

Oral participation in the EFL classroom

A study of variables that might affect students' oral participation in the Norwegian upper-secondary EFL classroom



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ABSTRACT IN NORWEGIAN

Engelsk er i dag rekna som eit globalt språk som brukast i store delar av verda. Difor er det naturleg at det er fokus på kommunikasjon i engelskfaget i skulen (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013). I denne oppgåva ser eg på munnleg kommunikasjon, der målet er å undersøke ulike variablar som kan påverke elevane sitt val om å delta munnleg på engelsk i klasserommet. Dei variablane som vil bli undersøkt er klasseromsaktivitetar (pararbeid, gruppearbeid eller klassesdiskusjonar). I denne variabelen vil også påverknaden av tema og samtalepartnarar bli undersøkt. Vidare ser eg på påverknaden av å oppleve nervøsit/engstelse for å snakke engelsk, bruken av norsk i klasserommet, og til slutt, elevane si oppfatning av eiga evne til å snakke engelsk.

Både den generelle påverknaden av variablane vart undersøkt i tillegg til om påverknaden av variablane endra seg i dei ulike klasseromsaktivitetane. Undersøkingane blei gjennomført i ein vidaregåande skule i to ulike klasser. Det blei samla inn både kvalitative og kvantitative data frå klasseromsobservasjon, spørjeskjema og individuelle intervju.

Resultata viste at elevane foretrakk å arbeide i par eller grupper framfor å delta i klassesdiskusjonar. I tillegg var dei mest komfortabel med å kommunisere med vener framfor kjenningar i klasserommet. Temaet påverka også elevane i ulik grad der enkle og kjente tema ofte var føretrekt framfor vanskelege tema. Fleirtalet av elevane opplevde ikkje meir nervøsit i engelskfaget enn i andre fag. Likevel var det også elevar som opplevde nervøsit.

Bruken av norsk viser at elevane er påverka av kva slags språk læraren og medelevane vel å bruke i tillegg til å vere knytt til bestemte kontekstar. For enkelte elevar blir også bruken av norsk påverka av at det ikkje alltid opplevast som naturleg å bruke engelsk i klasserommet.

Fleirtalet av elevane har trua på si eiga evne til å snakke engelsk i klasserommet. Likevel var det også fleire elevar som blir påverka negativt. Fleire trudde også at læraren ikkje hadde same oppfatninga av evnene deira til å snakke engelsk som dei sjølve.

Påverknaden av variablane endra seg også i forhold til om elevane deltok i pararbeid, gruppearbeid og klassesdiskusjonar, og i forhold til temaet og samtalepartnarane.

Prosjektet konkluderte med at elevane si munnlege deltaking vart påverka av dei ulike variablane, og at faktorar som påverkar munnleg deltaking i engelsk-klasserommet burde bli forska meir på i ein norsk kontekst. Det er viktig å vite korleis ein som lærar skal legge til rette for munnleg aktivitet og utvikling på ein måte som er komfortabelt for elevane.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction and relevance	1
1.2 Previous research.....	3
1.3 Research questions	6
1.4 Structure of the Thesis.....	7
Chapter 2: Theoretical background	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 The history of oral skills in English teaching.....	8
2.2.1 The development of the teaching of the English subject in Norway	10
2.3 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and communicative competence	11
2.4 Willingness to Communicate (WTC).....	14
2.4.1 The WTC-model with trait and state variables.....	14
2.4.2 Challenges with WTC	16
2.4.3 Context of theoretical background	17
2.5 Classroom activities	18
2.5.1 Topic.....	18
2.5.2 Interlocutors.....	20
2.6 Foreign language anxiety (FLA)	23
2.6.1 Communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation	23
2.7 The use of L1.....	26
2.7.1 Historical development.....	27
2.7.2 Authenticity and contexts in which the students use their L1	28
2.8 Self-perceived communication competence.....	30
2.8.1 Communication/communicative competence.....	30
2.8.2 Self-perceived communication competence.....	31
Chapter 3: Materials and methods	34
3.1 Methods.....	34
3.1.1 Quantitative research.....	34
3.1.2 Qualitative research.....	35
3.1.3 Mixed methods	36
3.2 Participants	37
3.3 Choice of methods.....	37
3.3.1 Classroom observation	37
3.3.2 The survey	40
3.3.3 Semi-structured, individual interviews.....	43
3.4 Reliability and validity	46
3.5 Ethical considerations.....	48

3.6 Possible limitations.....	49
Chapter 4: Results and discussion	51
4.1 Classroom activities	53
4.1.1 Pairs, groups or class discussions	53
4.1.2 Interlocutors.....	56
4.1.3 Topic.....	60
4.1.4 Discussion	64
4.2 Foreign language anxiety (FLA)	67
4.2.1 Communication apprehension	68
4.2.2 Test anxiety	70
4.2.3 Fear of negative evaluation	72
4.2.4 Variability in FLA and classroom activities.....	74
4.2.5 Discussion	78
4.3 The use of Norwegian (L1)	79
4.3.1 Contexts in which the students use their L1	79
4.3.2 Authenticity	84
4.3.3 Attitudes toward the use of Norwegian	86
4.3.4 Variability in the use of L1 and classroom activities	88
4.3.5 Discussion	92
4.4 Self-perceived communication competence (SPCC)	94
4.4.1 Impact of self-perceived competence	94
4.4.2 Variability in SPCC and classroom activities.....	96
4.4.3 Discussion	99
4.5 Summary and discussion	100
Chapter 5: Conclusion	103
5.1 Summary	103
5.1.1 Classroom activities.....	103
5.1.2 Foreign language anxiety (FLA)	103
5.1.3 The use of L1	104
5.1.4 Self-perceived communication competence (SPCC)	104
5.1.5 Variability.....	104
5.2 Pedagogical implications.....	105
5.3 Suggestions for further research.....	106
5.4 Conclusion.....	107
REFERENCES	108
APPENDICES.....	114
APPENDIX A: APPROVAL NSD	114

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION/CONSENT FORM STUDENTS	115
APPENDIX C: INFORMATION/CONSENT FORM TEACHERS	117
APPENDIX D: INFORMATION/CONSENT FORM SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL	119
APPENDIX E: RESULTS FROM CLASSROOM OBSERVATION.....	121
APPENDIX F: RESULTS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE (OPEN QUESTIONS)	130
APPENDIX G: RESULTS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE (STATEMENTS).....	139
APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	145
APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS	149
Interview A.....	149
Interview B.....	160
Interview C.....	189
Interview D.....	203
Interview E	222
Interview F	234

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 Do the students speak English in the EFL classroom?	51
Table 4.2 Students' answers to: Explain why you choose to speak, sometimes speak or not speak English in the classroom .	52
Table 4.3 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes toward working in pairs, groups or class discussions	53
Table 4.4 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes towards working in pairs, groups or class discussions	53
Table 4.5 The interviewees' thoughts on pair work, group work and class discussion	54
Table 4.6 Classroom observation: the impact of classroom activities	55
Table 4.7 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes towards interlocutors.....	56
Table 4.8 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes towards interlocutors	56
Table 4.9 The interviewees' thoughts regarding interlocutors.....	57
Table 4.10 Classroom observation results on the impact of interlocutors	59
Table 4.11 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes to topic	60
Table 4.12 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes to topic	61
Table 4.13 Interviewees' thoughts regarding topic and classroom activity	62
Table 4.14 Results from classroom observation in relation to topic.....	64
Table 4.15 Mean and mode scores concerning students' FLA	67
Table 4.16 Distribution of answers concerning students' FLA	67
Table 4.17 Mean and mode scores concerning students' communication apprehension	68
Table 4.18 Distribution of answers concerning students' communication apprehension	68
Table 4.19 Results from interviews concerning students' thoughts on communication apprehension	69
Table 4.20 Mean and mode scores concerning students' test anxiety	70
Table 4.21 Distribution of answers concerning students' test anxiety.....	70
Table 4.22 Interviewees' thoughts on test anxiety.....	71
Table 4.23 Mean and mode scores concerning students' fear of negative evaluation	72
Table 4.24 Distribution of answers concerning students' fear of negative evaluation.....	73
Table 4.25 Interviewees' thoughts regarding fear of negative evaluation	73
Table 4.26 Mean and mode scores concerning variability in FLA.....	75
Table 4.27 Distribution of answers concerning variability in FLA	75
Table 4.28 Interviewees' thoughts regarding FLA and classroom activity	76
Table 4.29 Students' thoughts regarding FLA and classroom activities.....	77
Table 4.30 Mean and mode scores concerning contexts in which the students rely on Norwegian.....	80
Table 4.31 Distribution of answers concerning contexts in which the students rely on Norwegian	80
Table 4.32 Interviewees' thoughts regarding the contexts in which they use Norwegian in the EFL classroom	81
Table 4.33 The contexts in which the students relied on Norwegian	83
Table 4.34 Mean and mode scores concerning authenticity	84
Table 4.35 Distribution of answers concerning authenticity	84
Table 4.36 Interviewees' thoughts regarding authenticity.....	85
Table 4.37 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes towards the use of Norwegian	86
Table 4.38 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes towards the use of Norwegian	86
Table 4.39 Interviewees' thoughts regarding their attitudes towards the use of Norwegian	87
Table 4.40 Mean and mode scores concerning variability in the use of L1	88
Table 4.41 Distribution of answers concerning variability in the use of L1	88
Table 4.42 Interviewees' thoughts regarding the use of L1 and classroom activities.....	89
Table 4.43 Students' responses to whether their use of L1 vary	91

Table 4.44 Mean and mode scores concerning students' self-perceived communication competence.....	94
Table 4.45 Distribution of answers concerning students' self-perceived communication competence	94
Table 4.46 Interviewees' thoughts regarding the impact of their self-perceived competence (SPCC).....	95
Table 4.47 Mean and mode scores concerning variability in students' self-perceived communication competence.....	96
Table 4.48 Distribution of answers concerning variability in students' self-perceived communication competence.....	97
Table 4.49 Interviewees' thoughts regarding self-perceived communication competence and classroom activities.....	97
Table 4.50 Answers to the open question regarding variability in students' self-perceived communication competence.....	98
Table 4.51 Students' answer to: In your opinion, what can be done to make it most natural and comfortable for you to speak English in the classroom? Explain.....	101

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: WTC in the L2 model

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Language

EFL: English as a foreign language

ESL: English as a second language

FL: Foreign language

L2: Second language

L1: First language

SPCC: Self-perceived communication competence

FLA: Foreign language anxiety

WTC: Willingness to Communicate

SA: Self-assessment

CA: Communication apprehension

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

Udir: Utdanningsdirektoratet/The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training

GLOSSARY

Classroom activities: in this project, classroom activities are defined as the activity the students take part in (pair work, group work or class discussions)

Communication: in this project, communication will be tied to oral communication

Communication apprehension: fear of not being understood or fear of not being able to understand others

Communicative competence: the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately

Foreign language anxiety: a feeling of anxiousness or nervousness about speaking a foreign language

Interlocutors: the person with whom you are speaking/working

Oral participation: the extent to which the students participate or show a willingness to participate orally in the classroom

Oral skills: one of the five basic skills in the English subject curriculum

Self-perceived communication competence: the way people perceive their own ability to communicate orally

State variables: variables whose impact is situational and changes in different contexts

Test anxiety: a fear of failing generally and/or when tested

Trait variables: variables whose impact is stable over time and in different situations

Willingness to Communicate: a concept developed to understand what affects peoples' willingness to participate orally

TRANSCRIPTION KEY FOR INTERVIEWS

Speakers	
Interviewer	I
Respondent	R
Turn start	:
Pauses, natural stops	
Pause	...
Short pause/natural stop	.. and ,
Inaudible/lost words or sentences	Indicated in the transcription that a word is lost and at what time it was lost Example: (word missing 12:23)
Vocal sounds	Any noises made by the respondent or the interviewer are written in the transcript in parentheses Example: (coughs)
Laughter	Indicated in the transcription that the respondent or the interviewer laughs Example: (laughs)
Hesitation	Indicated in the transcription that the interview subject is hesitant Example: (a bit hesitant)
!	Used for emphasis Example: And I thought what are the chances of that! (laughs)
?	Used with questions and for confirmation Example: How do you feel about speaking English in the classroom?
“ ”	Used when the students are referring to something someone else has said, when they are referring to something that they have thought about themselves and with certain terms Example: It's like “oh, I could have written that right!”

Inspired by transcription key in Hopland (2016)

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and relevance

In the Norwegian EFL classroom, communication is one of the main focuses. The aim is for the students to be able to communicate and *use* the English language (Rindal 2014, 2). However, communication occurs in many forms. In the English subject, the students learn how to communicate in English through speaking, listening, reading and writing, which are all of equal importance (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 4-5). Yet, through my experience as a student teacher, it has been challenging to teach a language that not all students are comfortable *speaking*. The Australian Psychology Professor Peter D. MacIntyre has written several studies on different factors that can affect students when communicating in second language classrooms (CBU 2020). He claims that not all learners choose to use their second language (hereon referred to as L2) orally (MacIntyre 2007, 564). There is no straightforward answer to why some students do not speak in class as students are affected by “individual, social, linguistic, situational, and other factors” (MacIntyre 2007, 564). Thus, a range of aspects might be explored to obtain more knowledge about the choices and thoughts behind the students’ oral participation in the classroom.

This project seeks to extend our understanding of oral participation in English in the Norwegian upper secondary EFL classroom. The study was conducted in two different classes at the first and second grade of upper secondary school with students between 15 and 17 years old. Before reviewing the research that has been conducted on this topic, it is useful to look into why it is relevant to investigate oral participation in a Norwegian context.

In Norway, English is considered a world language by the Ministry of Education and Research (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 2). English is taught as a mandatory subject from the age of six when children start primary school until the first year of upper secondary school, which is 11 years in total (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013; Rindal 2014, 8). English is a foreign language in Norway, even though it is widely used. Also, in “[t]he past couple of decades young Norwegians have experienced massive exposure to English through audio and audiovisual media, and many travel frequently and use English as a lingua franca with both native and non-native speakers” (Rindal 2014, 8). Thus, both the status and the exposure to English have developed. Norwegian authorities have succeeded in following the changing status of English globally and pointing out the different reasons for the necessity to learn

English in Norway (Rindal 2014, 9). However, English is no longer only the language of those who use it as their first language, such as the US and the UK (Rindal 2014, 7). Rindal (2014, 10-11) criticises that there is not enough focus on “Norwegians as speakers of English”. Would it be different if we considered English to be *our* language as well? (Rindal 2014, 10).

The aim of the English subject is to help students “build up general language proficiency through listening, speaking, reading and writing, and provide the opportunity to acquire information and specialised knowledge through the English language” (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 2). *Oral skills* is one of the five basic skills in the English subject curriculum in addition to *being able to read, being able to express oneself in writing, numeracy* and *digital skills* (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2013, 4-5). In today’s Norwegian EFL classroom, “it is of equal importance to be able to communicate orally, in writing, by means of graphic representations, and through other types of semiotic resources for meaning making” (Skulstad 2018a, 57). The focus of this project is on oral skills, and according to Skulstad (2018b, 117-118), “developing oral skills also needs focus in its own right”. It is also important to underline that this project does not mainly focus on *oral skills*. Instead, the main focus is on *oral participation*. Nevertheless, the concepts are highly connected, for instance, as one needs to participate orally in order to develop one’s oral skills in the English subject. Additionally, students’ thoughts regarding their oral skills can impact their oral participation. Thus, both concepts are relevant to this project. Furthermore, Skulstad (2018b, 133) states,

learners should be encouraged to use the English language orally from an early stage, to make speaking in English a natural part of the day-to-day business in the English classroom. From time to time, however, there will be learners who find it difficult and daunting to speak English in front of their classmates

It is challenging to encourage students to participate orally in English in the EFL classroom. Therefore, it is important to learn what influences their oral participation in class in order for teachers to be able to facilitate oral communication in English.

In this project, I have investigated variables that might impact students’ choice of speaking or not in the Norwegian EFL classroom. The variables are inspired by and chosen from the work of MacIntyre et al. (1998, 547) and their Willingness to Communicate in the L2 model. Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is a concept that is defined “as a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” (MacIntyre et al.

1998, 547). The students' readiness to enter a conversation, however, can depend on several variables.

The present study investigated four variables connected to students' readiness to speak English. First, I looked at whether students' oral participation is affected by classroom activities (pair work, group work and class discussions). Classroom activities were also seen in relation to the topic of the interaction and the number and familiarity with the interlocutors with whom the students work. Second, this project investigated the impact of foreign language anxiety (hereon referred to as FLA), meaning a feeling of nervousness and/or anxiousness about speaking English in the EFL classroom. FLA consists of communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127-128). The third variable that was investigated were the students' use of their L1. This variable was seen in relation to authenticity and the contexts in which the students rely on their L1. Lastly, this project looked at the impact of self-perceived communication competence, where the focus was on whether students are affected by their perceptions of their ability to communicate. All the variables except the reliance on L1 are covered in the WTC model (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 547) (see section 2.4). The variables were considered as both trait and state variables, which means that they were considered as both long-lasting and situational influences on the students' oral participation (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 546-547). The different variables, the WTC model and the distinction between trait and state will be further elaborated on in section 2.4.

To sum up, MacIntyre and Doucette (2010, 162) state, "In the domain of second language learning, there is a concern for students who study the language but remain reluctant to use it". There might be several explanations for this reluctance, and the aim of this study is to understand more of how these variables can impact the students' oral participation from the point of view of the students.

1.2 Previous research

Oral communication is complex. A range of factors can affect students when they are communicating, and their oral participation can change rapidly. Galajda (2017, 59) states, "communication variables are dynamic and should be investigated in action and interaction". Furthermore, people are affected by the context, the people and the language with which they are communicating (Galajda 2017, 60). Because of this complexity regarding the impact on

peoples' oral communication, I found the concept of Willingness to Communicate (MacIntyre et al. 1998) to be valuable in investigating students' oral participation in the classroom.

WTC has been researched in countries such as Japan (Yashima, MacIntyre and Ikeda 2018; Fushino 2010), China (Liu and Jackson 2008; Peng 2013; Peng and Woodrow 2010), Poland (Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2015; Galajda 2017; Baran-Łucarz 2014), Iran (Tavakoli and Davoudi 2017; Khatibi and Zakeri 2014) and Turkey (Bergil 2016; Asmali 2016). All of these studies have looked at one or several of the variables that are investigated in this study. The studies are, however, from countries in which the teaching of English differs from the Norwegian practices, to which I will return in chapter 2. Nevertheless, it is interesting to investigate whether the Norwegian students have similar experiences.

Previous research has shown that students are both positively and negatively affected by the variables relevant to this project. In relation to the first variable, classroom activities, interlocutors and topic, several studies point to the students being most comfortable in groups and/or pairs and least comfortable in class discussions (Bergil 2016, 184; Cao 2011, 472; Cao and Philp 2006, 488; Khatibi and Zakeri 2014, 936; Baran-Łucarz 2014, 466). Furthermore, students are not only affected by the number of people with whom they communicate, but also by the familiarity with them. Studies have shown that being familiar with the people with whom one is communicating is important for the students (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 548-549; Khatibi and Zaaker 2014, 937; Cao and Philp 2006, 284; Baran-Łucarz 2014, 464). Lastly, topic also influences the students' oral participation, where several studies show that familiarity with a topic has a positive effect, and a lack of knowledge about a topic has a negative effect (Kang 2005, 283-285; Cao 2011 472; Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2015, 7).

The second variable, foreign language anxiety (FLA), has been a hindrance for students' oral participation in many language classrooms. The students have been impacted by, for instance, how they are perceived by others (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127; Baran-Łucarz 2014, 462; Liu and Jackson 2008, 82; Young 1991, 427; Norderud 2017, 64). Oral testing, too, has had a negative effect in some studies (Liu and Jackson 2008, 82; Norderud 2017, 69). Research has also focused on other variables that might affect students' anxiousness, in addition to how to make it less frightening for students to participate orally (Baran-Łucarz 2014, 466; Norderud 2017, 68; Young 1991, 427-428).

In relation to the students' use of the L1, studies have shown that students, teachers and researchers are both for and against the use of the L1 in the L2/FL classroom. Research has

looked at what students or teachers think about the use of L1 in the L2/FL classroom (Brooks-Lewis 2009; Rye 2014; Dale 2015). Furthermore, the L1 use in relation to authenticity has been investigated (Galajda 2017, 12-14; Brooks-Lewis 2009, 227; Rye 2014, 74-75). Looking at the impact of authenticity was also an aim for this project. In addition, I explored the students' reasons for using their L1, the contexts in which they use their L1 and whether they feel that they are impacted by their L1 use. A similar focus was also found in the study of Brooks-Lewis (2009, 221), who investigates the view of the participants, and Moore (2013, 243), who looks at factors that might trigger L1 use.

Lastly, students' self-perceived communication competence has often impacted their oral participation. Feeling confident in one's own ability to communicate is important when deciding whether to participate orally in the classroom (Asmali 2016, 194; Fushino 2010, 703-704; Teven et al. 2010, 265-267; Baran-Łucarz 2014, 462-463).

This review of research that has been conducted of the variables relevant to this thesis shows that FL/L2 students in several countries, with different teaching practices, are affected by the same variables when deciding to participate orally in the classroom. These studies also consider these variables to be situational influences, where their impact can change, and the variables can influence each other. Yet, in addition to investigating the general impact, this project explicitly looks at how the impact of the different variables change in the classroom activities, with different interlocutors and with different topics. This exploration shows the complexity of this topic. In the following, I am going to turn to research that has been conducted in a Norwegian context.

In his master thesis, Norderud (2017, 5-6) aims to find variables that increase or decrease students' oral participation and look at how teachers can counteract with these variables to increase oral participation. His study was conducted with 15-16-year-old students in upper secondary school in Norway and he investigated this topic by conducting interviews with students and teachers. This MA thesis is the most similar to this study as he found that the students in his study were impacted by similar variables investigated in this project. In his research, Norderud (2017) found that students are affected by aspects of foreign language anxiety, such as communication apprehension (65-66) and oral testing (69). In addition, they were impacted by classroom activities (pair work, group work or class discussions) (Norderud 2017, 68). He also looked at the effect of the students' perception of their ability to speak English (Norderud 2017, 70-71). This study differs from Norderud's study in relation to the focus on investigating the effect of specific variables on the students' oral participation

through a questionnaire, classroom observation and interviews. In addition, the focus is only on the view of the students.

Furthermore, Rye (2014) has looked at teachers' L1 use in a Norwegian context and Dale (2015) has looked at the impact of topic on students' code-switching in upper secondary school in Norway in their master theses. Both studies are relevant to the L1 variable of this study. I will further elaborate on the results of the studies of Norderud (2017), Rye (2014) and Dale (2015) in chapter 2.

Even though WTC and other variables that affect students' oral participation in the classroom have been researched in several countries, there is a lack of research on the topic of what affects students' oral participation in Norway. Research has been conducted on, for instance, students' attitudes to different varieties of English in the Norwegian context (Tengs Sannes 2013; Alsaker Hopland 2016; Rindal 2014). Yet, to my knowledge, only Norderud (2017) has looked specifically at similar variables that are investigated in this study. In addition, Rye (2014) and Dale (2015) have looked at factors that influence students' L1 use. Therefore, there is a need for more research on what affects students' oral participation in a Norwegian context. This creates a research gap in relation to learning more about why students choose to participate orally or not in the Norwegian EFL classroom.

1.3 Research questions

This study looks at whether students' willingness to speak English in the Norwegian EFL classroom is affected by classroom activities (pair work, group work and class discussions), nervousness/anxiousness about speaking English, the use of Norwegian and perceived communication competence. Moreover, I look at whether the impact of these variables changes according to the classroom activity in which the students are taking part. Therefore, both the students' trait and state WTC will be investigated.

The students' opinions and attitudes regarding oral communication in the EFL classroom were investigated through a questionnaire as well as individual interviews. In addition, a classroom observation has been carried out to supplement the results from the questionnaire and the interviews.

The study aims to answer the following questions:

Main research question:

What affects the students' oral participation in the EFL classroom?

Sub-questions:

1. Is the oral participation of the students affected by the classroom activity in which they are taking part?
2. Is the oral participation of the students affected by foreign language anxiety?
3. Is the oral participation of the students affected by their reliance on their L1?
4. Is the oral participation of the students affected by their self-perceived communication competence?
5. Does the impact of the variables change according to the classroom activity in which the students are taking part?

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. In chapter one, the reader is introduced to the topic and the purpose behind the project. There is a short review of previous research, and a research gap is established before the research questions of the study are presented. In chapter two, I shortly review the role of the spoken language through the history of English teaching. Thereafter, the attention is turned to the research that has been conducted on different variables that were investigated in this project. In chapter three, there will be a presentation and a justification of the approaches and the methods used to answer the research questions of this project, before the results and the discussion of the results are presented in chapter four. Lastly, I summarise the important findings of this project, present some pedagogical implications as well as make suggestions for future research in chapter five.

Chapter 2: Theoretical background

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews research that has been conducted on the four different variables that are the focus of this project. First, however, there will be a short review of the history of English teaching in Norway to understand how different skills have been in focus at different times, and how oral skills are an integral part of how English is taught in school today (section 2.2 and 2.3). Thereafter, the focus is on the ideas behind Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (section 2.4), classroom activities (section 2.5), foreign language anxiety (FLA) (section 2.6), the use of L1 (section 2.7) and perceived communication competence (section 2.8). In the review of WTC and the variables, there will also be a focus on the dynamic nature of speaking in the classroom, and how the students' willingness or unwillingness to speak can change rapidly. This aspect is important in this project, as the aim is to explore in which ways the aforementioned variables affect the students' oral participation in general, as well as to look at whether their influence change in the different classroom activities: pair work, group work, and class discussions.

Before discussing the role of oral skills in the history of English teaching, it is important to distinguish between *oral skills* and *oral participation*. Even though the term oral skills is used when referring to the basic skills and the competence aims in the English subject curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 4-5), this project will mainly focus on what affects the students' oral participation. However, the students' thoughts about their oral skills level might impact their oral participation, where they might have excellent oral skills but low oral participation. Their oral participation might also affect their development of English speaking skills. It is therefore important to include both terms.

2.2 The history of oral skills in English teaching

The following review shows the changing focus on the different skills the students were to attain: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, it illustrates how the teaching of the English subject has come to where it is today with reference to the focus on communication. This aspect is especially relevant in this project as it addresses the teaching and learning of spoken English today.

Before the 19th century, the focus was not on learning how to communicate orally. Instead, the focus was on “*Bildung*” and “grammar, reading and writing” (Fenner 2018, 19-20). In the 19th century, however, this focus changed. Speaking the language became more important as people experienced English as a “living language” through teachers who spoke the language (Fenner 2018, 21). In the late 19th and the 20th centuries, there were several different methods for teaching English and the focus switched to the various skills the students were to attain.

The Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method and the Communicative Language Teaching approach were approaches and methods used in the teaching of English in the 20th century. The Grammar-Translation Method dominated in the classroom until the early 20th century, where the focus was on reading and translating authentic texts (Fenner 2018, 24-25). Communication took place in Norwegian, and aspects such as speaking, listening and pronunciation were not considered to be important. Instead, the focus was on “grammar rules” and “memorising vocabulary” (Fenner 2018, 25).

The Direct Method appeared as a result of the Reform Movement in the late 19th and early 20th century, with which speaking became more important (Fenner 2018, 25). The movement was inspired by the work of John Dewey as well as Wilhelm Viëtor’s work on the spoken language (Fenner 2018, 25). In the Direct Method, teaching took place in the target language, and even though it focuses on the development of oral skills through “questions-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students” (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 12). The Direct Method differed from the Grammar-Translation Method in its focus on the spoken language, where the students were to learn how to use the language to communicate (Fenner 2018, 26). Yet, the approach to developing students’ oral skills is rather different from how it is taught today.

The Audiolingual Method appeared after WWII, as the war led to a need for foreign language speakers. Together with the influence of the behaviourist learning theory from the US where learning “is in essence a process of habit formation which depends on three major elements: stimulus, response and reinforcement” (Du 2016, 32), the Audiolingual Method was formed. “Reinforcement” was important as “it increases the likelihood that the behavior will occur again and eventually become a habit” (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 56). Therefore, automatization of the communication was the aim (Fenner 2018, 27).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) appeared after the publication of “the *Threshold Level in a European unit/credit system for modern language learning by adults*” by the Council of Europe, which represented a significant change in language teaching (Fenner 2018, 29). Since its occurrence in the 1970s, CLT has continued to influence the teaching of English, and especially the teaching of oral skills. I will further elaborate on communicative language teaching and communicative competence in section 2.3.

2.2.1 The development of the teaching of the English subject in Norway

Since this project is concerned with the teaching and learning of English in a Norwegian context, it is relevant to review some of the developments in Norway. In the 19th century, around 1870, the English language was taught to young people who needed to learn the language for their work in trade and shipping (Fenner 2018, 23). Later, in the 20th century, English gradually became more important as society developed. English was introduced as a school subject in 1936. From 1936, the English subject was taught in town schools, and it was only taught outside of school hours in rural areas. In 1969, English became a subject for everyone. Before this, there was a debate about the capability of all learners to learn a foreign language. The subject needed to be suited for all students, this discussion led to a change in both *what* the students were supposed to learn as well as *how* they were supposed to learn it (Fenner 2018, 23-24).

All of the methods reviewed above (section 2.2) have been a part of the teaching practices in Norway. For instance, during the time of the Grammar-Translation Method, Norwegian was the language of communication in the classroom (Fenner 2018, 25). Elements from the Direct Method were evident “in the curriculum of 1939 (*Normalplan for byfolkeskolen av 1939*) (1957)” in which the focus was on, for instance, attaining a useful vocabulary (Fenner 2018, 26). Later, “the preliminary curriculum for primary and lower secondary education of 1970 (*Forslag til normalplan for grunnskolen av 1970*) expressed clearly that foreign language learning was regarded as “verbal habit forming”, which was characteristic of the Audiolingual method (Fenner 2018, 27). According to Fenner (2018, 27), most changes happened in the lower levels, where the aim of language teaching was to be able to speak English. Also, the audiolingual method had a structured approach, where it consisted of “a linguistic syllabus, which contains the key items of phonology, morphology, and syntax of the language arranged according to their order of presentation” (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 59). The idea was to memorise and practice using dialogues in the right contexts (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 59).

Lastly, the curricula of 1974: *Mønsterplan for grunnskolen av 1974* and *Læreplan for den videregående skole* showed elements from the Audiolingual Method (Fenner 2018, 28-29). For instance, students were “to express thoughts and ideas spontaneously in English” (Fenner 2018, 29). Also, little emphasis was put on the cultural aspect (Fenner 2018, 28-29). It is evident, therefore, that the development in Norway has involved elements from all the different methods of the 20th century. Besides, it shows the emerging emphasis on being able to use the language to communicate, which is the focus of this project. This emphasis is also important in Communicative Language Teaching and the teaching of English today.

2.3 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and communicative competence

The ideas behind Communicative Language Teaching and communicative competence have developed and become highly relevant in today’s teaching and learning of English. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001, 159), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) “starts from a theory of language as communication”, where the aim is to attain “communicative competence”. Communicative competence is a term coined by Dell Hymes in 1972, and it refers to “the desired goal (i.e., the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately)” (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 156-159). Hymes focused on “real language users” as opposed to an “ideal speaker-listener”, which was the idea behind *competence* in the view of Noam Chomsky (Skulstad 2018a, 44-45). For Hymes, “the rules of use” were equally important to “the rules of grammar” (Skulstad 2018a, 46).

Hymes focused on how actual learners communicate, where they could be affected by, for instance, being tired, nervous or distracted (Skulstad 2018a, 45). Factors that can affect students’ oral production are highly relevant for their performance in the language classroom. It is also relevant for this project, as these factors are likely to be mentioned by the students. However, the definition of communicative competence has developed and been redefined several times by different people Skulstad (2009, 255-257).

Canale and Swain (1980) (as cited in Skulstad 2009, 257) tied “communicative competence” to three different competences. The first competence, “grammatical competence”, is tied to the “linguistic aspects”. Second, it also involves “sociolinguistic competence”, which is related to “the social context of interaction”. Lastly, it consists of “strategic competence”, which “refers to strategies employed to avoid breakdown in communication and other potential difficulties” (Skulstad 2009, 257). Later, Canale added “discourse competence” as a fourth sub-competence, which was tied to “the ability to combine grammatical forms and

meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in a specific genre” (Skulstad 2018a, 46-47). Communicative competence, even with its definition at this point, is still highly relevant for the English subject today as it focuses on aspects such as distinguishing between formal and informal language as well as being able to adapt one’s speaking skills to different contexts (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 4). The term was further developed and specified by the Council in Europe in 2001.

The Council of Europe separates between “*general competences*” and “*communicative language competences*” in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR) (Skulstad 2018a, 47) (Council of Europe 2001, 101/108). General competences consist of “declarative knowledge (knowledge of the world, sociocultural knowledge and intercultural awareness), skills and know-how (practical skills and know-how, intercultural skills and know-how), ‘existential’ competence (attitudes, motivations, values, cognitive styles, personality factors etc.) and ability to learn” (Skulstad 2018a, 47).

Communicative competences are tied to “linguistic competences, sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences” (Skulstad 2018a, 47). Some of the categories are similar to the ones developed by Canale and Swain, yet they have included several new sub-categories (Skulstad 2018a, 47-48). This is the current understanding of communicative competence where both general competences and communicative competences are relevant in the English subject curriculum, to which I will return. I am not going to discuss the different categories in detail, but rather explain why communicative competence is an important aspect of the English subject curriculum as well as in this project.

Communicative competence is central with regard to students’ oral skills development. The concept relates to becoming “able to communicate successfully in a given context” (Skulstad 2018a, 63). In addition, communicative competence and CLT are important in the English subject curriculum (Skulstad 2018a, 58). This is evident, for instance, in the English subject curriculum for upper secondary school (VG1) where students are to learn how to “express oneself fluently and coherently in a detailed and precise manner suited to the purpose and situation” (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 9). Thus, communicative competence and CLT are important in relation to this study as they have influenced the teaching of English in Norway since its occurrence in the 1970s, and especially the teaching of oral skills. This is evident in “*Mønsterplanen av 1987*” (Fenner 2018, 31), as well as in “*Reform 94*” (33) and “*Kunnskapsløftet/LK 06/13*” (34).

In addition, CLT and communicative competence are relevant for this project as they focus on aspects such as meaningful/authentic communication, cooperation, and learner centeredness, which are important aspects in the development of oral skills in the Norwegian EFL classroom. These aspects are highlighted by Richards and Rodgers (2001, 161) who refer to three important principles in CLT: 1) “Activities that involve real communication promote learning”, 2) “Activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning”, and 3) “Language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process”. The principles all focus on the importance of authenticity, and Newby (2006, 20) claims that “authenticity is the guiding principle” in communicative language teaching methodology. By implication, authenticity is important to promote oral communication in the EFL classroom.

Furthermore, as opposed to previous methods, CLT is “learner centred and aims to motivate learners to want to learn the target language by building on and extending their knowledge and experience” (Fenner 2018, 30). The teaching is centred around the students and their experiences, and they have to take responsibility themselves. This aspect is also evident in relation to the focus on interaction and cooperation between both the individual student and the teacher as well as between the students. The focus on learning through cooperation is also evident in Vygotsky’s sociocultural learning theory and *the zone of proximal development*, which is *the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers* (Vygotsky 1978, 86). Learning through collaboration with peers and teachers is highly important for the students in the Norwegian EFL classroom to develop their oral skills. Lastly, communicative competence is an important term in relation to the focus on self-perceived communication competence in this project, to which I will return in section 2.8.

Thus, the historical development of the teaching of English subject shows how the focus on grammar, speaking, listening and writing skills has shifted throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries. Moreover, even though CLT seeks to develop all basic skills in the English subject curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 4-5), it also shows the importance of oral skills. In addition, this review might also contribute to attaining a deeper understanding of current and previous teaching methods which might still influence the teaching of English today.

2.4 Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is a concept from the 1980/1990s that further developed the understanding of L2 communication, where it affects both how much and how often students participate orally in the L2 (Reinders 2016, NP). The idea was originally developed to address communication behaviour in students' first language, and it was defined as "the probability of engaging in communication when free to choose to do so" (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 545-546). Different variables affected peoples' WTC, and they were seen as trait-like influences, meaning that the influences were considered to be stable over time and in different contexts (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 546-547). When WTC was later applied to an L2 context by MacIntyre et al. (1998, 546), this changed. Baran-Łucarz (2014, 447) describes communication second or foreign language as "a unique process and experience, governed by its own distinct rules". Moreover, MacIntyre et al. (1998, 546) state that "The differences between L1 and L2 WTC may be due to the uncertainty inherent in L2 use that interacts in a more complex manner with those variables that influence L1 WTC". In other words, communicating in the L2 is not the same as communicating in the L1. I will return to WTC in the L2 in section 2.4.1 below.

In this project, WTC will function as a framework for investigating variables that can affect the students' oral participation in a Norwegian EFL context. Thus, their willingness, as well as their actual oral participation, will be in focus.

2.4.1 The WTC-model with trait and state variables

MacIntyre et al. (1998, 547) created a pyramid-model which shows how different variables affect students' WTC in the L2. When applied to an L2 context, the variables that influenced people were seen as both trait and state variables (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 546). Trait variables are defined as "stable, long-term properties of the environment or person that would apply to almost any situation" where a person's self-confidence is an example of one such trait (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 546-547). According to MacIntyre et al. (1998, 551), self-confidence is tied to the cognitive, where the students evaluate their speaking skills. In addition, self-confidence is affective in the sense that students might experience feelings of anxiety and discomfort when communicating in their L2 (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 551). On the other hand, situational/state influences are defined as "transient and dependent on the specific context in which a person functions at a given time" (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 546). State communicative self-confidence is an example of this type of variable which is based on the same components as self-confidence (evaluation of own speaking skills as well as the experience of

anxiety/discomfort). However, with this variable, MacIntyre et al. (1998, 549) take the situational aspect into consideration as they state that “it is likely that some situations will entail more confidence than others, primarily depending on characteristics of prior L2 contact in these specific situations”. This is also highly relevant in this project, as the aim is to explore the general impact of both anxiety and self-evaluation and whether these are stable influences or dependent on the different contexts. In this way, this model represents a shift from considering the variables as stable influences towards regarding the variables as influences that might affect students’ WTC at different times and in different contexts.

With this model, which applied WTC to an L2 context, MacIntyre et al. (1998, 547) also redefined WTC “as a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2”. In this definition, it is important to note the focus on how WTC can change. In addition, MacIntyre et al. (1998, 547) state that students also show WTC even if they do not speak. For instance, students show WTC by raising their hands to show that they are willing to answer questions (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 547). However, before a student shows WTC, there are several influences that can be taken into account, as shown in the model in figure 1 (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 547).

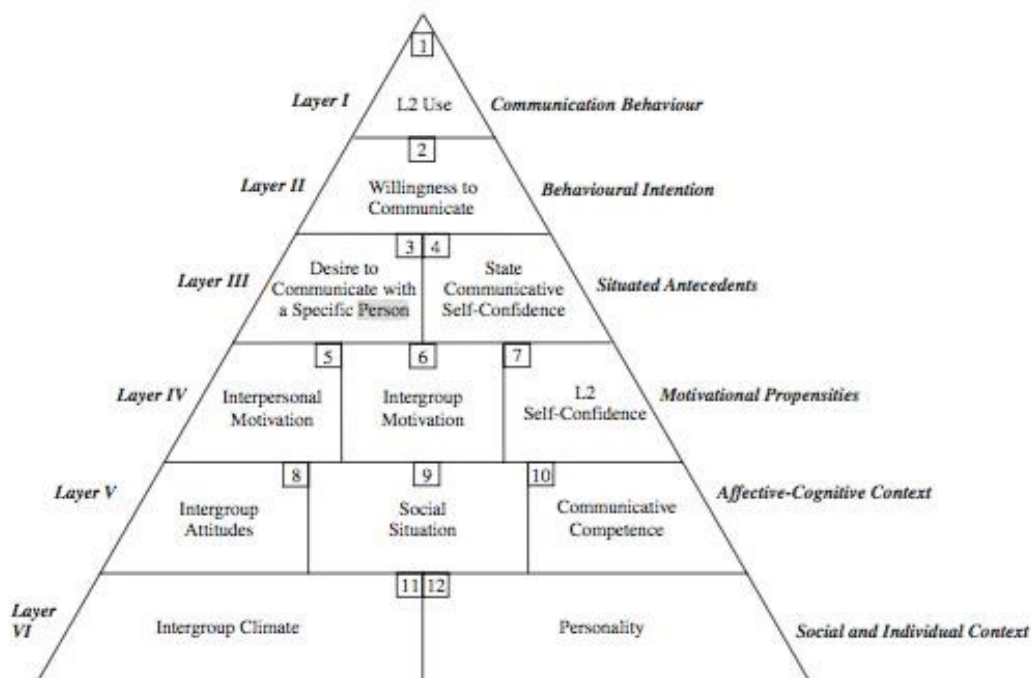


Figure 1: Heuristic pyramid model with situational and enduring variables that might affect students’ willingness to communicate (WTC) (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 547).

This project will look the oral participation of students in the EFL in relation to four different variables: classroom activities, foreign language anxiety, reliance on L1 and perceived communication competence. Most of the variables are retrieved from or inspired by aspects from the WTC model in addition to findings from researchers that have investigated other and similar variables. The students' reliance on their L1, on the other hand, is inspired by my own experiences as a student teacher. The variables in this study will not be categorised as trait or state variables. They will be regarded as both general influences as well as dependent on different contexts. The variables may differ from other studies in relation to how they are defined and investigated. This aspect is also relevant for other studies and researchers' interpretation of the WTC model and its variables.

2.4.2 Challenges with WTC

Galajda (2017, 30) states that defining WTC and the factors that can influence a person's WTC is challenging. Hence, researchers define and use the model in their own way. This is evident, for instance, with Bernales (2016, 3) who criticises this model for not including "*willingness to participate*", meaning participation through the L1 as well as "speech directed at oneself; and the formulation of thoughts in student's minds that are not (at least, originally) intended for articulation". Instead, the model focuses on speech that is "*articulated*" (Bernales 2016, 3). Hence, Bernales (2016, 10) seeks an understanding of WTC that shows the multifaceted nature of the classroom. Therefore, she wants to include other aspects than actual speech to indicate students' willingness to communicate. This example illustrates a way in which researchers may understand and use the concept of WTC differently.

Students' oral participation in the classroom can be challenging to predict and may change several times during one session. Galajda (2017, 4) states, "[b]eing incredibly changeable, communication is a unique and complex process". Therefore, it is difficult to facilitate oral communication in the EFL classroom in a way that suits every student.

Kang (2005, 291) offers a new definition of WTC based on how "WTC can dynamically emerge through the role of situational variables and fluctuate during communication". Thus, he suggests the following definition:

"Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an individual's volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables" (Kang 2005, 291).

This definition shows how difficult it can be for teachers to facilitate oral communication in the classroom, as students' WTC changes rapidly.

Nevertheless, the model offers insight into variables that influence students' oral participation in the classroom. The findings from research on WTC will be presented in the review of the different variables (section 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9).

2.4.3 Context of theoretical background

Most of the studies presented are conducted in countries which have different cultures and teaching practices compared to the Norwegian practices. In the following, I am going to present the English teaching practices in the countries that are represented in this project.

In China, English is a mandatory subject from Grade 3 in primary school, and it continues to be a mandatory subject throughout junior and senior secondary school (Gil 2016, 65-66). Furthermore, it is mandatory to study English for one year at the university (Gil 2016, 67). However, there are still challenges in relation to the teaching practices. For instance, grammar and academic knowledge is found to be more important than CLT and communicative competence (Kirkpatrick and Bui 2016, 12). Hence, the teaching of English in China may not facilitate oral skills development. Instead, it focuses on skills such as writing.

In South Korea, they start learning English in grade 3, where, since the 1990s, it has been a focus on implementing a communicative teaching approach (Chung and Choi 2016, 296). Thus, the situation in South Korea might be more similar to the Norwegian situation.

In Japan, English language teaching has been challenging. Ikuko Tsuboya-Newell (2017, NP) questions the teaching of English communication skills in Japan. One of the points that she makes is that the teaching of grammar and "silent skills" exceeds the focus on practicing how to communicate orally. This challenge is also brought forward by Glasgow and Paller (2016, 160) who describe a struggle "between those who prefer translation methods and those who prefer communicative methods" in Japan. This challenge might impact the students' development of communicative skills (Glasgow and Paller 2016, 160-161).

There are also studies conducted in Turkey and Iran. In Turkey, English is considered a foreign language and it is a compulsory subject taught at all levels. Moreover, since 2005, efforts have been made to adapt the teaching of English to EU standards (Kirkgoz 2007, 217). In Iran, learning English is a compulsory subject in middle school and in high school. However, not too much focus is put on being able to communicate orally (Ekstam and Sarvandy 2017, 113).

Lastly, there are studies conducted in Poland, where the teaching of English starts in pre-school, and it taught throughout primary school (Krzyk 2017, 45-48). In lower-secondary school, English is typically one of the two foreign languages that students study. In upper-secondary school, students can choose to study English (Krzyk 2017, 49-50). In other words, the amount of teaching that the students receive in English is similar to the Norwegian practices.

The purpose of this section was to point to the fact that most of the research that has been conducted on WTC and the variables that are investigated in this study is from countries in which the teaching approaches and practices are quite different from the Norwegian situation. However, the students of this study, as well as the students in the previous studies that are presented are FL/SL learners, and it is interesting to be able to compare the results of this project to international research.

2.5 Classroom activities

Classroom activities is, in this project, investigated in relation to pair work, group work and class discussions. Even though classroom activities might be considered the context in which to investigate other variables, it will be considered a variable in its own right because of the effect the different classroom activities might have on the students' oral participation. The impact of *interlocutors* and the *topic* of the interaction is also a part of this variable. These aspects are inspired by the different components of a "social situation" presented by MacIntyre et al. (1998, 553-554).

2.5.1 Topic

I have chosen to explore topic in relation to *familiar topics*, *difficult topics* and *easy topics* to see if there are any differences in the level of oral participation. These three aspects are relevant in relation to the topic because "the familiarity with a certain register will boost one's linguistic self-confidence, whereas a lack of these may inhibit even a generally confident speaker" (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 554). I chose not to define the terms *familiar*, *easy* and *difficult* topics, as the students might define these terms differently and have different opinions regarding the degree of difficulty of the topic. The purpose was to find out whether the students themselves believe that they are affected by the topic of the discussion in the classroom, so the definition of what constitutes a familiar, an easy or a difficult topic was left for the students to interpret.

Kang (2005, 283-284) found that topic influenced both the security and the excitement of the students. His study was conducted with non-native speakers of English in a conversation partner program at a university in the US. The students met with native speakers of English in which they spoke together for one hour Kang (2005, 280). The students who took part in this study were Korean students between 23-25 years who went to the US to study between 3-6 months. Before they came to the US, they had mostly learned written English from the beginning of middle school (Kang 2005, 280-281). In other words, the students have had different experiences with English compared to the students in this study. This does not, however, mean that the students of this study are not affected by the same variables.

The results in Kang's (2005, 283) study showed that a lack of background knowledge about a topic led to insecurity. A lack of background knowledge might make the students feel that the topic is difficult. When the topics were familiar, the participants spoke with excitement (Kang 2005, 284). Kang (2005, 285) also found that topic influences the responsibility of the students. He states, "[t]opics that were perceived to be useful and important for the participants appeared to create responsibility to talk, ask, and know about them" (Kang 2005, 285). This was evident, for instance, as one of the students felt a responsibility to pay attention to what was said about transferring between schools as he wanted information about this topic. This sense of responsibility also became evident when there was a topic that the students knew that they had more knowledge about compared to others (Kang 2005, 285). Furthermore, Kang (2005, 290) suggests that varying between different topics as well as letting the students participate in deciding which topics they want to talk about may help to create more WTC in the classroom.

Furthermore, Cao (2011, 470) researched situational WTC in an EAP class (English for Academic Purposes) in New Zealand. The students were from Korea and China, and between 20-30 years old. The results showed that "[h]alf of the participants in this study reported feeling disadvantaged in discussions of topics they lacked knowledge about" (Cao 2011, 472). Furthermore, the students were also negatively affected by not being interested in the topic (Cao 2011, 472).

Lastly, Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2015, 3) conducted a study of eight native speakers of Polish who were English majors at an institution of higher education in Poland. The students were 21 years old and had different proficiency levels in English. In this study, one of the students claimed that a change of topic could have made her participate more orally (Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2015, 7).

2.5.2 Interlocutors

Students are affected by who and how many they are working with. The impact of interlocutors, defined as “someone who is involved in a conversation” (Cambridge Online Dictionary, 13.11.2018), was investigated in relation to both the *familiarity* with and the *number* of people that the students worked with. The aim was to find out whether students were affected by speaking to friends as opposed to other classmates with whom they were not too familiar. In addition, the number of people that a student communicates with, represented in the pair, group and class discussion distinction, might also impact their oral participation.

Cao (2011, 472) states that the students’ WTC changes in relation to the number of people one must communicate with. He found that even though it is not always the case, overall, students wanted to work in groups and pairs. Also, some students in his study found class discussions to be “anxiety-provoking” in which failing before their classmates causes anxiety (Cao 2011, 472-473). Consequently, speaking in front of the whole class can be intimidating for some students. A preference of speaking in group discussions was also found in the study of Bergil (2016, 184) of Iranian university students’ WTC and the study of Khatibi and Zakeri (2014, 936) on Iranian EFL learners.

Feeling more confident when talking to a smaller number of people was also found in the study of Cao and Philp (2006, 488). Their study was carried out with eight international students at a General English program in New Zealand. All the students were at intermediate levels in English and they were from Korea, China, Japan and Switzerland (Cao and Philp 2006, 483). The results of the study showed that the students favoured speaking to few people (Cao and Philp 2006, 488). Moreover, class discussions reduce the students’ responsibility to communicate. In addition, this context “lacks the sense of cohesiveness that would presumably lend support to learners by making them feel secure enough to speak” (Cao and Philp 2006, 488). Therefore, class discussion context might be intimidating for students to participate.

Feeling secure when speaking was also an issue in Kang’s (2005, 283) study, in which the number of people affected their security. Kang (2005, 283) states, “[a]s the number of people in a conversation session increased, the participants’ security tended to decrease”. Working with a smaller number of interlocutors may therefore help the students feel more secure when speaking English.

Lastly, Lund (2006) discusses the use of different communicative opportunities in the Norwegian upper-secondary EFL classroom. In his study, he analysed the practice of three

teachers in relation to “[c]ommunicative activities among learners and teachers in networked environments” (Lund 2006, 188). In one of the teachers’ classes, they were talking about relationships. First, the teacher attempted to have a class discussion. However, Lund (2006, 189-190) states, “[t]his proved to be a difficult task in a class that was somewhat reticent on the one hand and prone to private comments, jokes and snide remarks on the other”. Thus, this activity was not a success. However, the same teacher decided to let the students discuss what is important to make relationships last in an online discussion forum. The results showed that several of the students that did not participate in class took part in this discussion online (Lund 2006, 190). This study provides an example of the difficulty with the traditional class discussion practice. However, it also shows the opportunities the teachers have in engaging the students in platforms where they feel more comfortable.

Furthermore, *familiarity* with interlocutors impacts students when deciding to speak. For instance, in the study of Cao and Philp (2006, 487), one of the learners stated that she was not willing to communicate with her classmates because she considered them to be strangers. The students in Bergil’s (2016, 184) study also showed low WTC when speaking to strangers. Familiarity with interlocutors had an impact on how safe the students felt as well as the excitement of the students in the study of Kang (2005, 282-284). The students felt insecure around people who did not know their proficiency level in English. The students also felt insecure about communicating in English with Koreans as they would be “ashamed of their non-fluent English speaking skills” (Kang 2005, 282). They felt most secure and their WTC was most encouraged when speaking to their tutors, who were native speakers of English (Kang 2005, 283). However, the tutors could also have a negative effect, depending on whether they seemed interested in the conversation or not (Kang 2005, 283).

Tavakoli and Davoudi (2017, 1513) look at WTC with Iranian EFL learners. The participants were between 11-50 years old and were from “intermediate, upper intermediate and advanced level of proficiency in a Language School”. The participants had the highest WTC in class discussions and when conversing with their teacher. The lowest WTC was found when speaking to their partner or in groups (Tavakoli and Davoudi 2017, 1518). However, these findings were in contrast with other findings on the impact of interlocutors. For instance, MacIntyre et al. (1998, 548-549) claim that we often have a desire to communicate with people who are similar to ourselves and people we talk to frequently. These findings are also supported by Cao and Philp (2006, 487). Khatibi and Zakeri (2014, 937) also found students to be most willing to speak when they were speaking to their friends.

Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelaks's (2015, 6) study also revealed that students were highly affected by whom they were communicating with. Two of the students stated that their WTC would not have been the same if the topic or the partner was different (Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2015, 6). The WTC of student 4, on the other hand, was negatively affected by her speaking partner as she took over the interaction (Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2015, 7).

Baran-Łucarz (2014, 464) found that students were affected by both group size as well as their relationship with the interlocutors in her study of Polish university students. The participants were between 18 and 40 years, the mean age was 21.40, and they had different proficiency levels in English (Baran-Łucarz (2014, 455). In relation to the effect of interlocutors, the students participated more when they spoke to people with whom they were familiar. In addition, role-play and pair/group work created more WTC for the participants than speaking in front several people (Baran-Łucarz 2014, 464). This shows that not only familiarity but also the number of interlocutors affect the students as well as the identity the speaker assumes when taking part in a role play. Baran-Łucarz (2014, 466) further advise that students should work in small groups as this creates less anxiety as opposed to larger groups.

Furthermore, Léger and Storch (2009, 271) investigated students in a French III class at an Australian university, in which they have been studying French for eight years. Even though this study does not involve students learning English, both languages are foreign languages and the students have been studying French long enough for it to be comparable to experiences other students might have when studying a foreign language. They found that the majority of the students found class discussions to be the most challenging (Léger and Storch 2009, 277). However, there were also difficulties with small group work, as some of the students did not feel that it was authentic to speak to their peers (Léger and Storch 2009, 279). Some of the students felt it was "pretentious, unauthentic, a little embarrassing" to speak in their L2 to their classmates, as they normally interacted in their mother tongue (Léger and Storch 2009, 279). Instead, many of the students felt that speaking to the teachers was more natural as they were native speakers (Léger and Storch 2009, 279-280). Léger and Storch's study as well as the other studies in this section show, there is not only one solution to help all students participate more in the classroom as some students prefer group work and talking to their friends, while others prefer class discussions, and some students find one topic challenging while others find it easy.

2.6 Foreign language anxiety (FLA)

Galajda (2017, 49) states, “For many language learners speaking causes stress, nervousness and anxiety and because of that it is perceived as the most difficult skill to develop especially in the context of the foreign language classroom”. Hence, foreign language anxiety is an important variable that can cause students to remain silent in activities involving oral communication in the EFL classroom. This is why this variable will be explored in this study.

Dörnyei (2005, 198) makes two important distinctions between trait and state anxiety and beneficial/facilitating and inhibitory/debilitating anxiety. According to Dörnyei (2005, 198), “Trait anxiety refers to a stable predisposition to become anxious in a cross-section of situations; state anxiety is the transient, moment-to-moment experience of anxiety as an emotional reaction to the current situation”. In this project, this distinction was researched by asking the students to reflect on whether their anxiousness towards speaking changes in the different classroom activities (pair work, group work and class discussion). In addition, I looked at the general impact of FLA. The term “anxious” is a quite negatively loaded word. Thus, to make sure that the students understood that I was interested in knowing whether they experienced anxiousness, nervousness or any other type of uneasy feelings, both terms anxious and nervous were used in this project.

2.6.1 Communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation

In this project, foreign language anxiety is tied to three aspects put forward by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986, 127). Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986, 127) state that “foreign language anxiety concerns performance evaluation within an academic and social context”. They tie foreign language anxiety to “three related performance anxieties: 1) communication apprehension; 2) test anxiety; and 3) fear of negative evaluation”. Anxiety will, in this project, be seen in relation to these three anxiety types. Communication apprehension involves “the personal knowledge that one will almost certainly have difficulty understanding others and making oneself understood” (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127). Test anxiety is “a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure” in which students expect to make a perfect performance, otherwise, it will be considered a failure (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127-128). Lastly, fear of negative evaluation involves “apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 128). In the following, I am going to present research on FLA that are relevant for the three anxiety types.

Liu and Jackson (2008, 72-73) look at foreign language anxiety with Chinese university students. The participants were between 14 and 21 years old and most of the students had only studied English since age 12. For the majority of the students, their contact with English was limited to school experiences (Liu and Jackson 2008, 73). Accordingly, the experiences of these students are highly different from students in Norway. Consequently, the results of this study might not be comparable to the Norwegian situation. However, the students in this study might also experience nervousness or anxiousness tied to speaking English. Also, the focus of this study were in many ways similar to some of the aspects that were investigated in this study.

Liu and Jackson (2008, 72-73) investigated the degree of foreign language anxiety the students experienced as well as the extent to which the students did not want to speak in the classroom. Over one third of the students were affected by all the different anxiety types in FLA (Liu and Jackson 2008, 82). Furthermore, they found that “students’ unwillingness to communicate and their FL anxiety are closely related” (Liu and Jackson 2008, 79). Hence, foreign language anxiety has a direct impact on students’ oral participation.

Young (1991) talks about different aspects that might cause anxiety for language learners. She mentions six different sources: “1) personal and interpersonal anxieties; 2) learner beliefs about language learning; 3) instructor beliefs about language teaching; 4) instructor-learner interactions; 5) classroom procedure; and 6) language testing (Young 1991, 427). Number one is tied to “low self-esteem and competitiveness”, where students who have low self-esteem are concerned with, for instance, the opinions of their peers. Competitiveness has to do with a comparison of oneself “to others or to an idealized self-image” (Young 1991, 427). This first source of language anxiety might also be tied to “social anxiety”, which is defined as “the prospect or presence of interpersonal evaluation in real or imagined social settings” (Young 1991, 427). This type of anxiety can be tied to “fear of negative evaluation” (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 128). The second source of language anxiety, the learners’ own perceptions about language learning, is important as it affects their predisposition and attitude towards learning a language. Young (1991, 428) refers to the study of Horwitz in which students are affected by, for instance, their accent as well as whether they speak correctly. This can be seen in relation to “communication apprehension” (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127). These students were also under the impression that there is a difference between peoples’ ability to learn a foreign language (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127; Young 1991, 428), which can affect them negatively as they compare themselves to others.

Furthermore, students might be affected by the teaching practice of their teachers. For instance, teachers who function as “drill sergeants” may cause anxiety for the learners as opposed to being a “facilitator” (Yong 1991, 428). Students can also be affected by how they interact with their teachers, where they may feel anxious about being corrected. At the same time, there are students who feel that this correction is necessary (Young 1991, 428). The fifth source of anxiety, anxiety in relation to classroom procedures, is tied to speaking in front of people (Young 1991, 429). This might indicate that students feel more anxious when speaking in front of a larger group of people. Lastly, in relation to testing, Young (1991, 429) finds that “In language testing, the greater the degree of student evaluation and the more unfamiliar and ambiguous the test tasks and formats, the more the learner anxiety produced”. This can also be seen in relation to “test anxiety” (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127-128), and it points to specific measures that need to be accounted for in language testing. In the Norwegian context, however, the students are now entitled by law to know by which criteria their performance is assessed as the students are to “take active part in the learning situation” (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2009, section 3-4). In summary, all of these variables are highly relevant and tied to the different anxiety types that the students might experience in the EFL classroom.

Baran-Łucarz (2014, 466) mentions some practical measures that might be taken to make it less frightening to speak in the FL classroom. In her study, Baran-Łucarz (2014, 462) asked the students two open-ended questions: “What might be the causes of your reluctance to speak during English class?” and “What remedies can you suggest for your reluctance to speak?”. She found that the students were often afraid of being negatively evaluated by others. One of the students answered the first question by saying, “I think others will laugh at my mistakes”. Another student said, “I fear the reaction of others” (Baran-Łucarz 2014, 462). To answer the second question, the first student said, “Nice atmosphere in the class”, whilst the second student thought it would help to work in smaller groups, “Working in small groups, nice, friendly, stress-free atmosphere” (Baran-Łucarz 2014, 462). Therefore, the opinions of others highly affect students’ oral participation in the classroom. These results also point to the importance of creating a good class environment where there is room for error and the classmates support each other.

Norderud (2017, 65-66) discusses shy children and communication apprehension. None of the students in his study reported being shy. However, one of the teachers claimed that two students could fit the characteristics. According to the teacher, pair and group work help

students who are shy to become more comfortable (Norderud 2017, 65-66). These findings also corroborate with the findings in the studies of Cao (2011) and Kang (2005), as discussed in section 2.5. Norderud (2017, 67-68) further goes on to discuss how to approach children with communication apprehension, in which he talks about different measures that can be taken to help shy children become more comfortable with speaking in the classroom. Examples of measures that might be taken include the development of a healthy classroom environment, seating/placement in the classroom as well as different task types that might be given. He also emphasizes the role of the teacher in helping these students (Norderud 2017, 66-67).

Furthermore, Norderud (2017, 68) talks about “Classroom procedures; speaking activities”, in which his respondents agreed that working in pairs and groups created least anxiety as they were not put on the spot. At the same time, working in pairs and groups could also lead to the use of Norwegian (Norderud 2017, 68). In his discussion of classroom speaking activities, Norderud (2017, 69) also mentions oral presentations where four out of six students whom he categorised as “less frequent participating students” said that they experienced anxiety during presentations. The last two students felt that it was fine as they had the opportunity to prepare themselves. Preparation was also important for the less participating students as they were afraid of being asked questions without being prepared (Norderud 2017, 69).

Lastly, it is important to keep in mind that FLA is a dynamic variable. Léger and Storch (2009, 270) state, “communication anxiety can operate at the individual level (i.e., an anxious person), or be triggered by the situational contexts (e.g., the language class) or by a particular event”. This division was important in this project, as the aim was to look at all the variables as both enduring and situational influences.

2.7 The use of L1

In this project, the students’ use of L1 is seen in relation to several aspects. The aim is not to point to the negative effects of using Norwegian in the English classroom. Instead, I am interested in knowing *why* and in which *contexts* the students use Norwegian and whether *they* feel that they are affected by it. First, I am going to look at *authenticity*, where the aim is to find out whether the students feel that the EFL classroom is a setting where it is natural to practice their speaking skills in English. Second, I will focus on the contexts and the reasons for the students’ use of Norwegian. This variable is not a part of the WTC model of

MacIntyre et al. (1998, 547). Yet, I have decided to include this as a variable as it might affect the students' oral skills development in the EFL classroom.

According to MacIntyre et al. (1998, 546), "the most dramatic variable one can change in the communication setting is the language of discourse" where WTC in the L1 is not necessarily comparable to WTC in the L2. Therefore, it is not necessarily communication in itself that is the challenge, but rather the language one uses to communicate. In the following, I am going to present some historically different perspectives on the use of L1 in the L2/FL classroom.

2.7.1 Historical development

Students' reliance on L1 has for a long time been discussed among researchers (Moore 2013, 239). Historically, the different methods of teaching reviewed in section 2.2 show the different attitudes towards using the L1 in the EFL classroom. For instance, in the Grammar-Translation Method, the students translated texts, and the communication was in Norwegian (Fenner 2018, 25). During the Direct Method, the focus shifted, as the L1 and translation from the L2 was to be avoided (Du 2016, 31). However, this was later criticised as teachers had to spend time on explanations in the target language that could more easily have been done in their L1 (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 13). In the Audiolingual Method, the view of L1 was also negative. Because of the focus on habit formation through the behaviourist learning theory, the students were to gain new habits in the L2 and dispose of themselves their L1 habits. Consequently, "the L1 is viewed as the major interference in their L2 learning" (Du 2016, 32-33)

Lastly, in relation to present teaching approaches, Moore (2013, 239) states that CLT as well as cognitive second language acquisition (SLA) theory both advocate for "English only" classrooms "where use of the L1 is seen as a 'problem' to be avoided, and teachers' lapses into L1 result in feelings of guilt". This feeling of guilt was present in the study of Rye (2014), to which I will return. The restricted use of the L1 in CLT was also fronted by Howatt (1988, 25 as cited in Du 2016, 34), in which he stated,

CLT has adopted all the major principles of the 19th century reform: the primacy of the spoken language, for instance, the inductive teaching of grammar, the belief in connected texts and, most significant of all, the monolingual (direct method) principle that languages should be taught in the target language, not in the pupils' mother tongue

Thus, historically there has been a changing idea about the effect of the L1. In the following, I am going to present some research that has been conducted on the use of the L1 in the ESL/EFL classroom.

2.7.2 Authenticity and contexts in which the students use their L1

Moore (2013, 239) investigated the use of L1 in the EFL classroom at a Japanese university. He claims that L1 use is natural in the L2 classroom (Moore 2013, 243). His study was conducted with learners between 19 and 33 years old with intermediate levels of English and the aim for the study was to identify factors that might trigger L1 use. He investigated at the amount of L1 that was used overall, whether the students' use of L1 is constant or dependent on different partners or whether it varies with time. In addition, he looked at the sociocognitive context in which the learners relied on their L1 as well as contextual influences on the use of L1 (Moore 2013, 243). Twenty-eight percent of the data collected was spoken in the students' L1, and the reasons for students' use of L1 were varied (Moore 2013, 245). Some had a stable reliance on L1, whereas others used more L1 when talking to people with a lower level of L2 proficiency or generally with other partners (Moore 2013, 245). Lastly, the results showed that the students could struggle with finding their roles in the interaction and figuring out what to do, which could affect their use of the L1 (Moore 2013, 247). In addition, the learners were affected by "task control" in which the use of L1 or L2 was affected by who took charge of solving the task (Moore 2013, 249). This could also be the case in this study, as students might speak more Norwegian if they do not understand the task or if they collaborate with someone who is not set on speaking English.

Galajda (2017, 12-14) distinguishes between "authentic communication" from "FL classroom communication" as the classroom does not provide the students with a natural scene for learning a language. She further talks about the role of the teacher, where they have to facilitate authentic oral production in the EFL classroom (Galajda 2017, 14). There are differences with these two types of communication in relation to "Aims", "Roles", "Control", "Turn-taking", "Topic", "Culture" and "Context" (Galajda 2017, 15-16). For instance, authentic communication roles are "[d]ependent on interlocutors' relations, context and aim of communication", whereas, in FL classroom communication, the teacher is responsible for how the students interact and act in the classrooms (Galajda 2017, 15). Even though this is not necessarily the case for all language classroom, it points to important aspects that might make it unnatural for the students to use their L2.

Brooks-Lewis (2009, 221) advocates for the use of L1 in the EFL classroom. She aims to explore adult EFL students' opinions regarding the use of L1 in the EFL classroom in which "[t]he goal was not to find whether the participants agreed or disagreed per se with concepts included in the course but *what* they had to say" (Brooks-Lewis 2009, 221). This aspect is

similar to the aim of this study, in which I am interested in exploring the students' own perceptions of their use of Norwegian in the EFL classroom. However, Brooks-Lewis's (2009) study differs from this study in relation to the starting point of the respondents who participated. Brooks-Lewis (2009, 221) researched Spanish-speaking adult learners in a Mexican university who were learning English for the first time, while this study focuses on upper-secondary school students who have learned English since the first grade. In consequence, not all of the findings in Brooks-Lewis' study is relevant for this project. The aspects that the respondents highlight may, however, be equally important for all students learning a second or a foreign language.

The results of Brooks-Lewis's (2009) study showed that students are both for and against the use of L1. For instance, one of the participants wrote: "The most important lesson that I learned at this time was that when we learn other languages we must not lose our identity or change it for other customs or traditions" (Brooks-Lewis 2009, 227). This statement might be tied to the issue of authenticity when speaking another language. However, a couple of responses showed a negative attitude towards the use of L1. For instance, one of the respondents said: "I would like the teacher to talk more in English because it is the only way we are going to learn the language" (Brooks-Lewis 2009, 224). Both of these opinions might be shared by the students in Norway who have studied the language for a long time.

Rye (2014) investigated the use of L1 in Norway. She found that students use Norwegian (L1) when talking to classmates about topics that were unrelated to their schoolwork, for explanations and working with difficult topics. On the other hand, they speak most English in class discussions and when communicating with their teacher (Rye 2014, 68). Hence, the students in her study used Norwegian and English in specific situations in the classroom.

The three teachers who participated in the study used their L1 to varying degrees. However, they all strived for "monolingual teaching" in the L2/FL (Rye 2014, 69-70). When they used their L1, it was for specific purposes such as for translation, when giving instructions and in situations where the students use their L1 (72). The students also preferred their teacher to use Norwegian in these situations (76). Therefore, there are situations in which both teachers and students find the use of L1 to be necessary.

Lastly, Dale (2015) has looked at students' code-switching in upper secondary school in Norway. He found that 12 out of 14 students who participated in the study switched to Norwegian when discussing topics that were "typically Norwegian" (Dale 2015, 39). Typically Norwegian topics were defined as "topics that elicit thoughts and feelings about

Norway” (1). One explanation for this code-switching might be the concept of *metaphorical code-switching* where “certain topics fall into certain conversational domains, and speakers are used to using specific codes for specific domains” (Dale 2015, 55). Another explanation for their code-switching might be tied to *communicative competence*. In this case, their code-switching might be caused by the students having insufficient language skills. This can be seen in relation to Cao’s (2011, 474) idea of students using their L1 to cover their weaknesses. Lastly, Dale (2015, 56) mentions the *markedness theory of code-switching*, which “is a socially motivated action that can be used to, among other things, maintain appropriateness and create an understanding”. Dale’s study show that there are several theories that can explain why students code-switch with different topics.

In summary, a range of different reasons could explain the students’ use of the L1 in the classroom, and there are different opinions regarding the effect the use of L1 has on the L2/FL development.

2.8 Self-perceived communication competence

“Self-perceived communicative competence is believed to be a causal factor in the way people choose to behave” (Galajda 2017, 44). Therefore, this is an important variable in exploring why students communicate or not in the EFL classroom. In this section, I look at how students are affected by their own perceptions of their abilities to communicate in English.

2.8.1 Communication/communicative competence

In this project, perceived communication competence will be understood as “students’ self-perception of their ability to communicate in an L2” (Fushino 2010, 703). However, before exploring students’ self-perception of their own ability to communicate, it is important to distinguish between “communication” and “communicative” competence. As mentioned in section 2.3, communicative competence is a wide term that includes “*general competences*” and “*communicative language competences*” as well as several sub-competencies (Council of Europe 2001, 101). However, when the students are asked to elaborate on their perception of their own abilities to speak English in this project, the focus will not be on the different competencies that belong to communicative competence. Instead, they will simply be asked about their self-perceived ability to communicate in general as well as whether this perception changes in the different classroom activities. Yet, I find it relevant to include communicative competence, as the concept is important in the English subject curriculum

(Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013). In addition, I believe that the competencies may come up as the students assess their own ability to communicate. This might involve their grammatical competence, which is a part of the linguistic competence (Council of Europe 2001, 112-113) or they might be struggling with the sociolinguistic aspect (118-119). Therefore, even if this project will not focus explicitly on communicative competence, the term is still important in relation to analysing how the students assess their own abilities to communicate in the EFL classroom.

2.8.2 Self-perceived communication competence

Students' self-perception of their ability to communicate is important in relation to their development in the English subject.

Students' beliefs about their own communicative competence do not necessarily correlate with their actual competence as perceived by their teachers. Therefore, it is interesting to look into the students' own perceptions. In the following, I am going to present different studies that show how students can be impacted by their self-perceived communication competence.

Teven et al. (2010, 265) conducted a study of self-perceived communication competence at a large Western university with 140 undergraduate students. The participants were between 18 to 38 years. They found that several aspects can affect a person's SPCC. For instance, communication apprehension and SPCC were negatively correlated, meaning that students consider themselves to be less competent if they have high communication apprehension. Second, WTC and SPCC are positively correlated where students have high SPCC if they have high WTC. Third, shyness and SPCC are negatively correlated. Consequently, shy students might have a negative view of their communication skills (Teven et al. 2010, 267). Hence, several of the variables that were investigated in this study might also have an impact on each other.

Furthermore, Fushino (2010, 703-704) talks about "communication confidence", which is a combination of communication competence and communication apprehension. He refers to the study of MacIntyre, Noels and Clement (1997) in which they looked at the relationship between "language anxiety, perceived and actual L2 competence" at a Canadian university with students studying French as an L2 (Fushino 2010, 703). The results showed that "anxiety and actual competence" showed a strong correlation with self-perceived competence (MacIntyre, Noels and Clement 1997, as cited in Fushino 2010, 703). Fushino (2010, 704) also underlines, in his study of students at a Japanese university, the dynamic character of

both communication apprehension and self-perceived communicative competence in L2 group work as the students may become more comfortable as they get more experience.

Baran-Łucarz (2014, 462) also talks about the students' "self-perceived linguistic competence". One of the students had "low pronunciation self-assessment and self-efficacy" in which he/she stated, "I will be less stressed and more eager to talk when I am sure that my grammar and pronunciation are correct" (Baran-Łucarz 2014, 462-463). Another student stated that he/she is affected by a "[l]ack of progress in speaking despite my effort" (Baran-Łucarz 2014, 463). The students are clearly negatively affected by their own thoughts regarding their oral skills. Lastly, one of the students said, "My level is lower than that of other students, so I try to avoid speaking at all costs. I realize this is a vicious circle, but can see no remedy. Maybe e-learning?" (Baran-Łucarz 2014, 463). In this case, a student is negatively affected by his thoughts about his own competence to the degree that he/she does not speak in class. Moreover, he/she compares their competence to others.

In the Norwegian context, Norderud (2017, 70) also talks about students' perception of their ability to speak English. One of the teachers claimed that students' oral participation is affected by how they perceive their speaking skills, and not necessarily by their actual speaking skills (Norderud 2017, 70). Furthermore, five out of six students that did not participate much in the classroom experienced a low perception of their speaking skills (Norderud 2017, 71).

Galajda (2017, 44) ties self-perceived communicative competence to the idea behind "self-efficacy" in which "[b]eliefs about our own abilities and about qualities such as intelligence have been shown to have a direct influence on how both children and adults interact with their worlds, and therefore how they go about learning from them" (Banyard and Hayes, 1994, p. 115, as cited in Galajda 2017, 44). This shows how important it is to focus on and pay attention to the students' utterances about their own abilities.

Lastly, Léger (2009, 161) looks at the impact of self-assessment with university students in Australia studying French III. This was investigated through three questionnaires in which the students got to reflect on their development and their "learning behavior" (Léger 2009, 162). In the questionnaires, Léger (2009, 164) investigated aspects such as vocabulary, fluency, turn-taking and pronunciation. The results at the end of the semester showed that "[l]earners' perceived improvement in vocabulary, fluency, and overall confidence as L2 speakers corresponded with individual goal-setting for the semester" (Léger 2009, 170). Accordingly, this type of "awareness-raising" seems to work (Léger 2009, 170). Five out of 21 students

said that the self-assessment “increased their confidence and motivation to participate in class” (Léger 2009, 167). In addition, the students felt that the questionnaires made them become more aware of their learning process, helped them to monitor their learning as well as making it easier to make specified goals (Léger 2009, 167). Lastly, all the students that were interviewed was positive towards SA (Léger 2009, 167). Hence, exploring the students’ perspectives on self-assessment might help to understand their willingness to participate orally in the classroom.

Even though this project does not focus on self-assessment, there is a focus on the students’ self-perception of their own abilities to communicate. More specifically, the research will focus on whether the participants are affected by their own thoughts about their ability to communicate. This is not exactly the same as self-assessment as described by Utdanningsdirektoratet (2015). Yet, the two concepts are quite similar as both entail an assessment of their own competence.

Chapter 3: Materials and methods

This chapter includes a presentation and a justification of the different approaches and methods that have been used to answer the research questions of this project (see section 1.3). Furthermore, I will present the different methods that were used, as well as describe how the data was collected and analysed. The materials will be presented in connection with each method. Lastly, the reliability and the validity of the project, as well as ethical considerations concerning the data collection process, will be discussed.

3.1 Methods

Creswell (2012, 3) defines research as “a process of steps used to collect and analyse information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue”. In this project, the aim is to attain a deeper understanding of the students’ oral participation in the Norwegian EFL classroom (see research questions in section 1.3). I want to investigate whether the students are affected by concrete variables in addition to learning *why* the students choose to participate orally or not in the classroom. Therefore, it is most suitable to use both qualitative and quantitative methods of research in this project. To best answer the research questions of this project, a mixed-methods approach has been applied. In the following, I am going to present the characteristics of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods, in addition to justifying the use of the different methods for this project.

3.1.1 Quantitative research

The purpose of using a quantitative research method in this project is to investigate the attitudes of a larger group of people. Creswell (2012, 13) describes quantitative research as the act of “[a]nalyzing trends, comparing groups, or relating variables using statistical analysis, and interpreting results by comparing them with prior predictions and past research”. In this study, the aim is to look at the attitudes of two groups of students towards a set of variables, which in turn will be seen in relation to previous research. It was natural, therefore, to use quantitative research methods as it is suitable when looking for trends and tendencies amongst several people (Creswell 2012, 13).

One of the differences between quantitative and qualitative research lies in the view of the *research focus* versus *the research subject* (Holliday 2007, 5-6). In quantitative research, the attention is on the research focus where the researcher tests hypotheses (Holliday 2007, 5-6),

or in this case, investigates the effect of specific variables. Therefore, the researcher first has to collect measurable data that can be analysed and generalised (Ivankova and Creswell 2009, 137). However, in the present study, the sample size is not big enough to be generalised (see possible limitations in section 3.6). Yet, it is possible to uncover some tendencies that can be further explored.

The strengths of quantitative research can be tied to, for instance, the validity of the findings as it is possible to perform quality checks on the results (Dörnyei 2007, 34). It is also possible to investigate the attitudes of a large number of respondents in a precise manner (Dörnyei 2007, 34). However, it can also be challenging to use quantitative research methods as they do not capture the complexity of the topic that is being investigated (Dörnyei 2007, 35). For the purpose of this project, I found it most suitable to combine quantitative and qualitative methods of research.

3.1.2 Qualitative research

Dörnyei (2007, 38) states, "qualitative research is concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore the participants' views of the situation being studied". A qualitative approach is suited to answer the research questions of this project as the focus is on exploring the views of the students. Furthermore, the topic of the research is quite complex and according to Dörnyei (2007, 39), "the participant-sensitivity of qualitative research is very helpful in deciding what aspects of data require special attention because it offers priority guidelines that are validated by the main actors themselves". Thus, a qualitative approach may help the researcher identify which aspects that are most important to focus on, which is especially relevant in the present project, as the reasons for students' willingness to speak English can vary substantially.

In qualitative research, the *research subject* is important (Holliday 2007, 5-6; Croker 2009, 7). The focus is on "how participants experience and interact with a **phenomenon** at a given point in time and in a particular context, and the multiple meanings it has for them" (Croker 2009, 7). The aim is to explore the world of the participants from an insider perspective (Croker 2009, 7).

Qualitative research differs from quantitative research in its exploratory nature. The aim is not necessarily to find anything that can be relevant to other contexts, instead, "its purpose is to discover new ideas and insights, or even generate new theories" (Croker 2009, 9). For the purpose of this study, the aim was to include qualitative research as a way to explore not only

to what degree the different variables affected the students' oral participation, but also to learn more about *why* the variables affected them or not.

3.1.3 Mixed methods

Mixed methods is defined as “a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study (...) to understand a research problem” (Creswell 2012, 535). This study has an “explanatory sequential design” in which quantitative data is collected before qualitative data, and the qualitative data is used to attain a deeper understanding of the quantitative data (Creswell 2012, 542). Creswell (2012, 542) states that in this design, “the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem; more analysis, specifically through qualitative data collection, is needed to refine, extend, or explain the general picture”. In this project, the quantitative data from the questionnaire will be supplemented by the qualitative data from the interviews and the classroom observation, which creates a more comprehensive picture of the situation in the respective classrooms where the research was conducted. To summarise, mixed-method research “*combine the methods in a way that achieves complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses*” (Jonson and Onquegbuzie 2004, 18, as cited in Punch 2009, 339).

Timing, *weighting* and *mixing* are three important characteristics of mixed methods research (Ivankova and Creswell 2009, 138). *Timing* is related to the order you choose to collect and analyse the data, which was discussed in the previous paragraph. *Weighting* has to do with the importance of the different types of data collected. When deciding what is more important, the researcher needs to find out whether the study focuses more on exploration or predicting results. In the case of this project, the research questions (see section 1.3) can be answered both qualitatively and quantitatively. By measuring both the effect through statements and Likert-scales in a questionnaire, as well as learning whether they are affected through open-ended questions in the questionnaire and the interviews, it is possible to uncover whether the students are affected by the different variables and whether the impact changes. However, since interviews are highly time-consuming, it is difficult to obtain the perspective of more than a few participants. This can be done more easily through the questionnaire. Hence, I would argue that the two methods are of equal importance as they both contribute to answering the research questions. Lastly, *mixing* has to do with “how the two methods, quantitative or qualitative, are integrated within the study” (Ivankova and Creswell 2009, 138). Again, this depends on the aim of the study (Ivankova and Creswell 2009, 138). As previously mentioned, I decided to use an explanatory sequential design where the qualitative

methods are used to complement and discuss the results from the quantitative data collection. Together, the different approaches can contribute to a deeper understanding of what affects students' oral participation in the Norwegian EFL classroom.

The setting of this project can be easier to grasp through the use of mixed methods. Both learning and socialising happens in the classroom, which makes it a complex setting to investigate. Mixed methods "can broaden the scope of the investigation and enrich the researcher's ability to draw conclusions" (Dörnyei 2007, 186). For the aim of this project, I believe multiple methods and approaches are necessary to capture the complexity of the setting as well as the topic.

3.2 Participants

The participants of this study were students between 15-17 years old in the first and the second year of upper secondary school in Norway. The research was conducted in two different classes with two different teachers, and both classes belonged to the general studies program. The first class was a VG1 class with 29 students, whilst the other class was a VG2 class with 21 students. In Norway, the English subject is mandatory in the first grade of upper secondary school, whereas the students can choose to continue studying English in the second and third grade of upper secondary school. No criteria were made for the selection of participants for this study except that they had to have English as a subject the year the data was collected. Hence, the research focus of this project was not connected to the level of English in upper secondary school, but to features and preferences pertaining to the learners themselves.

3.3 Choice of methods

The methods presented were chosen based on the research questions of this project (see section 1.3).

3.3.1 Classroom observation

A classroom observation was conducted to attain an overview of the different variables that could affect the students' oral participation. The observation lasted for two weeks, and I observed the two classes for three double-sessions each, which is a total of five and a half hours in each class.

Observation “provides direct information rather than self-report accounts” (Dörnyei 2007, 18). Hence, for the purpose of this project, it is useful to include observation as a tool in addition to the survey and the interviews. However, it is impossible to record everything that is going on during a session, which is why it is important to make some limitations for the scope of the observation. For instance, before entering the observation site, the observer needs to decide where the observation should take place. Thereafter, the observer needs to select what to observe, when the observation will take place and how long the observation should last (Creswell 2012, 215). Furthermore, it is important to use a “broad-to-narrow perspective” to get an overview of the site and the people that you are observing before you look at more specific situations or aspects that you want to observe (Creswell 2012, 215-216). Lastly, you can record both descriptive and reflective field notes.

Descriptive fieldnotes record a description of the events, activities, and people (e.g., what happened). Reflective fieldnotes record personal thoughts that researchers have that relate to their insights, hunches, or broad ideas or themes that emerge during the observation (e.g., what sense you make of the site, people, and situation) (Creswell 2012, 217).

In this project, I have used a combination of descriptive and reflective field notes.

3.3.1.1 Material

The material from the classroom observation were the field notes (see appendix E). The field notes were written on computer and by hand.

3.3.1.2 Observation design

Observations are typically separated into “‘participant versus ‘nonparticipant observation’ and ‘structured’ versus ‘unstructured observation’” (Dörnyei 2007, 179). In this project, I took the role of a nonparticipating observer, and the observation was partially structured as there were pre-determined focus points that were related to the variables that were investigated in this study. I decided to mainly focus on the following aspects:

- Whether the students are affected by the classroom activity: pairs, groups and class discussions
- Whether the students’ participation varied according to whom they were working with
- Whether the students were affected by the topic of the interaction
- In which contexts the students used on Norwegian

The other variables, FLA and SPCC has to do with the students’ own perceptions and they were therefore not a part of the classroom observation. There was also room for other

observations that appeared during the sessions. I did not use any recording devices, but made field notes (see appendix E).

3.3.1.3 Conducting the classroom observation

The classroom observation was conducted over the course of two weeks. The students were observed for three double sessions each, which is a total of five and a half hours in each class.

The teachers and I had discussed the different variables that would be observed in advance. Therefore, they had arranged for oral communication to be the focus of the sessions. The students worked in pairs, in groups and had class discussions. They worked with different topics that could be considered both easy and challenging, and they also worked with different people. For instance, in session one in class 1, the students discussed TV-series, news and football before they turned to one of the texts in the textbook about intercultural competence. In this session, several different topics could be both difficult and easy for the students to discuss.

I originally planned on using the classroom observation to choose participants with high, medium and low levels of oral participation for the interviews. However, it was rather difficult to make notes on individual students that were thorough enough to use for this selection. In addition, it was difficult to categorise the students as high, medium and low after only five and half hours of observation. Therefore, I mainly relied on the results from the questionnaire in which I looked for answers that showed high, medium and low degree of impact of the different variables. Additionally, the students were chosen based on who volunteered.

3.3.1.4 Analysing the classroom observation

The field notes from the classroom observation were analysed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is defined as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke 2006, 79). Braun and Clarke (2006, 87) describe the different steps in conducting a thematic analysis. First, you have to become familiar with the data. Thereafter, you create codes to sort the data material before you place them into different themes. In this project, some themes and categories were natural to use in the analysis as the data collection was based on the variables that were investigated. Also, the themes and the extracts that are chosen should be seen in relation to the research questions (Braun and Clarke 2006, 87).

It was useful to analyse the data from the classroom observation using a thematic analysis as it is a highly flexible way of analysing the data material. However, because of this flexibility, it is also important to follow the phases for the analysis. This is also relevant in relation not to be overwhelmed when deciding which aspects to focus on. For this project, the focus was guided by the research questions and the variables that were investigated. I used NVivo 12, a computer programme for text analysis, when analysing the classroom observation data. The results are presented in tables in chapter four.

3.3.2 The survey

There are both strengths and weaknesses with the use of surveys. First of all, it is challenging because it is difficult to assure that the interpretation of the scale items is the same for all the students. If the students interpret the meaning of the different scale points differently or different from the researcher, this may affect the results of the survey (Krosnick and Presser 2009, 11). Furthermore, the questionnaire should be rather short and easy to understand, as respondents do not want to spend too much time answering it. Consequently, it is difficult to go into great depth with a survey (Dörnyei 2007, 115). Also, the quality of the answers might vary as respondents might agree to answer the survey, but they may not have the motivation to provide answers of high quality (Krosnick and Presser 2009, 6). Furthermore, they may be or become disinterested or tired of answering questions, which can affect the quality, reliability and validity of the survey. On the positive side, however, surveys are highly efficient when it comes to collecting data, as it is possible to investigate the attitudes of several people at once. In addition, the analysis of the data from the survey can be done efficiently. Furthermore, the surveys can be versatile, meaning “that they can be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics” (Dörnyei 2007, 115). For the purpose of this project, using a survey helped me investigate the attitudes and behaviour of several students in relation to their oral participation in the EFL classroom.

3.3.2.1 Material

The survey data were analysed and tables were created using excel and the tools that were available in SurveyXact.

3.3.2.2 Survey design

A questionnaire was distributed after two weeks of observation. The questionnaire consisted of two different parts and it was based on the four variables that this project seeks to investigate: the effect of classroom activities (pair work, group work and class discussions),

nervousness/anxiousness about speaking English, the use of Norwegian and perceived communication competence (see appendix F and G).

The questions were mostly presented as statements that the respondents answered through 5-point Likert scales where they indicated to what degree they agreed or disagreed with the different statements. There were also a few open questions. The first part of the questionnaire focused on the general impact of the four different variables. The second part focused on whether the impact of the variables changed according to the classroom activity in which the respondents took part (pair work, group work or class discussions) as well as the impact of interlocutors and topic. The questions were based on the different variables, and some of the questions were inspired by the questionnaire items from Simic (2014, 95) where she has looked investigated some of the same aspects as in this study such as the students' own view of their speaking skills and the effect of interlocutors.

The questionnaire consisted mainly of *attitudinal* and *behavioural* questions. Attitudinal questions “are used to find out what people think, covering attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests, and values (Dörnyei 2007, 102). In this study, the attitudinal questions were concerned with the students' attitudes towards speaking English in the Norwegian EFL classroom as well as how they felt about the effect of the different variables that were investigated. Behavioural questions “are used to find out what the students are doing or have done in the past, focusing on actions, life-styles, habits, and personal history” (Dörnyei 2007, 102). These questions were typically related to the students' current and previous practice when it comes to oral participation in the EFL classroom.

When designing the questions, I focused on operationalising the variables that I wanted to investigate. Operationalisation is defined as “the specification of how you will define and measure the variable in your study” (Creswell 2012, 151). However, I did not focus on finding or creating definitions for the variables. Instead, I wanted to narrow down the focus and find aspects within the different variables that I wanted to investigate. This is how the variables were operationalised:

- 1) Classroom activities (pair work, group work and class discussions): will be seen in relation to *topic* (easy, familiar and difficult topics) and *interlocutors* (the familiarity and the number of people with whom one works)
- 2) Anxiousness/nervousness is tied to *communication apprehension*, *test anxiety*, *fear of negative evaluation* (see section 2.6 for definitions)
- 3) Reliance on L1: *authenticity* and *contexts* in which the students use their L1

- 4) Perceived communication competence has to do with *beliefs about own ability to speak English*

By operationalising the variables, I was able to narrow down my research focus and create more specific questions and statements that were relevant to the research questions. However, in hindsight, I realised that the anxiousness/nervousness variable could be interpreted in several different ways. I will return to this when talking about possible limitations in section 3.6.

3.3.2.3 Conducting the survey

The questionnaire was distributed after two weeks of classroom observation. Before they started, the participants were informed about the aim of the study as well as the different variables that would be investigated. They were also told that the questionnaire was quite long and that they could take all the time they needed. These strategies could help the respondents take the survey more seriously (Dörnyei 2007, 114).

The questionnaire was distributed through SurveyXact. The first students were finished in about 20 minutes, whereas the last student spent about an hour. In the first class, 27 out of 29 students answered the questionnaire, whereas, in the second class, 18 out of 21 students answered the questionnaire.

3.3.2.4 Analysing the survey

The analysis of the data from the survey was based on the research questions. The questionnaire consisted mainly of closed questions, which were answered through Likert-scales. In addition, there were four open questions and one multiple-choice question. Therefore, the data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

First, I had to decide which of the items from the survey that should be included in the analysis. The items were chosen based on which information that best answered the research questions. Since both the research questions and the themes in the survey were based on the same variables, it was natural to select items that best displayed the impact the variables had or did not have on the respondents. All the data from the survey is found in appendix F and G. The results will be presented in tables in chapter four.

The survey items that were chosen were analysed in relation to the mean and the mode. The mean “is the average of the scores”, whereas the mode “is the most frequently occurring score” (Dörnyei 2007, 214). I wanted to look at the two concepts together as looking at only one of them might lead to misleading interpretations. For instance, in this paper, the

statements were answered through a five-point Likert-scale. Thus, if there is a question in which half of the students answer that they strongly agree (5) whereas the other half answer that they strongly disagree (1), the mean would centre towards the middle. Consequently, one might assume that several respondents were neutral, as the mean, in this case, offers no information on the spread of the data. In this example, the mode would be either (1) or (5), and by only looking at this statistic, you might get the impression that the majority of students either agreed or disagreed with the statement. Thus, to get a more precise impression of the results and the tendencies, it can be valuable to look at the mean and the mode together.

The answers to the open-ended questions were analysed in NVivo 12 by creating different categories in which the answers could be placed. These questions were analysed in the same way as the interview transcripts and the classroom observation notes, using a thematic analysis.

3.3.3 Semi-structured, individual interviews

A semi-structured interview is an interview form that is both structured and open. Typically, it consists of an interview guide with pre-determined questions and categories, but there is also room for elaborating on and exploring what is being said in greater depth by using probes (Dörnyei 2007, 136). In this project, the interview format allowed me to ask questions about all the different variables that were evident in the survey. However, it was also possible to explore *why* the respondents felt the way they did.

Both strengths and weaknesses are found with this interview format. First, it is a method that is flexible as the researcher can follow the interview guide in addition to having the opportunity to explore any issues that might occur during the interview (Dörnyei 2007, 143). However, it is also challenging to use interviews as it takes a lot of time, and the interviewer, as well as the interviewee, can affect the outcome of the interview.

For instance, the interviewee might try to “display him/herself in a better than real light” (Dörnyei 2007, 144). Moreover, the interviewee might say too little or too much, which can result in data that cannot be used. On the part of the interviewer, several aspects need to be taken into consideration. Kvale (2007, 81-83) lists several important qualifications of an interviewer. An interviewer must be knowledgeable, which means that he/she has knowledge about the topic of the interview, as well as have an idea of what is most important to talk about concerning this topic. Furthermore, the interviewer needs to be structured in the sense that it is clear what the purpose of the interview is in addition to being clear about what is happening throughout the interview. It is also important to be *gentle*, where the interviewer

needs to be patient, respectful and understanding of the subject's thought process and ideas. Yet, it is also important to be *critical* and *interpreting*, which means that the interviewer questions and interprets what is being said. Thereafter, the interviewee can elaborate, confirm or disconfirm the ideas and questions of the interviewer (Kvale 2007, 81-83). Thus, conducting a successful interview relies heavily on the skills of the interviewer, which, of course, is challenging for a student with very little interviewing experience. However, Kvale (2007, 83) stresses that an interview performed by an inexperienced interviewer might still yield rich data.

3.3.3.1 Material

The material for the interview was the recording of the interviews as well as the interview transcripts (see appendix I). The interviews were recorded with a personal sound recorder and transcribed.

3.3.3.2 Interview design

The interview guide was created in advance, and the questions were based on the same categories as the survey. The guide contained some easy introductory questions that were intended to help the students feel more confident before turning to the different variables. The questions focused on: "(a) experiences and behaviours", "(b) opinions and values" and "(c) feelings" (Dörnyei 2007, 137) in which the students were asked both relatively open as well as more specified questions about the four variables that were the focus of this project. In the end, I included some debriefing questions to summarise the interview. I also included probes in the interview guide that would help the interviewees to go into greater depth (Dörnyei 2007, 138).

3.3.3.3 Conducting the interviews

The interviews were conducted over a period of two weeks. Twelve students were interviewed. However, only six of the interviews were used in the study. The students were chosen based on their answers in the questionnaire as well as the findings from the classroom observation. The aim was to interview three students from each class where one student had high oral participation, one had medium oral participation and one had low oral participation. The different levels were based on their answers in the questionnaire, where students with high oral participation showed little signs of being negatively affected by any of the variables in relation to speaking English in the classroom. Students with medium oral participation were affected by one or more of the variables, whereas students with low oral participation

were highly affected by some or all the variables. However, nine students in class 2 and eight students in class 1 did not agree to be interviewed. Several of these students were, based on their answers in the questionnaire and the classroom observation, potential candidates for interviews with students who have low oral participation. Therefore, this might have affected the amount of information I was able to obtain through the interviews regarding students with low oral participation.

The interviews were recorded with a personal sound-recorder. I also recorded my immediate thoughts after each interview. Five interviews were conducted in English, and one was conducted in Norwegian. The parts that are used from the interview in Norwegian are translated. Each interview started with information about the project, the aim of the project, how the data would be treated and stored as well as an assurance of the anonymity of the interview subjects. Furthermore, I also focused on stressing my interest in the perspective of the interview subjects and made it clear that there were no right or wrong answers. This information and reassurance were important to create a comfortable setting (Dörnyei 2007, 140). I started the interview by checking the sound recorder and asking about the interviewees' interests. Thereafter, I continued by asking them some easy and open introductory questions to help the students open up more easily (Dörnyei 2007, 137).

After the introductory questions, I turned to the different variables investigated in this project. Each variable was introduced before I started to ask questions to ensure that the students knew what was being investigated. Throughout this main part of the interview, the aim was for the students to speak as much as possible. I focused on being a good listener and give the students positive feedback in the form of nods and positive utterances, which is, according to Dörnyei (2007, 142), important for the interview. This was also confirmed by several of the interview subjects who stated that they felt comfortable speaking to me as they received positive reinforcement. In addition, in line with Dörnyei's (2007, 142) suggestions, I tried to keep the interview going by encouraging the students to elaborate on their answers. Also, if the students went too off-topic, I tried to ask questions to get the interview back on track. I also focused on confirming if I had understood what the students meant as well as summarising some of the points they had made to make the results more valid (Kvale 2007, 82).

The interview ended with a debriefing in which I gave the students the opportunity to comment on both the interview as well as the survey. They were asked about their opinion of the interview, whether there was anything that I should have asked about or if there was anything that should have been left out. This gave the students the opportunity to make

comments and ask questions (Dörnyei 2007, 143). Lastly, I thanked the students for taking part in the interview before ensuring them that they had every right to withdraw their participation, erase or make adjustments to what they had said.

3.3.3.4 Analysing the interviews

The interviews were transcribed (see page xiii for transcription key) and organised in categories in NVivo 12. Like the data from the classroom observation and the open questions in the questionnaire, the data from the interviews was analysed through thematic analysis (see section 3.3.1.4) in which the research questions and the operationalised variables guided the categories that emerged.

3.4 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are two important aspects that need to be taken into consideration when conducting research.

Validity involves making sure that you are investigating what you intend to investigate. Creswell (2012, 159) defines validity as “the development of sound evidence to demonstrate that the test interpretation (of scores about the concept or construct that the test is assumed to measure) matches the proposed use”. This study has used both quantitative and qualitative research methods to answer the research questions (see section 1.3). Therefore, the present study uses triangulation as a tool to ensure the validity of the research findings. Creswell (2012, 259) relates triangulation to “the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals (e.g., a principal and a student), types of data (e.g., observational fieldnotes and interviews), or methods of data collection (e.g., documents and interviews)”. Different types of data have been collected in this project (observational field notes, survey and interviews). By investigating the same variables through different data material and methods, I was able to verify from several sources that I was investigating what I intended and shed light on the topic from different perspectives.

Several other actions were taken to ensure the validity of the findings. The students were informed about the project and its aims on two or three different occasions. First, they received information about the project when the consent form for the project was handed out. Second, the same information was repeated before they answered the questionnaire. Lastly, the students who were interviewed were once again informed about the study. Thus, the

students were informed about the purpose and the different variables on several occasions, which hopefully led to a better understanding of what was being investigated.

The questionnaire was also piloted on four students from a different school than where the research was conducted. The feedback showed that they did not have any remarks on aspects that they did not understand nor did they comment on the length of the questionnaire. The students used between 20-30 minutes on the pilot test.

In the survey, some terms could potentially be difficult for the students to comprehend. Several terms and concepts were therefore translated into Norwegian to ensure that the students would understand them. Also, the variable that investigated the students' nervousness and/or anxiousness could be interpreted in several different ways. Hence, I asked the students who were interviewed how they understood the term nervous/anxious to see how differently this term was interpreted, to which I will return in section 3.6.

Reliability is important in relation to the research instruments that are being used in the data collection. According to Dörnyei (2007, 50), "reliability indicates the extent to which our measurement instruments and procedures produce consistent results in a given population in different circumstances". Several measures were taken to ensure the reliability of the project.

First, the variables were operationalised. In this way, I could make questionnaire items that were more easily understood by the participants. Furthermore, I made questionnaire items that were similar to each other, where the students were asked questions that had similar meanings, but they were phrased a bit differently. This could affect the reliability of the project as it is possible to look at the consistency in answers between the different questions that were similar. Operationalisation could also affect the validity of the project, as I could ensure that I investigated what I wanted. Secondly, the triangulation mentioned in the previous section is also relevant for the reliability of the project as using several methods helped me to uncover possible inconsistencies that might affect the reliability of the findings.

Furthermore, the observation, the survey and the interviews were all conducted within a period of four weeks. The first two weeks were dedicated to the observation, whereas the survey and interviews were conducted in the last two weeks. Therefore, the respondents were not significantly affected by there being too much time between the different parts of the project.

Another aspect that could have affected the reliability of this study is that students' attitudes and thoughts regarding their oral participation in the EFL classroom can change rapidly. This

was especially evident in the interviews when the students told me about their previous experiences as well as their predictions for the future. Therefore, the students might not have the same perceptions about their oral participation now as when the data was collected. This is relevant to all the different variables that were investigated as they can be both stable influences or influences that can change. I would argue, however, that the results are still reliable as it can make researchers and teachers more aware of the fact that different variables do affect the students positively or negatively in relation to oral participation. Accordingly, it can be easier to facilitate oral communication in the classroom.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Conducting research in classrooms can be ethically challenging. First, because of all the different people and personalities one must take into consideration, where the researcher has to look out for the needs of the teachers as well as the students (Dörnyei 2007, 188-189). Furthermore, there are a lot of procedures are involved in getting permission from the school, the teachers, the students and in some cases, the parents. Furthermore, the classroom is a place where interruptions easily occur (Dörnyei 2007, 189-190). The presence of a researcher can contribute to making it even more interruptive (Creswell 2012, 170). Thus, as a researcher, I need to “respect individuals and sites” (Creswell 2012, 169).

The research of this project was collected and treated according to the guidelines given by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) (see approval NSD in appendix A). A few days before the research started, the participants were given information about the aim of the project, as well as how the data that was collected would be treated. They were also assured that no information that could identify them would be included in the study and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Lastly, they were given an information/consent form in which they could decide whether they wanted to be a part of the project as well as the parts in which they wanted to participate (see appendix B). Signed consent forms were obtained from all participants that took part in the study. Twenty students agreed to be a part of the project in class 1. However, eight students did not want to be interviewed. In class 2, 29 students agreed to take part in the study, one student did not want to be observed, two students did not want to take part in the survey and nine students did not want to be interviewed. Signed consent forms were also obtained from the teachers in the two classes as well as the principal of the school in which the research was conducted.

All the participants that agreed to be a part of the study were given a number that was used throughout the data collection process to keep their identity confidential to everyone except the researcher. Furthermore, since the topic of the study could be sensitive for the students, the data was collected and stored in SAFE. SAFE is a secure desktop created by the University of Bergen for the storing and treatment of sensitive data. Lastly, after the project is finished, all the data will be erased.

3.6 Possible limitations

Several limitations might have affected the outcome of this study. First, the length of the questionnaire could have affected the respondents. According to Dörnyei (2007, 110), a questionnaire should not take more than half an hour to finish. Even though the pilot-testing showed that the students used approximately 20 minutes each, and none of them found the questionnaire to be too long, the students in the project used between 30 and 60 minutes, and several of them found the questionnaire to be too long. However, the students also said that they understood *why* the questionnaire was long. They were also told in advance that questionnaire was long and that they could take all the time that they needed. Nevertheless, judging by the feedback from the students as well as the short answers to the open questions in the questionnaire, the length of the questionnaire could have had a negative effect on the participants.

In addition to the challenges concerning the length of the questionnaire, some respondents had difficulties understanding some of the statements and one of the variables. This was evident as the students asked questions during the completion of the questionnaire. For instance, one of the questions asked the students to indicate to what degree they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "I speak English in pairs because I only talk to my partner". However, a couple of students asked whether this meant that they only talked to their partner no matter what the circumstances, which, of course, was not the underlying idea behind the question. Therefore, even though the variables were operationalised, I needed to take into consideration that some of the questions might be misinterpreted or interpreted in a different way than I intended to by the respondents. Also, the second variable, anxiousness/nervousness, might yield different responses based on how the respondents interpret these terms. This was evident as I asked the students to explain how they interpreted this variable in the interview (see appendix I). Student C and F felt that anxious and nervous were quite similar terms. Student A tied this feeling to a lack of confidence, student D felt that it had to do with a feeling of

hopelessness and uneasiness. Student E related it to frustration and a fear of speaking. Student B also tied it to a fear of speaking, yet, she also added that nervous would be a more suitable term to the feelings she experienced in the classroom. Even though the interviewees' answers show that they do not have too different interpretations of the terms, they were somewhat different. These interpretations could have impacted the validity of the results.

The number of participants in the project was not high enough to make a sample that would be representable to the whole population of Norwegian EFL learners in upper secondary school. This applies to the quantitative data collection. To attain a more comprehensive understanding of the issue that is being investigated and for the results to be generalisable, it is necessary to conduct similar research elsewhere and with a larger group of people.

Furthermore, when conducting the interviews, sometimes I found myself asking questions and follow-up questions that could potentially lead the interviewees in certain directions. Consequently, "there is the danger that the interview will center on what the researcher feels is important rather than on what has been important in the participant's life" (Murray 2009, 59). However, I often stopped and tried to rephrase the question to be more open. Also, the students did not have a problem with disagreeing with me whenever it seemed like I had led them in a certain direction. Therefore, it did not seem like the phrasing of the questions affected the opinions of the students. It is, nevertheless, important to take into consideration that it might have affected them.

Lastly, five out of six interviews were not transcribed straight after the interviews took place. Thus, some of the details about each interview, such as facial expressions and gestures, were lost. However, after each interview, I recorded my thoughts and interpretations about what was said and how the interview subject acted during the interview. During the recording, I also talked about my own limitations and how to improve them.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion

In this chapter, I will present and discuss the results emerging from the data that has been collected to answer the research questions of this project (see section 1.3). The results are based on the responses of 45 students from upper secondary school in Norway, individual interviews with six of the students, and a classroom observation. The presentation and discussion will be organised according to the different research questions where both the quantitative and the qualitative data will be presented and analysed with each question. The results are presented in tables and with quotes from the participants. With each research question, I will first present and comment on the quantitative and qualitative results before discussing them in light of theory at the end of each section. Thus, the answer to the research question regarding classroom activities, interlocutors and topic is found in section 4.1, the question regarding FLA in section 4.2, the use of Norwegian in section 4.3 and SPCC in section 4.4. The research question regarding variability will be answered in a separate subsection for each of the variables.

Before turning to the different variables, I find it relevant to present the results from the overarching question of this project.

Table 4.1 Do the students speak English in the EFL classroom?

	Respondents	Percent
Yes	26	57,8%
Sometimes	18	40,0%
No	1	2,2%

n=45

As seen in table 4.1, out of 45 respondents, 26 stated that they do speak English in the classroom, 18 answered that they speak English sometimes, whereas one said that he/she does not speak English in the classroom. Furthermore, in the questionnaire, the students were also asked to explain why they choose to speak, sometimes speak or not speak in the EFL classroom.

Table 4.2 Students' answers to: Explain why you choose to speak, sometimes speak or not speak English in the classroom

Categories	Number of responses
Answering questions	5
Classroom activity (pair, group, class discussion)	1
→ Group work	1
Confidence	7
→ Confidence in answers	6
Context using Norwegian	3
Do not know	1
Grade	7
Insecurity about own competence or answer	7
→ Fear of saying something wrong	1
→ Vocabulary	1
Interestedness	3
Judgement	1
Obligation	2
Practice	7
Teacher	2
Variety	5
Willingness to speak	1

n=45

As seen in table 4.2, 13 different categories emerged from the analysis. All answers to the open questions are found in appendix F. On the right-hand side it says “number of responses” instead of respondents as the same students might have mentioned several aspects that can be tied to different categories. The most mentioned reasons for speaking or not were related to confidence, insecurity about own competence, grades and practice.

However, there were also five answers that pointed to how the students' oral participation varies in the classroom. For instance, one of the students said,

Because sometimes I don't want to speak, while other times I am more involved
(My translation)

This variety could also be affected by the topic, as explained by one of the students,

I choose to speak to learn or share my opinion. If I don't speak it's often because I'm tired or the theme/chapter is not interesting

Lastly, one of the students mentioned judgement as a reason for not participating orally in the EFL classroom,

I am afraid of saying something wrong, because I feel that people judge a little too quickly
(My translation)

Thus, there can be several reasons for students' oral participation or lack of it in the EFL classroom. Some of the variables that were investigated through this project were mentioned by the students, while new categories emerged that can be further explored in future research, as will be discussed in chapter 5. In the following, I am going to turn to the impact of the different variables that were the focus of this project.

4.1 Classroom activities

Classroom activities was seen in relation to whether the students were affected by working in pairs, groups or taking part in class discussions as well as the number and familiarity with whom they are working.

4.1.1 Pairs, groups or class discussions

Table 4.3 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes toward working in pairs, groups or class discussions

Statement	Mean	Mode
I speak English when working in pairs	4,13	4
I speak English when working in groups	4,00	4
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon hvor alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	3,29	4

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.4 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes towards working in pairs, groups or class discussions

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
I speak English when working in pairs	0 0,0 %	1 2,2 %	5 11,1 %	26 57,8 %	13 28,9 %
I speak English when working in groups	0 0,0 %	1 2,2 %	9 20,0 %	24 53,3 %	11 24,4 %
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon hvor alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	6 13,3 %	6 13,3 %	8 17,8 %	19 42,2 %	6 13,3 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

As seen in table 4.3, the mean and the mode confirm that most students agree with speaking in pairs or groups. In class discussions, however, the mode is the same, but the mean is lower, which suggests that there is a substantial spread in the distribution. This is also evident in table 4.4 as six students strongly disagreed, and six students disagreed with speaking in class discussions. Here, there are also fewer students who strongly agree and agree compared to pair and group work. Therefore, the results of the questionnaire suggest that students favour speaking in pair and group work over class discussions.

The results from the interviews are coherent with the results from the questionnaires.

Table 4.5 The interviewees' thoughts on pair work, group work and class discussion

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Feels more confident when talking in pairs or groups with his best friends	Prefers to work in pairs. The bigger the groups, the less she talks	Speaks most in class discussions as he can get a bit lazy when working in pairs	Speaks most in pairs because it is easier to avoid speaking when taking part in class discussions	Prefers to work with her partner in pairs because then she has the opportunity to speak more	Speaks more in groups than in pairs because then the teacher is overseeing their work and there might be people that she does not know

As is evident in table 4.5, five out of six interviewees, as far as speaking English was concerned, favoured pair and group work over class discussions. However, the reasons for favouring pair and group work varied. For instance, student A stated,

Ehm, I feel like pairs and groups are a little bit easier than speaking in class because when you are speaking in class everyone hears it, your teacher hears it. But when you are speaking in pairs and groups, it's like if it is with ehm, my best friends, I feel way more confident

His confidence was affected by his teacher and his peers listening to what he says. This was also the case with student D. Student B also gets increasingly nervous with the number of people she has to speak in front of. Student E speaks the most English in pairs because then she has the opportunity to practice and speak the most, not because she is uncomfortable with the context,

I: Yeah? Ehm, in which situations do you speak the most English?

R: Ehm... maybe with my partner because then it's, you have more time to talk and give your whole opinion. Ehm... but I also speak if the teacher is telling us or ask us questions

Student F, on the other hand, spoke the most in groups because then the teacher was paying attention. In addition, there might be people that she does not know, which makes her more attentive. I will return to the impact of the familiarity with the interlocutors in section 4.1.2.

Lastly, student C favoured class discussions,

R: Yes, cause when we're working in pairs like, ehm, with the one I'm sitting next to, ehm, I can get a little bit lazy (laughs)

Student C was concerned about his grade. He wanted to speak as much as possible when the teacher was listening, and therefore he could become a bit lazy when talking in pairs. This

was also the case with student F, as she stated that it was easier to switch to Norwegian when the teacher was not paying attention.

The classroom observation also corroborated with the results from the other two research methods. More students took an active part in the discussions in pair and group work than in class discussions. Table 4.6 shows the main findings after observing the different classes in one day each (two double sessions after each other) in addition to one double session.

Table 4.6 Classroom observation: the impact of classroom activities

Classroom activity	Class 1	Class 2
Pair work	The students worked for the most part in pairs throughout the six sessions they were observed	The students worked for the most part in pairs throughout the six sessions they were observed
	Normally, nearly all the students spoke English in pairs before turning to Norwegian when the tasks were completed. There were a few students who did not take part in pair discussions	Out of 30 students, about 2/3 of the students spoke English on a regular basis when working in pairs. They also turned to Norwegian when they were finished with the tasks
Group work	Same tendencies for pairs and groups. They solved the tasks in English before turning to Norwegian to discuss other topics	The students seemed to become even more distracted by working in groups. Often there were only some students who worked while the others were distracted
Class discussion	The pair and/or group work often resulted in a class discussion	The pair and/or group work often resulted in a class discussion
	Out of 21 students, about half of them volunteered answers in class discussions. It was mostly the same students who spoke	Out of 30 students, there were only a few students who volunteered answers in the class discussions. It was mostly the same students who spoke

As seen in table 4.6, the findings of the classroom observation are in line with the results from the interviews and the questionnaire. The students were most active in pairs in both classes. However, when working in groups, there was not much difference in class 1 in which they spoke English to the same extent during group work as pair work. In class 2, on the other hand, group work could make it even more chaotic. Often, only one or two students worked in the groups while the others were busy talking about unrelated topics or using their computers. Also, often they did not discuss the task(s) with each other, or they discussed it in Norwegian.

In class discussions, there were some students who participated each time. However, as will be discussed in section 4.1.3, the participation in the class discussions varied according to the topic in class 1. In class 2, however, it was the same students who participated regardless of the topic.

Next, I am going to present the results regarding whether the students are affected by the familiarity and the number of interlocutors with whom they are working.

4.1.2 Interlocutors

The aim of looking at the impact of interlocutors on the students' oral participation was to see if the students were affected by the number or the familiarity with the interlocutors with whom they were working.

Table 4.7 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes towards interlocutors

Statement	Mean	Mode
I speak English in pairs if I talk to a friend	4,13	4
I speak English in pairs if I am talking to an acquaintance (=bekjent)	3,96	4
I speak English in groups if I am talking to my friends	4,04	4
I speak English in groups when talking to acquaintances	3,89	4
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) because I feel comfortable with my peers (=medelever)	3,33	4
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) because I feel comfortable with the teacher	3,82	4
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) even if I am uncomfortable with all my peers (=medelever)	3,09	4
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) even if I am uncomfortable with my teacher	3,04	3 and 4
I avoid speaking English in class discussions (diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) because there are too many people to speak in front of	2,71	2

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.8 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes towards interlocutors

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
I speak English in pairs if I talk to a friend	0 0,0 %	1 2,2 %	6 13,3 %	24 53,3 %	14 31,1 %
I speak English in pairs if I am talking to an acquaintance (=bekjent)	0 0,0 %	4 8,9 %	2 4,4 %	31 68,9 %	8 17,8 %
I speak English in groups if I am talking to my friends	0 0,0 %	1 2,2 %	4 8,9 %	32 71,1 %	8 17,8 %
I speak English in groups when talking to acquaintances	0 0,0 %	0 0,0 %	10 22,2 %	30 66,7 %	5 11,1 %
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) because I feel comfortable with my peers (=medelever)	4 8,9 %	7 15,6 %	10 22,2 %	18 40,0 %	6 13,3 %
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) because I feel comfortable with the teacher	0 0,0 %	2 4,4 %	11 24,4 %	25 55,6 %	7 15,6 %
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) even if I am uncomfortable with all my peers (=medelever)	5 11,1 %	6 13,3 %	15 33,3 %	18 40,0 %	1 2,2 %
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) even if I am uncomfortable with my teacher	4 8,9 %	10 22,2 %	14 31,1 %	14 31,1 %	3 6,7 %
I avoid speaking English in class discussions (diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) because there are too many people to speak in front of	7 15,6 %	16 35,6 %	8 17,8 %	11 24,4 %	3 6,7 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The mean and mode in table 4.7 show that the students are affected by the familiarity with the people they are working with. The mean scores show that the students are more positive towards speaking in pairs and groups when they know the person with whom they are communicating. Also, as seen in table 4.8, more students find being comfortable with the teacher a more important factor for participation in class discussions than being comfortable with their peers. However, the overall results show that the students are generally more positive towards speaking English in pairs and groups compared to class discussions.

The results from the interviews also showed that the number and familiarity with the interlocutors had an impact on the students' choice of participating orally or not in the EFL classroom.

Table 4.9 The interviewees' thoughts regarding interlocutors

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Prefers to talk to his best friends as he feels more confident with them	Prefers to talk to her best friend as she understands her. Gets nervous when talking to people she does not know	He is not too affected by who he is speaking to. He would, however, like to make a good impression if he were to talk to someone he did not know	Prefers to talk to someone she knows because she feels safer with them. She also thinks that people who have better oral skills will judge her	Speak more when talking to people she does not know as she can speak more Norwegian to her friends	Speaks more English to people she does not know

Nearly all the interviewees said that they prefer to talk to their friends/people they know. However, several of them also stated that they speak more English when talking to people that they do not know too well. For instance, student C stated,

- I: In what way would you get affected?
 R: Like, I think, ehm, maybe because I like giving a first good impression to people, ehm, like in any way I can
 I: Mhm
 R: Ehm... so, I think that's the reason I would, ehm, perhaps try to speak more English to someone I don't know

Thus, student C wants to make a good first impression on the people that he does not know. Student F also stated that she spoke more with people who were not her closest friends if they were talking about a topic from the English subject.

There was a tendency for the students to become more easily distracted and speak more Norwegian when talking to their friends. Yet, at the same time, they felt most comfortable and

they preferred to speak to people with whom they were familiar. This was pointed out by several of the students. For instance, student E said,

Yeah, because when I know the people in my classroom, ehm, I don't know it just feels more comfortable speaking out because no one's going to judge you or anything

Student D avoided speaking when talking to someone she did not know. When she was asked what it is like speaking to and working with people she does not know too well, she stated,

R: Then it will be more like... ehm, you try to speak as little as possible and you try to sort of... yeah, it does not feel natural then

I: Mhm

R: It feels like a knot in my stomach

(My translation)

She became very nervous and self-conscious when talking to people who were not her friends. Furthermore, student B feels safer with her best friend, whilst talking to other people feels different as she is afraid of the judgement of others,

I: Mhm. So it feels different when you talk to the other classmates?

R: Mhm. It kind of does

I: Mhm. Ehm... in what way?

R: Like, ehm... I'm nervous if like I don't formulate the sentence right

I: Mhm

R: Or if I... forget to tell something or I don't understand the question and they're going think like "What? Don't you understand that? That's so easy"

I: Mhm

R: That don't... I'm kind of afraid of that

Fear of being negatively evaluated will be further discussed in section 4.2.

Table 4.9 shows the results from the classroom observation in relation to working in pairs and groups with different interlocutors. The students only worked in random pairs on one occasion. Consequently, the results are based on a small amount of data.

Table 4.10 Classroom observation results on the impact of interlocutors

Classroom activity	Class 1	Class 2
Pair work	<p>Working with people they are familiar with: Speaks most both English and Norwegian while working with people of their own choosing</p> <p>Pair work is the context in which most of the students seem to be contributing to orally in English</p> <p>Working with people they are not familiar with: They spoke English to each other when they were split up into random pairs. However, overall, they were more silent. When they were finished, they notified the teacher</p>	<p>Working with people they are familiar with: Speaks most both English and Norwegian while working with people of their own choosing</p> <p>Pair work is the context in which most of the students seem to be contributing orally. However, not necessarily in English</p> <p>Working with people they are not familiar with: They were not split up into random pairs during the sessions I observed</p>
Group work	<p>Working with people they are familiar with: Speak English when solving the tasks before turning to Norwegian</p> <p>Working with people they are not familiar with: The students became even more silent when working with people they did not know. Fewer people participated orally in English</p>	<p>Working with people they are familiar with: Going from pair to group work with people they knew led to even more noise and distractions in this class. However, there were also groups who spoke English and worked together</p> <p>Working with people they are not familiar with: When split up into random groups there were a lot of disturbances. A couple of the students returned to other groups with people they normally work with</p>

Table 4.10 shows how the students were impacted by the familiarity of the interlocutors when working in pairs and groups. Class 1 was made up of students from different classes, whereas in class 2, most of the students knew each other from before. Overall, the results from the observation showed that the students spoke most when talking to the people that they sat next to, who often were their friends. However, the communication did not necessarily take place in English.

When class 1 was split up into random pairs, all the students spoke English at first. However, when they were finished, some of them spoke Norwegian, as they would normally do with

their friends. Yet, quite a few students started to ask the teacher what to do next, and to let him know that they were finished with their tasks. They not seem to want to small-talk after completing the tasks as they did when working with their friends. Therefore, it might seem as if they were more uncomfortable speaking to people they did not know, and they were eager to move on. The same happened when they were split up into random groups. However, there were also some students who remained silent throughout.

In class 2, the students were not split up into random pairs, but they were, on one occasion, split up into random groups. When working in these groups, the tendency was the same as working with groups of their own choosing. Out of seven groups, one group spoke English nearly throughout, and two groups discussed parts of it in English before they got unfocused and talked about other topics in Norwegian. The rest of the groups spoke in Norwegian, and they were highly unfocused. Some of the students ended up switching groups because it was difficult to get anything done in their assigned group.

In relation to the impact of interlocutors, the observation also showed the positive impact of the teacher. In both class 1 and class 2, the teacher's presence made the students speak English. This effect was also evident in the groups where they almost exclusively spoke Norwegian.

4.1.3 Topic

The aim of looking at the impact of topic was to see whether the students' oral participation was affected by talking about easy topics, familiar topics or difficult topics.

Table 4.11 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes to topic

Statement	Mean	Mode
I speak English in pairs if the topic is familiar	3,87	4
I speak English in pairs if the topic is easy	4,00	4
I speak English in pairs even if it is a difficult/challenging topic	3,76	4
I speak English in groups if the topic is familiar	3,78	4
I speak English in groups if the topic is easy	3,89	4
I speak English in groups even if it is a difficult topic	3,69	4
I speak English in class discussions if the topic is easy	3,53	4
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) even if the topic is difficult	3,31	4

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.12 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes to topic

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I speak English in pairs if the topic is familiar	2	4,4 %	1	2,2 %	8	17,8 %	24	53,3 %	10	22,2 %
I speak English in pairs if the topic is easy	3	6,7 %	2	4,4 %	3	6,7 %	21	46,7 %	16	35,6 %
I speak English in pairs even if it is a difficult/challenging topic	1	2,2 %	3	6,7 %	12	26,7 %	19	42,2 %	10	22,2 %
I speak English in groups if the topic is familiar	3	6,7 %	0	0,0 %	8	17,8 %	27	60,0 %	7	15,6 %
I speak English in groups if the topic is easy	2	4,4 %	1	2,2 %	6	13,3 %	27	60,0 %	9	20,0 %
I speak English in groups even if it is a difficult topic	3	6,7 %	2	4,4 %	9	20,0 %	23	51,1 %	8	17,8 %
I speak English in class discussions if the topic is easy	2	4,4 %	8	17,8 %	6	13,3 %	22	48,9 %	7	15,6 %
I speak English in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare) even if the topic is difficult	5	11,1 %	7	15,6 %	9	20,0 %	17	37,8 %	7	15,6 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.11 shows that most students speak English regardless of the difficulty of the topic. Overall, the students are most positive towards speaking English about easy and familiar topics in pair and group work. Quite a lot of students were, however, positive towards speaking English in groups even if the topic is difficult, as seen in table 4.12. Nevertheless, 12 students neither agree nor disagree with speaking in pairs about a difficult topic, and nine students who neither agree nor disagree with speaking in groups about a difficult topic. There might be several reasons for the students' insecurity regarding difficult topics, and the results from the interviews, which I will return to below, can contribute to shed light on some of these reasons.

Furthermore, the mean in table 4.11 and as well as the results in table 4.12 show that the students were slightly more negative towards class discussions compared to pair and group work. However, even though there are some minor differences, it is interesting that the results from the class discussion are that similar regardless of the degree of difficulty of the topic. This may indicate that it is not necessarily the topic that is the problem when speaking in class discussions.

The results from the interviews show that the students were highly affected by the topic of the interaction, although, in different ways. Two of the students prefer difficult and challenging topics, while the rest of the interviewees prefer to talk about easy and familiar topics. The reasons for preferring different topics vary. They were also affected by the classroom activity in relation to talking about different topics.

Table 4.13 Interviewees' thoughts regarding topic and classroom activity

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Talks more if it is a topic he is interested in. Prefers pair and group work	Prefers easy topics and finds it easier to talk to a larger number of people if she is familiar with the topic	Prefers classroom discussions and challenging topics, as he does not speak that much if the topic is easy	Shows more interest if she likes the topic they are talking about. Does not pay too much attention if the topic is boring. Finds it easier to talk in pairs and groups	Prefers topics that she is familiar with. Gets insecure with difficult topics and prefers to talk in pairs as she has the opportunity to speak more	Prefers to talk about difficult topics to be challenged. She does not have a preference when it comes to pairs, groups or class discussions

The reasons for the students' preference varied. Student B found it difficult to talk about topics that were personal,

- R: Like more personal the harder it is to talk about it
 I: Yeah, yeah
 R: Like if we talk about like family or like disease or like something like that
 I: Mhm
 R: And if you like read a text and that like hits you
 I: Mhm
 R: Then it's hard to talk about
 I: Yeah
 R: If it's like personal
 I: Yeah
 R: So I think that's like the hardest, if it's personal

Student F preferred more difficult topics as she wanted to be challenged. She stated,

- R: I prefer talking about difficult topics because it's, I feel like it's more... useful kind of
 I: Yeah
 R: (laughs). Cause if it's easy, it's like you don't have much to say about it
 I: Yeah, mhm, yeah, that's interesting
 R: (laughs)
 I: Mhm. So you prefer something that you need work a bit on?
 R: Yeah, cause I'm, I chose English to get better and not to lose my...
 I: Yeah
 R: Ehm, accent and stuff and pronouncing

Student C spoke most when he was familiar with the topic, but difficult topics did not stop him from participating. Student A, B, D and E, however, preferred familiar topics. Student B stated,

- R: But like if I'm going to talk to like a big group and I know the task by heart and I know like... I have worked on this before and I know everything is...

I: Mhm

R: ...like I really passionate and I can talk

I: Mhm

R: Like someone have to stop me before I... I keep talking to someone stops me

However, student B found open themes, meaning themes that did not necessarily have a specific answer, to be difficult,

R: But if it's like, ehm... an open theme

I: Yeah

R: Then it's like kind of harder

Student D does not participate if it is a theme that she has a lack of knowledge about,

I: Are you affected by the topic in any way?

R: Yes... it has a lot to say because if I don't have a clue about what we're talking about or think it's really boring what we're talking about then I don't bother answering either because I don't bother paying too much attention

(My translation)

It is important to take into consideration that the topics can be difficult because the students have a lack of knowledge about them, or they do not know how to formulate sentences correctly. Yet, they could also be difficult because they are sensitive, and the students are afraid of being misunderstood by others, which will be further discussed in section 4.2.1. Nevertheless, it shows that the students have different interpretations of what constitutes difficult and easy topics.

The results from the classroom observation (see appendix E) also showed a difference in relation to the topics and the level of engagement of the students. The students discussed the following topics during the sessions they were observed:

Class 1: tv-series, news, football, text about intercultural competence, culture clash and table manners

Class 2: abolitionist movement, slavery, DACA, TV-series/movies about immigration, what it means to be an immigrant, text about an illegal immigrant and grammar

Table 4.14 Results from classroom observation in relation to topic

Activity	Class 1	Class 2
Pair work	When discussing topics such as tv-series, news, and football, the students seemed eager. However, they discussed more in Norwegian than in English compared to when they discussed intercultural competence and culture clash. When they discussed table manners, they almost only spoke English	When the students discussed movies/TV-series about immigration, they were somewhat more eager. However, mostly, they did not seem too affected by the topic and they discussed more in Norwegian than in English
Group work	They worked in groups when discussing texts from the textbook. They first discussed the tasks before turning to Norwegian when discussing unrelated topics	They worked in groups when discussing texts from the textbook. A lot of the communication was in Norwegian and about other topics. In several of the groups, one of the students had to take charge to make notes
Class discussion	More students volunteered answers in English with topics such as tv-series, news, football and table manners. Fewer volunteered answers when discussing the texts from the textbook	It was always the same few (7) students who took part in the class discussions regardless of the topic

Table 4.14 shows how the students were affected by the topic. In class 1, the students were more eager and participated more orally with some of the topics. However, when discussing tv-series, news and football, they spoke a lot of Norwegian. As several of the students stated that they spoke Norwegian when discussing topics that were unrelated to the English subject, this might explain why they spoke Norwegian when discussing these topics. In class 2, the topic did not seem to matter that much. The level of engagement and oral participation did not change significantly when talking about the different topics.

4.1.4 Discussion

The results showed that the students were affected by different classroom activities, interlocutors and topics. However, in different ways. In this section, I am going to discuss the following aspects:

- 1) The impact of the number and the familiarity with the interlocutors
- 2) The impact of different topics
- 3) The use of class discussions

First, in relation to the classroom activity/the number of people they have to work with, the students prefer pair and group work over class discussions. The same findings were evident in the studies of Cao (2011, 470-472), Fushino (2010, 708) and Cao and Philp (2006, 488). Second, in relation to familiarity with interlocutors, the students prefer to speak to someone with whom they are familiar and safe. Feeling more comfortable speaking to friends was also the case in the study of Cao and Philp (2006, 488), Baran-Łucarz (2014, 464) as well as Pawlak and Mystokowska-Wiertelak (2015, 6). In the interviews, two of the students felt most comfortable speaking to their friends, as seen in section 4.1.2. Therefore, it is also the case in this study that the students want to speak to people who are similar to themselves and whom they communicate with frequently, as pointed out by MacIntyre et al. (1998, 548-549) and supported by Cao and Philp (2006, 487) and Khatibi and Zakeri (2014, 937).

The results show how challenging it can be for the teacher to facilitate oral communication in English as the students feel most comfortable and safe speaking to their friends. Yet, they also become easily distracted and speak more Norwegian when talking to their friends. Judging by the results, I believe it can be a good idea to pair the students up with classmates that they are not too familiar with for two reasons. First, it makes the students more attentive. Second, it is important for the students to get to know their classmates, as several of the students pointed out that they were most comfortable talking to people they know.

Another interesting finding in relation to interlocutors was the effect of communicating with their teacher. The observation showed that the students spoke English whenever the teacher was present. In addition, several of the interviewees mentioned the positive impact their teacher had on their oral participation and speaking English when told to do so by the teacher was mentioned in the questionnaire. Thus, the role of the teacher as a facilitator and a conversation partner for the students is highly important. Tavakoli and Davoudi (2017, 1518) also found that the teacher was the most favourable to communicate with for the students.

Third, the results regarding the effect of the topic are also in line with previous research. For instance, similarly to the results of this study, Kang (2005, 283) found that topics in which the students lacked background knowledge led to insecurity. This lack of background knowledge might be tied to difficult topics in this project. The results from the questionnaire indicated that some of the students were affected by difficult topics, as were several of the interviewees. Lack of knowledge also affected the participants negatively in Cao's (2011, 472) study.

However, avoiding difficult topics to get the students to participate orally is not the solution. One of the interviewees (student C) did not bother to participate if the topic was easy.

Additionally, several of the students in both classes spoke Norwegian when the teacher asked them to discuss “easy” topics. Also, what constitutes easy, familiar or difficult topics are defined differently for the students. Therefore, it might be valuable to include the students more when deciding what they are going to work with, as suggested by Kang (2005, 290).

Even though Tavakoli and Davoudi (2017, 1518) found students to be most willing to speak in class discussions, the students of this study favoured class discussions the least. This hesitance towards speaking in class discussions was also evident in the studies of Cao (2011, 472), Fushino (2010, 708), Cao and Philp (2006, 488) and Kang (2005, 283). In Lund’s (2006, 189-190) study of communicative activities in the upper secondary EFL classroom in Norway, he pointed out the students’ lack of participation in class discussions. However, an alternative to class discussions might be to use online discussion forums where more students feel comfortable participating (Lund 2006, 190). This example shows that there are other options in which the students might feel safer voicing their opinions. However, the students still need practice in speaking in front of their peers and their teacher. Therefore, I would argue that there also needs to be a focus on how to make students comfortable speaking in front of their class. Student B in this study mentioned that speaking to her friend and getting a confirmation from her made her safer when speaking up in class. Thus, letting the students discuss first in pairs and/or groups can make them safer when taking part in class discussions. Another important aspect to work on is the class environment, where the students need to feel safe and respected by their teacher and their peers to participate.

One last point of discussion is the use of class discussions. Judging from the results presented in this section, it is evident that for several students, class discussion is a source of nervousness. This type of teacher controlled activities are a part of past approaches and methods in the teaching of English. For instance, in the Direct Method, where the students practiced their oral skills through “questions-and-answer exchanges” with their teacher (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 12). Furthermore, in the Audiolingual Method, with its focus on automatization, the teacher plays a crucial role in interacting with the students in order to help them speak in a correct manner (Richards and Rodgers 2001, 62-63).

In today’s CLT inspired approach to teaching, the students are in focus (Fenner 2018, 30). The students are no longer expected to perform perfectly. Instead, they are viewed as “real language users”, as described by Hymes (Skulstad 2018a, 44-45). Furthermore, cooperation with peers and teachers is essential as the approach is based on sociocultural learning theory (Vygotsky 1978, 86). Therefore, the focus is on cooperation and the teacher as a facilitator

(Richard and Rodgers 2001, 167). It is also clear, however, that many of the students in this study rely heavily on the teacher as an instructor. Even so, the results regarding classroom activities showed that the students preferred cooperation in small groups or pairs as opposed to class discussions. It might be valuable to avoid “old-fashioned”, teacher-controlled class discussions where the students feel that they need to provide correct answers, and instead focus even more on facilitating student-centred activities in small groups and pairs.

4.2 Foreign language anxiety (FLA)

Foreign language anxiety was seen in relation to three different types of anxieties: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127).

Table 4.15 Mean and mode scores concerning students' FLA

Statement	Mean	Mode
I feel more anxious (=engstelig) in my English class than in other classes	1,98	2
I feel confident when I speak in English class	3,53	4
I feel that my peers (=medelever) speak English better than I do	2,80	3
I feel embarrassed about speaking English in my English classes	2,16	2
I get so anxious (=engstelig) about speaking English that I forget things that I know	2,64	2

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.16 Distribution of answers concerning students' FLA

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I feel more anxious (=engstelig) in my English class than in other classes	15	33,3 %	21	46,7 %	4	8,9 %	5	11,1 %	0	0,0 %
I feel confident when I speak in English class	1	2,2 %	7	15,6 %	10	22,2 %	21	46,7 %	6	13,3 %
I feel that my peers (=medelever) speak English better than I do	7	15,6 %	10	22,2 %	15	33,3 %	11	24,4 %	2	4,4 %
I feel embarrassed about speaking English in my English classes	12	26,7 %	22	48,9 %	4	8,9 %	6	13,3 %	1	2,2 %
I get so anxious (=engstelig) about speaking English that I forget things that I know	5	11,1 %	19	42,2 %	11	24,4 %	7	15,6 %	3	6,7 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

First, I wanted to investigate the general impact of nervousness and/or anxiousness when speaking in the EFL classroom. The mean and the mode in table 4.15 show that most of the students agree that they do not feel more anxious in the English classes compared to other classes. The majority of the students feel confident when speaking in the English classes and

they do not seem to be embarrassed about speaking English either, as seen in table 4.16. Nevertheless, there are also students who agree to be anxious, do not feel confident and get embarrassed. Also, even though many of the students either strongly disagree or disagree, it is interesting to see that there is a tendency for students to compare themselves to each other.

4.2.1 Communication apprehension

The aim of looking at communication apprehension was to find out whether the students' oral participation was affected by a fear of not being able to understand others or making oneself understood.

Table 4.17 Mean and mode scores concerning students' communication apprehension

Statement	Mean	Mode
I avoid (=unngrår) speaking English because I worry that I will not understand what others are saying	1,91	2
I avoid (=unngrår) speaking English because I worry that I will not make myself understood	2,51	2
It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in English	2,42	2
I feel anxious (=engstelig) about speaking without preparation in English classes	2,62	2

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.18 Distribution of answers concerning students' communication apprehension

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I avoid (=unngrår) speaking English because I worry that I will not understand what others are saying	18	40,0 %	19	42,2 %	2	4,4 %	6	13,3 %	0	0,0 %
I avoid (=unngrår) speaking English because I worry that I will not make myself understood	5	11,1 %	22	48,9 %	8	17,8 %	10	22,2 %	0	0,0 %
It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in English	8	17,8 %	17	37,8 %	13	28,9 %	7	15,6 %	0	0,0 %
I feel anxious (=engstelig) about speaking without preparation in English classes	7	15,6 %	17	37,8 %	8	17,8 %	12	26,7 %	1	2,2 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Overall, the mode in table 4.17 shows that most of the students are not affected by either not being understood by others nor being able to understand others. However, the students are more affected by not making themselves understood compared to not being able to understand others, as is evident by the mean scores in table 4.17 as well as the distribution of answers presented in table 4.18.

Table 4.19 Results from interviews concerning students' thoughts on communication apprehension

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Does not think too much about not being understood. A bit more afraid of not being able to understand others as it might affect his confidence	Both afraid of not being understood as well as understanding others. Uses her best friend to understand what things mean	Does not fear not being able to understand his teacher nor his peers. Sometimes he worries that his peers will not understand him because he can use difficult terms	Afraid of not being understood and understanding others	Sometimes afraid of not being understood or understanding others depending on the topic as well as who she is working with	Can be nervous about not understanding her teacher but solves it by asking him. She is more affected by being misunderstood by others

Three out of six interviewees (student B, student D and student E) were both afraid of not being understood as well as not understanding others. In relation to not being understood, Student D said,

I: Yes... mhm. Ehm... and then I wonder... are you ever afraid of not being understood?

R: Yes

I: Yes?

R: Yes, very often!

I: Mhm... so when you sort of participate orally you are afraid of the others not understanding?

I: Yes (laughs)

I: Why is that do you think?

R: It is probably because I am a bit insecure about my English skills

I: Mhm, mhm

R: ... and those types of things. And I feel that perhaps I am not using those words that I should use you know...

I: Mhm

R: Because the people in the class have a very advanced language
(My translation)

Thus, student D was afraid of not being understood as she had a negative view of her own skills and she compared her level to the level of her classmates.

Student C was not afraid that he would not be understood because he did not know how to formulate sentences correctly. Instead, he worried that his peers would not understand his language because it might be too complex,

I: No, good, okay. And... have you ever experienced any fear of not being understood or being able to understand others? Or just the first one first, have you ever experienced a fear of not being understood?

R: Ehm... perhaps if I maybe use, ehm, some, a little complicated words, then I might care a little bit like "okay, do they understand that word"

I: Mhm

R: Like... but... my, when general speaking English, I have no fear of being understood

Student F is not particularly afraid of not being understood nor understanding others. However, she is afraid of being *misunderstood*, in which the content of her statement is the problem, but not the language. She states,

I: Yeah, yeah. So, in some ways, if I understand you correctly, it has a bit to do with what you're talking about?

R: Yeah, but it doesn't connect to the language

I: No

R: So it would be the same, ehm, it would be like in English than it would have been in Norwegian

Thus, it is not only formulating sentences correctly and making oneself understood that is the issue, but it is also being able to formulate what you are going to say in the right way. This aspect was also brought up by student E.

4.2.2 Test anxiety

The aim of looking at test anxiety was to see if the students' oral participation was affected by a fear of failing in general as well as in relation to oral testing.

Table 4.20 Mean and mode scores concerning students' test anxiety

Statement	Mean	Mode
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I am afraid of failing in front of my classmates	2,71	2
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I am afraid of failing in front of my teacher	2,36	2
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I worry about how the teacher will assess (=vurdere) my ability to speak English	2,58	2
I am calm when my teacher assesses my oral skills	3,58	4
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English unless I am certain that the performance will be perfect	2,64	2

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.21 Distribution of answers concerning students' test anxiety

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I am afraid of failing in front of my classmates	5 11,1 %	19 42,2 %	9 20,0 %	8 17,8 %	4 8,9 %
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I am afraid of failing in front of my teacher	9 20,0 %	19 42,2 %	10 22,2 %	6 13,3 %	1 2,2 %
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I worry about how the teacher will assess (=vurdere) my ability to speak English	7 15,6 %	18 40,0 %	10 22,2 %	7 15,6 %	3 6,7 %
I am calm when my teacher assesses my oral skills	2 4,4 %	2 4,4 %	14 31,1 %	22 48,9 %	5 11,1 %
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English unless I am certain that the performance will be perfect	3 6,7 %	22 48,9 %	9 20,0 %	10 22,2 %	1 2,2 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The mode scores in table 4.20 indicate that the students are not particularly afraid of failing. However, the mean scores show that there are also students who are affected. The students are slightly more affected by failing in front of their classmates than their teacher. Furthermore, the most common response suggests that students are calm when they are assessed by their teacher. This aspect was also brought up in the interviews, where several of the interviewees were positive towards their teachers in relation to feeling comfortable when speaking in the EFL classroom. For instance, student B talks about her teacher affecting her oral participation positively in the classroom,

R: So then like he has a close connection to each ehm... to each student individually

I: Mhm

R: So that's easier to to like be safe and to like be myself when I'm in the classroom

I: Mhm

R:... because of the teacher sees me

The encouragement of the teacher might actually help the students become more comfortable speaking English, even if they are being assessed.

Table 4.22 Interviewees' thoughts on test anxiety

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Feels a bit nervous talking in front of the whole class and a teacher who is going to give him a grade	Negatively affected by her stutter and the topic	Is not afraid of testing nor failing in front of others	Likes oral testing better than written testing and feels more comfortable because she has the opportunity to prepare	Does not like oral testing in general, not only in the English subject	Likes oral testing better than written testing. She struggles with the content, not the language of the presentations

The interviews focused more specifically on finding out whether the students were nervous about oral testing, not only in relation to a general fear of failing. The results were varied. Student E does not like oral testing in general, and it does not have anything to do with speaking English,

R: Ehm, being afraid of, ehm, like practicing a lot of the presentation and then when I come in front of the class I like panic

I: Yeah

R: And then I forget what I say and all the practicing is wasted because I didn't get all I knew out

I: Mhm. So you experience a bit of those emotions when you have presentations?

R: Yeah, but that goes to like every topic

Student F struggles with the content of the presentations, but not the language,

But in oral, it's, I know the words, and the only thing that is difficult is the just the content, but... then again it's that would be Norwegian too, that's just how my level of getting content for the presentation is at, it's nothing to do with the language (laughs)

The same can be said for student B, who is affected by the topic. However, she also has a stutter, which affects her negatively. Four out of six interviewees do not like presentations because of other aspects than simply speaking English. However, student A and D are affected by the fact that they have to speak English in front of their peers and their teacher. Still, for student D, test situations are better than written as she has the opportunity to practice what she is going to say in advance.

In relation to the students' fear of failing, it was evident that all the interviewees were in some ways concerned with how their peers and/or their teacher perceived them. However, this did not necessarily mean that they were afraid of failing in front of them, especially if they were familiar with the people they were working with, as discussed in section 4.1.2.

Even though the results from the questionnaire and the interviews showed that a fear of failing or a fear of oral testing is not a big issue, some students still experience this fear, and five out of six interviewees experienced nervousness during presentations in front of their peers and their teacher for various reasons. Yet, student A and D mentioned that they like oral testing better than written as they have time to prepare in more detail with oral presentations. Accordingly, there are both positive and negative aspects of oral testing.

4.2.3 Fear of negative evaluation

The aim of looking at fear of negative evaluation was to see if the students' oral participation was affected by a fear of being negatively evaluated by their teacher or their peers.

Table 4.23 Mean and mode scores concerning students' fear of negative evaluation

Statement	Mean	Mode
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I worry about my peers (=medelever) evaluating (=vurdere) my ability to speak English negatively	2,51	2
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I worry about my teacher evaluating (=vurdere) my ability to speak English negatively	2,38	2
I am afraid of being corrected by the teacher when speaking English in class	2,31	2

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.24 Distribution of answers concerning students' fear of negative evaluation

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I worry about my peers (=medelever) evaluating (=vurdere) my ability to speak English negatively	9	20,0 %	17	37,8 %	7	15,6 %	11	24,4 %	1	2,2 %
I avoid (=unngår) speaking English because I worry about my teacher evaluating (=vurdere) my ability to speak English negatively	9	20,0 %	19	42,2 %	10	22,2 %	5	11,1 %	2	4,4 %
I am afraid of being corrected by the teacher when speaking English in class	10	22,2 %	19	42,2 %	9	20,0 %	6	13,3 %	1	2,2 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The mode scores in table 4.23 show that the most frequent answer is that the students disagree with being affected by a fear of negative evaluation. Yet, there are also students who experience this fear. Similarly to the results from test anxiety, more students are afraid of being negatively evaluated by their peers as opposed to their teacher. Only a small number of students are afraid of being corrected by the teacher, which again might be tied to their good relationship with their teacher. Perhaps the results would have been different in a class where the students did not have the same relationship with their teachers as the students had in this study.

Table 4.25 Interviewees' thoughts regarding fear of negative evaluation

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Sometimes thinks about what the teacher and his peers think	She is affected by both her teacher as well as her peers. Afraid of the reaction she gets from others	Does not think about what others think	Often thinks about the evaluation from others	Does not think about what others think	Does not think about what her peers think. Thinks about the grade in relation to her teacher

Half of the interviewees were worried about the evaluation from their peers and/or their teacher. However, student C and F, the two students who could be categorised as students with high oral participation, did not worry too much about the evaluation from others.

Student E thought about the evaluation from her teacher, but not her peers. In relation to the evaluation from her teacher, she stated,

Ehm... maybe I'm kind of afraid, ehm, what he thinks of me because he's like judging me, ehm, or not judging me but grades

Student A also thought about the evaluation from the teacher in relation to his grade,

Yeah, like I talked about a lot earlier... they can... you can think that they're going to laugh at you if you do... doing bad and the teacher will give you a bad grade if you're not speaking good and things like that

Both student A and student D worried about the judgement from their peers. Student D stated,

So if I sort of answer wrong or... yeah, say words wrong and then they probably think like "oh, she is really stupid" sort of

(My translation)

Student D always worries about what her peers and her teacher think about her when she speaks, and she feels that the evaluation from her peers is the worst. Lastly, student B stated,

R: Ehm... when we like having a discussion and the whole classroom is silent and there's like, he ask question and then I'm like... "Oh I know this"

I: Mhm

R: Then I raise my hand and he picks me... then everyone turns around to look at you

I: Mhm

R: Then I'm like "Oh, what did I say something wrong?"

I: Mhm

R: Cause then everyone is listening and everyone is looking directly at you

I: Mhm

R: Then if you say something wrong, then you will kind of be remembered

Like student A and D, student B is also afraid of the judgement of her peers and her teacher. However, she is even more afraid of what she says, where speaking in itself is not the problem.

In summary, the interview results show that the two students with high oral participation do not fear the evaluation of their peers nor their teacher. The rest of the interviewees have some thoughts regarding the evaluation of others, where they think about the teacher in relation to their oral grade, and their peers in relation to being judged and remembered in a negative way.

4.2.4 Variability in FLA and classroom activities

The aim of looking at the variability in FLA was to see whether the students' FLA was affected by the classroom activity in which they were taking part, the topic of the interaction and the interlocutors with whom they were communicating.

Table 4.26 Mean and mode scores concerning variability in FLA

Statement	Mean	Mode
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking in pairs	3,58	4
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking in groups	3,36	4
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	2,76	3
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking to my friends	3,71	4
I become more anxious (=engstelig) when speaking to people who are not my friends	3,18	3 and 4
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when the topic that we are talking about is easy	3,73	4
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when the topic that we are talking about is familiar	3,73	4
I become more anxious (=engstelig) when the topic that we are talking about is difficult/challenging	2,98	3

n=45

1= Strongly agree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.27 Distribution of answers concerning variability in FLA

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking in pairs	0	0,0 %	5	11,1 %	12	26,7 %	25	55,6 %	3	6,7 %
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking in groups	1	2,2 %	7	15,6 %	13	28,9 %	23	51,1 %	1	2,2 %
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	5	11,1 %	11	24,4 %	20	44,4 %	8	17,8 %	1	2,2 %
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when speaking to my friends	0	0,0 %	6	13,3 %	9	20,0 %	22	48,9 %	8	17,8 %
I become more anxious (=engstelig) when speaking to people who are not my friends	1	2,2 %	9	20,0 %	17	37,8 %	17	37,8 %	1	2,2 %
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when the topic that we are talking about is easy	0	0,0 %	4	8,9 %	11	24,4 %	23	51,1 %	7	15,6 %
I become less anxious (=engstelig) when the topic that we are talking about is familiar	0	0,0 %	4	8,9 %	9	20,0 %	27	60,0 %	5	11,1 %
I become more anxious (=engstelig) when the topic that we are talking about is difficult/challenging	1	2,2 %	11	24,4 %	22	48,9 %	10	22,2 %	1	2,2 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The results in table 4.26 and 4.27 indicate that FLA varies according to the different classroom activities, with whom the students are working and the degree of difficulty of the topic. As discussed in section 4.1, the students preferred to speak in pairs and groups, and they also experience less anxiousness/nervousness when speaking in these contexts compared to class discussions. First, the mode scores in table 4.26 show that the most frequent answer is that the students agree with becoming less anxious when speaking in pairs and groups. In class discussions, on the other hand, the most frequent answer is that the students neither agree nor disagree. Second, there are more students who agree to become less anxious when speaking to their friends. Yet, this does not equal that they become more anxious by speaking to people who are not their friends, as seen in table 4.27. Third, they become less nervous/anxious when talking about easy and familiar topics compared to more difficult/challenging topics. However, the mean in table 4.26 shows that there are also a number of students who neither agree nor disagree, and a few students who disagree with

becoming less anxious. In other words, there might be students who are affected by other aspects or feel nervous regardless of the classroom activity, interlocutors and topic. Nevertheless, the results in table 4.26 and table 4.27 clearly show that FLA can vary according to classroom activities.

Table 4.28 Interviewees' thoughts regarding FLA and classroom activity

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Feels less nervous speaking in pairs and groups, the least nervous in groups	Gets more nervous when talking in front of more people. It is important for her to talk to or in front of someone she feels safe with	Feels comfortable regardless of the classroom activity	Varies from day to day, but she feels that it is best to work in pairs or groups	Feels comfortable regardless of the classroom activity	Feels more nervous when talking about difficult topics

The results of the interviews coincide with the findings in the questionnaire. The interviewees' nervousness was affected by the number of and familiarity with the interlocutors they were working with. They were also affected by the topic. Thus, all the different aspects of classroom activities affected the students in different ways in relation to experiencing nervousness or anxiousness. Student C and E, however, feel comfortable speaking regardless of the classroom activity. When asked what makes her comfortable, student E answered,

Ehm, I think that, ehm... all of them is like similar, you're just talking to different persons or people in the classroom. So I feel talking in pairs is easy because it's just one person, and in groups you can get like other peoples' opinion so that's pretty good too because when you're just two people you don't get like the whole experience of like everyone's opinion about the textbook when you're in group. So there's like positive sides with everything

Thus, student E manages to get the most out of each classroom activity. Students A, B and D are all affected by the number of people they have to work with in relation to experiencing nervousness. Student A states,

Ehm, I feel, I don't feel that much more nervous about speaking in pairs and groups, it's pretty much even. But in class I feel more nervous than in groups and pairs

because it's the whole class and it's more people that you have to speak English in front of and that's makes it a little bit harder

Student D also pointed out that in pair and group work, there is more room for failing. In summary, the students' nervousness is affected by the classroom activities in which pair and group work make them feel less nervous than taking part in class discussions.

The students were asked in the questionnaire to explain whether their FLA changed according to the classroom activities.

Table 4.29 Students' thoughts regarding FLA and classroom activities

Categories	Number of responses
Affected by others	1
Classroom activity	40
→ Class discussions	10
→ Group work	17
→ Pair work	13
Do not feel nervous	20
Does not feel right	1
Do not know	1
Do not speak	1
Interlocutors	6
→ Familiarity	5
→ Number	1
Negative evaluation	3
Not a problem	20
Reading	1
Self-esteem	3
Topic	2

As seen in table 4.29, the students are affected by a variety of aspects when it comes to feeling nervous and/or anxious in the EFL classroom. Forty of the responses stated that one or more of the different classroom activities affected them positively or negatively when it comes to their nervousness. Most commonly, the class discussion was mentioned as a negative impact whereas they felt less nervous in pairs and/or groups. The students were also impacted by the other two aspects in classroom activities, interlocutors and topic, as well as aspects that are evident in FLA, such as self-esteem and a fear of negative evaluation. Nevertheless, 20 responses stated that they did not feel nervous when speaking English. Thus, quite a few do not get nervous.

4.2.5 Discussion

The findings related to this variable might indicate the students experience parts of FLA. Four aspects will be discussed in this section:

- 1) Anxiety type
- 2) The students who seem to have FLA
- 3) The effect of judgement
- 4) Variability in FLA

Most of the students experienced neither communication apprehension, test anxiety nor fear of negative evaluation. However, judging by the number of students who neither agreed nor disagreed or actually experienced nervousness tied to the different aspects that were investigated, there were students who experienced at least some of the aspects of FLA. This was also evident in the interviews as all interviewees except student C experienced some of the aspects of FLA. This means that the students experience nervousness tied to communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, 127) to varying degrees, but it is not necessarily tied simply to speaking English. They may instead be affected by, for instance, the topic in which they felt nervous about talking about difficult or sensitive topics. They could also be affected by the classroom activity as they were afraid of being negatively evaluated by their peers and/or their teacher when speaking up in class.

Yet, there are some students who *do* feel more anxious in their English classes than other classes, who compare themselves to others and who do not feel confident when speaking. In the interviews, one student (student D) experienced anxiety that was directly related to speaking English. The students in the study of Liu and Jackson (2008, 82) as well as Baran-Łucarz (2014, 462) also experienced anxiousness in relation to a fear of being negatively evaluated and not making themselves understood. In addition, in this study, there might be more students who might experience FLA or have other reasons not to participate as there were students in both class 1 and class 2 did not agree to be interviewed, as mentioned in section 3.3.3.3 and 3.5.

There were examples of both trait and state anxiety (Dörnyei 2005, 198). Student D is an example of a student who experiences this type of anxiety in almost any situation in the classroom, and it inhibits her from speaking. However, some of the other interviewees could experience state anxiety, which was triggered by different situations in the classroom.

Judgement, especially from peers, was a hindrance for the students in this study. There was a tendency for students to laugh at each other in class 2, and two out of three interviewees from this class described this judgement and laughter from their peers as a negative impact on their oral participation. The last interviewee from this class also mentioned that this was the case in their class, but he was not affected by it in the same way as the other two students. This type of judgement was not an issue in class 1.

In relation to variability, the students' nervousness could vary according to the classroom activities, the topic and the interlocutors. First, the students felt more nervous when speaking English in front of the whole class in class discussions. Norderud (2017, 68) also found that speaking in pairs and groups created least anxiety for the students. They could also be negatively affected and become more nervous when talking about difficult or sensitive topics. Lastly, they became more self-conscious and concerned with making a good impression when speaking to people who were not their friends.

It is valuable for teachers to know which situations and factors that trigger students' nervousness for speaking English in the classroom. With this knowledge, measures can be taken to make it less intimidating. For instance, the teacher can focus on getting the students to get to know each other, which might help both in relation to talking to people who are not their friends as well as speaking up in class discussions. In addition, if the students are more involved in deciding what they are going to talk about and how they are going to work with it, they may experience less nervousness.

4.3 The use of Norwegian (L1)

The use of Norwegian (L1) was seen in relation to authenticity, the contexts in which the students may rely on their L1, their attitudes towards the use of L1 as well as whether their L1 use varied.

4.3.1 Contexts in which the students use their L1

In this section, the aim is to look at whether the students' use of Norwegian is affected by specific contexts or reasons for using Norwegian.

Table 4.30 Mean and mode scores concerning contexts in which the students rely on Norwegian

Statement	Mean	Mode
I speak Norwegian instead of English to cover my weaknesses when speaking English	2,20	2
I speak Norwegian because I forget the words in English	2,91	2 and 4
I speak Norwegian to make sure that I have understood a word correctly	2,93	4
I speak Norwegian to make sure that I have understood a task correctly	3,09	4
I need to speak Norwegian to become certain about what to do in the English classes	2,47	2
If we discuss the tasks in Norwegian before we start, I feel more confident in my ability to speak English	3,18	4
I speak more English when I am talking to my teacher	3,49	4

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.31 Distribution of answers concerning contexts in which the students rely on Norwegian

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I speak Norwegian instead of English to cover my weaknesses when speaking English	13	28,9 %	18	40,0 %	6	13,3 %	8	17,8 %	0	0,0 %
I speak Norwegian because I forget the words in English	8	17,8 %	11	24,4 %	9	20,0 %	11	24,4 %	6	13,3 %
I speak Norwegian to make sure that I have understood a word correctly	5	11,1 %	14	31,1 %	8	17,8 %	15	33,3 %	3	6,7 %
I speak Norwegian to make sure that I have understood a task correctly	3	6,7 %	14	31,1 %	7	15,6 %	18	40,0 %	3	6,7 %
I need to speak Norwegian to become certain about what to do in the English classes	7	15,6 %	21	46,7 %	8	17,8 %	7	15,6 %	2	4,4 %
If we discuss the tasks in Norwegian before we start, I feel more confident in my ability to speak English	3	6,7 %	8	17,8 %	14	31,1 %	18	40,0 %	2	4,4 %
I speak more English when I am talking to my teacher	1	2,2 %	6	13,3 %	13	28,9 %	20	44,4 %	5	11,1 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The mode in table 4.30, as well as the number of respondents in table 4.31, show that the majority of the students either disagreed or strongly disagreed with using Norwegian to cover their weaknesses. Nevertheless, there are other contexts in which many of the students agree that they use Norwegian. For instance, as seen in table 4.31, there are 15 students who agree and 14 students who disagree with using Norwegian when they have forgotten a word in English. There are also 21 students who agree or strongly agree and 17 who disagree and strongly disagree with using Norwegian for clarification of tasks. Lastly, 21 of the students either agree or strongly agree with becoming more confident with speaking English if they discuss the tasks they are going to solve in Norwegian first. Therefore, there is a substantial number of students who agree to using Norwegian for some sort of clarification. In addition, over half of the respondents speak more English when talking to their teacher. These results have a large spread in the answers of the students, which might indicate that the use of Norwegian is varied.

Table 4.32 Interviewees' thoughts regarding the contexts in which they use Norwegian in the EFL classroom

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Uses Norwegian when talking about other topics as well as for clarification	Uses Norwegian for clarification of tasks and words, and when talking about other topics	Uses Norwegian for short answers	Uses Norwegian in groups and for clarification of words and tasks	Uses Norwegian for clarification of words and tasks	Uses Norwegian when talking about her spare-time and for clarification

The results from the interviews coincide with the results from the questionnaire in relation to the use of Norwegian for clarification. Five out of six interviewees use Norwegian for clarification of words and/or tasks. The only exception was student C,

I: Ehm... do you speak English, Norwegian or both in the classroom?

R: Ehm... yeah, ehm, mostly English, this is just in the classroom, right?

I: This is just in the classroom

R: Yeah, ehm... mostly English, as I said

I: Yeah?

R: And... in pairs I get can get a bit lazy and talk Norwegian just because it doesn't matter really for me then

Student C only uses Norwegian in pairs when he answers short questions as he does not bother to use English. However, all the other interviewees found it necessary sometimes to use Norwegian for clarification. For instance, student F explained,

Well maybe it's, I'm... if the teacher comes down to my desk, ehm, I would ask him of what we are going to do, I would ask him in Norwegian

Furthermore, student E stated,

Ehm, I feel like I mostly speak English and if there are words I'm insecure about and not certain of I just use the Norwegian word like... get my whole content out

Lastly, student B explained in which contexts she uses Norwegian,

Just to make sure that I'm like understand the question or understand a task or...

Thus, using Norwegian for clarification is rather common among the students.

Another aspect that affected some of the students when choosing to use Norwegian was which language their peers and/or their teacher spoke. Student A stated,

Ehm, I speak a little bit of both during the classes. Uhm, I usually speak Norwegian when the teacher is not said that I am going to say something. If I say something to my

medelevar...? I usually say it in Norwegian unless it's a group work and I'm supposed to speak English to them. Ehm, and if I, if it's something that I can't find the word of I maybe use a little bit of Norwegian words...

Student B is also affected by how the others are speaking,

Because if I'm asked a question in Norwegian, then it's like natural to answer in Norwegian

Lastly, student D answers in English if the teacher asks her a question,

I: Like, what, sort of, does it take for you to think it's OK to speak English?

R: I do think it's OK no matter what because if the teacher sort of asks me questions I do answer them

(My translation)

Hence, most of the interviewees used Norwegian for clarification. This was also the case in the classroom observation, in which I wrote down some examples of situations in which the students spoke Norwegian (see appendix E):

The students used Norwegian when:

- Discussing unrelated topics
- Figuring out how to solve the task
- Asking for clarification, translation, translate from English to Norwegian

Examples of comments:

- Kva betyr "abolitionist"? (What does abolitionist mean?)
- Themes means "tema", right?
- Er det meininga vi skal...? (Are we supposed to...?)
- Vi skal berre snakke om karakterane og fortelje kva vi synes om filmen (We are only going to talk about the characters and what tell each other what we thought about the movie)

Also, in the questionnaire, the students were asked to describe the contexts in which they relied on Norwegian (see appendix F).

Table 4.33 The contexts in which the students relied on Norwegian

Categories	Number of responses
Always use English	3
Clarification	18
→ Clarification of tasks	5
→ Clarification of words	7
Classroom activity	17
→ Class discussions	3
→ Group work	8
→ Pair work	6
Do not know	2
Interlocutors	6
→ Familiarity with interlocutors	6
Only use English when I have to	2
Speaks Norwegian when talking about other stuff	7
→ Breaks	1
Teacher	5
Tiredness	1
Topic	5
Use Norwegian whenever possible	5
When others are speaking Norwegian	7

The different contexts in which the students used Norwegian is presented in table 4.33. Eighteen of the responses had to do with using Norwegian for clarification of either tasks or words,

When we are going to talk about a completely new topic, which I have never heard about before, it can be a bit difficult to speak English, so then it might be easier to speak in Norwegian in the beginning to make sure I understand what I am talking about before speaking English afterwards
(My translation)

Also, seven students stated that they spoke Norwegian when talking about unrelated topics,

I use Norwegian when I'm talking off the topic. I usually speed through the questions beforehand

It was also evident that the students were affected by who and how many they were working with. Six responses stated that they spoke Norwegian according to what their peers decided to do, eight students used Norwegian when working in groups, and six students used Norwegian when working in pairs:

I use Norwegian when we are in groups, because we'd rather chat than doing tasks

I don't use Norwegian in discussions because it is expected that we speak English. I can use Norwegian when we work in pairs because it matters less to me

Thus, the results from the open question about the context in which the students rely on Norwegian are in line with the results from the interview and the closed questions in the

questionnaire. In the following, there will be a presentation of the results regarding authenticity when speaking in the EFL classroom.

4.3.2 Authenticity

In this section, the purpose is to find out if the students feel that the EFL classroom is a place in which it is natural to practice their English-speaking skills, and whether their use of Norwegian affected by it not being natural to speak English in the classroom.

Table 4.34 Mean and mode scores concerning authenticity

Statement	Mean	Mode
I speak Norwegian instead of English because I feel that speaking English in the classroom is not authentic (= klasserommet skaper ikke en naturlig setting for å snakke engelsk)	2,29	2
Speaking to native speakers of English would make it more natural for me to speak English	3,80	4
I speak English in the classroom because it feels natural	3,33	4
I speak Norwegian instead of English because it does not feel natural to speak English to my classmates	2,69	2
I find it necessary to speak both Norwegian and English during the English classes	3,27	4
I believe it is important to speak both Norwegian and English to keep my Norwegian identity	2,64	2
I believe it is important to speak both Norwegian and English to communicate with my friends in the English classroom	3,09	3 and 4

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.35 Distribution of answers concerning authenticity

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I speak Norwegian instead of English because I feel that speaking English in the classroom is not authentic (= klasserommet skaper ikke en naturlig setting for å snakke engelsk)	8	17,8 %	23	51,1 %	8	17,8 %	5	11,1 %	1	2,2 %
Speaking to native speakers of English would make it more natural for me to speak English	1	2,2 %	2	4,4 %	13	28,9 %	18	40,0 %	11	24,4 %
I speak English in the classroom because it feels natural	1	2,2 %	10	22,2 %	13	28,9 %	15	33,3 %	6	13,3 %
I speak Norwegian instead of English because it does not feel natural to speak English to my classmates	5	11,1 %	16	35,6 %	13	28,9 %	10	22,2 %	1	2,2 %
I find it necessary to speak both Norwegian and English during the English classes	3	6,7 %	5	11,1 %	16	35,6 %	19	42,2 %	2	4,4 %
I believe it is important to speak both Norwegian and English to keep my Norwegian identity	7	15,6 %	15	33,3 %	13	28,9 %	7	15,6 %	3	6,7 %
I believe it is important to speak both Norwegian and English to communicate with my friends in the English classroom	2	4,4 %	11	24,4 %	15	33,3 %	15	33,3 %	2	4,4 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The mean and the mode in table 4.34 show that the students do not agree to speak Norwegian instead of English because it is not authentic to speak English in the classroom. The most frequent answer is that the students believe that it is natural to speak English in the classroom. However, there are also quite a few students who disagree and are insecure about the authenticity when speaking in the classroom. A few students find it necessary to speak both Norwegian and English in the classroom, as seen in table 4.35. One of the contexts that they

find it necessary in could be, for instance, when they are talking to their friends. Sixteen students agreed that it is necessary to speak both Norwegian and English to communicate with their friends in the classroom, and several of the interviewees also said that it was not always natural to speak English to their friends.

Table 4.36 Interviewees' thoughts regarding authenticity

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
He does not feel that English is as natural as Norwegian, but it is natural in some contexts	English comes natural to her because of song lyrics	It feels natural to speak English	Feels more natural to speak English to someone she knows than someone she does not know	It feels natural to speak English	It feels natural to speak English when talking about topics that has to do with the English subject

The interview results showed that the students felt speaking English in the classroom was natural. However, some conditions needed to be fulfilled for it to be natural to speak. For instance, student A stated,

R: The teacher said that now you have to speak English to each other, then it feels very natural

He feels that it is natural to speak English when he is told to do so by the teacher. The importance of the teacher in making it natural to speak English was mentioned by several of the students. Student C, for instance, stated that he would speak Norwegian or English according to which language his teacher asked the questions in. A similar statement was also made by student E. This indicates that the role of the teacher in facilitating oral communication in English is crucial. Another interesting aspect was found with student B,

I feel it comes very natural because I sing English lyrics all the time

She felt that song lyrics and watching movies and TV-series had helped her in making it more natural to speak English.

The results show that different aspects can affect the students in making oral communication in English authentic in the EFL classroom. First, speaking to, being told to speak and answering questions from the teacher help the students speak English. Second, even though it feels most comfortable, it is not always natural to speak English to their friends. Lastly, the

impact of their peers' choice of speaking Norwegian or not makes a difference for their own choice.

4.3.3 Attitudes toward the use of Norwegian

In this section, I look at the students' beliefs about the use and the impact of Norwegian.

Table 4.37 Mean and mode scores concerning students' attitudes towards the use of Norwegian

Statement	Mean	Mode
I still develop my speaking skills in English even if I am talking Norwegian in class	2,73	3
I believe it is important to speak English to develop my speaking skills	4,13	4
My speaking skills in English are negatively affected by using Norwegian instead of English during the English classes	3,07	3
I believe we should only speak English during the English classes	3,02	3

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.38 Distribution of answers concerning students' attitudes towards the use of Norwegian

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I still develop my speaking skills in English even if I am talking Norwegian in class	7	15,6 %	10	22,2 %	16	35,6 %	12	26,7 %	0	0,0 %
I believe it is important to speak English to develop my speaking skills	1	2,2 %	1	2,2 %	4	8,9 %	24	53,3 %	15	33,3 %
My speaking skills in English are negatively affected by using Norwegian instead of English during the English classes	1	2,2 %	11	24,4 %	19	42,2 %	12	26,7 %	2	4,4 %
I believe we should only speak English during the English classes	2	4,4 %	13	28,9 %	15	33,3 %	12	26,7 %	3	6,7 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

In addition to authenticity and contexts in which the students rely on Norwegian, I also wanted to investigate the general attitudes the students had towards the use of Norwegian in the EFL classroom. As is evident in table 4.37, the students seem to be insecure about the impact of the use of Norwegian in the class. The majority of the students agree that it is important to speak English to develop their English skills, whereas 13 students disagree and 12 agree with the statement that they should only speak English during the classes, as is seen in table 4.38. Also, the most frequent answer is that the students neither agree nor disagree with this latter statement. The results might indicate that the students do believe that it is important to speak English, but they disagree about the effect of using Norwegian in the classes. They are also insecure about whether their oral skills are negatively affected by the use of Norwegian. As seen in table 4.38, 12 students agreed and 11 students disagreed with Norwegian having a negative effect on their speaking skills. This insecurity was also reflected in the interviews. However, they all agreed that some situations, the use of Norwegian was

acceptable. Table 4.39 presents the general attitudes of the students in relation to using Norwegian in the classroom.

Table 4.39 Interviewees' thoughts regarding their attitudes towards the use of Norwegian

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
It can be necessary to use Norwegian to learn how to express what you think in English	Thinks that everyone uses a bit of Norwegian in the class	There are no contexts in which he feels that the use of Norwegian is necessary	Feels that using Norwegian in the classroom makes her feel safer	The use of Norwegian can be helpful to get back on track	Thinks it is okay to use Norwegian when asking for help

All the interviewees explained that they used Norwegian for various reasons in the classroom. Everyone except student C found the use of Norwegian to be helpful or even necessary in some situations. Student C did not explicitly state that he did not want the class to speak Norwegian, but there were not any situations in which *he* felt the need to speak Norwegian. The other interviewees listed some context in which they found the use of Norwegian to be necessary. Student A stated,

Ehm, yeah. If you... someone doesn't know the word of something and doesn't know how to express them in English, ehm, they learns by knowing in Norwegian what they have to say, ehm, ehm, in English

Student A believes that it can be valuable to express oneself in Norwegian if you do not know how to formulate yourself in English. A similar view was held by student E,

But, ehm, using the Norwegian word for clarification will just help you because it shows that you can still get back on track with the English while using the Norwegian term

Getting back on track by receiving help was also a situation in which student F found it acceptable to use Norwegian.

Student D also used Norwegian for the same reasons as mentioned by the other interviewees. Furthermore, she felt that using Norwegian makes her safer in the classroom,

R: Ehm... I believe I think it is necessary sort of

I: Yeah?

R: Because... ehm... I feel that it makes me much safer in the class
(My translation)

Student D was the only interviewee who was negatively affected by simply speaking English. Consequently, using her own mother tongue made her feel safe in the classroom.

4.3.4 Variability in the use of L1 and classroom activities

The purpose of looking at variability in the use of L1 is to find out whether the students' L1 use varies with the different classroom activities, the interlocutors or the topic.

Table 4.40 Mean and mode scores concerning variability in the use of L1

Statement	Mean	Mode
I speak more Norwegian than English when talking to my friends	3,29	4
I speak more Norwegian than English when talking to people who are not my friends	3,33	4
I speak more Norwegian than English when working in pairs	2,82	3
I speak more Norwegian than English when working in groups	2,76	3
I speak more Norwegian than English when speaking in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	2,27	2
I speak more Norwegian than English when the topic is easy	2,09	2
I speak more Norwegian than English when the topic is familiar	2,13	2
I speak more Norwegian than English when the topic is difficult	2,71	2

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.41 Distribution of answers concerning variability in the use of L1

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I speak more Norwegian than English when talking to my friends	0	0,0 %	13	28,9 %	12	26,7 %	14	31,1 %	6	13,3 %
I speak more Norwegian than English when talking to people who are not my friends	0	0,0 %	11	24,4 %	12	26,7 %	18	40,0 %	4	8,9 %
I speak more Norwegian than English when working in pairs	2	4,4 %	16	35,6 %	17	37,8 %	8	17,8 %	2	4,4 %
I speak more Norwegian than English when working in groups	3	6,7 %	14	31,1 %	20	44,4 %	7	15,6 %	1	2,2 %
I speak more Norwegian than English when speaking in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	9	20,0 %	18	40,0 %	15	33,3 %	3	6,7 %	0	0,0 %
I speak more Norwegian than English when the topic is easy	10	22,2 %	24	53,3 %	8	17,8 %	3	6,7 %	0	0,0 %
I speak more Norwegian than English when the topic is familiar	10	22,2 %	24	53,3 %	6	13,3 %	5	11,1 %	0	0,0 %
I speak more Norwegian than English when the topic is difficult	5	11,1 %	15	33,3 %	13	28,9 %	12	26,7 %	0	0,0 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The results in table 4.40 and 4.41 indicate that the use of Norwegian varies in the EFL classroom. As seen in table 4.41, the results regarding speaking with friends or people who are not their friends are quite similar. The students' use of Norwegian is therefore affected by both talking to their friends and people who are not their friends. In relation to the different classroom activities, the results are quite similar for pair and group work. The mode shows that the most frequent answer is that the students neither agree nor disagree with speaking more Norwegian than English when working in pairs and groups. In relation to class discussions, the mode is 2, and the majority of the students either disagree or strongly disagree with speaking more Norwegian than English when taking part in class discussions.

Lastly, most of the students either disagree or strongly disagree with speaking more Norwegian than English both in pairs and groups.

The use of Norwegian seems to be somewhat affected by speaking about difficult topics, even though the most frequent answer is that the students disagree. Table 4.40 shows that 15 students disagree and five strongly disagree, but there were also 12 people who agree and 13 who neither agree nor disagree to speak more Norwegian when the topic is difficult. Consequently, quite a few students are affected by the degree of difficulty of the topic when choosing whether to speak Norwegian or English in the EFL classroom.

Table 4.42 shows the interviewees' thoughts regarding whether their use of Norwegian varies according to classroom activities, interlocutors and topic.

Table 4.42 Interviewees' thoughts regarding the use of L1 and classroom activities

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Speaks more Norwegian in groups and pairs, especially if he is working with people he knows	The use of Norwegian varies according to the teacher, the topic and how she is asked questions	He is affected by the people around him when choosing to speak Norwegian or English	Speaks more Norwegian in groups as the teacher is not paying attention	Speaks more Norwegian when talking to friends	The use of Norwegian varies according to who she is working with

The students are highly affected by the classroom activity and interlocutors when choosing whether to speak Norwegian or English. Student D stated,

- I: Ehm... in relation to the use of Norwegian... does that vary too?
 R: Yes
 I: Yes?
 R: Because like when you don't know the other then, then you don't speak Norwegian because then you want to perform well
 I: Yeah?
 R: And when you speak Norwegian you can, it can sort of be a sign that you are not that good in English and that you don't master it that well
 (My translation)

Student D wants to speak English to people that she does not know to make a good impression. However, she also explains that this pressure to speak English makes her more silent than working with people she knows. Therefore, she speaks most, both Norwegian and English with her friends.

Speaking more Norwegian with people they know was also the case for student A and student E. Student E explained,

R: Ehm... ehm, maybe I feel, I speak more Norwegian when I'm speaking to a friend of mine

I: Yeah

R: Because then I often have more things to say about the topics or there's more things that I can be uncertain of

Student C speaks Norwegian or English according to what the people around him choose, or how he is feeling.

R: Like, if I feel like talking in English, I would talk in English

I: Yeah

R: If I feel like talking in Norwegian... yeah, it's mostly just the feeling

I: Just the feeling. So it does vary, but can you point at something specific that affects you?

R: That affects me? The other people around me

I: Yeah

R: Those are the ones that affects me if it's... if it's the, if they need practice or if... it's mostly the people around me that affect me

The impact of others is also mentioned by student B who talks about the effect of the teacher and the language he/she decides to use,

R: But if the teacher asks in English then we ask in English but if we don't know then we answer in Norwegian

I: Yeah, mhm

R: It kind of depends on how you 're asked as well

I: Yeah

R: Because if I'm asked a question in Norwegian, then it's like natural to answer in Norwegian

The students are also affected by the classroom activity where they speak more Norwegian in pairs and groups than in class discussions. For instance, student D speaks more Norwegian in pairs and groups as the teacher is not paying attention,

Ehm... it is perhaps like if you sit in pairs or in groups then it is much easier to sort of use Norwegian because the teacher does not stand there and listen
(My translation)

Through the observation, it was also evident that this was the case for several others, as I noted that the students switched language when the teacher came to talk to them in pairs and groups.

In the questionnaire, the students were also asked to explain whether their use of L1 changed according to the different classroom activities.

Table 4.43 Students' responses to whether their use of L1 vary

Categories	Number of responses
Affected by others	4
Always Norwegian	1
Clarification	5
Classroom activity	29
→ Class discussions	8
→ Group work	11
→ Pair work	10
Different expectations	1
Does not vary	17
Do not know	3
Interlocutors	3
Teacher	3
Topic	1
Try to speak English	2
When asked a question	1

As seen in table 4.43, 17 of the responses simply stated that their use of Norwegian is not dependent on the different classroom activities. Twenty-nine responses indicated that their use vary. In general, the students spoke the least Norwegian in class discussions as they were expected to speak English in this context. In pairs and groups, they use more Norwegian. For instance,

If I speak in class scissions I speak English, because that's what I am supposed to do. In groups and Pairs, I also speak English but more Norwegian than I would in a discussion, because it is less formal. I usually speak English when answering questions in groups and pairs, but I speak Norwegian quicker than I would in a discussion with the whole class.

Also, they mentioned the impact of their peers and their teacher when deciding whether to speak Norwegian or English. For instance,

If we speak in pairs i can speak more norwegian because the teacher does not listen and cant tell us to speak english

In short, the use of Norwegian varies for many of the students in this study where they are mostly affected by working in pairs, groups or class discussions as well as being affected by their teacher and their peers when deciding which language they are going to speak.

4.3.5 Discussion

The purpose of exploring the use of L1 in the EFL classroom was to find out what the students thought about using Norwegian in the English classroom. The results show that the use of Norwegian is a natural part of the Norwegian EFL classroom. There were three important findings that I wish to discuss:

- 1) Authenticity relies heavily on the teacher
- 2) The use of Norwegian is acceptable and sometimes necessary for the students to keep up
- 3) The students' reliance on Norwegian varies according to the classroom activity, interlocutors and topic

Authenticity when speaking is heavily dependent on the teacher. Newby (2006, 20) underlined the importance of authenticity in CLT, and Richards and Rodgers (2001, 161) talk about meaningful activities that can help the students develop. This responsibility is important to focus more, even though it is challenging to create authentic situations for the students to practice their English in a classroom. With this, it is also important that the teacher does not simply force everyone to speak English, he/she also needs to encourage the students and give them positive feedback to make it more comfortable and natural to speak English.

Also, the results of this study are in line with the ideas presented by Galajda (2017, 14-15), in which she talks about the responsibility of the teacher in facilitating authentic oral communication. Several of the interviewees and the responses in the questionnaire mentioned their teacher in relation to situations in which they speak English. Rye (2014, 68) also found that the students spoke most English when communicating with their teacher. Therefore, a lot of the responsibility of making it natural for the students to practice their oral skills lies on the teacher.

The use of Norwegian is sometimes necessary as the students need clarification. Cao (2011, 474) found that students rely on their L1 to cover their weaknesses. This might also be the case for several of the students in this study. They did not, however, characterise it as weaknesses, instead they simply stated that they sometimes need to speak Norwegian to clarify words or tasks in order to keep up. The students in Cao's (2011, 474) also used their L1 for similar reasons as the students in this study, such as planning and talking about unrelated topics. The use of Norwegian was often tied to getting back on track. Nevertheless, I would still argue, based on the observations, that the use of Norwegian in these two classes,

and especially in class 2, can inhibit the students' development in English, especially for the students who almost exclusively spoke Norwegian.

Lastly, it was clear that the students' use of Norwegian varied according to classroom activities, interlocutors and topic. First, the students spoke more Norwegian in pairs and groups, which was typically caused by the teacher not being present. Second, the students spoke more Norwegian to their friends than their teacher or acquaintances as they felt obligated to make a good impression in front of their teacher and people with whom they were not too familiar. Third, the topic affected the students when deciding whether to speak Norwegian or English. From the classroom observation, it seemed like "easy" topics could lead to more discussion in Norwegian. Perhaps this was caused by the topics being "typically Norwegian", as the case was in the study of Dale (2015, 39). In addition, the students seemed to be affected by working with difficult topics, where 12 students agreed and 13 neither agreed nor disagreed that they spoke more Norwegian than English when working with difficult topics. Rye (2014, 68) also found that the students' use of Norwegian was affected by difficult topics. Dale's (2015, 55) idea about communicative competence where the students code-switch because of insufficient language skills might also explain the students' use of Norwegian in this situation. Yet, there were also students who were not affected by difficult topics. Student C, for instance, preferred more challenging topics, as he would simply answer the easy questions in Norwegian. Therefore, talking about topics that are easy is not necessarily the solution to making the students speak more English.

Some of the findings correlate with the results in Moore's (2013, 239) study on Japanese EFL learners. For instance, the impact of other people played a role for the students in this study as they sometimes spoke Norwegian instead of English because they were affected by others, or because they were working with their friends. Even though Moore (2013, 245) found students to be speaking their L1 with people with lower level or other partners, it still shows that the choice of speaking in their L1 or English is affected by the people they are working with. The students felt that it was most comfortable and natural to speak to their friends. However, they also felt more obligated to speak English when talking to people they do not know.

From the results and the discussion of this variable, I would argue that the use of Norwegian does not necessarily inhibit the oral skills development of the students in English. However, it is necessary to have clear guidelines as to which contexts it is acceptable to speak Norwegian.

4.4 Self-perceived communication competence (SPCC)

Self-perceived communication competence was seen in relation to how the students were impacted by their perception of their abilities to communicate in English.

4.4.1 Impact of self-perceived competence

In this section, I look at whether the students' oral participation is affected by how the students perceive their speaking skills in English.

Table 4.44 Mean and mode scores concerning students' self-perceived communication competence

Statement	Mean	Mode
I speak English because I believe in my abilities to do so	3,47	4
I avoid speaking English because I feel that I do not know how	2,04	2
I am negatively affected by my thoughts about my own abilities to speak English	2,64	2
I do not feel confident in my ability to speak English in the English classroom	2,44	2
I feel confident in my ability to speak English in the English classroom	3,44	4
I believe in can develop my speaking skills in English	3,73	4
I believe I can speak grammatically correct English	3,56	4
I believe I can express myself fluently (=flytende) in English	3,64	4
I believe my perception (=oppfatning) of my ability (=evne) to speak English is the same as my teacher's perception	3,09	3
I believe that I am able to adapt my speaking skills to different situations in the classroom	3,76	4
I doubt my ability (=evne) to develop my speaking skills in English	2,42	2

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.45 Distribution of answers concerning students' self-perceived communication competence

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I speak English because I believe in my abilities to do so	0	0,0 %	10	22,2 %	9	20,0 %	21	46,7 %	5	11,1 %
I avoid speaking English because I feel that I do not know how	14	31,1 %	22	48,9 %	2	4,4 %	7	15,6 %	0	0,0 %
I am negatively affected by my thoughts about my own abilities to speak English	8	17,8 %	15	33,3 %	9	20,0 %	11	24,4 %	2	4,4 %
I do not feel confident in my ability to speak English in the English classroom	8	17,8 %	19	42,2 %	9	20,0 %	8	17,8 %	1	2,2 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English in the English classroom	0	0,0 %	9	20,0 %	11	24,4 %	21	46,7 %	4	8,9 %
I believe in can develop my speaking skills in English	1	2,2 %	2	4,4 %	11	24,4 %	25	55,6 %	6	13,3 %
I believe I can speak grammatically correct English	1	2,2 %	6	13,3 %	10	22,2 %	23	51,1 %	5	11,1 %
I believe I can express myself fluently (=flytende) in English	2	4,4 %	4	8,9 %	8	17,8 %	25	55,6 %	6	13,3 %
I believe my perception (=oppfatning) of my ability (=evne) to speak English is the same as my teacher's perception	2	4,4 %	11	24,4 %	16	35,6 %	13	28,9 %	3	6,7 %
I believe that I am able to adapt my speaking skills to different situations in the classroom	1	2,2 %	1	2,2 %	10	22,2 %	29	64,4 %	4	8,9 %
I doubt my ability (=evne) to develop my speaking skills in English	5	11,1 %	19	42,2 %	18	40,0 %	3	6,7 %	0	0,0 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The impact of the students' self-perceived communication competence on their oral participation in the EFL classroom is presented in table 4.44 and 4.45. According to the mode scores, the most common response shows that the students believe in their ability to speak English. However, as is evident from the mean scores in table 4.44 and the distribution of answers in table 4.45, there are also students who are negatively affected by their thoughts and who do not believe in their own ability to speak English. Quite a few students disagree that their thoughts about their ability to communicate correlate with their teacher's perception, which might point to, for instance, the students having too high expectations about their own skills. This was also pointed out by several of the interviewees.

The interviews showed that the students were affected by their thoughts about their own ability to speak English, both positively and negatively, as seen in table 4.46.

Table 4.46 Interviewees' thoughts regarding the impact of their self-perceived competence (SPCC)

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Feels that his oral skills have gotten better than before and that his classmates respect what he is saying	Feels that her oral skills have gotten better than before which boosts her confidence when speaking English	Thinks his skills are better than the average Norwegian, which affects him positively and makes him participate more	Feels that her oral skills are OK. Negatively affected by comparing her level with the level of her classmates	Does not think too much about her own oral skills level	Thinks that her oral skills are good which boosts her confidence

All six interviewees some ideas about their own oral skills level, and they felt that their thoughts affected them when choosing to participate or not in the classroom. Student C and student F, the students with high oral participation, felt that their skills were good, which gave them a confidence boost when participating orally in the EFL classroom. For instance, student C said,

I: Does this, yeah... Ehm, do these thoughts about your own skills affect you in any way in the classroom, positively or negatively?

R: Ehm... I don't think so. I think, ehm, like it can affect me cause I can get more active in the classroom because I feel comfortable with it

In relation to the negative effect these thoughts could have on the students' oral participation, student D stated,

I: And then the question is, what do you think about your own ability to speak English?
 R: Ehm... I do think that I, ehm, I do know how to speak English. My speaking skills are ok, but I am not very good at it
 I: Mhm
 R: ... and perhaps I am not as good as I should have been then
 I: Mhm
 R: Ehm... because according to the others in the class
 I: Mhm
 R: Kind of like... yeah, I am not at their level sort of
 (My translation)

Student D spends a lot of time comparing her own level with the level of her classmates, which affects her negatively. However, she does believe that she is able to develop her skills, which can make it more comfortable to speak. Student A and student B feel that it is more comfortable to speak now as they have developed their skills.

Several of the students talked about how their oral skills had developed over the years. This shows that the students' ideas about their own competence are developed over time, and previous experiences can affect them for a long time. Thus, it is vital that the students have good experiences in the classroom in order to feel confident when speaking.

4.4.2 Variability in SPCC and classroom activities

In this section, I look at whether the students' SPCC varies according to the classroom activity, the interlocutors and the topic of the interaction.

Table 4.47 Mean and mode scores concerning variability in students' self-perceived communication competence

Statement	Mean	Mode
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when I am working in pairs	3,87	4
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when I am working in groups	3,76	4
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when I am participating in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	3,36	4
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when talking to friends	4,07	4
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when talking to people I do not know	3,36	4
I feel confident in my ability to speak English if the topic is easy	3,96	4
I feel confident in my ability to speak English if the topic is familiar	3,93	4
I feel confident in my ability to speak English if the topic is difficult	3,53	4

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.48 Distribution of answers concerning variability in students' self-perceived communication competence

Statements	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when I am working in pairs	0	0,0 %	4	8,9 %	6	13,3 %	27	60,0 %	8	17,8 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when I am working in groups	0	0,0 %	5	11,1 %	6	13,3 %	29	64,4 %	5	11,1 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when I am participating in class discussions (=diskusjon der alle kan rekke opp hånden å svare)	1	2,2 %	9	20,0 %	12	26,7 %	19	42,2 %	4	8,9 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when talking to friends	0	0,0 %	2	4,4 %	5	11,1 %	26	57,8 %	12	26,7 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English when talking to people I do not know	1	2,2 %	9	20,0 %	13	28,9 %	17	37,8 %	5	11,1 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English if the topic is easy	0	0,0 %	2	4,4 %	8	17,8 %	25	55,6 %	10	22,2 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English if the topic is familiar	0	0,0 %	1	2,2 %	10	22,2 %	25	55,6 %	9	20,0 %
I feel confident in my ability to speak English if the topic is difficult	2	4,4 %	6	13,3 %	9	20,0 %	22	48,9 %	6	13,3 %

n=45

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neither agree nor disagree 4=Agree 5= Strongly agree

The results in table 4.47 show that the most frequent answer for all the different statements was 4 (agree). Therefore, it might seem as if the students' self-perceived communication competence is not too affected by the classroom activities. Also, for most of the questions, the mean and the mode are similar, which shows that there is an overall agreement between the students. In three cases, however, the mean scores show that there is a larger spread in the answers. For instance, regarding participation in class discussions, one student strongly disagrees, nine students disagree and 12 neither agree nor disagree with feeling confident, as seen in table 4.48. There are also nine students who disagree and 13 who neither agree nor disagree with feeling confident when speaking to people they do not know. Lastly, there are students who are affected by the degree of difficulty of the topic in which two students strongly disagree, six students disagree and nine students neither agree nor disagree with feeling confident when speaking about difficult topics. Thus, even though there is an overall agreement that students feel confident in the different classroom activities, there are also indications of students' self-perceived competence being affected by taking part in class discussions, talking to people they do not know as well as talking about difficult topics.

Table 4.49 Interviewees' thoughts regarding self-perceived communication competence and classroom activities

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F
Feels more confident in pairs and groups	Varies according to the topic	Feels equally competent in all the classroom activities	Varies according to who she is working with	Varies according to the topic	Does not vary according to classroom activity

The results in table 4.49 show that four out of six interviewees are affected by classroom

activities, interlocutors and topic with regard to their self-perceived communication competence. Student C and student F feel equally competent regardless of the classroom activity. Student A feels more confident in groups and pairs. Student D is affected by the familiarity with the people she is working with,

R: But it does vary, ehm, a bit because... like if you sit with someone you like, yeah are close friends with or... ehm, and then you know sort of that they will not judge you and stuff

I: Mhm

R: ... and then it is much easier for you to... even though you say some stuff wrong or something and just talk and then you get a bit more sense of achievement and feel that "I can do this" sort of

(My translation)

Working in pairs and groups with people that they are comfortable with can therefore improve their SPCC. Furthermore, Student B and E are affected by the topic. Student B stated,

R: Yeah, sometimes I think it's good and sometimes i don't think it's so good

I: Yeah

R: It depends on the theme

Therefore, making sure that the students also get to talk about topics they master can develop their SPCC.

In the questionnaire, the students also explained whether their SPCC changed according to the classroom activity in which they were taking part (see appendix F).

Table 4.50 Answers to the open question regarding variability in students' self-perceived communication competence

Categories	Number of responses
Affected by others	3
Bad perception of own abilities	4
Classroom activity	17
→ Class discussions	5
→ Group work	6
→ Pair work	6
Depends on achievement	1
Does not vary	24
Do not know	2
Interlocutors	6
→ Familiarity	2
→ Number	2
Topic	2

More half of the students' self-perceived competence was not affected by the classroom activities, where 24 of the students stated that the different classroom activities do not contribute to changing their self-perceived communication competence. Six students, however, mention the impact of interlocutors where they feel more safe with fewer people and people with whom they are familiar. In addition, five students are negatively affected by class discussions. Lastly, four students feel that their perception and their skills are poor irrespective of the classroom activity in which they are taking part.

Several of the students were highly affected by their self-perceived communication competence and they can change with good experiences,

When I am able to say something reasonable aloud in the class then my own perception of what I can and can't do changes
(My translation)

Thus, working with the students' SPCC is highly important.

4.4.3 Discussion

The aim of looking at the students' SPCC was to find out whether their perceptions inhibited their oral participation in the classroom. There were two important findings that I wish to discuss:

- 1) The students are affected by their self-perceived communication competence
- 2) The students' self-perceived communication competence varies

In relation to the first point, the interviews and the questionnaire showed that the students could be both negatively and positively affected by their thoughts about their own competence. Galajda (2017, 44) ties self-perceived communication competence to "self-efficacy" in which our beliefs affect how we act and interact with the world. Therefore, it is important that the students have a correct and realistic perspective of their own competence. One of the teachers in the study of Norderud (2017, 70) claimed that the oral participation of the students was affected by their perceptions of their ability to speak, which was not always the same as their actual oral skills level. In this study, there was only 13 who agreed and 3 who strongly agreed to their teacher having the same impression of their speaking skills as themselves. Therefore, there might be a lot of students whose oral participation might be impacted by having a poor perception of their oral skills, which is not necessarily the same as their actual speaking skills. In addition, there was a tendency for the students to compare their oral skills level to others, which can have a negative impact on their oral participation, as seen in the study of Baran-Łucarz (2014, 463). This points to the importance of working with the

students' SPCC in which Léger's (2009, 161) study shows how students can have a positive development with the use of self-assessment.

Lastly, the students' self-perception about their abilities vary. Yet, over half of the responses in the questionnaire stated that the classroom activity does not matter in relation to their self-perceived communication competence. Still, there are students who are affected by different factors such as interlocutors, topic, pair work and group work. Therefore, there are ways to facilitate oral communication in the classroom to make students feel safer and more competent. For instance, the students reported feeling more competent when speaking to their friends. This might have to do with the fear of making a bad impression on people that they are not too familiar with. The responses concerning interlocutors and SPCC in the questionnaire and the interviews stated that there is more room for error, and they felt more confident with people that they know. They were also affected by the number of interlocutors as they prefer to communicate in pairs and in groups over class discussions. The students' SPCC seemed to be slightly more negatively affected by difficult topics compared to easy and familiar topics. However, there were larger distributions of the answers in relation to the impact of pairs, groups or class discussions and the familiarity with interlocutors. Therefore, it would seem like the impact of interlocutors matters more than the impact of topic.

Students' SPCC also vary in relation to experience. The students in the study of Fushino (2010, 704) got more comfortable with more experience. In this study, student A and B felt that their oral skills have improved. Therefore, it is important to encourage the students' oral participation for the students to develop their skills and their perception of their skills.

4.5 Summary and discussion

To summarise and discuss the findings from this chapter, I am first going to briefly compare the results to the students' own opinions of what makes it natural and comfortable to speak English, before I highlight some important findings from the project.

In the questionnaire, the students were asked to explain what they believe makes it most natural and comfortable to speak in the classroom. I am going to compare the results to the different variables that were investigated in this study.

Table 4.51 Students' answer to: In your opinion, what can be done to make it most natural and comfortable for you to speak English in the classroom? Explain

Categories	Number of responses
Affected by others	1
Classroom activity	11
→ Class discussions	1
→ Group work	5
→ Pair work	5
Do not know	6
Getting to know classmates	2
Interlocutors	3
→ Familiarity	2
Less focus on correct language	1
More participation from peers	1
Not much that can be done	5
→ Native speakers	1
→ Own responsibility	1
Only speak English	13
Oral activities	1
Practice	5
→ Practice accents	2
Presentations	1
Respect	2
→ No judgement	1
→ Stop laughing	2
Self-esteem	2
Teacher	7

In table 4.51, the different categories that emerged from the students' answers to what makes it natural and comfortable to speak English in the classroom is presented. Several of the responses have to do with the different variables that have been the focus of this project. However, some categories that emerged showed the importance of the class environment as well as the impact of the teacher. In addition, 13 responses stated that it would help only to speak English in which they wanted both their peers and their teacher to be consistent in the use of English in the classroom. These aspects might be worth investigating in the future, as will be discussed in chapter 5. It is also noteworthy that six responses do not know what can be done and five responses state that nothing can be done. Even though one of the responses states that nothing can be done because the teaching is perfect, almost ¼ of the responses state that they either do not know what can be done or that feel that the EFL classroom does not give them the opportunities that they need. These results point to the importance of working with oral participation in the EFL classroom.

Lastly, I am going to review some of the findings from this chapter that can hopefully help to understand more and improve the teaching of English to better facilitate oral communication in the EFL classroom.

1) The students are affected by *who* and *how many* people they work with

As presented and discussed in section 4.1, students are highly affected by the number and the familiarity with the interlocutors. Even though they admitted that they could be more attentive when speaking to people who are not their friends, it is clear that they prefer and feel most comfortable speaking to their friends. Also, the majority of the students preferred to speak in pairs and/or groups as opposed to taking part in class discussions. Therefore, there are ways in which the teacher can facilitate more oral participation in the classroom.

2) The students are self-conscious

From the results in section 4.2 on FLA and section 4.4 on SPCC, it is evident that students spend a lot of time thinking about their own performances as well as what the others think about their performance. Their oral participation is highly affected by how they perceive their own ability to communicate. Also, they are concerned with making themselves understood and not being judged by their peers. These findings show the importance of working with the students' SPCC as well as working with the class environment when it comes to feeling comfortable with making mistakes in front of their peers.

3) The use of Norwegian is sometimes necessary

Even though the students need to practice speaking English in the EFL classroom, the use of Norwegian is sometimes necessary to keep up. They use Norwegian for clarification of words if the teacher or their peers use a word they do not understand, or if they need help to express themselves in English. They also use Norwegian for clarification of tasks, to understand and plan how they are going to solve a task. In these contexts, the use of Norwegian does not seem to inhibit their oral skills development. However, the use of Norwegian can also be negative when they simply use Norwegian *instead* of English, which was often the case, especially in class 2. Therefore, it might be valuable to provide clear guidelines for the students in relation to which contexts it is acceptable to use Norwegian in the EFL classroom.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary

The aim of this thesis was to investigate the effect of four variables on the students' oral participation in the Norwegian upper secondary EFL classroom. First, I looked at the impact general impact of classroom activities (pair work, group work and class discussions), which also included the effect of topic and interlocutors. Second, the impact of foreign language anxiety (FLA) was investigated. Third, I looked at the students' use of Norwegian (L1). Lastly, I investigated the effect of the students' self-perceived communication competence (SPCC). After looking at the general impact these variables had on the students' oral participation in English, I also looked at whether the impact of FLA, the use of Norwegian and their SPCC changed according to the different classroom activities, the topic and the interlocutors.

Through three different approaches: classroom observation, questionnaire and individual interviews, I was able to attain a deeper understanding of how these variables impact the students, and how to facilitate oral participation in English in the EFL classroom.

In the following, I am going to briefly summarise the findings of the different variables that were investigated. Then, I will address the pedagogical implications of the findings of this study. Lastly, I am going to make some recommendations for future research before providing some concluding remarks at the end.

5.1.1 Classroom activities

In this project, the results showed that more students preferred to speak to fewer people in in pairs and/or groups as opposed to taking part in class discussions. They were most comfortable speaking to people with whom they were familiar even though they could become more attentive when speaking to other people in their class. Also, their oral participation was affected by the degree of difficulty of the topic where more students favour familiar and easy topics compared to difficult topics. However, how they define what constitutes easy, familiar and difficult topics differ for the students.

5.1.2 Foreign language anxiety (FLA)

The results showed that the majority of the students were not more anxious in the English class compared to other classes. However, some of the students were affected by aspects of FLA, as they experienced nervousness/anxiousness about not being understood or able to

understand others, being misunderstood or negatively evaluated by others. The results also showed that the students care more about the opinions and the judgement of their peers as opposed to their teacher.

5.1.3 The use of L1

The students were aware of how they used their L1 in the EFL classroom. First, the findings showed that the students' use of Norwegian was affected by whether their teacher and/or their peers spoke Norwegian. Second, they spoke Norwegian more often in pairs and/or groups as opposed to class discussions. Lastly, they used Norwegian for specific purposes, such as clarification of words and tasks. However, it could also be challenging as Norwegian could *replace* the use of English, which in turn can affect their oral skills development in the target language. In addition, for some students, the use of Norwegian may be caused by the EFL classroom not being a setting in which it feels natural to practice their English speaking skills.

5.1.4 Self-perceived communication competence (SPCC)

The results from the impact of students' self-perceived communication competence show that the students are affected by their thoughts about their own oral skills competence. The majority of the students believe in their own ability to communicate. However, there are also students who are negatively affected by their perceptions, who are self-conscious and who compare themselves to their peers. It was also noteworthy that a lot of the students did not think that their perception of their oral speaking skills was the same as their teacher's perception. Consequently, their actual speaking skills as perceived by their teacher might be better than how they perceive it.

5.1.5 Variability

It was evident that the variables in this project can be considered both state and trait variables where the students' oral participation changes. The variable that was found to be most consistent throughout the different classroom activities was the students' SPCC. However, the students' thoughts on their abilities to communicate also varied. Investigating the variability and the effects the different variables have on the students shows the complexity of this topic. Students' oral participation can change rapidly according to, for instance, the topic, interlocutors, activity and feedback from others. The variability and complexity of this matter also points to the importance of learning more about what affects students' oral participation to help them develop their oral skills.

5.2 Pedagogical implications

The results of this project have yielded some results that might be valuable for EFL teachers in Norway.

As the students in this study were least comfortable participating in class discussions, some measures can be taken to make it less intimidating. First, letting the students discuss in pairs and/or groups before taking part in class discussions could make it easier to participate orally. In this way, the students get to discuss their answers with their peers, which again can make them feel more confident and comfortable participating orally afterwards. Second, it is evident that the students need time and confirmation from peers and/or their teacher before speaking up. Therefore, being put on the spot by the teacher can cause nervousness for the students, which could lead to less oral participation. Lastly, good experiences can lead to a willingness for the students to participate more in the future. It is, therefore, important to give the students positive feedback when they participate orally.

Authenticity is important to feel comfortable with practicing English speaking skills. The teacher has a responsibility to facilitate authentic oral communication in the EFL classroom. Several of the students stated that they spoke English if they were told to do so by the teacher. Consequently, it is also important for the teacher to be consistent. If the students are under the impression that they do not have to speak English, they can more easily rely on Norwegian. Therefore, it is important for teachers to make their expectations clear for the students. It might also be a good idea to include the students in the process of making some guidelines for the class. This can include rules on, for instance, the use of Norwegian, where it can be acceptable to use Norwegian for certain purposes and in certain contexts.

Even though the majority of the students in this study were willing to speak English under the right circumstances, a few students found oral participation in English to be intimidating regardless of the context. Therefore, it is important for EFL teachers to be creative and come up with alternatives to support those students who do not speak English in the classroom. Examples of alternatives that are used today are to let the students record themselves speaking or make videos. Such alternatives might benefit not only those who are reluctant to speak in the English classroom, but also those who do participate orally in the classroom as they can use their creativity and practice their oral skills in different ways.

Furthermore, in the purpose section of the English subject curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 2), it says, “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”. The EFL classroom is not necessarily a place where the students get to practice using their oral skills in different contexts. Several students find speaking English to their friends or their acquaintances to be awkward sometimes. Thus, the EFL classroom might not provide the students with a setting in which they find it natural to use and practice the English language. Therefore, it might be valuable for the students to use their English in contexts outside the classroom.

Lastly, continuing to embrace English as a global language is important. In ENG1-03 (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 2), English is characterised as a world language. Yet, it is also a focus on learning about English as the language of “the others”, in which the students learn about the cultures and the lifestyles of people that have English as their primary language (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 10). In the new curriculum (ENG01-04), there is a continued focus on English as a global language. For instance, in the competence aims after VG1, the students are supposed to know how to “describe central features of the development of English as a world language” (My translation) (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2020, 11). I would argue that this is an important step in embracing English as *our* language as well, as pointed out by Rindal (2014, 10). This development could make the students embrace the language more as a part of their own identity, which could make it more natural and less intimidating for them to use it.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

Since oral participation is not widely researched in Norway, this is an area of interest that can be valuable to investigate further. In future research, it might also be interesting to look at oral participation in both lower and upper secondary schools as well as to expand the research focus to several schools and in different parts of the country. Some aspects might be especially worth examining to get a better understanding of students’ oral participation in the classroom.

First, the role of the teacher is crucial in facilitating oral communication in the classroom. The teacher was often mentioned by the students as a reason for both participating or not participating orally in the classroom. Consequently, it might be worth looking into how the teacher affects the students in deciding to speak up or not. On this topic, it would also be interesting to investigate the differences in classrooms in which the teacher has an English-only practice as opposed to teachers who allow the students to use their L1. Do the students

who are required to speak English throughout the sessions participate more? Or do they avoid speaking since they are only allowed to communicate in English?

Second, the competence aims in the English subject curriculum after the first grade of upper secondary school state that students should be able to, for instance, “express oneself fluently and coherently in a detailed and precise manner suited to the purpose and situation” (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 9). Is the EFL classroom suited to help students achieve such complex competence aims? More research on the actual oral skills levels of students, as well as the possibilities that exist in the Norwegian EFL classroom to develop these oral skills, is needed.

5.4 Conclusion

Oral participation in the EFL classroom is an area of research that still needs to be developed. Studies on this topic and similar variables that were investigated in this study have been carried out in several countries. Yet, there is still a need to investigate this further in contexts that are similar to the Norwegian practices to get an even clearer picture of what impacts students’ oral participation. This project has shown that different variables affect the students’ oral participation positively and negatively, and there are ways in which teachers can facilitate oral communication in English in the Norwegian EFL classroom. However, if students are to achieve the different oral skills aims in the English subject curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2013, 9), it is crucial to continue to find ways in which they feel comfortable practicing these skills in the Norwegian EFL classroom.

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