal encounters between people, and its "truth" is therefore mediated and changeable. Lastly, emancipatory knowledge is the result of critical reflection and critical self-reflection that frees us from constraints, i.e. leads to a transformation.

In line with these types of knowledge, Mezirow uses Habermas's distinction between instrumental and communicative learning (Mezirow 2003, p. 59). Instrumental learning means to assess truth claims, and often relies on an empirical approach. Communicative learning, on the other hand, does not involve assessment of truth claims, but rather "claims of rightness,

sincerity, authenticity, and appropriateness" (p. 59). In communication with others, it is not necessarily important to determine whether or not a statement is true, but it can be crucial to understand the underlying intention of said statement. In a classroom discussion, there is often one or two students who like to exaggerate and provoke responses. If the other students learn to identify the lacking sincerity of the provoking statements, they will approach the situation differently by addressing the intention rather than the truth of what was said.

Mezirow's communicative learning is not directly comparable to sociocultural learning theory, which is more commonly referred to in didactic and pedagogical publications. The founder of sociocultural learning theory, Lev Vygotsky, believed that knowledge is not constructed individually, but through interaction with others (Imsen, 2005, p. 265). According to this view, knowledge, ideas, attitudes and values are all shaped and reshaped through contact with others. Whereas sociocultural learning theory explains learning in general through social interaction, Mezirow's communicative learning means learning how to understand others. Central to his theory is to critically reflect on pre-existing beliefs as well as new knowledge, and one must therefore also critically examine the person one learns from. Hence, these theories are dissimilar in terms of both scope and aim in this respect.

Mezirow (1997) identifies four processes of learning (p. 7). The first is to elaborate an existing point of view. This is done by experiencing things which correspond to our existing bias, and it can strengthen or expand our view of e.g. a group of people. Mezirow focuses much on negative points of view through social mechanisms like ethnocentrism, but the case might be made that these points of view can be positive as well. If one experiences that people who skate are very polite, it is easy to strengthen this view if one also learns that they are very welcoming towards new participants. The second process of learning is when we establish new points of view that fit into our existing habits of mind. The third process is learning to transform a point of view, which happens when an individual experiences something that goes against an existing point of view. As previously mentioned, many such experiences may result in what Mezirow calls "a transformation by accretion" in a habit of mind. Lastly, we can learn by becoming aware of and critically reflecting on biases, leading to an "epochal transformation", which Mezirow identifies as uncommon and more difficult than other forms of transformation since it necessitates an awareness of very covert habits of mind.

Essential in transformative learning theory, is the concept of critical reflection. Mezirow (1998) sees reflection as "simple awareness" of objects, thoughts, feelings, etc., where there is a lack of assessment of the things reflected on (pp. 185-186). Critical reflection, on the other hand, makes such assessments, either implicitly or explicitly, on the basis of past experiences

and assimilated values (p. 186). Furthermore, "[w]hen the object of critical reflection is an assumption or presupposition (CRA), a different order of abstraction is introduced, with major potential for effecting a change in one's established frame of reference" (Mezirow 1998, p. 186). This critical reflection can turn towards both self and others, through which the result may be "[s]ignificant personal and social transformations" (p. 186).

2.3.2. How to facilitate transformation

Patricia Cranton (2002) identifies seven facets in a transformative learning process (pp. 65-66). She proposes that the process should not be seen as linear, but more as a spiral, and calls her description a "rough guide" to help educators understand transformative learning better. The seven facets are as follows:

- An activating event that typically exposes a discrepancy between what a person has always assumed to be true and what has just been experienced, heard or read
- Articulating assumptions, that is, recognizing underlying assumptions that have been uncritically assimilated and are largely unconscious
- Critical self-reflection, that is, questioning and examining assumptions in terms of where they came from, the consequences of holding them, and why they are important
- Being open to alternative viewpoints
- Engaging in discourse, where evidence is weighed, arguments assessed, alternative perspectives explored, and knowledge constructed by consensus
- Revising assumptions and perspectives to make them more open and better justified
- Acting on revision, behaving, talking, and thinking in a way that is congruent with transformed assumptions or perspectives (Cranton 2002, p. 66)

Cranton further proposes teaching strategies for each of the seven facets (2002, pp. 66-70). For the first facet, Cranton believes that teaching can create activating events by exposing students to points of view that are different from their own. The exposure can take the form of different art forms or readings that present different perspectives, and the students must be asked to look at the topic from the different perspectives.

By articulating assumptions, students reveal ideas which are deeply embedded in their subconscious, and Cranton suggests a few ways to successfully provoke such discovery. One way is to ask students critical questions that e.g. encourage them to identify experiences that led to their view, possibly revealing that few such experiences exist and that the assumption is flawed. Another teaching strategy is to use metaphor analysis, where students first are asked

to apply a metaphor to something, and then what underlying assumptions affected the choice of metaphor.

To develop critical self-reflection among students, Cranton proposes the use of several different approaches, and two of these are the use of reflective journals and modelling critical self-reflection in the classroom. By using reflective journal exercises, students write down their experiences with something in or outside school to make them reflect on the experience. Cranton advices that students not only write what happened, but also their thoughts, feelings and reactions and the reasons for these. She further suggests that the teacher should volunteer to read the journals so that uncertain students' feelings and ideas can be validated, and prompt questions to further develop their critical self-reflection. Modelling critical self-reflection in the classroom can create an environment where the norm is to challenge ideas and perspectives, and the teacher must lead the way for students to follow. Cranton believes that establishing such a learning environment with the students is one of the best grounds for teaching transformation.

In order to make students open up to alternative viewpoints, it is important to create a safe learning environment where students can try out different perspectives in a harmless way. For example, role play can be a way for students to act out someone else's viewpoint without taking personal responsibility for this view. Similarly, in a classroom debate, students can take a stance that is opposite of their own and learn to articulate arguments from a different point of view. Another way would be to make students write letters from a particular perspective, e.g. that of a Confederate soldier during the American Civil War, or a Syrian refugee crossing the Mediterranean.

Before students engage in discourse, Cranton recommends that time should be spent on setting up guidelines for a successful discourse, as well as explaining the difference between a discourse and a discussion. She identifies the guidelines as:

> having accurate and complete information, being free from coercion and distorting self-deception, weighing evidence and assessing arguments, being open to alternative perspectives, critically reflection on presuppositions, having equal opportunity to participate, and accepting informed consensus as valid knowledge (Cranton 2002, p. 69).

To help participants remember the guidelines, Cranton suggests the use of student observers, who take notes and give feedback. A less open way to participate in discourse is the writing of dialogue journals, which are passed on between two or three students. This makes it easier for more introvert students to participate, and it makes it easier to remember the guidelines.

Cranton admits that when it comes to revising assumptions and perspectives, teachers cannot do more than to facilitate such change in their students, and support them in their transformation. The support can either be the acknowledgment of difficult emotions for a student who is struggling, or showing appreciation of the joy of a student who experiences the transformation in a more positive way.

Finally, helping students act on their transformed frames of reference is a challenge, since these acts most likely will take place outside of school. Still, it might be possible to set up situations at school where students can use their transformed views. If a student has transformed a disturbed image of a group which is also represented at school, it might be possible to set up a situation where he can interact successfully with this group's members. Cranton also proposes that field trips and other experiential learning projects could help students gain new experiences in accordance with their revisions.

By providing what she calls a "rough guide", Cranton does not propose that transformation is something that can be taught, but rather something that can be facilitated through environment where students are challenged, combined with safety and support. She writes that "[i]n every strategy we use, we need to provide an ever-changing balance of challenge, support and learner empowerment" (2002, p. 71). When teaching upper-secondary students in general, and LM students in particular, one could argue that this balance is of greatest importance, since their age and background make many of them quite vulnerable.

2.3.3. Criticism of transformative learning theory

Kucukaydin and Cranton (2012) define transformative learning as a "theory-in-progress" (p. 44). Critically questioning transformative learning theory, they raise a series of important questions regarding the ideas, terminology and usage in this fairly young and developing model. One point for discussion is how terms are legitimised through use, without critically questioning their meaning (Kucukaydin & Cranton 2012, p. 48). For example, transformative learning theory holds critical reflection as a central component for transformation, but a study by Taylor (1994) showed that this is not always the case (more about this study later in this section).

Another issue outlined by Kucukaydin and Cranton (2012) is the difficulty of placing transformative learning theory into the current epistemology of education, which is obscured by different viewpoints, like realism, relativism and postmodernism (pp. 49-50). Making the task even more complex, is the development of four different approaches within transformative learning theory: the developmental, emancipatory, extrarational and rational

approach (p. 44). Mezirow's theory is here defined as the rational approach, whereas the extrarational is a way is a response to the lacking inclusion of emotion, imagination and intuition in his writings. Focusing on the extrarational approach, Kucukaydin and Cranton suggest more inclusion between the different views on transformative learning to help develop the theory further:

> Emotions significantly affect our learning both in terms of enhancing learning and in inhibiting learning. For example, anxiety could obstruct learning in one situation (math anxiety) and in another situation motivate a person to learn. Incorporating emotions, feeling, intuition, and imagination has led to a more holistic understanding of transformative learning. (2012, p. 45)

Taylor (2007) has a similar position in his second critical review of the empirical research on transformative learning theory (p. 188). Furthermore, he points to the need to investigate the extrarational approach further, as very few studies engage how emotions can be used to facilitate learning. Another point addressed by Taylor, which is perhaps especially significant to this thesis, is the relational factors of transformative learning. Little research has been conducted into the effects of positive and negative relationships between students and between teacher and students (p. 187).

Taylor (1994) has conducted a qualitative study in which he interviewed twelve Americans who had lived abroad for at least two years. The aim was to find out how intercultural competence developed during their stay, and one of Taylor's findings was that critical reflection did not play an important part in all of the participants' adaptation to their new cultural surroundings. Instead, he found that some of the participants consciously rejected thinking too much about cultural issues, and chose to act as they normally would have in any other context, even though they eventually subconsciously adapted to their new surroundings (1994, p. 170). Taylor therefore concludes that there are both reflective and nonreflective ways of reaching transformation. Taylor's findings challenge Mezirow's claim that critical reflection is a necessary component in transformative learning. Mezirow (1998) has acknowledged Taylor's study, and compares the nonreflective way to transformation to assimilative learning; a tacit process which can take place in both children and adults, even though he argues that it can only be the result of culture change, brain washing, coercion and indoctrination (p. 191). In spite of recognising Taylor's results, Mezirow still holds that a possible result of assimilative learning is critical self-reflection.

2.3.4. The relevance of transitional learning in secondary education

Jack Mezirow based his initial ideas of transformative learning on empirical data from adult learning (Stray & Sætra 2016, p. 9). However, transitional learning theory has been shown to be applicable to young adult learners as well, e.g. upper-secondary school students and students in higher education (Taylor 2007). Stray and Sætra (2016) claim that the theory has not gained much attention in Scandinavia (except for Knud Illeris' work), and suggest that one of the reasons for this is a misunderstanding that the theory can only hold relevance to adult learners (p. 9). This section will discuss the usefulness of transformative learning theory in upper-secondary education, and refer to a few studies of young adult learners where this theoretical framework was implemented.

A relevant question to ask is whether or not upper-secondary students have frames of references that are fixed enough to go through a transformation? To provide a possible answer, I would like to share some classroom experience. When teaching the topic of immigration and integration, I always begin by asking my students to draw the first face that comes to mind when they think of an immigrant. Every time I have led this exercise, most students draw a person of colour, and oftentimes with a religious head garment. In my view, this constitutes a habit of mind, through which students see refugees and immigrants as the same. This is in spite of the fact that most immigrants to Norway are white, and come here to work. Making students draw a simple face, after which we look at immigration statistics to Norway, has made it possible for my students to not only identify a flawed habit of mind, but also to wonder how this habit of mind came into being. This is perhaps the most obvious teaching experience I have in which students become aware of their own frame of reference.

In a similar vein, it is possible that adolescent students are more susceptible to transformation, because their frames of references are less stringent than with adults. As previously explained in this chapter, frames of references are the product of a bundle of experiences upon which the individual creates certain judgments. It might be possible that because young learners have fewer experiences to cement their points of view and habits of mind, they are more open for transformation than adult learners. Mezirow himself writes that "frames of reference should be considered more functional or more ideal when they are more inclusive, differentiating, critically reflective, open to other points of view, and integrative of experience" (1998, p. 188). Thus, it could be argued that exposing upper-secondary students to experiences in which they challenge and "loosen" their own frames of references, e.g. through the exercises proposed by Cranton (2002), could make them better able to critically question future experiences before forming their eventual opinions.

In her doctorate dissertation about the implementation of principles from critical theory in teenage learning, Lyon (2009) taught a group of high school students the ideas of critical theory. The students applied the ideas of the theory in discussions about issues such as power, social justice, sexism, etc. Upon completion of the research project, all the participating students believed that critical education should play a more important role in secondary education (p. 179). One of Lyon's research goals was to find out if critical theory could lead to transformative learning for teenagers, and she draws the following conclusion:

> The results of the study indicate that reading and discussing critical theory changes some teens' attitudes, assumptions, and actions and leads some teens to changed views of self, others, and society. Thus, critical theory provides opportunities for transformative learning for some teens (p. 177).

In an article about how reflection and judgement can be facilitated in education, Stray and Sætra (2016) use transitional learning theory to discuss what factors must be in place for students to develop critical reflection and political judgment. They propose dialogue as teaching technique to foster pupils' critical reflection, and especially emphasise the teacher's role in this process (pp. 20-21). In their view, the teacher is an essential model in the students' transformative development, not just by showing support and tolerance, but also by questioning the students' views (p. 21). If one of the challenges of implementing ideas from transformative learning theory in secondary education is believed to be the lack of experience and maturity among the students, the use of teachers as models for the students can give the necessary support for successful transformation.

2.4. The Role of Language in Intercultural Communication

2.4.1. The classroom as a speech community

In a theoretical discussion about intercultural competence in the English classroom, it is necessary to contemplate the role of language. Kramsch (1998) explains that language both *expresses, embodies* and *symbolises* cultural reality (p. 3). In other words, language is not only a means to express how we view culture, but it also holds cultural meaning in itself (Risager, 2006). For example, we teach our students never to use "the n-word" because of its historical usage and highly biased and racist meaning. Still, the word is used by African American artists in popular music, which can sometimes puzzle students, considering its history. The example illustrates that the connection between language and culture is a highly complicated one, which should arguably be discussed with the students.

Unequal language proficiency between interlocutors can create a social power inequality because the less proficient speakers do not always have the same ability to state their thoughts clearly in the same way as a native speaker, and consequently, they might refrain from speaking their minds. There might also be feelings of inferiority and superiority because of the linguistic imbalance. Since all students in the EFL classroom (except for some occasional native speakers) acquire English as a second or third language, the potential power inequality between the MA and LM students could be made weaker when they communicate in a shared second language. As a result of this *levelling*, opportunities arise that could facilitate an ideal arena for cooperation between students of different cultural backgrounds. As Byram (2008) explains:

> By sharing a language, an individual shares a reality within a social group and is a member of that group, whether it is the small group of a school community or the large group that forms the population of a state, with all the complexities of overlaps and separations that link the two. (p.111).

Thus, the shared language creates a new social group in which all members take equal part, as well as creating a shared reality. Kramsch (1998) uses the term "speech community" to describe a group where all members share the same language, but "discourse community" for speech communities in which members use the language in the same way (pp. 6-7). Since English classrooms in Norway are speech communities in which the authority of one language over others is reduced, it could create an interesting prospect of developing a discourse community. In this discourse community, LM and MA students could create a common discourse that focuses on a co-construction of truths about issues of culture and identity.

To further emphasise this point, we can turn to Kramsch (1998), who proposes that "[i]ntercultural communication refers to the dialogue between minority cultures and dominant cultures, and are associated with issues of bilingualism and biculturalism" (p. 82). Such issues can be harder to deal with for minority members because of their weaker and sometimes marginalised position in society. For example, Bredella (2006) discusses the problems of identity politics[2], and states that minority members can be so strongly influenced by a majority's ethnocentric view of their group, that they end up internalising this view themselves (p. 84). Hence, a (stereotypical) group identity takes over what should be individual identities unimpeded by ethnicity and culture. Kramsch (2006) explains that "[s]hifting the emphasis from culture to identity in language teaching dissociates the

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[2] Political activity based on cultural, ethnic, gender, racial, religious, or social interests that characterize a group's identity.

individual learner from the collective history of the group, it gives people the agency and a sense of power by placing their destiny in their own hands" (p. 17). Her view resonates strongly with Dervin's (2016) fluid perspective on IC, discussed in section 2.2.2.

Tornberg (2004a) argues that the FL classroom is a suitable arena for conversations about difference. She believes that too much focus on future communicative purposes in the FL classroom inhibit "real" communication about present issues (p. 137), and that lacking linguistic and communicative skills are challenges that should not limit conversations about difficult topics. By developing a shared dimension of interest in the FL classroom, Tornberg sees a space that will facilitate students' self-ascription, among other things (p.139).

2.4.2. *English as a* lingua franca

The role of English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) is of relevance to this thesis for two reasons. Firstly, teaching ELF is central in Norwegian secondary English education, as students are anticipated to need the language not only in countries where English is the primary language, but in situations where there is no shared first language between interlocutors. This brings us over to the second reason, which is that in my research project, I will place my students in a situation where English becomes a real *lingua franca,* as successful communication will rely on the use of a mutual second language. Thus, it is necessary to take a closer look at theory concerning ELF and its connection to interculturality.

Risager (2016) defines a lingua franca situation as "a communicative situation dominated by people who don't have the language in question as their first or early second language" (p. 33). This definition seems reasonably straight forward, but Risager problematises her own definition by asking if ELF should not begin to include a wider range of communicative settings, especially in countries where the *lingua franca* is also the predominant first language. She gives the example of a British-Greek and a British-Russian immigrant who share a conversation in English in the UK. This would traditionally not constitute a lingua franca situation, but if one imagines the exact same conversation taking place in Poland, it would count as such (2016, p. 38).

Risager (2016) also points out that the distinction between EFL and ELF in language research is problematic, as it creates unclear lines between the social and individual perspectives of language (p. 37). The social perspective considers how language is used in social settings, whereas the individual perspective is about "the role of the language in the individual's life and learning" (p. 37), e.g. if it is a second language, a foreign language, and

at what age the language was acquired. Risager suggests that much teaching focuses on communication with native speakers in specific countries, and expresses the need for more inclusive language education:

> I would characterise such teaching as drawing on the traditional national paradigm in language and culture pedagogy. Alternatively, the teaching of the foreign language can focus on (or at least include) uses of the language in lingua franca situations and thus favour a more transnational approach to language and culture pedagogy by drawing attention to the fact that the target language may be used in many kinds of situations all over the world (2016, p. 37).

Holmes and Dervin (2016) also open up for a more inclusive understanding of ELF. Firstly, they propose that there is not *one* English, but rather a number of different Englishes, taking into consideration the different pidgins, creoles, regional and local forms (p. 3-4). Using this understanding of a plurality of Englishes, the implication is that one must also speak of Englishes as *lingua francas.* Second, Holmes and Dervin take into account the different socio-linguistic elements of gender, social class, status in society, regional origins that mark out accents, dialects, discourses, etc. when they ask "are not all situations of interaction in English ELF?" (p. 5). Thus, it seems as if the understanding of ELF in language education research is evolving, and that a broader perspective in teaching could better prepare students for a more diverse usage of the language.

This view is supported by Baker (2016), who suggests that it is better to use the term *intercultural awareness* (ICA), because it focuses less on specific assumptions of different cultures, and more on the "emergent, complex and dynamic nature of culture and communication in ELF" (p. 81). Elaborating on this view, Baker writes:

> (…) it is not possible to specify in advance the linguistic forms and communicative norms that will best enable learners to successfully engage in all the communicative situations they may encounter. Instead, it is better to approach teaching as providing learners with communicative repertoires which can then be made use of as appropriate (2016, p. 84).

Baker (2016) sees critical reflection as crucial in this open kind of language teaching, as the learner must make a choice between different communicative approaches that can successfully be applied in the same situation (p. 84). However, he admits that this view of intercultural ELF learning provides difficulties for educators, as there are no clear answers to how this open approach can provide specific methods and goals in their teaching (p.85).

To conclude, the connection between ELF and interculturality has been neglected in educational research, or at least has not been updated to align with more current perspectives

on e.g. intercultural competence, the interconnection between language and culture, language education etc. (Holmes & Dervin, p. 2). For example, Bjørge (2016) points out that textbooks on intercultural communication connect the level of directness in communication to specific national or regional cultures (p. 115), which promotes a solid view of interculturality. Adapting a more fluid approach to the ideas of culture, interculturality and English as a *lingua franca* may instead lead to a broader understanding of the role of ELF in intercultural communicative situations.

2.5. Common Principles

So far, this chapter has focused on the two separate theoretical frameworks of intercultural competence and transformative learning. Even though there are differences between the two, there are some key areas where their ideas align, or at least run parallel. This section attempts to establish some common principles from IC, TL and linguistic theory, which can be explored in classroom interaction between MA and LM students in upper secondary EFL classrooms. The principles are as follows:

- Establishing dialogue
- Fostering critical reflection
- Facilitating transformation
- Contemplating the extrarational dimension of learning
- Using English as a *lingua franca*

It might seem overly simple to coin "establishing dialogue" as the first principle of dialogue teaching, but arguably, the dialogues need be established as something more than a mere conversation in order for them to serve their purpose. Establishing dialogue will here be defined as facilitating open and unbiased conversation, based on respect and tolerance, and with the goal of exploring different views to reach a consensus. Epistemologically, both intercultural competence and transformative learning theory build on constructivist ideas, and as such, they underline the importance of creating interpersonal situations through which knowledge can be co-constructed. If the LM and MA students engage in a truly open and unbiased dialogue, they could explicitly and implicitly learn much about themselves and the Other by exchanging each other's views and exploring new ideas. As discussed in section 2.2.3., Dervin (2016) specifically suggests dialogue as a valuable tool in teaching intercultural competence, because it takes a step away from an individualistic approach to IC. Similarly, Cranton (2002) proposes the use of discourse in teaching for transformation, where "evidence

is weighed, arguments assessed, alternative perspectives explored, and knowledge constructed by consensus" (p. 66). This thesis will use the term dialogue for both Dervin and Cranton's methods, as they share very similar characteristics and goals.

A second commonality between TL and IC is the focus on critical reflection. Mezirow (1998) sees critical reflection, especially of one's own assumptions and presuppositions, as key to transformative learning. Byram's (2008) *savoir s'engager* adds this critical dimension to intercultural competence, which has been maintained in more recent approaches to IC. For example, the Council of Europe identifies critical thinking as one of the skills in the model of competences for democratic culture, and in line with Mezirow's ideas, the document suggests, among other things, that the focus can be on the presuppositions of the individual, "recognising one's own assumptions and preconceptions that might have biased the evaluative process, and acknowledging that one's beliefs and judgments are always contingent and dependent upon one's own cultural affiliations and perspective" (2016, p. 46). In a different vein, Baker (2016) suggests that critical reflection plays an important role in students' pragmatic choices in communicative situations. Thus, critical reflection could play a vital role in several aspects of communication between LM and MA students in the English classroom.

A third area of convergence is how learning can bring about change in the students' mindsets. This is a principle in which transformative learning theory has clearly defined ideas, whereas it is more implicit in the theory of intercultural competence. In transformative learning theory, the idea is that transformation can be brought about when learners experience change in their frame of reference, e.g. when being made aware of a wrongful assumption. As discussed in section 2.2.1., Dervin and Gross (2016) also use the term transformation, although very carefully, suggesting that *inter-* in intercultural competence "hints" at transformation (p. 4). Their view is that in intercultural situations, there should ideally be a meeting of cultures where a common ground is created between participants, and that this understanding constitutes a form of transformation. In a communicative situation between LM and MA students, one might expect there to be some assumptions about the other students, and communication between them could bring about a change in views. Such assumptions can also focus the interaction itself, and not just perceived characteristics of other students. One could argue that the word transformation is a strong one, since it can imply an "aha moment" through which a learner moves from one position to another in an instant. In the following, this thesis will use the term transformation for the third common principle, while recognising that the process of transformation can happen gradually and perhaps also quite covertly.

Both intercultural competence theory and transformative learning theory recognise the extrarational dimension of learning. Both Taylor (2007) and Kucukaydin and Cranton (2012) believe that transformative learning theory should include emotions to a greater extent, as it can both enhance and inhibit learning. Similarly, Dervin (2016) admits that feelings of inferiority or frustration of there not being one correct answer in questions of interculturality can affect learning. In a situation where MA and LM students interact, there might be feelings of superiority or inferiority, anxiousness, or having expectations that are not met during the interaction. Hence, this principle acknowledges that emotions are important in any learning situation, and that they are especially important to consider in new learning situations that cause students to feel uncertain, anxious or not fully prepared. Furthermore, positive emotions can enhance the learning outcome of the dialogues and serve to balance out the negative emotions.

The final principle suggested in this section focuses on the use of English as a *lingua franca*. As discussed in section 2.4., using a shared second language can help level participants not only linguistically, but also socially. In addition, this principle is in line with several of the competency aims about oral communication in the VG1 English curriculum, e.g. "listen to and understand social and geographical variations of English from authentic situations" (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2016). One could argue that this is one of the greatest potentials of joining MA and LM students in the English subject, as it creates *authentic* communication where success is determined by the use of English as a *lingua franca*, as opposed to regular English classes where students can simply switch to their native language to solve communication issues. Thus, use of English as a *lingua franca* in interaction between LM and MA students could both have the effect of social levelling, and can arguably be an ideal way to put the learners in a more *realistic* EFL discursive situation in the sense that it requires the use of English to achieve successful communication. It might also help students develop a linguistic repertoire to be used in future ELF situations, as suggested by Baker (2016).

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The present chapter aims to describe the research design of the study, and to explore relevant theory on research in general and design and methodology in particular. Using case study as design, the study utilises the instruments of audio recordings, group interviews and a questionnaire in an effort to explore the didactic potential of using dialogue in the EFL classroom. This chapter will not only present how the study was conducted, but also discuss the many choices made regarding participants, methods, ethics, etc.

3.1. Choice of Research Methods and Design

3.1.1. Rationale for the mixed methods approach

Research theory normally recognises two different branches of research; qualitative and quantitative (Cresswell 2014). Qualitative research aims to explore a phenomenon in depth by gathering rich data, typically from a relatively small number of sources. Quantitative research, on the other hand, gathers a smaller amount of data from a great number of sources, with the purpose of generalising the results for an entire population. It is often said that quantitative research is numeric because it concerns itself with data which can be coded into numbers. As such, its rigidity makes it better suited for validation and generalisation, whereas qualitative research's greatest strength is perhaps its fluidity and focus on depth (Grønmo, 2004).

Mixed methods studies aim to benefit from the strengths of these two research branches, as well as make up for some of their weaknesses. The present study utilised an embedded design, where one form of data plays a supportive role to the other form of data (Cresswell, 2014, p. 574). Although the most common approach is to let qualitative data support the quantitative data (ibid., pp. 574-575), the quantitative data in this case provided support for the qualitative data by giving insight into all participants' experiences with the project, as opposed to the qualitative data, which was gathered from the focus group only. The aim is to strengthen the reliability of the data, as well as the validity of the study as a whole.

In line with Cresswell's recommendations, it is necessary to consider the priority of the different data collection methods used (2014. p. 578). The qualitative data will be given priority in this study for two reasons. Firstly, this thesis aims to explore the phenomenon of dialogues in the EFL classroom, and the qualitative data provides much deeper insight than the quantitative data. Secondly, the questionnaire was implemented in the study to see if the focus group's experiences were similar to that of the other students, and as such, the quantitative data was gathered primarily to strengthen the qualitative data. Still, this thesis

remains open to the possibility that the quantitative data can provide useful findings on its own, although these findings cannot be generalised or assume to locate any causal effect, which is a typical goal for quantitative case studies (Elman et al., 2016, p. 383)

3.1.2. Rationale for the case study design

As this study looks into the didactic potential of a specific EFL educational practice, there are several research designs that could be employed. A popular design within educational research, especially in instances where the researcher also has the role of teacher, is action research. A central element in this design is that the teacher/researcher aims to systematically examine his own practice in order to improve his teaching (Ulvik, 2016, p. 18). The study certainly mixes the role of teacher and researcher, and it also explores the potential didactic challenges and potentials of peer-led mixed group dialogues. However, as I have never used this kind of group dialogues in my teaching before, nor have any of my colleagues, the study cannot relate to the improvement of previous practice. Moreover, as the thesis has more of an explorative purpose instead of specifically targeting one didactic issue, action research was decided against as design for this study.

The present study aims to explore the peer-led mixed group dialogue between MA and LM students in the upper secondary level classroom, and as such examines a specific classroom methodology. For this reason, *case study* was opted for as the most suitable research design for the research project, since it, as Cresswell explains, "may focus on a program, event, or activity involving individuals rather than a group per se", and seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of the case (2014, p. 493). It should also be pointed out that the present case study will have an element of ethnographic design, as it involves two distinctive groups, at least from an educational point of view. It thus resembles what Stake (1994, p. 237) calls an *intrinsic* case study, in which the case itself (here: the LM and MA students) is the focus. Still, it seems more correct to define the research project as an *instrumental* case study (ibid.), as its main purpose is to explore the didactic potentials and challenges of the mixed group dialogue.

3.2. Choice of Research Instruments

3.2.1. Classroom observation

In order to study the dialogues up close, it was necessary to hear what the students talked about. I opted to record the focus group's dialogues, instead of sitting in on them, as a

teacher's presence would likely have affected them more than having a recorder in front of them. Video recordings of the dialogues could have been an option to explore how non-verbal communication affected the interaction, but it was considered to be too intrusive for the participants, compared to the need for the data it could provide. The audio recordings produced were digital, and after the sessions were finished, the recordings were transferred from the recorder to a password protected computer and subsequently deleted from the recorder. The same approach was used after the group interviews to ensure complete control over who had access to the recordings.

3.2.2. Focus group interviews

Kvale (2007) sees focus group interviews as especially well-suited to obtain different viewpoints on an issue, and the interaction within the focus group may give voice to opinions that are usually not accessible (p. 72). In traditional group interviews, the interviewer has less control, since the participants will be responsible for much of the progression themselves by commenting on each other's utterances, and introducing new topics. The interviewer in a focus group interview is often called a moderator, entailing a less controlling, although equally important, role in the interview. A vital task for the moderator, Kvale points out, is to facilitate a "permissive atmosphere for the expression of personal and conflicting viewpoints on the topics in focus" (2007, p. 72).

The present research project uses focus group interviews to better understand the dialogues from the participants' perspectives. The audio recordings give sufficient data to explore what was said in the dialogues. However, to consider all five principles suggested in Chapter 2 required a method that would allow the participants to explain what they were thinking during the dialogues, possible feelings that arose, what they chose not to say, etc. The focus group interviews made it possible to ask them directly about these things and make them reflect on the experience of the dialogues. Not only were the interviews central to exploring the five principles, but it also gave necessary guidance for planning of the next phases of the project. The information gathered in the interviews was also used to create the questionnaire.

3.2.3. Questionnaire

Quantitative methods often aim to make generalisations by studying a representative sample of a population (Creswell 2014). The present study will apply quantitative method through the questionnaire, but will do so only to attain wider insight into the use of peer-led mixed group dialogue in the EFL classroom, and not to make any generalisations about the use of dialogue

in all other contexts. Using a questionnaire allows all participants of the classroom project to share their view of Let's Talk, which would not be possible through the study of the focus group alone. An alternative to the questionnaire could have been observing the students during the dialogues or open classroom discussions after the dialogues, but the most silent students would probably not have shared their experiences through such approaches.

3.3. Context and Participants

3.3.1. Choice of participants

The participants of this research project were not chosen at random. For practical reasons, the study was conducted at the school where I work, since gaining access to another school would entail much more planning. Doing all the work at this school made it easier to obtain permission from the school administration, as well as communicating with students and parents since their contact information was already accessible. Perhaps the most significant advantage of doing the study at my school, was that I could teach the LM students in English and spend the first month of the school year gaining their trust and building a relationship with them. Arguably, this was central to the success of the study, because this student group is generally more socially and psychologically vulnerable than the majority classes.

The most significant criteria for choosing the majority class in this study was that it had to have its English lessons at the exact same times as the language minority class. The aim was that the study should have minimal intrusion on the students' school schedules. A VG1 class was selected, so that there would be as small English proficiency differences as possible, as well as closest possible age proximity. Based on these criteria, there were three General Studies classes to choose from, and the first colleague I approached kindly agreed to let her class be involved in the study.

The focus group members were selected through purposeful sampling, meaning that participants are intentionally selected based on a sampling strategy (Creswell 2014, p. 228). From the VG1 class, the goal was to find two students who would be comfortable in a situation where the dialogues would be recorded, as well as the following interviews. Their personal qualities were considered more important than their English proficiency, as communication would most likely rely just as much on their attitudes as their language skills. The two students were chosen because they were perceived to be open, outgoing, fairly confident, and positive towards the project. When selecting students from the language minority class, language proficiency was one of the criteria considered, as the study would

rely on a certain level of linguistic communication to provide insight into both the benefits and challenges of using dialogue. This choice and its possible limitations is discussed further in section 3.5. As with the MA students, the two LM students were selected because they were perceived to be confident, outgoing and interested in the project. All the students selected accepted to participate in the study without hesitation.

3.3.2. Description of the two English classes

The language minority group consisted of 16 students from a variety of backgrounds. Their ages ranged from 16 to 24 years, with equal distribution of girls and boys. There were a handful of students who came from European countries, but most of the students originated from Africa and the Middle East. The students in this group came from different classes, mostly from the introduction classes for minority students, but also regular VG1, VG2 and VG3 classes. The students were placed in this group because their language proficiency was considered high enough to be able to finish the VG1 English course, but with need for instruction at a slower pace and lower level of difficulty than a regular VG1 class would provide. At the time of the study, the class had established a good working environment, but the students did not know each other very well.

    The VG1 General Studies class that participated in this study consisted of 20 students, all except one with Norwegian as a first language. Ordinarily, this class also included three LM students, but these students had already finished VG1 English in the introduction class the previous year. Being in a heterogenous class meant that the MA students were used to being around LM students and including them in their activities. The students from this class were all either 15 and 16 years of age, and none of them were native speakers of English. Their English teacher described them as an active and pleasant group, and in general put their written and oral proficiency around mid-level.

3.3.3. Presentation of focus group members

Maria is 16 years old and had only lived in Norway for a few months when the study started, and therefore spoke very little Norwegian. She has lived most of her life in a country in Southern Europe, but her parents are originally from the Balkans. Maria described herself as an outgoing person. She was inquisitive, social and interested in the English subject. Maria was the least active during the dialogues, but when she spoke, she often questioned the things the group was talking about, or what was in the preparation material.

Chris is 16 years old, originally from the Middle East. He has lived in Norway for a few years, so he speaks some Norwegian but lacks the confidence to use it outside the classroom. Chris is very interested in football and motivated to do well at school. In the classroom, he liked to engage in discussions with other students. In the dialogues, he often contributed with reflections about his Middle-Eastern background, or experiences from Norway.

Lene is 16 years old, and sees herself as social and outgoing. She is active during the English lessons, and seems to like the subject. Lene took charge in the dialogues, by reading the tasks for the group and trying to find common ground. Although leading the group was sometimes a challenge, Lene was always very positive towards the dialogues.

Peter, also 16 years old, was seen as one of the cool boys in the VG1 class at the beginning of the school year, but took an attentive and helpful role during the dialogues. He finds English class a bit boring, but was very positive towards the dialogues because they were different from regular class. The group often leaned on Peter when they searched for the right word, or needed an explanation of something in the text.

Susan was asked to step in for Maria in the second dialogue, because Maria was away from school. She was asked just before class started, and with some hesitation, she agreed to join the focus group. Susan is 24 years old and originally from South East Asia. She has lived in Norway for several years and is fairly proficient in Norwegian. She was seen as a confident student, but most likely did not feel as confident in English class. This could be a possible reason for why she barely spoke in the second dialogue.

To help the reader remember the students' group affiliation, the students' pseudonyms will for the rest of this thesis be labelled with the prefix "MA_" for majority student (i.e. MA_Lene and MA_Peter) and "LM_" for the language minority students (i.e. LM_Maria, LM_Chris and LM_Susan).

3.4. Data Collection Procedures

Case studies are often sequential in form, as they explore the developmental process through a certain activity (Cresswell, 2014, p. 493). This was the case with the present study as well, allowing for adjustments which would allow for a greater insight into the didactic potential of the peer-led mixed group dialogues. The empirical data was collected between September and November in 2017. The project in the classroom was conducted in three 90-minute phases, each consisting of pre-activities a dialogue. The group interviews were made one or two days after the dialogues. The questionnaire was completed directly after the final dialogue in the

final phase. This section describes the data collection procedures for the interviews and questionnaire, as well as the three different stages of the project.

3.3.1. Data collection from the interviews and questionnaire

For the focus group interviews, a semi-structured interview form was used with some over-arching questions and topics (Appendix 3), which is in line with Kvale's recommendations for exploratory interviews (2007, p. 38). The focus points for the interviews were the topic for the dialogues, cooperation in the group, communication between the members, and improvement of the dialogues. The second and third interviews also asked the participants to compare the last interview with the previous ones. The semi-structured form gave flexibility in terms of picking up on the responses of the participants and asking them to elaborate, making it suitable for exploring the dialogues more closely. The questions in the interview guide changed somewhat during the study because it became important to discuss different things with the focus group, depending on how the dialogues had gone. The focus also shifted slightly from group dynamics towards communication after the first interview, to better correspond to the five principles presented in Chapter 2, which were penned after the first dialogue phase was finished.

When planning the questionnaire, it was necessary to identify and operationalise the variables that were to be explored (Creswell 2014, p. 168-169). The variables for the questionnaire were the five principles coined in Chapter 2; dialogue as method, critical reflection, transformation, emotion, and the use of ELF. Because the questionnaire was made between the second and third dialogue rounds, the questions could be based on the data collected from the focus group so far, resulting in a more accurate operationalisation of the variables. This also allowed for easy comparison of the focus groups' experiences with those of the other participants. To make the questionnaire equally accessible to both MA and LM students, the questionnaire primarily consisted of statements from the focus group interviews, which the respondents had to agree or disagree with on a five-level Likert scale from "disagree strongly" to "agree strongly" (Appendix 4). An open-ended question was added at the end of the questionnaire, in case the participants wanted to share any other information that the statements did not cover.

The questionnaire was conducted using an online survey instrument, called EasyQuest. An online survey provider was chosen because it was a quick and effortless way to both collect and organise the data. The participants were given a link to the online survey on their digital learning platform, and used their computers or smartphones to reply. Even though EasyQuest

only provides fairly simple tools for organising and analysing data, the data set could be downloaded for further analysis using other programmes. In total, 27 students answered the questionnaire. 16 of these were from the MA class and the remaining eleven from the LM class.

3.3.2. Phase one

The first round of dialogues took place at the end of September 2017. The school year started in mid-August, and it was necessary for the teachers to spend a month building relationships with the students, before asking them to partake in the study. The students were informed about the study in both written and oral form. The written information was only provided in Norwegian, as was the consent form the students signed (Appendix 2). In the MA class, all the information was presented in Norwegian, whereas the LM students were informed orally in English. The minority class was also given a translation of the written information and the consent form. The students did not have to decide there and then, but were advised to bring the information home to share with their parents. Still, most of the students chose to sign the consent form immediately. All the students in the two classes decided to participate in the study.

The first round of dialogues was conducted during a double lesson of 90 minutes in total, at the beginning of the school day. The topic for the dialogues was freedom of speech, and the first 45 minutes were spent reading a text about the topic (Appendix 12). The students read the text individually and the teacher walked around the classroom answering questions. Students who quickly finished reading were instructed to visit the online sources listed in the text. At the end of these 45 minutes, students were presented with some guidelines for the dialogues (Appendix 5) and the groups they would be part of for the dialogues. After a five-minute break, the students found their groups, which were spread out between two different classrooms. There were five different tasks for the groups to complete, and the groups were only given one task at a time. Once a task was completed, a group member had to ask the teacher for the next task. This was done to ensure that the groups did not skip tasks, and to make them feel obligated to spend a reasonable amount of time on one task before moving on to the next one. When the groups had completed all the tasks, they were asked to just sit and talk to each other or wait outside while the other groups finished.

Once the groups were situated in the two classrooms and had been given the first task, the focus group was led to a small group room where they would have their dialogue. It would not have been possible for the focus group to be with the other students, since the sound from

the other dialogues would have made recording difficult. Once the teacher had started the digital recorder, he left the focus group students to themselves. The tasks were put upside down in a stack on the middle of the table, and the students were instructed to take one task at a time. Once the focus group was finished, the students turned off the recorder and came back to their classes. The group interview was conducted two days after, at the end of an English lesson.

3.3.3. Phase two

The second phase of the study was conducted in mid-October and things were done very similarly to the first dialogue round. The topic for the second dialogue was equality, and just as the last time, students were introduced to the topic through a written text (Appendix 14). The first lesson was spent reading and digesting the text, and the dialogues took place in the second lesson. Because some of the MA students had reported that their group did not work so well in the first round, the teachers had removed one group and spread its members across other groups to make them more functional. Therefore, there was some rummaging before the groups were settled and ready to begin. The tasks for the second dialogue are shown in Appendix 15.

Focus group member LM_Maria was not in school on the morning in question, so before the lessons began, I asked LM_Susan if she could join the focus group for this dialogue. Although a bit hesitant at first, she seemed more confident after reading about the topic during the first lesson. The focus group held its dialogue in the same group room as the last time, and everything was implemented the same way as in the first dialogue. The group interview was conducted during lunch the following day, and even though she did not take part in the second dialogue, LM_Maria asked if she could sit in during the interview. She was allowed to join the interview because I wanted her to still feel part of the focus groups since there would be one more dialogue, and because she could potentially provide more insight into the first dialogue.

3.3.4. Phase three

In the second interview, the focus group was asked if they were open to discussing something more personal in the final dialogue, like the relationship between minority and majority groups in society. Because the students answered this question very positively, integration was chosen as topic for the third dialogue. The hope was that this topic would feel more relevant for the students, and that the success of the dialogues would rely less on previous

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knowledge and more on their personal experiences as a minority or majority member. The more personal nature of the final dialogues also made it necessary to prepare the students for possible emotional responses and explain how to best deal with them.

Apart from the topic, a few other changes were implemented in the final phase of the project. Firstly, the preparation material was given as a lecture in the auditorium which had room for both classes at the same time. The hope was that teaching the two classes together would help bring them closer together. Secondly, the lecture was formed not to supply students with facts, but primarily to challenge the students to think more openly about questions of integration, e.g. how prejudice plays into our conception of groups of people or how people categorise in order to make sense of the world. Lastly, the tasks for the dialogues did not only consist of questions, but also some statements which the students had to react to (Appendix 16). The students were instructed to either agree or disagree with the statements by using a laminated card that was green on one side and red on the other. The cards were primarily implemented in the dialogues to increase the participation of the LM students who did not speak very much, but it also forced students to make an active choice before seeing what the others replied.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedures

Once the empirical data was collected, the analysis procedures began. As Kvale (2007) explains, transcriptions are translations from oral to written language, and "involve a series of judgments and decisions" (p. 93), and a description of the transcription procedures is therefore included in this section instead of the data collection section (Section 3.4.) After the recordings were transferred to the computer, they were transcribed. To protect the anonymity of the participants, each focus group member was given an alias that was only known to me. Since this study does not concern itself with linguistic analyses, the transcript was adapted to be easier to read and analyse. For example, some repetition of words or half-spoken utterances that were revised by the participant shortly after were removed if perceived to be insignificant. Brackets were used to indicate pauses or short silences, interruptions or short comments relevant to the interpretation of what was said. The sound quality of the recordings was excellent, but on occasion it was difficult to ascertain what the participants were saying because they talked simultaneously. These instances were also documented in brackets. The interviews and dialogues were transcribed in the same manner.

Since this thesis suggests five principles for dialogue teaching (establishing dialogue, fostering critical reflection, facilitating transformation, contemplating the extrarational dimension of learning, and using English as a *lingua franca*), these were used as themes to be examined in the data. Some of these themes were split into subcategories for analytic purposes. For example, critical reflection is difficult to detect, but elements of e.g. question raising or disagreement can serve as indicators of such reflection. All the categories and subcategories are presented in Figure 1. Apart from the five principles, the analysis tried to locate other themes that were relevant to the main research question about the benefits and challenges of using dialogue teaching in mixed EFL classrooms. In accordance with the exploratory nature of this case study, no categories were defined outside the five principles.

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<u>Categories and subcategories for analysis</u>

Dialogue

- Politeness
- Agreement
- Disagreement
- Open discourse
- Lacking discourse
- Co-constructed knowledge

Critical reflection

- Disagreement
- Question raising
- Acknowledgment of different arguments
- Awareness of issue
- Lacking awareness of issue

Transformative learning

- Articulating assumption
- Revising assumption/perspective
- Critical self-reflection

The extrarational dimension of learning

- Direct emotional responses
    - Positive & negative
- Indirect emotional responses
    - Positive & negative

English as a *lingua franca*

- Misunderstanding
- Clearing up misunderstanding
- Failed communication
- Hedging
- Use of other language

</div>

Figure 1: Categories and subcategories for analysis

As shown in Figure 1, all five categories were subcategorised in order to simplify the analysis of the data collected from the focus group. After the interviews and dialogues were transcribed, they were printed and analysed. The transcripts were read thoroughly several times, each time focusing on one category with subsequent subcategories. Relevant findings were underlined and labelled using the subcategories. For transparency reasons, an example of an analysed dialogue page is given as Appendix 18. Following the analysis of each

transcription, the findings were categorised in separate documents to help condense and structure the results.

Exploring the five themes, both the qualitative and quantitative data were analysed simultaneously, creating a cyclic process where findings in the qualitative data gave new angles to explore in the quantitative data, and vice versa. Although somewhat controversial, this type of convergent design analysis gives a unified analysis of mixed data (Cresswell, 2014, p. 580). In the present study, this analytic approach was selected because the survey was constructed on the information gathered from the first two dialogue rounds, making the qualitative and quantitative data thematically converged. The analysis was not restricted to the five theoretical principles, but also sought to explore other didactic challenges and potential of peer-led mixed group dialogue teaching.

As previously mentioned, EasyQuest, the online survey provider used to implement the questionnaire, does not offer instruments for in-depth analysis of the data. The data file was therefore downloaded and processed using Excel, which allowed for correlation analysis between two variables, e.g. if less confident students were less happy with the project than the other students. Many such analyses were conducted in Excel, and those that provided relevant findings, either on their own premises or in relation to the qualitative data, are presented in Chapter 4.

3.6. Reliability and Validity

Scientific studies are traditionally measured in terms of validity and reliability. The concept of validity is based on the idea that knowledge can either be true or not, whereas reliability questions the way one has attained knowledge. Some qualitative researchers have regarded these two very intertwined terms as being too biased in favour of positivist ideas, and suggest that there is no objective social reality (Kvale 2007, p. 122-123). Instead, by providing transparency and accepting that qualitative research is heavily reliant on the interpretations of the researcher, one can instead speak of the trustworthiness of a study. Still, this thesis uses the terms reliability and validity, since these are normally used for evaluation of research, but recognises that knowledge neither can nor should always be presented in line with the rigid ideas of positivism.

The researcher has a very influential role in the analysis of data, as implicit and explicit choices are grounded in the subjective, through e.g. emotions, experiences, prior knowledge, conflicting roles, etc. It can be hard for researchers to see how subjective mechanisms can

influence the study, and the study therefore implemented several procedures in order to ensure the validity of the results. Firstly, the students were presented with the analysed data to see if there were any discrepancies between their and the researcher's understanding of the dialogues. In a similar vein, the questionnaire made it possible to compare the focus group's experiences with the dialogues to that of the other participating students. Still, it must be pointed out that it would not necessarily be problematic if the interviews and the questionnaire had given conflicting data, even if it obliges the researcher to investigate the reasons for the discrepancy.

To ensure reliability, this thesis aims to provide full transparency of the planning and implementation of the study and the analysis of its data. The qualitative data is provided in the appendices to give the reader full access, whereas the quantitative data is provided in summarised form in Appendix 17. Moreover, the thesis is grounded in educational and research theories to achieve a high academic standard. To safeguard against methodological errors in the research, questions regarding choice of methods, design and analysis procedure have been discussed with this thesis's supervisor, as well as other didactics teachers and students at Work in Progress seminars.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

In educational research where the educator is also a researcher, the double role creates potential ethical issues which need to be considered in the study (Creswell 2014, p. 620). The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees' (NNREC) Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Theology clearly states that roles and responsibilities need to be established in research where the researcher relates to the participants in different ways (2016, p. 23). This also means that students must be made aware of the dual role of their teacher, and understand in which situations he has the role of educator, and when he is a researcher. In this study, it was explained to the students that it would be clearly stated when the Let's Talk project was being conducted, and that during these lessons the two teachers would collect data from them. In all other lessons, however, there would be no data collection at all. Consequently, any information obtained during lessons where it was not clearly stated that the study was taking place has not been included in this thesis, since it would violate the trust between students and educators.

Another issue related to the dual role of educator/researcher in educational research is the principle of consent, and the present study collected free, informed and explicit consent from

its participants, in line with the NNREC's recommendations (2016, p. 15). In research in general, the participants must always have the option to refuse participation in a study, and must be allowed to withdraw from the project at any time. Even though this information was given both in written and oral form to the participants of the present study, it was also necessary to consider whether any students felt pressured into participating. The students might have believed that refusing to participate in the project could affect their grades negatively, or that participation would increase chances of a better grade. Therefore, it was emphasised both in the information letter and the oral presentation of the project that the study would not affect the evaluation of the students in any way, and that refusing to participate would not have any negative consequences.

A paramount principle in research is maintaining the participants' anonymity, and the present study took several measures to protect the identity of the students who participated. Firstly, there is no mention of the school's name or where in the region it is located. Even if one could locate the school, the classes involved would be hard to designate. The questionnaire was created to be anonymous, and the fact that it was online with closed questions made it impossible to recognise the students, e.g. by handwriting. The focus group members were given aliases from the beginning, which were only known to me, and there was never a written key that could identify them. Still, the other students knew which students participated in the focus group, and could possibly recognise some of them from the transcripts in spite of the aliases. However, this is perceived as unlikely, and it is believed that the necessary steps were taken to maintain the anonymity of the participants, within what one can reasonably expect.

When studying children, there are some ethical considerations which must be made related to their age. According to NNREC, adolescents who are 15 years or older can consent on their own behalf, but one should consider the fact that children are more inclined to obey authorities than adults are (p. 21). Furthermore, if the collected data is considered to be sensitive, the researcher must obtain permission from parents or guardians unless the student has turned 18 years of age. Because all the participants in the present study were 15 years or older, and since the data collected was not considered sensitive, students signed the consent forms themselves. The students were, however, asked to take the written information home to their parents/guardians and discuss participation with them before giving consent. Before implementation, the study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (See Appendix 1).

3.8. Possible Limitations of the Methods and Material

The present study has taken a number of steps to secure good research quality throughout the project, as well as disclosing fully and openly the rationale behind these steps. As Kvale points out, "validation does not belong to a separate stage of an investigation, but permeates the entire research process" by "continually checking, questioning, and theoretically interpreting the findings" (2007, p. 123). The study began with a thorough exploration of relevant theory that could shed light on dialogue in the EFL classroom, which ended with the proposition of five principles that would be explored in the study. The principles helped focus the investigation, but might also have contributed to overlooking valuable avenues in both implementation and analysis stages of the study. Still, as shown in Chapter 4, the data is analysed and discussed in light of alternative views on the use of dialogues.

In spite of the efforts made to ensure that this study follows methodological standards and good research practice, one must admit that the limited experience of the researcher could leave the study vulnerable to justified criticism from more experienced researchers. In the present chapter, efforts have been made to provide full transparency of the steps taken and the rationale behind these steps, which in itself is an attempt to warrant good research quality. Sandelowski (2015) argues that qualitative researchers often have knowledge and prior experiences which implicitly guide their choices, and that this *connoisseurship* can contradict ideas of transparency: "[t]ransparency is a much used term in discourses about the validity of research procedures and findings, but integral to the taste-making of the connoisseur is the impossibility of transparency, of articulating or accounting for all aspects of one's engagement with an object" (p. 91). As such, tacit choices might have been made in this study based on the researcher's familiarity with school, students and EFL teaching, that contradict the idea of transparency.

It must be pointed out that much of the data in this study is collected from the focus group, and that its members were selected by specific criteria (as explained in section 3.2.1.). As a result, the focus group had a different composition than some of the other groups, in terms of language proficiency, attitudes towards the project and personality traits. It is therefore possible that the focus group members were able to communicate better with each other, or give more positive answers during the interviews, than if other dialogue groups were interviewed. However, there was little discrepancy between what the study group and the other students reported after the dialogues sessions, and the focus group spent a shorter amount of time talking together than many other groups did during the second and third

dialogue rounds, which suggests that the differences were not too great to affect the quality of the study.

The present study explored dialogue as a teaching method in a very specific context, and findings presented in the next chapter are thus not directly applicable to other contexts. One can for example expect the dialogues to work differently in contexts with MA students only, or in lower secondary education. However, the findings of this study can hopefully provide valuable insight into interaction between LM and MA students, and open up for new questions about the use of dialogue in the EFL classroom.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

This chapter will present and discuss the most significant empirical findings from the mixed-method action research conducted for this thesis. Guided by the main research question "what are the didactic benefits and challenges of using dialogue teaching in mixed EFL secondary classrooms?", the chapter consists of sections that correspond to the thematic interpretation of the findings. Each section begins with a brief introduction, but the conclusions are saved for the final chapter.

Creswell (2014) names narrative discussion as the primary form for presenting qualitative data (p. 278). In this form of narrative, the empirical data is summarised in detail and presented in line with the analytic approach opted for. The analysis in this thesis is built around interrelated themes, and the narrative discussion will therefore concentrate on one theme at the time, while referencing how findings may relate to other themes as well. Furthermore, as the study gathered both quantitative and qualitative data, the convergent design analysis used in this study (Creswell 2014, p. 580) makes it natural to also converge the mixed data in the narrative. Consequently, this chapter consists of sections that present both qualitative and quantitative data in a unified narrative, instead of presenting the data types separately. This is also a reasonable approach, considering the fact that the qualitative data collected in the first two dialogue rounds constituted the basis for the questionnaire, making the two data forms highly interrelated thematically.

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the qualitative data is given priority in this study, and as such, most of the narrative discussion revolves around the transcripts from the recorded focus group dialogues and interviews. The quantitative data mainly served to support the qualitative data, but in some cases, it has exposed relevant findings of its own. In line with ethical guidelines for empirical research, this chapter will not only present results from the data analysis that are in line with the themes explored or the discussion that follows, but also debate conflicting findings that challenge or limit the interpretations made in this thesis.

4.1. Examination of the Five Theoretical Principles for Group Dialogue Teaching

Following the review of literature in Chapter 2, this thesis attempted to establish five common principles based on ideas from intercultural competence theory, transformative learning theory and some linguistic theories, specifically crafted to explore group dialogues between LM and MA students from secondary EFL classes. The principles are: establishing dialogue, fostering critical reflection, facilitating transformation, contemplating the extrarational

dimension of learning, and using English as a *lingua franca* (cf. section 2.5.). The present section is categorised into five subsections, corresponding to the five principles. Each subsection gives a brief explanation of its focus areas, followed by a narrative discussion of the qualitative and quantitative data combined.

4.1.1. Establishing dialogue

The first principle explored in this section relates to the very essence of dialogue teaching. By establishing dialogue, as opposed to plain conversation or debate, students can explore each other's views through openness and respect. This section is based on the qualitative data from the focus group dialogues and interviews, examining the group's interaction and some of the attitudes of its members. The discussion will focus on the elements of politeness, consensus and disagreement, and open discourse, in line with central ideas in the theories of intercultural competence and transformative learning, as discussed in Chapter 2. The term *open discourse* is used in the following discussion to distinguish dialogue as teaching method from discourse as communicative practice within the dialogue groups, although these two terms, as previously discussed, can be used interchangeably.

The data from the dialogues shows that the focus group members were quite apt at finding suitable communication strategies. The group established an atmosphere of politeness and were very helpful when there were words that needed explanation or tasks that needed clarification. The students rarely attacked other students or their statements directly, and instead, disagreement was mainly voiced by presenting alternative understandings of the issue at hand. A good example of the latter is from the third dialogue, when MA_Lene disagrees with LM_Chris's view: "Yeah, but I maybe think about agreeing" (Appendix 10, line 71). Instead of saying directly to LM_Chris that she disagrees with him, Lene directs her opinion at the statement they are discussing when she says that she is "maybe thinking about" agreeing. Thus, by not attacking LM_Chris's opinion directly, and adding hedging elements of "maybe" and "thinking about", MA_Lene states her opinion in a way that will not lead to confrontation or embarrassment between herself or LM_Chris.

Young and Sachdev (2011) found in their study of intercultural competence teaching in the UK, USA, and France, that teachers were hesitant to engage in controversy because it would lead to confrontation (p. 89). They even give a quotation from a teacher who believes that one cannot have controversy and sensitivity in the classroom at the same time. However, from the dialogue data in this study, it seems students are more than able to engage with difficult topics without creating conflict or controversy. One could argue that it is *because* of their sensitivity

that they are successfully mastering the *simplexity* (Dervin, 2016) of the dialogues, with personal and controversial topics, some linguistic disparity and fairly unfamiliar members with diverse backgrounds.

The last task in each dialogue was to summarise what the group talked about and what they agreed and disagreed on. Especially in the first dialogue, this task made the focus group reconsider some of the things they had talked about, trying to find a shared understanding. In the excerpt below, the group is taking a second look at an unlawful anti-gay protest held by a Nordic far-right group that took place in Kristiansand last summer. The police did not prevent the protest, but instead removed counter protestors from the streets, leading to massive criticism the ensuing days.

> MA_Lene: What did you agree on and disagree on? Oh, we disagreed on…
> LM_Maria: Trump! [laughs] [short pause] and Kristian… how do you say it?
> MA_Peter: Kristiansand. The protestors?
> LM_Maria: Yeah.
> MA_Lene: Didn't we agree on the Kristiansand thing?
> LM_Chris: Well, like for security reasons, not by their meanings. For security reasons we said it was okay, because there would be a fight or something. But not like if the police didn't like the gay people and did not want them to protest and go home, and the other ones, the anti-gay could do whatever they want. That's wrong.
> LM_Maria: Didn't we agree on the right to protest?
> (Appendix 7, lines 207-216)

When they start listing things they had disagreed on, MA_Lene and LM_Maria question the group's conclusion. This sparks a new conversation about the things already discussed in the dialogue, and the group clears up some misunderstandings and consolidate a consensus about freedom of speech. LM_Chris concludes the discussion by saying: "I think we agreed on everything. We had disagreements about the text, but not our opinions" (lines 248-249). Even though the task only asked the students to state the things they disagreed on, the group started mediating their positions, which might suggest an inclination towards consensus rather than disagreement. A similar situation takes place in the third dialogue, although more effortlessly, when LM_Chris changes his stance on immigrants not having to learn the native language of their new country (Appendix 10, lines 149-153).

Even though the focus group members seemed inclined to reach consensus in the dialogues, they reported in the interviews that they were open to disagreement:

> LM_Chris: In my point of view, it would be easier to disagree, because now it's like the fifth time we're together and you have the confidence to say what you want. If it was the

first time it would be a little bit difficult, but not now. If you have a reasonable thing to say.

Interviewer: Because you know each other?

MA_Peter and Lene: Yeah.

MA_Peter: It would be much more interesting if we disagreed, I think. So you can learn the different views on the same topic.

MA_Lene: But even though we didn't know each other the first time, I think I would dare to say what I thought, because I think it's important to be honest and say what you mean.
(Appendix 9, lines 96-104)

For LM_Chris, knowing the other group members is a condition for disagreement, since "you have the confidence to say what you want", whereas MA_Lene believes she would dare to disagree without knowing the people she talked to. MA_Peter and LM_Chris both say that increased disagreement would make the dialogues more interesting since it would present a variety of views. Furthermore, all four focus group participants later in the interview welcomed the idea of disagreeing more, despite their efforts in the dialogues to reach agreement. It thus seems that the participants had positive attitudes towards establishing what Iversen (2014) calls a *disagreement community* where people with different opinions work to collectively solve issues (p. 12).

A comparison of the focus group's reported attitude towards disagreement with their interaction in the dialogues suggests that although disagreement is welcomed, it is dealt with in a very respectful manner. There is no situation in the data where the participants voice their disagreement by saying that one of the other students is wrong or that they disagree with them as people (e.g. saying "I disagree with you"). Instead of direct confrontation, the dialogue members typically uttered their own opinions without commenting on the others' views. This supports the interview data, where the members described disagreement as a way to learn about different views. Nothing was said about the thrill of a good discussion or attempting to "win" over another student. As such, the dialogues appear to have served as a suitable arena for open and respectful discourse that at least did not discourage different views.

As previously mentioned, this section will also discuss possible evidence of open discourse, through which knowledge is co-constructed via mediation (Cranton 2002, p. 69). Two passages have been selected to serve as examples of how communicative knowledge is developed in the dialogues, the first of which is given below:

MA_Lene: Shall we move on? Okay, over here a student used the word *neger,* negro, about a student several times during a lunch break. Discuss the following questions. Is the student allowed to use this word? Is it part of his freedom of speech?

MA_Peter: I think that as long as he don't uses it to insult, he can use it. I think that he could use any other word as well as long as it's not meant to hurt anyone. You have to ensure that he doesn't get hurt by you using it. If you know someone I think it is easier to use it, but you should be careful because it can be misunderstood.

LM_Chris: Yeah, like you can use it if he's your close friend, he will not say anything. If someone tells me "you're white" or something like that I will get hurt a hundred percent, and it's the same for black people if you tell them *nigger, nigger, nigger.* Yeah, it's okay if he's your good friend, because they will not take it personal. If you don't know a person you have to know what is his or her feelings so you don't hurt them.

MA_Lene: Personally, I don't think it's wrong to say *neger* because, yeah it is a word that has been used in history to *nedverdige,* ehm… to like denigrate black people. It is a word, and if you know his or her feelings well then maybe it's okay to say it. If a student says it several times than it is another thing because I think it is bullying.

MA_Peter: Yes, if you use it to put him down or something, then it's not okay.

(Appendix 6, lines 133-149)

This passage is only part of a lengthy discussion about the acceptable use of the word *negro* and its variations. Through their dialogue, the focus group members try to find the line where acceptable use of the n-words turns into bullying or racism, and they provide insight into both historical and cultural affiliations with these words. Manoeuvring between examples and interpretations of different situations, the students reach a common understanding of acceptable and unacceptable usage of *negro,* leading to the consensus that it depends on the intentions of the speaker and the situation in which it is uttered. Consequently, the group has come to a common understanding based on their dialogue. The passage serves as a good illustration of *simplexity* (Dervin, 2016)*,* as the participants navigate between complex (historical and present-day usage of the n-word) and the simple (not hurting anyone's feelings). It thus also exemplifies that mixed group dialogues can promote intercultural competence.

At the same time, the above excerpt shows lacking awareness of the receiver's emotions in situations where the n-word is used. The focus group was more concerned with the intentions behind a potential utterance using the n-word, rather than the reaction of the receiver. Oftentimes, intercultural conflicts can be rooted in situations where messages are poorly received in spite of best intentions, and therefore a vital element in intercultural competence is to reflect on and anticipate such potential conflicts (Dervin, 2016). One could argue that this is a weakness of peer-led dialogue learning, as the teacher does not have access to what is said and therefore cannot question the participants' conclusions. As Kramsch (2004) states, "language teachers have to be prepared to go beyond linguistic form and to discuss meanings of all sorts" (p. 58), and peer-led mixed dialogue teaching should therefore find ways to incorporate this role. A further discussion of this point is given in section 4.2.1.

The excerpt below provides additional evidence of the development of communicative knowledge. In the extract, the students are discussing the statement "integration only works if we force immigrants to learn the language and to get a job":

MA_Lene: Yeah, but I maybe think about agreeing because I think that they have to get a job, and if they have to get a job they also have to learn the language. They need it to communicate.
MA_Peter: Yeah, that's true.
MA_Lene: Because not everyone speaks English. Everyone knows a little English, but when you work there are very complicated stuff and then it's hard to communicate. And if the immigrants don't talk the language of the country they immigrate to, then the language will die.
MA_Peter: Yeah, I agree. I think they should be forced to learn the language, the native language, and get a job. We can't just take in people and not make them work, because then the country won't go around.
LM_Chris: Yes, but force to learn the language, like… I will give an example. When I came to live here, to spend my whole life here, it's not like the government forced us. We have to learn the language the whole day. Even if the government doesn't force people, they are going to learn it anyways.
MA_Lene: Yeah, that's true.
(Appendix 10, lines 71-85)

Through their discussion, the students present alternative views of the given statement about integration. LM_Chris does not necessarily agree that immigrants have to learn Norwegian, whereas MA_Lene sees work and learning the language as interrelated. Through the exchange of views, the group's conversation progresses by acknowledging and elaborating on what is said, e.g. when LM_Chris gives himself as an example of a person who does not need to be forced to learn Norwegian. Although this lengthy conversation continues without reaching a clear conclusion, the students end the dialogue by admitting that they agreed with each other on the question of immigrants learning the native language.

The members of the focus group also showed positive attitudes towards learning from each other. During the first interview, the focus group members were asked if they had learned anything from the experience of the first dialogue. LM_Chris gives a clever answer:

Yes. Experience! [Lene laughs] Yes, because we exchanged our thoughts and that was the fun part, because it doesn't matter if I have my own thoughts. But if I talk with other people, from other nationalities, it's easier. You get to know another culture, you get to know a lot of things, and that's the good part. [the other participants voice agreement]
(Appendix 7, lines 51-54)

LM_Chris sees the experience of the dialogue as the most valuable learning outcome, believing that the exchange of views was "the fun part". When he says that "it doesn't matter if I have my own thoughts", this suggests that he views proper knowledge and understanding as something co-constructed with other people. LM_Chris also sees the dialogues as a way to learn from people who represent other nationalities, promoting knowledge about other cultures. The other participants appeared to agree with LM_Chris, and when asked directly if the interaction was more important than the topic, they confirm the notion. This suggests that the students saw learning from others as a key function of the dialogue.

One could argue that open discourse requires participants to react to and comment on what is being said by the others, as seen in the previous excerpt. However, there are also examples where the focus group members did not engage with each other in the same manner, and this was especially evident in the second dialogue. In the following excerpt, the focus group is discussing whether or not it is fair to call the USA "the land of dreams" when there is so much inequality:

MA_Peter: Ehm… [short silence] I think you can still dream even if there is some inequality in the country. Though there might not be the same opportunities for everyone, everyone has the same opportunity to dream big. Try to pursue their dreams.
MA_Lene: I think both yes and no because as you say everyone has the opportunity to dream big, but not everyone has the opportunity to achieve what they want.
LM_Chris: It is called the land of dreams for everyone, but if you think about the twelve percent of American which is African Americans and twenty percent Latinos I think, then you know… Inequality is in every country but in the USA I think there is a lot. Because everyone has a dream, everyone has the right to dream and live their life in their own way, but equality is very important.
[short pause]
LM_Susan: I agree with you, *Chris*.
(Appendix 8, lines 14-25)

The excerpt gives the groups' entire answer to the task in question, and shows that the participants each speak once and in turn. There are no references to each other's views or statements, no acknowledgment of what has been said, or utterance of conflicting views. Susan does say that she agrees with LM_Chris, but she does not explain what she agrees with or why. Thus, there is no mediation of opinions or progression in their understanding of the issue discussed in this passage, which is arguably a requirement for true discourse. The second dialogue was especially challenging in this respect, compared to the two other dialogue rounds, and a further discussion of this issue is provided in section 4.2.

4.1.2. Critical reflection

Fostering critical reflection, the second principle for dialogue teaching suggested in this thesis, is a vital part in several of the theories discussed in Chapter 2. It is one of the conditions of transformative learning, a central component in the development of intercultural competence, and affects the pragmatic choices made in communication with others using ELF. Although critical reflection might have influenced the dialogues greatly, it is perhaps the most difficult to detect, as it steered the *covert* reasoning behind many of the participants' actions and utterances. However, interview data can provide the students' own account of if and how the dialogues made them reflect on the given topics. This section attempts to explore how critical reflection was present in the dialogues, which for analytic purposes has been narrowed down to the elements of disagreement, question raising, and acknowledgment of different arguments. This section will not discuss critical reflection in relation to any linguistic pragmatic choices that were made, as this is part of the deliberation in section 4.1.5.

Disagreement was a topic in the questionnaire as well as the dialogues and interviews. Even if two thirds of the respondents of the questionnaire had experienced disagreement in the dialogues (see figure 2), disagreement is not necessarily proof of critical reflection, as one can disagree about something by simply persisting in keeping an opinion that differs from someone else's. At the same time, disagreement could point to critical reflection e.g. when a student questions the basis of an argument or sees that argument in light of alternative views. Still, only 30 percent of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "one or more of the dialogues made me see that I was wrong about some things", which might mean that the dialogues led few of the students to critically examine their own assumptions or opinions, which is defined as a central prerequisite for personal and social transformation (Mezirow 1998, p. 186).
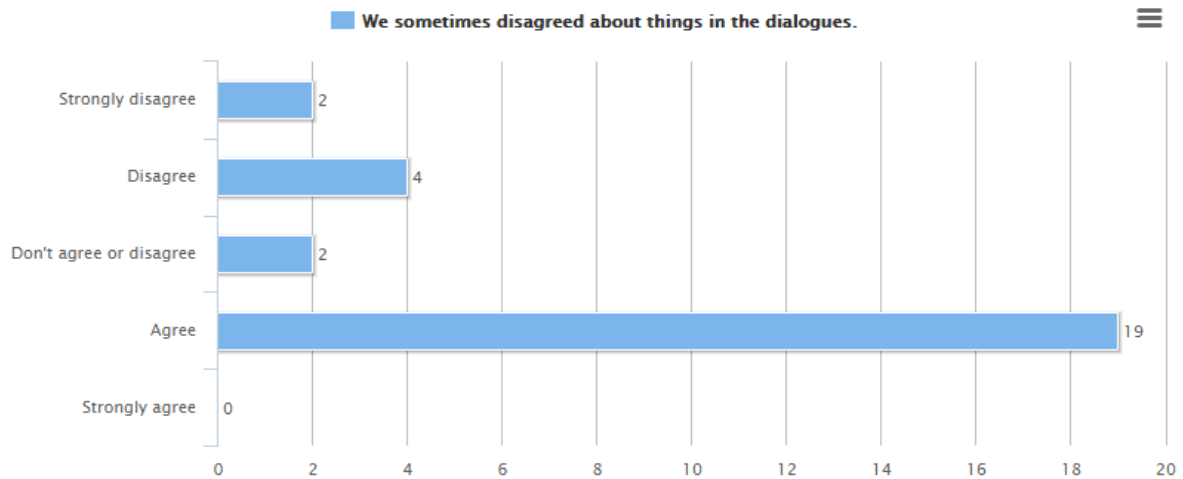
Figure 2: We sometimes disagreed about some things in the dialogues.

In dialogue one, the focus group discussed the line between racism and free speech, specifically in the USA. MA_Peter states that "I think that racism should be illegal. Everywhere, no matter what" (Appendix 6, line 57), taking a very decisive stance in the matter. LM_Maria, on the other hand, counters MA_Peter's viewpoint by saying "Yeah, but they signed the United Nations Declaration, so…" (line 58). By making her point, LM_Maria challenges the other students to contemplate that the USA is obligated to protect the freedom of speech, thus reopening the dialogue. In this situation, the other members of the group keep to their views but are at least challenged to improve their arguments. Raising questions, as LM_Maria does in this example, does not only show an ability to critically reflect on the issue, but also prompts her peers to critically revise their position. One could argue that it is in these kinds of situations where the collaborative nature of the group conversations has its greatest potential, as one member's critical awareness can scaffold the others. Two more extracts are given below to illustrate this point.

During a discussion of the statement "governments should stop many immigrants from living in the same area", the focus group members talked about the negative effects of many immigrants living together, making it sound as if the immigrants do this by choice only. However, MA_Peter had a different view, as illustrated in the following passage:

MA_Lene: Yeah, cause when immigrants gather they might start to have their own kinds of rules and just… *skille seg*, what is that?
MA_Peter: Separate?
MA_Lene: Yeah. Away from the Norwegian culture.

MA_Peter: But I think that the reason why everyone lives in the same area is the price of living there. So the immigrants would find cheap places to live and all of them would live in the same place. I think that's the problem.
(Appendix 10, lines 46-52)

In this case, MA_Peter acknowledges that one cannot simply stop many immigrants from living in the same area, since housing prices constrain their options. Although his argument relies heavily on the (false) assumption that all immigrants are poor, MA_Peter makes the rest of his group see that there are several factors influencing where immigrants live. MA_Lene accepts MA_Peter's argument and concludes that "if the government should stop immigrants living together then they also have to make cheaper opportunities for them" (Appendix 10, lines 54-55). When MA_Peter presents an alternative view on the issue, he shows the ability to critically reflect on the topic, but more importantly, he challenges the other group members to do the same.

A similar example from the same focus group dialogue is when the students discuss if immigrants should be forced to learn the native language. In the excerpt, LM_Chris explains why he believes that proficiency in international languages can make up for not speaking the native language of the country in question:

Learning the language, I'm not sure about that. It's a good thing to learn the language, the key to communicate with people, but there are a lot of international languages that people talk. Like what we are doing now, it's English, in this English class. But there are other languages also. To get a job, learning the language is an important thing, but they don't have to be forced.
(Appendix 10, lines 66-70)

LM_Chris acknowledges that language can be a problem, and that it is closely related to employment by saying that "[t]o get a job, learning the language is an important thing (…)". Still, he assesses the problem by voicing a different perspective when he says that there are other international languages that allow successful communication. Just as MA_Peter does in the previous excerpt, LM_Chris sees the issue from different perspectives and welcomes the other group members to do the same.

The focus group members provided much insight into the role of critical reflection in the dialogues. When talking about the freedom of speech as a topic, LM_Maria says that "we just listen to these topics all the time but maybe we don't think about it" (Appendix 7, lines 25-26). This distinction is in fact similar to the one Mezirow (1998) gives, when proposing that reflection is simply awareness of something, whereas critical reflection entails an assessment

of the thing reflected upon (pp. 185-186). LM_Maria is aware of freedom of speech as a fundamental human right, but has never before been in a situation where she has to critically reflect on some of the issues surrounding this right. In the same interview, MA_Lene describes that the participants "had to think about every single thing very long" (line 33), which also suggests a deeper cognitive process than mere awareness.

There is more interview data that proposes the presence of critical reflection in the dialogues. MA_Lene said that "I had to reflect more about the topic when we discussed it" (Appendix 9, line 75), which shows that she believed it was the discussion itself which led to her reflection. This also relates to Vygotsky's idea that "[t]hought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them" (1986, p. 218). MA_Lene talks more about this in the final interview, saying that "we also got to hear what the others thought and listen to them. And be open-minded. We could maybe change our minds and see things from other perspectives" (Appendix 11, lines 124-125). Although she is not using the term reflection in this quotation, the student mentions several indicators of critical reflection. Being open-minded entails a willingness to examine one's own beliefs in comparison to those of others, and being able to see things from different perspectives can challenge students to assess these perspectives to come to their own conclusions, the result of which can be critical reflection (Cranton 2002).

In the interviews, the focus group members sometimes called the tasks difficult, but rarely explained why they experienced them as such. Trying to get the group to elaborate on this view, the interviewer asked during the final interview if the difficulties were caused by something other than the language. MA_Peter answered that "with very open questions it was hard to give an answer", and MA_Lene believed that "it would have been hard in Norwegian also" (Appendix 11, lines 131-134). Thus, there was something about the tasks that challenged the students, which would have been equally difficult in Norwegian. It is possible that the experienced difficulty was because the tasks challenged the students to critically examine their views about complex issues. Hence, it seems likely that students can develop critical reflection by talking about challenging issues in dialogues.

MA_Peter actually enjoyed this challenge, saying that "I found it more challenging to speak my mind, so I found it more fun to talk about. I had to dig a little deeper to say what I meant. That made it more interesting for me" (Appendix 11, lines 37-38). It seems that MA_Peter's interest is fuelled by the fact that he had to fully engage with the ideas that were discussed in his group. This corresponds to Klafki's idea of *exemplary* learning, where the learner is engaged on a personal level (1996, p. 189). Hoff (2014) relates this idea to

intercultural competence by stating that "personal investment is essential if the intercultural dialogue is to affect the learners' ways of thinking and the cultivation of their personal identities" (p. 514).

4.1.3. Transformative learning

The following section explores if group dialogue in the EFL classroom can facilitate transformative learning, as defined in section 2.3.1.. Using the limited amount of data from this research project, it is, with one exception, hard to prove explicitly that a change in students' frames of reference took place (Mezirow, 1997). As such, it is helpful to turn to Cranton's (2002) facets for transformative learning (cf. section 2.3.2). By listing the seven facets, Cranton provides categories to be explored in the data, the most relevant for this section being: articulating assumptions, revising assumptions and perspectives, critical self-reflection, being open to alternative viewpoints, and engaging in discourse (p. 66). The two latter facets will not be discussed in full in this section, as there is significant overlap with other sections in this chapter.

In the third interview, when asked what they had learned from working with the dialogue project, MA_Peter shares some thoughts about the difference between the LM and MA students:

> And the views of different people on the topics. How they, who don't originally come from Norway, look differently on the topics than us. Because we are taught differently in different countries. I thought that was interesting. But it was very much the same for all of us. We agreed on almost anything. There wasn't that much difference.
> (Appendix 11, lines 152-155)

In the beginning of the answer, MA_Peter focuses on the perceived differences between LM and MA students, believing that different backgrounds give different views. However, he also admits that there were in fact very few differences between them. The first part of the answer appears to be an assumption, as he makes no direct references to the dialogues, and refers to "people" in general. Still, he bases the conclusion that they mostly share the same views is based directly on his experiences with the group, saying that "it was very much the same for all of *us*" and "*we* agreed on almost anything" (my emphasis). One could thus argue that MA_Peter first articulates an assumption, followed by a revision of the same assumption based on the experiences of the dialogues, although it is not clear if he is aware of the assumption himself.

Furthermore, MA_Peter's answer has a clear cultural dimension by initially drawing up a line between "Self" and "Other" when he says "*they,* who don't originally come from Norway, look differently on the topics than *us*" (my emphasis). Dervin (2016, p. 35) calls the obsession of difference the *differentialist bias,* which moves focus away from the commonalities shared between people. Interestingly, MA_Peter shifts from his initial bias towards an inclusive description of the focus group as a whole (using *us* and *we*), realising that there were in fact few differences between them, in spite of their various backgrounds. This is a valuable lesson in the development of intercultural competence, brought on by interaction between members of seemingly dissimilar groups in a dialogue setting.

The clearest evidence of transformation was shared on the open question of the questionnaire (cf. appendix 4), where one of the LM students explains how his assumptions were challenged by his experiences with the project:

> The let's talk project went very good because I thought that, students in other classes would be more intelligent than us in [LM class], then I realised that they were just simple like us, kind and honest. And then I realised again that, it was a very good way for integration, getting to know each other, for that very reason I salute (sic.).

This student had most likely had very limited interaction with MA students before the project, and had formed some preconceptions of their superior intelligence. Through the dialogues he experienced that his assumptions were wrong, and that the MA students were "just simple like us, kind and honest". The quotation also shows that the student is able to articulate his assumptions and reflect on their truthfulness. Consequently, he has changed his point of view through the dialogues, and perhaps also shifted his habit of mind (cf. section 2.3.1.), which in line with Mezirow's (1997) theory would constitute as transformative learning.

To explore the principle of transformation, the questionnaire asked the students to agree or disagree with the statement "one or more of the dialogues made me see that I was wrong about some things". Out of the 27 respondents, eight students reported to agree or strongly agree, nine students disagreed, while the remaining ten were undecided. This data makes it difficult to draw conclusions, but when compared to how the students evaluated their own English proficiency, it appears that half of the students who regarded their proficiency as "pretty good" agreed with the statement (as shown in figure 3). Only 18 percent of the students who believed they speak English "okay" agreed with the statement, but half of this group disagreed or strongly disagreed with it.
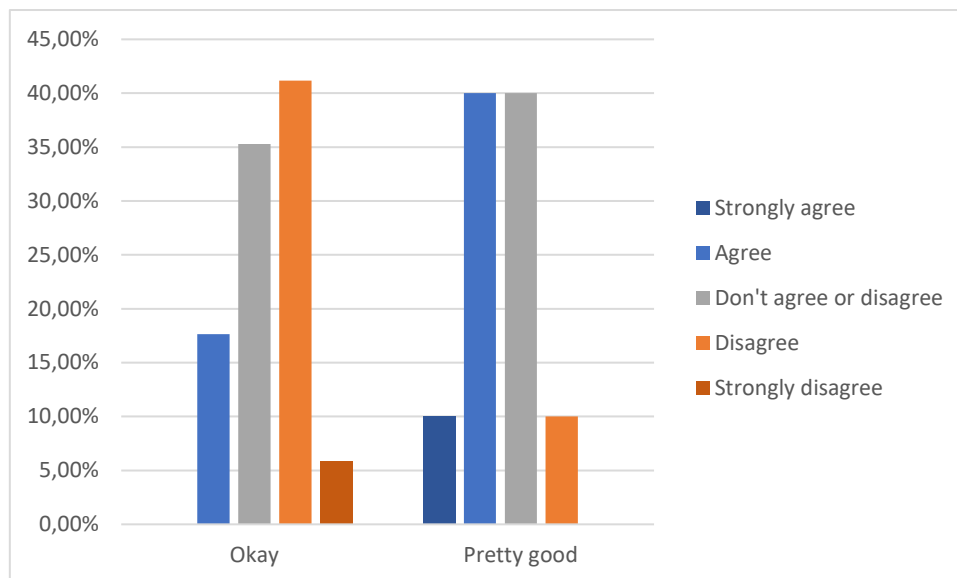
Figure 3: One or more of the dialogues made me see that I was wrong about some things.

The numbers thus show that about a third of the students changed their views during the project, and that most of these students were confident about their English proficiency. A relevant addition, which is shown in figure 5 in section 4.1.4., is that none of the linguistically confident students felt afraid to speak in the dialogues. One could ask if these confident students participated more in the dialogues than the less confident students. If this was the case, they might have articulated their own assumptions more often, making them susceptible to criticism and revision. This would correspond to Vygotsky's (1986) ideas of how thoughts are created through language.

In a similar vein, figure 4 shows that 15 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the dialogues had made them think about things in new ways, and only three students disagreed with this statement. Arguably, "thinking about things in a new way" is not very precise and could just as well relate to learning something new from the preparation material as changing one's view because of the dialogue itself. The respondents who agreed with the statement were scattered between LM and MA students and self-perceived English proficiency, making it difficult to draw any conclusions through a deeper data analysis. Still, that over half of the respondents agreed that they thought about things differently than before could mean that they were open to alternative viewpoints during the Let's Talk project.
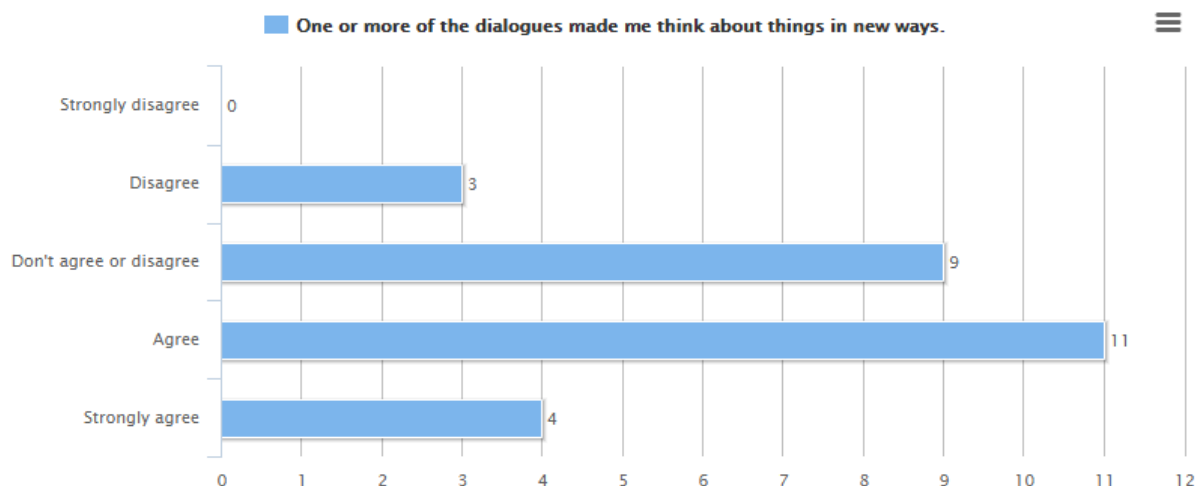
Figure 4: One or more of the dialogues made me think about things in new ways.

As discussed in section 4.1.2., detecting critical reflection explicitly in the data is challenging, as is detecting critical self-reflection. Seen as a prerequisite for transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997; Cranton, 2002), critical (self-)reflection should be fostered in the learner, and this is perhaps the area where Let's Talk had the greatest potential for improvement. Even if evidence of critical reflection can be found in the dialogues, there is also data which suggests that the students could have learned more by critically examining the dialogues and becoming aware of e.g. the role the language plays in them. A further discussion of possible improvements is given in section 4.2.

4.1.4. The extrarational dimension of learning

This section discusses how the extrarational dimension of learning affected the dialogues, and to what extent it enhanced or inhibited learning. Scholars like Kucukaydin and Cranton (2012) and Taylor (2007) point to the fact that transformative learning theory has overlooked this aspect of learning for a long time, and propose that more research has to be made in this area. The extrarational dimension of learning is also highlighted in the liquid realistic approach to intercultural competence, taking the stance that "IC is composed of contradictions, instabilities, and discontinuities" (Dervin 2016, p. 82), which means that IC development is an emotional exercise. Lastly, studies have shown that anxiety greatly impacts spoken participation among EFL learners (Chiu et al. 2010; MacIntyre & Gardner 1991). However, in situations where anxiety is not provoked, speaking a foreign language can instead increase students' self-confidence (Atas 2015, p. 962).

In the current section, the qualitative and quantitative data provides insight into some of the emotions students experienced while participating in the project, and the discussion will attempt to explore if these emotions have influenced the students' learning outcome. How the students' learning has been affected is difficult to consider in this section alone, as it must be compared to the other findings regarding the didactic potential of the dialogues.

One of the things the research project explored was how the students felt before the dialogues, and as figure 5 shows, about 40 percent of the students were nervous before the dialogues started. This number was quite evenly divided between the majority and minority classes. The apprehensive students might have had negative attitudes towards the project, at least initially, but based on how many students were happy with the project in total, it seems that their nerves did not affect their attitudes permanently. Feeling nervous possibly also made the students more alert and ready for the dialogues.
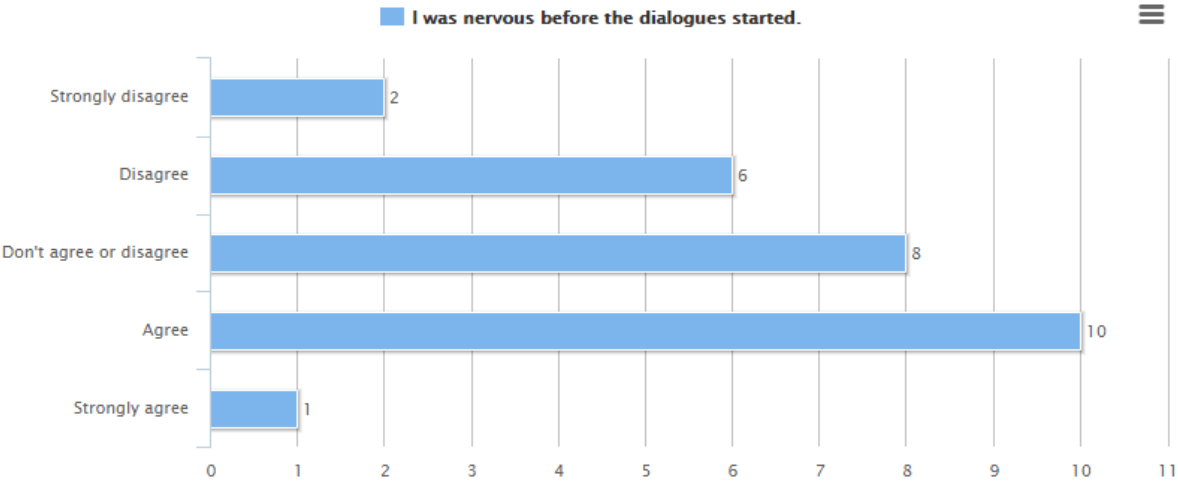
Figure 5: I was nervous before the dialogues started.

On the questionnaire, the participants were asked if they were afraid to speak in the dialogues, and only five out of 27 students reported having felt afraid. Comparing these numbers to how the students perceived their own oral English proficiency in figure 6, 80 percent of the students who believed their English to be "pretty good" were not afraid to speak. The students who labelled their English as "okay" were less confident, as only about 40 percent disagreed to having felt afraid. The students who evaluated their own English as "okay" also reported to be more nervous before the dialogues started. Consequently, the quantitative data shows a correlation between the students' view of their own language proficiency, their confidence to speak in the dialogues, and how nervous they felt before the dialogues.
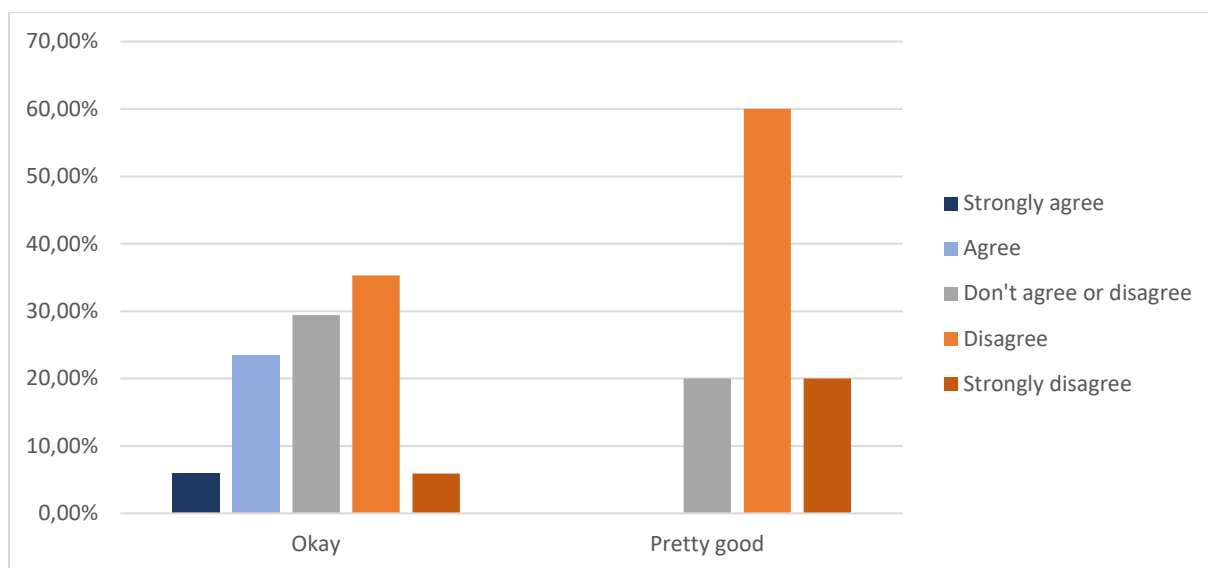
Figure 6: I was afraid to speak in the dialogues.

The qualitative data provides deeper insight into the connection between self-perceived language proficiency, nervousness and confidence. In the first focus group interview, MA_Lene and MA_Peter said that they had felt somewhat anxious before the first dialogue, and that they had some thoughts about talking to the LM students:

> MA_Peter: I thought it would be hard if there were words we didn't understand.
> MA_Lene: Yes.
> MA_Peter: It would be hard to explain in Norwegian when they don't know Norwegian that well.
> MA_Lene: And I thought about if they were good in English or not so good. If it would be difficult to have a conversation.
> (Appendix 7, lines 195-199)

As seen in the excerpt, MA_Lene and MA_Peter's anxiousness was related to communication. MA_Peter had felt unsure about a situation where he could not rely on Norwegian to solve communication issues. MA_Lene had felt uncertain of how easy the conversation would flow, since she did not know how proficient her dialogue partners would be. Thus, it seems that their insecurity was connected first of all to stepping into an unfamiliar situation with people they had not met in advance. In spite of their apprehensiveness, the focus group dialogues appear to have transpired without significant difficulties, and neither MA_Lene nor MA_Peter reported having any communication issues with the others.

In the first interview, Maria said she did not feel nervous before the dialogues, but admitted to feeling less confident when speaking English. As shown in the extract below, her

lack of confidence was led on by fear of not being able to say what she wanted, even though she believed that the dialogues would help her learn more English:

> LM_Maria: I wasn't nervous because I am an outgoing person. When I speak in English I'm not…
> LM_Chris: Comfortable?
> LM_Maria: Not comfortable, confident. I was scared that maybe I couldn't say what I think. This is a good exercise because we learn English too, and…
> (Appendix 7, lines 144-147)

In spite of having a very positive attitude towards the project, LM_Maria's lack of confidence is evident in the dialogues, and might have affected communication within the group. LM_Maria is a clever student who often raised relevant, critical questions about the things they were discussing in the group, and she not have trouble contesting the other participants' interpretations. However, even though she was often factually right, she easily gave in to the others' insistence. A passage from the first dialogue where the participants discuss the legality of a demonstration that was mentioned in the preparation material illustrates this:

> MA_Lene: So why didn't both protestors have the right to protest?
> MA_Peter: Maybe the anti-gay protestors were peaceful but the counter protestors were not.
> LM_Chris: Yeah, maybe because of the security reasons. Like if they were in the same street and they protest against each other, they can get into fighting if they say something hateful. But the police should have handled it better, both of them, not just one. They took out the counter protestors and sent them home.
> MA_Lene: That's really unfair.
> LM_Maria: But the protest was not lawful.
> LM_Chris: No, it was. It says *even if* the protest was not lawful. It's like *if* the protest was lawful.
> LM_Maria: Oh, okay. Yeah.
> (Appendix 6, lines 78-87)

In this extract, LM_Maria sees that the other group members are discussing the issue on incorrect grounds, as the protest in question was unlawful. She has the confidence to correct her peers, but when she is challenged by LM_Chris, who gives an incorrect explanation of the phrase *even if,* she immediately submits to him. By conceding to the view of her peers in this situation, LM_Maria's valid correction is invalidated, which might have a discouraging effect on her desire to contribute further in the dialogue. Had the other participants given her credit for her correct objection, that could instead have strengthened her self-confidence.

There is also data which suggests that the dialogues helped build students' confidence in themselves. In the first interview, MA_Lene says that "I personally don't like talking in the English class. I get very nervous and unsure. So this is a very good exercise" (Appendix 7, lines 153-154). MA_Lene sees the dialogues as a way to improve her confidence to speak out in regular classroom activities, which was a situation where she presently felt "nervous and unsure". However, in the last interview, MA_Lene believes that her English has improved and that she at the very least has gained the confidence to speak her mind: "I have learned to talk English maybe a little better. And to dear to say what I want to without being scared to be judged or to say something wrong" (Appendix 11, lines 148-149). This change was also noticed by my colleague, who reported that MA_Lene participated more in classroom discussions after Let's Talk had started. MA_Lene's development illustrates that mixed group dialogue could be a setting through which students can safely practice their oral proficiency, thereby supporting Atas's (2015) findings.

Another emotion that was examined in the research was frustration with other students. As shown in figure 7, there is a great discrepancy between the LM and MA students concerning feelings of frustration. None of the LM students had felt frustrated by other students who did not participate orally in the dialogues. The MA students, however, felt this frustration to a much larger extent; over 60 percent saying that they either agreed or strongly agreed with feeling frustrated. A likely interpretation of the numbers is that the LM students contributed less than the MA students in the dialogues, and that most of the frustration felt by MA students was directed at the LM students. However, it is also likely that some of the frustration was directed at other MA students who did not speak much.
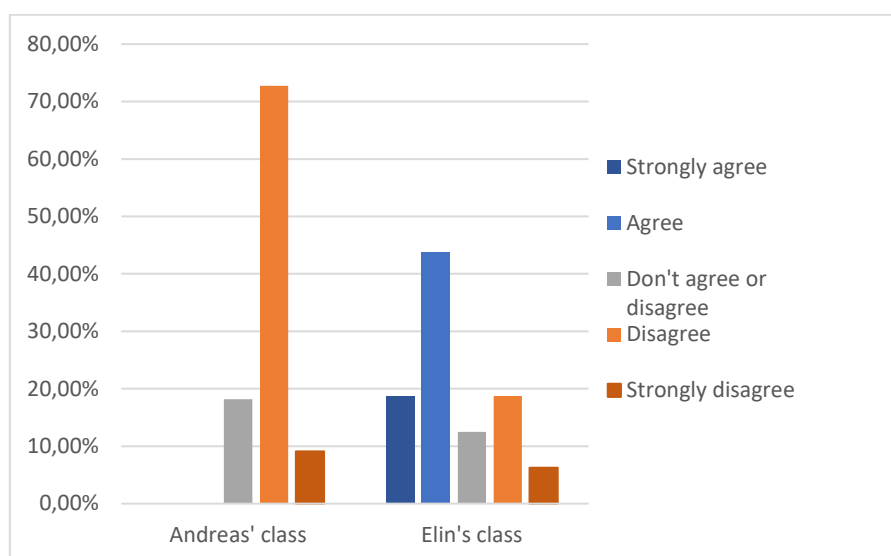
Figure 7: Sometimes I was frustrated with students who didn't say much.

The statement "sometimes I was frustrated with students who didn't say much" came from the second dialogue, after which one of the MA students voiced her frustration with her dialogue group, and especially towards the LM students who had participated very little. The MA student had even tried to provoke the LM students into speaking, by uttering provocative statements directed at them. Her provocation had been unsuccessful and the group's further cooperation was luckily not affected by her attempts. Still, it serves as an example of how frustration can lead to students losing their temper and possibly disrupting on-going or future dialogues. This raises the question whether EFL teachers should try to avoid situations where frustration might occur. Dervin (2016) suggests that an "important issue relating to IC is to get used to discomfort, to appreciate entering risky territory, and to accept that some degree of 'pain' is involved in dealing with intercultural encounters" (p. 83). Thus, one could argue that allowing a certain amount of frustration could help promote the participants' intercultural competence in group dialogue teaching.

It is relevant to ask if and how the frustration that many of the MA students felt affected the dialogues. This is, however, a difficult question to answer, since the focus group members never reported in the interviews that they had felt frustration or other similar emotions. The only sign of frustration in the focus group can be found in the first dialogue when LM_Maria does not understand what MA_Peter says, and he replies with "Ehm, forget about it" instead of explaining what he had said (Appendix 6, line 245). The exchange is followed by nervous laughter before the dialogue continues, seemingly unaffected.

Even if the qualitative data sheds little light on the effect the frustration might have had in the dialogues, a comparison of figure 7 and figure 8 below suggests that the effect was limited. Even though over 60 percent of the MA students reported feeling frustrated during the dialogues, none of them disliked working with the project, and only one of them was undecided. Similarly, all MA students reported that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "meeting students from the other English class was interesting/fun". Consequently, it is likely that the students saw the benefits of the project despite some discomfort.
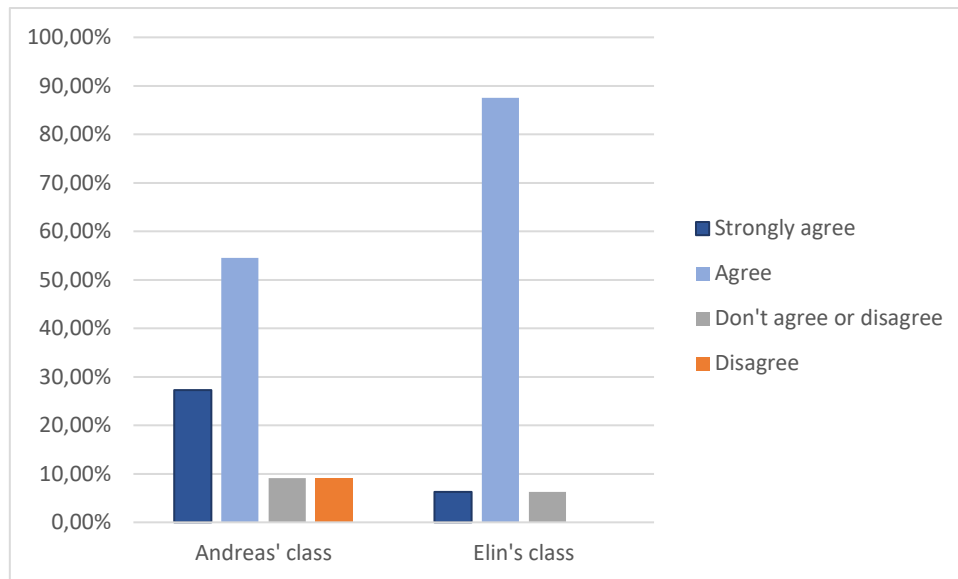
Figure 8: I liked working with the project Let's Talk

4.1.5. *English as a* lingua franca

The last principle for dialogue teaching suggested in Chapter 2 is the use of English as a *lingua franca*. By joining LM and MA students, the dialogues became discursive situations where successful interaction relied on the use of English as a shared language. The fact that students could not rely on their first language to solve communication issues forced them to find solutions using English only, and the strategies used could build a useful repertoire for similar situations in the future (Baker, 2016). This section explores how the participants experienced the use of English in the dialogues, and analyses how the they used English to communicate.

As shown in figure 9, a strong majority of the students reported on the questionnaire that the dialogues were a good way to learn English. Additionally, two of the MA students elaborated on the final, open question in the questionnaire, saying that the dialogues were "(…) a great way to speak more anguish [English]", and "(…) a nice opportunity to talk in English". Similar things were said in the focus group interviews, e.g. in the third interview (Appendix 11) when they were asked what they had learned from the dialogues. MA_Lene reported to "have learned to talk English maybe a little better (line 148), and LM_Maria believed she had learned "being more comfortable speaking English (line 159). In sum, the data implies that, from the participants' perspective, language training and development was the most important outcome of Let's Talk. Even if other outcomes were mentioned by the focus group, like reflecting on difficult topics and getting to know students from the other

class, it seems that they were the most aware of how the dialogues made them speak more English.
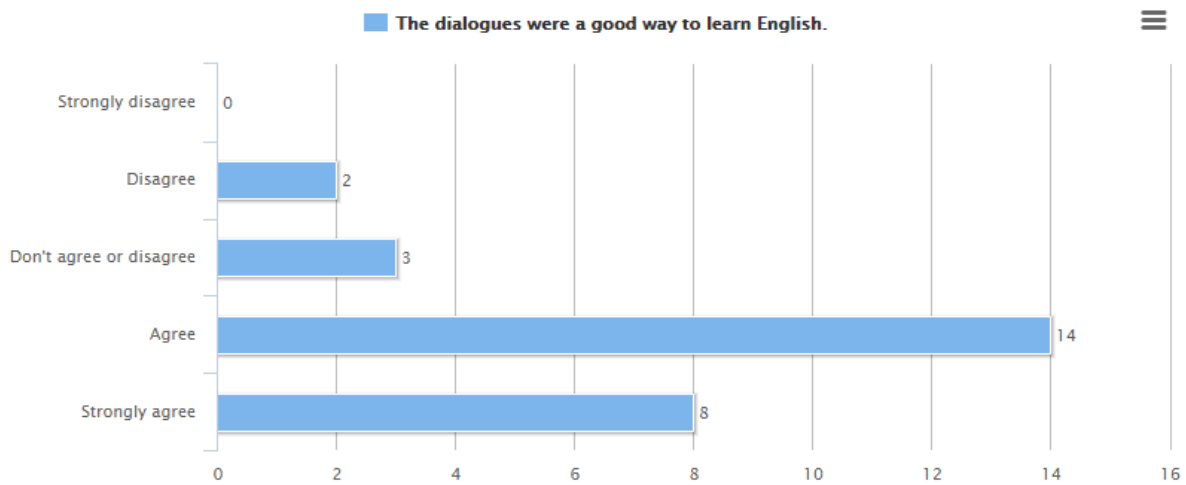
Figure 9: The dialogues were a good way to learn English.

Whereas most of the students believed that the dialogues were a good way to learn English, they had few thoughts about *how* they spoke English in the dialogues. When the focus group members spoke about the importance of conducting the project with students from a different background, they focused on the fact that they had to speak English or that it allowed them to explore different views. However, none of the focus group participants mentioned that they had to speak in a particular manner, or that they had to make special considerations regarding their interlocutors. In other words, the participants did not reflect on the fact that the dialogues required them to use their intercultural competence. This is also shown in the passage where the focus group discussed the appropriate use of derivations of the n-word, not recognising the receiver's emotions. A possible reason might be that the instructions given to the students before the dialogues never asked them to reflect on the role of interculturality and how the dialogues would differ from a normal classroom situation in this respect. Thus, if one of the objectives of such dialogue teaching is to make students aware of how English is used differently in ESL and ELF situations, the pre-activities must help them become aware of the difference. A more thorough discussion on pre- and post-activities and student awareness is given in section 4.2.1.

Even if the participants did not reflect on how the language was used differently in a setting where English was a *lingua franca,* they did see the benefit of talking to students from another class. Figure 10 shows that about half of the students in both the MA and LM classes

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did not believe that it would have been better to carry out the project in their own class only. The MA students were more positive in this respect than the LM students, as over thirty percent of this group strongly disagreed with the given statement. A possible explanation might be that the Norwegian students share the same first language, and saw it as necessary to be forced to speak English. Most of the LM students, however, did not have a shared mother tongue, and were therefore more used to a classroom situation where the use of English was a necessary step to communicate with others. The interview data also shows a difference between MA and LM students, as MA_Lene and MA_Peter often pointed out that they liked the fact that they had to speak English in the dialogues, whereas LM_Maria, LM_Chris and LM_Susan never gave a comparison between their class and the dialogue group.
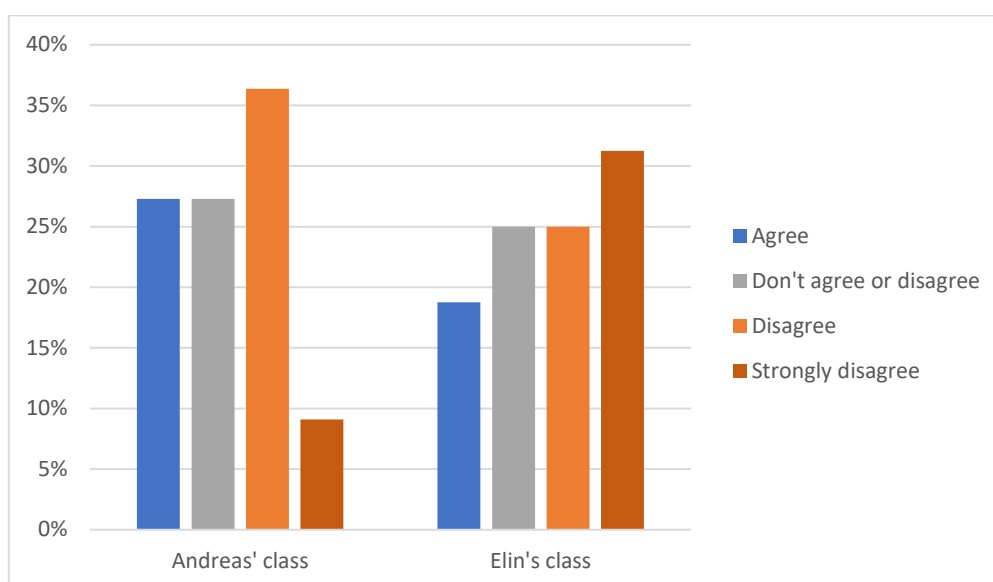
Figure 10: I would have learned more if the dialogues were in my own class only.

The dialogue transcripts expose that several different communication strategies are used in exchanges between the students. As discussed in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.4.2.), Baker (2016) believes that students should build linguistic repertoires that can be used in different types of communicative situations, as it is impossible to teach them strategies for all possible scenarios. Consequently, it is relevant for this thesis to question whether the dialogues might help students build such repertoires. In the following dialogue excerpt, LM_Maria and MA_Peter discuss if immigrants can be forced to work or not. MA_Peter believes that immigrants can be treated differently from other citizens, whereas LM_Maria tries to make the point that at least in her country of origin, they would have the same rights:

LM_Maria: But no one can force you to work. In [country of origin], where I'm from, in the constitution it is written that you have the opportunity to work… [hesitates] that the government, the state, has to give you a job. I don't remember the words, but no one can force you to work.
MA_Peter: Yes, but that's when you already live in [Maria's country of origin]. But if you come to Norway it should be a condition to work. So you can be forced to work if you go to Norway. If you understood that?
LM_Maria: No, sorry.
MA_Peter: When you lived in [Maria's country of origin] you were a citizen of [Maria's country of origin]. And then you have the right of [Maria's country of origin].
LM_Maria: Yeah, but…
MA_Peter: But when you don't live in Norway you don't have the right to not work, because it's a condition to come into the country. If you understand?
LM_Maria: Oh, sorry, I don't know how it works here, so I'm…
MA_Lene: No, it's okay.
MA_Peter: I think it's like that.
(Appendix 10, lines 95-110)

In this discussion, MA_Peter tries to make his point clear to LM_Maria, and asks her on two occasions if she understands him. It might be that he recognises that LM_Maria sometimes has trouble understanding what is said and wants to make sure that she understands him. LM_Maria tries to counter MA_Peter's arguments ("Yeah, but…"), but is interrupted by MA_Peter who explains how he believes things work in Norway. Even though MA_Peter is mistaken, LM_Maria recognises him as an authority on Norway, and apologises by saying "Oh, sorry, I don't know how it works here". MA_Lene quickly jumps in to support LM_Maria, and MA_Peter moderates his arguments, saying that he *thinks* that is how it works in Norway.

The excerpt shows that the students make pragmatic choices to ensure successful communication. MA_Peter tries to make sure that LM_Maria understands him by asking her directly if she does. When Maria apologises to MA_Peter, it seems that both MA_Lene and MA_Peter want to help her save face. MA_Peter does so by using a hedge, opening up for the idea that he might be wrong and that LM_Maria could be right. These pragmatic choices could be seen as part of the students' linguistic repertoires (Baker, 2016), and the dialogue gives them a chance to practice using different strategies to make communication effective.

The excerpt is also interesting in terms of IC. As Dervin (2016) writes, educators "need to create situations of encounters that can help students to test their resistance to discomfort and potential failure" (p. 83), and the above passage can be seen as such a situation. The discussion also has a cultural side because MA_Peter, being a Norwegian, takes the role of authority on Norwegian matters, and sees LM_Maria's position as related to her country of

origin. However, LM_Maria tries to make a point on the grounds of universal human rights, and a misunderstanding that is not initially grounded in culture becomes just that. The participants thereby experience an intercultural situation which they have to deal with to the best of their abilities, developing their intercultural competence. At the same time, it might be necessary for the teacher to be available for the students after the dialogues, to help them process the experience and how they chose to handle it (cf. section 4.2).

Another side to building a linguistic repertoire is to learn which strategies do not work. An example from the dialogues is how MA_Lene and MA_Peter sometimes used a Norwegian translation to explain something, which in some cases led to confusion for the two other group members:

> LM_Maria: I think the law has to be interpreted. I don't know if you understand. There are many different interpretations of it. I don't think it has to be interpreted because the right… Just follow it.
> MA_Lene: Yes, interpretation is like *oppfatning*.
> LM_Maria: What?
> MA_Lene: Like how you see… how you…
> MA_Peter: The view of something. The way you look at something.
> (Appendix 6, lines 266-272)

In this situation, MA_Lene tries to create a mutual understanding of the word *interpretation* by translating it to Norwegian. LM_Maria, who speaks almost no Norwegian at this point, does not understand what MA_Lene is saying, and MA_Lene has to come up with a more suitable explanation. Perhaps not prepared for LM_Maria's reaction, MA_Lene hesitates to come up with an English translation and MA_Peter helps by giving an English explanation, resolving the situation. By engaging in dialogue, students can thus be trained to handle unsuccessful as well as successful communication, and it challenges them to find their own solutions to issues as they unfold. The excerpt also shows that using English as a *lingua franca* was necessary to ensure successful communication within the group.

There were some cases where the two MA students communicated in Norwegian. These were primarily situations where either MA_Lene or MA_Peter were looking for an English word and helped each other. For example, in dialogue two, MA_Lene lacks a suitable phrase in English when she says that "it doesn't mean that if you… *gå I dine fotspor, hva er det?"*, and MA_Peter suggests "follow your parents maybe" (Appendix 8, lines 125-126). In the same dialogue, MA_Peter is trying to interpret the word *comparison* in a task, and says "*Jeg tror det betyr sammenligning.* But I don't really understand how to do that" (line 83). When

MA_Lene and MA_Peter spoke Norwegian, it could have made the other students feel left out of the conversation. Still, it appears that communication was not significantly disrupted by these occurrences, and that the LM students rarely reacted to them.

The data from the dialogues shows that there were a few communication issues during the focus group's dialogues, but that most of these situations were resolved successfully. There is one example from the second dialogue which proved to be challenging for the students to handle:

> MA_Lene: [reads] Did you know about social inheritance before today? Do you think it is important to learn what it is and what effect it has on people's lives?
> MA_Peter: I knew what it was, but I didn't know the English word for it.
> [short silence]
> LM_Susan: Before today it was violent. Criminal, maybe.
> MA_Lene: Oh yeah. You mean… [tries to interpret what Susan has said. Longer silence follows] Oh wait! We forgot to make a comparison between the members of the group (…)
> (Appendix 8, lines 75-82)

This passage shows how students answer questions about social inheritance, and how MA_Lene reacts when LM_Susan says something that does not make sense to her. At first, MA_Lene tries to interpret what LM_Susan said, engaging it in a positive manner by saying "Oh yeah. You mean…". When she discovers that she has no valid interpretation of LM_Susan's words, a long silence follows in which MA_Peter and LM_Chris do not come to her aid. MA_Lene's way of solving the situation is to deflect their attention onto something else, pointing out that they had not completed the previous task. In this case, the students never got to know what LM_Susan meant by what she said, since they never asked her to explain. Hence, one could say that the communication issue was not solved, but rather overlooked.

4.2. Other Didactic Benefits and Challenges of Dialogue Teaching

So far, this chapter has focused on the suggested principles for dialogue teaching given in Chapter 2. However, the data and the teachers' experiences from the Let's Talk project raise other questions about the didactic potential and challenges of using dialogue in secondary EFL teaching. Quite consistently, about 80 percent of the students either agreed or strongly agreed that the respective dialogues went well. However, the number of students who strongly agreed rose from two to ten between the second and third dialogue, which is a considerable

increase. There are likely many factors which may have influenced the students' varying experiences with the dialogues, and due to time- and space restrictions, this thesis can only explore some of them. The current section examines how the pre- and post-activities affected the dialogues, as well as the influence of the topics and tasks given.

4.2.1. Pre- and post-activities

The Let's Talk project consisted of one 45-minute lesson where the students prepared for the dialogues by either reading a text or attending a lecture, directly followed by one 45-minute lesson during which the dialogues took place. Time permitting, the two classes would have a short conversation with their teacher at the end of the last lesson, talking about their experiences from the dialogue. The current section examines how the pre- and post-activities affected the learning outcome of the project and discusses what changes might have been made to increase the didactic potential of the dialogues.

In order to not intrude too greatly on my colleague's teaching plan, I decided that each Let's Talk round should not take up more than one double lesson, although realising that this would come at the expense of the time I would have available to teach the students about the topic. Unsure about the effects the limited preparations had, I asked the focus group if it would be a good idea to spend more time preparing for the dialogues. In the first interview, it became clear that the focus group members saw benefits of the limited preparations:

> MA_Peter: No, I think it was cool to look at the tasks together in this room.
> Interviewer: So not to know the tasks before you came into this room?
> MA_Peter: Yeah.
> LM_Chris: If I get it before, I start finding lots of information and other things. It needs to be the same before we come here.
> MA_Peter: At the same level.
> (Appendix 7, lines 211-216)

MA_Peter believed it was important that the group was not familiar with the tasks before the dialogue started, and LM_Chris elaborates on this view by saying that if he got the tasks beforehand, he would "start finding lots of information and other things". They both agreed that the group had to be "at the same level" when conducting the dialogue. The focus group was asked the same question in the last interview, during which MA_Lene and LM_Maria replied:

MA_Lene: Yes and no. It depends on the theme. Some things are easier to talk about than others.
LM_Maria: I think that if we talked in class about this, the themes, it wouldn't be good because we could change our minds. Like we do here without knowing the topic too well, we can say what we think without anyone…
(Appendix 11, lines 137-140)

MA_Lene implies that more preparation would help her engage in issues she found it difficult to talk about. LM_Maria, on the other hand, dismisses the need for more preparation, believing it to be unfortunate if participants' views would be influenced by other students in their class before the dialogue started. Her view appears to be very similar to that of LM_Chris and MA_Peter, believing that the members should have equal knowledge about the topic, and not have the opportunity to reflect too much about it before entering the dialogues. It appears that these three participants saw the dialogues as the most suitable arena for exploring the topic, perhaps experiencing the dialogue group as a safe environment to talk openly about each other's views.

It is pertinent to ask if more preparation would especially have helped the LM students who felt less confident about their own English proficiency. The focus group's composition was somewhat different than the others, as LM_Maria and LM_Chris were two of the most proficient English speakers from their class, and since all four participants were quite extrovert. In comparison, LM_Susan, who stepped in for LM_Maria in the second dialogue, spoke only four times during their interaction, only two of these times speaking in full sentences. Many of the LM students had similar proficiency to LM_Susan's, and it is reasonable to believe that a longer preparation time would have given students more knowledge about the given topic and a wider vocabulary with which to speak about it. The more proficient students could also benefit from more preparation. For example, in the first interview, LM_Chris explains how not having enough knowledge about the topic made it very difficult to talk about: "Like we were talking about freedom of speech. It was in America and Norway and we don't know the rules and not so much about these different countries and their rules. So that was a little bit difficult to understand" (Appendix 7, lines 19-21). Hence, teaching the students more about the topic could have strengthened their confidence in the dialogues, making them participate more.

It seems reasonable to expect that more pre-activities could have a positive effect on the learning outcome of the dialogues, if it indeed stimulates greater participation. It would also be possible to do this without compromising the dialogues, like LM_Maria fears. For example, one could focus more on instrumental knowledge about the given topic by

processing different material, and not ask students to assess it subjectively. Furthermore, students could engage in communicative exercises unrelated to the topic, which would teach them how to prepare for e.g. different types of communication issues. As the focus group members point out, however, it is important for the students to feel "at the same level" during the dialogues. This might entail that different classes need a different amount of time to complete the pre-activities, according to their language proficiency and pre-existing knowledge.

Let's Talk did not include planned post-activities, but the teachers tried to "debrief" the classes after the dialogues, acting as mediators (Kramsch, 2004). These classroom conversations were unstructured and were a way to gain insight into the groups' experiences. For example, these informal talks revealed that all students experienced the second dialogue as more difficult than the others, resulting in some changes for the last dialogue round. Lack of time at the end of the lesson meant that these talks were very brief, and it is doubtful that all the students got the opportunity to share what was on their minds. This could have had a negative effect on how these students processed their experience from the dialogue. Furthermore, the teachers potentially missed vital information relevant to the progression of the project.

Part of our job as educators is to make the students aware of the intended outcome of their lessons, and more time for pre- and post-activities might have helped students become more conscious of the learning outcome of the project. For example, as discussed in section 4.1.5., the interview data shows that the focus group members saw the dialogues as a good way to learn English, but they did not reflect on what type of communicative situation they were training for. Addressing this issue in the pre- or post-activities could have helped them become better aware of this outcome, as well as seeing the intercultural dimension of their experiences in the dialogues. On a similar note, when asked to agree or disagree with the statement "one or more of the dialogues made me think about things in new ways", about a third of the students disagreed or were undecided (cf. figure 3). Furthermore, eight out of 27 respondents on the questionnaire did not think that they had learned a lot from the dialogues. It is likely that more, although perhaps not all, of the students would have seen the potential of the dialogues if more time was spent on raising their awareness before and after the dialogues were held.

Lastly, more time for pre- and post-activities would likely have made the students better equipped to handle their feelings towards the dialogues. As seen in section 4.1.4., many students experienced some anxiousness before the dialogues started, and over 60 percent of

the MA students felt frustrated with other students who did not participate much during their interaction. The data suggests that these emotions did not impact the participants' overall satisfaction with the project, but as discussed previously in this chapter, it has likely had some influence over the dialogues. Thus, the students' emotions should be a topic in the pre- and post-activities, if only to validate the feelings they experienced and to tell them that what they feel is natural. The teacher could also discuss with the class how emotions can affect a learning situation in different ways.

These findings are relevant to the five principles for peer-led mixed group dialogue teaching, as discussed in Section 4.1. By increasing the time spent on pre- and post-activities, the students would e.g. receive more support from the teacher and fellow students regarding their emotions, which could increase their confidence and thereby their contributions in the dialogues. Moreover, they might have become more aware of the linguistic and intercultural dimensions of the dialogues, and thus recognise more easily what they had learned from them. Lastly, one could argue that lacking awareness of the issues discussed limits the students' critical reflection, and thereby also the dialogue group's collective effort to explore controversial democratic issues.

4.2.2. Influence from the topics and tasks

The last aspect of Let's Talk to be discussed in this chapter is how the students experienced the topics and tasks, and how the instructions influenced the learning outcome of the dialogues. The topics given were *freedom of speech, equality,* and *integration*, but the preparation material was somewhat different every time, as were the tasks for the dialogues. This section analyses how the students experienced the topics differently, mostly on the basis of the interview data. The tasks will also be compared to explore how future material should be crafted.

The students were mainly positive about the topic *freedom of speech*. MA_Lene said that "(…) it was a bit difficult, but it was very interesting. And I learned some new stuff", suggesting that the difficulty of the topic did not prevent her from finding the topic interesting and instructive (Appendix 7, line 14). MA_Peter was very happy with freedom of speech as a topic, saying that "it's a hot topic right now, all over the world. I thought it was interesting to discuss", and later explaining that "I've always been interested in human rights and freedom and stuff like that. I just enjoy talking about it" (lines 15-16 and 24-25). Like MA_Lene, LM_Maria and LM_Chris found the topic challenging to talk about, again suggesting that

more or better pre-activities could have prepared the students better. Still, all the focus group members were happy with the first dialogue.

As previously mentioned, the second dialogue did not go as smoothly as the other two. The groups appeared to be less engaged, and finished much quicker compared to the first dialogue. This was also when the MA students started reporting frustration with lacking participation of the LM students. In the second interview, LM_Chris shared some ideas about the topic of equality:

> It was kind of difficult. When we talk about equality, it's not an easy thing. We need to get deep under it to get the real meaning of it. We talked about it but I think we didn't get to the end of it, like the depth of the matter. We just talked about how the rules are and something. (Appendix 9, lines 39-42)

LM_Chris experienced the topic as challenging, because the group failed to get to "the depth of the matter", and instead ended up talking about "how the rules are and something". This view is supported by the others, e.g. when MA_Peter said that "I think it was just difficult to discuss it. This time it was easier to give short answers" (line 44). From MA_Lene's perspective "it was mostly that we didn't have that much to say, so we didn't talk so much. It was a little bit quiet sometimes. (lines 66-67). Apparently, the students felt that they had little to say about equality and experienced this dialogue as more shallow and quiet, and the possible reasons for this will be discussed below. It should also be mentioned that the students were asked if they could think of any other reasons besides the topic for why the second dialogue was less successful, but they believed that the topic was the only reason (Appendix 9, lines 69-71).

In the last interview, the focus group members had a lot to say about the topic of integration, and seemed enthusiastic about it:

> Interviewer: What did you think about the topic integration?
> MA_Lene: I think it was interesting and relevant.
> Interviewer: And how was it relevant?
> MA_Lene: Because there is a lot of integration today.
> MA_Peter: We hear about it all over the news, so we maybe all know a little about it.
> Interviewer: What about your own lives? Did you feel like it was relevant to you?
> MA_Lene: Not so much, but I liked to discuss it and to see it from other perspectives.
> Interviewer: Yeah. What about you, Chris?
> LM_Chris: I agree. I think it was a very good topic to talk about, it was interesting. There was a lot of different views from everyone and it was good to disagree about a lot of things.
> (Appendix 11, lines 16-26)

The students describe equality as "relevant" and "interesting" on several occasions, showing a positive attitude towards the topic. MA_Peter believes that because it is a relevant topic which is often present in the news, the students know more about it. LM_Chris saw it as a good topic because it prompted different views and disagreement, which, as discussed further later in this section, could just as well relate to the tasks they were given. The students did not, however, say that the topic was easier in any way. In fact, MA_Lene said that "it was the most difficult theme. But also the most interesting" (line 33). MA_Peter had a similar view, saying that "I found it more challenging to speak my mind, so I found it more fun to talk about. I had to dig a little deeper to say what I meant. That made it more interesting for me" (lines 37-38). The quotations show that the students did not want the topics to be easy, but instead saw the challenge as "interesting" and a way to "dig a little deeper".

Even if the focus group was happiest with the dialogue about integration, it appears that this was not because it felt closer or more relevant to their own lives. In the previous excerpt, MA_Lene answers the question of relevance directly, saying it was "not so much" relevant for her own life. The questionnaire also asked about the relevance of the topics, and even though the numbers were quite consistent for the three topics, integration scored a bit lower. Five students disagreed that this was a relevant topic in their lives, compared to three students disagreeing concerning equality and freedom of speech. In fact, one of these five students was an LM student, which might seem strange considering this person's immigrant status. It is possible that this student did not understand the question fully, but it could just as likely be that this student did not see the relevance of it. That five students did not see the relevance of the topic and six were undecided, in spite of being in a class with LM students and participating in a project with other LM students, shows the importance of raising student awareness about the topic in general, and not just the dialogue itself.

A question which needs consideration is how the tasks influenced the success of the dialogues. The tasks for freedom of speech (Appendix 13) asked the students what they thought about some of the controversial issues described in the preparation text (Appendix 12), and to discuss two imagined cases from their own school. From the focus group transcript, these tasks seemed to stimulate interest and a real dialogue, as described in section 4.1.1. The tasks for equality were, as previously stated, not as successful. One of the tasks for this dialogue (Appendix 15) also concerned a controversial issue from the preparation text (Appendix 14), whereas the other questions related to social inheritance in the students' and other people's lives.

As pointed out previously in this section, students experienced the second dialogue as the least successful one, and the focus group data supports this view. Some of the tasks given for this dialogue asked the students to relate the topic to their own lives, but these questions were very descriptive, e.g. "what is your social inheritance?". Two of the tasks even consisted of yes/no questions, which likely limited the groups' discussion. The tasks were thus more closed and might have contributed to the fact that students spoke less and did not really respond to each other the same way they did in the two other dialogues. As MA_Peter said in the second interview, "this time it was easier to give short answers" (Appendix 9, line 44).

Two changes were made to the tasks before the last dialogue round. First, most of the tasks were statements which the students had to either agree or disagree with. This was an attempt to make students take a certain view and defend it, hopefully stimulating more interaction. Second, the students had to use laminated cards which were green on one side and red on the other, and the colour facing upwards would indicate their agreement or disagreement with the given statement. The cards were first of all implemented to make the least participating students contribute more, as they could no longer remain completely passive in the dialogues. The hope was also that once they had put the laminated card on the table, they would feel inclined to explain their position. The focus group believed that the cards contributed to the dialogue:

Interviewer: If you could choose, would you do it with or without the cards?
LM_Maria: With the cards. If I agree or disagree it's more immediate.
MA_Peter: It was very black and white what people meant.
LM_Chris: The best part about the cards was that when someone else said something and you had forgot if he agreed or disagreed, you could see the card and understand what was happening, and say something about that.
(Appendix 11, lines 51-56)

As LM_Maria points out, the cards led the students to make up their minds quickly, and it was as MA_Peter said easy to see the opinion of the other participants. LM_Chris saw the cards as helpful to avoid misunderstanding between the group members. The focus group participants were also positive towards using the cards in future dialogues. In a similar vein, the focus group liked discussing statements instead of questions, believing that it made them talk more. MA_Lene was the only one who elaborated on this view, saying that it was "because everyone has different opinions, and we got to share our views of the statements" (Appendix 11, lines 46-47). Furthermore, as discussed in section 4.1.1., the statements allowed students to disagree without confronting the other students directly. The data thus suggests that the use

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of cards and statements improved the last dialogues, although it is likely that other factors might have had an effect as well.

Klafki (1996) proposes that in order for learning to be *exemplary,* it has to be relevant to the students' life world. As indicated in the findings, the three topics were not regarded as relevant to all the students' lives, even if one as an outsider can see a strong relevance. It is possible that increased awareness of the dialogues, as discussed in section 4.2.1., could have helped the students see this relevance, which again would have increased their learning outcome. However, the participants did like the fact that the topics were difficult, as it stimulated deeper thought processes about the topics. Although a positive indicator of critical reflection, which is a prerequisite for transformative learning processes (Mezirow, 1998), the students did perhaps think deeper about the topics than the dialogues themselves. If so, they might have overlooked the intercultural and linguistic dimensions of the group dialogues.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This final chapter provides a brief summary of the thesis as a whole, and presents the conclusions of this master's thesis's exploration of peer-led mixed group dialogues in the EFL upper secondary level classroom. The last three sections discuss potential limitations of the thesis, as well as its possible implications for future research and classroom practice.

5.1. Summary and Conclusions

5.1.1. Summary

This master's thesis set out to explore the didactic benefits and challenges of using peer-led group dialogues in a mixed EFL upper secondary level classroom setting. Dialogue is here defined as an open and unbiased conversation, based on respect and tolerance, and with the goal of exploring different views to reach a consensus (Cranton 2002; Dervin 2016). Including consensus in the definition is problematic, as disagreement could be just as valid an outcome of dialogue if the interlocutors are unable to reach agreement because of conflicting values or world views. Iversen (2014) believes that classrooms can serve as *disagreement communities,* where opposing views can be voiced and explored together to develop a better understanding of community and democracy. Tornberg (2004a) proposes that the foreign language classroom is particularly suited for talking about controversial topics, and that lacking linguistic and communicative skills should not serve as an excuse to engage with "safe" topics only. The above given definition's inclusion of the word consensus could therefore better be explained using the cliché "agreeing to disagree".

MA and LM students from two different classes participated in the study. By including students from different classes and backgrounds, the educational setting of the study received a new dimension, compared to more traditional and homogenous Norwegian EFL classroom. Furthermore, the homogenous classroom is currently changing in relation to societal changes in Norway with growing ethnic and cultural diversity (Statistics Norway, 2016). One of the main aims of this thesis was to explore how interaction between these two groups shaped the dialogues, and to discuss to what extent it promoted transformative learning, intercultural competence and communicative skills.

A mixed methods case study was conducted for this thesis, through which the teacher also took the role of researcher. The qualitative data was collected from a focus group consisting

of four students[3], allowing close examination of the interactions in the dialogues and the participants' experiences of being in this type of learning situation. The three dialogues of the focus group were audio recorded, as were the three interviews. The quantitative data was provided by a questionnaire which all the students answered upon the completion of the project.

On the basis of the discussion of relevant theoretical works in Chapter 2, this thesis suggested five principles for mixed group dialogue teaching: establishing dialogue, fostering critical reflection, facilitating transformation, contemplating the extrarational dimension of learning, and using English as a *lingua franca.* These five principles further constituted five categories through which the data was analysed. In the rest of this section, however, the hypotheses given in the first chapter will structure the discussion of the key findings from the study.

5.1.2. Developing intercultural competence

The first hypothesis theorises that by serving as a disagreement community, the peer-led mixed group dialogues can develop students' intercultural competence. Some teachers hesitate to engage with controversial topics in the classroom out of fear of confrontation (Young & Sachdev, 2011). Dervin (2016), on the other hand, believes that instability is central in any intercultural encounter, and that teaching therefore should place students in unstable situations (pp. 82-83). It is therefore relevant to consider not only the role of disagreement in the dialogues, but also how instability might have affected the participants' learning.

The data revealed that a degree of instability was present in the dialogues. Firstly, some participants, mainly MA students, felt frustrated with other group members. Secondly, focus group data showed a wide spectre of situations where disagreement took different forms. For example, disagreement was sometimes only grounded in interpretation of the facts, whereas other times, differences of opinion were grounded in opposing world views. Moreover, the participants reported being nervous before the dialogues, not because of the controversial topics, but rather because they would meet students from a different background, who they were not familiar with. Reportedly, the nerves also related to how well they would be able to communicate with each other. Thus, it seems that the instability of the dialogues was only partly related to the topics.

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[3] In addition to one substitute student in the second dialogue, cf. section 3.3.3.

The development of intercultural competence can be explored through the participants' strategies for solving the instability that arose, and the data shows a variety of approaches used to solve difficulties. For example, when frustrated with her peers' lacking participation in the dialogue, one MA student purposefully attempted to provoke her fellow group members to speak, potentially creating conflict within the group. A few times, issues remained unresolved, as the group proceeded to a new task. Contrastingly, disagreement was often resolved successfully through the use of hedging, and the focus group members rarely contradicted each other's arguments directly. The findings also indicate that the focus group participants were inclined towards reaching a consensus, even though they reported in the interviews that disagreement within the group would make the dialogues more interesting. This inconsistency suggests that the participants had the necessary attitudes to create disagreement communities in the dialogues, but that they perhaps lacked the skills and confidence to contradict each other directly, which is a key element in Iversen's (2014) definition of a disagreement community.

The findings indicate that the participants seldom reflected on the interculturality of the dialogues. For example, five focus students did not see the relevance of the topic integration, despite being members of a class with some or only immigrant students, and engaging with students from a different background than themselves in the dialogues. Similarly, focus group member MA_Lene reported that the topic was not very relevant for her own life. Furthermore, the participants failed to reflect on how communication in the dialogues differed from other communicative settings. Consequently, the findings indicate that participants were not sufficiently aware of the intercultural dimension of the discussion topics, which likely would have helped them to better develop their own intercultural competence.

Even though the thesis can give no conclusive answer to the first hypothesis, the findings suggest that mixed group dialogues can be disagreement communities that promote intercultural competence. The instability of intercultural encounters is present through disagreement, politeness, apprehension, and frustration, making the dialogues *simplex* settings (Dervin, 2016) for the participants to handle, but this instability was often related to communication issues rather than true disagreement. Thus, there seems to be a didactic potential of promoting IC through mixed group dialogue teaching, even if the analysis shows that the participants were not always able to find appropriate solutions to communication problems. The study also suggests that students are fully able to engage in open, respectful and tolerant dialogue about controversial issues, without creating unmanageable confrontations.

5.1.3. Critical reflection

The second hypothesis proposes that peer-led mixed group dialogue can serve as a suitable arena for developing critical reflection. Transformative learning theorists believe that critical reflection is necessary in order to change one's frame of reference (Mezirow, 1997; Cranton, 2002). For this thesis, it is relevant to explore if such changes came about through the dialogues. Moreover, critical reflection is a central component in intercultural competence (OECD, 2016; The Council of Europe, 2016), sometimes defined as critical awareness (Byram, 2008). The presence of critical reflection should therefore be considered in relation to these theories, as well as the general promotion of *Bildung* (Klafki, 1996).

My findings suggest that there were profound cognitive processes present in the dialogues. The focus group members reported that they had to think deeply about the topics they discussed. By discussing different issues, they also reflected more about them, in line with Vygotsky's (1986) idea of thoughts coming into existence through language. In the analyses, question raising was used as an indicator of critical reflection, and on several occasions, students raised critical questions that not only showed their own reflective skills, but prompted them among the other students as well.

Although there are findings indicating transformative learning processes through the mixed group dialogue teaching, not all of these indicate critical reflection or awareness. One LM student, however, was very much aware of the transformative effect the project had had on him, saying that his prejudices about the MA students were proven wrong by engaging with them in the dialogues. This student also believed that the project facilitated integration at the school. His reflections serve as a powerful example of the didactic potential of mixed group dialogues. Other examples, however, indicate a lack of awareness of previous assumptions and how the project changed these, e.g. when MA_Peter, one of the MA focus group members, shows a change in perspective about the LM students, although it appears that he is unaware of this change himself (Appendix 11, lines 152-155). This study thereby indicates that mixed group dialogues can potentially promote critical reflection skills, but that efforts must be made to enhance students' awareness of certain elements involved in these learning processes and the expected learning outcome of them (cf. section 5.1.2.).

5.1.4. Oral communication skills

The final hypothesis suggests that peer-led mixed group dialogue promotes oral communication skills that are useful in coping with ELF situations outside the classroom. The

incorporation of LM students in this setting changes the role of English from a second language to a *lingua franca*, as many of the LM students had low proficiency in Norwegian. Thus, the MA students could no longer rely on their mother tongue to solve communication issues, a fact which focus group participants and MA_Lene and MA_Peter experienced several times. Instead, participants had to resort to other communication strategies, thus developing their linguistic repertoires (Baker, 2016).

The data analysis indicates that a range of pragmatic choices were made to support an atmosphere of politeness and respect. These choices were especially important in situations where the group disagreed and one student had to back down. In such cases, the "winning" students would moderate their answers and reconcile with their opponent to facilitate future cooperation. Such examples also illustrate the instability of the dialogues and how students had to use their communicative skills to cope with these situations. The results also indicate that the participants had to make communicative choices of an intercultural nature, e.g. helping each other save face, although it is not possible to conclude that this relates directly to the mix of MA and LM students. Lastly, the participants, and especially the MA students, were more interested in the fact that the dialogues forced them to speak English, rather than reflect on *how* English was used, compared to other settings. This once again indicates that students' awareness of the nature of the mixed group dialogues, and in this case of the role of the language in this type of setting, has to be raised to increase the learning experience.

Another finding of the study, which relates to the development of oral communication skills, is that the dialogues appeared to strengthen some students' confidence to speak. Both LM_Maria and MA_Lene reported that the project made them more confident in speaking English in general. MA_Lene also said that she dared to speak more in her own class than before, an observation which was corroborated by my colleague. Thus, group dialogues can potentially help students overcome their speaking anxiety, which is a normal obstacle in the EFL classroom (Chiu et al. 2010; MacIntyre & Gardner 1991).

5.1.5. Summing up the challenges

As stated in Chapter 1, the hypotheses formed in this thesis focus on the possibilities of using peer-led mixed group dialogues in upper secondary EFL teaching, but this does not mean that the challenges are less important. In fact, one might say that the revealed challenges are even more important, since they offer insight into how the learning outcome of the dialogues can be enhanced in future didactic practice.

The findings of the study indicate that the key challenge, which influences all the didactic potentials of peer-led mixed group dialogues, is raising students' awareness of the dialogue method and the learning outcome of it. The findings suggest a lacking awareness of how English was used differently from regular classroom practice (at least for the MA student), and of the intercultural dimension of the dialogues. Furthermore, this lack of awareness might have affected the degree to which the students were able to critically reflect on these issues, as well as the issues concerning the topics they discussed. The lacking awareness seems to indicate that a greater focus must be placed on the pre- and post-activities related to the dialogues.

More specifically, this means that the teacher should be more involved in the project and actively engage with the students and their experiences from the dialogues, to a larger extent than what was done in this study. In this respect, donating more time towards such a dialogue project seems a reasonable investment, as it likely will enhance most of the potential learning outcome. The findings also indicate that the students reflected more on the topics rather than the interaction in the dialogues, even if some students did not see the topics as relevant to their own lives. Lastly, it is a challenge to make questions that sufficiently stimulate to dialogue and critical reflection, although there are indicators that discussing statements rather than answering questions, in addition to the use of red and green cards, prompted more participation.

5.2. Didactic Implications

As this thesis indicates several benefits of using peer-led group dialogues in the EFL classroom, it invites educators to consider implementing such dialogue teaching in their practice. According to some scholars (e.g. Chiu et al. 2010; MacIntyre & Gardner 1991), and in my experience as an English teacher, the fear of speaking in the English classroom constitutes a significant obstacle for our students' oral skills development. One indicated benefit of peer-led group dialogues is increasing confidence to speak English with other students, and implementing this teaching method early in the school year could help lay the foundation for more spoken participation in English between students for the rest of the year. Furthermore, in accordance with Vygotsky's (1986) ideas of how thought is developed through language, one must consider that increased oral participation facilitates profound cognitive processes like critical reflection, which was indicated as another potential outcome of the peer-led group dialogues.

Another didactic implication of this study is that educators should contemplate how disagreement is managed in the classroom. The focus group data suggests that students are more comfortable being polite and respectful towards other students than saying outright that they disagree with something that was said. A common strategy was to voice one's own opinion without relating it to the opposing view of someone else, and in general, the participants were inclined to seek out agreement rather than disagreement. One could argue that this form of discussion lacks true disagreement, as there is no contradiction of opinions. Iversen (2014) proposes that classrooms can and should serve as disagreement communities where students are trained in democratic involvement. However, if students are indeed inclined towards consensus and lack the courage to contradict each other, as the results of the present study imply, it is necessary for educators to find ways to teach students how to voice disagreement in a direct, but respectful way that encourages rather than discourages other students to participate.

A third implication that needs to be considered is the implementation of LM students in EFL classroom practice. In the current study, the mix of LM and MA students brought a new dimension to the peer-led group dialogues that facilitated unique learning potential. Firstly, the interaction between these two groups created a sense of instability for the students (Dervin, 2016), who were anxious about meeting the other students and communicating with them. However, the students overcame their anxiety and were very happy with the project overall. Furthermore, the dialogues gained a more obvious intercultural dimension when students from different backgrounds engaged each other in conversation, but perhaps the most valuable experience was that "there wasn't much difference", as focus group member MA_Peter said. Lastly, the fact that the LM students spoke little to no Norwegian created a more *realistic* communicative situation, in the sense that it required all students to use English as a *lingua franca* to communicate. English educators should therefore consider how LM students can be used as a valuable resource to bring a new and exciting dimension into their classroom practice; a dimension which is already fully present outside the classroom.

5.3. Potential Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This thesis has a very wide scope, attempting to examine the didactic benefits and challenges of using peer-led mixed group dialogue teaching. This is partly because, to my knowledge, there is no existing study that has looked into collaboration between LM and MA EFL students in this fashion. As such, this was to an extent an explorative study. Given the

limitations of a master's thesis, the exploration of the mixed dialogue method has only broached some of the didactic implications. This section therefore discusses some of the thesis's potential limitations, and gives some suggestions for future research.

The present study has not been able to provide a deep linguistic analysis of the group dialogues, even if it ideally could have revealed more about how and to what extent students use and develop their linguistic repertoires (Baker, 2016). For this, a more detailed transcription of the dialogues would likely be necessary. Future studies on mixed group dialogues could explore specific pragmatic elements like politeness or directness. One could also conduct a study similar to that of Hoffstaedter and Kohn (2015), who analysed how EFL users interacted through online collaborative dialogues. In such studies it would be relevant to implement control groups to gain better insight into the differences between ESL and EFL usage in different dialogue settings. This could not be provided in the current study because of its spatial and temporal limitations.

Relating to the idea of mixed group dialogues, there are numerous other avenues that could be pursued further. This thesis only explored the dialogues of one focus group, but it would have been interesting to compare several groups to each other, as there might be considerable variation in terms of e.g. politeness, openness, cooperation and activity level. The implementation of more than one focus group could also provide a basis for comparisons between different types of learners, e.g. introvert students versus extrovert students. Moreover, the dialogues could just as well take place between academic and vocational students or students from different schools. This would give greater insight into the idea of *diverse diversities* (Dervin, 2016), where one sees all groups as internally heterogenous.

The current thesis has a strictly English didactics focus, but the classroom project seems to have implications for other fields within educational research and practice as well. For example, some participants believed that the study facilitated integration between the LM and MA students, an area which could be pursued in pedagogical research. Furthermore, similar dialogue studies could be conducted within e.g. Social Science or Religion didactics, where issues of ethnic diversity, word views and inclusive democratic involvement are important components.

As discussed in Chapter 2, transformative learning theory is grounded in research on adult learners (Stray & Sætra, 2016), although there are a few studies that suggest relevance to secondary education as well (Taylor, 2007). The present thesis has used terminology and ideas from transformative learning theory in upper secondary level EFL teaching, and has found that the participants show some degree of critical reflection as well as some clear cases

of transformation. Yet this study's explorative nature entails a lacking depth and focus on the potential of transformative learning in group dialogue teaching specifically, and in upper secondary education in general. Hopefully, future studies can contribute to a better understanding of transformative learning processes in upper secondary education.

5.4. Concluding Remarks

Concluding this thesis, the main findings are that there appear to be several didactic benefits of conducting peer-led group dialogues between MA and LM students in the EFL upper secondary level classroom. The study suggests that such dialogues can promote intercultural competence and transformative learning by exploring controversial issues, and applying critical reflection skills. It also exercises the students' oral communication skills, which are central in the success of the dialogues. However, the greatest challenge indicated in this study is that the participants lacked awareness of the different dimensions of this type of communicative setting, such as the role of interculturality or how English was practiced differently from other classroom situations. This is, at least in part, believed to be the result of insufficient involvement by the teachers in the study, especially when debriefing the students after the dialogues.

On a more general level, the results imply that teachers in the upper secondary level EFL classroom can trust their students' ability to face challenging situations in the classroom in which controversial issues are discussed. Not only do the students need to recognise that future intercultural encounters outside the classroom include some level of instability (Dervin, 2016), but also that interaction with the Other can be meaningful and interesting. However, students require close support from the teacher to process difficult emotions and enhance awareness of the learning outcome.

This thesis was written at the brink of significant changes to the Norwegian educational system, and, from what is known about these revisions so far, some of these changes reflect the realities of an increasingly heterogenous society. It is hoped that this thesis can offer some insight into how the ongoing changes can be implemented in the classroom, or at least stir debate on the issue. Moreover, the thesis builds on the belief that LM students can be vital assets in our teaching, and that projects such as this one can have positive ripple effects, e.g. leading to greater interaction between two groups who, at least at my school, seldom engage with each other.

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Appendix 1: NSD Approval

Hild Elisabeth Hoff
Sydnesplassen 7
5007 BERGEN

Vår dato: 04.08.2017   Vår ref: 54613 / 3 / ASF   Deres dato: Deres ref:

Tilbakemelding på melding om behandling av personopplysninger

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 01.06.2017.
Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

54613	*How can dialogue between language minority students and majority students in the EFL classroom promote intercultural competence?*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Universitetet i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Hild Elisabeth Hoff*
Student	*Andreas Boer Johannessen*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.06.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Dersom noe er uklart ta gjerne kontakt over telefon.

Vennlig hilsen

Appendix 2: Information Letter

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet *"Let's Talk"*

Bakgrunn og formål

Dette forskningsprosjektet er del av en masteroppgave ved Universitetet i Bergen. Den vil undersøke om samtaler på engelsk mellom elever fra forskjellig bakgrunn kan utvikle elevers evne til å snakke sammen om deres meninger, holdninger og verdier, og kanskje også utfordre disse meningene, holdningene og verdiene.

Jeg ønsker både å ha med elever som har bodd i Norge hele sitt liv, og elever som ikke har bodd i Norge så lenge, og det er derfor du er valgt ut som mulig deltaker i mitt forskningsprosjekt.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Forskningsprosjektet går ut på at vi i noen timer denne høsten skal jobbe med et eget prosjekt som heter *Let's Talk.* Det går både ut på å jobbe med noen ting i din egen klasse, men også at du deltar i samtaler med elever fra en annen klasse.

Jeg vil gjerne ta notater av det som blir sagt i timene når vi jobber med prosjektet. I tillegg vil en av samtalegruppene bli spurt om å ta lydopptak av sine samtaler, og å stille til noen gruppeintervjuer der jeg stiller spørsmål om hvordan samtalene gikk. Alle som deltar vil på slutten av høsten bli spurt om å ta en spørreundersøkelse på internett om hva dere syns om å jobbe med dette prosjektet.

Om du ikke ønsker å delta i forskningsprosjektet kan du fortsatt være med på *Let's Talk* sammen med de andre elevene. Da vil ingenting av det du har sagt bli skrevet ned, og du vil heller ikke bli bedt om å være med på opptak/intervju eller spørreundersøkelse. Dette prosjektet vil ikke ha noen innvirkning på karakteren din, uansett om du ønsker å delta eller ikke.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Det er bare jeg som har tilgang til den informasjonen dere kommer med, og alt lagres på en PC som er beskyttet med passord. Alle navn vil bli anonymisert, og det er bare jeg som vet hvem som har sagt hva. På den måten vil ingen som leser masteroppgaven min kunne vite hvem du er eller hva du har sagt.

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes juni 2018. Etter dette vil alle opptak og lister med navn på deltakerne slettes.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert.

Jeg gjør oppmerksom på at elever som er under 16 år må ha godkjenning fra sine foresatte.

Dersom du har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med meg på tlf. 41123882, eller eventuelt min veileder på Universitetet i Bergen, Hild Elisabeth Hoff, på tlf. 55582361.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien «Let's Talk»

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta.

Navn:

_____

Signatur og dato:

_____

Appendix 3: Semi-structured Interview Guide

Semi-structured interview with focus group

Open start
Let's start with your experience from the group conversation. Is there anything you want to say in general about the experience?

The topic
What do you think about the topic for today's dialogue?
How relevant do you think the topic is for your own life?
Did you get something out of talking about this? In what way?
Do you think you would have learned as much if you e.g. wrote about this instead?

Cooperation
How did you cooperate to solve the tasks given? Did anything complicate or make things easier?
How did you talk about disagreement?
How much did the preparations in class help you to talk about disagreement?

Learning about each other
What feelings or thoughts did you have about the dialogue before you started today?
What have you learned about the other group members during the conversation?
Did you have any ideas about the other members before you started the conversations, which have now changed?

Improvement
What can you do to make the dialogue even better next time?
How can we teachers make the preparations better for next time?
What are your feelings towards the next group conversation?

What was different in this conversation compared to the last one(s)?
Do you feel like you are better at speaking together now compared to earlier conversations? Why?

Appendix 4: Questionnaire

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is about your experiences with Let's Talk. It will mostly ask you to say your opinion about different statements about the dialogues. Please check the box that fits best.

Which English class are you in?

Elin's class   Andreas' class

What is your gender?

Girl   Boy

How well do you think that you speak English?

not so good   okay   pretty good

I liked working with the project Let's Talk.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

I was nervous before the dialogues started.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

I was afraid to speak in the dialogues.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

I looked forward to the dialogues.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

Sometimes I chose not to say something even though I wanted to.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

Sometimes I was frustrated with students who did not say much.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

The first dialogue (about freedom of speech) went well.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

Freedom of speech was a relevant topic for my own life.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

The second dialogue (about equality) went well.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

Equality was a relevant topic for my own life.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

The last dialogue (about integration) went well.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

Integration was a relevant topic for my own life.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

I learned a lot by being part of Let's Talk.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

One or more of the dialogues made me think about things in new ways.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

One or more of the dialogues made me see that I was wrong about some things.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

We sometimes disagreed about things in the dialogues.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

We always agreed about things in the dialogues.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

The dialogues were a good way to learn English.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

Meeting students from the other English class was interesting/fun.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

I would have learned more if the dialogues were in my own class only.

I strongly disagree   I disagree   I don't agree or disagree   I agree   I strongly agree

Do you have any comments about Let's Talk? Please write them down here.

_____

_____

Thank you for answering the questions, and for participating in Let's Talk!

Appendix 5: Guidelines for a Successful Dialogue

Guidelines for a Successful Dialogue

A dialogue is more than a conversation. It is based on openness, respect and tolerance. The goal is to listen to each other and to talk about both the things you agree and disagree on. Here is some advice:

1. **Listening** is just as important as talking.

2. Show **respect** to the other dialogue members, both in use of language and body language.

3. Even if you disagree, you should still respect the other person's view.

4. Be **honest**. Say only things you mean.

5. **Emotion** is natural. Showing emotion is a good thing, but remember point 2.

Appendix 6: Transcript of Dialogue 1

Lene: Who wants to start?

Chris: You can.

Lene: Okay, my name is ###, I'm sixteen years old. I play handball, I like to be with friends and my family. I like school but sometimes it's boring.

Peter: Yes, I can go next. My name is ###. I'm here from ###. I enjoy working out in my spare time and I also like to hang out with friends. And in the weekends I usually go to the cinema or just to ### or something. And I have been doing boxing for around seven years I think and I enjoy that really much.

Maria: My name is ###. I'm from ###, but I have origins from ###. I'm sixteen. I like to swim, I like reading. Listening to music and I like to cook.

Chris: My name is ###. I'm from ### and I've been for like one year in Norway. I like to play football and also hang out with my friends. I live in ###. Yeah.

Maria: I've been in Norway for three months.

Lene: Three months!

Maria: Yeah.

Lene: Wow! And you think it's difficult to learn Norwegian?

Maria: Yes, it's really a different language.

Chris: I've been one year here, but I know a little bit English so it helps me a lot with Norwegian. So now I want to go to *vanlig klasse*. But I can't go there yet because they told me I have to go one more year more and learn Norwegian. I have been to tenth class in Norway, but I don't know what… yeah.

Lene: Nice. Which language do you talk at home?

Maria: ###.

Chris: *###*.

Lene: Yeah. Interesting.

Peter: So you both know English more well than Norwegian?

Maria: Yeah.

Peter: Yeah, okay.

Lene: Okay. Shall we start? [turns the next piece of paper with task 1]

Lene: Okay. In the text about the freedom of speech you read about the Charlottesville rally this summer. Do you think President Trump should have condemned the White nationalists for their views, and blame them for the incident? Likewise, do you think the Norwegian police handled the Kristiansand protest correctly? Hm, that's difficult.

[Chris reads very quickly through the task, mumbling]

Maria: What is likewise?

Lene: What?

Maria: Likewise.

Peter: Ehm, similar to.

Maria: Ah, okay.

[short silence]

Lene: What do you think?

[short silence]

Maria: I don't think that Trump should condemn this people, because if you have this freedom why do you have to condemn them?

Lene: Yes, that's true.

Chris: I think they should have been content, because like Donald Trump was the one because he always passes some racist comment, that's obvious. And he, like, likes to throw fire on every people. So if this was a black person, a hundred percent he was going to say something

51 because that's what he does every time. But like North Korea now, like they are fighting and
52 it's the same thing. He is passing on racist comments and calling the person rocket man. And
53 if that was a black person he would have commented that. Some of the white people they are
54 a bit more racist, like than the black people. In America it has very bad history because of
55 how they were and what they did. They were treated as slaves and, yes I think that Trump
56 should have condemned him.
57 Peter: Yeah. I think that racism should be illegal. Everywhere, no matter what.
58 Maria: Yeah, but they signed the United Nations Declaration, so…
59 Chris: Yes, this is freedom of speech, but I can't do whatever I want. We see in Myanmar
60 many people are dying but the leader, I don't know what is her name, she has won the Nobel
61 Prize but she should say something for the people to learn something about it, and that's what
62 Trump needs to do. He should say something to people so that another people should learn
63 from that. Because he is a leader of a country.
64 Lene: Yeah, it's difficult because they do have a right to say what they mean and… but I
65 think there is a limit for how far they can go.
66 Peter: Yeah, when you hurt other people you've gone over the limit.
67 Lene: [reads from task] "And likewise, do you think the Norwegian police handled the
68 Kristiansand protest correctly?" I do not think so. The counter protestors were intercepted by
69 police. Why were the counter protestors intercepted by the police when the…
70 Peter: Anti-gay protestors?
71 Lene: Yeah… [short silence] Sorry, I don't know what to say.
72 Peter: It's okay. [short silence]
73 Maria: Yeah, the counter protestors were led away by the police. Why were the counter
74 protestors and not the protestors, like why they did not let together to protest.
75 Lene: Do you mean that they protest against the same thing?
76 Maria: No, the protestors were protesting against gays, and the gays wanted to protest against
77 them.
78 Lene: So why didn't both protestors have the right to protest?
79 Peter: Maybe the anti-gay protestors were peaceful but the counter protestors were not.
80 Chris: Yeah, maybe because of the security reasons. Like if they were in the same street and
81 they protest against each other, they can get into fighting if they say something hateful. But
82 the police should have handled it better, both of them, not just one. They took out the counter
83 protestors and sent them home.
84 Lene: That's really unfair.
85 Maria: But the protest was not lawful.
86 Chris: No, it was. It says *even if* the protest was not lawful. It's like *if* the protest was lawful.
87 Maria: Oh, okay. Yeah.
88 Lene: I think that's unfair, and I don't know what more to say.
89 Maria: I think that both had the same rights. That they both had to protest.
90 Peter: But I think that be careful about what you protest about, because when it comes down
91 to religion, you know, sexuality, you should keep that to yourself. Not protest about it.
92 Because people can get hurt when you say something about their belief of something.
93 Maria: You have to respect. You can protest, but be like quiet. I don't know what to say.
94 Lene: You can have your thoughts for yourself, not spread it out. You can say your meaning,
95 but don't make it such a big thing. Just say "I mean this, and you mean that".
96 Peter: Yeah, cause it must be scary for a gay person to walk out in Kristiansand when this
97 protest is going on.
98 Chris: Yeah, like from my country, where I'm from in ###, there is no respect for the gay
99 people. Not in the place where I lived, but in some of the provinces they even get killed.
100 Lene: Oh.

101   Chris: But it's the way they are born, it's not their problem. Like they have the same things,
102   they do the same like us, they eat like us, they do whatever, they are the same people and have
103   the right to do whatever they want.
104   Peter: Yeah, I agree.
105   [Everyone signals their consent]
106   Lene: Shall we move on? Should I just read? [reads out loud] "A Christian organisation has
107   asked if they can come to your school to talk to students about homosexuality as a threat to
108   Norwegian society. You represent the student council, and the Head Master has asked for
109   your opinion on the matter. What will you say? Will you allow the organisation to come to
110   your school to spread this message?"
111   Chris: If I were the student council I would have resigned. When they talk about
112   homosexuality as a threat to Norwegian society, which it is not… We have never seen gay
113   people kill someone, bomb someone, nothing. They are living their simple life, so it's not a
114   threat to society. But if they want to talk and if they want to prove it like a hundred percent,
115   then it's okay, but if they're just protesting and don't really have an opinion and are just
116   joking around then they are doing like political games. That's not a good thing.
117   Peter: I think it's okay that they come and we can see how they look at homosexual people, as
118   long as they don't insult anyone. We are learning about their religion when they're coming to
119   our school but they have to keep it respectful, I think.
120   Maria: Yeah, the Christians don't like them. If they come to school they will say something
121   bad about them. I don't think that I would want them to come.
122   Lene: I will only say my opinion if they promise not to do something about it and…
123   Maria: Something bad?
124   Lene: Yeah. If they respect my opinion, then I will say what I mean. That the homosexual
125   people are worth the same as ehm *heterofile?* What is that in English?
126   Peter: Straights.
127   Lene: Straights, yes! Like straight people, they have exactly the same human rights. It's no
128   big difference between those people.
129   Peter: Yes, I agree.
130   Maria: Yeah, I agree too.
131   Lene: They can spread this message if they respect it.
132   [Maria and Peter signal agreement]
133   Lene: Shall we move on? Okay, over here a student used the word *neger,* negro, about a
134   student several times during a lunch break. Discuss the following questions. Is the student
135   allowed to use this word? Is it part of his freedom of speech?
136   Peter: I think that as long as he don't uses it to insult, he can use it. I think that he could use
137   any other word as well as long as it's not meant to hurt anyone. You have to ensure that he
138   doesn't get hurt by you using it. If you know someone I think it is easier to use it, but you
139   should be careful because it can be misunderstood.
140   Chris: Yeah, like you can use it if he's your close friend, he will not say anything. If someone
141   tells me "you're white" or something like that I will get hurt a hundred percent, and it's the
142   same for black people if you tell them *nigger, nigger, nigger.* Yeah, it's okay if he's your
143   good friend, because they will not take it personal. If you don't know a person you have to
144   know what is his or her feelings so you don't hurt them.
145   Lene: Personally, I don't think it's wrong to say *neger* because, yeah it is a word that has been
146   used in history to *nedverdige,* ehm… to like denigrate black people. It is a word, and if you
147   know his or her feelings well then maybe it's okay to say it. If a student says it several times
148   than it is another thing because I think it is bullying.
149   Peter: Yes, if you use it to put him down or something, then it's not okay.

150   Chris: I hear this word a lot, but what does it mean? [writes the word down and shows it to the
151   others]
152   Maria: *Nigga*?
153   Peter: It's the same thing, it's slang.
154   Chris: Yeah, I used it once in school and the person who heard it he got upset. I said just
155   *nigga.* [the other students laugh]. Yeah because I saw it on YouTube and it was a little bit
156   funny, they were saying like *yeah nigger, what's up? What's up, man?* So I told one of my
157   friends *nigger,* but I didn't know what it meant.
158   Maria: Yeah it's like slang, like *nigger, nigga.* But if you say it in America they will kill you,
159   probably.
160   [the others laugh]
161   Lene: But I think that *nigga* has become a word like *bro* or *my man.* Just slang.
162   Peter: Yeah, and it's used very often by black people. To each other.
163   Maria: Yeah, they say this in [country of origin]. Like people say to each other, *yeah nigga.*
164   Lene: I think that when it's between two *niggas* [laughs], I think it's okay, but maybe a white
165   person and a black person should be a bit careful. Like a white person shouldn't say…
166   Chris: It has like the same pronunciation sometimes, so it can be misunderstood very easily.
167   Like no one says *nigger.* Like sometimes they don't really pronounce the *r* but it has the same
168   thing, like *nigger/nigga.*
169   Maria: But this is Norwegian word? [most likely points at the word *neger* in the written
170   question]
171   Peter: That's Norwegian. In English [writes the words down on paper]. *Negro* was used back
172   in the days I think.
173   Maria: In [country of origin] it means *negro.*
174   Peter: Yeah, but I think it has been used by Americans as well.
175   Lene: Should you say something to the student? If yes, what would you say?
176   Maria: Stop?
177   Peter: Yeah, like in every other bullying case you should prevent it if you can.
178   Chris: Like if it's a joke between friends then it's okay, but if the person has a meaning to
179   discriminate the other person he has to stop.
180   Lene: I think you can recognise if it is bullying or if it is a joke. So you have to see the
181   situation yourself and then *vurdere*… [thinks of a suitable word, then laughs] *vurdere*
182   Maria: If this thing keeps on, you should say something to someone else. This is a big
183   problem, actually.
184   Lene: It says here that the student says it several times, and then I think it is bullying. We
185   should say something, and then maybe if it don't stop we should say something to a teacher.
186   [Lene turns the paper sheet with the last task]
187   Lene: Summing up today's dialogue, what is the group's conclusion about freedom of
188   speech? What do you agree on, and what do you disagree on?
189   Maria: I do not understand *summing up*.
190   Chris: Like the entire thing from the dialogue.
191   Lene: All the stuff we have talked about.
192   Peter: The summary.
193   Maria: Ah, okay.
194   Lene: So, the group's conclusion?
195   Peter: Yeah, do we have a conclusion?
196   Lene: Maybe that it is good to say what you mean, but that there is a limit. You have to think
197   about the others' feelings. You have to take some responsibility and don't do stuff that hurts
198   others.

199 Chris: Yeah, you can tell whatever you want but you should not break the law. You should
200 not mean to discriminate people. Nowadays with the media and other things, the freedom of
201 speech is not in the right way. We should use it in a way that is improved, that we don't have
202 hate on a group.
203 Peter: Yeah, that's true. I think you can think whatever you want, but you have to be careful
204 about what to say.
205 Lene: And you have to accept that people are different and have different meanings, and
206 should respect it.
207 Lene: What did you agree on and disagree on? Oh, we disagreed on…
208 Maria: Trump! [laughs] [short pause] and Kristian… how do you say it?
209 Peter: Kristiansand. The protestors?
210 Maria: Yeah.
211 Lene: Didn't we agree on the Kristiansand thing?
212 Chris: Well, like for security reasons, not by their meanings. For security reasons we said it
213 was okay, because there would be a fight or something. But not like if the police didn't like to
214 gay people and did not want them to protest and go home, and the other ones, the anti-gay
215 could do whatever they want. That's wrong.
216 Maria: Didn't we agree on the right to protest?
217 Lene: Yes, so we agree on that thing. And there was also something else we agreed on.
218 Chris: Charlotte? [All speak a bit back and forth, trying to remember the name
219 Charlottesville]
220 Lene: I think it was task 1. What did we say again, about that?
221 [Hesitation]
222 Chris: We said that they needed to condemn them because he was leader of a country and
223 teach other people what is correct.
224 Peter: Yes, and you told us that if it were a black group he would have… what was the word?
225 Chris: Condemned
226 Peter: Yes, condemned them.
227 Maria: And the man in the car, did they condemn him?
228 Chris: No, that's what we were talking about. The question was why Donald Trump didn't
229 condemn the person who did that.
230 Maria: Ah, okay.
231 Chris: That was a shameful act by people who were protesting against those statues and those
232 who were killed. So President Trump just said that was a shameful act. He is a tweeter, he just
233 tweets in the middle of the night and doesn't know anything else. He just wrote that it was a
234 shameful act. He should have come to the media and have a discussion that it was not a good
235 thing. You can't have those people who think that the statues of the people that they say were
236 heroes, but had black people as their slaves.
237 Maria: Yes, this is not right. But I think, there was a man and maybe a woman in the car, that
238 they should be condemned, because he or she killed nineteen people.
239 Chris: No, she killed one person and injured nineteen people.
240 Maria: Injuring, what is that?
241 Peter: Hurt. Physical hurt.
242 Maria: So she only killed one woman.
243 Peter: Yes, but that's a serious act, even though it's only one person.
244 Maria: Hm?
245 Peter: Ehm, forget about it.
246 [nervous laughter]
247 Lene: Okay, but is this something we disagree on? Or are we agreeing?

248   Chris: I think we agreed on everything. We had disagreements about the text, but not our
249   opinions.
250   Lene: So as a conclusion I think we have the same opinion, or almost. But have you read this
251   paragraph?
252   Chris: [reads] On a Huffington Post blog page you can… [unclear]
253   Lene: Yes, about the UK activist. I think she has a really
254   Chris: Good point, yes.
255   Lene: A good point about that we have to talk more about the responsibilities.
256   Peter: Yeah, that's right. With freedom comes responsibility.
257   Lene: Yes, absolutely.
258   Maria: Because sometimes we talk without thinking of what are we saying. I think that all
259   people do that, and something we have to work on.
260   Lene: I think the freedom of speech and the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights
261   should add one more law that says that you should have to think more about the
262   responsibility.
263   Chris: Yeah, like whatever you say you have the freedom, but not give hateful speech against
264   a group or something.
265   Peter: Yes, it's the same in Norway, I think.
266   Maria: I think the law has to be interpreted. I don't know if you understand. There are many
267   different interpretations of it. I don't think it has to be interpreted because the right… Just
268   follow it.
269   Lene: Yes, interpretation is like *oppfatning*
270   Maria: What?
271   Lene: Like how you see… how you
272   Peter: The view of something. The way you look at something.
273   Lene: What do you think it [the right] means?
274   Maria: The interpretation? I don't know, I…
275   Chris: In the United Nations. Chicago and New York and everything, they have different view
276   of it.
277   Maria: This is a really important declaration, I think.
278   Lene: Yeah, absolutely.
279   Maria: And I don't think he [one?] has to have a lot of views.
280   Lene: Maybe that it has to be more specific, that all people act the same about the declaration.
281   Chris: Yes, like the Declaration of Human Rights in the United Nations was signed a lot of
282   years back. And that time maybe there was something that is new in this time. Like for
283   example in the United States you can see people have a billboard on their head saying "fuck
284   Donald Trump". And people say "okay, don't do that" or "yeah, you are great", but it has to
285   be under a law. That you have freedom of speech, but you don't have to spread hate among
286   other people.
287   Lene: There has to be a limit. If there isn't it will keep going on and the world will be not so
288   good.
289   Lene: Okay, are we finished, or what do you think?
290   Peter: I think we're done.
291   Lene. Yes. This was fun!

Appendix 7: Transcript of Interview 1

Interviewer: Let's start with your experience of the dialogue. Is there anything you want to say about it in general, the experience?

Maria: No. [laughs] It was very nice. [others voice consent] We meet like other people from different… yeah, from Norway. Actually, I never talked to him [referring to Chris].

Chris: Yeah, she doesn't know my name, but we are in the same class. [everyone laughs]

Interviewer: Then it's about time, isn't it?

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: So, it was a good experience to talk to each other? People that you normally don't talk to. Do you agree with that? [all participants voice agreement]

Interviewer: I thought we'd talk a bit about the topic, freedom of speech. What did you think about this topic for your dialogue?

Lene: I thought it was a bit difficult, but it was very interesting. And I learned some new stuff.

Peter: Yeah, it's a hot topic right now, all over the world. I thought it was interesting to discuss.

Interviewer: Okay. So what made it difficult, Lene?

Lene: I don't know, it was different things. Ehm…

Chis: Like we were talking about freedom of speech. It was in America and Norway and we don't know the rules and not so much about these different countries and their rules. So that was a little bit difficult to understand.

Interviewer: [to Peter] And you thought it was interesting as well. What about it was interesting?

Peter: I'm not quite sure, but I've always been interested in human rights and freedom and stuff like that. I just enjoy talking about it.

Interviewer: [to Maria] What did you think about the topic?

Maria: I agree with Lene. It's difficult because it's something that… we just listen to these topics all the time but maybe we don't think about it. But it was difficult.

Interviewer: Do you think it would have been easier if we spent more time on this in class before the dialogues? If we had talked more about it, or read more about it?

Maria: Sorry?

Interviewer: Would it had been easier if we had talked more about it in class before you had the dialogues? Or would it still have been a very difficult topic to talk about?

Maria: We have our own ideas, so even if we spoke about it in class it would still be the same.

Lene: Yeah, it would still be the same. We had to think about every single thing very long.

Interviewer: And how relevant do you think the topic was for your own lives? Did it have some relevance, do you think?

Peter: No, not much.

Maria: I have never protested.

Chris: Me too.

Interviewer: Okay. But have you ever thought about the role of freedom of speech in your own life, like what you're allowed to say or not allowed to say?

All: Yes.

Maria: I want to say to my parents something, but.

Interviewer: [in a joking tone] so you don't have freedom of speech at home?

Maria: [takes the joke] no, it's not like that. [laughs]

Chris: That's some kind of respect for your family, so that's another thing.

[short silence]

Interviewer: And do you think you got something out of talking about this topic? Did you learn something, did you sort of get something back from the experience?

51   Chris: Yes. Experience! [Lene laughs] Yes, because we exchanged out thoughts and that was
52   the fun part, because it doesn't matter if I have my own thoughts. But if I talk with other
53   people, from other nationalities, it's easier. You get to know another culture, you get to know
54   a lot of things, and that's the good part. [the other participants voice agreement]
55   Interviewer: So it was not as much the topic, but that you could sit and talk together? Was that
56   more important?
57   Chris: I think so, yes.
58   Peter: Yes, I think so.
59   Maria: Because we are almost the same age.
60   Peter: We've never met before. Only her [points to Lene].
61   Interviewer: Do you think you would have learned as much writing about this instead of
62   talking about it?
63   Lene: No, I don't think so.
64   Interviewer: Why not?
65   Lene: Because when we talk to each other we hear the others' thoughts and ideas. That's very
66   interesting, and we definitely learned more about the topic this way.
67   Maria: It's immediate. You hear it and it immediately you think of an answer you can give. If
68   you write it, then you read what she wrote. You have to write the answer and give it back to
69   her. But if we talk together it's better because it's immediate.
70   Peter: Yeah, I think that when you write a paper, it's easier to think about other things. You
71   have to stay focused when part of a conversation.
72   Interviewer: And when you talked together, how did you feel that you cooperated as a group?
73   Maria: It was easy.
74   Lene: It was easy all the way. We listened and were respectful.
75   Interviewer: Did you ever talked about disagreement.
76   Maria: Yes. We disagreed.
77   Lene: It was very funny, because at first we disagreed. And then we talked and…
78   Chris: [unclear]
79   Lene: Yeah, so we talked, and then we agreed.
80   Interviewer: Yes, because I saw at the end of the dialogue, when you began summing up what
81   you'd talked about, then it was like "didn't we agree on this, didn't we disagree on this?", and
82   then you had to take another round to try to discover what you'd said before and if it was
83   agreement of disagreement.
84   Maria: Yes, and at the end we agreed.
85   Chris: Kind of agreed on everything.
86   Interviewer: And why is that, do you think? Why did you start out by having different views,
87   and then at the end you ended up agreeing?
88   Chris: Because at first, everyone had their own thoughts. But at last, I thought about
89   something she didn't think about, and what he would have thought, I wouldn't. So at the end,
90   everyone got their own reason.
91   Peter: We learned all the way.
92   Interviewer: Good. And how do you think that the preparations in class helped you talk about
93   disagreement, for example? Was there anything that you did before you started the dialogues
94   that helped you out?
95   Peter: I can't remember.
96   Lene: For me it was. I worked a little bit with the paragraphs and it helped me.
97   Interviewer: The paragraphs from the text?
98   Lene: Yes. And some of the words. So it was easier to talk about it here.
99   Maria: I think it's good to read the topic, because you have to know the ideas that… not the
100   ideas… the realities. And you can create your own ideas, and then you share it.

101   Interviewer: You also learned a bit about opinion phrases in the classes before, do you
102   remember? I think you class did the same, right? [pointing to Lene and Peter].
103   Lene and Peter: Yes.
104   Interviewer: Did you feel like you could use some of that in the dialogue?
105   Peter: Yes, I remembered to use some of them.
106   Maria: I don't know. I just say "I think", I don't know why.
107   Chris: Yes, I think we used "in my opinion" sometimes.
108   Peter: Yeah, I used that as well.
109   Lene: Yes.
110   Interviewer: Do you think it would have been different if, say you two [referring to Lene and
111   Peter], you talked to people from your own class only? Or you just have people from our class
112   [directed at Maria and Chris] in the dialogue, instead of mixing the two classes. What do you
113   think about that, would it have been different?
114   Peter: I think we would have started talking Norwegian about our things.
115   Lene: Yes, absolutely.
116   Chris: Maybe I would have been fighting with someone… [mumbles, unclear] They are
117   Norwegian, right? [referring to Lene and Peter], and they know a lot about freedom of speech.
118   Not me, I don't know a lot about it, because I'm from a country where these things are not
119   possible. In my own class there is Somali and Kongo and other places, and we have our own
120   thoughts, but the thing is, we don't know a lot about that. So it would have been one right
121   thing and one wrong thing and I think that would have been chaos. A hundred percent.
122   Maria: I'm from a country that has this freedom. So I think that maybe if I was just talking
123   with Norwegians, maybe we have almost the same thoughts. But maybe if I was speaking just
124   with them [referring to language minority students] there would have been different thoughts.
125   Interviewer: [to Chris] Okay, so you experienced that Norwegians know a bit more about the
126   topic and then you are more humble in a way?
127   Chris: Yes, I thought that if I say… I had never heard about freedom of speech, maybe or TV
128   or something. And then I see that in my country people get killed and things like that. And
129   when I see them protest and they get killed, you get a little bit scared of these things. Yeah, it
130   was a great experience for me to be here.
131   Interviewer: And Lene and Peter, you had to speak English, right? And normally if you just
132   spoke to Norwegian students you could switch to Norwegian.
133   Lene and Peter: Yeah.
134   Interviewer: And what do you think about having to speak English?
135   Lene: I learned a lot. I teach my mind to think in English and just be faster.
136   Peter: I used words I wouldn't have used in any other situation.
137   Interviewer: Do you think that's positive?
138   Lene and Peter: Yeah.
139   Interviewer: If we talk a bit about how you felt before this dialogues started. Did you have
140   any thoughts or ideas about what you were going to do?
141   Maria: What's that?
142   Interviewer: Before the dialogue started, did you have any feelings like… were you nervous
143   or did you think that this is not going to be that interesting. Or were you excited?
144   Maria: I wasn't nervous because I am an outgoing person. When I speak in English I'm not…
145   Chris: Comfortable?
146   Maria: Not comfortable, confident. I was scared that maybe I couldn't say what I think. This
147   is a good exercise because we learn English too, and…
148   Interviewer: Do you think that you get some confidence when speaking in this group?
149   Maria: I don't know, maybe. Because this was the first. Maybe the… [searches for a word]
150   Interviewer: The next ones? The following dialogues?

151 Maria: Yeah…
152 Peter: I think we should do more of this in English class.
153 Lene: I personally don't like talking in the English class. I get very nervous and unsure. So
154 this is a very good exercise.
155 Maria: Yes, because in ### we don't do a lot of conversation. If I write in English I'm really
156 good, but if I speak I'm not really good. I think it's difficult, and when I came in this class we
157 were just speaking English and I was happy. I can practice.
158 Interviewer: [to Lene] and what made you more comfortable here, speaking English, than in
159 your own class?
160 Lene: Everyone talks English here. And I learn from the others.
161 Peter: Yeah, I think it's easier to talk English with strangers, usually, than people you know.
162 Lene: Yes.
163 Chris: Like when you are with your best friend they can make a joke just like that if you say
164 something wrong. Sometimes friends can make jokes and you have to be careful about your
165 words because friends can get you wrong and make jokes. Here we did not know each other,
166 but we were able to express our meanings. That was good.
167 Interviewer: Have you learned anything about the other group members in the dialogues?
168 Peter: Yeah, a little bit.
169 Maria: Like? [laughs]
170 Peter: You were from ###, is that right?
171 Maria: Yeah.
172 Peter: You were from…
173 Chris: ###.
174 Peter: ###, yeah that's right.
175 Maria: But I have origins from ###.
176 Peter: That's right. That's the only thing I learned.
177 Lene: Also it's interesting to listen to the difference when they speak. You talk very fast [to
178 Chris] and you talk a bit slower [to Maria].
179 Chris: I'm not able to talk slow. If I talk slow I will get everything wrong. In maths and
180 *samfunnsfag,* I don't know what that is in English. When I talk Norwegian, maybe it's wrong
181 sometimes, but he tells me to talk slowly because no one understands what I say.
182 [the others laugh]
183 Maria: [to Lene] And I thought you were from Poland, but I don't know why. [Lene laughs
184 loudly]
185 Lene: Because of my accent or how I speak?
186 Maria: No, I just thought you were from Poland, but I don't know why. So I asked her, "are
187 you from Norway?".
188 Interviewer: Before we made these groups, before you knew who you were going to talk to,
189 did you have any ideas about the people from the other class? [to Maria and Chris] did you
190 have any ideas about Norwegian students? [to Lene and Peter] did you have any ideas about
191 the foreign students?
192 Maria: This is the first time I speak to Norwegian students.
193 Chris: I have been to Norwegian school, so this was okay for me.
194 Interviewer: [to Lene and Peter] what do you think?
195 Peter: I thought it would be hard if there were words we didn't understand.
196 Lene: Yes.
197 Peter: It would be hard to explain in Norwegian when they don't now Norwegian that well.
198 Lene: And I thought about if they were good in English or not so good. If it would be difficult
199 to have a conversation.

200   Interviewer: But I saw that during the dialogue you were really good at helping each other
201   out. When there was something you didn't understand, the rest jumped in and started
202   explaining. I think that worked really well, do you agree?
203   All: Yes.
204   Interviewer: So, let's end by talking a bit about next time. Can you think of something that
205   would make things even better next time, as a group here?
206   Maria: No, we know each other now that we have met. So next time we will not be shy,
207   because we are comfortable in each other's company.
208   Interviewer: And what about me, as the leader of this project. Do I need to do something
209   different? Was the text okay, would you like to learn more in advance, is there something else
210   I should prepare you for in advance?
211   Peter: No, I think it was cool to look at the tasks together in this room.
212   Interviewer: So not to know the tasks before you came into this room?
213   Peter: Yeah.
214   Chris: If I get it before, I start finding lots of information and other things. It needs to be the
215   same before we come here.
216   Peter: At the same level.
217   Lene and Maria: Yeah.
218   Interviewer: So you don't get to prepare too much before the questions?
219   All: Yes.
220   Interviewer: And did you have enough tasks to do?
221   Maria: Yeah, it was half an hour so…
222   Interviewer: What are your feelings towards the next dialogue? Do you have any ideas?
223   Peter: I'm excited, because this is much more fun than the regular class. [everyone laugh]
224   Interviewer: [jokingly] I won't tell you teacher about that. [laughter] Okay, thank you so
225   much.

Appendix 8: Transcript of Dialogue 2

Lene: Who wants to start?

Chris: You can start [to Susan].

Susan: Can I introduce myself? My name is ###, I'm from ###. 24 years old. I'm living in ###.

Lene: Yeah.

Chris: Yeah, you guys know me. I'm ###. That's it. [the others laugh]

Peter: I'm ###. I live here in ###. I am sixteen years old, and that's it.

Lene: My name is ###. I'm sixteen years old. I live in ###. In my spare time I play handball. Yeah, that's it. [pause] Shall we start?

Lene: [Reads] America has often been called "the land of dreams". Do you think this is fair when you think about the level of inequality in the USA?

Peter: Ehm… [short silence] I think you can still dream even if there is some inequality in the country. Though there might not be the same opportunities for everyone, everyone has the same opportunity to dream big. Try to pursue their dreams.

Lene: I think both yes and no because as you say everyone has the opportunity to dream big, but not everyone has the opportunity to achieve what they want.

Chris: It is called the land of dreams for everyone, but if you think about the twelve percent of American which is African Americans and twenty percent Latinos I think, then you know… Inequality is in every country but in the USA I think there is a lot. Because everyone has a dream, everyone has the right to dream and live their life in their own way, but equality is very important.

[short pause]

Susan: I agree with you, *Chris*.

Lene: Do you want to read? [to Peter]

Peter: Yes, I can read. There are many African Americans in US prisons. A. In your opinion, what needs to be done to improve the situation? B. Do you think the present situation supports people's prejudice about Black people? Prejudice means having ideas about people based on how they look or where they are from.

Lene: Okay, so to improve the situation…

Peter: I think there should be stricter rules to imprison people in the USA. Because right now you can imprison someone for nothing. So I think there should be stricter rules for it.

Lene: That's a very good point. [long silence]

Chris: I think in the first one, I think in this generation, right now in the USA it is impossible to change their minds. But America is a country with a very young population, 30 percent of them are young, so if we can educate those people and change their mindset it would be a very good thing for like 20-30 years. We can have a country without that kind of situation. Because right now, those people who are over 50, you can't change them because of the way they are raised.

Lene: Yeah, that's true.

[short silence]

Lene: So it's also important teach the youngest ones to be equal to everyone. [short silence]. So do you think the present situation supports people's prejudice about Black people? I think a little bit, but… [short silence] what do you guys think?

Susan: I think the present situation is also like the past. Before, how they thought about Black people. They discriminated Black people. So now also they have the same situation.

Lene: Because people judge Black people before they meet them?

Susan: Yes.

Peter: But it has gotten better, I think. It was worse before, back in the days. More racism.

51   Lene: But it can still be better.

52   Peter: Yeah.

53   Chris: It can still be better if the USA changes its government, the way they lead the country.

54   For example the president and the police and other ones. If a white man is driving, he has a

55   one percent chance to be stopped, but if it's a black person, or two or three black persons in

56   the car, they will be stopped by the police and asked "what are you guys doing in the middle

57   of the night" or something. Just because they are black. And that's how they often get killed.

58   In here it says that their chances of going to jail was one out of three, but I think it's better to

59   go to prison than to get killed. [Lene laughs]. They get out and act nervous, and they get shot.

60   It would have to be stricter rules for shooting a gun.

61   Lene: Yeah.

62   Peter: I think so too.

63   Lene: Let's move on. What is your social inheritance? Make a comparison between the

64   members of the group. Okay. I think my social inheritance is both my mum and dad have

65   higher education and a good job. What about you? [refers to Peter]

66   Peter: My parents also have a high education, so I think that they're more focused on me

67   getting a high education as well. Yeah.

68   Susan: My father has a high education, but not my mother. They also focus on me to get a

69   higher education.

70   Peter: Okay, I see.

71   Chris: I don't really remember my father, because he has it from a long time ago, but my

72   mother does not have a good education, and that's why she wants me to have a better life.

73   And here she is trying very hard for me and I think I should do the same so I can have what

74   she wants.

75   Lene: [reads] Did you know about social inheritance before today? Do you think it is

76   important to learn what it is and what effect it has on people's lives?

77   Peter: I knew what it was, but I didn't know the English word for it.

78   [short silence]

79   Susan: Before today it was violent. Criminal, maybe.

80   Lene: Oh yeah. You mean… [tries to interpret what Susan has said. Longer silence follows]

81   Oh wait! We forgot to make a comparison between the members of the group. Is it like to say

82   that all of us… no…

83   Peter: *Jeg tror det betyr sammenligning.* But I don't really understand how to do that.

84   Lene: No, me neither. But three of us have higher education in our family, and Chris' does

85   not. Okay, that's it. Back to task four. I did know about social inheritance before, like you

86   said [to Peter], but I didn't know what it was in English. I think it is important to learn what it

87   is and what effect it has on people's lives because it is true that the social inheritance affects

88   your life and the choices you make.

89   Peter: Yeah. I think it is more important in other countries, like for example America, because

90   there you don't have the same opportunities, but in Norway I think you have more of the same

91   opportunities like everybody else. So it's more important with social inheritance in countries

92   like the USA.

93   Chris: Yes, I agree.

94   Lene: As it says here, Norway is the country in the world with the highest level of equality.

95   That's true, I agree.

96   Lene: Do social inheritance and discrimination excuse bad behavior or poor quality of life? Or

97   do people have to take responsibility of their own lives, no matter what their background is?

98   [one of the students reads very softly in the background, trying to comprehend the question]

99   [long silence]

100   Lene: Both yes and no, I think. I think you can't excuse bad behavior with poor life quality.
101   Maybe you can excuse low quality more than bad behavior because of the background. [short
102   silence] It is not right to excuse it just because of the background. If you grow up in a poor
103   ehm… *område?*
104   Peter: District? Area?
105   Lene: Yeah, then maybe learn to work harder and to achieve your goals. So I think maybe it
106   has the opposite effect. Therefore it is not right to excuse…
107   Peter: Yeah, I agree with that one.
108   Chris: Yes, because it doesn't matter when you get older and older and you can't excuse…
109   Like if you don't have a good life for yourself you have got to think about it. It doesn't matter
110   how your past was, you have to think about now and how the future will be so you have to
111   use your mind. You can't make an excuse because of how your country was or your family
112   was towards yourself. You have to grow up.
113   Susan: I agree.
114   Peter: Shall we move on?
115   Lene: Okay. Summing up today's dialogue, what is the group's conclusion about equality?
116   What do you agree on, and what do you disagree on? [short silence] I think we agree on
117   everything. [the others give their consent] And our conclusion about equality? What do you
118   say? [short silence] That people have the option to receive their dreams?
119   Peter: Yeah. In Norway?
120   Chris: Everywhere!
121   Lene: Everywhere in the world.
122   Chris: Yes, they should not be judged for their ways, because of what race they are. If they
123   are Black, White. They have the right to live their life.
124   [others voice agreement]
125   Lene: It doesn't mean that if you… *gå I dine fotspor, hva er det?*
126   Peter: Ehm… follow your parents maybe.
127   Lene: Yeah, social inheritance does not mean that you follow your parents. Maybe you can do
128   the opposite.
129   Peter: Maybe you can learn from their mistakes.
130   Lene: So, our conclusion about equality is? [silence] [Lene laughs] It's hard.
131   Chris: Everyone is equal and everyone has their life.
132   Peter: Everyone is the same, I think.
133   Lene: Yeah, and ehm… It does mean having equal opportunities in life, I think. Do you
134   agree? [others voice consent] Yeah, so we agree with the text and…
135   Peter: Yeah, so that's it, I think.

Appendix 9: Transcript of Interview 2

2

3   Interviewer: Is there anything you'd like to say about the dialogue yesterday? Any thoughts
4   about how it went?
5   Peter: Yeah, I think it went well, but the time before was better, I think.
6   Interviewer: Okay. And why is that?
7   Peter: I think the topic was easier to discuss, maybe.
8   Interviewer: So the topic was easier this time. In what way? What made it easier?
9   Chris: First of all we did not spend a lot of time, so it shows it was easy.
10 Interviewer: Okay, so you didn't speak for as long as last time?
11 Chris: We were talking and we had the same thoughts, so we agreed very fast on everything
12 and we were finished soon.
13 Interviewer: Did you feel like you had a real discussion during the dialogue yesterday?
14 Chris: Yes.
15 Peter: Yes, kind of.
16 Lene: Yes, kind of. Not like a big discussion, but maybe a little.
17 Interviewer: Did you have more of a discussion last time?
18 Peter: Yeah, definitely.
19 Interviewer: And did that have to do with how difficult the text was, the topic was, or was
20 there something else?
21 Lene: I think so. I think it was a very difficult topic.
22 Interviewer: So there's more to talk about when it's difficult than when it's easy, in a way?`
23 Lene: No, did you mean that it was… [to Peter]
24 Peter: I meant that it was an easier topic the first time.
25 Interviewer: Okay, so it was a more difficult topic yesterday?
26 Peter and Lene: Yeah.
27 Lene: Therefore it was difficult to say much.
28 Interviewer: Do you have any ideas about what made it more difficult yesterday compared to
29 last time?
30 Maria: I read the text. I think it was easier yesterday.
31 Interviewer: So you think that the text for yesterday is easier than last time.
32 Maria: Yes.
33 Interviewer: And what made it easier?
34 Mara: I don't know. I understand more about that text. I don't know the questions you asked
35 them, but I think that it's easier.
36 Interviewer: [to Lene and Peter] But you saw it as more difficult?
37 Lene and Peter: Yeah.
38 Interviewer: What about you, *Chris,* do you have any thoughts?
39 Chris: It was kind of difficult. When we talk about equality, it's not an easy thing. We need to
40 get deep under it to get the real meaning of it. We talked about it but I think we didn't get to
41 the end of it, like the depth of the matter. We just talked about how the rules are and
42 something.
43 Susan: It's not so difficult and also not so easy. Because we understand much, then explain.
44 Peter: I think it was just difficult to discuss it. This time it was easier to give short answers.
45 Lene: Yeah.
46 Interviewer: Okay. So maybe the tasks could have asked you to dig a bit deeper.
47 Peter and Lene: Yes.
48 Interviewer: Were you looking forward to this second dialogue?
49 All: Yes.

50   Interviewer: How was it compared to last time? Did you look more forward to it this time
51   than last time? [short silence] Any other feelings involved?
52   Lene: I think it was the same.
53   Peter: Yes.
54   Chris: Me too.
55   Interviewer: Did you feel more confident this time?
56   Lene: Yeah.
57   Peter: Yeah, I did.
58   Interviewer: Why is that?
59   Peter: Because we had done it before. It was easier for me to talk English.
60   Lene: Yeah, and we know each other. Except for you [indicates Susan], we got to know you
61   yesterday, so that was fun.
62   Maria: The first time we didn't know what to do. We didn't know that you had to ask us
63   questions, that we have five tasks, so we didn't know what to expect.
64   Interviewer: Yeah, I understand. So what was different in this dialogue compared to last
65   time? We've talked a bit about the topic, but was there something else that was different?
66   Lene: I think it was mostly that we didn't have that much to say, so we didn't talk so much. It
67   was a little bit quiet sometimes.
68   Peter: Yes.
69   Interviewer: Is it possible that you didn't have as much to say for other reasons than the topic?
70   Peter: I think it was just the topic.
71   Lene: Yeah.
72   Interviewer: [short silence] Let's see, I'm just gonna check my questions here. Did the
73   dialogue give you any new ideas, any thoughts? Related to your own life or the United States
74   or… [short silence]
75   Lene: I had to reflect more about the topic when we discussed it, so that was fine. But I don't
76   know if I got any new ideas or opinions.
77   Peter: I learned a bit about, what's it called, social inheritance. I learned that that might be a
78   big factor to where we end up in life. Didn't know that before.
79   Chris: Yes, me too. I didn't have any knowledge about social inheritance. Maybe inside, but I
80   wasn't able to explain it until yesterday. I read it and I understood it.
81   Interviewer: In general, do you find it easier to talk about agreement, when you agree about
82   something, than disagreement, not agreeing about something?
83   Lene: Both yes and no, because when you disagree about something you have to make a good
84   argument, but when you agree everyone has the same arguments.
85   Interviewer: So it's easier?
86   Peter: It's much easier.
87   Chris: Yes, because from the first time we agreed on almost everything. We didn't have any
88   disagreement I think. Well, maybe on some things, but we didn't have so much disagreement.
89   Lene: And one time we first disagreed and then we talked about it, and then we agreed.
90   [Maria, Chris and Peter voice agreement]
91   Interviewer: But let's say, next time you get a different topic. Do you think that if you really
92   disagree about something you would be able to say it? Or would you be like "oh, I don't
93   know if I want to", you know?
94   Maria: Maybe we would say that we disagree, but it would be difficult to say why.
95   Interviewer: To explain, to have the arguments, like you said [referring to Lene]?
96   Chris: In my point of view, it would be easier to disagree, because now it's like the fifth time
97   we're together and you have the confidence to say what you want. If it was the first time it
98   would be a little bit difficult, but not now. If you have a reasonable thing to say.
99   Interviewer: Because you know each other?

100   Peter and Lene: Yeah.
101   Peter: It would be much more interesting if we disagreed, I think. So you can learn the
102   different views on the same topic.
103   Lene: But even though we didn't know each other the first time, I think I would dare to say
104   what I thought, because I think it's important to be honest and say what you mean.
105   Interviewer: So next time, if I make a task that challenges you to disagree more, would that be
106   okay?
107   Peter: Of course.
108   Lene: Yeah!
109   Chris: That would be more interesting, because there would be a better mix of ideas.
110   Maria: Yeah.
111   Peter: It's kind of boring when we just agree on everything.
112   Lene: It's like "I agree", "true" [laughs].
113   Interviewer: I'll see what we can do.
114   Chris: North Korea.
115   [Everyone laughs]
116   Interviewer: Did you feel that you learned something more about each other in this second
117   dialogue?
118   Lene: No. Maybe a little.
119   Chris: Maybe about our parents.
120   Lene: Yeah, that's true!
121   Peter: We told about our parents.
122   Lene: When we talked about social inheritance.
123   Interviewer: Okay. Last time I remember that you two [to Lene and Peter] said something
124   about before we did the first dialogue, that you were a bit unsure if it would be easy to
125   communicate with the other students?
126   Lene and Peter: Yeah.
127   Interviewer: Because you didn't know their language level, right? Have any of you felt that
128   that has been an issue, a problem?
129   Lene: No.
130   Interviewer: I don't think anyone would be offended if you say so, any of you.
131   Lene: If I don't understand at first, I get him to explain [referring to Peter].
132   Peter: Yeah, we helped each other out.
133   Lene: Yeah, and if I didn't know, I asked *Peter*.
134   Interviewer: So you kind of make up for the difficulties? You find ways to communicate?
135   Peter: Yes, exactly.
136   Lene: Yeah.
137   Interviewer: Imagine that you could all speak Norwegian in this group, because some of you
138   haven't been in Norway that long, so we can't expect that. But if everyone did have a good
139   level of Norwegian, would these talks be any different?
140   Chris: Yes, surely. Because when I talk to my other colleagues [most likely means *fellow*
141   *students*], they're from Afghanistan, right? It's much easier to explain the words, but in
142   English it's not so easy, but not so that we can't understand each other. I speak Norwegian
143   okay, but, like *de vil ikke forstå...*
144   Interviewer: They will not understand?
145   Chris: Yeah, they will not understand. That's the thing.
146   Lene: And if it was in Norwegian we could explain something in more detail.
147   Interviewer: But would you still have a benefit of speaking English in a group like this, even
148   though you could speak Norwegian? You know, that we force you to speak English, do you
149   see benefits of that?

150   Peter: Yes, we are forced to use words we wouldn't use normally. I learned much English
151   from that, I think.
152   Lene: I think it's a very good thing because if you go to a country that speaks English, you
153   have to talk English, and it isn't always that easy. Because in English class we always read
154   and do tasks, but don't talk so much.
155   Interviewer: Okay. Any other ideas? [short silence]
156   Chris: No.
157   Interviewer: Okay. Were there any times where you had something to say, but you didn't for
158   some reason?
159   Maria: Yeah. Cause I didn't know what to say. So this was a bit of a problem.
160   Interviewer: So it wasn't a feeling that you didn't dare to say it?
161   Maria: I don't know what to say. First I didn't know what to say. If I knew how to say it…
162   The first time I was a bit afraid to say something, because maybe they don't agree with me. I
163   don't think the next time will be like this.
164   Chris: I don't think there were any provoking questions. If there were any provoking
165   questions, maybe we wouldn't have said something.
166   Peter: I'm afraid to talk too much. I think they would have become bored if I talked too much.
167   Interviewer: Do you think so?
168   Peter: I try to let the others talk.
169   Maria. Me too!
170   Interviewer: But would you think that *Peter* speaks too much, or would that be fine with you?
171   Cause I think that we sort of over-compensate when we think that people don't want to hear
172   us speak. But it seems to me like you're very positive towards each other, so you probably
173   could say more without bothering the others.
174   Lene: Yes, it's fine if someone talks a lot.
175   [short silence]
176   Interviewer: Another question about English. Do you feel like it brings you closer together,
177   not just in the way you communicate, but also in another way. I mean, you have never talked
178   together before this, and you come from two different groups in school. Do you feel like the
179   language has brought you together in some other sense?
180   Chris: Yeah, social communication, like that.
181   Lene: Friendship.
182   Chris: I can talk to a Norwegian person, but I can't talk with that confidence in Norwegian. If
183   I talk it would be a little bit creepy or something. When I play football, I don't talk a lot in the
184   football pitch, because if I talk Norwegian and say something wrong… like others wouldn't
185   say anything, but inside I would feel like… [unclear].
186   Interviewer: Have you ever felt that, any of you [to the others]?
187   Maria: I always speak English here, so if I'm in the supermarket, if I'm out, if I'm in school,
188   it's always the same for me. I can't speak Norwegian.
189   Interviewer: Do you have any thoughts about that [to Lene and Peter]?
190   Lene: No, not really.
191   Peter: No.
192   Interviewer: Okay. And let's talk about next time. Is there anything you would like to do
193   differently?
194   Peter: Just another topic.
195   Chris: Not about the USA.
196   Susan: Yeah, not the USA.
197   Interviewer: You think it's too boring? It's because it fits into the topic on the term plan.

198   Chris: My whole life when I was in [country of origin], when I was in school, there was only
199   one topic in English class, and that's the USA. It's been sixteen years, and I've talked about
200   the USA a lot. And also in TV and everywhere it's talk about the USA, nothing else.
201   Interviewer: Okay, I understand that. So a different topic that gets you going a bit more than
202   yesterday.
203   All: Yes.
204   Interviewer: Okay, I'm up for the challenge. I'll see what I can do. [laughs] But do you think
205   it's a good idea to do a dialogue, like you've done a few times now?
206   All: Yes.
207   Interviewer: So you like the form?
208   Peter: Yeah. It's much more interesting than doing the tasks in the book, in class.
209   Lene and Maria: Yeah.
210   Interviewer: Okay good.
211   [Interview is interrupted by two teachers who come in, asking for an umbrella that was left
212   behind during lunch. This lasts for about 20 seconds]
213   Maria: You're red [to interviewer]
214   Interviewer: Yeah, because I wasn't expecting that at all. [hesitates, trying to pick up where
215   he left off] [short silence] Let's see, I kind of got out of it. [laughs with the students] [another
216   short silence]
217   You said that you don't want to talk about the US [to Chris]. But is there something that you
218   would like to talk about?
219   Chris: Where?
220   Interviewer: In the next dialogue.
221   Chris: I can talk about anything, but not the US. Just take another country and I can talk about
222   any topic, like equality or anything.
223   Interviewer: Okay. Is there something that we can't talk about in the dialogues?
224   Chris: What?
225   Interviewer: Is there something that we can't talk about? That's not allowed to talk about, or
226   that you would feel uncomfortable talking about?
227   Chris: I will talk about anything.
228   Lene: No.
229   Maria: For me something… [points at herself]
230   Interviewer: Personal?
231   Maria: Yeah.
232   Interviewer: So something that is not too personal, maybe?
233   Lene: For me, it's the same, because if it is personal you have a lot to say.
234   Maria: But maybe, if it's personal, you don't want to say it.
235   Interviewer: But no one can force you to say something you're uncomfortable saying. In these
236   dialogues or these interviews you're always allowed to say "sorry, that's not something I like
237   to talk about". That should be okay, I think, so I understand that some things are personal.
238   [short silence] But we don't have to talk about the US, we don't have to talk about an
239   English-speaking country at all.
240   Maria: We can talk about [country of origin].
241   Interviewer: [jokingly] Let's talk about [country of origin]! [laughter] Since you come from
242   two different backgrounds, if we generalise a bit, would it be okay to talk about that? How it
243   is at school for two different groups and…
244   Chris: It would be an interesting conversation. There's a lot of difference.
245   Maria: Yeah.
246   Peter: We all have something to say about it, because we are all in that situation.

247   Interviewer: Okay, good. It's just an idea. [short silence] Do you have any feelings towards
248   next time? Or did you have any feelings towards the dialogue yesterday?
249   Chris: What kind of feelings?
250   Interviewer: I don't know. Were you nervous? Were you anxious, were you happy? Excited?
251   Peter: I'm a little nervous at the beginning, but after five minutes I'm pretty comfortable.
252   Susan: I was nervous yesterday because it was the first time for me.
253   Interviewer: Yes, I understand that.
254   Chris: For me it was okay.
255   Interviewer: Did you have the same attitude towards the dialogue the same round as the first
256   round? Or was it more relaxed, were you less excited?
257   Lene: Maybe a bit more relaxed.
258   Peter: Yes, I think so. The first time I thought I had to say everything so… right things. To
259   look for the right way to say something. Yesterday it came more natural.
260   Interviewer: What's the reason for that, do you think?
261   Peter: I think I'm more confident with the people. That's it.
262   Lene: Yeah, with the situation. What to expect.
263   Interviewer: We're almost finished. Is there something else you want to say about this time or
264   next time?
265   Lene: I'm looking forward to it.
266   Interviewer: That's good to hear.
267   Peter: When is it?
268   Interviewer: In a month's time.
269   Peter: Okay.
270   Interviewer: Thank you all for taking the time.

Appendix 10: Transcript of Dialogue 3

Lene: Okay, should we start? [Reads] What makes integration so difficult? [Mumbles a bit, unsure how to pronounce the word *integration*]

Peter: Moving from different places, I think.

Chris: When they are together, I think.

Maria: People come together.

Lene: Maybe because there are different cultures, traditions that kind of collide and don't work together.

Peter: Yeah. I think different people and different cultures scare us in a way.

Lene: like strange things…

Peter: Strange habits.

Lene: Yeah.

Maria: That they don't know each other.

Chris: Yeah, I think it's about culture and things like that.

Lene: People are scared of the unknown. [Silence] Okay. [Turns the next slip of paper and reads next task]. How can thinking outside the box help us find better solutions for integration? [Silence] Maybe if we look at all the people as one and think about all the common stuff. Stuff like…. Ehm… Everyone likes to get love and have fun.

Peter. Yeah, I see. Stop putting them in boxes and look at them as one people. And find the common interests.

Maria: I agree.

Peter: And that way we lose the racism, so that would be good.

Chris: Yes, if we think outside the box, it's how we don't stereotype people. We think about everyone as the same, so it's a good thing for integration.

[Silence]

Lene: [Turns the next slip of paper and reads] The next four slips of paper will present statements which you have to agree or disagree with, using the red and green cards. You have to use the cards and you must also try to explain your opinion. You can even try to change the others' view. [Turns the next slip of paper and reads] Governments should stop many immigrants from living in the same area.

[Someone takes the paper slip to read themselves]

Peter: I think that they kind of support racism and make big differences between different racial groups if they separate people.

Maria: But it's talking about separating immigrants to put immigrants with the people who are from the country.

Lene: Yeah.

Peter: Not immigrants with immigrants.

Lene: To not let immigrants live together but to spread them around. That was kind of hard.

Chris: I don't think so because if you see at Grønnland you see that… if you go at night, in the tunnels, it's a bit scary. If there is a group of immigrants it's not a bad thing for the government, but for the people. When you come to a new country you have to follow the rules and if you have one million people from the same culture it will become just like it was in their country. It will be the same thing. I agree with that, I want the government to not have too many immigrants in one area.

Lene: Yeah, cause when immigrants gather they might start to have their own kinds of rules and just… *skille seg*, what is that?

Peter: Separate?

Lene: Yeah. Away from the Norwegian culture.

50   Peter: But I think that the reason why everyone lives in the same area is the price of living
51   there. So the immigrants would find cheap places to live and all of them would live in the
52   same place. I think that's the problem.
53   Lene: Because the immigrants don't have much money and then it's hard to find a
54   neighbourhood that's cheap. So if the government should stop immigrants living together then
55   they also have to make cheaper opportunities for them. So green cards?
56   Maria: Yeah, we all agree.
57   Lene: [Turns next slip of paper] Integration only works if we force immigrants to learn the
58   language and to get a job. [Rumbling around, participants turning their cards].
59   Maria: I don't know because if you want to be integrated in society you should know the
60   language and the culture of the country, but if you force someone it's not good.
61   Lene: That's true. I don't think force is a good way to make them learn, but language and to
62   get a job is very important.
63   Maria: I think that this phrase, if it did not have "force", I think I would agree. But I give red.
64   Chris: Yeah, it's a good thing. The workers have to work for their own good. You can't just
65   sit there and think that the government should give you money. You have to get a job.
66   Learning the language, I'm not sure about that. It's a good thing to learn the language, the key
67   to communicate with people, but there are a lot of international languages that people talk.
68   Like what we are doing now, it's English, in this English class. But there are other languages
69   also. To get a job, learning the language is an important thing, but they don't have to be
70   forced.
71   Lene: Yeah, but I maybe think about agreeing because I think that they have to get a job, and
72   if they have to get a job they also have to learn the language. They need it to communicate.
73   Peter: Yeah, that's true.
74   Lene: Because not everyone speaks English. Everyone knows a little English, but when you
75   work there are very complicated stuff and then it's hard to communicate. And if the
76   immigrants don't talk the language of the country they immigrate to, then the language will
77   die.
78   Peter: Yeah, I agree. I think they should be forced to learn the language, the native language,
79   and get a job. We can't just take in people and not make them work, because then the country
80   won't go around.
81   Chris: Yes, but force to learn the language, like… I will give an example. When I came to live
82   here, to spend my whole life here, it's not like the government forced us. We have to learn the
83   language the whole day. Even if the government doesn't force people, they are going to learn
84   it anyways.
85   Lene: Yeah, that's true.
86   Chris: Cause you see like
87   Maria: Television.
88   Chris: Yeah, you just see the TV and [unclear]. If you are going to be around people in the
89   same area you're going to learn the language. But they should be forced to get a job, yeah. I
90   agree with that.
91   Lene: Yeah, it sounds very strict when we say "force", so I understand what you mean. It's
92   very good to make the immigrants work.
93   Peter: Yes, it should be a condition for moving to Norway.
94   Lene: Yeah, and the language will come after.
95   Maria: But no one can force you to work. In [country of origin], where I'm from, in the
96   constitution it is written that you have the opportunity to work… [hesitates] that the
97   government, the state, has to give you a job. I don't remember the words, but no one can force
98   you to work.

99   Peter: Yes, but that's when you already live in [Maria's country of origin]. But if you come to
100 Norway it should be a condition to work. So you can be forced to work if you go to Norway.
101 If you understood that?
102 Maria: No, sorry.
103 Peter: When you lived in [Maria's country of origin] you were a citizen of [Maria's country of
104 origin]. And then you have the right of [Maria's country of origin].
105 Maria: Yeah, but…
106 Peter: But when you don't live in Norway you don't have the right to not work, because it's a
107 condition to come into the country. If you understand?
108 Maria: Oh, sorry, I don't know how it works here, so I'm…
109 Lene: No, it's okay.
110 Peter: I think it's like that.
111 Lene: If you can work then it's important that you work. I don't know if there are sick people
112 who come to Norway, but what are they going to do then? It's very complicated.
113 Chris: The thing is that the government should have stricter rules because a lot of families
114 who come to Norway they have ten or fifteen children, and they don't send them to
115 kindergarten, and the government has to pay them a lot of money just for them to stay at
116 home. They have to pay their electricity bills, all their expenses like clothes. One year should
117 be maximum. But if the government gives them this chance every year they will not get
118 anywhere, because they will just sit at home and say that the government will pay everything.
119 Lene: Maybe the government should come up with jobs that you could have, so that it's easier
120 for them to have a job.
121 Chris: Yeah. [Silence]
122 Lene: [Turns the next slip of paper and reads] Ehm… There is segregation at our school.
123 Segregation means like groups [most likely signals something with her hands]
124 Peter: Yeah.
125 Chris: Yes, segregation means to stay apart.
126 Peter: To separate, kind of.
127 Lene: It's kind of both yes and no, but I think I'll say yes. Because when you see at drama,
128 dance and music classes they are together…
129 Chris: All the time?
130 Lene: No…
131 Chris: In free time?
132 Lene: Yes. In their free time. And like SSP [laughs], SSP classes are together and maybe your
133 class is all together [referring to the introduction classes for language minority students]. So I
134 think there is some segregation and people that are like you, you will automatically be with
135 them. If there are people who you are not comfortable around, you don't hang with them.
136 Peter: Yeah, true. But I kind of feel that segregation is necessary because we have different
137 ehm… *linjer?* Ehm… different programmes, so we kind of have to segregate the students.
138 Maria: I think it's normal. In all the schools in all the world there are groups.
139 Chris: Yeah, like one thousand students in one school, like it's hard to be integrated. One
140 person can't talk to five hundred in a day.
141 Lene: That's true.
142 Maria: You can't be friends with everyone. Everyone is different has their own personality, so
143 you can't hang with everyone.
144 Lene: So I think it's not a problem if people still are nice with each other.
145 Maria: They should respect each other.
146 Lene: Yeah, if everyone respects each other, it's okay. It's not a problem. Okay, so everyone
147 has green cards?
148 [The three other confirm]

149   Lene: [Turns last slip of paper] Summing up today's dialogue, what is the group's conclusion
150   about integration? What do you agree on and what do you disagree on?
151   Peter: I think we agree on everything except one thing.
152   Lene: About forcing immigrants to learn the language. You guys did not agree?
153   Chris: No, I agree
154   Peter: It was because of the word "force", I think.
155   Lene: Yeah, if there was another word then it would have been different. So we agree on
156   everything?
157   Maria: Yeah.
158   Peter: Yeah, I think so.
159   Lene: That's nice. [Laughs] But what is our conclusion about integration? Is it that the
160   immigrants should really learn the language and get a job? So the people won't be segregated
161   and…
162   Peter: Yeah. I think the immigrants should be separated all around the country to kind of
163   blend in with the Norwegian people.
164   Lene: Yeah, Norwegian culture and traditions and…
165   Chris: It would be easier for themselves in the community with a lot of other people. They
166   will learn the culture and the language really fast. That would be better.
167   Lene: Yeah. [Short silence] Are we finished?
168   Peter: Yes, I think we are done.

Appendix 11: Transcript of Interview 3

Interviewer: What did you think about this last group dialogue?
Maria: It was good. We didn't agree on everything like the last time. It was different.
Interviewer: Did you like the fact that it was different, that you disagreed about some things?
Maria: Yes. I don't know why, but yes.
Interviewer: What about you guys, did you also experience that you disagreed about some things?
Peter: Yes. I think I disagreed about one particular thing, but I don't remember what it was.
Interviewer: Did that make things more difficult or more interesting?
Peter: More interesting and more challenging.
Lene: Yeah.
Maria: We made the others think [searches for words]
Interviewer: Change their minds?
Maria: Yeah. That was interesting.
Interviewer: What did you think about the topic integration?
Lene: I think it was interesting and relevant.
Interviewer: And how was it relevant?
Lene: Because there is a lot of integration today.
Peter: We hear about it all over the news, so we maybe all know a little about it.
Interviewer: What about your own lives? Did you feel like it was relevant to you?
Lene: Not so much, but I liked to discuss it and to see it from other perspectives.
Interviewer: Yeah. What about you, Chris?
Chris: I agree. I think it was a very good topic to talk about, it was interesting. There was a lot of different views from everyone and it was good to disagree about a lot of things.
Interviewer: Do you think it was more difficult for you two, who are immigrants?
Chris: No, I think I agreed on everything.
Maria: No, not difficult because I don't have problems saying what I think. It was fine.
Interviewer: If you compare this to the other topics that you've had, what would you say? We've talked about equality and freedom of speech, and this time integration.
Peter: I think they are all connected in a way, but I think integration was the most interesting to talk about.
Lene: I also think it was the most difficult theme. But also the most interesting.
Chris: I think it was fun. At some points we tried to change each other's' ideas. I think that was a fun part, very interesting.
Interviewer: [to Peter] You said it was interesting. Could you say something more about that?
Peter: I found it more challenging to speak my mind, so I found it more fun to talk about. I had to dig a little deeper to say what I meant. That made it more interesting for me.
Interviewer: Was it perhaps not just the topic, but the fact that there were statements that you had to think about? Did that help you?
Peter: Yes, I think so.
Lene: Yes.
Interviewer: Did that help you to make you talk, better than the questions?
All: Yes.
Interviewer: Why do you think that it was easier to talk about statements?
Lene: Because everyone has different opinions, and we got to share our views of the statements.
Interviewer: And how was it using these cards? Did it help you in any way?
Lene: Sometimes we forgot it. But when we remembered it was fun.
Chris: I agree. It was good.

51　Interviewer: If you could choose, would you do it with or without the cards?
52　Maria: With the cards. If I agree or disagree it's more immediate.
53　Peter: It was very black and white what people meant.
54　Chris: The best part about the cards was that when someone else said something and you had
55　forgot if he agreed or disagreed, you could see the card and understand what was happening,
56　and say something about that.
57　Interviewer: Did any of you change your cards at any time during the discussion?
58　Chris: Yes, I did.
59　Lene: I did.
60　Maria: I didn't. [Everyone laughs]
61　Interviewer: You held you ground. And how was it to change your views? Was it because you
62　heard someone give a good argument?
63　Lene: Yes.
64　Interviewer: So you felt open to changing you mind?
65　Lene: Yes.
66　Interviewer: But you didn't, *Maria*? Why not?
67　Maria: I believe in my opinions.
68　Interviewer: And there were no arguments that made you change your mind?
69　Maria: No.
70　Interviewer: What about you, *Peter*? Did you ever change your mind?
71　Peter: I think I changed my mind one time. But I don't remember. I'm not quite sure.
72　Interviewer: What do you think about the group now, compared to when you started? Is there
73　a difference?
74　Lene: I feel more comfortable when I sit here and talk. And we know each other better than
75　we did.
76　Interviewer: Hypothetically, if we teachers wanted to keep doing this after Christmas, not for
77　my research, but just the classes. Would you like to keep the groups or change them?
78　Lene: I would like to keep them.
79　Peter: Yeah, me too.
80　Chris and Maria: Yes.
81　Lene: I like that everyone speaks their mind. I don't know if it is like that in all of the other
82　groups.
83　Interviewer: You don't think you could learn something more from talking to other students?
84　Maria: I think that the group is [struggling to find the right words]
85　Interviewer: Set?
86　Maria: Yes.
87　Interviewer: Okay. And it's more comfortable in a way, to talk in the same group?
88　Maria: Yes.
89　Interviewer: I can understand that. [short pause] In the last dialogue, did you feel that it got
90　more personal?
91　Maria: Yes. I'm an immigrant myself, it's my position right now. I felt like, okay, this is… I
92　don't know what to say.
93　Interviewer: You felt part of the topic?
94　Maria: Yes, because in [country of origin], even if I'm born in [country of origin], I'm
95　[original nationality]. And there is a little bit of racism, well not racism, but they keep
96　reminding you that you're [original nationality]. Even if you grew up in [country of origin],
97　you're [original nationality]. I don't know how to explain. It's not racism, but they don't treat
98　you like an [citizen of country of origin].
99　Interviewer: And talking about this topic made you think about these experiences?
100　Maria: Yes.

101   Interviewer: How did that make you feel?
102   Maria: It's okay. It was worse when I was a child, but now it's okay.
103   Interviewer: Did you guys feel like it was more personal?
104   Chris: It was personal to me. As an immigrant I think about it sometimes. Most of the topics
105   were about immigrants, and I thought about my own life. How was it to come to Norway and
106   to live with people and how to integrate with them. I thought about my own life.
107   Interviewer: Was it difficult to talk about this with students who are born in Norway.
108   Chris: No, I think that when you are the same age it is easy to understand each other. It
109   doesn't matter which country you are from. It gets a lot easier to communicate and to talk to
110   each other about your opinions.
111   Interviewer: [To Lene and Peter] What about you two? Did you ever feel that you had to be
112   careful about what you said?
113   Lene: Maybe in the start, but I don't think so. I found it a bit personal because I had to say my
114   opinions. But I think it was interesting to hear what they [referring to Maria and Chris] said
115   about it. I wasn't scared about saying anything wrong.
116   Peter: The same goes for me. I didn't think it was personal to me because I never experienced
117   any of that, but as she said, I spoke my mind. So it got a little personal.
118   Interviewer: Let's try to sum up Let's Talk. I have some questions summing it up. What has
119   been the best thing about the project?
120   Lene: That we spoke English all the time and learned to think faster in English.
121   Maria: We met new people. Since I came to this school I never talked to Norwegian students.
122   So this was the first time.
123   Interviewer: So language was one thing. Meeting other people. Anything else?
124   Lene: We also got to hear what the others thought and listen to them. And be open-minded.
125   We could maybe change our minds and see things from other perspectives.
126   Interviewer: Is there anything that has been challenging during the project?
127   Peter: Some of the questions were challenging, I think. Some of them were a bit hard to
128   understand, maybe.
129   Lene: Yeah. Not so many, though.
130   Peter: No. Most of them were fine.
131   Interviewer: Was it just the language, or was it that they asked you to talk about something
132   that was difficult?
133   Peter: Yes, I think it was that. With very open questions it was hard to give an answer.
134   Lene: Yeah, it would have been hard in Norwegian also.
135   Interviewer: What if we talked more about the different topics before the dialogues? If we had
136   three lessons instead of just one? Would that have made it easier to talk about these things?
137   Lene: Yes and no. It depends on the theme. Some things are easier to talk about than others.
138   Maria: I think that if we talked in class about this, the themes, it wouldn't be good because we
139   could change our minds. Like we do here without knowing the topic too well, we can say
140   what we think without anyone…
141   Interviewer: I understand. So you're not affected by anyone from your own class before you
142   come here. This way you only get to discuss here.
143   Maria: Yes, because you say what you think. Maybe I didn't explain…
144   Interviewer: No, I think I understood. [short pause] What do you feel that you've learned
145   from this?
146   Lene: About the topics?
147   Interviewer: About anything. About the topics or… [silence] Or maybe I should ask "have
148   you learned anything? [students laugh]
149   Lene: I have learned to talk English maybe a little better. And to dear to say what I want to
150   without being scared to be judged or to say something wrong.

151   Interviewer: So you feel more confident?
152   Lene: Yes, maybe.
153   Peter: And the views of different people on the topics. How they, who don't originally come
154   from Norway, look differently on the topics than us. Because we are taught differently in
155   different countries. I thought that was interesting. But it was very much the same for all of us.
156   We agreed on almost anything. There wasn't that much difference.
157   Interviewer: That's also interesting to learn, I guess, that there aren't that big differences.
158   What about you guys? [To Chris and Maria] Did you learn anything? If you say "no", I won't
159   be offended [laughs].
160   Maria: Maybe being more comfortable speaking in English. I don't think we have different
161   minds. Maybe because of the age, I don't think we have different minds.
162   Chris: I think the same.
163   Interviewer: Has this project made you think about things in new or different ways?
164   Lene: Yes, it has.
165   Interviewer: Can you remember anything specific?
166   Lene: Maybe when we talked about integration. I heard what the others said. Maybe, yeah.
167   Chris: I think the last questions about integration were a bit challenging. There was this one
168   question where we agreed and disagreed. It was immigrants living in the same place and
169   forcing them to work. That was a question we talked about a lot and we disagreed. I think you
170   get many different opinions from people, from other perspectives.
171   Interviewer: Would you like to do this more?
172   All: Yes.
173   Interviewer: Why?
174   Lene: It is a variation from normal lessons and I think it's very important to talk and use our
175   vocabulary. Because that's how we will be graded.
176   Peter: We speak more English here than in the English class.
177   Lene: We use it to read and listen.
178   Peter: Yes, that's quite repetitive.
179   Chris: I'm happy because I don't have to do the questions in the class and I can talk here. I am
180   happy about that.
181   Interviewer: So doing this is better than talking in class? Or do you just talk little in class?
182   Peter: I think it's that. We talk more here, I think, because we are more comfortable with only
183   four people than twenty people.
184   Lene: Yeah.
185   Interviewer: But if you did this in a group of four students from your own class only?
186   Lene: I think this is more serious. We have to talk English to understand each other. In our
187   class we maybe start speaking in Norwegian and don't do what we should be doing.
188   Interviewer: Is there anything else you would like to say about the project? [silence] No?
189   Okay. Let me just end by saying thank you so much for being part of this focus group! It
190   means a lot to me.

Appendix 12: Introduction text to Dialogues about Freedom of Speech

Freedom of Speech

Today's topic for the *Let's Talk* project is freedom of speech. Freedom of speech is a basic human right, documented by article 19 in the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights, which says that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression (…)". Even if most countries in the world have signed the declaration, there are many different interpretations of it. This text will lead you through some of the issues of freedom of speech in the USA, the UK and Norway.

According to Reuters, the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment protects free speech very strongly. This even includes hate speech, which means denigrating for example gays, ethnic minorities, people of colour, or women. As a consequence, U.S. courts have often ruled in favour of people accused of hate speech. This means that Ku Klux Klan members have been protected by the law to continue spreading their hate towards Black people, unless it leads to "imminent lawless action". In 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court even ruled that the Westboro Baptist Church's "God Hates Fags" anti-gay campaign should be allowed to continue, and even picket during military funerals.

Have you heard of the Charlottesville rally that took place in Virginia this summer? During a protest by White nationalists, a car drove into a crowd of counterprotestors, killing a 32-year-old woman and injuring 19 people. The incident caused a great debate in the U.S., especially after President Trump refused to condemn the nationalists for their White supremacist views. Instead, the president said that both sides were to blame for what happened.

In the United Kingdom, there is no law specifically against hate speech, but there are several laws that protect individuals from hateful speech. For example, the Public Order Act 1986 forbids racial hatred on grounds of colour, race, ethnic origin and nationality. Religious hatred and denigration of sexual minorities are made illegal in more recent laws.

On a Huffington Post blog page, UK activist Roanna Carleton-Taylor argues that one should talk more about the responsibilities of speech, and not just the freedom of speech. Her first argument is that hate speech builds on stereotypes, and that people are judged just because they look a certain way or belong to a group of people. Secondly, hateful speech is often built on lies, not opinions. Carleton-Taylor also believes that freedom of speech means that you have to accept responsibility of what you say, and that by allowing hate speech we allow hate to become normal in our society. What do you think?

June 29 this year, White nationalists held an anti-gay protest in Kristiansand. The protest was mostly peaceful, but there were some counterprotestors who were led away by the police. Even if the protest was not lawful, the nationalists were allowed to march the streets, while counterprotestors were intercepted by the police. In the days after, many people disagreed with how the police had handled the situation, and some of them said that the freedom of speech was violated. Can you think of why?

Freedom of speech is not a simple issue. How does one balance the right of the individual, while at the same time protecting the rights of others? Which one is more important? In the group dialogue later today, you will discuss freedom of speech. There will be some questions related to this text, and other questions about situations you might experience in your daily lives. Therefore, try to think about some of the questions asked in this text before the dialogues start.

Vocabulary

to denigrate	to say very critical and often unfair things about someone
to rule	here: to decide
i**mminent**	likely to happen at any moment
to picket	to protest using signs (see picture)
rally	a gathering, often to protest
nationalist	someone who believes that the people of a country should not mix with people who look different
counterprotestor	someone who protests against people who are protesting
condemn	express great disapproval
White supremacy	the belief that Whites are better than all other "races"
to intercept	to cut off, to stop
to violate	here: to break a law

Sources

CRM UK webpage: http://www.civilrightsmovement.co.uk/faq-what-classed-hate-speech.html
   Obtained 11.09.2017.
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Appendix 13: Tasks for the Dialogues about Freedom of Speech

Before you begin

This is the first time you meet as a group. Take some time to say something about yourselves, and to show interest in the other members ☺

Task 1

In the text about the freedom of speech, you read about the Charlottesville rally this summer. Do you think President Trump should have condemned the White nationalists for their views, and blame them for the incident?

Likewise, do you think the Norwegian police handled the Kristiansand protest correctly?

Task 2

A Christian organisation has asked if they can come to your school to talk to students about homosexuality as a threat to Norwegian society. You represent the student council (elevrådet), and the head master has asked for your opinion on the matter. What will you say? Will you allow the organisation to come to your school to spread this message?

Task 3

You overhear a student use the word "neger" ("negro") about another student several times during a lunch break. Discuss the following questions:

- Is the student allowed to use this word? Is it part of his freedom of speech?
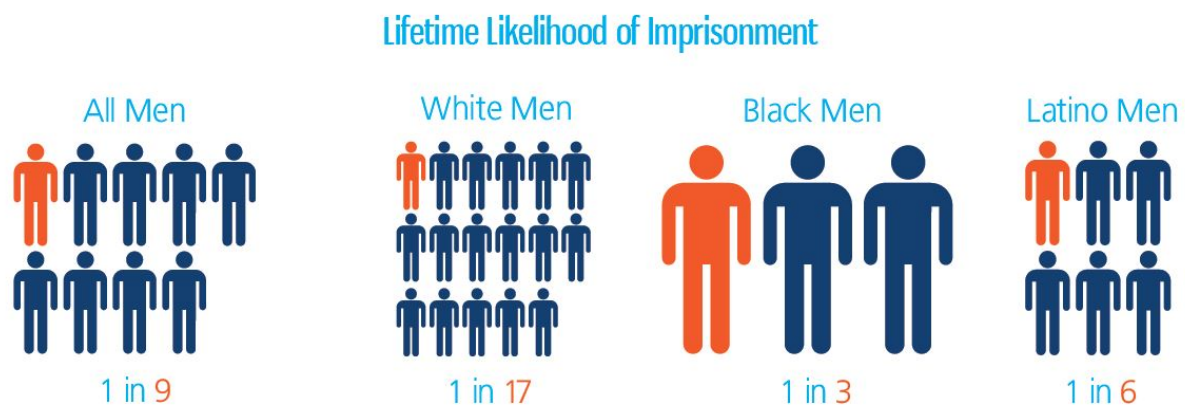- Should you say something to the student? If yes, what would you say?

Task 4

Summing up today's dialogue, what is the group's conclusion about freedom of speech? What do you agree on, and what do you disagree on?

Appendix 14: Introduction text to Dialogues about Equality

Are We Masters of Our Own Lives?

What does equality truly mean? Does it mean having equal opportunities in life, or does it mean that one should end up with the same quality of life? The answer would most likely depend on the values of the person you ask, and perhaps also which country this person comes from. Today, you will learn about equality in the USA, and in the dialogue you will discuss your view on this topic.

Equality is a hot issue in the USA, despite the American Declaration of Independence saying that "all men are created equal" and that all Americans have the right to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness". Statistics show that big minorities, like African Americans, Native Americans and Latinos, have lower income and worse quality of life than White Americans. As you can see in the illustration below, there is a much higher chance for African American and Latino men to be imprisoned than for White men. This is especially disturbing when you consider the fact that African Americans make up only 15 percent of the U.S. population, and Latinos 18 percent. Why is there so much inequality in the USA?

Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment

All Men — 1 in 9
White Men — 1 in 17
Black Men — 1 in 3
Latino Men — 1 in 6

First, you should learn the term *social inheritance*. Inheritance is what is passed on to you by your parents, and normally we think of money and property when we talk about this word. Social inheritance, on the other hand, is about *the kind of life* your parents pass on to you. Research has shown that if your parents have a high education you have a higher chance of doing well at school. Likewise, children of parents with a violent or criminal past have a higher risk of following the same path. It is still important to say that this will not *always* happen, but the *risk* is higher.

We cannot only blame social inheritance when we explain inequality in America. In the last years, there has been a series of protests by African Americans because they feel discriminated against by the police. Tragic incidents, like the police killing the unarmed Black teenager Michael Brown, has caused much anger in the African American community.

Organisations, like Black Lives Matter, have been created to make Americans aware of the fact that discrimination is still strong in the USA.

Even though inequality is very visible in the USA, it is a problem in all countries. Norway is the country in the world with the highest level of equality, but still our country is not perfect. Social inheritance works the same way here, and in some parts of the country, there are more school drop-outs and higher levels of poverty and social problems. Immigrants from some countries also stand out as poorer and with higher crime numbers than the Norwegians in general. An important difference from the USA is that we have a welfare state that keeps a better balance.

There are some people who believe that it is natural to have some inequality in society. They would argue that people have to take responsibility for their own lives instead of blaming their background or the country they live in. One of the core values in the USA is *individualism*, which means that people have to make their own lives and not depend on help from others. An American might say that everyone has the same opportunity to get a good education, but that it is up to each person to make the most of this opportunity. As it says in the Declaration of Independence, everyone has the right to the *pursuit* of happiness, but not necessarily to achieve it.

Vocabulary

Equality	That everyone is the same; has the same opportunities (*likhet*)
Opportunity	The possibility of getting something (*mulighet*)
Pursuit	Chase; try to get (*forfølgelse*)
Income	The money a person makes (*inntekt*)
Term	Word or group of word with a specific meaning (*begrep*)
Imprisonment	Being put in prison (*fengsling*)
Inheritance	Something handed down by your family, like a house (*arv*)
Likewise	Similarly (*likens*)
Inequality	The opposite of equality (*ulikhet*)
Disturbing	Troubling; not good (*urovekkende*)
To consider	To think about (*å ta i betraktning*)
Salary	The money you get from working (*lønn*)
To achieve	To reach; to get (*å oppnå*)

Sources

Pew Research: http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/12/racial-wealth-gaps-great-recession/ Downloaded 16.10.2017
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US History: http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/ Downloaded 16.10.2017
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Appendix 15: Tasks for Dialogue about Equality

Task 1

America has often been called "the land of dreams". Do you think this is fair when you think about the level of inequality in the USA?

Task 2

There are many African Americans in US prisons.

   a) In your opinion, what needs to be done to improve the situation?
   b) Do you think the present situation supports people's prejudice about Black people? (*Prejudice* means having ideas about people based on how they look or where they are from)

Task 3

What is your social inheritance? Make a comparison between the members of the group!

Task 4

Did you know about *social inheritance* before today? Do you think it is important to learn what it is and what effect it has on people's lives?

Task 5

Do social inheritance and discrimination excuse bad behavior or poor quality of life? Or do people have to take responsibility of their own lives, no matter what their background is?

Task 6

Summing up today's dialogue, what is the group's conclusion about equality? What do you agree on, and what do you disagree on?

Appendix 16: Tasks for Dialogues about Integration

Task 1

What makes integration so difficult?

Task 2

How can thinking outside the box help us find better solutions for integration?

Task 3

The next four slips of paper will present statements which you have to agree or disagree with, using the red and green cards. You have to use the cards, and you must also try to explain your opinion. You can even try to change the others' view!

Immigrants have the biggest responsibility themselves to make integration successful.

Governments should stop many immigrants from living in the same area.

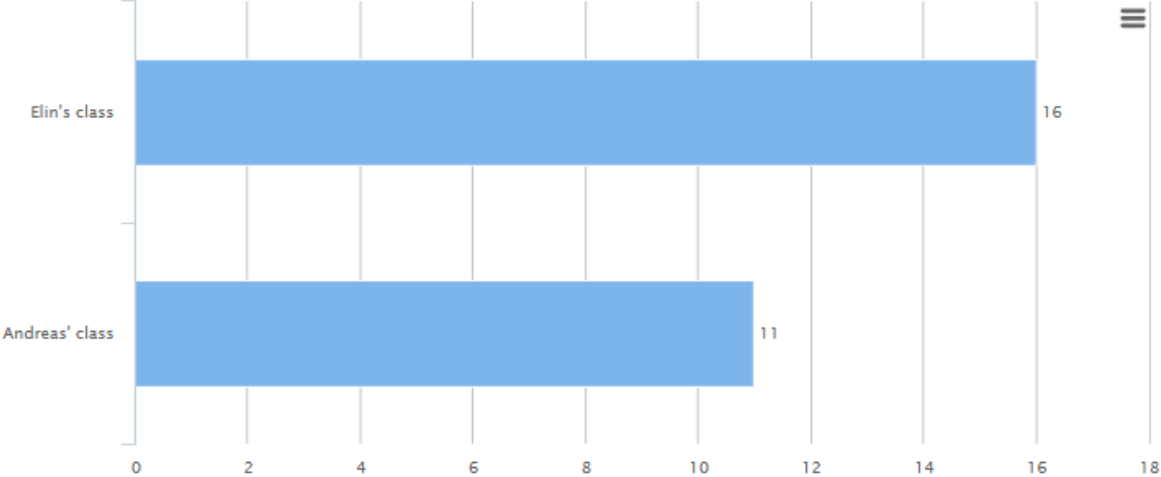Integration only works if we force immigrants to learn the language and to get a job.
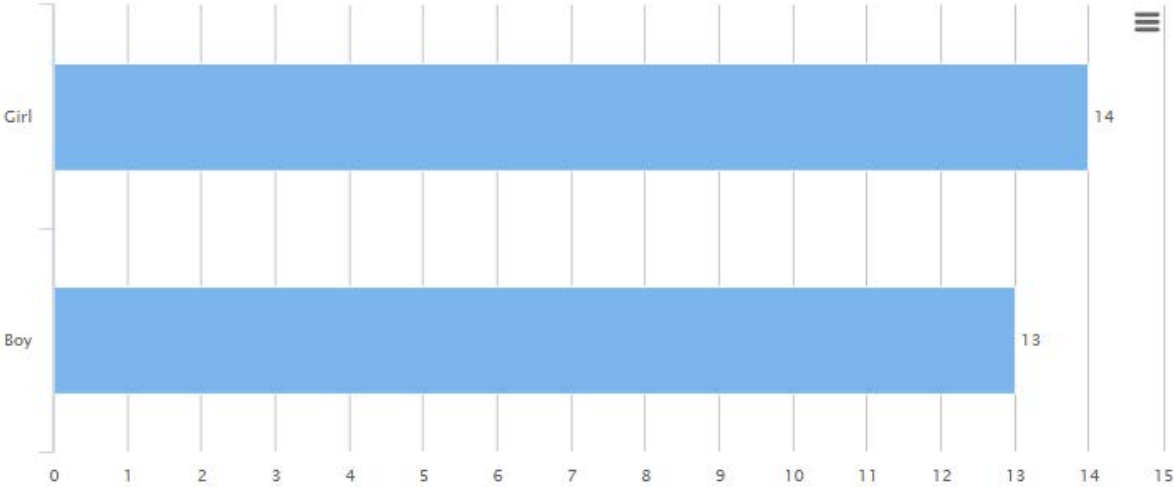
There is segregation at our school.

Task 4

Summing up today's dialogue, what is the group's conclusion about integration? What do you agree on, and what do you disagree on?

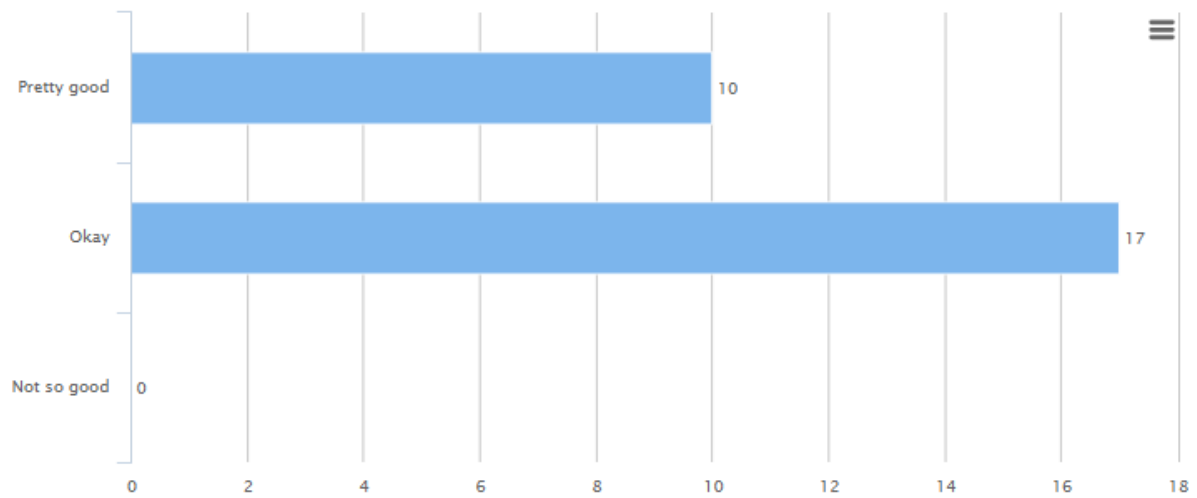**Appendix 17: Results from the Questionnaire**

Which English class are you in?

Are you a girl or a boy?

How well do you think that you speak English?

Pretty good	10
Okay	17
Not so good	0

Below there are 20 statements about Let's Talk. Please check the box that fits best.

I liked working with the project Let's Talk.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	1
Don't agree or disagree	2
Agree	20
Strongly agree	4

I was nervous before the dialogues started.

Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	6
Don't agree or disagree	8
Agree	10
Strongly agree	1

I was afraid to speak in the dialogues.

Strongly disagree	3
Disagree	12
Don't agree or disagree	7
Agree	4
Strongly agree	1

I looked forward to the dialogues.

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	1
Don't agree or disagree	11
Agree	13
Strongly agree	1

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Sometimes I chose not to say something even though I wanted to.

Strongly disagree	3
Disagree	15
Don't agree or disagree	3
Agree	6
Strongly agree	0

Sometimes I was frustrated with students who did not say much.

Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	11
Don't agree or disagree	4
Agree	7
Strongly agree	3

The first dialogue (about freedom of speech) went well.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	3
Don't agree or disagree	1
Agree	17
Strongly agree	6

Freedom of speech was a relevant topic for my own life.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	2
Don't agree or disagree	12
Agree	11
Strongly agree	1

The second dialogue (about equality) went well.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	1
Don't agree or disagree	5
Agree	19
Strongly agree	2

Equality was a relevant topic for my own life.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	3
Don't agree or disagree	9
Agree	12
Strongly agree	3

The last dialogue (about integration) went well.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	1
Don't agree or disagree	4
Agree	12
Strongly agree	10

Integration was a relevant topic for my own life.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	5
Don't agree or disagree	6
Agree	13
Strongly agree	3

I learned a lot by being part of Let's Talk.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	3
Don't agree or disagree	5
Agree	13
Strongly agree	6

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One or more of the dialogues made me think about things in new ways.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	3
Don't agree or disagree	9
Agree	11
Strongly agree	4

One or more of the dialogues made me see that I was wrong about some things.

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	8
Don't agree or disagree	10
Agree	7
Strongly agree	1

We sometimes disagreed about things in the dialogues.

Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	4
Don't agree or disagree	2
Agree	19
Strongly agree	0

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We always agreed about things in the dialogues.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	10
Don't agree or disagree	9
Agree	5
Strongly agree	1

The dialogues were a good way to learn English.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	2
Don't agree or disagree	3
Agree	14
Strongly agree	8

Meeting students from the other English class was interesting/fun.

Response	Count
Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Don't agree or disagree	1
Agree	14
Strongly agree	12

I would have learned more if the dialogues were in my own class only.

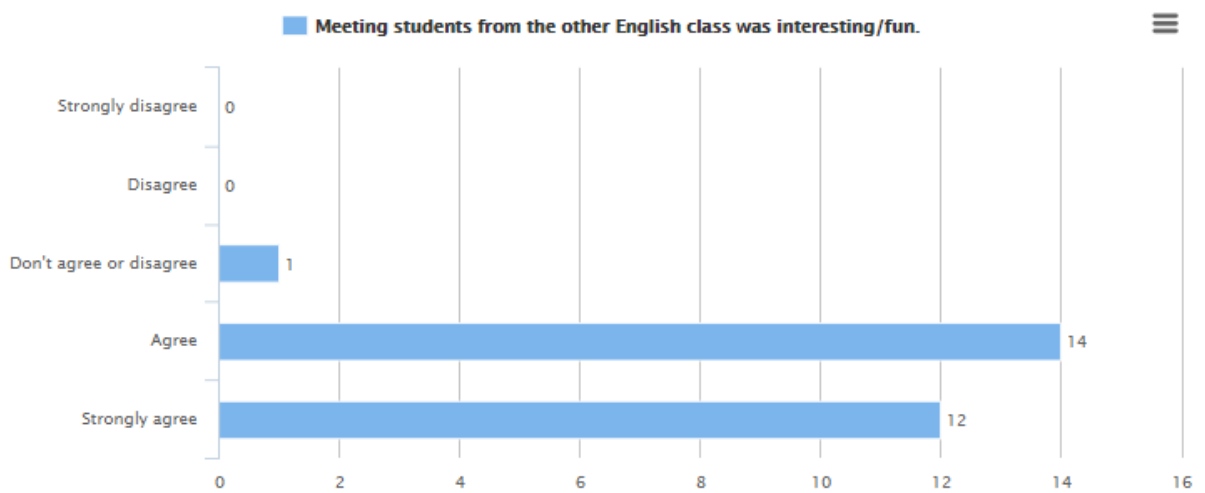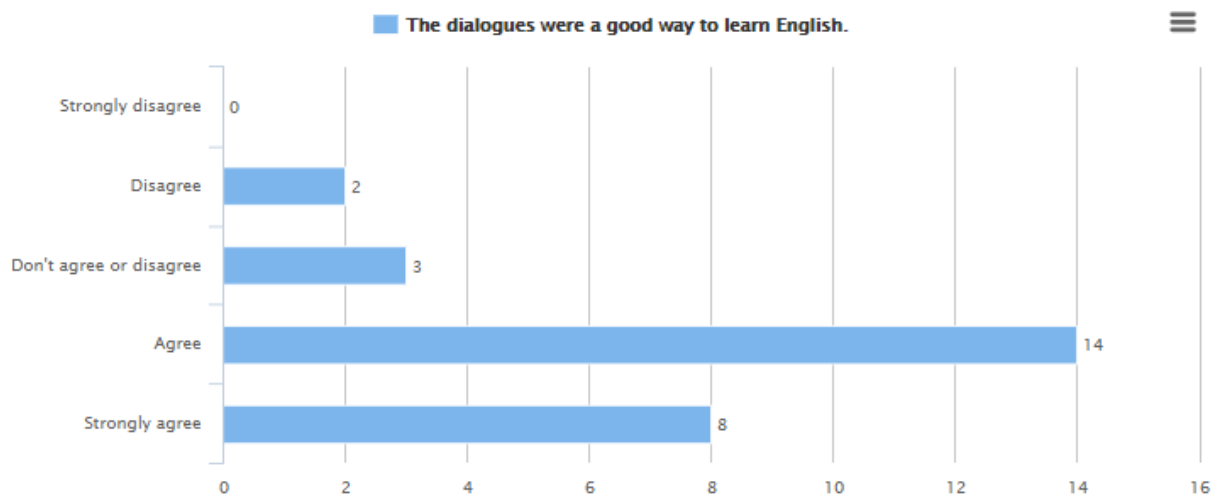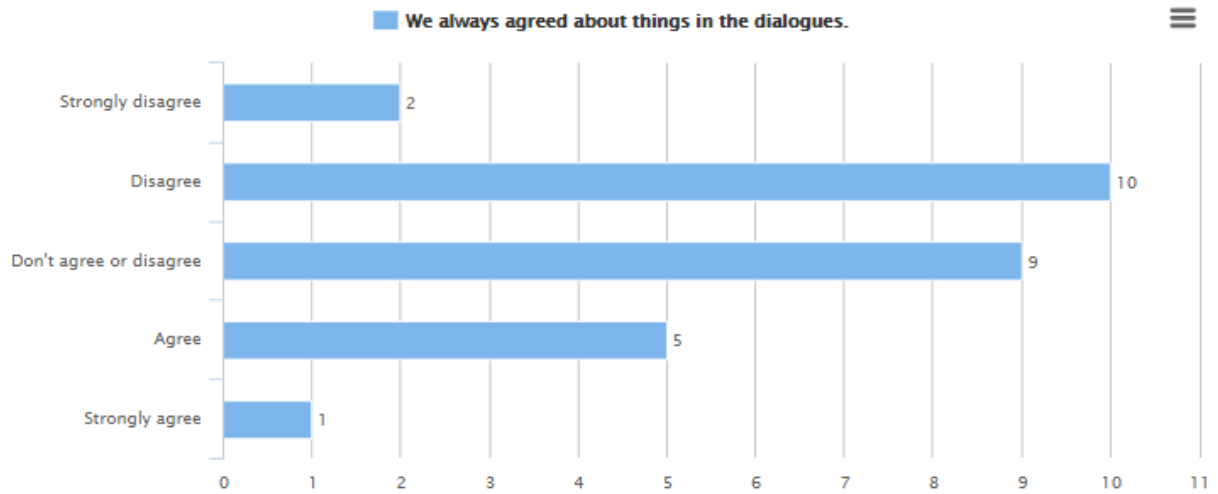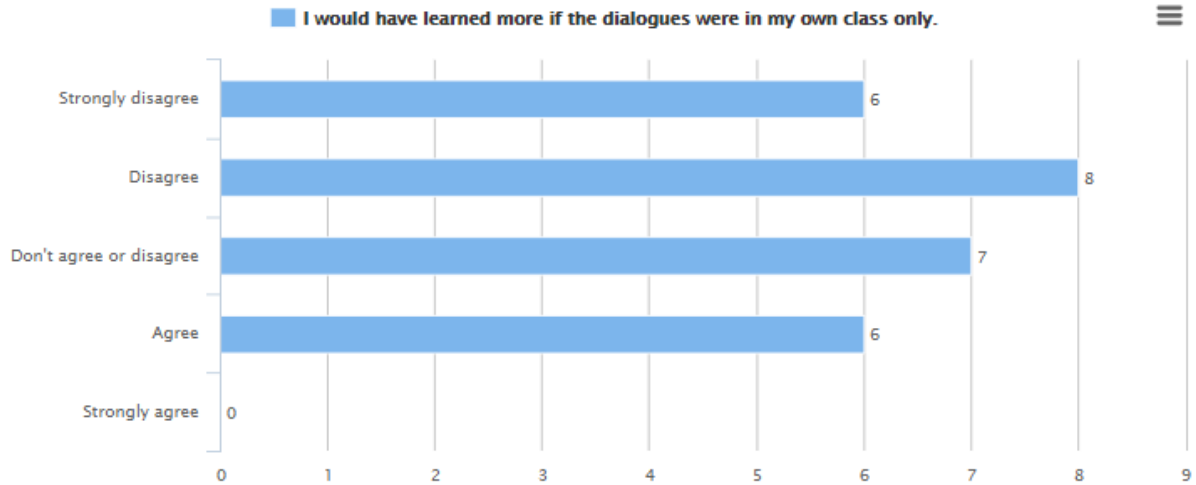|	
Strongly disagree	6
Disagree	8
Don't agree or disagree	7
Agree	6
Strongly agree	0

Answers on the open question

LM students

- I liked the hole thing all. It was very greit.
- i think it was a good job to do lets talk and to be know the others.
- I learn much things that i didn't know before.
- no that is all.
- The let's talk project went very good because I thought that, students in other classes would be more intelligent than us in AMSA, then I realised that they were just simple like us, kind and honest. And then I realised again that, it was a very good way for integration, getting to know each other, for that very reason I salute. Conclusion: It was really good and I I enjoyed it very much, but the problem was that, we only had few days with that. Hope we will have another project in the future. #x0D;

MA students

- It was wery fun
- I think it was fun to share menings with each others
- It was an interesting concept and I learned a lot about other peoples opinions and it was an nice opportunity to talk in English.
- It was quiet fun
- We didn't really know each other to feel comfortable enough to hold a flowing conversation, it would probably be more beneficial to do it in just one class
- I think this was a great experience, and a great way to speak more anguish.

Appendix 18: Example of Transcript Coding

Mediate to reach consensus.

Vocab. from text.

Lene: Yes, so we agree on that thing. And there was also something else we agreed on.

Chris: Charlotte? [All speak a bit back and forth, trying to remember the name Charlottesville]

Lene: I think it was task 1. What did we say again, about that?

[Hesitation]

Chris: We said that they needed to condemn them because he was leader of a country and teach other people what is correct.

Peter: Yes, and you told us that if it were a black group he would have... what was the word?

Chris: Condemned

Peter: Yes, condemned them.

Maria: And the man in the car, did they condemn him?

Chris: No, that's what we were talking about. The question was why Donald Trump didn't condemn the person who did that.

Maria: Ah, okay.

Awareness of issue

Chris: That was a shameful act by people who were protesting against those statues and those who were killed. So President Trump just said that was a shameful act. He is a tweeter, he just tweets in the middle of the night and doesn't know anything else. He just wrote that it was a shameful act. He should have come to the media and have a discussion that it was not a good thing. You can't have those people who think that the statues of the people that they say were heroes, but had black people as their slaves.

Maria: Yes, this is not right. But I think, there was a man and maybe a woman in the car, that they should be condemned, because he or she killed ninety people.

Chris: No, she killed one person and injured nineteen people.

Clears up m.

Maria: Injuring, what is that?

Vocabulary expl.

Peter: Hurt. Physical hurt.

Maria: So she only killed one woman.

Peter: Yes, but that's a serious act, even though it's only one person.

Maria: Hm?

Peter: Ehm, forget about it. *Impatient? E.R.*

[nervous laughter]

Agreement

Lene: Okay, but is this something we disagree on? Or are we agreeing?

Chris: I think we agreed on everything. We had disagreements about the text, but not our opinions.

Lene: So as a conclusion I think we have the same opinion, or almost. But have you read this paragraph?

Restarts discussion

Chris: [reads] On a Huffington Post blog page you can... [unclear]

Lene: Yes, about the UK activist. I think she has a really

Chris: Good point, yes.

Lene: A good point about that we have to talk more about the responsibilities.

Peter: Yeah, that's right. With freedom comes responsibility.

Lene: Yes, absolutely.

Maria: Because sometimes we talk without thinking of what are we saying. I think that all people do that, and something we have to work on.

Lene: I think the freedom of speech and the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights should add one more law that says that you should have to think more about the responsibility.

Chris: Yeah, like whatever you say you have the freedom, but not give hateful speech against a group or something.

Peter: Yes, it's the same in Norway, I think.

Maria: I think the law has to be interpreted. I don't know if you understand. There are many different interpretations of it. I don't think it has to be interpreted because the right... Just follow it.

Lene: Yes, interpretation is like *oppfatning*

Maria: What?

Lene: Like how you see... how you

Peter: The view of something. The way you look at something.

Tries to expl. by v. Norwegian

good discussion about the limits of F.o.S. Co-constr. knowledge