How Can Learners of English as a Foreign Language in Norwegian Upper Secondary School Acquire a Broader Academic Vocabulary as well as Become More Autonomous and Meta-Linguistically Aware?

An Action Research Study

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Abstract in Norwegian

Denne mastergradsoppgaven har sin bakgrunn i en doktorgradsoppgave skrevet av Hellekjær i 2005 som konkluderer med at elever som har fullført videregående skole i Norge ikke er tilstrekkelig forberedt på å lese engelskfaglige tekster på høyere utdanningsnivå. Hellekjær viste til at 30 - 40% av studenter på universitetsnivå opplevde vanskeligheter med å lese fagbøker og akademiske tekster på engelsk. En like sentral problemstilling som ligger til grunn for denne oppgaven er hvordan en kan fremme metakognisjon og selvregulering i utviklingen av engelskspråket slik at elevene kan bli autonome i sin videre språkutvikling. Dette blir særskilt vektlagt som en sentral kompetanse i NOU sin rapport om fornyelse av fag og kompetanser i de nye læreplanene (NOU 2015:18).

Målet med denne masteroppgaven i engelsk fagdidaktikk er å undersøke om bruken av dybdelæring og mengdelesing sammen med særskilt fokus på vokabularutvikling gjennom bruken av akademiske ordlister, kan ha en effekt på det akademiske ordforrådet. I tillegg var det sentralt å undersøke om fokus på læringsstrategier og bruken av refleksjonsnotat kunne fremme utviklingen av metakognisjon og selvregulering i læring av engelskspråket.

Studien er basert på aksjonsforskningsmetoden og tar i bruk en test som måler størrelse på ordforråd før og etter prosjektperioden. Det er også tatt i bruk et dataprogram som scanner tekster for bruken av akademisk ordforråd. Dette ble utført på elevtekster, en før prosjektstart og en ved slutten av prosjektperioden. I tillegg er det foretatt en tematisk analyse av refleksjonsnotater som elevene skrev ved slutten av prosjektet.

Resultatene indikerer at elevene har i løpet av prosjektperioden hatt en økning i både det reseptive og det produktive ordforrådet. Ut fra refleksjonsnotatene kan en også spore en økende grad av metakognisjon og en høyere grad av motivasjon for faget. De rapporterer om høy nytteverdi i forhold til både dybdelæring og bruken av akademiske ordlister gjennom dataverktøyet Quizlet.

Table of Contents

List of Figures and tables

List of Key Abbreviations

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

L2   Second Language

LLS   Language Learning Strategies

SLA   Second Language Acquisition

Vg1   Year one in upper secondary school

GSL   General Service List

AWL   The Academic Word List

VST   Vocabulary Size Test

VP   VocabProfiler

TA   Thematic Analysis

NSD   Norwegian Social Science Data Services

1 Introduction

"In a globalized world the need for a large, sophisticated and accurate vocabulary is greater than ever" (Hestetræet, 2018).

1.1 Background and Rationale of the Study

English is taught in Norwegian schools as a foreign language (EFL) all through primary and secondary school. It is taught at scheduled hours in the classroom, and acknowledged for its significance to education, business and mobility, but not as an official second language (Rindal, 2014). However, in large companies English is often used as a lingua franca (Hellekjær, 2007), and in higher education a considerable number of textbooks and lectures are in English (Ljosland, 2008). The last couple of decades young Norwegians have also experienced massive exposure to English through the media, and many Norwegians travel abroad frequently and use English as a lingua franca with both native and non-native speakers (Rindal, 2014). In other words, the importance of the English language in Norway is increasing. Norwegian education authorities have clearly defined the subject´s purpose in the current curriculum, the *Knowledge Promotion* (LK06/13) (2006/2013), stating that English is a universal language needed for communication with other cultures and thus a necessary subject for Norwegian students. It states further that English is also a necessary skill in higher education and in the work life:

> In addition, English is increasingly used in education and as a working language in many companies. To succeed in a world where English is used for international communication, it is necessary to be able to use the English language and to have knowledge of how it is used in different contexts. Thus, we need to develop a vocabulary and skills in using the system of the English language, its phonology,

orthography, grammar and principles for sentence and text construction, and to be able to adapt the language to different topics and communication situations (LK06/13).

Norwegians are considered highly proficient in English and have always had a close relationship with the USA and Great Britain through political, cultural and economic cooperation. Factoring in increasing globalization and that also Norway is becoming more multi-cultural, we can assume that most Norwegians have fairly frequent encounters with the English language. Norwegian schools have taught English since 1959 and today it is a core subject in Norwegian schools from first grade in primary school through Vg1 general studies and Vg2 vocational studies in upper secondary school. In international comparisons of teenager´s proficiency of English, Norwegian tenth graders have very high scores (Bonnet, 2004), and in The EF English Proficiency Index, Norway is ranked among the countries with "a very high proficiency" (Education First, 2016). English is currently taught as a foreign language but has widespread usage in both business and academia in Norway. Nevertheless, good language skills in what is often an informal and conversational English, is not always adequate when an academic or work-related situation demands more advanced formal written and oral skills. Also, university students find themselves struggling with academic English, and find it hard to keep up with their studies due to the extensive use of academic English both in lectures, textbooks and written assignments (Hellekjær, 2009).

As an English teacher in upper secondary school I find that my students have high conversational skills in English, but that they lack an academic vocabulary and register to express themselves in a precise and more formal manner when the communication context

demands it. My impression and experience through teaching Vg1 English (year one in upper secondary school) for more than a decade, is that many students at some point in lower secondary or upper secondary stagnate in their language development and become less motivated to expand their vocabulary and vary their language style.

Most textbooks applied on the Vg1 level in my opinion aim to cover too many topics from the English-speaking world and therefore cover them in a cursory manner, and more or less adhere to the pattern of one factual text followed by one short story for each topic. Therefore, the coverage of topics becomes thematically very predictable, and is too similar to what the students have already worked with in lower secondary school (Ørevik, 2019). It also seems that many texts adapted for Vg1 textbooks do not contain a high enough amount of academic vocabulary compared to normal academic texts found in newspapers, academic textbooks etc. (Skjelde, 2015). Students are as a result not challenged sufficiently and do not find the repetition of topics and genres interesting. According to Bakken (2018), traditional and outdated teaching practices and choice of input material might lead to passive and unengaged students. Consequently, they lose their motivation to work on developing their vocabulary and language skills, and furthermore, they do not seem to reflect on their language development or have thoughts and opinions on how to improve their language skills. It is very often up to the teacher to design a lesson plan, including input material, that will interest and challenge the students sufficiently. This is a time-consuming task especially with the number of topics we aim to cover if we follow the textbooks and their topic selection. Along with many of my fellow teacher colleagues, I see a need for a different approach in the EFL classroom in terms of input selection, the

number of topics to cover, and a stronger focus on academic writing and metalinguistic awareness.

According to the Ludvigsen Committee and their report "The School of the Future" (NOU 2015:18), working on a few topics in depth should be prioritized over a large number of topics only covered in a cursory manner. They argue that for students to develop critical thinking, and lifelong learning skills, it is necessary to work on a single topic over time and in a deeper manner than what the current curriculum stipulates. The new curriculum which will be implemented in 2020 has a strong emphasis on this kind of in-depth learning. The Committee argues that it will leave students with a deeper knowledge and understanding along with the necessary skills and language to communicate and develop further learning. The report also emphasizes the need for students in the school of the future to develop metacognitive skills about how to learn and how to self-regulate their learning process. In a knowledge-based society it is fundamental for students to be able to independently develop their skills and knowledge and become familiar with new areas of knowledge throughout their lives. By developing metacognition and self-regulation the students will learn to engage more in the learning process in a way that promotes in-depth knowledge. It can also contribute to an increase in motivation for learning in school and in other arenas. To be able to plan, implement and evaluate one´s own work can give students effective and useful working habits in school and later in higher education and work life (Fenner, 2018).

Metacognition can be defined as "an awareness of and reflections about one´s own knowledge, experiences, emotions and learning in the contexts of language learning and

teaching" (Haukås, 2018). This entails students being able to reflect on and develop an awareness of their own and others´ knowledge, along with an awareness of how to increase learning and develop further knowledge (Haukås, 2018). Metalinguistic awareness is a subcategory of metacognition and refers to the knowledge of language. It can be referred to as "thinking about language" and relates to the learners´ ability to think about language and text as a phenomenon. It involves actively engaging in the writing process by reflecting critically on the various writing choices available, and making decisions based on those reflections (Ofte, 2014).
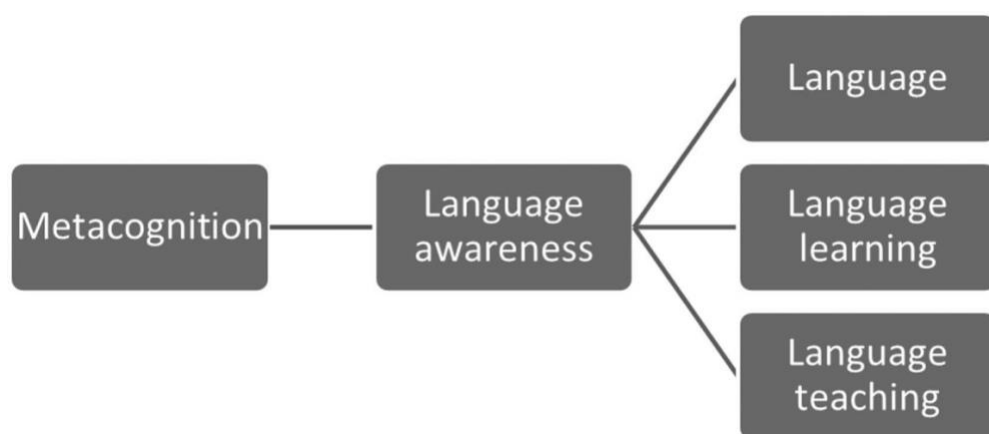
Figure 1.1 Metacognition in Relation to Language Awareness and its Subdomains (Haukås, 2018)

Developing metacognition in language learning requires students to raise their awareness through actively reflecting on language as a phenomenon, and to reflect on various learning strategies and choices that will contribute to further language development.

1.2   Previous Research

There have been previous studies investigating academic English proficiency levels, and levels of metalinguistic awareness among upper secondary students and university

students. Hellekjær conducted a case study in 2001 where he carried out a survey of university students´ academic English reading proficiency, in which he found that about 35% of students had difficulties reading English texts and 40% of the students struggled with understanding English lectures. This is a significant portion of students, and an issue that institutions of higher education, education authorities and English teachers in upper secondary school need to address. Being able to read and learn from English texts and textbooks is an essential skill in higher education, in particular in smaller language communities such as Norway (Hellekjær, 2012). Hellekjær also wrote his doctoral dissertation "The Acid Test: Does Upper Secondary EFL Instruction Effectively Prepare Norwegian Students for the Reading of English Textbooks at Colleges and Universities?" (2005), where his investigation indicates that Norwegian upper secondary EFL instruction does not sufficiently prepare the students for higher education and has ample room for improvement in this respect. He continues to make several recommendations of how to improve EFL instruction in upper secondary general studies in order to better prepare the students for higher education. One of his recommendations is to increase emphasis on extensive reading and improve reading fluency and develop vocabulary through incidental acquisition. Another recommendation is to increase emphasis on systematic vocabulary development.

Kimberly Skjelde has written her Master´s thesis on academic vocabulary in English course materials for advanced Norwegian learners of English. Her aim was to see how general academic vocabulary is used within factual textbook texts and across topic related texts. She also aimed to investigate to what extent the use of glossaries in textbook texts assist advanced EFL learners with the acquisition of general academic vocabulary during unassisted reading (Skjelde, 2015). In her conclusion Skjelde states that her study showed

the low percentage of 4% of Academic Word List (AWL) word families in 45% of the texts used in the course material, and that they can hardly be compared to academic texts which normally have an 8-10% coverage of AWL word families (Coxhead, 2000). She points to the need for further research into productive and receptive vocabulary size among EFL learners of English in Norway.

In 2013, Elise Arnsby conducted a mixed-methods study for her Master´s thesis to follow up the results from Hellekjær´s 2001 study. She found that the situation had improved somewhat, but during interviews with the students, many admitted that they experienced serious difficulties with reading strategy use and with learning from what they had read.

In the field of metalinguistic research, I refer to Åsta Haukås who has investigated the importance of metalinguistic awareness among foreign language students arguing that increased emphasis on metacognition is a key to better language competency in future students (Haukås, 2014). Students who have a strong sense of language awareness and reflect on their own SLA achieve higher learning results than students who to a lesser degree are aware of their own language learning strategies and do not reflect on these issues. Frequent use and knowledge of language learning strategies also proves to correlate positively with a high degree of language fluency.

All of the above studies suggest there is ample room for improvement in upper secondary EFL instruction in preparing the students for higher education. Furthermore, these studies point to the necessity of assisting the students in raising their metalinguistic awareness along with becoming more autonomous language learners.

1.3   Aim and Scope

The aim for this Master project is to engage my EFL students to extensive reading on an in-depth topic alongside the use of academic word lists in an attempt to systematically develop the students´ academic vocabulary. I utilized an action-based research method where I plan to work with the topic "The Civil Rights Movement in the USA". This topic is relevant in accordance with the competence aim after Vg1/Vg2 of acquiring knowledge about "culture and social conditions in several English-speaking countries" (LK06/13). My Vg1 class in English general studies will be presented with a wide selection of texts on the topic and will research the issue of discrimination in the USA today as a continuation of the topic.

As in the English subject curriculum, the concept of *text* was used in the broadest sense of the word. "It involves oral and written representations in different combinations and a range of oral and written texts from digital media" (LK06/13). Apart from gaining new knowledge on the topic, the focus was specifically on increasing the students´ academic vocabulary and developing metalinguistic awareness. Through this approach I hoped to motivate and challenge my students by letting them work with a variety of factual and fictional texts, as well as watch documentaries, interviews and TEDtalks on the chosen topic. TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to spreading ideas on Ted.com, usually in the form of short and powerful talks on almost all topics such as science, education, business, climate change and other relevant global issues. I wanted to see if this extensive text exposure and in-depth learning approach would result in a more mature academic writing style. In order to evaluate any improvement of productive academic vocabulary, I compared an essay written at the outset of the school year with an essay written at the end of the in-depth project period using the vocabulary profiling tool Lextutor. A standard

vocabulary size test before and after the project was also conducted with the internet-based tool Vocabularysize.com to assess possible changes in receptive vocabulary. At the culmination of the project the students wrote a reflection note about their acquisition of academic vocabulary, language learning strategies, motivation level and their development of metalinguistic awareness.

Research Questions:

1. To what degree can an increased emphasis on content-based instruction and extensive reading along with the systematic use of academic word lists and vocabulary focused learning, assist EFL students in acquiring a broader academic vocabulary?

2. How can the use of reflection notes and focus on learning strategies and learner autonomy help EFL students develop metalinguistic awareness and train them in becoming more autonomous learners of vocabulary?

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

Through an action-based research where Vg1 upper secondary students are involved in an in-depth learning project, this study aims to investigate how useful the exposure to extensive reading, emphasis on the use of academic word lists, alongside the use of reflection notes and learning strategies is effective on the development of academic vocabulary and metalinguistic awareness. The thesis is organized such that chapter two will provide a presentation of theoretical background on vocabulary acquisition in a second language, academic vocabulary in particular, implementation of Academic Word Lists (AWL), and the value of metalinguistic awareness. Chapter three aims to describe the

research design of the study, and to present and discuss relevant theory on research in general and on the action research design and methodology implemented in this study in particular. Results from the action research will be presented in chapter four, along with a discussion of the findings before the concluding chapter presents summative remarks and points to further recommendations on how to improve teaching of academic vocabulary and how to assist students in becoming more meta-linguistically aware.

2   Theoretical Background

One of the aims of this chapter is to present the theoretical background as to why

vocabulary acquisition is a vital component of second language learning and how it has

more recently come to the forefront in the field of language teaching. The present chapter

will therefore attempt to shed light on the historical role of vocabulary in EFL teaching,

the nature of vocabulary, vocabulary goals, the assessment of vocabulary, various

vocabulary learning strategies, explain the term "academic vocabulary", and describe the

implementation and reasoning behind Coxhead´s Academic Word List (AWL). An

explanation of metalinguistic awareness and how it is essential in helping students become

improved language learners will be presented towards the end of the chapter.

2.1   The Historical Role of Vocabulary in EFL Teaching

Vocabulary is an important component of communicative competence in second language

acquisition (SLA). In 1980, Paul Meara characterized vocabulary learning as a neglected

aspect of language learning, (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). However, this started to change

almost at the time of Meara´s comment, and the acquisition of vocabulary has now become

one of the most researched areas in SLA. It seems obvious that communication can easily

break down if we do not use or know the correct word to express our meaning. With this in

mind vocabulary forms a vital part of language learning.

2.1.1   The Grammar-Translation Method

The methods and approaches in EFL teaching in Norway has changed quite dramatically

over the years, moving from language-focused to communicative perspectives. In the

Grammar-Translation Method, vocabulary was learned through the memorization of bi-

lingual word lists along with the extensive use of translation exercises (Richards &
Rodgers, 2014). Texts were translated from Norwegian to English and vice versa. The
Grammar-Translation method also focused on dictionary exercises when teaching
vocabulary, where one would look for antonyms and synonyms and definitions for words
found in the reading texts. The main focus in this method was on reading texts, and the
above-mentioned methods were seen as important to promote understanding of these texts.

2.1.2   The Audiolingual Approach

The Audiolingual Approach in EFL teaching was central in the 1960s and was viewed as a
process of mechanical habit formation (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The focus in this
approach was on phonological and grammatical structure according to which, the four
skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing were taught. The aim was mastery of
these four skills more than the acquisition of vocabulary and the finding of meaning in a
text. The classroom practices included drills and pattern practice, therefore leaving little
room for the learners´ involvement in choosing what vocabulary to learn (Hestetræet,
2018). In this approach, the learner became a more passive participant.

2.1.3   The Communicative Language Teaching Approach

The most recent approach of EFL teaching is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).
Dell Hymes coined the term "communicative competence" in 1972 and according to
Skulstad (2018):

> *Communicative competence* is *the* single most important concept in second/foreign
> language learning and teaching. The reason for this is that developing a learner´s

communicative competence has been the central aim of any second/foreign language course in the western world since the late 1970s (Skulstad, 2018 p.43).

The aim of CLT is to become able to communicate successfully in a given context. Since the world has become more globalized, Norwegian students and workers have to communicate in English in a number of contexts. Fluency in communication is key to achieving mutual understanding in such settings and requires a broad and accurate vocabulary for multiple contexts. "Since CLT emphasizes fluency, the role of vocabulary is strengthened" (Hestetræet, 2018 p.164) and has therefore resulted in a larger focus on vocabulary learning in the EFL classroom.

2.1.4   Curricular Issues and Recommendations from the Council of Europe

In the *Reform 94* curriculum for compulsory English Vg1 in upper secondary school, the concept of communicative competence was strongly emphasized. The students were expected to develop both a wide general vocabulary and a specialized vocabulary linked to their own field of study, either academic or vocational. The level of communicative competence developed was considered the basis for assessing the learners´ language (Hestetræet, 2018). In the *Knowledge Promotion* English subject curriculum (LK06/13) the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, along with numeracy and digital skills, are the main focus areas. The competence aims after Vg1 include understanding and using "an extensive general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to one´s education program" (LK06/13, p.10).

In the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (*CEFR), descriptors of vocabulary range and vocabulary control are included. At the B2 level, which is

22

categorized as an upper intermediate level, learners are expected to have "a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to his/her field and most general topics", and to be able to "vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 112). At the B2 level of vocabulary control, lexical accuracy is expected to be high, but still allows for some incorrect word choice that does not hinder communication. The CEFR document also lists suggestions on how to develop vocabulary knowledge. These include exposure, recycling, use of different types of dictionaries, use of visuals when demonstrating words, memorization of word lists, and the study of the structures and semantic features of words (Council of Europe, 2001, pp. 149-150, Hestetræet, 2018 p.171). Furthermore, the method of guessing from context is considered effective as well as learning vocabulary in chunks and collocations.

2.1.5 Research on Vocabulary

In the research field of vocabulary, corpus linguistics has made a considerable and important contribution to our knowledge about the nature of vocabulary (Hestetræet, 2018). We now have knowledge about the vocabulary of both native and non-native speakers, and of how many words it is necessary to know in order to communicate successfully in certain given contexts. This knowledge along with the CLT approach has moved the focus from grammar to vocabulary in EFL teaching.

2.2 The Nature of Vocabulary

Vocabulary can be divided into three groups: high-frequency, mid-frequency and low-frequency words. The first group, high-frequency words consists of the 3,000 most frequently occurring English word families. A word family consists of a headword, its inflected forms and its closely related derived forms, i.e. *approach - approachable,*

approached, approaches, approaching, unapproachable. Knowing these high-frequency words gives a 95% text coverage (the percentage of words the reader understands) for spoken English, which means that the learner will understand 95% of the words, while the remaining 5% will be unfamiliar words. The second group, mid-frequency words, comprises the next 3,000 - 9,000 word-families. The third group, low-frequency words, involves word families beyond the 9,000 level (Nation, 2013).

2.2.1 Vocabulary Size

The challenge of acquiring a large enough vocabulary for successful communication in a variety of settings has been the focus of much recent research. Paul Nation (2013) showed that in order to understand for example a newspaper article or novel without frequent stops to consult a dictionary, a 98% text coverage is needed, which means that one needs to know more than 98% of the words in the text. A 98% coverage implies that an 8,000 - 9,000 word-family vocabulary is needed to deal with a written text, and a 6,000 - 7,000 word-family vocabulary is needed to deal with a spoken text. In comparison, a vocabulary size of 6,000 word-families is needed for 98% coverage of children´s movies (Nation, 2013). Studies suggest that educated adult native speakers of English know about 20,000 word-families (Goulden et al., 1990). This indicates that for each year of their life starting at the age of three and probably up to the age of 25 years old, native speakers add on average 1,000 word-families a year to their vocabulary (Biemiller and Slonim, 2001).

2.2.2 What Does It Mean to Know a Word?

According to Nation (2013), to fully know a word means to know both the form, meaning and usage of the word. Knowing the form involves among other things to know how it is

spelled and pronounced, whilst to know the meaning of a word involves knowing what form can be used to express what meaning and what associations and synonyms the word invokes. In this context many L2 learners struggle with knowing which grammatical patterns the word is used in, and also of which collocations the word is most often a part of. For L2 learners to in fact start to use new words as part of their own vocabulary demands a certain amount of confidence and a willingness to take risks.

2.2.3   Avoidance as Coping Strategy

According to a pilot study on the use of words and phrases in an academic writing task Coxhead (2000) carried out with six Chinese students at Massey University Aottearoa/New Zealand, risk is a hindrance most students report as a reason for not using new words in context. Avoidance is a major coping strategy for many students in an early phase of encountering new words and phrases. Many students in her study reported that they were afraid to use the new vocabulary incorrectly and therefore receive a lower assessment mark. Coxhead therefore recommends teachers to engage students in activities that build confidence in using new words, such as common fluency development activities such as 10-minute writing tasks on a familiar topic.

2.3   Vocabulary goals

The main vocabulary goal is obviously to increase the learners´ useable vocabulary (Nation, 2013). When setting vocabulary goals for L2 learners of English one needs to work out how many really useful words learners need to know for their level and purpose. In other words, one needs to identify what kind of vocabulary needs to be focused on, and how much needs to be learned. So how does one help L2 students approach this level of

vocabulary knowledge, and how does one set goals for vocabulary learning? In this setting it is useful to use frequency and range of occurrence, i.e. how often the word appears in various settings, to distinguish several levels of vocabulary. Distinguishing these levels helps ensure that students learn vocabulary in the most useful sequence and thus gain the most benefit. The principle guiding what vocabulary to learn is the frequency principle, and the principle guiding how to teach and explain vocabulary is the principle of the four strands. (Nation, 2013).

2.3.1   The Frequency Principle

The Frequency Principle is a needs analysis and a content and sequencing principle, because it strongly affects what is learnt and in what order it is learnt. When working with vocabulary development Nation (2013) emphasizes the need to focus on high-frequency words first. The classic list of high-frequency words is the *General Service List of English Words* (West, 1953) which contains around 2000 word-families. About 165 word-families in this list are function words, such as *a*, *some*, *two*, *because*, and *to* (See Appendix 1). The rest are content words, that is nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. The high-frequency words of a language are so important that it is recommended that they are studied explicitly. Therefore, a considerable time should be spent on these words by both teachers and learners.

2.3.2   The Principle of the Four Strands

Nation´s Principle of the Four Strands explains that in order to ensure a well-balanced language course you need to have four strands of *Meaning-Focused Input* (MFI), *Meaning-Focused Output* (MFO), *Language-Focused Learning* and *Fluency Development*,

as well as an equal amount of time devoted to each strand within the language course. In practice this means that each strand should make up ¼ of the language course.

2.3.2.1 Meaning-Focused Input

The first strand of MFI involves learning through reading and listening at a suitable level for the learner. According to Krashen´s Input Hypothesis (1985), it is central that the texts the students are reading are at an appropriate level, i.e. slightly more advanced than their current level. Krashen calls this level "i+1", where "i" is the learner´s interlanguage and "+1" is the next stage of language acquisition. This principle promotes incidental learning of vocabulary through attention to meaning, particularly through reading (Zimmerman, 1997). Learning activities within this strand includes among other things extensive reading, listening to stories and reading while listening. Extensive reading is regarded as an important aspect of SLA as it develops both reading fluency and vocabulary (Nation, 2013). If the students are given the opportunity to read large amounts of texts in the target language and the freedom to choose texts, they may develop motivation and enjoyment of reading and thereby increase their overall proficiency in the language (Day & Bamford, 1998).

2.3.2.2 Meaning-Focused Output

The second strand, MFO implies learning through writing and speaking. According to Nation there is clear evidence that when you learn a word, that word has a long period of growth in richness and strength, and consequently one meeting with the word is unlikely to give you all you need to know about said word. As you develop more knowledge of the word you strengthen and enrich it, and MFO provides a way of increasing knowledge of words and also helps you see gaps in your own knowledge of vocabulary. One must also

take into account the plethora of authentic oral and written discourse available through the internet. Research shows that time spent on extra mural English such as on the internet, reading books, watching TV, listening to music etc, correlates positively with an increase in both oral proficiency and vocabulary (Sundqvist, 2009). Learning activities within this strand includes prepared talks, ten-minute writing assignments and peer conversations. The best way to work with MFI and MFO, according to Nation, is to work with content-based instruction which involves learning content matter while learning the language.

2.3.2.3 Language-Focused Learning

The third strand of language-focused learning is to deliberately study the language, in this case vocabulary. Some learning activities within this strand can be dictation, word cards, dictionary work and guessing from context. Guessing from context is according to Nation (2013) one of the most useful strategies to learn new vocabulary. He also refers to this method as *lexical inferencing* or *incidental learning.* It is particularly important for dealing with the large number of low-frequency words that learners encounter, and it is many times the only available learning strategy for finding the meaning of an unfamiliar word when listening. (Wesche, Parikbakht & Haastrup, 2010). Nation (2013) explains that guessing from context involves three types of strategies:

1. Implementation of *interlingual* knowledge

2. Implementation of *intralingual* knowledge

3. Implementation of *contextual* knowledge

The first strategy entails students activating previous knowledge from their native language when encountering an unfamiliar word, which is referred to as interlingual

knowledge. This could be connecting the words to loanwords used in their native language or general knowledge about other languages. The second strategy involving intralingual knowledge is when students use their previous knowledge of the target language, in this case English, to guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Lastly, the implementation of contextual knowledge refers to the students´ knowledge of the text they are reading and of the world in general. If students are trained in this strategy it could become a lifelong tool for them to keep developing their vocabulary in both their native language as well as in foreign languages. However, it requires a major exposure to the language through extensive meaning-focused input, and also considerable time spent on learning the strategy of guessing from context. "In today´s English as a second or foreign language classrooms, with their frequent use of ICT, there are more opportunities than ever to encourage engagement with meaning through a wide range of topics and genres, and through interaction, exposure and task" (Hestetræet, 2018 p.179).

2.3.2.4   Fluency Development

The fourth strand is the strand of fluency development which does not involve learning new language-items. On the contrary, this strand is about becoming very proficient at what is already known. Fluency development needs to occur separately for each of the four skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking. This strand has the characteristic of being message-focused, involving very easy material, involving some pressure to perform at a faster than usual speed, and involving reasonably large quantities of language use (Nation, 2013). Some learning activities involving this strand includes the 4-3-2 talk, where students present a topic orally for four minutes and then reduce it to three and two minutes

subsequently. Speed reading is also an effective learning activity within this strand, as well as listening to stories and 10-minute writing activities.

The four major strands of a language course should all be seen as opportunities for the development of academic vocabulary knowledge (Nation, 2013). Thus, there should be listening and reading activities that encourage the learning of academic vocabulary. However, the texts should not be too difficult for learners and no more than about 5 % of the running words in the texts should be new words. According to Nation (2013), there should be language-focused activities such as direct teaching, learning from word cards, and word part analysis. Productive use of academic vocabulary is another important component of academic success. This can be encouraged through the presentation of prepared formal talks, discussions based on texts, writing summaries and critical evaluations of articles.

2.3.3   Vocabulary and Reading

 Extensive reading and intensive reading are very different forms of reading and fall under two different strands in Nation´s Principle of Four Strands. "Intensive reading involves the assisted careful reading of texts with the goals of understanding the text and learning language items from the text" (Nation, 2008, p.59).

2.3.3.1   *Intensive Reading*

He states that intensive reading is what extensive reading is not. Intensive reading falls under the strand of language-focused input along with the usage of word-cards, dictionary and grammar instruction. This strand makes up a quarter of a complete language course

timewise, and the part of intensive reading makes up a quarter of the language-focused strand. Thus, it should only amount to 1/3 of all reading activities and the other 2/3 should be spent on extensive reading. Despite this, intensive reading is frequently used in Norwegian classrooms in the teaching of English, mostly due to the dependency of textbooks in both primary and secondary school (Hestetræet, 2012). Generally, the texts in these textbooks are often accompanied by glossaries, that include brief translations of targeted vocabulary. Glossing around 3-5% of running words in texts seem optimal (Nation, 2013) in order to assist the students in the learning and understanding of words, while simultaneously allowing for uninterrupted reading. A higher percentage could disturb the students in their reading, and a lower percentage could make it difficult for the students to understand the meaning of the text. In a study of academic vocabulary in Norwegian upper secondary school textbooks for EFL students, Skjelde (2015) concluded that there was room for more glossing of academic vocabulary.

2.3.3.2 Extensive Reading

Nation (2013) clearly states that extensive reading should make up 2/3 of all reading activities and is more effective in acquiring new vocabulary and at the same time encourages the joy of reading. He defines extensive reading as "reading large numbers of texts largely chosen by the learners where there are 5% or less unknown running words" (Nation, 2013, p. 219). This correlates with Krashen´s Input Hypothesis (1985) as mentioned above in this chapter (section 2.3.2.1). One way of finding texts suitable to the learners´ level is to copy a page from relevant books and ask the learners to underline the words that are unfamiliar to them. In this way, the teacher can decide if the text is suitable or not (Day & Bamford, 1998). Another way to decide if the text is at an appropriate level

for the students is to have them take the vocabulary size test "myvocabularysize.com" or the Vocabulary Levels Test on lextutor.ca. Graded readers can be helpful when finding the appropriate reading level. These books are according to Nation, "complete books that have been prepared so that they stay within a strictly limited vocabulary" (Nation, 2013, p. 246), and helpful to both meet the criteria of appropriate vocabulary level and develop reading fluency. The challenge of extensive reading in the EFL classroom is time limitations. There is simply not enough time to read vast amounts of text, and therefore the students need to be encouraged to read English also at home.

2.3.4 Vocabulary and Writing

As mentioned above in this chapter about Nation´s Four Strands, writing belongs to the strand of meaning-focused output and displays a student´s productive vocabulary. A learner´s receptive vocabulary is often larger than their productive vocabulary often due to the fact that producing the written word takes place in a de-contextualized setting i.e. with no support from context, and students are afraid to use words they have just encountered and which they do not feel they master completely. However, writing increases knowledge of new words and also helps a learner to detect gaps in their vocabulary knowledge. "The act of writing supports vocabulary acquisition, primarily because it creates a need to express meaning through choosing appropriate vocabulary" (Hestetræet, 2018, p. 174). Furthermore, Nation (2008, p. 83) explains that with writing "learners need to extend their productive vocabulary to include the specialized vocabulary of their areas of study and interest", and in addition that "vocabulary knowledge supports writing" (Nation, 2013, p. 262). Generally, students have a desire to improve their writing in order to express themselves more accurately and also demonstrate their knowledge of a topic. As much of their assessment grade is based on written mock-exams and written national exams, their

writing skills are very much in focus. They are familiar with the assessment criteria linked to content, structure and language use in their answers, and realize that they need to use an accurate and varied vocabulary that is relevant and appropriate for the topic they choose to write about. However, they still tend to feel aversion from using new words that they still are familiarizing themselves with, and it is vital that classroom practices allow for making mistakes and assist them in trying out new words as referred to above about avoidance as a coping strategy (section 2.2.3).

2.3.4.1   Collocations

Learning and using collocations helps form an idiomatic and accurate written language, and it seems obvious that when new vocabulary is taught, the focus should be on entire combinations of words (Nesselhauf, 2003). EFL students tend to understand collocations better than they are able to produce them in writing. According to Schmitt (2010), students tend to overuse high-frequency collocations and underuse less frequent collocations. Furthermore, students tend to have problems in choosing the correct verb in verb-noun collocations, such as in "*make a mistake".* Finally, it seems that EFL students lack intuition in understanding collocations, more so than native speakers. Nation (2013) suggests incidental learning of collocations through extensive reading, and intentional learning of collocations through memorization, as a means to increase the use of collocations in productive vocabulary.

2.3.5   Content-Based Instruction

Content-based instruction in language learning is a form of in-depth learning on content matter at the same time as one learns language features (Nation & Gu, 2007). This form of

language teaching may require the students to read extensively about a topic, gather information from a variety of sources, and report on this information on a regular basis. Eventually the students can write a report on their research and also give an oral report to the whole class. It is important that there is work done on this topic every week so that learners gradually build a substantial amount of knowledge about it, gain control of vocabulary used in that topic area, and are able to talk, read, listen, and write about the topic with a reasonable degree of fluency and accuracy.

Content-based instruction is particularly suited to vocabulary development for several reasons:

1. By limiting the content matter of the lessons to a specific subject area, the vocabulary load becomes much less and much more manageable.

2. Keeping within the same subject area increases the repetition of the vocabulary, both high frequency and academic vocabulary, which in turn increases the amount of vocabulary being learned.

3. Limiting the content matter to a particular subject area allows learners to build up knowledge of the subject area. This means that later study in that area will become easier because the content is increasingly familiar. This makes it easier to guess from context, and to develop and establish new concepts.

4. It provides good opportunities for vocabulary learning through linked skill activities, where learners deal with the same content material through a range of different skills. For example, they may read a text, then talk about it, and then write about it. The four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing can be combined in a very large variety of ways to provide many linked skill activities.

When the same vocabulary occurs through each one of the three activities across the skills, there is a very high chance that it will be learnt.

5. Speaking and writing activities in content-based instruction can readily draw on written input to the task. This allows the teacher to design vocabulary learning into the speaking task, by making sure that target vocabulary occurs in the written input to the task. (Nation & Webb, 2011)

From a vocabulary perspective, one of the most effective ways of providing both meaning-focused input and meaning-focused output is by having a content-based instruction focus in the course (Nation & Webb, 2011). A challenge in this way of teaching however, can be to find a topic that both interests the students and is also familiar to the teacher.

2.4   Assessing vocabulary

Vocabulary can be assessed through vocabulary size tests, vocabulary level tests or through the students´ written work. Teachers read and grade their students´ texts throughout the school year e and through these texts they can gain valuable insight into their students´ vocabulary development over time (Hestetræet, 2018).

2.4.1   Testing Vocabulary Size

An essential part of good course planning involves testing the learners to find out their vocabulary size. A native speaker of English has on average a score of 20,000 words, and if a learner intends doing academic study in English in upper secondary school or at university, then a score of at least 8,000 word-families is important (Nation & Beglar, 2007). Tests that measure students´ vocabulary allow teachers to find out whether the learners need to be focusing on high-frequency words, academic words or low-frequency

35

words (Nation, 2013). *The Vocabulary Size Test* (Nation & Beglar 2007, Beglar, 2010), is an online test with 140 multiple choice items, with 10 items from each 1000 word-family level. It takes around 40 minutes and measures knowledge of written word form, the form-meaning connection, and to a smaller degree concept knowledge. The test measures largely decontextualized knowledge of the word although the tested word appears in a single non-defining context in the test. It measures written receptive vocabulary knowledge, that is the vocabulary knowledge required for reading. It does not measure listening vocabulary size, or the vocabulary knowledge needed for speaking and writing. Paul Nation´s (2006) research suggests the following scores needed for:

- Reading: 8,000- 9,000 word families
- Listening: 6,000 – 7,000 word families

This test can be useful to establish the students´ current vocabulary size as well as trace development over time. It can also motivate the students to work systematically with vocabulary development as well as boost their language awareness and confidence.

2.4.2   Assessing Vocabulary in Written Texts

Assessing vocabulary in written texts happens continuously in the EFL classroom in upper secondary school. It is an essential marker of lexical richness and accuracy and supports both content in written work as well as language skills. Lexical richness is "the quality of lexical knowledge that is demonstrated in a text", showing how large a vocabulary students master and how well they master it (Nation & Webb, 2011, p. 246). Different ways to measure lexical richness can be to assess: 1) if there is a high proportion of

different words and therefore less repetition, 2) if there is a high proportion of low-frequency and advanced words i.e. academic vocabulary, 3) if there is a high level of accuracy and thus few lexical errors concerning form and meaning, 4) specificity of meaning, and 5) the extent to which words are used with their frequent collocates (Nation & Webb, 2011, pp.246-247).

2.5 Academic vocabulary

The competence aims after Vg1 emphasize "the ability to understand and use an extensive general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to one´s education" (LK06/13). In other words, students in upper secondary school are expected to be able to learn and use academic vocabulary both receptively and productively. Even though language educators are aware that vocabulary is a fundamental part of all language acquisition, it is only in the last few decades that research and attention has been devoted to how it may best be taught. How to define general and academic vocabulary, and how to teach our students this vocabulary is central in this thesis. Coxhead defines academic vocabulary as "lexical items that occur frequently and uniformly across a wide range of academic material" (2000, p.218). Similarly, Nation (2013) defines academic vocabulary as the shared vocabulary of several fields of study, while Hestetræet (2018) defines academic vocabulary as a type of vocabulary that is frequently used in academic texts, but less frequent in other types of language use. Furthermore, Beck, McKeown & Kucan (2013) state that academic vocabulary sits between conversational words and subject specific words. All these above-mentioned definitions are related and suggests that academic vocabulary is important to master when studying at a higher level such as university and college.

2.5.1 Academic Word List

The *Academic Word List* (AWL) was developed by Coxhead (2000) as a result of research aimed to investigate the vocabulary needed for academic study. This list consists of 570 word-families based on a 3,500,000-token corpus, of academic English which is divided into four groupings of Art, Science, Law and Commerce (See Appendix 2). A *token* is every word form in a spoken or written text, also sometimes referred to as *running words*. The list is divided into nine sub-lists of 60 words and one of 30, each based on range and frequency criteria.

There are several reasons why academic vocabulary is considered to be important and a useful learning goal for learners of English for academic purposes (Nation, 2013). First, academic vocabulary is common to a wide range of academic texts, and not so common in non-academic texts. Second, academic vocabulary as defined by the AWL, accounts for a substantial number of words in academic texts, about 14 % (Gardner & Davies, 2014). Third, academic vocabulary is generally not as well-known as technical vocabulary which "consists of words that are closely related to the content of a particular discipline" (Nation, 2013 p.303). In a small-scale investigation of difficulties found by second language learners reading academic texts, Cohen et al. (1988) found that non-technical vocabulary like *essential*, *maintain* and *invariable* was more often unknown than technical vocabulary. Fourth, academic vocabulary is the kind of specialized vocabulary that an English teacher can help learners with.

2.5.2 Implementation of Academic Word Lists (AWL)

Knowing the 2000 high-frequency words in the General Service List in addition to the AWL will give close to 90% coverage of the running words in most academic texts. Academic vocabulary is according to Coxhead (2006) a form of high-frequency vocabulary in academic texts and thus any time spent learning it is time well spent. Explicit learning of academic vocabulary can happen through focused study through use of such wordlists. Effectiveness is the main argument for the explicit approach, because it almost always leads to greater and faster gains, with a better chance of retention and mastery (Schmitt, 2008). It is therefore important to have lists of academic vocabulary to help in planning and assessing learning.

Coxhead (2006) recommends that learners start with sub-list 1 as this list contains the most frequently occurring academic words. When the words in sub-list 1 are known one should move on to sub-list 2 and then continue in a numerical order until all 10 sub-lists have been studied successfully. Principles guiding how to assemble and work effectively with vocabulary study sets includes choosing words that are not similar in spelling and meaning in order to avoid interference and make learning more effective. One should also focus on retrieving words instead of just recognizing them. This is done effectively by using word cards with the word on one side and the meaning of the word on the other side. Repetition is an important factor in learning vocabulary, and the time gap should be only minutes between repetition in the beginning and then on to repetition with intervals of hours, days and weeks. Various association techniques are also useful when striving for a deeper understanding and knowledge of a word. Techniques referring to language and situational contexts along with synonyms are useful for this purpose. By explicitly teaching academic

vocabulary through the use of AWL, students may master the academic vocabulary needed for further studies at a faster rate (Coxhead, 2006; Nation, 2013).

2.5.3   Academic Word Lists on Quizlet

As mentioned above in this chapter (section 2.5.1) the AWL is a useful list for all students who plan to prepare for academic study. The words are divided into ten sub-lists according to frequency, and sub-list 1 is the best place to start. I chose to have my students work with the AWL sub-lists on Quizlet which is a mobile- and web-based study application which allows students to study information via learning tools and games. The program trains students by using different memorization methods and study modes. Some of the modes include the following:

1. *Word cards*: similar to paper flashcards. The word is on one side and the definition is on the other side.

2. *Learn*: in this study mode, users are given questions about a part of the word list which they need to answer correctly in order to move on to the next part of the list. Repetition of terms answered incorrectly increases in frequency and a dashboard shows learning progress over time. The mode uses spaced repetition concepts to focus on longer-term retention and subject mastery versus shorter-term memorization.

3. *Write*: In this study mode, users are shown a term or definition and must type the term or definition that goes with what is shown. After entering their answer, users see if their answer was correct or not.

4. *Spell*: In this mode, the term is read out loud and users must type in the term with the correct spelling.

5. *Test*: similar to the "Write" mode, but in a test form.

6. *Gravity*: In this study mode, definitions scroll vertically down the screen in the shape of asteroids. The user must type the term that goes with the definition before it reaches the bottom of the screen. It is one of the 'Play' study modes. The user can pick the level of difficulty and game type.

7. *Match*: In this study mode, users are presented with a grid with terms scattered around it. Users drag terms on top of their associated definitions to remove them from the grid and try to clear the grid in the fastest time possible. This is also one of the `Play´ study modes.

8. *Live*: in this study mode the teacher uses the program to randomly break their class up into any number of teams one wants. Each team will have to choose the correct term/definition in the least amount of time to win. If the teacher decides to shuffle the teams, the groups are randomly put into new teams. This game works by choosing a set of flashcards and putting these flashcards into a format which works for the game.
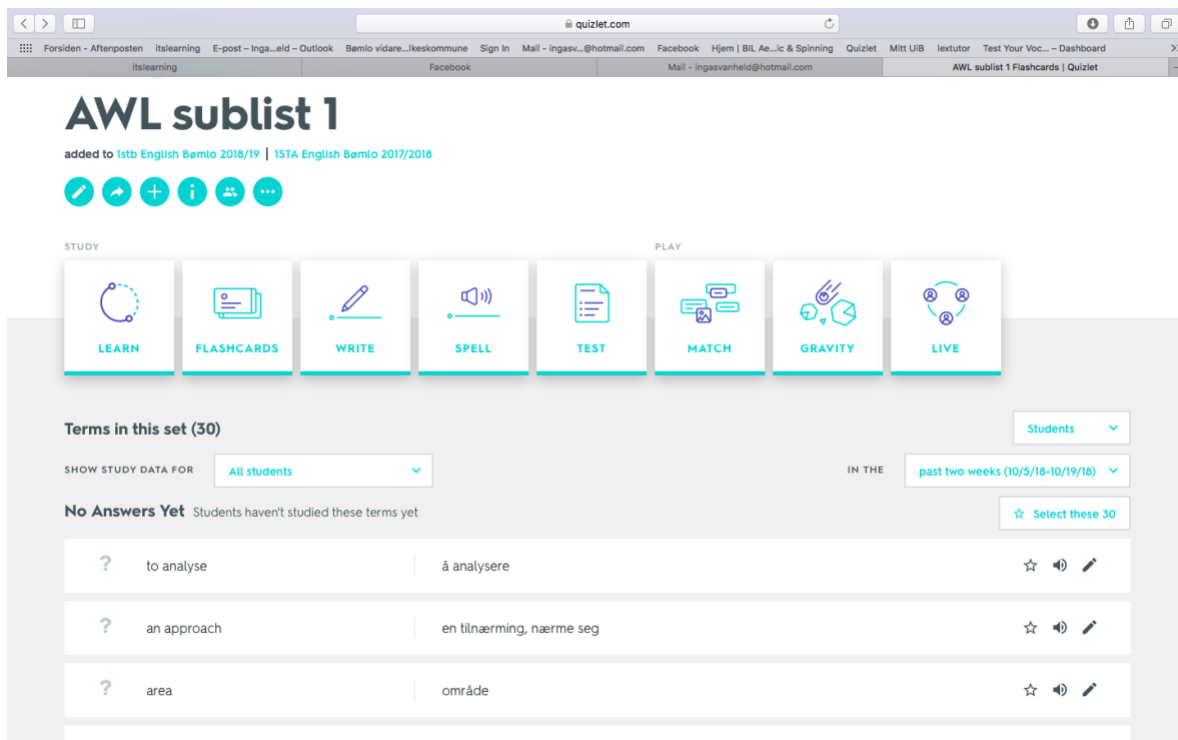
Figure 2.1   A Screenshot of Quizlet

I found that many of the principles mentioned by Coxhead were compatible to the various

modes and functions on Quizlet. My students were given the choice of which mode they

preferred to work with on Quizlet. They were free to plan how and when to use Quizlet as

long as it did not interfere with class work that required everyone to participate. Typical

work sessions with Quizlet would be working with new topic related vocabulary lists

before initiation of a new topic, working with AWL in between topics and when the

students had finished the assigned work for the day they would be encouraged to work

with AWL on Quizlet. After an appropriate amount of time working with each list the

class would partake in the "Live" game mode where the Quizlet program creates random

teams which compete against each other in matching words with definitions the fastest.

This activity is social in nature and makes room for collaboration within a competitive

mode, which my students enjoyed very much.

2.6 Metalinguistic Awareness

Ingunn Ofte´s (2014) study on English academic writing proficiency among L2 learners, concludes that raising students´ metalinguistic awareness is necessary to facilitate their further development in L2 academic writing proficiency. The English subject curriculum (LK06/13) also emphasizes that students should have knowledge of and the ability to reflect on their own language development. This is based on The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) and a criterion for good language development which recognizes that students who have metacognitive knowledge, i.e. aware of what they learn and how they learn, are more successful in their language learning (Haukås, 2014).

2.6.1 Competence in Learning and In-Depth Learning

The Ludvigsen Committee and their report "*The School of the Future*", underlines the importance of developing metacognition and self-regulation.

> The committee finds pupils´ development of metacognition and self-regulated learning as essential for further learning and underline that these areas are developed in collaboration with teachers and co-pupils. A knowledge-based society and working life demand that the individual must develop his or her own knowledge areas throughout life. By developing metacognition and self-regulation pupils learn to be involved in a way that will promote in-depth learning. This may also promote motivation for learning in school and in other areas. Being able to plan, implement and evaluate one´s own work may give pupils good work habits in school and in further education and working life. (NOU 2015:18, p.28)

The report defines renewals in subjects and competences that Norwegian students need in their future education and working life. The four main competences are *subject-specific*

competence, competence in learning, competence in communicating, interacting and participating, and finally*competence in exploring and creating.* Competence is defined as being "able to master challenges and solve tasks in various contexts, and comprise cognitive, practical, social and emotional learning and development, including attitudes, values and ethical assessments" (NOU 2015:18, p.14). The competence of learning is in relation to the English subject about striving to become an autonomous learner of the English language and being able to utilize useful individual learning strategies along with becoming aware of what one knows at present and how one best learns. Another key concept in the report is *in-depth learning* which means that "the pupils use their ability to analyze, solve problems and reflect on their own learning to construct a robust and flexible understanding" (NOU 2015:18, p.14). This style of learning is central in the new curriculum *Fagfornyelsen* which is to be implemented in 2020.

2.6.2 Learner Autonomy

Fenner (2018), describes the concepts of *learner autonomy* and *learning strategies* in relation to metalinguistic awareness and points to the need to work with these concepts in the EFL classroom. According to Holec (1981), learner autonomy is "taking charge of one´s own learning", and he further states that this ability is "not inborn, but must be acquired either by 'natural' means or (as most often happens) by formal learning i.e. in a systematic, deliberate way" and underlines that "to take charge of one´s own learning is to have (…) the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning" (Holec, 1981 p. 3). Little (2001) states that accepting responsibility for our own learning is not only about developing metacognitive mastery of the learning process, but that it additionally has an affective value in that autonomous learners through this pro-active

approach also become more motivated learners. Their intrinsic motivation is activated when they accept responsibility for their own learning, and autonomous learners are therefore both reflective and motivated which in turn results in more successful learning (Dam, 2011).

2.6.2.1 Vygotsky´s Social-construct theory

Learner autonomy has been linked to Vygotsky´s social-construct theory of learning which states that learning, and especially language learning is dependent on interaction with someone more skilled, such as a teacher in a school setting or peers that are on a higher level. Furthermore, Vygotsky´s theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) states that children who are in the zone of proximal development for a particular task can almost perform the task independently, but they need a little assistance to perform the task successfully (Vygotsky, 1986). According to this theory, the learner can only reach a certain level on his or her own and needs the guidance or scaffolding of a grown-up or an expert in order to reach beyond his or her personal limits. However, the guidance does not need to be from a person, it can also be with the help of tools and technology. According to Vygotsky, what the learner can manage with the help of a teacher today, he or she can manage on his or her own tomorrow (Vygotsky, 1986).
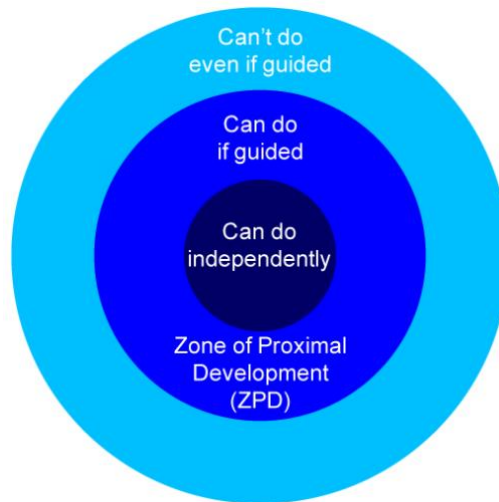
Figure 2.2   Zone of Proximal Development

ZPD is an important concept that relates to the difference between what a learner can achieve independently and what a learner can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a more knowledgeable other or through tools and technology. In relation to vocabulary acquisition this guidance can be in the form of vocabulary testing through which one can identify the needs and correct level for a student to work on in order to enhance vocabulary. Also, the explicit teaching of language learning strategies could support the learner in becoming a more autonomous learner.

2.6.2.2   *Three Pedagogical Principles of Learner Autonomy*

Little (2001) states that the development of language learning autonomy is governed by three pedagogical principles:

- *Learner involvement* - engaging learners to share the responsibility for the learning process.

- *Learner reflection* – helping learners to think critically when they plan, monitor and evaluate their learning

46

- *Appropriate target language use* – using the target language as the principle medium of language learning

According to these three principles the teacher should help the students to set their own learning goals, choose texts and content, decide on methods and also evaluate results. In order for the students to reflect, the teacher must help them define what they already know and what they need to learn next. This could be through oral discussions or through written reflection notes. As for using the target language as the principle medium of language learning, Fenner (2018) states that "meta-communication, based on reflection in the foreign language is not only used to develop linguistic competence, but also to promote reflection and develop the learners´ thinking" (Fenner, 2018 p. 289).

In the CEFR, learner autonomy is not in much focus but is introduced as "the ability to learn", or *savoir apprendre.* It can be viewed as the process of learning a foreign language as well as learning to learn. Language learning abilities are seen as enabling "the learner to deal more effectively and independently with new language learning challenges, to see what options exist and to make better use of opportunities" (Council of Europe, 2001 p. 106).

2.6.3   Learning Strategies

There is an old Chinese proverb which says "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime". It is much the same with helping students develop effective learning strategies. If you as a teacher give your student the correct answer to a problem it will give them an immediate solution, but if you help them develop learning strategies to work out the solution for themselves, it will empower them

to become autonomous learners who take responsibility for their own learning in the future. Fenner claims that with the implementation of LK06/13, the "concept of learning strategies has gained increasing importance, also in the subjects of English and other foreign languages" (2018, p. 283). This is also central in the new curriculum *Fagfornyelsen,* where focus is on developing autonomous learners and along reflection and critical thinking.

> Language learning strategies (LLS)are purposeful, conscious (or at least partially conscious), mental actions that the learner uses to meet one or more self-chosen goals such as (a) overcoming a learning barrier, (b) accomplishing a L2 task, (c) enhancing long-term L2 proficiency, and (d) developing greater self-regulation (ability to guide one´s own learning). Like most aspects of L2 learning, LLS occur in real contexts (specific settings), are complex (with multiple, interacting factors), and are dynamic (flexible, usable in different ways, and changeable along with learners´ changing needs). LLS can be learned with help from a teacher, a friend, a book, or the internet, although many learners creatively and effectively generate their own LLS. (Oxford, 2017 p.82).

In other words, learner autonomy and LLS are closely linked and are described in the CEFR through the following points: "awareness of one´s own strengths and weaknesses as a learner, ability to identify one´s own needs and goals, ability to organize one´s own strategies and procedures to pursue these goals, in accordance with one´s own characteristics and resources" (Council of Europe 2001, p.108).

Previous research on learning strategies have focused on what successful language learners do. Griffiths (2008) utilized feedback from good learners and made a list of the types of

strategies these students said they used when learning a foreign language. Below are some of these strategies:

- Strategies to manage their own learning

- Strategies to expand their vocabulary

- Strategies to improve their knowledge of grammar

- Strategies involving the use of resources

- Strategies involving all language skills

"Compared to learner autonomy, learning strategies are a more instrumental concept relating to various sets of skills, which can be learnt and practiced" (Fenner, 2018 p. 292). Such strategies in relation to vocabulary acquisition could be guessing from context, extensive reading and working with vocabulary lists.

2.6.4 Model for Working with Students´ Metacognition in the Classroom

However, research also shows that students seldom get the opportunity to reflect on language and their own language development with others (Haukås, 2012). A reason for this can be that the communicative approach that has dominated the arena of SLA since the 1980s resulted in very little focus on metalinguistic awareness. With the recent emphasis on metacognition and the proven value of metalinguistic awareness, the teacher should therefore take the time to reflect upon different language learning strategies with the students. They should teach a wide selection of LLS and give the students the opportunity to practice them within a context of content-based instruction. The various strategies could be for writing, reading, vocabulary learning or improved communication (Fenner, 2018).

They also need to be given the opportunity to discuss and reflect with fellow students and the teacher on which methods were useful for them and why.

Teachers should make use of certain principles that are part of most metacognitive instructional models: the activation of learner´s prior knowledge, reflections on what learners know and want to learn, explanations and modelling of learner strategies by the teacher and learners´ own involvement in making goals for monitoring and evaluating the learning process (Haukås, 2018).

According to Anderson "metacognition combines various attended thinking and reflective processes" (2002, p.1). Anderson further adds that metacognition can be divided into the following five major components:

1. *Preparing and planning for learning*. Students reflect on what they need or what they want to accomplish and what they can do to accomplish their learning goals.

2. *Selecting and using learning strategies*. Selecting and using particular strategies in a given context for a specific purpose. This is based on the learners´ thinking and making conscious decisions about the learning process.

3. *Monitoring strategy use*. Students should be trained to keep track of their strategy use. While in a learning process, students could, for example, ask themselves questions about their strategy choices, how well these particular strategies work, and to what extent they used them the way they intended.

4. *Orchestrating various strategies*. For most learning tasks, students must apply several strategies. Thus, it is beneficial to students in their learning process to effectively coordinate the different strategies they know.

5. *Evaluating strategy use and learning*. The fifth component is summed up in four questions that Anderson suggests should be asked cyclically during the learning process: (1) What am I trying to accomplish? (2) What strategies am I using? (3) How well am I using them? (4) What else could I do? Anderson emphasizes that these questions can be regarded as the essence of the first four components and that all of them work best together (Anderson, 2002).

Teachers should encourage their students to use all of these components of metacognition in their work to develop metalinguistic awareness.

2.6.5   Six Categories of Language Learning Strategies

LLS can be divided into six categories: memory, cognitive, metacognitive, social, compensatory and affective strategies (Haukås, 2018). Oxford (1990) created a questionnaire, *Strategy Inventory of Language Learning* (SILL), to help with research and reflection with learners. The questionnaire consisted of 50 statements in the above-mentioned categories. One example of a statement is: "I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English". The students were asked to mark the frequency of their strategy use on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Never or almost never true of me" to "Always or almost always true of me". By filling out such a form, learners become aware of which strategies they normally use and which strategies they hardly ever use. This can make them decide to widen their use of strategies and try to employ new ones.

It is vital that teacher and students reflect together on a regular basis about why the five components of metacognition mentioned above are important in the language learning process, and how one can work to increase language learning awareness.

3 Research Methodology

The present chapter will present the research design of the project and explore relevant theory on research in general and on the action research design and methodology in particular. Using action research as design, the study utilizes various instruments as a means to enhance students´ academic vocabulary along with the systematic use of academic word lists. The study also examines the use of reflection notes and the effect it may have on the development of the students´ metalinguistic awareness. This chapter will present how the study was conducted, and also discuss the many choices made regarding methods and ethics.

3.1 Choice of Research Methods and Design

Research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue. "At a general level, research consists of three steps: 1) Pose a question, 2) Collect data to answer the question, 3) Present an answer to the question" (Creswell, 2014, p.17). Research in educational settings and among teachers is important for several reasons such as that it adds to knowledge, it enhances teacher reflection, it improves teaching practices and also informs educational and governmental groups who develop new curricula and learning goals. In general, one can conduct research by employing one of two main approaches, the *qualitative approach* or the *quantitative approach* depending on the type of problem one wants to research (Creswell, 2014).

3.1.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

"Qualitative research is best suited to address a research problem in which you do not know the variables and need to explore. The literature might yield little information about the phenomenon of the study, and you need to learn more from participants through exploration" (Creswell, 2014 p. 30). In qualitative research the aim is to explore a problem and develop an understanding of a central phenomenon within a field of study (Creswell, 2014). Such a phenomenon can be the concept of teaching English vocabulary to Norwegian students. As the researcher does not know the variables at the outset of the study it is central to explore the learning process. In qualitative research the intent is to learn from the participants, and it is common to utilize text analysis when analyzing and interpreting the collected data. In this approach one looks for themes and descriptions and based on these, attempt to identify larger meanings of the findings. It is also common to include the researcher´s subjective reflexivity and bias when reporting on the findings (Creswell, 2014).

In quantitative research, a research problem is identified based on trends in the field or on the need to explain why something occurs (Creswell, 2014). In this approach one tends to be more specific in creating research questions and the results tend to be measurable. Characteristics of the quantitative approach is that it relies more heavily on existing literature, data collection is often numeric, and the research report takes an objective and unbiased approach. Additionally, in quantitative research you analyze the collected data using statistical procedures such as referring to scores on individual tests and interpreting them in light of initial predictions or prior research.

Traditionally in much of social sciences, including educational research, there is a clearly defined line between quantitative (numbers and statistics) and qualitative (words) collection of data. They are often presented as opposites, where qualitative data is seen as inductive (to draw conclusions from what you observe) and quantitative data is exclusively seen as deductive (when general statements or premises are used to draw conclusions). Today many researchers argue that this is an artificial line and that one should instead view the two as complementary more than as opposites that should be kept separate. According to Pring (2015), the divide is a "false-dualism" and the quantitative investigation can in fact clear ground for the qualitative and the other way around.

> Qualitative knowledge is the test and building block of quantitative knowing. This is not to say that such common-sense naturalistic observation is objective, dependable or unbiased. But it is not all naïve. It is the only route to knowledge – noisy, fallible, and biased though it may be (Campbell, 1979 p.186).

My understanding is that one does not need to limit oneself to either qualitative or quantitative method and data collection. Both approaches are important and useful when shedding light on the concept of knowledge, teaching and learning. In this research context one should view the two approaches as different sources of information that inspire further reflection and discussion in an extremely dynamic and complex field of research. The quantitative method, may be in the form of standardized questionnaires, reading and vocabulary tests, measurements of linguistic features in texts etc. The qualitative method focuses more on unique and in-depth issues and is often represented by interviews, reflection notes and observation which is more demanding of resources. Many nuances

often force us to limit the data material to for instance a few in depth interviews, otherwise the whole study becomes too complex and it is difficult to attain an overview or a complete picture. In reality, both methods are often used in tandem, and different types of data can contribute to shedding light on one and the same phenomenon or process.

3.1.2   Action Research Design

I have chosen the action research design for this study because I have a particular educational problem I would like to try and solve, and thereby improve student learning and my own teaching practices.

> Action research designs are systematic procedures done by teachers or other individuals in an educational setting to gather information about, and subsequently improve, the ways their particular educational setting operates, their teaching, and their student learning (Mills, 2011as in Creswell, 2014 p.609).

Action research is similar to mixed methods research, in that it uses data collection based on either quantitative or qualitative methods or both. However, action research differs from mixed methods research in that it addresses a specific, practical issue and seeks to obtain solutions to the problem (Creswell, 2014). The scope of action research provides a means for teachers or educators in the schools to improve their practices of taking action and to do so by participating in research. In order for this design to be defined as research, the work must be connected to a theoretical perspective and also submitted to an audience (Ulvik, Riese & Roness 2016). Theory is necessary so one can express one´s understanding of that which is to be researched into, and also so that the study can be

hypothesized and put to the test against experience. Another factor is that the interpretation of those tests and that experience should be available for critical examination by others in the light of the data (Pring, 2015). Such action research aims to improve educational practice.

The social-psychologist Kurt Lewin coined the term "action research" in the 1930s (Mills, 2011). At that time, it mostly focused on improving social conditions through collaborative group processes that consisted of four steps: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Today action research has gained support in the field of education as it empowers the teachers, encourages change in schools and encourages teachers to reflect on their practices.

3.1.2.1   Criticism of the Action Research Design

However, there is criticism towards this research method. The strongest critical view is that it is too informal and does not meet the requirements of scientific research. Also, the frequent act of reporting findings in popular periodicals instead of systematically in scholarly educational journals has been met with criticism. However, Pring (2015) meets this criticism and claims that even though action research focuses on a particular situation, it still holds value in the general field of education.

> Although such a practical conclusion focuses on the particular, thereby not justifying generalization, no one situation is unique in every respect and therefore the action research in one classroom or school can illuminate or be suggestive of practice elsewhere. (Pring, 2015 p.153)

For teachers and educators working to improve their teaching practices in the classroom, the action research method is the most practical and effective way of doing research.

The design today within educational research consists of three steps: planning, action and evaluation. After identifying a problem and reflecting upon how to best face this problem, the teacher-researcher must formulate a plan of action that will improve his or her practice in the classroom related to the given problem. Next, the planned action must take place. Step number three is to evaluate how the action worked and try to find out why things were either successful or not successful. Action design is often illustrated as a spiral, where the three steps are repeated several times until the researcher has found a solution to the identified problem.
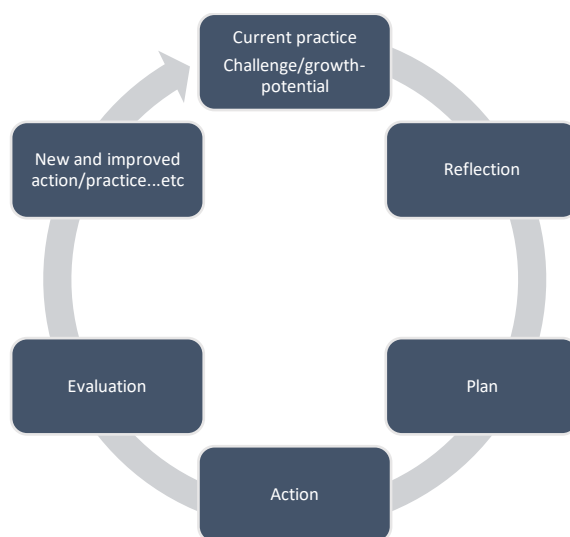
Figure3.1 Action Research Spiral (Ulvik, 2016)

Action research designs are usually divided into two categories: "practical action research" and "participatory action research" (Creswell, 2014,). Practical action research is when

teachers seek to research problems in their own classrooms and where the focus is on teacher development and student learning. In this design the teacher is the researcher. The aim is to research and improve a specific problem. A drawback to this design is that the teacher has dual roles and therefore limited time to reflect on her research as she has to teach and implement actions in the classroom simultaneously. As a teacher-researcher, it is therefore important that one is conscious of this dual role and try to balance it as much as possible.

To understand this research design, we have to look at the major ideas and principles behind it and assumptions about the role of teachers as learners, as reflective practitioners, and as individuals engaging in small-scale research projects as defined by Mills (2011). First, it is essential that teacher-researchers have decision-making authority to study an educational practice as part of their professional development. Second, they have to be committed to continuous professional development and school improvement, as well as have the eagerness to reflect on their practices in order to improve them. Third, teacher-researchers also need to be systematic in their approach and have to choose an area of focus, as well as determine data collection techniques along with a plan on how to analyze and interpret the data. Finally, the teacher-researcher has to develop action plans and have a platform for sharing their findings with the educational community (Creswell, 2014).

Participatory action research has more focus on studying social issues in communities and organizations outside of education with the aim of emancipation or change in society. This is a form of collaborative inquiry and hence the name participatory action research.

3.1.3   Rationale of the Action Research Design

I have chosen to implement the "practical action research design" for this study due to several reasons. Firstly, it allowed me to perform the study in my classroom and focus on a specific educational problem area that is highly relevant to my students and therefore to me as a teacher. Secondly, the design allowed me to reflect on my teaching practice and hopefully helped me to improve this practice and my students´ learning. It was my aim to enhance the level of academic vocabulary among my students seeing as many students in upper secondary school seem to have a limited academic vocabulary. This naturally creates problems for them when encountering academic texts and in their own production of such texts in upper secondary school, but also at a later stage when entering higher education and in work settings where English is broadly used.

In addition, as mentioned in chapter 1 (section 1.1), it seems that the students´ motivation for further developing their language and vocabulary stagnates at some point in secondary or upper secondary school. Another relevant issue pointed out by many of my fellow English teachers in upper secondary school, is the small number of students who currently choose English as an optional program subject. This leaves the majority of students in upper secondary school with a two-year gap of no English classes before they enter higher education. I therefore decided that the action research design was the most appropriate design for my project as I implemented specific actions to solve an educational problem. I tested my students´ academic vocabulary level along with initiating learning activities that hopefully promoted and facilitated my students` vocabulary acquisition. These actions were also intended to boost their motivation so as to further develop their language independently. The focus on metalinguistic awareness was also central, and the plan was to

give the students time to reflect on their language learning both individually and together with others. Using action research enabled me to plan, implement and evaluate the results of these actions in the hope of improving the manner in which I teach vocabulary and the way my students learn this vocabulary. It also allowed me to reflect on my own teaching practice and through the publication of this thesis my findings will become available to a wider audience.

3.2   Choice of Research Instruments

When a teacher is to research her own practice, it is not sufficient to rely on her general experience and impressions after completing her teaching lesson. However important, this will not contribute to a systematic development of her teaching practice. Research data must be collected in a planned and systematic manner. Few people today claim that there is one correct and best method to collect data, since all methods will have weaknesses and sources of error. My choice of methodology was based on the methods that I believed would best give me the answers to my research questions. For this purpose, I chose to make use of the mixed methods approach within the action research design. This approach is "when you have both quantitative and qualitative data and both types of data, together, provide a better understanding of your research problem than either type by itself" (Creswell, 2014 p.565).

The present study combines three different sets of data: results from the vocabulary size tests, results from the profiling of students´ texts and a thematic analysis of student reflection notes. I consider the first two sets of data to be quantitative in nature, and the last to be qualitative in nature. The vocabulary size tests gave me a figure in which I could

compare the students´ vocabulary level both at the outset of the project and at the culmination of the project. The tests provided a number that represents the students´ general vocabulary size and also more specifically their academic vocabulary size. This figure helped me evaluate if the classroom actions had been successful in the sense that they had increased the students´ receptive vocabulary, both general and academic vocabulary. In addition, I utilized the vocabulary scanning program "lextutor.ca" to scan the students´ texts which I aimed to compare in order to trace productive use of academic vocabulary and see if there had been an improvement in this area as well. They wrote one text at the outset of the project and one text at the culmination of the project. Finally, I had the students write reflection notes that shed some light on the students´ metalinguistic development and their level of motivation for the English subject in general. Accordingly, my research instruments were as follows:

1. Vocabulary size tests

2. Vocabulary profiling

3. Reflection notes

3.2.1 Vocabulary Tests

The "VocabularySize.com" is a free online service designed to assist teachers and researchers in recognizing the size of their students´ vocabulary derived from the latest research in second language vocabulary acquisition. The Vocabulary Size Test (VST), which is used in this study is designed by Paul Nation who is one of the leading scholars in the field of SLA and in particular the acquisition of vocabulary. Teachers can use the tests on this site to profile their classes´ vocabulary knowledge. By measuring the average and range of vocabulary sizes of their classes, one can adjust materials and methods to more

closely match the students´ needs and abilities. One can identify which students would benefit from additional vocabulary support and instruction as well as track their progress throughout a program of language instruction to ensure their students´ development.

Measuring vocabulary size is an important tool in trying to improve the efficiency and efficacy of second and foreign language education. Because of the importance of words in using a language, vocabulary size has often been found to strongly correlate with other language proficiency measures such as reading and listening comprehension as well as general language proficiency. It is also an important tool when helping students set goals for language development and learning.

The VST arranges words into word families. Word families are used to avoid the over-counting that can occur when different forms of a word are given their own entry in a dictionary (Nation, 2013). They are also more appropriate to use as a unit of counting when dealing with receptive word knowledge. In this test word families are arranged in order of frequency based on the fairly strong relationship between frequency and difficulty. Higher frequency words also tend to have more members in their word family than lower frequency words. Representative words are sampled from this list at a rate of 1:100. Therefore, each item on the VST represents itself, the members of its word family, and 99 other word families which are roughly equivalent in terms of difficulty and word family size. By testing 140 words, one can roughly estimate how many unique word families are known, up to a maximum of 14 000 word-families (Nation & Beglar, 2007, A Vocabulary Size Test). I had my students take the VST at the outset of the research period

and then again at the culmination of the research period to see if there had been an increase in their receptive vocabulary.

3.2.2   Vocabulary Profiling

Nation´s text analysis software Vocabprofiler (VP), is found on the Lextutor website. The program scans any text and divides its words into four categories by frequency: (1) the most frequent 1000 words of English, (2) the second most frequent thousand words of English, i.e. 1001-2000, (3) the academic words of English (the AWL, 550 words that are frequent in academic texts across subjects), and (4) the remainder which are not found on the other lists. In other words, VP measures the proportions of low and high frequency vocabulary in a written text, organizes the vocabulary in each text into word families, which are again arranged according to type, token and word frequency levels

I utilized VP to scan student texts for academic vocabulary. An academic text typically found in academic textbooks for higher education, has a percentage of 9% -14% from the AWL. In many student textbooks from upper secondary school this percentage is much lower (Skjelde, 2015).

The first text the students handed in was the long answer for the mock exam which they had in December. All four writing tasks were former exam tasks from the 2015 Spring Vg1 English exam under the heading "Education´s role in society". The length of the texts they handed in varied from about 300 – 600 words. Vocabulary in the field of education and social mobility had been discussed and worked with when reviewing the preparation material. The second text the students handed in was the long answer for their spring mock

exam which were mostly from the 2017 Spring Vg1 English exam under the heading "Being a good worker and a good citizen". However, one task about "Race and Inequality in the USA" was added and was more specifically targeted for the vocabulary we had been working with in class. The remaining tasks about being "good citizens, indigenous peoples and standing up for what you feel is right", were also suitable for the vocabulary we had been studying during the project period. The rationale for choosing texts from their mock exams was so the students did not feel these texts were extra burdens, and even though a few students had exercised their right not to participate in the project they still had to partake in the mock exam. The length of the second texts were similar to that of the first. The two students´ texts were comparable in that they are both based on previous exam tasks, they are both of the same length, and they both have the same evaluation criteria. However, there are always conditions that make the comparison less reliable and that are beyond our control as teachers. The individual students can experience having a bad day, they may fail to connect with the various writing tasks, or for other reasons not perform at their best. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize findings from the profiling of their texts, however I believe the results are valuable in indicating a certain trend in productive vocabulary development.

3.2.3   Reflection Notes

According to Anderson´s (2002, 2008) model on how to work with metacognition with students in the classroom one component is evaluating strategy use and learning. As mentioned above in chapter 2 (section 2.6.2), Anderson suggests four questions which should be asked cyclically during the learning process: (1) What am I trying to accomplish? (2) What strategies am I using? (3) How well am I using them? (4) What else

could I do? The use of reflection notes at the culmination of this study was an attempt to have my students implement this stage of evaluation. They wrote individual reflection notes in English where they reflected upon the different vocabulary learning strategies they had utilized during the project period. I gave them the following questions to help them started:

1. How did I work with vocabulary learning this period?

2. What strategies did I use?

3. Were they new or familiar strategies?

4. How did I work with vocabulary learning before?

5. Which strategy is the most useful for me (natural exposure, memorization, dictionary use, guessing from context?)

6. Has your vocabulary size increased during this project? If so, why do you think?

7. Explain how you will work with vocabulary learning going forward in your studies?

8. In what way are you more conscious of your own personal language needs and goals after this period?

3.2.3.1 *Thematic analysis of reflection notes*

In order to identify and find meaning from the students´ reflection notes I utilized the method of Thematic Analysis (TA) which is a widely used method within qualitative data analysis. It helps identify, organize and find patterns of meaning across a dataset. Definition of terms:

a) Data corpus: refers to all data collected for a particular reason

b) Data set: refers to all the data from the corpus that is being used for a particular analysis

c) Data item: refers to each individual piece of data collected, which together make up the data set or corpus (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Through focusing on meaning *across* a dataset, TA allows a researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences. Identifying unique and idiosyncratic meanings and experiences found only within a single data item is not the focus of TA. This method, then, is a way of identifying what is common to the way a topic is talked or written about, and consequently make sense of those commonalities (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

It is important to keep in mind that what is common across a dataset is not necessarily meaningful or important to the study. The patterns of meaning identified in an TA need to be important in relation to the questions asked. TA is a flexible method and allows the researcher to focus on finding meaning either across the entire dataset or examine one particular aspect in depth. One can report the obvious or one can investigate latent meanings that lie behind what is explicitly said (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The questions asked in the reflection notes in this study were experiential and exploratory in form. I used a combination of inductive and deductive approaches to data-coding. Inductive as I mainly code the data based on the students´ answers and experiences, and deductive as I draw on theories from the field of metacognition within language learning and teaching. I utilized the six-phases approach to TA, when I analyzed the reflection notes.
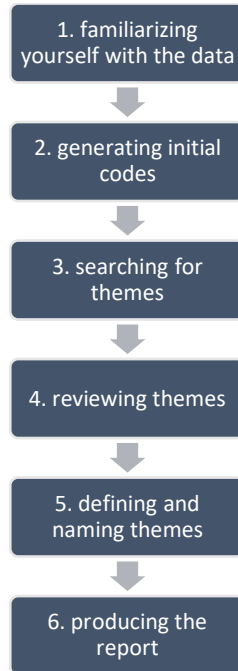
Figure 3.2 The Six-Phases Approach to Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

The six steps involved reading the reflection notes numerous times until I was familiar with the data and therefore able to code and organize the data according to themes on which I could write a report.

3.3   Meaning-focused Input Material

The topic we studied during the research project was the *Civil Rights Movement in the USA* and *Race and Inequality in the USA Today*. The texts consisted of the following:

1. "Slavery in America", an article from History.com with a percentage of 6.5% academic vocabulary.

2. "Civil Rights Movement", an article from History.com with a percentage of 7.07% academic vocabulary.

3. "Martin Luther King Jr. – An Extraordinary Life", a webpage developed by the Seattle Times Newspaper and tailored for students.

4. "Harlem", a poem by Langston Hughes.

5. "The Help", a novel by Kathryn Stockett was optional.

6. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: "The Danger of a Single Story", TED talk

7. Melody Hobson: "Color Blind or Color Brave", TED talk.

8. Brittney Cooper: "The Racial Politics of Time", TED talk.

9. "A Conversation About Growing Up Black", video from the New York Times Op Docs.

10. "Black and White Americans are Worlds Apart", report from Pew Research Center.

All the texts can be found in appendices 5-7. Specific vocabulary lists along with AWL were presented on Quizlet to assist the students in learning new topic related words and academic vocabulary in general. Focus was on learning content and fostering intercultural competence in the students along with building their vocabulary. The students had discussions, group work, ten-minute writing activities, 4-3-2-1 talks and prepared individual talks on the topic. Furthermore, they worked with topic specific vocabulary lists and AWL on Quizlet implementing various language focused activities and learning strategies. They were also asked to write a short log after each session to assist them later on in writing a reflection note at the culmination of the project.

3.3.1 Focus on Intercultural Competence

The *Civil Rights Movement in the USA* and *Race and Inequality in the USA Today* were chosen as topics for this project based on the competence aims of the current curriculum alongside the wish of fostering the students´ intercultural competence. The specific competence aim they worked with was to gain knowledge about "culture and social conditions in several English-speaking countries" (LK 06/13, p.9). The term *intercultural competence* is not specifically mentioned in the current curriculum, however it can be understood from the purpose statement of the EFL subject that it is encouraged as seen in the sentence "greater interaction, understanding and respect between persons with different cultural backgrounds" and therfore "strengthen democratic involvement and co-citizenship" (LK 06/13 p.1). Furthermore, with an increase in globalization and multi-cultural societies the need for intercultural understanding is stronger than ever (Hoff, 2018). The new curriculum, *Fagfornyelsen*, specifically employs the term intercultural competence in its´ purpose statement and emphasizes strongly the focus on helping learners to become critical and independent thinkers who can examine and understand issues from different perspectives. Furthermore, the new curriculum stipulates that learners must be given the opportunity to study topics more in-depth rather than on a superficial level (NOU, 2015). In the design of the input material for this project I aimed to expose my students to multifaceted reading experiences and in-depth learning as these "encounters with texts offer unique opportunities for critical thinking and multi-dimensional exploration" (Hoff, 2018, p. 81). The texts varied widely in genres ranging from factual articles, literary texts, lectures and interviews, to multi-modal texts and statistical reports. The chance of engaging the students on a personal level seemed to increase as a result of this wide variation in texts.

3.3.2   The Value of TED talks in the EFL classroom

Utilizing TED talks in the EFL classroom is a great way to build interest, motivation and background knowledge on a topic as well as serve as a springboard for generating discussion, reflection and expressing meaning. Furthermore, listening to TED talks given by professionals and experts in their fields are in my opinion helpful in acquiring and consolidating new vocabulary in addition to useful practice in listening to informal, formal and academic talk (Coxhead, 2018). One of the main problems Hellekjær (2005) detected in his doctoral dissertation as mentioned in section 1.2. of this study was specifically related to the fact that when students enter higher education and need to listen to academic lectures in English, they fell short.

In order to gain as much benefit as possible from TED talks, it is important to know how difficult they are in terms of vocabulary, which level of students they are appropriate for, and how to support these students´ comprehension of the talks. Lexical coverage can be defined as the percentage of words in a text that readers are familiar with. Research has shown that readers need to know 95% for good understanding and 98% for adequate comprehension of the text they are reading, but that a lower percentage is needed for spoken English (Nation, 2013). In a study by Coxhead and Walls (2012), it was found that 3.79% to 3.9% of the AWL is covered in TED talks, while there is about 4.4% in spoken academic English in higher education. Analyses of TED talks have shown that learners need to be familiar with 4000 word-families for a 95% lexical coverage, while a 98% coverage meant being familiar with 9000 word-families (Coxhead & Walls, 2012). This entails that students should be at higher-intermediate and above level in order to have a meaningful encounter with TED talks, as was the case with most of my students. They

were also prepared for the talks by having studied topic related vocabulary and having engaged in pre-listening activities. All TED talks could be read from transcripts while listening which turned out to be a useful for some of the students.

3.3.2.1 TED talk: The Danger of a Single Story by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

The Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Adichie tells the story of how she found her authentic cultural voice and warns that if we hear only a single story about another person, country or culture, we risk a critical misunderstanding. A pre-listening activity for this talk was to explore the concept of *stereotypes*.

3.3.2.2 TED talk: Color Blind or Color Brave by Mellody Hobson

The finance executive Mellody Hobson talks about the subject of race and how it can be a touchy and controversial subject. However, she points out that this is exactly the reason we need to talk about it. Her message is that speaking openly about race, and particularly about diversity in recruitment, will result in better business teams and better societies. A pre-listening activity for this talk was to discuss which factors contribute to effective and good working teams.

3.3.2.3 TED talk: The Racial Politics of Time by Brittney Cooper

Brittney Cooper talks about racism through the lens of time, explaining how historically time has been stolen from people of color and as a result leaving them behind. She talks about the political nature of time and says that "if time had a race it would be white. White people own time." She offers us three observations of race about the past, the present and the future, and says that it relates to the combating of race and white dominance. A pre-listening activity for this talk was to

explore the concept of *white privilege* and discuss what we know about race and inequality in present day USA.

3.4 Context and Participants

In the action research design, the teacher often plays the dual role of teacher-researcher which implies that one needs to combine both teaching and doing research. This can be stressful in light of restrictions on time and also in relation to doing two things simultaneously. Some advice given by experienced teacher-researchers are to choose a method of data collection that is not too time consuming or complex. Furthermore, it is recommended to focus on a research question that one finds interesting and meaningful to work with so that the extra work-load becomes worth it. Lastly, it is a good idea to involve your own students for a number of reasons, one being to save time, but a more principal reason is that it can potentially strengthen your relationship with your students and create a better learning environment (Creswell, 2014).

3.4.1 Choice of Participants

The participants of this research project consisted of my English vg1 general studies class. For practical reasons the choice was made to do the research project at the school where I work and with a class that I teach. This choice gave me easy access to both the school administration and the students and their parents, which is desirable both in terms of gaining consent from both the students and the administration, and also providing them with the necessary information about the project. A close relationship with the students and a safe learning environment is also in my opinion an advantage when conducting action research with the aim to improve learning and teaching. The participants were

selected through purposeful sampling where "researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2014 p. 228).

3.4.2   Description of the Class

The class consisted of 25 students, of which nineteen were girls and six were boys. They were all between 16 and 17 years old and attending their first year of upper secondary school in the field of general studies. English is a compulsory subject in this line of education and is a subject that can be drawn for both a written and/or an oral exam. All students were L2 learners and had Norwegian as their mother tongue. I would describe the class as very conscientious, hard-working, pleasant and eager to do well in school on a general basis. Most of them ranked mid-level to high-level in their English proficiency level based on their grades and classroom activity during the first term of the school year.

3.5   Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are common terms in scientific research and are used to ensure that findings are to be trusted and that they are relevant in relation to the research question. Reliability means that scores from an instrument are stable and consistent, and validity is the development of sound evidence to demonstrate that the test interpretation matches its proposed use (Creswell, 2014).

3.5.1   Validity

To ensure validity, I have employed the method of triangulation where I have combined several methods of data collection. Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection in descriptions and

themes in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). The students were tested for receptive

vocabulary size, their texts were profiled for productive academic vocabulary, and they

were shown the findings from the reflection notes in order to see if they recognized them

and agreed with them.

3.5.2   Reliability

To ensure reliability in this study I have tried to provide full transparency of the

implementation of the study and the analysis of its data. In order to give the reader full

access, the list of appendices include all the collected data in the form of vocabulary size

tests results, the results of the profiled student texts and the thematic analysis of the

reflection notes. Even more importantly, the study is grounded in educational and research

theories, as referred to in the introduction to this chapter, to achieve a high academic

standard. Furthermore, choice of methodology and research instruments have been

discussed with my supervisor in order to avoid methodological errors. I have chosen to list

the input material used in the study in section 3.3 *Meaning Focused Input*, and to include

AWL and topic related word lists in the Appendices list.

3.6   Ethical Considerations

"What makes the subject of ethics particularly challenging for teacher researchers is the

intimate and open-ended nature of action research", (Mills 2011, p.29). The National

Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and Humanities (NESH), a part of

the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committee (NNREC), provides ethical guidelines

within educational research. NESH states that roles and responsibilities need to be

established in research where the researcher relates to the participants in different ways.

As I have studied my own students, I need to be acutely aware of my dual role as both teacher and researcher and the sensitivity needed to fill both roles. There has been complete transparency during the whole process, and I emphasized to the class both orally and in their written information, that participation was completely voluntary. It is also important that the research itself is in the best interest of the students and involve them in the process as much as possible.

Another issue related to the dual role of teacher-researcher in educational research is the principle of consent. In this study, free, informed and explicit consent was collected from the participants, in line with the NNREC´s recommendations. It was made explicitly clear that the participants had the option to refuse participation in the study, and also had permission to withdraw from the study at any time. This information was given both orally and also in written form where they were given the option to sign the consent form (See Appendix 3). It was also necessary to consider if the students felt pressured into participating, in fear of that their grades would suffer from refusing to participate. Thus, it was specifically underlined in the oral presentation of the study that their grades would in no way be affected neither positively nor negatively by choice of participation.

A paramount principle to consider in research with participants is that of anonymity. Personal data must normally be de-identified, while publication and dissemination of the research material must normally be anonymized. I took several measures in this study to protect the identity of the participants involved in the study. Firstly, there is no mention of the school where the study has taken place, nor the regional part of Norway where the school is situated. Secondly, the vocabulary tests, written texts and reflection notes have

all been made anonymous by the use of code which replaced the students´ names. Each student was given a number that was only known to me, and there is no written record of the key to this code. I used the same number for each student to mark the vocabulary size test, the text profiles and the reflection notes. This allowed me to compare the various results and gain valuable insight. Lastly, all the research instruments and input from students took place on the computer, so there is no handwriting to identify the students. I therefore believe that all measures have been taken to protect the students´ identity within reasonable limits.

Children and adolescents who take part in research are particularly entitled to protection. According to NESH, minors who have turned 15 can consent to researchers collecting and using their personal data. One exception is if the data collected is considered to be sensitive, then one must obtain consent from the parents if the child is under 18 years old. All the participants in my study were 15 years or older, and as the data collected is not considered sensitive, the students signed the consent form themselves. However, they were advised to take the form home to show their parents and receive their advice. The study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) (See Appendix 4).

3.7   Possible Limitations of the Methods and Material

Steps have been made to ensure good scientific research in this study, among them a thorough study of relevant theory within methodology, and also in the fields of vocabulary acquisition in SLA and metacognition. However, there are several limitations to the current study. There is no exact way to know if the results of the second vocabulary size tests were a direct consequence of this project, neither is there proof that our work in the

classroom had a direct impact on the productive academic vocabulary produced in their second texts. However, I strongly believe that my students´ vocabulary results and reflection notes can contribute with valuable insight to the field of vocabulary learning and teaching. In addition, I have made it a priority to attempt full transparency of my research steps and the rationale behind them in the hope of bringing some value to the field of vocabulary acquisition and metacognition in language learning and teaching.

A further limitation to this study is that the project itself is fairly small in scope considering the input material and duration, and therefore the effect it would have on vocabulary size and production is uncertain. Also, each of the students has only written one reflection note, and the development in metacognition and language awareness is something that most likely takes time and would benefit from a more systematic practice. It can therefore be difficult to measure or discuss a growth in language awareness based on this study. In relation to the reflection notes, the prepared questions could also pose a limitation. The students might answer what they think I would like to hear instead of a more truthful account of their experience. Furthermore, the use of reflection notes does not leave room for asking follow-up questions as is the case with interviews for instance. Despite these limitations, I believe my study provides valuable insights into students´ processes of becoming more aware of language learning strategies and developing metalinguistic awareness.

4 Results and Discussion

This chapter will present and discuss the most relevant findings from the action research conducted for this thesis. All significant findings will be discussed in light of the two main research questions stated in chapter 1 which are:

1. To what degree can the increased emphasis on content-based instruction and working with in-depth topics along with the systematic use of academic word lists and vocabulary focused learning, assist EFL students in acquiring a broader academic vocabulary?

2. How can the use of reflection notes and focus on learning strategies and learner autonomy help EFL students develop metalinguistic awareness and train them in becoming more autonomous learners of vocabulary?

The chapter consists of four main parts in which I first present the results from the vocabulary tests, secondly I present the results of the vocabulary profiled texts written by the students, followed by a presentation of the thematic analysis of the students´ reflection notes, and finally a summary and discussion of these results.

Research Instrument:	Date administered:	Number of students:
Vocabulary size test 1	14.02.18	25
Vocabulary size test 2	02.05.18	25
Vocabulary profiling text 1	15.12.17	25
Vocabulary profiling text 2	04.05.18	25
Reflection note	15.05.18	21

Table 4.1 An overview of administered research instruments

4.1   Vocabulary Size Test

The vocabulary size test measures receptive word knowledge. As mentioned in chapter 3 (section 3.2.1), the test is developed by Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and is based on extensive second language vocabulary acquisition research conducted by professor Paul Nation. The figure below illustrates the development in the students´ vocabulary from the initial test which was taken at the outset of the project to the final test which was administered at the culmination of the project.
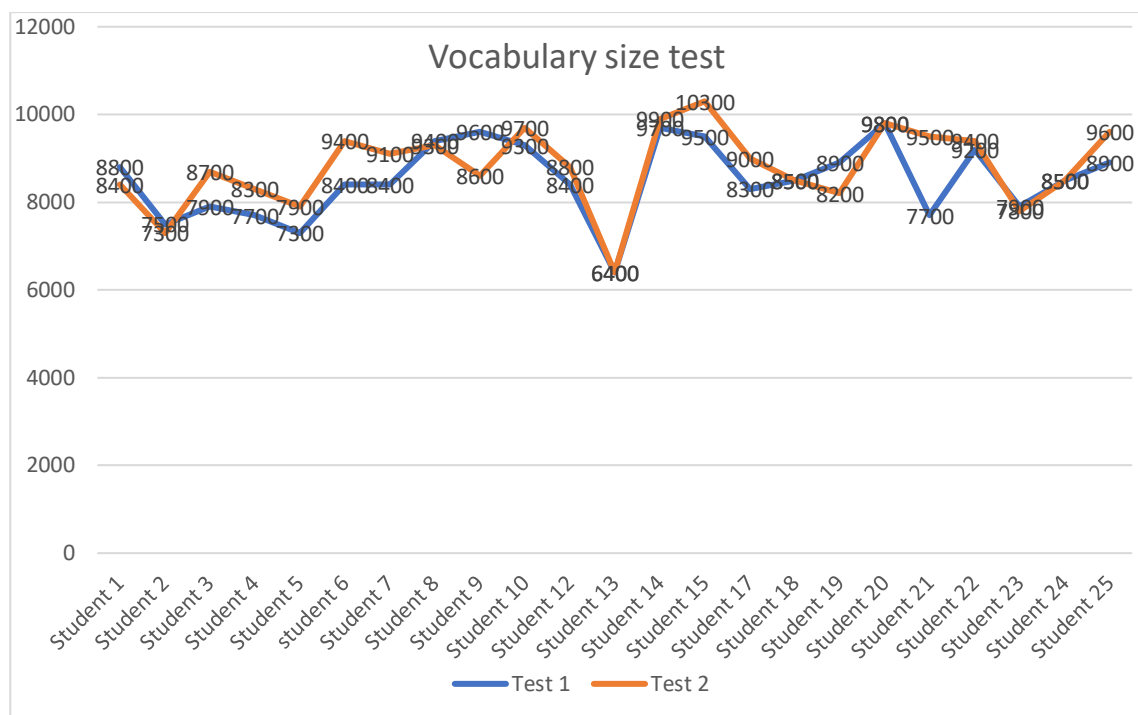
Figure 4.1 Vocabulary Size Test Results

Prior to the tests the students were thoroughly informed about the intention of the project and the importance of vocabulary development as a tool for understanding more advanced academic texts both in upper secondary school as well as in higher education and work situations.

The students in my class were tested the first time on February 14, 2018 which was at the outset of the research period. On this initial test a majority of the students earned a score of between 8,000 – 9,000 word-families which is considered medium to high proficiency on the Vg1 level. As mentioned in chapter 2, research shows that a knowledge of 8,000 – 9,000 word-families are needed in order to understand 98% of a written text and 6,000 – 7,000 word-families are needed to deal with a spoken text (Nation, 2013). With this knowledge as a backdrop a command of 8,000 – 9,000 word-families should be a vocabulary goal for EFL students on this level. This size of vocabulary knowledge allows them to read texts such as newspaper articles and novels. However, there were seven students who scored within the 7,000 word-family range and one student as low as at the 6,400 word-family level. These scores indicate that the majority of the students in my class have a fairly high level of receptive knowledge and would be able to understand newspaper articles and novels on an intermediate level along with most spoken English, but the students with the lowest scores might have difficulties comprehending articles and other texts on the Vg1 level.

The students were tested a second time on May 2, 2018 which was at the culmination of the research period. At this point they had worked systematically with Nation´s four strands of language learning (2013). The strand of MFI included extensive reading and listening at a suitable level for the learner in accordance with Krashen´s Input Hypothesis as mentioned above in chapter 2 (section 2.3.3). The strand of MFO included peer conversations, ten-minute writing activities and prepared talks. Nation states that this strand of MFO helps strengthen knowledge and retention of a word along with discovering gaps in existing knowledge. In the strand of language focused learning, the students

studied AWL and other topic related vocabulary lists on Quizlet. The use of flash cards, dictation and repetition was very much in focus. The fourth and last strand of fluency development was worked with through 4-3-2-1 minute talks and listening to stories on TEDtalk.com.

The majority of the test scores on this second test showed a growth in vocabulary size with a few exceptions. Thirteen students had a positive increase in their vocabulary size, the most profound one was student 21 who had an increase from 7,700 to 9,500 word-families, indicating a growth of 1,800 word-families. I will give more attention to this student later on in the chapter. Six students had a slight decrease in vocabulary size, the most considerable being a decrease of 1,000 word-families from 9,600 - 8,600, but on average these students did not show a decrease of more than a couple hundred word-families per student. Four students remained on the same exact level on both tests, among them the student with the 6,400 word-family score and the other three students ranging from 8,500 – 9,800 word-families. Overall, a majority of the students had an increase in vocabulary size at the culmination of the research period which lasted approximately 10 weeks.

4.2   Vocabulary Profile of Students´ Texts

As mentioned in chapter 2.3.4, writing belongs to the strand of meaning-focused output and displays a student´s productive vocabulary. The figure below illustrates the students´ development in productive academic vocabulary as seen through their written texts.
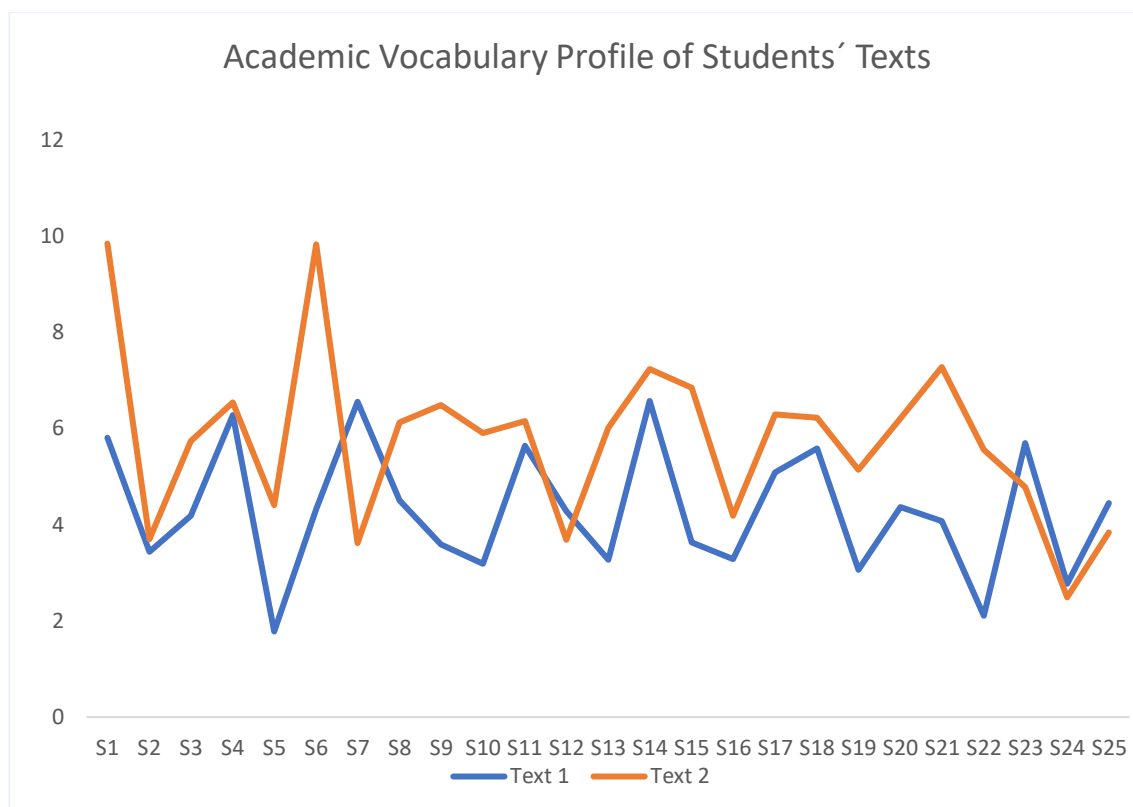
Figure 4.2 Academic Vocabulary Profile of Students´ Texts

Most students have a more extensive receptive vocabulary than productive vocabulary and it was therefore exciting to see if the project had caused an increase also in their productive vocabulary. In Vg1 most of the formal assessment of the students´ English grade is based on written work such as essays, book reviews, mock exams and a possible national written exam, therefore the students were highly motivated to increase their productive vocabulary. However, they were explicitly reminded that the results of this profiling would not affect their grades in any way.

Nation´s text analysis software Vocabprofiler (VP), was implemented to profile the students´ texts for academic vocabulary. The first text was their long answer for the mock exam in December 2017 prior to the start of the research period. According to Skjelde (2015), the average percentage of academic vocabulary in student EFL textbooks in upper

secondary school is 4%. This indicates a gap of 5% to higher education textbooks, as the average percentage of academic vocabulary typically found in academic textbooks in higher education is 9%. The MFI texts that the students worked with during this project had an average percentage of academic vocabulary of 6-7% which lies between the level of EFL textbooks in upper secondary school and that of texts dealt with in higher education. As mentioned above in chapter 3 (section 3.2.2), all four writing tasks which the students could choose from were former exam tasks from the 2015 Spring Vg1 English exam. Vocabulary in relation to the overall topic for the exam "Education´s role in society" had been worked with while studying the preparation leaflet. The profiling results of the students´ texts showed an average of 4.3% productive use of academic vocabulary with a majority of the students showing 3 – 6 % usage of academic vocabulary. However, there was a low score of 1,78% and a high score of 6,57% indicating a strong variation in the students´ ability to produce academic vocabulary in a longer text.

The second text the students handed in was the long answer for their spring mock exam where the writing tasks were mostly from the 2017 Spring Vg1 English exam under the heading "Being a good worker and a good citizen". This mock exam set also included a text about "Race and inequality" so as to correspond with the material we had been working with during the project period. The academic vocabulary profiling of these texts indicated an average increase of 1,46%. 20 students increased their percentage of productive academic vocabulary, while only 5 students showed a decrease in the production of academic vocabulary.

The majority of the students showed an increase in their production of academic vocabulary after having worked systematically with AWL, topic related vocabulary lists and in-depth content-based instruction. As mentioned in chapter 2 (section 2.3.5), one of the most effective ways of providing both MFI and MFO from a vocabulary perspective is by having content-based instruction (Nation & Gu, 2007). This has contributed to a considerable growth in productive vocabulary among the students in my opinion.

4.3   Thematic analysis of reflection notes

In order to identify themes and find meaning in the students´ reflection notes I have utilized the method of Thematic Analysis (TA) as mentioned above in chapter 3 (section 3.2.3.1). In relation to the research questions the following themes have been identified and found meaningful:

1.   Confidence and motivation
2.   Metalinguistic awareness and willingness to develop own vocabulary
3.   Looking to the future

The students wrote the reflection notes in English and I have chosen not to correct language errors in order to present the quotes from these reflections as authentically as possible.

4.3.1   Confidence and motivation

In reviewing the data set I noticed many of the students referred to an increase in confidence and motivation in relation to acquiring a broader and more academic English vocabulary.

Student 1: *English is more fun now, and I am motivated to learn more English than before we started this project…. I feel like I am a better English speaker now than before, which makes me feel more comfortable trying to experiment.*

This suggests that the student has experienced a boost in her motivation along with a definite increase in confidence. Furthermore, this quote demonstrates that the student is less afraid of experimenting with new words in her productive language, which could be an indicator to why the majority of students had an increase in their productive vocabulary as seen above in chapter 4.2. The research period and specific focus on vocabulary development might have helped create a learning environment and setting, where the students felt less afraid of taking chances and moreover realized that the whole point of the project was trying to implement new words in their writing and that making mistakes was a natural part of this.

The following quotes by students 12, 14 and 18 also underline the feeling of accomplishment and the newfound confidence and motivation to use new words in future written assignments.

Student 12: *I have learned more advanced words, and I know about more words I can use in a text. I feel a bit of my English language has changed.*

These reflections show that the student has experienced positive results from her work which leaves her with a sense of accomplishment and growth in her confidence as a learner of EFL.

Student 14: *I feel like my future assignments and texts will be more structured and well-written now that I have been practicing and learning new words.*

These reflections demonstrate a growth in confidence along with a developing learner autonomy and willingness to use language learning strategies.

Student 18: *My vocabulary has been influenced/changed after working on vocabulary in different ways, such as I feel my vocabulary specter has increased, and I feel like I have received and can use more academic words both by speaking and writing.*

This statement underlines the sense of accomplishment and growth in confidence which is obviously closely linked to level of motivation. The student experiences a change in her language proficiency based on the implementation of certain LLS. These reflections inform us that these students feel more empowered to utilize an academic and more advanced vocabulary in their writing now than they did prior to the research project. Their confidence in the business of language learning has increased and they are becoming more autonomous language learners.

4.3.2 Metalinguistic awareness and willingness to develop own vocabulary

The second theme that revealed itself while I was reviewing the data set was the students´ growth in metalinguistic awareness and willingness to develop their vocabulary.

Student 1: *I think the most important is to dare to experiment with the language and in that way learn of corrects and wrongs.*

This quote reveals the students´ knowledge of how important it is to develop fluency and growth in vocabulary by daring to experiment with new words and not be afraid of making mistakes. She reveals an awareness of central processes in language learning and that vocabulary acquisition is incremental in nature.

> Student 4: *I am certain that I have a better understanding of more high frequent academic words.*

This statement shows that the student is now more aware of the metalanguage of linguistics through using the term "high-frequent academic words". In my opinion this is significant in developing awareness about language learning and vocabulary building. It demonstrates the knowledge of setting practical vocabulary goals in the sense that one should learn high-frequent words first, and also it shows the development of a meta language which is vital when becoming aware of one´s own metalinguistic development.

> Student 10: *My language needs variation and I want to learn more words related to the topics I am working with, so that I can understand more and write more advanced texts.*

This student is very goal oriented and expresses a wish to advance her vocabulary and knowledge of topics. She sees vocabulary as a tool to help her communicate and do better in her writing tasks. Her reflections show a growing awareness of her development as language learner.

Student 11: *I think I am more aware when choosing which word to use in some sentences. I think about how I could use other words instead of the words I have used a lot.*

Here we see a student that demonstrates a growing awareness of LLS and reflections on her own development in acquiring a more extensive vocabulary and being able to vary her language. Both quotes demonstrate awareness on how to improve their language through the use of LLS and furthermore a willingness to work on vocabulary development specifically.

4.3.3   Looking to the future

A final theme which I found relevant in relation to the research questions is how the students will continue to work on their language development after they finish Vg1 general studies. The development of learner autonomy is vital for future language development and I noticed many of them were reflecting on how to develop their language learning and particularly their academic vocabulary going forward. In looking at this theme I have chosen the following quotes to illuminate many of the students´ thoughts on this topic.

Student 2: *I will therefore after finishing this semester make sure that I keep on reading books and speak English so that I will strengthen and expand my vocabulary.*

Student 2 has become fond of reading books in English and acknowledges that this helps build receptive vocabulary and language proficiency. This student also acknowledges that speaking English helps strengthen the productive vocabulary and language skills. He or

she mentions two specific areas, reading and speaking, that will be focus areas in the future.

> Student 10: *Going forward I think I am going to read more English books and maybe use Quizlet to remember the words I have learned and not forget them.*

This student also mentions reading as a LLS that will be implemented in the future. In addition, this student mentions the online vocabulary learning tool Quizlet, as a method to retain the words he or she has learned during the project period and which consisted of both AWL and topic specific lists. To keep practicing AWL on Quizlet is seen as a useful strategy by this student and will hopefully be helpful in further studies.

> Student 15: *The way I have worked with academic word lists during this period, is most definitely a strategy I will use as I proceed learning more of the English language.*

This quote clearly defines AWL as a language learning strategy that this student has found useful and therefore will continue to use in the future. As mentioned in chapter 2, the effect of using wordlists to acquire a broader vocabulary is one of the most effective ways to learn vocabulary. The above quotes underline how important reading books are for these students in their vocabulary development and also the strategy of using wordlists to build vocabulary and develop fluency in their future.

A more specific aspect of their future is their upcoming studies at colleges and universities, which is also mentioned in some of their quotes. Students 11 and 16 state the following:

Student 11: *I would like to have a better vocabulary going forward in my studies.*

Student 16: *I will definitely work with more vocabulary going forward with my studies. I have come to realize that academic vocabulary learning is not wasted time. One would have much advantages with learning academic vocabulary. It will reward you when you are going to universities and other studies.*

This exhibits a development of life-long learning strategies that will be useful for them in both their higher education and their future career.

4.4   Discussion of results

The results from the vocabulary size tests and vocabulary profiled texts both demonstrate on average a positive development in both receptive and productive academic vocabulary. Furthermore, the analysis of the reflection notes, show a presence of a developing metalinguistic awareness and the willingness to become more autonomous learners of academic vocabulary.

4.4.1   Increase in Receptive Vocabulary

The increase in receptive vocabulary size is not very considerable perhaps, however it is present among the majority of the students and in some cases quite remarkable. Seeing as the size of the students´ receptive vocabulary was fairly high at the outset, it is tempting to consider that the increase might consist of mostly academic vocabulary along with topic specific vocabulary. I am fairly certain that the systematic use of AWL has aided them in this development. Furthermore, the exposure to various texts employing a higher percentage of academic vocabulary than they are used to along with fluency development

91

activities such as planned talks and short writing tasks has also aided them in increasing their academic vocabulary.

However, it is difficult if not impossible to point to one direct cause in both increase and decrease in vocabulary. Factors such as motivation, stress, and also their state of mind and physical form on the test day has to be taken into consideration. In addition, the results must be interpreted in light of the research projects´ spatial and temporal limitations.

4.4.2 Increase in Productive Vocabulary

The results from the profiled texts were considerably more significant. The increase in the productive use of academic vocabulary in the students´ text showed a much larger increase than I would have expected. My experience has always been that my vg1 EFL students possess and master a more extensive receptive vocabulary than productive vocabulary. That is to say they understand more words than they actually put to use in their own writing. An explanation to this rather surprising result, can be that the research context itself allowed the students to relax more and feel free to experiment with the language and new vocabulary. In this context they were more or less expected to utilize new words and making mistakes was a natural part of this. Some students also mention this boost of confidence in their reflection notes.

Another factor which likely played a part in the increase of productive vocabulary is the systematic use of AWL and other topic specific vocabulary lists along with in-depth content-based instruction. It has been suggested that such lists are an effective and rapid way to learn new vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008). With the specific focus on vocabulary

building though the usage of such lists, retention also tends to improve. Through the entire research period the students were exposed to various texts on the topics "The Civil Rights Movement" and "Race & Inequality in the USA today". This in-depth focus on theme along with the systematic use of vocabulary lists has had a substantial impact on the results of their productive vocabulary size.

4.4.3   A Closer Look at Two Students

I find it meaningful to take a closer look at two students who respectively showed a considerable increase in receptive and productive vocabulary. Student 21 showed the considerable increase of 1,100-word families in receptive vocabulary from the first to the second vocabulary size test. This same student also showed a substantial increase in productive vocabulary. The first text written by this student contained a 4.08% of academic vocabulary, while the second text written by this student contained a 7.28% of academic vocabulary. This is an excerpt of the students´ reflection note:

> *In the English periods I have had during this project, I have been increasing my vocabulary with the help of Quizlet and academic word lists... By doing this, I have learned different words that I have never heard of, in a very interesting way. By saying "interesting" I mean that I have never used that type of strategy before. On Quizlet, my teacher posts different academic word lists with different numbers on them. Each academic word lists have words that increases your vocabulary. This is very helpful, as it makes you remember the words quicker and better. After learning different words, we would pair up in groups and have competitions. This was very exciting, as it was very educational… These strategies have been helpful within increasing my vocabulary, since Quizlet kind of "beats words into your head", because if you write something wrong, you are forced to write it correctly so that you can move on… I must find a way to use the words now, because it is*

very difficult to start using hard words once you have learned them. I will definitely be practicing these strategies on Quizlet in the future if it will be possible for me…It will be very educational for my future studies too, for example when I will be taking a higher form of education.

It seems that the student has benefited substantially from studying vocabulary by using AWL and topic specific wordlists. This is evident from her scores on the vocabulary size tests along with her profiled texts and her own experience as she describes it in her reflection note. In addition, the results and the students´ reflections coincide with the theory of how explicit learning of academic vocabulary can happen through focused study of such wordlists (Coxhead, 2006). Furthermore, Schmitt (2008) argues that this approach is more effective and leads to considerable and faster gains compared to other methods of learning vocabulary. It also improves the chance of retention of the newly acquired vocabulary.

Student 6 also showed a remarkable increase of 1,000 word-families in receptive vocabulary from the first to the second test. However, this student showed an even more remarkable increase in productive vocabulary. The first text written by this student contained a 4.32% of academic vocabulary, while the second text written by this student contained a 9.83% of academic vocabulary. This is a considerable increase in productive vocabulary and is worth studying closer. Below is an excerpt of the students´ reflection note:

This period I have worked with improving my vocabulary in different ways…I used the Learn mode on Quizlet a lot and I find that to be the most useful strategy on Quizlet for me…I have not worked much with English vocabulary learning, other than "gloseprøver" in elementary school…I have not been so aware of the fact that we have been working on vocabulary, since we also have done other things like

94

reading texts and watching videos. But I have been aware while writing, trying to use more academic words…I think I have learned new words by working with the AWL on Quizlet and I am more focused on using a more academic vocabulary while writing…

It seems that this student has benefited mostly from working with AWL on Quizlet and responds well to a high level of repetition. As mentioned in chapter 2 (section 2.5.3) the "learn" mode that the student mentions is where students can move on to a new set of words only after having answered the previous study set correctly. Repetition of terms answered incorrectly increases in frequency and a dashboard shows learning progress over time. The mode uses spaced repetition concepts to focus on longer-term retention and subject mastery versus shorter-term memorization. Also, writing activities has assisted this student in becoming more aware of her own academic vocabulary and has helped to increase her productive vocabulary. The students´ reflection note along with her test scores prove that she has had valuable opportunities to work with wordlists as well as practice implementing new words in her own writing.

4.4.4   Reflection Notes

As mentioned in chapter 2 (section 2.6.), Ofte (2014) concludes that raising students´ metalinguistic awareness is necessary to facilitate their further development in L2 academic writing proficiency. Furthermore, the CEFR recognizes that students who have metacognitive knowledge are more successful in their language learning. The reflection notes written by the students indicate a growth in metalinguistic awareness, and a general growth in motivation and confidence. This is also underlined in their positive results on the vocabulary size tests and in their profiled texts. Based on this information it seems viable

to conclude that this action research project has mostly been a positive experience for the students where they have experienced tangible improvement in an area of academia where many of them have been at a standstill for some time. Language development is a long-term process that requires considerable exposure to target language and continuous work on fluency development. This in turn requires both endurance and patience. Students need to mature in language skills and subject matter over time, but they also need strategies and experiences that boost their motivation in language learning.

The Ludvigsen report "*The School of the Future*" (NOU 2015:18), states that students who develop metacognition and self-regulation, learn to be involved in their learning processes in a way that promotes in-depth learning and develops their competence in learning. The report also underlines the need for advanced competence in languages and communication due to globalization and internationalism of society and working life (2015), in other words this will be an area of focus in the new curriculum. According to results from receptive vocabulary size tests and productive vocabulary profiles, I think it is fair to conclude that this project provided new language learning strategies for the students along with a motivation boost. The students seem to have developed an increase in learner autonomy along with effective language learning strategies which they can independently utilize going forward. They have also demonstrated an increased awareness and willingness to take charge of their own language development in the future.

5   Conclusion

This final chapter includes a brief summary of this Master´s thesis as a whole and presents the conclusion of the project. The aim of this project was to explore how to help EFL students in Vg1 general studies develop a broader academic vocabulary through the utilization of AWL combined with in-depth studies and content-based instruction. In addition, there was a strong focus on how the use of reflection notes could assist the students in developing metalinguistic awareness and become more autonomous language learners. The last section of this chapter discusses possible didactic implications for future research and classroom practice, as well as

 potential limitations of the study.

5.1   Summary and Conclusions

Below follows a brief summary of the background and rationale of the project along with the aims, the context, the methodology and the findings.

5.1.1   Summary

The aim for this Master´s thesis was to engage my EFL students in Vg1 general studies to extensive reading on an in-depth topic alongside the implementation of academic word lists in an attempt to increase the students´ academic vocabulary. I employed the action-based research design which is a recognized method when you have a specific educational problem to solve (Creswell 2014). The educational problem in this case was the difficulties students report they have in understanding longer academic texts in English on university level (Hellekjær, 2009) due to their insufficient mastery of academic vocabulary. According to Hellekjær´s findings in his doctoral dissertation "The Acid Test: Does Upper

Secondary EFL Instruction Effectively Prepare Norwegian Students for the Reading of English Textbooks at Colleges and Universities?" (2005), English language teaching in upper secondary school does not prepare students sufficiently and needs to focus more on the development of academic vocabulary in order to prepare the students for higher education.

This project also aimed to study how the use of reflection notes could promote the development of metalinguistic awareness and assist the students in becoming more autonomous language learners. The English subject curriculum (LK06/13) emphasizes that students should have knowledge of and the ability to reflect on their own language development, based on the findings that students who have metacognitive knowledge, i.e. aware of what they learn and how they learn, are more successful in their language learning. (Council of Europe, 2001). These principles are also in line with the principles of the new national curriculum as described in the Ludvigsen´ Committee report "*The School of the Future*" (NOU 2015:18). The report underlines the importance of in-depth learning and the need to provide the students of the future with the specific competence of learning and thus develop learner autonomy.

The participants of this research project consisted of my English Vg1 general studies class. They were selected through purposeful sampling where "researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2014 p. 228). The central phenomenon is in this project is the educational problem mentioned above. This gave me easy access to the students at all times and made the organization of the project run more smoothly. The study combined three different instruments:

vocabulary size tests, text profiling and student reflection notes. The vocabulary size tests were administered at the outset of the project as well as at the culmination in order to see if there had been a measurable effect on receptive vocabulary size, as was the text profiling of the students´ texts to see if there had been a development of productive academic vocabulary. At the culmination of the project the students were asked to write reflection notes with the purpose of shedding light on the students´ metalinguistic development and their level of motivation for further developing their language skills independently.

5.1.2   Results in Academic Vocabulary

The competence aims after Vg1 emphasize "the ability to understand and use an extensive general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to one´s education" (LK06/13). How to assist my students in acquiring a broader academic vocabulary has been central in this project. Nation (2013) defines academic vocabulary as the shared vocabulary of several fields of study and Hestetræet (2018) defines it as a type of vocabulary that is frequently used in academic texts, but less frequent in other types of language use. One of the reasons why academic vocabulary is considered to be vital for students in upper secondary school is that it accounts for 14% of the words in academic texts which students will encounter and need to master in higher education (Gardner & Davies, 2014). The AWL was developed as a result of research aimed to investigate the vocabulary needed for academic study (Coxhead, 2000). Knowing the 2000 high-frequency words in the General Service List and the AWL will give close to 90% coverage of the running words in most academic texts. This study has therefore utilized the AWL as one of the main components in an attempt to improve the students´ academic vocabulary.

The results of the vocabulary size tests, and the profiled students´ texts show on average a general increase of both receptive and productive academic vocabulary. Thirteen students had a positive increase in their receptive vocabulary size based on the results from the vocabulary size test. The most significant result showing an increase from 7,700 – 9,500 word-families, which constitutes an increase of 1,800 word-families. The results from the profiled students´ texts showed an average increase of 1,46% of their productive academic vocabulary, which is quite a substantial increase considering the limited amount of time spent on this project. Twenty students increased their percentage of productive academic vocabulary, while only five students showed a decrease in the production of academic vocabulary.

5.1.3   Results in Metalinguistic Awareness

Based on recent emphasis on metacognition and the proven value of metalinguistic awareness in language development, this study has set aside time to reflect upon different language learning strategies with the students. I have made use of certain principles that are part of most metacognitive instructional models: the activation of learner´s prior knowledge, reflections on what learners know and want to learn, explanations and modelling of learner strategies by the teacher, and learners´ own involvement in making goals for monitoring and evaluating the learning process (Haukås, 2018). The use of reflection notes has been instrumental in activating these principles and demonstrate that many students in this study have experienced an increase in confidence and metalinguistic awareness. Their motivation has also increased, and they have identified language learning strategies which will be useful for them going forward in their language development and future studies.

5.2 Didactic Implications

As I am writing this thesis the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training is on the brink of introducing a new curriculum for Norwegian primary and secondary school, which will be implemented in stages starting the autumn of 2020 (NOU 2015:18). In my opinion the findings and methodology in this Master´s project point to central didactic implications for the EFL classroom which are fully in line with the principles of this new curriculum. Furthermore, as this project generally points to positive results in academic vocabulary size and an increasing metalinguistic awareness among the students involved, it should invite teachers in the EFL classroom to contemplate implementing some of these teaching practices in their classroom.

One didactic implication is to encourage teachers in the EFL classroom to work systematically with reflection and teach their students to become aware of useful learning strategies. Taking the time to reflect with the students on language and their own language development is something Haukås (2012) also strongly recommends (see section 2.6.2). I found that implementing components from Anderson´s model (2008) on how to work with metacognition (see section 2.6.2) was very helpful in this matter, and also spending time on different learning strategies and having the students write reflection notes helped to develop a growing metalinguistic awareness among the students. An important aspect of this is also to involve them more in the choice of topics and input material that they will work with, set learning goals, evaluate their own work, as well as focus on language learning strategies. The general part of the new curriculum points to the need for a renewal of subjects and competences in order to meet the future needs of working life and society. One of the four defined competences which will be in focus is the "competence in

learning". This competence correlates strongly with this projects´ aim to develop more autonomous and meta-linguistically aware students, and therefore makes this focus on metalinguistic awareness highly relevant.

A second didactic implication I want to recommend is to choose fewer topics and work more in-depth with them. This is also a concept which will be strongly in focus in the new curriculum. This involves adding more texts to the MFI strand of the language course and including a larger number of genres. The focus should be on content-based instruction which is a particularly suitable approach for acquiring a broader vocabulary. Furthermore, this approach coincides with the emphasis on extensive reading which has also been proven to have positive effects on vocabulary size.

The actions taken in this project are recommended by experts in the fields of SLA who in addition to recommend an increased emphasis on extensive reading and content-based instruction, also recommend a focus on systematic vocabulary development. With this in mind a final didactic implication is to work systematically with AWL and topic related word lists in the EFL classroom. This method can point to positive results regarding vocabulary acquisition in this project as well as something the students through their reflection notes have concluded were both very useful as well as motivational. The implementation of AWL and other topic specific wordlists are recommended by Coxhead (2006) and is said to almost always leads to greater and faster gains and retention of vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008).

To conclude, I strongly encourage teachers to place vocabulary acquisition in focus along with taking the time to reflect with their students. I also recommend EFL teachers to make use of computer programs such as Quizlet, vocabularysize.com and lextutor.ca to set useful vocabulary goals as well as assist students in working with vocabulary through useful learning strategies and keep track of their vocabulary development.

5.3 Potential Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

It is obvious that time is a limitation when conducting research in a school setting and according to a school time table. Extensive reading and systematic development of vocabulary is time consuming and it can be difficult to motivate the students to read and work with vocabulary lists at home as well as in school. Also, the 10-week period which the project lasted might have been too small of a time frame to trace real development in vocabulary and metalinguistic development. I would have liked to systematically apply this approach to facilitate vocabulary and metalinguistic development throughout the school year, however I still believe that this project provides valuable insight into the process.

Another limitation could be the students´ state of mind and concentration level when taking the vocabulary size tests. This could explain why some students actually experienced a lower result on the second test compared to the first test. If they were tired, hungry or anxious for instance, all these external factors could influence their test results. This is however true for all research involving individuals and thus difficult if not impossible to control.

A third limitation of the project is that the students only had the opportunity to write one reflection note, and in hindsight I realize that it could have been useful if they had written at least two reflection notes in order to trace an actual development in metalinguistic awareness and learner autonomy.

I recommend further studies in both the field of developing academic vocabulary as well as in the use of reflection notes to promote learner autonomy and metacognition. In the present study the research was conducted over a limited period of 10 weeks, and it would be interesting if it were followed up by a large-scale research with one or more classes over a full year.

Another recommendation for further study in this field, is to follow up Skjelde´s research (2015) on EFL textbooks. I would propose a study that examines a few of the new textbooks in Vg1 English which will be published in accordance with the guidelines of the new curriculum. Scanning the texts for academic vocabulary and identifying tasks that relate to learning strategies and learner autonomy would be of great interest to EFL teachers.

Another perspective could be to examine the correlation of students´ interest and motivation for the English subject with an increasing involvement in planning, implementing and evaluating their own work with in-depth topics. The choice of content can be a major factor in stimulating interest and motivation, and it would be interesting to see to what degree it could increase vocabulary and overall language proficiency.

The field of metacognition is also an area I recommend further study into and how this could be worked with in a more systematic manner in the EFL classroom. Writing reflection notes systematically throughout a school year and following a model for developing metacognition would be an interesting study to see if learners develop into more autonomous learners.

5.4   Concluding Remarks

Concluding this thesis, the main findings are that there appears to be several didactic benefits of working systematically with vocabulary through the usage of the AWL along with extensive reading and in-depth learning. The study suggests that such work can assist EFL learners in Norwegian Upper Secondary School in acquiring a broader academic vocabulary as well as make them more prepared for higher education. Furthermore, the findings suggest that writing reflection notes along with explicit teaching of learning strategies seem to be useful in developing metalinguistic awareness and autonomy of learning. However, the greatest challenge of this study was not having enough time for extensive reading within school hours and also in reaching an agreement with the students on topics for in-depth learning that everyone found motivating and interesting.

On a more general level, I believe the methods utilized in this study are in line with central aspects of the new curriculum which is to be implemented in 2020. The concepts of *learner autonomy*, *in-depth learning*, *critical thinking* and *intercultural competence* is very much in focus alongside the aim for the EFL learner to become more competent in applying an academic and purpose specific vocabulary which is useful for further studies as well as in a future workplace.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Headwords of the Academic Word list

This list contains the headwords of the families in the Academic Word List. The numbers indicate the sublist of the Academic Word List. Sublist 1 contains the most frequent words and Sublist 10 the least frequent. The list comes from Coxhead (2000).

abandon	8	amend	5	automate	8
abstract	6	analogy	9	available	1
academy	5	analyse	1	aware	5
access	4	annual	4	behalf	9
accommodate	9	anticipate	9	benefit	1
accompany	8	apparent	4	bias	8
accumulate	8	append	8	bond	6
accurate	6	appreciate	8	brief	6
achieve	2	approach	1	bulk	9
acknowledge	6	appropriate	2	capable	6
acquire	2	approximate	4	capacity	5
adapt	7	arbitrary	8	category	2
adequate	4	area	1	cease	9
adjacent	10	aspect	2	challenge	5
adjust	5	assemble	10	channel	7
administration	2	assess	1	chapter	2
adult	7	assign	6	chart	8
advocate	7	assist	2	chemical	7
affect	2	assume	1	circumstance	3
aggregate	6	assure	9	cite	6
aid	7	attach	6	civil	4
albeit	10	attain	9	clarify	8
allocate	6	attitude	4	classic	7
alter	5	attribute	4	clause	5
alternative	3	author	6	code	4
ambiguous	8	authority	1	coherent	9

113

coincide	9	compensate	3	concept	1
collapse	10	compile	10	conclude	2
colleague	10	complement	8	concurrent	9
commence	9	complex	2	conduct	2
comment	3	component	3	confer	4
commission	2	compound	5	confine	9
commit	4	comprehensive	7	confirm	7
commodity	8	comprise	7	conflict	5
communicate	4	compute	2	conform	8
community	2	conceive	10	consent	3
compatible	9	concentrate	4	consequent	2
considerable	3	coordinate	3	depress	10
consist	1	core	3	derive	1
constant	3	corporate	3	design	2
constitute	1	correspond	3	despite	4
constrain	3	couple	7	detect	8
construct	2	create	1	deviate	8
consult	5	credit	2	device	9
consume	2	criteria	3	devote	9
contact	5	crucial	8	differentiate	7
contemporary	8	culture	2	dimension	4
context	1	currency	8	diminish	9
contract	1	cycle	4	discrete	5
contradict	8	data	1	discriminate	6
contrary	7	debate	4	displace	8
contrast	4	decade	7	display	6
contribute	3	decline	5	dispose	7
controversy	9	deduce	3	distinct	2
convene	3	define	1	distort	9
converse	9	definite	7	distribute	1
convert	7	demonstrate	3	diverse	6
convince	10	denote	8	document	3
cooperate	6	deny	7	domain	6

domestic	4	environment	1	exploit	8
dominate	3	equate	2	export	1
draft	5	equip	7	expose	5
drama	8	equivalent	5	external	5
duration	9	erode	9	extract	7
dynamic	7	error	4	facilitate	5
economy	1	establish	1	factor	1
edit	6	estate	6	feature	2
element	2	estimate	1	federal	6
eliminate	7	ethic	9	fee	6
emerge	4	ethnic	4	file	7
emphasis	3	evaluate	2	final	2
empirical	7	eventual	8	finance	1
enable	5	evident	1	finite	7
encounter	10	evolve	5	flexible	6
energy	5	exceed	6	fluctuate	8
enforce	5	exclude	3	focus	2
enhance	6	exhibit	8	format	9
enormous	10	expand	5	formula	1
ensure	3	expert	6	forthcoming	10
entity	5	explicit	6	foundation	7
found	9	grant	4	image	5
framework	3	guarantee	7	immigrate	3
function	1	guideline	8	impact	2
fund	3	hence	4	implement	4
fundamental	5	hierarchy	7	implicate	4
furthermore	6	highlight	8	implicit	8
gender	6	hypothesis	4	imply	3
generate	5	identical	7	impose	4
generation	5	identify	1	incentive	6
globe	7	ideology	7	incidence	6
goal	4	ignorance	6	incline	10
grade	7	illustrate	3	income	1

incorporate	6	invest	2	medical	5
index	6	investigate	4	medium	9
indicate	1	invoke	10	mental	5
individual	1	involve	1	method	1
induce	8	isolate	7	migrate	6
inevitable	8	issue	1	military	9
infer	7	item	2	minimal	9
infrastructure	8	job	4	minimise	8
inherent	9	journal	2	minimum	6
inhibit	6	justify	3	ministry	6
initial	3	label	4	minor	3
initiate	6	labour	1	mode	7
injure	2	layer	3	modify	5
innovate	7	lecture	6	monitor	5
input	6	legal	1	motive	6
insert	7	legislate	1	mutual	9
insight	9	levy	10	negate	3
inspect	8	liberal	5	network	5
instance	3	licence	5	neutral	6
institute	2	likewise	10	nevertheless	6
instruct	6	link	3	nonetheless	10
integral	9	locate	3	norm	9
integrate	4	logic	5	normal	2
integrity	10	maintain	2	notion	5
intelligence	6	major	1	notwithstanding	10
intense	8	manipulate	8	nuclear	8
interact	3	manual	9	objective	5
intermediate	9	margin	5	obtain	2
internal	4	mature	9	obvious	4
interpret	1	maximise	3	occupy	4
interval	6	mechanism	4	occur	1
intervene	7	media	7	odd	10
intrinsic	10	mediate	9	offset	8

116

ongoing	10	precise	5	react	3
option	4	predict	4	recover	6
orient	5	predominant	8	refine	9
outcome	3	preliminary	9	regime	4
output	4	presume	6	region	2
overall	4	previous	2	register	3
overlap	9	primary	2	regulate	2
overseas	6	prime	5	reinforce	8
panel	10	principal	4	reject	5
paradigm	7	principle	1	relax	9
paragraph	8	prior	4	release	7
parallel	4	priority	7	relevant	2
parameter	4	proceed	1	reluctance	10
participate	2	process	1	rely	3
partner	3	professional	4	remove	3
passive	9	prohibit	7	require	1
perceive	2	project	4	research	1
percent	1	promote	4	reside	2
period	1	proportion	3	resolve	4
persist	10	prospect	8	resource	2
perspective	5	protocol	9	respond	1
phase	4	psychology	5	restore	8
phenomenon	7	publication	7	restrain	9
philosophy	3	publish	3	restrict	2
physical	3	purchase	2	retain	4
plus	8	pursue	5	reveal	6
policy	1	qualitative	9	revenue	5
portion	9	quote	7	reverse	7
pose	10	radical	8	revise	8
positive	2	random	8	revolution	9
potential	2	range	2	rigid	9
practitioner	8	ratio	5	role	1
precede	6	rational	6	route	9

scenario	9	select	2	site	2
schedule	8	sequence	3	so-called	10
scheme	3	series	4	sole	7
scope	6	sex	3	somewhat	7
section	1	shift	3	source	1
sector	1	significant	1	specific	1
secure	2	similar	1	specify	3
seek	2	simulate	7	sphere	9
stable	5	task	3	underlie	6
statistic	4	team	9	undertake	4
status	4	technical	3	uniform	8
straightforward	10	technique	3	unify	9
strategy	2	technology	3	unique	7
stress	4	temporary	9	utilise	6
structure	1	tense	8	valid	3
style	5	terminate	8	vary	1
submit	7	text	2	vehicle	8
subordinate	9	theme	8	version	5
subsequent	4	theory	1	via	8
subsidy	6	thereby	8	violate	9
substitute	5	thesis	7	virtual	8
successor	7	topic	7	visible	7
sufficient	3	trace	6	vision	9
sum	4	tradition	2	visual	8
summary	4	transfer	2	volume	3
supplement	9	transform	6	voluntary	7
survey	2	transit	5	welfare	5
survive	7	transmit	7	whereas	5
suspend	9	transport	6	whereby	10
sustain	5	trend	5	widespread	8
symbol	5	trigger	9		
tape	6	ultimate	7		
target	5	undergo	10		

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

Erfaringsbasert masteroppgave i engelsk didaktikk.
"Academic Vocabulary: How learners of English in Norwegian upper secondary school can acquire a broader academic vocabulary."

Bakgrunn og formål
Dette er et aksjonsforskningsprosjekt der målet er å prøve ut didaktiske metoder i engelskfaget for å øke det akademiske ordforrådet til elever i vg1 studiespesialiserende. Det vil bli tatt i bruk akademiske ordlister, en «vocabulary levels test»(standardisert ordforrådstest) og tekstanalyse programmet lextutor.ca. To sett med elevtekster; et ved oppstarten av prosjektet og et ved slutten av prosjektet, vil bli scannet for akademisk vokabular for å gi et sammenligningsgrunnlag. I tillegg vil elevene ta en ordforråds test før og etter prosjektet. På slutten av prosjektperioden vil elevene bli bedt om å skrive et refleksjonsnotat om hvordan de arbeidet med språkutvikling. Hensikten med refleksjonsnotatet er å utvikle metakognisjon rundt språklæring. Prosjektet inngår i en masteroppgave i engelsk didaktikk ved Universitetet i Bergen. Som lærer i engelsk i 1Sta ved Bømlo vidaregåande skule vil jeg forske på egen klasse da hensikten er å forbedre læring og undervisning i faget.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?
Elevtekstene og refleksjonsnotatene som skal innleveres er en del av den vanlige undervisningen og vurderingsgrunnlaget, og innebærer ikke ekstra arbeid for elevene. Ordforrådstestene er frivillige. Samtykke til scanning av tekstene ved bruk av dataprogrammet lextutor.ca, og bruk av refleksjonsnotat og ordforrådstester som datamateriale i forskningsprosjektet er frivillig. All material vil bli anonymisert og kun lagret på min private datamaskin som er beskyttet med brukernavn og passord.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?
Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Elevtekstene, ordforrådstestene og refleksjonsnotatene vil bli anonymisert. Det er kun jeg som har tilgang til navnet ditt, og det vil bli anonymt lagret på min datamaskin. Publisering av resultat i masteroppgaven vil være fullstendig anonymisert, og du som enkeltperson vil ikke være gjenkjennelig utover at du er elev ved Bømlo vidaregåande skule og at du går i vg1 engelsk.

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes i mai 2018. All datamaterial vil da være lagret anonymt på min personlige datamaskin. Det vil bli brukt til videre tolkning av resultat og publisert anonymt i masteroppgaven.

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.
Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med Inga Sortland Svanheld, Tlf. 99 25 38 86 eller veileder Sigrid Ørevik ved Uib, tlf +47 55 58 23 62.

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

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

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

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

NSD

Sigrid Ørevik
Sydnesplassen 7
5007 BERGEN

Vår dato: 24.01.2018   Vår ref: 57719 / 3 / PEG   Deres dato: Deres ref:

Vurdering fra NSD Personvernombudet for forskning § 31

Personvernombudet for forskning viser til meldeskjema mottatt 12.12.2017 for prosjektet:

57719	*Erfaringsbasert masteroppgave i engelsk didaktikk. Academic Vocabulary: How learners of English in Norwegian upper secondary school can acquire a broader academic vocabulary*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Universitetet i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Sigrid Ørevik*
Student	*Inga Sortland Svanheld*

Vurdering
Etter gjennomgang av opplysningene i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon finner vi at prosjektet er meldepliktig og at personopplysningene som blir samlet inn i dette prosjektet er regulert av personopplysningsloven § 31. På den neste siden er vår vurdering av prosjektopplegget slik det er meldt til oss. Du kan nå gå i gang med å behandle personopplysninger.

Vilkår for vår anbefaling
Vår anbefaling forutsetter at du gjennomfører prosjektet i tråd med:
• opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon
• vår prosjektvurdering, se side 2
• eventuell korrespondanse med oss

Vi forutsetter at du ikke innhenter sensitive personopplysninger.

Meld fra hvis du gjør vesentlige endringer i prosjektet
Dersom prosjektet endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å sende inn endringsmelding. På våre nettsider finner du svar på hvilke endringer du må melde, samt endringsskjema.

Opplysninger om prosjektet blir lagt ut på våre nettsider og i Meldingsarkivet
Vi har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet på nettsidene våre. Alle våre institusjoner har også tilgang til egne prosjekter i Meldingsarkivet.

Vi tar kontakt om status for behandling av personopplysninger ved prosjektslutt
Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS   Harald Hårfagres gate 29   Tel: +47-55 58 21 17   nsd@nsd.no   Org.nr. 985 321 884
NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data   NO-5007 Bergen, NORWAY   Faks: +47-55 58 96 50   www.nsd.no

Ved prosjektslutt 11.05.2018 vil vi ta kontakt for å avklare status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Se våre nettsider eller ta kontakt dersom du har sporsmål. Vi onsker lykke til med prosjektet!

Marianne Hogetveit Myhren

Pernille Ekornrud Grondal

Kontaktperson: Pernille Ekornrud Grondal tlf: 55 58 36 41 / pernille.grondal@nsd.no

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Inga Sortland Svanheld, inga.svanheld@hfk.no

Appendix 4: Thematic Analysis of Reflection Notes

Thematic analysis	
Themes	**Direct quotes from a selection of students.**
An increase in confidence and in motivation	*"English is more fun now, and I am motivated to learn more English than before we started this project". (S1)* *"I feel like I have reached a new level in English"(S1)* *"I feel like I am a better English speaker now than before, which makes me feel more comfortable trying to experiment"(S1)* *"Well I know more words now and feel more confident speaking English". (S1)* *"I am certain that I have a better understanding of more high frequent academic words". (S4)* *"When we started this project my goal was to try to learn academic words, which I could use in daily speech or in written texts. This I believe I mastered". (S4)* *"I feel like my vocabulary has become better and now I know more advanced words that I did not know a while ago". (S10)* *"I have learned more advanced words, and I know about more words I can use in a text. I feel a bit of my English language has changed". (S12)* *"I think my vocabulary has been expanded and that I have been learning a lot of new words". (S14)* *"I feel like my future assignments and texts will be more structured and well-written now that I have been practicing and learning new words". (S14)* *"I increased the number of word families that I know by somewhere around 5000 – 7000 word families during the period". (S15)* *" My vocabulary has been influenced/changed after working on vocabulary in different ways, such as I feel my*

	vocabulary spectre has increased, and I feel like I have received and can use more academic words both by speaking and writing". (S18) *"My vocabulary has increased by learning words on quizlet". (S21)* *"My vocabulary has definitely expanded". (S22)* *"Using this site was both fun and effective". (S24)* *"I have also expanded my vocabulary, I now know more words than I did when first starting out this project". (S24)*
Showing metalinguistic awareness and willingness to develop own vocabulary	*"I think the most important is to dare to experiment with the language and in that way learn of corrects and wrongs." (S1)* *"Most importantly maybe, have I been more aware that vocabulary learning is important, because it makes it so much easier to communicate with others and to understand others" (S2)* *"My awareness of learning strategies has definitely changed during this project, when I now have realized that working a lot with words pay off." (S4)* *"I think I have learned need words by working with the AWL on quizlet and I am more focused on using a more academic vocabulary while writing". (S7)* *"We have had some usage in quizlet before, but now we really put focus in using and learning with it. This made me much more effectively on learning". (S8)* *"The most useful way of learning vocabulary for me is to use Quizlet and memorize the words". (S10)* *"My language needs variation and I want to learn more words related to the topics I am working with, so that I can understand more and write more advanced texts". (S10)* *"I think I am more aware when choosing which word to use in some sentences. I think about how I could use other words instead of the words I have used a lot". (S11)*

	"I know I can get a better vocabulary, and I have to work on it". (S12) *"It is much easier to learn new words by memorizing them using well-structured lists and quizzes than it is just reading texts". (S15)* *"My awareness of learning strategies has not changed very much in this period of time. I have always known that natural exposure is the easiest way for me to learn. However, now I am more conscious about it". (S16)* *"...when I write English now I am more aware of what words I use and I always think if I could switch out some of the words". (S19)* *" I have learned a fair amount of words, however after taking the "word-family" test twice, my result was exactly the same both times". (S20)* *"I am more aware of the different strategies that I could use to expand my vocabulary". (S22)* *"My awareness of the different learning strategies increased when we worked with this project". (S23)* *"It was a very effective way of learning new vocabulary. Before I did not knowingly work with vocabulary like in the last period". (S23)*
Looking to the future	*"I will therefore after finishing this semester make sure that I keep on reading books and speak English so that I will strengthen and expand my vocabulary" (S2)* *"Going forward in my studies I am sure I will continue working with vocabulary learning, and try to gain more words". (S4)* *"I think I will be using this site a lot forward in my studies; it is both fun and interesting to learn like this" (S5)* *"After this period I want to continue expanding my vocabulary". (S6)*

	"Going forward I think I am going to read more English books and maybe use Quizlet to remember the words I have learned and not forget them". (S10) *"I would like to have a better vocabulary going forward in my studies". (S11)* *"I will continue using quizlet when working with vocabulary going forward in my studies". (S11)* *"I want to continue expanding my language and working with how I can get better when it comes to writing, reading and speaking English" (S14)* *"The way I have worked with academic word lists during this period, is most definitely a strategy I will use as I proceed learning more of the English language". (S15)* *"I will definitely work with more vocabulary going forward with my studies. I have come to realize that academic vocabulary learning is not wasted time. One would have much advantages with learning academic vocabulary. It will reward you when you are going to universities and other studies". (S16)* *"Going forward, I will definitely work harder with vocabulary learning". (S16)* *"My goals after this period is to just keep increasing my vocabulary and learn more academic words". (S18)* *"Going forward in my studies, I think I will stick with Quizlet when it comes to vocabulary learning". (S18)* *"I will definitely be practicing these strategies on quizlet in the future if it will be possible for me, because it was extremely helpful". (S21)* *"Forward I will be more aware of how I can work with my vocabulary, and I will be more focused that as well. The test on Quizlet are probably something that I will continue with". (S22)*

Appendix 5: List of study texts with online links

"Slavery in America": https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/slavery

"Civil Rights Movement": https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/civil-rights-movement

"Martin Luther King Jr. An Extraordinary Life": https://projects.seattletimes.com/mlk/

TED talk: Color Blind or Color Brave?
https://www.ted.com/talks/mellody_hobson_color_blind_or_color_brave

TED talk: The Racial Politics of Time
https://www.ted.com/talks/127rittney_cooper_the_racial_politics_of_time

TED talk: The Danger of a Single Story
https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

"A Conversation About Growing Up Black"
https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000003670178/a-conversation-about-growing-up-black.html

Report: Black and White Americans Are Worlds Apart (numeric literacy)
http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2016/06/27/on-views-of-race-and-inequality-blacks-and-whites-are-worlds-apart/

Harlem

What happens to a dream deferred?

 Does it dry up
 like a raisin in the sun?
 Or fester like a sore—
 And then run?
 Does it stink like rotten meat?
 Or crust and sugar over—
 like a syrupy sweet?

 Maybe it just sags
 like a heavy load.

 Or does it explode?

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

Appendix 7: "The Help" – study questions for the novel

Twenty-two-year-old **Skeeter** has just returned home after graduating from Ole Miss. She may have a degree, but it is 1962, Mississippi, and her mother will not be happy till Skeeter has a ring on her finger. Skeeter would normally find solace with her beloved maid Constantine, the woman who raised her, but Constantine has disappeared, and no one will tell Skeeter where she has gone.

Aibileen is a black maid, a wise, regal woman raising her seventeenth white child. Something has shifted inside her after the loss of her own son, who died while his white bosses looked the other way. She is devoted to the little girl she looks after, though she knows both their hearts may be broken.

Minny, Aibileen's best friend, is short, fat, and perhaps the sassiest woman in Mississippi. She can cook like nobody's business, but she can't mind her tongue, so she's lost yet another job. Minny finally finds a position working for someone too new to town to know her reputation. But her new boss has secrets of her own.

Seemingly as different from one another as can be, these women will nonetheless come together for a project that will put them all at risk. And why? Because they are suffocating within the lines that define their town and their times. And sometimes lines are made to be crossed. In pitch-perfect voices, Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town, and the way women—mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends—view one another.

Study questions to discuss in groups – chapters 1-6

1. Aibileen reveals that after Treelore's death, she became bitter about the work she does for white families. Why?
2. How is Mae Mobley different from other babies Aibileen has raised? Why does Mae get upset when Aibileen has to go home for the evening?
3. Why won't Miss Hilly use the guest bathroom? What does this tell us about her?
4. What does Aibileen write in her blue book? Why did she start keeping a blue book?
5. What kind of special powers do Aibileen's prayers have?
6. What risks does Aibileen take in this chapter to help Minny find work?
7. How is Celia Foote different from the other white ladies?
8. What are the seven rules for working for a white lady? What do these rules say about the relationship between African-Americans and whites at the time?
9. Why can't Miss Celia make a friend with any of the white women in town?
10. What does Skeeter want to do with her career? What does her mother want her to do instead?
11. What differences in wages does Skeeter notice for male and female workers?
12. What is Constantine's advice for Skeeter when Skeeter is called ugly at age 13? What does Skeeter learn about Constantine's parentage? Why is she shocked by this?
13. As a young girl, what does Skeeter's mom mainly criticize about her daughter?

Study questions to discuss in groups – chapters 7-8

1. How do the Leefolts treat their daughter and dog similarly?
2. What are the inconveniences of Aibileen's new bathroom?
3. What does Aibileen decide to do every day to help Mae Mobley's self-esteem?
4. What makes Elizabeth furious at Mae Mobley and Aibileen?
5. How is Skeeter and Aibileen's relationship coming along? How does Aibileen feel about Skeeter?
6. What happens to Robert, and why does he do to receive this treatment?
7. What is Miss Skeeter's big idea for her book? How does Aibileen react to this idea?
8. What are Ms. Stein's concerns about the safety of the maids? How does Miss Skeeter offend Aibileen in this chapter?

Study questions to discuss in groups:
1. Who was your favorite character? Why?
2. Like Hilly, Skeeter's mother is a prime example of someone deeply flawed yet somewhat sympathetic. She seems to care for Skeeter—and she also seems to have very real feelings for Constantine. Yet the ultimatum she gives to Constantine is untenable; and most of her interaction with Skeeter is critical. Do you think Skeeter's mother is a sympathetic or unsympathetic character? Why?
3. How much of a person's character would you say is shaped by the times in which they live?
4. Do you see discrimination based on gender in the novel? Explain.
5. Do you believe that Minny was justified in her distrust of white people?
6. Do you think that if Aibileen had stayed working for Miss Elizabeth, that Mae Mobley would have grown up to be racist like her mother? Do you think racism is inherent, or taught?
7. Do you think there are still vestiges of racism in relationships where people of color work for people who are white?
8. What challenges does the US have with racism today? Explain.