English vocabulary learning
with special attention to Norwegian pupils
in lower secondary schools

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Preface

After working as an English teacher in a Norwegian lower secondary school for thirteen years, I have had the privilege to accompany quite a lot of pupils in their exploring of the English language. The pendulum has swung as to what has been the main focus of the language teaching, but lately, at least internationally, vocabulary has been on the agenda. Paying attention to vocabulary learning has led me to notice a sizeable difference in how and at which rate pupils are learning new words. Some pupils expand their vocabulary at a high rate, while others struggle over a long period of time and still end up with limited vocabulary. In addition to the fact that pupils differ in the way they learn new words, it is also evident that the methods teachers use in vocabulary teaching are of great importance for the pupils' learning of new words. In this thesis my intension is to explore about vocabulary in general, look at how some tenth grade pupils and their teachers deal with words, and try to find out if some ways of working with words give better results in vocabulary acquisition than others. According to Beck at al. (2002:1) it is clear that a large and rich vocabulary is the hallmark of an educated individual. A large vocabulary repertoire facilitates becoming an educated person to the extent that vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency in particular and school achievement in general. Vocabulary acquisition might still not be the main component in the teaching of English as a second language in the Norwegian classroom today, however the international focus on vocabulary learning will hopefully inspire English teachers and curriculum makers to focus even more on words and how to work with them in the time to come.

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List of abbreviations

SLA	Second language acquisition
ESL	English as a second language
EFL	English as a foreign language
L1	First language
L2	Second language
K 2006	Kunnskapsløftet - Knowledge Promotion
L 97	Læreplan for den tiårige grunnskulen – Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in Norway
M87	Mønsterplanen av 1987 - Curriculum guidelines for compulsory education in Norway

Summary in Norwegian

Engelsk vokabularinnlæring med særlig fokus på norske ungdomsskoleelever.

I denne oppgaven belyses vokabularinnlæring fra forskjellige sider. Først er ulike teoretiske tilnærminger til språkinnlæring som behaviorismen og universell grammatikk sett på før språkopplæringen er satt i et historisk perspektiv. Hvordan engelskfaget har gått fra å være et språk for eliten til å bli et fag for allmennheten er diskutert og læreplanen i faget er belyst. Videre er selve språkopplæringen og faktorer som spiller inn på den behandlet. Hva er et ord, hva vil det si å kunne et ord og hvilke ord bør man lære seg, er sentrale spørsmål som er omhandlet. Viktige individuelle element i språkopplæringen som motivasjon, bruk av lærestrategier og anlegg for språk er også utdypet og essensielle faktorer i planlegging av undervisningen for at opplæringen skal gi et best mulig læringsutbytte for elevene er gjengitt.

To studier er utført på norske ungdomsskoleelever. Først ble to læringsmetoder prøvd ut i egen klasse for å se hvilken som gav best læringsutbytte angående vokabularinnlæring. Læreren plukket ut ord der elevene ble testet for ordkunnskap før og etter de ulike metodene var gjennomført. Den ene metoden var å lese en tekst og deretter jobbe med ulike oppgaver der noen utvalgte ord ble bearbeidet, den andre metoden var ekstensiv lesing, der klassen leste en roman uten å bearbeide ordene. Begge metodene gav læringsutbytte, men metoden der det ble jobbet eksplisitt med ordene gav best læringseffekt. Den andre studien hadde som mål å belyse engelskfaget i ungdomsskolen i dag, og 190 tiendeklassinger og 24 lærere besvarte et spørreskjema. De ble spurt om hvilke input de verdsetter, hvor gode de synes elevene er i engelsk, hvilke lærestrategier de bruker og hvilke hindringer de ser i undervisningen. Mange funn ble gjort, blant annet at gutter og jenter jobber på ulike måter og verdsetter forskjellige input. Særlig guttene var veldig opptatt av praktiske tilnærminger til språket, som film, musikk og dataspill. Et annet viktig funn var at lærerne er vurdert til å være viktigere enn alt annet for elevene i språkopplæringen. Oppgaven konkluderer med at norske tiendeklasseelever generelt er suksessfulle i engelsk, men der er utfordringer. Et viktig moment er at skolen trenger lærere med solid utdanning i engelsk, og at vokabularinnlæring bør vektlegges enda mer. Som McCarthy sier: 'Uansett hvor godt eleven lærer seg grammatikk, uansett hvor godt han mestrer lydene i det andre språket, uten ord til å kunne uttrykke et bredere spekter av betydninger kan ikke kommunikasjon i et andrespråk forekomme på noen meningsfull måte.'[1]

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[1] 1990:viii, Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997:140 (oversatt av undertegnete)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory

Like all other languages English consists of different components. Being a teacher it was important to me to write a thesis about something that could help me to give my pupils the best possible foundation for becoming proficient English users. Culture, literature, grammar and pronunciation are all aspects of the subject of English and could have been interesting to explore further, but as I started reading second language theories and books on languages, vocabulary caught my interest. If your grammar is not correct, you might still be understood, if your pronunciation is not perfect, you still may be able to communicate, but if your vocabulary is deficient, misunderstandings may arise and communication might become difficult. Laufer quotes McCarthy (1990:viii, in Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997:140) who says: 'No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way.'

An extensive amount of research has been done on vocabulary, and much literature is written in the field. Vocabulary has attracted researchers a lot lately, and it is not practicable to look at all aspects of the area in a master. However, it is my intention that the theories and vocabulary related elements emphasized in this thesis, will give the reader insight to the process of English vocabulary learning.

The aims of this thesis are: (1) To shed light on the building material of language viz. vocabulary, and relate this to theories and historical trends in the teaching of English. (2) To examine two teaching methodologies and try to find out if one of them is better than the other in making the pupils develop their vocabulary in English as a second language. Two different methods in vocabulary acquisition are tried out and are commented on. The first method is Reading Plus Exercises (RPE), the second method Reading Only (RO). (3) To investigate how some Norwegian tenth grade pupils in lower secondary school and their teachers work with English vocabulary and their attitude to different aspects of the language-learning situation in class. The method used in this part is an online questionnaire for pupils and another online questionnaire for teachers of English in lower secondary schools.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. In the present chapter a brief explanation of the most important terms within vocabulary acquisition is given and the theme of the thesis is introduced. Chapter 2 gives some theoretical background of second language acquisition in Norway as well as abroad and highlights important aspects of the English subject in Norwegian schools. Some central questions in second language acquisition are outlined and discussed in chapter 3 like *What are words? What words to learn?* and *How to learn them?* Chapter 4 describes and explains material

and methods used in the RPE and the RO project and in the questionnaires. In Chapter 5 the results from the RPE and RO studies and the two questionnaires are looked at and analysed. Finally in Chapter 6 a summing up is made and suggestions are made for teaching within vocabulary to make pupils even more successful in their learning of vocabulary.

1.2 Terminology

In research literature specialised vocabulary is often used and different scholars use many terms differently. To the reader this might be quite confusing, but to define words can make the confusion even worse. To give a word its proper meaning, unfamiliar words often have to be used, and then those words may have to be defined again. In this thesis the use of the concept 'second language acquisition' will be explained and a few other salient words will be explained when they occur in the text.

Second language acquisition will be used as Ellis (1997:3) uses it: Second language (often referred to as L2) acquisition is 'the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom'. Second can refer to any language that is learned subsequent to the mother tongue, but in this thesis the concept will refer to Norwegian pupils learning English.

CHAPTER 2 THEORIES AND HISTORICAL TRENDS

Many theories have been developed to try to explain how languages are learned. A variety of disciplinary perspectives have been involved in the field, but the dominant theoretical influences have been linguistic and psycholinguistic (Michell and Miles, 2004:3). Nearly 100 years ago the educational psychologist, Edvard Thorndike, did a study of the errors children made in answering questions designed to test their understanding of reading selections. He found that the problem for the children was that they did not know the words in the section (Chall, in Stahl, 1999:1). Thorndike's study contributed to the growing emphasis on teaching word meanings and much of the research and application of readability from the 1920s until today. Second language vocabulary acquisition is a wide and diverse area, thus only a few, relatively influential theories will be mentioned briefly here to give an idea about the theoretical background in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research. The Norwegian situation regarding the National curriculum will then be looked at to give a theoretical background for the findings in my own research in the classroom

2.1 Behaviourism

Behaviourism is a psychological theory of learning which was very influential in the 1940s and 1950s (VanPatten & Williams, 2007:18). According to behaviourists, language learning is the result of imitation, practice, feedback and habit formation. Children imitate the language they hear around them and continue to use the language on which they get positive response and stop using the language on which they do not get feedback or get negative feedback on. In this way the children form habits of correct language use. SLA is believed to occur in a similar fashion. Correct models must be imitated repeatedly and if given positive feedback the language learner will continue to use the forms learnt, will practice using the forms, and finally new habits have been learnt. If SLA is not successful, transfer is the problem. Transfer occurs when the learner uses habits from the L1 in attempting to produce the L2. If the two languages are too far apart there can be negative transfer, but if the two languages are similar positive transfer can happen. A system was made to compare the languages sound by sound, structure by structure, to help the learners find out what problems would occur. This system, or tool, was called Contrastive Analysis, and was very important in language learning at the time. The implication for the classroom was clear: correct models, repetition, avoidance of error and appropriate feedback, and SLA learning should be a success.

Today behaviourist theory is no longer believed to cover all sides of language learning. No empirical studies were done to prove the theory, but when the first studies in SLA were made in the 1970s, the findings did not support the behaviourist claims. As will be discussed later, Chomsky's

criticism of the behaviourist views on learning, can be said to be a change of paradigm, and Lightbown and Spada (1999:15) among others now see behaviourist explanations for language acquisition as a reasonable way of understanding how some of the regular and routine aspects of the language are learnt, but not as a theory for the more creative aspects of language.

2.2 Structural Linguistics

Another theory at the time presented language as based on a finite set of predictable patterns (VanPatten &Williams, 2007:20). According to this theory language was like a set of building blocks. This way of seeing language was called *structural linguistics*, and because of its descriptive nature and the way language was seen as a set of patterns, it blended easily with behaviourism, which viewed language learning as the acquisition of a set of behaviours. According to Simensen (2007:41) American structuralism had a tremendous influence on L2 teaching in the period 1950-1970. An important aim for this school was to turn linguistics into an empirical, objective and descriptive science. Another aim was to produce accurate descriptions of languages as used by native speakers, not prescriptions of languages as was done earlier. The American structuralists also developed new models for the description of modern languages that were appropriate for the analyses and description of basic sentence patterns.

2.3 Universal Grammar

What really changed the general view on language learning in the 1960s was the work by Noam Chomsky (Mitchell & Miles, 2004:94). He criticised many aspects of the behaviourist theory and challenged the learning theories at the time. According to Chomsky children do not only learn and reproduce what they hear, they also create completely new sentences. Because children make their own language, for example by saying it *breaked*, something they never could have heard, Chomsky was convinced that children internalised rules. On the basis of these observations Chomsky claimed that children have an innate faculty that guides them in their learning of languages. This faculty, or core, is an abstract knowledge about language form, and is something all humans are born with. Chomsky called this faculty Universal Grammar. The notion of Universal Grammar is based on the idea that all languages are built upon a common grammar, substantially the same in all languages. These principles are innate, and facilitate language acquisition. Children are born with an ability to find out by themselves the rules of the language system, no matter what language they use. The importance of Universal Grammar is supposed to diminish with age, and its worth seems to drop at puberty. Language specialists today generally accept this notion of an innate predisposition to language, even if the environmental factors in language learning are not caught by this way of describing language learning.

2.4 The Monitor Theory

According to VanPatten and Williams (2007:25) one of the most influential theories in the field of SLA is the Monitor Theory, developed by Stephen Krashen in the 1970s. Earlier theories had been made for language learning, but this was the first theory especially made for SLA. The theory attempts to explain a variety of phenomena in language learning, and it supports Chomsky's theory about humans being endowed with a specific faculty for language acquisition. Krashen (1985:2) sees the comprehension of meaningful input and the interaction of these messages with the innate language acquisition core as the driving force behind any kind of acquisition. The Monitor Theory consists of five hypotheses woven into a complete SLA theory.

The first hypothesis, *The Acquisition- Learning Hypothesis*, is the most important where a main point is the distinction between learning and acquisition (Krashen, 1985:1-5,VanPatten & Williams, 2007:25, and Mitchell & Miles, 2004:45). Krashen sees the two terms as two separate ways of gaining knowledge. *Acquisition* takes place naturally without the learner being consciously aware of it. It emerges spontaneously when a learner is interacting in L2 and the focus is on meaning. In acquisition neither instruction nor the intention to learn is necessary, the language will come to the learner unintentionally. In *learning*, on the other hand, the learner is gaining explicit knowledge about and is working consciously with the language. Learning occurs when the L2 is the object and the meaning not necessarily the medium of instruction. When these effortful processes in learning grammar rules and other patterns within the language are aims of learning, the result will be learning and not acquisition. An important part of this hypothesis is that the two systems are separate. According to Krashen the acquired system and the learnt system cannot interact. Knowledge that is learnt cannot be converted into acquired knowledge via practice, and vice versa a learner may use a structure accurately, but not be able to state the rule for its use.

For many teachers this gives an answer to a problem often experienced. When the pupils have learnt for example the use of the third singular *s*, and have even used it correctly in tests, they still use it incorrectly when the meaning and not the form is focused on. The learners have learnt the rule, but they have not acquired it. Because of this, Krashen sees the limitations of formal instruction, and argues that the pedagogical approaches should be based on a lot of input and the opportunity for meaningful interaction.

A criticism of this hypothesis is the vague definition of what conscious and unconscious processes are, and how one can possibly test if the learner's language production is the result of a conscious or an unconscious process (Mitchell & Miles, 2004:45). Another criticism is on the claim made by Krashen that learning cannot turn into acquisition. Some researchers disagree (Gregg, 1984, McLaughlin, 1987, in Mitchell & Miles 2004:45) and there still is a debate about whether different kinds of knowledge interact or remain separate.

The second hypothesis, *The Monitor Hypothesis*, states again that learnt knowledge is not very useful (Mitchell & Miles, 2004:46). Learning is just a monitor, or editor, and its function is to edit the acquired knowledge when the learner is producing language and even then the learnt knowledge is only useful in very restricted exercises when there is time to retrieve it. The criticism here is that time and pressure in real conversation seldom allows for such monitoring to happen.

The third hypothesis, *The Natural Order Hypothesis,* states that learners follow sequences in their acquisition of specific forms of the language; a phenomenon already noticed both in L1 and L2 research (Mitchell & Miles, 2004:47). The Natural Order Hypothesis claims that the order of learning is independent of instructional sequences and also of the complexity of the structures to be learnt. Research has shown, for example Brown et al in the 1960s (in Lightbown & Spada, 1999:5), that children do acquire grammatical morphemes in a remarkably similar sequence, but part of the criticism on this hypothesis is that Krashen pulls it too far. Language transfer and individual variability are not taken into account.

The Input Hypothesis is the fourth hypothesis, which focuses on the input. The point made here is that humans acquire language only by receiving comprehensible input. Language must be slightly above the level of the learner to make the optimal learning environment. Output is not much valued as a means to acquire language. Production is considered the result of acquisition rather than the cause of it. Only input is the way of acquiring language. This part of the hypothesis is criticized for the vague term 'comprehensible input'. Because of the inaccurate term it is impossible to verify the theory.

The final hypothesis is called *The Affective Filter Hypothesis*. This is mainly about the learner's inner state. To be receptive for the input leading to language acquisition it is important that the learner is relaxed and comfortable. On the other hand, learners in a stressful environment where they are forced to produce language before they are ready will have high affective filter, and the processing of input will be blocked (VanPatten & Williams, 2007:28). This hypothesis is meant to explain much of the difference in acquisition among language learners. Scholars generally agree that affective filters exist and are important for language learning, but Krashen's affective filters are said to be too theoretical and vague (Lightbown and Spada,1999:40).

2.5 Historical trends in language teaching generally

A glimpse into history might be an eye opener in understanding the presence. When it comes to pedagogical preferences in language teaching they are often reflected in the way psychologists, sociologists and pedagogical researchers define human behaviour and possibilities at the time. The view of humanity has pedagogical consequences. Some leading methods in the history of language teaching will be mentioned and a short dip into pedagogical history will be given below.

The Grammar Translation Method was the original way of teaching modern languages in public schools at the end of the eighteenth century (Simensen, 2007:24). The primary goals of this method were to prepare pupils to read and write classical materials and to pass exams. The teaching focused on grammar, and statements of grammar rules were always included in the L2 teaching. Vocabulary lists were also important, and sentences for translation were part of the teaching programmes. The Grammar Translation Method was the leading, if not the only way of teaching into the twentieth century, but it received criticism for the neglect of realistic, oral language.

By the end of the nineteenth century The Reform Movement was established. The critiques of the old-fashioned grammar teaching wanted vocabulary teaching to be associated with real life and not only with syntactic patterns. The reformers emphasised the oral language, and made a phonetic alphabet and phonetically transcribed texts to be used in the schools for teaching of pronunciation. Oral methodology was popular, texts should deal with real life, and the reformers wanted the L2 language to be used by the teacher, because they were convinced that the use of L1 was an obstacle to favourable language learning.

Different 'natural' methods were introduced at the end of the nineteenth century, The Direct Method being the best known of them. These methods tried to relate meaning directly with the target language, without the translation in between. Interaction was at the heart of language learning, and small groups were made where the language could float in intensive question and answer exchanges with graded progression.

The audio-lingual method, or the structural approach, was developed in the 1940s. This is the period when behaviourism was the leading learning theory, and the behaviourist way of seeing learning influenced the pedagogy fundamentally. The audio-lingual method had grammar or structure as its starting point, emphasized pronunciation, and oral drilling of basic sentence patterns were important. When Noam Chomsky published his ideas about the innate grammar in all human beings in the late 1950s, this also changed the pedagogical methods. The focus was no longer on the structures of the language and the formation of habits, but on communicative proficiency.

Later education moved from translation/grammar methods of the first half of this century to audio-lingual approaches in the 60s, and finally widespread attempts to introduce communicative goals and activities from the 70s and through the 80s (Simensen, 2007:54). Today much vocabulary research centres not only on the different words, but also on the words' context and on how the words are used (Simensen, 2007:59), and this knowledge is brought into the classrooms.

2.6 Historical trends in language teaching in Norway

According to Brandtzæg (2008:114) English started as a subject in Norwegian schools in the 1870s for some pupils with special interests. The argument to start with English was the utility value related to trade and shipping. In 1889 the subject was statutory as a voluntary subject, but did not gain ground until the1920s, when some promoters reintroduced the importance of the subject. From 1936 it became an important pawn to secure the comprehensive school. However in direct contradiction to the intensions of the labour party, English ended up as a subject for the elite as an entry to the higher education. The subject underwent great changes, and in 1955 English was introduced into school as a subject for everyone, and since then English has been a compulsory subject in the national curriculum. From being a language for the elite, English is now obligatory for all and is taught to all pupils from first year at primary school.

Society changes and since an important aim for the school is to educate pupils for society, school has to change as well. Different curriculums have been created to give the nation a standard to follow in the teaching of, among other subjects, English. The first plan to see the light was a plan for the 'city-folk school' from 1957 (Daasvand, 2001:26). Shortly thereafter, in 1960, a curriculum for an experiment with 9 years of schooling emerged. Then in 1970 a suggestion to a plan arrived and in 1974 a syllabus for primary and lower secondary school came into being. Curriculum guidelines for compulsory education in Norway came in 1987 and ten years after, in 1997, the curriculum for the 10 years compulsory school in Norway saw the light. In 2006 a new curriculum for Norwegian schools was promoted: The National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training (K2006). Because this is the guideline for teaching in the Norwegian schools today, this syllabus will be outlined in some details below.

The Knowledge Promotion is divided into different parts. The general part has many similarities with the preceding plan, the L97. It gives the overall aim for the education training and is about the values, the cultural and the knowledge foundation for the education. For English, the curriculum first states the purpose of the subject before dividing the subject into three main areas: (1) language learning (2) communication and (3) culture, society and literature. In this part vocabulary is only mentioned explicit once, in the communication part, where it is stated that 'good communication implies knowledge and skills in using vocabulary and idiomatic structures, pronunciation, intonation, orthography, grammar and building of sentences and texts.'[1] The core skills are then mentioned: being able to read, to express oneself orally, to express oneself in writing, and to use digital tools. Vocabulary is not mentioned, but it is implicit that vocabulary is needed to communicate. The main part of the curriculum is where the competence aim for the different years is stated. English has competence aims after the second, fourth, seventh and tenth years in primary

and lower secondary school and after the first year in the programmes for general studies (Vg1) or after the second year of vocational education programmes (Vg2). Vocabulary is mentioned for all stages, but since the focus of my study is on English vocabulary in the 10th grade, those aims will be pinpointed.

The first part of the curriculum, about language learning, focuses on knowledge about the language, language usage and insight into one's own language learning. The pupils are expected to utilize different situations and strategies to learn English. They must use remedies critically and independently. The main focus is on seeing what is involved in learning a new language and seeing relationships between English, one's native language and other languages. The second part, about communication, has only one aim directly connected to vocabulary, but most of the aims are connected to vocabulary in one way or another and will therefore be looked at below[2].

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

• master vocabulary that covers a range of topics

• use basic grammatical and text structures of English orally and in writing

• understand spoken and written texts on a variety of topics

• express himself/herself in writing and orally with some precision, fluency and coherence

• adapt his/her spoken and written English to the genre and situation

• present and discuss current events and interdisciplinary topics

• read and understand texts of different lengths and genres

• select listening, speaking, reading and writing strategies adapted to the purpose and situation

• write texts that narrate, describe, argue or give messages, with the appropriate basic structure and
   adequate paragraphing

• use content from various sources independently and critically

• demonstrate the ability to distinguish positively and negatively loaded expressions referring to
   individuals and groups

• communicate via digital media

• describe and interpret graphic representations of statistics and other data

The third part about culture, society and literature focuses on cultural understanding in a broad sense. It is based on the English-speaking world and covers key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions. The pupils are among other things expected to be able to

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[1] Læreplanverk for kunnskapsløftet, 2006:94.

[2] English Subject curriculum.

describe aspects concerning both Great Britain and the USA, know about the situation for some indigenous peoples in English-speaking countries and read literary texts from different genres.

As can be seen, the curriculum gives few concrete statements about vocabulary, but the topics mentioned give strong guidelines about what vocabulary the pupils are expected to know after ten years of English at school.

Compared with earlier curriculum K2006 is shorter and less concrete. In L97, the latest curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school before K2006, a lot of space was used describing the use of English in society, both orally and in writing, knowledge about the English language, culture and the pupils' own learning. In L97 suggestions of texts to use in English lessons were listed, and it was stated that the pupils should explore and experiment with the language. In K2006 no suggestions about texts to read are made, the professional expectations are stated in competence aims after the second, fourth, seventh and tenth years. What is important is not what the pupils have been through, but what they actually master. No new methods for the teaching are mentioned in K06. The methods from L97 are still valid; actually the great change in didactics came with M87, when communicative language teaching was promoted. English is to be the language in an English language-learning classroom, and communication is highlighted in the plan. It is also stated that the four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing must go hand in hand.

2.7 Summing up

Humans are no longer seen as parrots in their language learning only repeating what they hear. Krashen's Monitor Theory has been subjected to much criticism, but nevertheless his ideas have been highly influential in SLA theory and teaching. Many projects and much research have used Krashen's ideas as a starting point for their works. Today the situation shows a diversity of research centering on very different parts of the language learning processes. While some scholars focus on grammar, others have language processing as their main focus and lately language interaction has become important within SLA research. Sociolinguistic is a growing field, where the environment wherein the language learners live is seen as playing an important role in the language learning process.

There are obviously different ways of viewing how language develops in humans, but Pinker (1994:4) combines different views in his summing up: 'Language is a distinct piece of biological makeup of our brains. Language is a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction, is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently.' Even if this primarily relates to learning of an L1 it certainly affects L2 learning as well.

English in the Norwegian school is of course influenced by the international situation, and as stated above the National curriculum plays an important part in a Norwegian classroom. A Norwegian teacher today has to state aims for all learning and follow the curriculum made by the government. Knowledge about vocabulary acquisition will still be useful, and hopefully teachers and curriculum makers will put more emphasis on this important field in the time to come.

CHAPTER 3 WORDS

This chapter will focus on words and factors influencing language learning. A language consists of a huge amount of words and for a language teacher it is important to find out what words to focus on and also how to work with vocabulary learning. Word knowledge is a multifaceted matter, and what kind of knowledge is the aim for the training is also important to reflect on. These are elements of the language learning process that will be dealt with below. Stahl (1999:1) sees the importance of vocabulary learning and puts it this way:

'Our knowledge of words determines how we understand texts, define ourselves for others, and define the way we see the world. A richer vocabulary does not just mean that we know more words, but that we have more complex and exact ways of talking about the world, and of understanding the ways of thinking more complex thinkers see the world… The more words we know, the more distinctions we make about the world, the more clearly we see things in our world. We use words to think; the more words we know, the finer our understanding is about the world.'

3.1 What is a word?

Johansson and Lysvåg (1986:20) state the fact that words are notoriously difficult to define exactly even if native speakers intuitively recognise them. Words are characterized by a certain degree of independence phonologically, orthographically, semantically and syntactically. The independence is manifested syntactically by its mobility and capability of standing alone. Wikipedia defines a *word* as the smallest free form (an item that may be uttered in isolation with semantic or pragmatic content) in a language, in contrast to a morpheme, which is the smallest unit of meaning. A word may consist of only one morpheme (e.g. *cat*), but a single morpheme may not be able to exist as a free form (e.g. the English plural morpheme -*s*). Typically, a word will consist of a root or stem, and zero or more affixes. Words can be combined to create other units of language, such as phrases, clauses, and/or sentences. A word consisting of two or more stems joined together form a compound.

In vocabulary studies, the base and inflected forms of a word are collectively known as a lemma. A set of word forms, sharing a common meaning, is known as a word family. Vocabulary might be single words, verbal phrases and idioms. Words can be classified as receptive (words we understand when others use them) or productive (words we are able to use ourselves), furthermore vocabulary is divided into oral and written vocabulary. When written, Graves (2006:11) defines words as 'groups of letters separated by white space.' Words are also divided into word classes. Johansson & Lysvåg (1986:3) refer to articles, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, auxiliaries, etc. as function words and see them as belonging more to the grammar of the language than to its

vocabulary. Unlike content words, that is nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, they have little meaning in isolation and serve more to provide links within sentences and modify the meaning of content words.

Some philosophical notions about word meaning might give an idea about the semantic aspect of vocabulary. Schmitt (2000:23) states that there is a relationship between a word and its referent, i.e. the person, thing, action, condition, or case it refers to in the real or imagined world. This relationship is arbitrary and not inherent in the word itself. Often this is not a direct relationship, but refers to a class or category. In this connection Schmitt uses the word *dog* as an example. There are many different kinds of dogs: big, small, black, white, with long or short fur, but still we will agree on what to call a *dog*. To determine the characteristics of a *dog*, it is useful to find which semantic features belong to the category. Some *dogs* will have many features belonging to the category, while other *dogs* will have few, but still be a *dog*. There will always be some animals that will be difficult to categorize, and Aitchison (1987, in Schmitt, 2000:24) uses the concept "fuzzy meaning" about such words. Quite a few words have more than one meaning, and others are graded in different ways. How fast do you have to walk before you start running? Do you have to have a child to be a father? One theory to explain how people deal with fuzzy meaning is prototype theory. It proposes that the mind uses a prototypical 'best example' of a concept to compare potential members against.

For second language learners, words with more than one meaning and idioms are maybe more of a problem than the fuzziness of some words. When the proficiency in a language is limited, it is hard to know when a bank is somewhere to put the money and not the ground around the edge of the river. Looking up a word in the dictionary there might be ten different meanings of one single word. How is it possible to know which one to choose? The English language is very rich in words, but there are many obstacles to pass for the learner of English. Especially idioms are difficult for foreigners to understand. Saeed (2003:60, Wikipedia) defines an idiom as 'a word or phrase that means something different to what the words imply if interpreted literally.' When a person uses an idiom, the listener might misunderstand if s/he has not heard this figure of speech before. If we look at the word *die*, for example, there are several ways to bring about the meaning of the word. The verbal phrase *pass away* gives a more poetic connotation to the hard fact that someone has died, and the idiom *give up the ghost* has the same meaning, but yet giving other associations. The language skills in a second language have come quite far when a person understands idioms such as *put one's foot in it* (do something studpid). Bryson (1990:1) admits that English is 'full of booby traps for the unwary foreigner.' He takes the word *fly* as an example of problems the language learner may encounter. The word may signify 'an annoying insect, a means of travel, and a critical part of a gentleman's apparel.' As can be seen there is not necessarily a one-to-one correspondence between a word and its meaning, and the challenges for a language learner are enormous. To look at a word

in its context is now a common teaching method in vocabulary learning, and contexts might give clues crucial for the understanding of a word's meaning.

To find out about a learner's vocabulary, two aspects are important. Both breadth and depth have to be considered in deciding how far a learner has come in his or her vocabulary development. Depth concerns the different kinds of knowledge a learner might have of a word, and breadth concerns the number of words a learner knows. For scholars trying to find out how many words people know, a dilemma is how to count words. Researchers often come up with very different numbers when counting for example how many words are in the English language. The popular press has reported from 400.000 to 600.000 words (Claiborne, 1983:5. In Norbert Schmitt. 2000:3), from a half million to over 2 million (Crystal, 1988:32. In Norbert Schmitt, 2000:3), about 1 million (Nurnberg & Rosenblum, 1977:11. In Norbert Schmitt, 2000:3), and about 200.000 words in common use, although adding technical and scientific terms would stretch the total into the millions (Bryson, 1990:139). How can the numbers of counted words vary this much? The main problem is the different way scholars define words. Should *walk, walked* and *walking* be counted as one word or three words? Are *stimulate* and *stimulation* one or two words? Words might refer to word families and then the three different *walks* are only counted once. The point here is just to show that there are different ways to count words and this might lead to substantial differences when trying to find out how many words a language or a pupil's vocabulary consists of. It is important that the way the counting of words is done is explicitly mentioned when figuring out for example how many words pupils know in lower secondary schools.

3.2 What does it mean to know a word?

To know a word is a multifaceted matter. Is it to recognize a word in a text, or is it to know the word well enough to be able to use it in speech or writing? Do you know a word if you understand what it means in a special context, or do you have to know it without a context as well? Do you know a word if you only understand it in writing and not in speech, and what about knowing how to write it but not how to say it or vice versa? What aspects of the word do you have to know before you can say that you really know the word? The answer to these questions have great implications for how words are taught and are also important for the measuring of word knowledge by the students. Different aspects of word knowledge will be discussed below.

Nation (1990:31) has listed different knowledge that shows the complexity of a word. According to him the following points are all important aspects of word knowledge: The meaning(s) of the word, the written form of it, the spoken form, the collocations of the word, the register of the word, the associations and finally the frequency of the word.

Laufer (in Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997:141) refers to six kinds of knowledge that she sees

as necessary in order to know a word. First the form of the word is important, both its pronunciation and spelling. Second the word's structure must be known. The third knowledge is the syntactic pattern of the word and then the word's meaning. Finally lexical relations and common collocations are properties important for knowledge of words.

Nagy and Scott (2000) also identify several dimensions describing the complexity of what it means to know a word. According to them readers need to have many exposures to a word in different contexts before they "know" it. A context often gives a clue about what the theme in the sentence is about and this makes it possible to guess the meaning of the words. According to Nagy and Scott it is not enough to be able to guess the right meaning of the word just in one special context, it is necessary to be able to use the word productively before knowledge of a word can be declared.

Word knowledge is also multidimensional. This is because many words have multiple meanings and serve different functions in different sentences, texts, and conversations. Take the word *fall* for example. How many meanings can possibly be found of the term? *Fall* in love, *fall* down, *fall* short, the *fall* of man, *fall* asleep, the season *fall*…It is possible to know some of these uses of the word but not all, and the English language being so full of words, is it possible to say you know a word even if not all the aspects of the word are familiar to you? Word knowledge is also interrelated in that knowledge of one word connects to knowledge of other words. If one for instance knows the word *urban*, some knowledge of related words are also achievable. Prior knowledge might be used to find out what *urbanite* or *suburban* means for example. As can be seen "knowing" a word is a matter of degree rather than an all-or-nothing proposition. The degrees of knowing a word are reflected in the precision with which we use a word and also how quickly we understand a word. Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2002:11) mention that the different purposes for which the words are used also say a lot about how well words are known. There obviously is a gap in the knowledge between a language user who is familiar with the vocabulary used in formal occasions only, and a language user aware of the differences in language use in formal versus informal occasions.

Another important point made by Nagy & Scott (2000) is how well the language user understands and uses words in different modes, for example receptive versus productive language. Schmitt (2000:4) defines receptive knowledge as being able to understand a word and is normally connected with listening and reading. If we are able to produce a word of our own accord when speaking or writing, then that is considered productive knowledge (passive/active are alternative terms). To understand language other people use, which is spoken or written language, is quite different from producing language oneself. To be able to speak or write, it is crucial to know enough words to make sentences, speak with a pronunciation the listener can understand, or write

with an orthography the reader can recognize. Quite different aspects of the language are required to know about, however all crucial to be able to communicate in a second language.

Word learning is incremental; this means that it takes place in many steps. In my study, referred to in Chapter 4 and 5, this insight that knowing a word is a matter of degree rather than an all-or-nothing proposition is taken into account. Paribakht & Wesche (in Coady and Huckin, 1997:180) have developed a vocabulary test to distinguish stages in learners' developing knowledge of particular words. The test uses a scale rating from total unfamiliarity, through recognition of the word and some idea of its meaning, to the ability to use the word with grammatical and semantic accuracy in a sentence.

Hatch and Brown (1995:370, in Daasvand, 2001:10) state the importance for teachers to be aware of the different aspects of word knowledge in their planning of the language courses. They also underscore the salience of thinking about what kind of knowledge is the aim for the language learners. If the aim of the course is to make the students better readers, orthography is important, but the most central aspect to work on is the words' meanings. When writing, correct orthography may be crucial for the message to be successful, and if the aim of a course is to improve the speaking skills, pronunciation is crucial, but also meaning is necessary to work on to be able to communicate. What is considered sufficient knowledge under one circumstance might not be sufficient under others.

It is also salient to remember that learning of words is only part of the learning of a second language. Read (2000:3) states the point that being proficient in a second language is not just a matter of knowing a lot of words, but also being able to exploit that knowledge effectively for various communicative purposes. Learners can build up impressive knowledge of vocabulary and yet be incapable of understanding radio news or asking for assistance at an enquiry counter. An important aim for language learners must be that they can use words appropriately in their own speech and writing, rather than just demonstrating that they understand what a word can mean. Self-confidence might also play a role in the experience of knowing or not knowing of words as can be seen when asking pupils if they know a word (section 5.3.5 will give some details on this point). Boys tend to answer positively more often than girls, independent of the real competence.

As can be seen from this short review of the knowledge aspect of words, knowing a word is a multifaceted issue and the language, as well as the social context, is of importance when it comes to word knowledge.

3.3 What words to learn?

What words to learn is of course a question that has to take into consideration who the learners are. A native speaker of English participating in a course at the university has to learn different words than a Norwegian teenager learning English at school, or a five year old in his or her first meeting with English at school. In this section the focus will be on second language learners and what words they should learn. Estimates of numbers of words to learn are considered and a discussion is done on which of these words can be useful to know.

There are many words in a language, but not all of them are equally important to learn, and a challenge for the language teacher is to find out what words are needed to learn to make the pupils successful in their language learning. To get a perspective on the kinds of words that need instructional attention, Beck at al (2002:8) see a mature literate individual's vocabulary as comprising three tiers. The first tier consists of the most basic words – *happy, walk, baby*, and so on. Words in this tier rarely require instructional attention. The second tier contains words that are of high frequency for mature language users and are found across a variety of domains. Examples in this category might be words like *coincidence, absurd* and *fortunate.* Because of the large role they play in a language user's repertoire, rich knowledge of words in the second tier can have a powerful impact on verbal functioning. Thus, instruction directed toward tier two words can, according to Beck at al, be very productive. The third tier is made up of words whose frequency of use is quite low and often limited to specific domains. Words in this category may be *peninsula, lathe* and *refinery.* An understanding of these words would not be of high utility for most readers, but might be learned when a specific need arises.

Nation (2001:11) distinguishes four kinds of vocabulary in texts. (1) High frequency words are the words that occur very frequently in different kinds of texts and in oral conversation. Almost 80% of the words in a text usually are high frequency words. (2) Academic words are words common in academic texts. These words typically make up about 9% of the running words in texts. (3) The third kind of vocabulary is a group of words called technical words. These are words closely related to the topic and subject area of the texts. Technical words are common in the special areas, but not so common elsewhere. Typically about 5% of the running words in a text are technical. (4) The last group of words are called the low frequency words. These are all the other words not covered by the previous mentioned groups. About 5% of the words in academic texts are low frequency words. This is the largest group of words and there are thousands of them, but they occur very infrequently and cover only small proportions of any text.

As stated in section 3.1, there are about 1 million words in the English language, depending on how the words are counted, and as a start it might be sensible to look at how many of these words native speakers of English know. This is interesting because it can provide some indication

of the size of the learning task facing second language learners. The numbers here are approximate because of the different ways researchers are counting words, as shown in section 3.1, but an estimate given by Golden, Nation and Read (1990, in Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997:7) more or less agreed upon, is that a university graduate will have a vocabulary of around 20.000 word families. Read (2000:17) defines a word family as consisting of 'a base word together with its inflected and derived forms that share the same meaning.'

According to Schmitt and McCarthy (1997:8) many adult foreign language learners of English have a vocabulary size of less than 5000 word families even if they have been studying the foreign language for several years. If the foreign language is learnt in the second language environment, the chances for learning words at a rate close to that of a native speaker increase, but since the focus here is on the learning of English in Norway that advantage, unfortunately, is not relevant here.

One way to find out what words to learn is to see how frequent the word occurs in normal use of the language. According to Schmitt and McCarthy (1997:9) a small number of words occur very frequently in English, and learning those words the learner will be able to understand a large proportion of the words in written as well as in spoken text. An example is the word *the.* About 7 per cent of the words on a page of written English, and about the same for speech, are repetitions of this word. The usefulness of learning *the* is obvious, at least from the point of view of frequency. Schmitt and McCarthy show the relationship between vocabulary and text coverage by using the Brown Corpus. This corpus, even if it is a bit old and not among the largest today, is still much used and is quite diverse with more than 1,000,000 running words made up of 500 texts of around 2000 words.

Table 3.1 Vocabulary size and text coverage in the Brown Corpus

Vocabulary size	Text coverage
1,000	72.0%
2,000	79,7%
3,000	84,0%
4,000	86,8%
5,000	88,7%
6,000	89,9%
15,851	97,8%

The numbers are from Francis and Kucera, 1982, in Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997:9. The figures in the last line are from Kucera (1982).

The numbers are for lemmas and not for word families. The learning of 1000 words in English is a possible task for most pupils, and by doing so it is estimated that more than 70% of the words in a normal text is known. Further, by learning 2000 lemmas, it is estimated that about 80%

of a written text is understood, and the coverage is expected to be even higher in informal spoken text, maybe as much as 96% (Schonell, Meddleton & Shawn, 1956, in Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997: 9). Learning 6000 lemmas gives coverage of about 90%, and finally learning nearly 16000 lemmas almost 98% of the words in a written text will be known. Hirsh and Nation (1992, in Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997: 9) looked at novels written for teenagers and younger readers. These numbers are even more favourable for the foreign language learner: they found that a vocabulary of 2000 words covered 90% of the texts. With knowledge of 5000 words 98.5% of the texts were understood by the learner.

An important task is then to find out how far a foreign language learner comes with knowing for example 2000 words. This knowledge means that about one word in every five is unknown. According to Na and Nation (1985, in Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997:10), this knowledge of words is not sufficient to guess successfully the remaining unknown words from a text. They state that 95% coverage is necessary for that purpose. Research by Laufer (1988a, in Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997:10) also states that 95% coverage is sufficient for comprehension of a text. This means that for texts and communication for or with teenagers, between 3000 and 4000 words should be sufficient for comprehension, but for adults, word knowledge of about 10.000 words is more appropriate.

Schmitt & McCarthy (1997:11) argue that the second language learner will know a large proportion of the words in English if they learn the 3000 or so most frequent words, and knowing those words will allow them to understand a great proportion of texts and communication in English. Before concentrating on more specialised vocabulary, the high frequency vocabulary must be learned. Only if the learner has academic ambitions, academic vocabulary or specialised vocabulary is important. Nation (2001:16) also states the importance of focusing on the high frequency words in the learning of a second language. According to him 'the high frequency words of the language are clearly so important that considerable time should be spent on them by teachers and learners. The time spent on high frequency words is well justified by their frequency, coverage and range.' How to find those high frequency words is then a crucial task for the teacher.

In the early 1930s Ogden & Richards (Palmer, West & Faucett, 1963, in Schmitt 2000:15) developed a vocabulary list with only 850 words to make the learning of vocabulary manageable for second language learners. Their intention was to limit English vocabulary as much as possible, to make the language-learning task easier for the learners. This Basic English did not last very long however. A great number of words still existed in the world that needed to be addressed and the Basic English had to give each word many meanings, so that it was in reality not simpler at all.

Other scholars had a more successful approach to vocabulary teaching. They tried to find systematic criteria to select the most useful words for language learning, and their work ended up in what was called "The Carnegie Report." The report recommended the development of a list of

vocabulary to use in the production of simple reading materials. Frequency of a word was important for the selection of words on the list. The list consisted of about 2000 words. It was published as the *General Service List of English Words* (GSL) (West, 1953:84, in Schmitt 2000:16). The GSL has been very influential because frequency, the different parts of speech and meaning senses are listed, and the list is now being revised. Other lists of the most frequently occurring words in English were made, and the most influential were: *The teacher's word book of 20.000 words* by Thorndike, 1932 (in Nation, 2001: 267), *The American heritage word frequency book* by Carroll, Davies & Richman, 1971 (in Nation, 2001: 265) and *The Brown Corpus* by Francis & Kucera, 1982 (in Nation, 2001:14).

Although it is old and many newer lists are much wider, according to Schmitt (2000:15) the GSL still remains the best of the lists because of its information about the frequency of each word's various meanings, and also the careful application of criteria other than frequency and range. The fact that vocabulary needed in different situations is dependent on context, on the other hand, was not considered in the making of the list. Some words may not be frequent in general English, but still very important in special situations. *Pencil* is such a word; not very frequent in normal language use, but in a classroom the word is of great importance. West's word list still is the most used list, and is of practical use to teachers and curriculum planners. To find out if a word is worth spending time on, the list can be checked and if the word is on the list, it might be worth paying attention to.

3.4 Factors influencing language learning

There are different elements influencing language learning both individually and more generally. The individual aspects will be looked at in this section. It is salient to understand that learners deal with second language acquisition in different ways to be able to give them the possibility to flourish at their own level and in their own way. Motivation, aptitude and learning strategies are important individual factors influencing on a learner's language acquisition and will, along with gender, be discussed below.

Gardner (1985:50) sees *motivation* as the root of all human behaviour. When we act, we do it because something has driven us to action. Motivation is the factor that makes us do what we do. Trying to explain success or failure in learning a second language is difficult without mentioning the key factor motivation. Different scholars give different definitions of motivation, but Gardner's definition seems to be more agreeable than others. 'Motivation involves four aspects; (1) a goal, (2) effortful behaviour, (3) a desire to attain the goal and (4) favourable attitudes toward the activity in question.' If we look at this with a view to the successful language learner, this means that the learner must start with setting her or himself a goal, and must want to reach that goal. The learner must then put a lot of effort into the given task in trying to achieve the goal, and also try to keep a

positive attitude towards what s/he is actually doing. There are many elements that have an influence on motivation in second language acquisition, and Gardner mentions the learner's interest in foreign languages and attitudes toward the L2 community as important factors, along with attitudes toward the learning situation where evaluation of the teacher and of the course is essential. The desire to learn the L2 influences the motivation, and the effort or intensity in which the learner starts working with the tasks also has an effect. Finally Gardner puts the learner's attitudes toward learning the L2 as important for the motivation.

Ellis (1994:36) states that when the learner has a personal, strong wish to be integrated in the target language's society this is a strong integrative motivation leading to better language acquisition than financial incentives, such as money. Instrumental motivation might still be important, especially in situations where the learner is provided with no opportunity to use the target language, and no opportunities to interact with members of the target group. According to Ellis motivation is not an innate personality character, but an unstable factor in second language learning. Aptitude and intelligence are stable factors that some have more of than others, but when it comes to motivation, even the poorest learner can have a high degree of motivation, and become a successful learner as a result of such motivation.

Lightbown and Spada (1999:57) look at the importance of the teacher in the second language-learning classroom. In a classroom setting it is important for the teacher to create the basic motivational conditions at the beginning of a task, but the initial motivation also has to be generated. The maintaining and protecting of motivation is further important, and finally evaluation is essential to make the learner draw lessons for the future. In order to succeed in this it is essential for the teacher to find tasks to match the learner's capacity. The learner must be given the possibility to cope with the material. The tasks must be difficult, but within the learner's capacity. If the tasks are too easy, the learner will not spend much effort in solving them, and if the tasks are too difficult, learners will give up, often before they have even started. According to Lightbown & Spada, motivation is a key factor in SLA, and maybe the most important factor in the classroom, which can make all learners successful in a second language.

Another salient factor in language learning is *aptitude*. Carroll (1981, in Ellis, 1994:494) defines general aptitude as 'capability to learn a task', which depends on 'some combination of more or less enduring characteristics of the learner'. It is an inherent ability, or a talent, in this context, to learn a language. It is part of a person's character, and high ability quickens the learning and understanding. Pimsleur, Oller and Perkins (1978) have seen aptitude as a part of intelligence, but in later SLA research it has been treated as an individual, significant factor in language acquisition. According to Skehan (1989:38, in Gass & Selinker, 2001:345) 'aptitude is consistently the best predictor of language learning success'. The rate of language learning is where aptitude is

most crucial. The difference between individuals is not in whether they can learn a task or not, but rather in the length of time it takes them to learn it (Gass & Selinker, 2001).

Learning style is also important when it comes to language learning. It concerns the ways learners prefer to acquire and represent language. Reid (1995, in Lightbown & Spada, 1999:58) defines it as 'an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred way of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills'. Language learners have their own preferences for how they like to learn new material. Learning style is also seen as a personality trait because it is relatively fixed and hard to change.

Reid (1995, in Lightbown & Spada,1999:58) has found it useful to divide language learners into four categories, according to their preference for approaching language learning: (1) V*isual learners* like to see what they are supposed to learn, for example by reading books and looking at charts. (2) *Aural learners* learn best by listening to new material, for example lectures or audiotapes. (3) *Kinaesthetic learners* like strong elements of physical response in the learning process, for example gesturing or mime. (4) *Tactile learners* prefer to 'do' what they have to learn, for example by using building models in mathematics. Reid's dividing of learners into these four categories is of great importance for the teacher in preparing methods for use in teaching programs.

Language learning strategies is another important non-linguistic factor in second language acquisition. The question what successful learners *do* as opposed to less successful learners is what is focused on in learning strategies. Different learners have different approaches when attempting to learn a second language, different techniques and different methods. Two different definitions will give a brief understanding of what learning strategies refer to: Oxford (2004) defines language learning strategies as 'behaviours or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable.' O'Malley & Chamot (1990) define language-learning strategies as 'the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information.' The choice of strategy influences two aspects of learning: the rate of acquisition and the ultimate level of achievement (Ellis,1994:529).

There are many different strategies learners can use in the process of learning a second language, and Wharton (2000) has divided them into six groups. (1) *Memory strategies* help learners to store information in long-term memory and bring it back when needing it. They include using imagery, sounds, or both to remember new words. (2) *Cognitive strategies* usually involve identification, retention, storage and revision of internal mental models. These include, for example, reasoning, analysing, and summarizing. (3) *Metacognitive strategies* help learners to manage their learning. These are strategies for dealing with the learning process and allow learners to control their own cognition. The learners plan, organize and later evaluate their own learning process. (4)

Compensation strategies are used to overcome lack of knowledge of the target language. If a learner, does not know a word for example, the learner can use circumlocution, find other ways of saying it, or just pretend knowing it. If the learner for example laughs at a joke she does not understand, that is a compensation strategy. (5) *Affective strategies* are used to try to control emotions and attitudes related to language learning. High anxiety is, for example, shown to have a negative effect on language learning, so techniques to reducing anxiety might be an affective strategy. (6) *Social strategies* are strategies to facilitate interaction with others. These are strategies to cooperating with others, asking questions, and involving in other cultures.

By identifying the strategies used by good language learners, it might be expected that if less successful learners were taught these, more successful learning would result (Rubin, 1975 in Gass & Selinker, 2001:366). This is, according to Gass & Selinker, unfortunately shown not always to be the result. There is no guarantee that poorer language-learners benefit from the same learning strategies as more successful learners. Good learners may have other abilities than poorer learners, and this may affect the use of strategy. If poorer learners try these strategies, they may not be able to use them, and might have to improve their language skills before those strategies can be of any use. An interesting claim is then that language-learning success causes the use of the strategy, in the sense that successful learning allows for the use of the strategy (Gass & Selinker, 2001:368). Ellis (1994:545) states that there now is evidence to suggest that a number of individual learner differences and situational factors are related to strategy use. The success of the different strategies depends on situational and social factors like the language being learnt, the learning setting, the type of learning tasks and the learner's sex. The fact that learning strategies vary according to learning task suggests that it might be possible to change learner's strategic behaviour through training. Ellis concludes in this optimistic way in suggesting that language learners have possibilities to learn how to learn.

Gender is another important factor that influence on language learning. According to Nordahl (2006) it has been documented over a long period (Knutsen 1975, Ogden, 1995, Hægland & Kirkebøen 2007, in Nordahl, 2006) that girls do better in school than boys. The results from a survey on 4497 girls and 4504 boys in 2006[3] showed that the girls had a significant better learning outcome in all basic subjects. The average score on the three subjects Norwegian, mathematics and English showed that the girls scored 0.37 marks higher than the boys. The teachers in the survey suggested that a reason for the difference is that boys in general show less work effort in school and are less motivated than girls. The boys do not work as hard as the girls do either, according to the teachers. The girls also seem to have a better ability or will to fit in, and together with their stronger

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[3] The survey is part of an evaluation of a project where Lillegården resource centre and Hedmark University College worked together to map pupils' educational achievements.

work contribution today's school fits girls better than boys, again according to the teachers in the survey. Lightbody et al (1996, in Nordahl, 2006) claim that girls seem to have a stronger inner wish to learn and improve their skills. Boys on the other hand are characterized by always wanting to be first or to be best. Their goal is to show that they master different skills. They seem to be motivated by competition and challenges.

Sax (2008) looked at girls and boys entering college and found that girls performed better, but boys, who were not as well prepared as girls had much more confidence. Only on writing did the female self-confidence level outpace the male level (and reflect reality). Girls and boys were asked if they thought they were above average on different skills, and the numbers for intellectual skills were 52.2% for girls and 68.8% for boys. Also on mathematical and academic abilities the boys outclassed the girls on assessing how successful they think they are. Sax argued that girls appear unwilling to believe or admit that they are as competent as their performance would suggest.

Bakken et al (2008) make another comment on gender stating that girls in general achieve better marks than boys in Norwegian compulsory school. They look at different explanations for this and suggest that the school system has problems with integrating boys' needs when organizing the teaching environment. The lack of male role models in school as well as in kindergarten might also be an explanation for the divergence and yet another supposition is that girls achieve better than boys because their values correspond better with the school culture. Bakken et al looked at studies published in Scandinavian languages or English and found that Norwegian as well as international studies concluded that gender counts when it comes to how children and teachers interrelate in the classroom. The studies showed that, past and present, boys dominate the classroom and receive more attention from the teacher. This implies that classroom interaction cannot by itself be a strong explanation of boys' poorer school achievement. Giving more attention to boys in the classroom can thus be interpreted as part of the teachers' strategies to keep order and create a positive learning climate. In addition, some teachers may focus on boys to help them create a better situation for themselves in class. The hypothesis that the feminization of school is an important reason for boys' poorer school achievement has been investigated in some international studies, but has not received much empirical support.

Another perspective on gender differences in school, is given by Mead (2006). She refutes the worry that the boys are in crises in school because boys are falling behind girls in elementary and secondary school and are increasingly outnumbered on college campuses. According to Mead the real story is not bad news about boys doing worse; it's good news about girls doing better. In fact, with a few exceptions, American boys are scoring higher and achieving more than they ever have before. But girls have just improved their performance on some measures even faster. As a result, girls have narrowed or even closed some academic gaps that previously favored boys, while other

long-standing gaps that favored girls have widened, leading to the belief that boys are falling behind.

As section 3.4 has demonstrated there are many elements within the individual learner that influence on his or her success in language acquisition. Aptitude and gender are predetermined and learning style is also said to be fixed to a certain point. Learning strategies and motivation however are flexible factors influencing on vocabulary learning and have been argued to give all language learners a possibility to be successful in the learning task, regardless of the learners' qualifications.

3.5 How to work with words

As noted in section 3.4 all language learners are individuals with different capabilities, but there are nevertheless some general aspects in the vocabulary learning process common to all language learners. Below more general course planning and factors influencing the learning process will be mentioned and commented on and a brief overview of what successful language courses and their components are will conclude the chapter.

As noted in section 2.1 Krashen did not believe very much in explicit vocabulary teaching, but other researchers do see the gains of instruction. Nation (1994:97) for example sees direct vocabulary study as a way of speeding up the learning process. According to him 'direct vocabulary learning is a way of trying to bridge the gap between second language learners' present proficiency level and the proficiency level needed to learn from unsimplified input.'

According to Beck et al (2002:2) the best approach to vocabulary learning is that it should be robust – vigorous, strong and powerful in effect. A robust approach to vocabulary involves directly explaining the meaning of words along with thought-provoking interactive follow-up. Sökmen (in Schmitt & McCarthy,1997:239) suggests that the best way to learn vocabulary is to add explicit vocabulary to the usual inferring activities in the L2 classroom. Nation (1982, in Schmitt & McCarthy,1997:245) argues that those students who were most successful in vocabulary learning used several vocabulary learning strategies. Schmitt (2000:14) claims that the best practise to ensure the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary includes a principled selection of vocabulary and an instruction methodology that encourages meaningful engagement with words over a number of recyclings.

Simensen (2007:220-228) states that vocabulary acquisition has two aspects. First the students have to learn new words and understand their meaning, and then the words must be remembered. In order to remember words repetition is salient. Simensen sees consolidation activities as an important way to ensure that students recall the meaning of the new words in listening and reading as well as to ensure the retrieval of the words from memory in speaking and

writing. Many different programmes have been made for language-learning courses, and Nation's (1994:v) complete language-learning program is one of them. This program consists of a five major components of a language-learning course, which show the different levels of the acquisition process:

(1) Meeting new vocabulary for the first time

(2) Establishing previously met vocabulary

(3) Enriching previously met vocabulary

(4) Developing vocabulary strategies

(5) Developing fluency with known vocabulary

(1) In the language learning process meeting new vocabulary for the first time takes place in formal presentation, reading and listening. The learner is active in communicative activities and in other activities where s/he works individually, in pairs or groups. (2) When the new word is noticed it has to be established. Further meetings with a new word are necessary to establish the new word. (3) Later in the process enriching previously met vocabulary is important. It is essential to know different aspects of the word, how many meanings it has, suffixes and prefixes and grammatical patterns among other things. (4) Developing vocabulary strategies to cope with unknown vocabulary must also be part of a language-learning programme according to Nation, and finally (5) developing fluency with known vocabulary is essential to be a successful language learner.

Repetition is a factor affecting vocabulary learning, but maybe not as important as previously assumed. For example, Saragi, Nation and Meister (1978, in Nation, 1994:81) found that repetition accounted for about 20 % of the factors involved in learning. Tinkham (1993, in Nation, 1994:81) found that learners differed greatly in the time and number of repetitions required for learning. Most learners required five to seven repetitions for the learning of a group of six paired associates, and a few required over twenty repetitions (Nation, 1994:81).

Other scholars have also looked at the process of learning vocabulary, among them Stahl (1999:30), who mentions three principles of vocabulary development:

(1) There has to be definitional information and contextual information about a word's meaning.

(2) The pupils have to be active in the learning process and

(3) there has to be multiple exposures to meaningful information about each word.

Much research is done on different factors influencing language learning in classrooms. In a study of 14 adult classes learning English as a second language in the United States, McDonald, Stone & Yates (in Ellis, 1994:604) found that different types of classroom behaviours were related to different kinds of language proficiency. A structured teaching style with teacher-directed practice

activities or question and answer sequences showed improved scores on tests of formal reading skills, while a more open teaching style characterized by free responses, games and discussion led to improved oral proficiency.

Wong-Filmore (1985, in Ellis,1994:605) identifies a number of factors that detailed observations of some 60 classrooms have shown to work for language learning. These are grouped into two sets: class organization and characteristics of teacher talk. Wong-Filmore found that teacher-directed activities were positive for language learning and classes with open structure and those that made heavy use of individual work were found to be among the least successful for language learning. The features of teacher-directed interactions that Wong-Fillmore considers facilitative of acquisition include formal lessons with clearly marked boundaries, and well-established procedures for allocating turns. 'The important teacher-talk characteristics are a clear separation of languages (that is avoidance of translation), an emphasis on communication and comprehension by ensuring message redundancy, the avoidance of ungrammatical teacher-talk, the frequent use of patterns and routines, repetitiveness, tailoring questions to suit the learners' level of proficiency, and general richness of language.'

Paribakht & Wesche (in Coady & Huckin, 1997:177-187) tried to find out if special tasks could be designed that would increase the effectiveness of vocabulary learning through reading practice. They compared both the numbers of words learnt and also the depth of knowledge of the learnt words. Beginning and intermediate students from a variety of L1 backgrounds participating in an ESL program at the University of Ottawa were tested. One group was given selected texts to read and then a series of vocabulary exercises based on the target words. The other group was also given selected texts to read, but then instead of exercises, the students in that group read a supplementary text containing the target words again. The aim was to show if only reading was as effective in vocabulary development as reading plus exercises. To test the students' word knowledge The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) was used. The instrument uses a 5-point scale where students report themselves and also demonstrate knowledge of specific words in written form. The scale rates from total unfamiliarity through recognition and further to the ability to use the word with accuracy both grammatically and semantically. A pilot study was carried out on 17 students and the results showed that vocabulary enhancement techniques were effective in increasing the acquisition of selected words. A main study was then carried out on thirty-eight young adult students. The students were exposed to both treatments. Paribakht and Wesche found that the quantitative gains in vocabulary knowledge were greater for the group that had been working with exercises as well as with texts than for the group where reading had been the only method in the learning process. As for qualitative differences the group working with exercises as well as reading also seemed to have achieved deeper knowledge of the target words. Their

conclusion was that both treatments resulted in increased vocabulary knowledge, but that the group working with exercises as well as reading learnt more words and learnt them better. In contrast to Krashen, Paribakht and Wesche conclude that focused instruction is desirable when specific vocabulary outcome is sought.

Reading is an activity found to be of great importance for the pupils' academic development. According to Graves (2006:39) wide reading over time makes the single largest contribution to vocabulary development, much more than listening, discussion or writing. Good readers tend to do well in school, and according to Stahl (1999:13) wide reading improves children's vocabulary knowledge; it even may improve children's overall intellectual growth.

Input is an important issue within language learning. Straková (2007) claims that to benefit the most from the acquisition phase it is necessary to immerse children in the environment full of samples and messages in the target language. These should be meaningful and understandable to children. There are many kinds of input influencing on the pupils' language learning and lately the Internet, computer games, films and music have taken a dominating role in influencing on young people's language. According to Medienorge (2010), over the last ten years the Internet has increased dramatically, especially among the young generation. According to a survey by Pew Internet (2010) video games provide a diverse set of experiences and related activities and are part of the lives of almost all teens in America. Video gaming is pervasive in the lives of American teens - young teens and older teens, girls and boys, and teens from across the socioeconomic spectrum. Opportunities for gaming are everywhere, and teens play video games frequently. When asked, half of all teens reported playing a video game 'yesterday.' Those who play daily typically play for an hour or more. Fully 97% of teens aged 12-17 play computer, web, portable, or console games. These figures come from an American survey, but there is no reason to believe that the numbers differ much when it comes to Norwegian teenagers. Statistics Norway (2008) reveals that 72% of 16-year olds listen to music every day. On average they listen to music 89 minutes a day. Much of the music is English and might be an important input for the learning of vocabulary.

As has been stated in section 3.4 many factors influence the learning of words. Nation (2001:23-24) has looked at the words themselves and reflects over what he calls the learning burden of a word. Words require different amounts of effort to learn. The learners' language background is of importance and also each of the aspects of what it means to know a word. According to Nation the learning burden of a word is lighter the more familiar the learner is with the word's patterns and knowledge already. This pattern and knowledge can be from the learner's first language or from other languages learnt. The knowledge can also come from previous knowledge of the second language. This means that for learners with a first language closely related to the language being learnt, the learning burden is light. For language learners with a first language that is not related to

the second language, the learning burden is heavy. Nation sees this knowledge about the different burdens of the word as fundamental for the teacher to take into consideration in the teaching of new words. By drawing attention to systematic patterns and analogies within the second language, teachers can help reducing the learning burden of words.

Laufer (Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997:141-146) looks at other aspects of the word that influence the word's learnability. The pronounceability of the word is one such factor. The learner's L1 system to a great extent determines if the words are phonologically difficult or not to pronounce. Familiarity with phonological features and its familiar combinations of features are shown to affect the learners' accuracy in both perceiving, saying and remembering words. Orthography is another factor influencing how easily a word is learnt. The English language has often sound-script incongruence, and that makes the language difficult for L2 learners. Differences between the L1 and the L2's writing system can also be responsible for learning problems. Long words might be more difficult to remember than short words, but if the components of the word are familiar, the difficulty is not proven. Words with irregular plural, gender of inanimate nouns and noun cases might lead to learning problems. Furthermore confusion of words that look alike is a common problem and abstract words and words with multiple meanings are argued to be harder to learn than concrete words with only one meaning. Finally grammatical categories are said to influence how hard it is to learn a word. Nouns seem to be easiest to learn while adverbs probably are the most difficult words to add to vocabulary.

3.6 Summing up

As can be seen from this overview, vocabulary acquisition is quite a varied area in linguistics, and only a few aspects have been dealt with here. The important messages in this chapter are that a word is more than just a word and knowledge of a word is a multifaceted matter. There are many factors influencing language learning, both individually and generally. Much research is done in the field of language learning, and lately there is some agreement on how vocabulary best is learnt. It is generally agreed upon that substantial input of the second language is of great importance in vocabulary acquisition and combined with exercises where the input is consolidated, vocabulary learning will happen. This is obviously a simplification where type of exercises and input is not discussed, but still a statement worth noticing. Many scholars, for example Beck at al. (2002:1) and Stahl (1999:3) now highlight vocabulary as one of the most important factors in language learning, something future language learners may profit from. As Read (2000:1) emphasises: 'After a lengthy period of being preoccupied with the development of grammatical competence, language teachers and applied linguistic researchers now generally recognise the importance of vocabulary learning and are exploring ways of promoting it more effectively.'

CHAPTER 4 MATERIALS AND METHODS

As stated in section 1.2 my own research is two folded. (1) In the first part two different methods in vocabulary acquisition were tried out. The aim was to find out if one of the methods is better than the other in making the pupils develop their vocabulary in English as a second language. (2) The second part of my research tries to capture how pupils and teachers in some Norwegian schools work with English vocabulary. The method used here was an online questionnaire: one for pupils and one for teachers. The present chapter deals with materials and methods used in my own research. Material and method used in Reading Plus Exercises (RPE) and Reading Only (RO) will first be outlined and commented on in section 4.1 and 4.2, and then aspects concerning the questionnaires will be presented in section 4.3.

In connection with research it is important to think about how to gather and analyze information, and this is what method is about. The method used in a specific piece of research work is crucial for what findings can be obtained. According to Rasinger (2008) the quantitative method is normally used if the purpose is to find out how many or how much there is of something. If, on the other hand, the purpose is to find out how something is, qualitative method is used. In this study the quantitative method is employed.

4.1 Reading Plus Exercises

The first method to test the pupils' vocabulary acquisition was reading plus exercises. To find out if comprehensible input and working with exercises give good effect for the learning of words, pupils were tested for their word knowledge of 12 words (see section 4.1.6) before and after reading a text and working with exercises (see section 4.1.7), and the same 12 words were tested after they had read the text and worked with the exercises.

4.1.1 Background

Literature on vocabulary acquisition gives quite a few suggestions on what can be done to improve the pupils' vocabulary, but as a teacher I wanted to try out myself if I could find facts about how my own pupils learnt most words.[4] A pilot study was done in my own class, and that is now part of the thesis called RPE. Aspects of this will be presented below.

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[4] Originally the aim of this thesis was to compare two different teaching techniques in different schools and see if one of them was better than the other in vocabulary acquisition. Three schools were planned to take part in the study in order to have different schools, different teachers and enough pupils to make the results from the survey to some degree generalizeable. Unfortunately the two other schools were very reluctant to participate in the study and therefore the project failed.

4.1.2 The school

The school where the study took place is situated in the West of Norway. It is a lower secondary school with five hundred pupils and about 60 teachers. It is a school where knowledge is focused on, but the well being of the pupils is equally important. A quote by *Ksuan Tsu* fronting the school's homepage, gives an idea about the school's values: 'If you sow once, you reap once, if you plant a tree you reap ten times, if you obtain knowledge you reap a hundred times.' The teachers are working in sections and teams and there are 17 classes with about 29 pupils in each class.

4.1.3 Procedure

To test the effectiveness of explicit vocabulary learning, a teaching technique with reading a text and doing exercises afterwards was carried out on a group of pupils. First there was a pre-test on twelve words picked out by the teacher. After the test the pupils worked with exercises during two lessons, and then a post-test on the same twelve words were done the day after the exercises were completed. The tests were digitalised, so the pupils worked on a computer and sent the results to the learning platform 'Fronter.'[5] The teacher explained both exercises and tests in English as well as in Norwegian.

4.1.4 The pupils

As a teacher I have unlimited access to the raw material, the pupils, and my tenth form class participated both in the study where different teaching methodologies were tested for and in the questionnaire about English vocabulary work in Norwegian classrooms. A convenience sample was used in the project. This means that the pupils had geographical proximity, they were available at the time, and were easily accessible. The pupils are from 13 till 16 years old when they attend our school. When the pupils come to our school they have already learnt English for seven years. The pupils participating in this project were in their final year at the school, the tenth form. They were fifteen and sixteen years old when the project took place, depending on when they were born. The class consisted of 26 pupils. One of the pupils did not participate in ordinary teaching, and three pupils were absent the day the first study was done, so the studies were carried out on 22 pupils, 8 girls and 14 boys. The pupils had ratings in the English subject from 2 till 6, 6 being the highest score.

4.1.5 The text

The textbook used for the reading plus exercises study was *Searching 10* by Anne-Brit Fenner and

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[5] Fronter is a platform for learning and cooperation on the Internet developed specifically for the education sector.

Geir Nordal-Pedersen. This book was chosen because it is the one used at our school in the tenth grade. The selected text is about African wildlife and is at an intermediate level. It is called 'An African Safari' and is a brief text on 1.5 pages about wild life in Africa written by Fenner.

4.1.6 The words

There are many familiar words for the pupils in the text, but also some specialised words pupils might find difficult. The authors of *Searching* have picked out words they think can prevent the understanding of the text, translated them into Norwegian and put them in the margin. The thought behind this way of dealing with vocabulary is, according to Fenner,[6] that we perceive texts as meaningful units while reading. When the words' meanings are explained in the margin on the page they occur, the reader will not be disturbed in the overall understanding of the meaning content of the text by having to look elsewhere for an explanation of the words.

Stated by Fenner, the selection of words in the margin was done according to the following criteria: (1) Words not emphasized earlier. (2) Not high frequency words. (3) Important words for the meaning content the authors think the pupils might find difficult. (4) Words occurring with a special meaning in the text. (5) Words that the authors, after long experience as teachers, think the pupils might have problems with while finding the meaning of a text. The authors see vocabulary acquisition primarily as taking place by understanding in a meaningful context followed up by conscious learning and later use in new contexts. Twelve words were picked out from the list to test for the pupils' knowledge before and after working with the target words. The words were:

Nouns: *lodge, herd, goal, breath, cub, moment, leaf, male.*

Verbs: *spot, frighten.*

Adjectives: *impressive, huge.*

4.1.7 The exercises

Paribakht and Wesche (in Coady and Huckin, 1997:183) have grouped vocabulary exercises in five categories representing a thought hierarchy of mental processing, and the pupils in my study had to do one exercise from each category. The categories are: (1) Selective attention where the main point is to draw the learner's attention to the target word. The aim is to ensure that the pupils notice the word. There are many ways of doing this, for example by boldfacing, italicizing or underlining the target word. (2) In recognition all necessary elements are provided and the learners are asked only to recognize the target words and their meanings, thus only partial knowledge of the target words are required. Examples of exercises in this category are matching the target word with a definition, choosing the correct picture after seeing or hearing the target word or choosing the right word to

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[6] This information has been translated and edited by me from an email by Fenner, in October 2008

label a picture. (3) The third category involves manipulation, where the pupils' knowledge of morphology and grammar is tested. These exercises entail rearranging and organizing given elements to make words or phrases. The pupils might for example use stems and affixes to construct words, or change the grammatical category of a word, such as from noun to adjective. (4) Interpretation involves analysis of meanings of words with respect to other words in given contexts. Exercises in this category may be finding the odd word in a series of collocationally related words or multiple-choice cloze exercises. (5) Production is the highest level on the so-called thought hierarchy of mental processing. These exercises require the learner to produce the target words in appropriate contexts. Open cloze exercises and answering a question requiring the target word are examples of exercises from this category.

In the present study Paribakht and Wesche´s thinking is the basis for the exercises made for the pupils. Exercises were made from the five categories and the pupils had to do one exercise from each category. First they were asked to underline the target words in the reading text. Next they had to match the target word with a definition. The third exercise was to manipulate the target words, change the grammatical category of the target words or change them in other ways. Exercise number four included finding the odd word in a series of collocationally related words. Finally the pupils had to fill in the target words in an open cloze exercise. A complete overview of the exercises is presented in Appendix 1.

4.1.8 The test

To test the pupils' vocabulary acquisition The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) was used (Paribakht & Wesche in Coady & Huckin,1997:179-181). I found this test, made to distinguish stages in learner's developing knowledge of particular words, useful for my purposes. It is a self-report form where the students have the possibility to say if they know a word or not and to grade their knowledge of a word as well.

Figure 4.1 shows the scale used to test for the pupils' vocabulary before and after working with the target words.

I	I don't remember having seen this word before
II	I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.
III	I have seen this word before, and I think it means ___ (Synonym or translation.)
IV	I know this word. It means _____. (Synonym or translation.)
V	I can use this word in a sentence. _____. (Write a sentence.) (If you do this section, please also do section IV.)

Figure 4.1 VKS elicitation scale – self-report categories, Paribakht & Wesche (1993, Coady & Huckin 1980).

Paribakht & Wesche (1993, Coady & Huckin 1997:181) have also developed a system for scoring on the VKS as shown in figure 4.2 below. This scheme was used in my study.
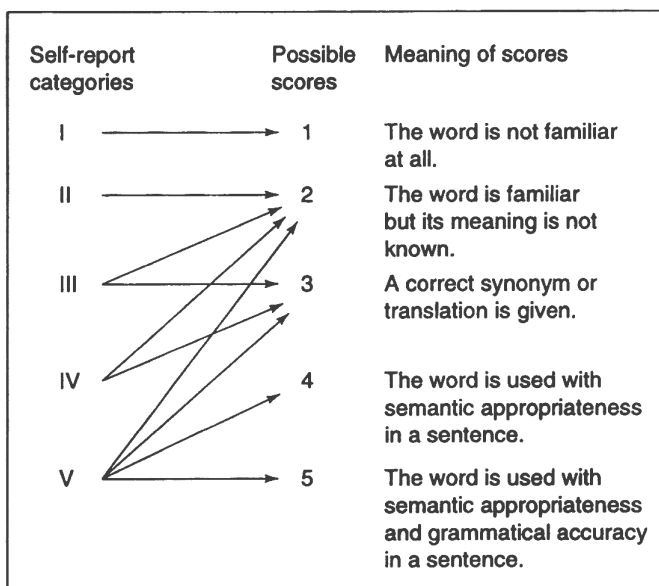
Figure 4.2 VKS scoring categories – meaning of score (Paribakht & Wesche, 1993 in Coady, & Huckin,1997:179-181).

As can be seen in figure 4.2, wrong responses in categories III, IV and V will lead to a score of 2. A score of 3 indicates that an appropriate synonym or translation has been given for categories III or IV. If the word is used in a sentence demonstrating the learner's knowledge of its meaning in that context but with inaccurate grammar, a score of 4 is given. A score of 5 reflects both semantically and grammatically correct use of the target word.

4.1.9 Processing data

When all pupils had answered all tests, the scores were counted as shown in figure 4.2 for all pupils and set in an Excel sheet. The total scores were summed up, the average score found and the difference between the results before and after working with the target words were shown. The girls' and boys' scores were also presented separately. A list of the individual scores can be seen in Appendix 2 and a survey of the total results will be presented in chapter 5.

4.2 Reading only (RO)

The second method to test the pupils' vocabulary acquisition was reading only. To find out if comprehensible input is enough for the learning of words, pupils were tested for their word knowledge of 12 words (see section 4.2.3) before and after reading a novel. The words were not dealt with in any way in class, but the pupils knew that the same 12 words would be tested after they had read the novel, and the pupils were encouraged to find out the meaning of words they did not know.

4.2.1 The pupils

The same pupils were exposed to each of the two studies and in this way served as their own controls. This means that 22 pupils from my class completed the study.

4.2.2 The text

The text used was an adapted version of the novel *Jane Eyre* originally written by Charlotte Brontë. The book is adapted for school with 2500 headwords, retold by Clare West (1990). It has about 100 pages and is divided into 25 chapters with illustrations and glossary found at the end of the book. The content of the novel is romantic and even if both genders normally like the book, it might suit girls better than boys.

4.2.3 The words

The vocabulary of the novel was not dealt with in class, but all words were repeatedly used in the novel, and many of them were important for the understanding of the text. Some words were difficult and supposedly new to most pupils and some were more ordinary words. The teacher picked out the words. The words were:

Nouns: *disadvantages, relief, impression, permission.*

Verbs: *expect, refuse, accept, disapprove, deceive.*

Adjective: *polite.*

Adverbs: *immediately, fortunately.*

4.2.4 The test

To test for the pupils' vocabulary acquisition, 'The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale' (see section 4.1.8) was used here as well before and after reading the novel.

4.2.5 Processing data

The scores were summed up according to the same procedures as with the RPE and the complete figures are attached as Appendix 3. A survey of the results will be presented in chapter 5.

4.2.6 Reliability and validity in RPE and RO

The reliability of an instrument refers to the extent to which scores on the instrument are free from errors of measurement. Proficiency test-raters are not reliable if their evaluation varies according to how tired they are. The question is if the data are consistent with how things really are. The scale used to measure vocabulary growth in the RPE and RO tests seems to be quite reliable because the pupils have to translate the words or write sentences where they show whether they have understood a word. A vulnerable point is when the scores are counted. The researcher has to be very accurate, but still two researchers might get different points because all words and sentences have to be counted and interpreted, and the researcher's own assessment will decide the outcome. In the RPE and RO tests the scores have been counted three times to avoid possible mistakes. The same researcher has counted the scores so that the assessment as to what belongs to the different scores will be the same for all pupils and also the same for the scores on both pre and post tests. Another important factor within tests and subsequent responses is how valid the findings are. Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it has been designed to measure. An aim with the RPE and RO studies was to check which methodology was best, the one reading a text and working with exercises or only reading a longer text. Many variables may influence on the result, as for example the difficulty of the words, how much time the pupils worked with the words and their motivation to fulfil the tasks given, and an important question to ask is if the results actually give an answer to the question of which method is the best. My conclusion is that the variables may influence on the results; however, the findings in the study do give an indication as to which method is best. Another question about the RPE and RO tests would be how valid the results are beyond the test situation with 22 pupils participating in the study.

4.3 Questionnaires

This section deals with how pupils and teachers at a number of Norwegian schools indicated that they worked with English vocabulary and how they evaluated different aspects with the learning of English in class. To find out details about this work, one questionnaire was made for pupils and one

for teachers were they were asked about use and reflections on vocabulary acquisition. Below information about the participants and how they were selected is first discussed before the processing and administering of the questionnaires are outlined. A brief discussion of advantages and disadvantages with the use of questionnaires concludes the chapter.

4.3.1 The sampling

Sampling procedures were done according to principles used by Zoltán (2003:72). Zoltan states that the most common sample type in L2 research is a convenience or opportunity sample, where an important criterion of sample selection is convenience for the researcher: members of the target population will be selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, or easy accessibility. Convenience samples are usually 'purposive,' which means that besides the relative ease of accessibility, participants also have to possess certain key characteristics that are related to the purpose of the investigation.

In our digitalized world it is straightforward to get access to information. To find lower secondary schools for my study, a national register was obtained from the Internet listing all comprehensive schools in Norway (http://www.skole.no/skoler/grs1A.php). 57 schools were then picked out at random by starting at the top taking every seventh comprehensive school. Since all parts of the survey deal with tenth graders, combined schools were not included in the survey to be certain that the school had pupils and teachers in the tenth grade. My own school was added to the 57 because I tried out the questionnaire in my own class and added these responses to the study. A convenience sample combined with random sampling is used in this part of the research. All schools are anonymous with their own code in case some variables would turn out to be interesting.

The printed edition of the questionnaires was ready in March, but due to lack of knowledge about digitalizing for the computer, help from the university was needed, and time pressure there led to the digitalized version not being ready before the end of May. The end of May for pupils and teachers in the tenth grade is a busy time, however the questionnaires were sent out on June 3. A mail was sent to the headmaster of the 58 schools asking him/her to distribute the survey to one class in the tenth grade and also to the teachers of English working with tenth grade pupils, see Appendix 4. Most schools did not respond at all, so after a week the headmasters were phoned. Quite a few of them apologised that they did not have time due to the final exams and others said it had become a big problem that so many different actors wanted to do surveys at their schools, so they did not want to participate. In the end pupils from 8 schools and teachers from 14 schools participated in the study. One school did not have access to computers, but sent answers on paper. The consequence is that the percentage of participants in the study is lower than hoped for. Generalizations must therefore be done with care, but still interesting observations in Norwegian

schools have been made, and it might be possible to draw some conclusions based on this material with certain reservations.

4.3.2 The pupils

A total of 190 tenth grade pupils from 8 different schools answered the questionnaire; of these were 98 girls and 92 boys. Five of the schools are situated in the west of Norway, one in the north, one in the east and one is located in the middle of the country. Two of the schools are small schools with few pupils in each class, while the other six are big schools with between 20 and 30 pupils in class. All pupils are in the last year of lower secondary school, the tenth grade. 22 of the pupils are not native speakers of Norwegian.

4.3.3 The teachers

24 teachers from 14 different schools participated in the survey. 17 of them were female and 7 were male. 7 were under 40 years of age while 17 were 42 years or more. 20 of the teachers had more than one year of teacher education in English while 4 had less than one year. 10 of the teachers had worked for 12 years or less as a teacher whereas 4 had worked as teachers for 13 – 19 years. 10 had worked as teachers for 20 years or more. 11 of the teachers had not lived in an English speaking country while 10 had lived abroad where English was spoken for three months to two years. Three teachers had lived in an English speaking country for more than three years.[7]

4.3.4 Constructing the questionnaire

Constructing a good questionnaire involves a series of steps and procedures. First the scholar has to decide on the general features of the questionnaire, such as the length, the format, and the main parts. In my case a digitalised version was chosen to make the task as easy as possible for both pupils and myself. With help from Senior Systems Developer Knut Hofland, the University of Bergen, the questionnaire was made available on the Internet for the schools picked out to participate in the project. This made the processing of the answers a manageable job for the researcher and since pupils often are positive to computers, digitalizing the questionnaire may have had a positive influence on making them participate in the study. As can be seen from Appendix 5 the pupils' questionnaire was not very comprehensive; 11 questions to be answered and ready in five minutes. To ask effective questions and decide what topics to bring up is of course of great importance for the outcome of a study, and for this questionnaire literature on vocabulary and many years of experience as a teacher led to a conclusion as to what questions to ask. The questionnaire was divided into main areas where the first part dealt with how much time the pupils estimated to

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[7] More about this information and other figures not found in the thesis might be obtained by contacting me.

spend on reading, writing, listening and speaking in class. The next main area covered input. Ten different inputs were asked for and the pupils had to tick off what they saw as most important for their learning of English in class. What learning strategies they used were also asked for and finally what the pupils saw as obstacles in their learning process. The teachers' questionnaire was almost identical to the pupils', only section 8 had additional questions to teachers only. The type of questionnaire used was a closed-ended questionnaire.

The pupils and teachers could not formulate their own answers; all questions had alternatives where the participants could pick out one or more answers. In the questionnaire items were tried to be kept clear and direct, and a simple language was used. Ambiguous or loaded words and sentences were tried avoided. Personal questions were left at the end of the questionnaire because the sensitive nature of such questions may give some people resistance to answer the questionnaire. The complete questionnaires will be found in Appendix 5 for pupils and Appendix 6 for teachers.

4.3.5 Processing questionnaire data

The first step of processing the data involved converting the respondents' answers to figures by means of coding procedures. Each school was given a unique identification code and the responses were then put into the statistical program SSPS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - again with help from the University of Bergen, this time by Assistant Professor Kolbjørn Slethei. The coding process for each item involved converting the answer into a numerical score. A major element of the coding phase is to compile a coding frame that specifies the meaning of the scores for each item and a codebook that contains an organized summary of all the coding frames. Keying in the data was done very carefully, checked three times to avoid mistyped numbers as possible contamination of the dataset. A few errors were found and corrected before the actual analyses was undertaken. The responses to all the questions were then counted and set in a table. The figures in the tables were summed up and commented on. Girls' and boys' respective answers were separated because this variable turned out to be interesting. The same procedure was utilized on the teachers' questionnaire; however, their responses were not separated by gender. The dataset had quite a few variables that could have been interesting to compare, but time and space limit stopped further examination of the responses.

4.3.6 Questionnaire as a method: strengths and weaknesses

The two questionnaires constitute a main part of the thesis and for that reasons some comments about the use of the questionnaire as a method will be given. As with all other methods there are both advantages and disadvantages with using questionnaires. According to Zoltán (2003:9)

questionnaires are efficient in many ways both in terms of researcher time and effort and also with respect to financial resources. By administering a questionnaire to a group of people, a huge amount of information can be collected in a very short time, and the personal investment required is a fraction of what would have been needed in e.g. interviewing the same number of people. Furthermore, processing the data can also be fast and relatively straightforward, especially by using some modern computer software. They can also be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting many different topics.

A disadvantage is that it is very easy to produce unreliable and invalid data by means of ill-instructed questionnaires. Because respondents are left to their own devices when filling in self completed questionnaires, the questions need to be sufficiently simple and straightforward to be understood by everybody. Thus, this method does not allow for in-depth examination and might result in somewhat superficial data. In my project there are 11 main questions, and there is no room for the participants of the survey to add any information. The questions also restrict the types of variables that can be investigated. When the researcher asks for example as in question (9) in pupils' questionnaire 'Why don't you learn even more English in class?' six alternatives were given, and it was not possible for the pupil to give other answers even if none of the answers suited him/her. What could have been a possible way to deal with this limitation would have been to follow up this in-breadth research with in-depth research, for example by interviewing a selected group of the pupils from the survey.

Another disadvantage is that respondents often have limited time to spend on questionnaires and mostly they do not benefit from the activity in any way. Thus the results may vary greatly from one individual to another, depending on the time they choose to spend and how serious they work with the task. Respondents often leave out some questions, either by mistake or because they do not like them. Questions may also be misread or misinterpreted. In distant modes the majority of the respondents may not even bother to have a go at the questionnaire. Many schools did not answer this questionnaire, and without a personal call even fewer would have responded. Another important question is if we can trust that the answers we get reflect how things really are. How reliable are the responses we get? A sixteen-year-old pupil may have many reasons for giving questionable answers: s/he may misunderstand the question, may be afraid the teacher can use the answers against him/her, s/he just wants to be funny, s/he doesn't know what to answer so s/he just ticks off a random answer or s/he writes what s/he thinks the teacher wants him/her to write.

Some questions may also be hard for the pupils to answer because it might be difficult for them to assess how they actually are working in class. In periods, reading might for example be on the agenda while at other times writing or speaking might be highlighted. Without any personal contact between the researcher and the informant, little can be done to check the seriousness of the

answers and to correct the erroneous responses.

4.3.7 Summing up

In this chapter materials and methods used in my own study have been outlined and commented on. Information about the participants in the studies, how they have been chosen and details concerning materials in both the reading studies and the questionnaires with strengths and weaknesses have been discussed. It has been noted that choice of method is of considerable importance for the results of a study, and must be considered thoroughly. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter the quantitative method is used in this study and this choice of method will influence on the findings. In retrospect it is possible to see that it might have been desirable to combine the quantitative research with qualitative research to go deeper into the findings from the studies, however that is unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis.

CHAPTER 5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results obtained from my own research. In section 5.1 results from the two Reading studies where two different methodologies in vocabulary acquisition were tried out, will be presented and commented on. The aim was to find out if one method was better than the other in developing the pupils' vocabulary in English. The first method was Reading Plus Exercises (RPE) and the second method was Reading Only (RO). Krashen (1985:2) claims that humans acquire language only by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input and he underlines the limitations of formal instruction. A purpose with the Reading studies was to check the value of Krashen's statement that comprehensible input is enough for learning. Section 5.2 presents the responses from pupils' and teachers' questionnaires. An aim with the questionnaires was to find out how Norwegian pupils and teachers work with English vocabulary and what is emphasized in the teaching of English in the classroom today. The chapter is concluded by a summary.

5.1 Results from the RPE study

Section 3.5 showed that for vocabulary growth it is beneficial to deal with words in different ways. The RPE study tried to find out if reading and working with target words[8] afterwards is a prosperous method in vocabulary acquisition. In the RPE study the pupils were given a pre-test on 12 words picked out by the teacher before they started to work with a text, and then the same words were asked for in a post-test after the pupils had read a text and worked with different exercises containing the target words. The words were: *lodge, herd, goal, breath, cub, moment, leaf, male, spot, frighten, impressive, huge.*[9] Details about the counting of scores were given in section 4.2.8. The highest possible score in the study was 60. This signifies that with 12 words the total score would be 1 320 if all 22 pupils knew all the words. A table containing the results from the individual pupils is found in Appendix 2 and the total results from the tests are presented below in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Test scores on RPE

	Total		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Total scores	966	1 114	148
Average scores	43.9	50.6	6.7

[8] Target words are here understood as the words the pupils are aiming at learning.
[9] See section 4.2.6 for more details on the words.

As can be seen from the scores in table 5.1 the pupils knew many of the words before they started to work with them. On average the pupils scored 43.9 out of 60 points. This number is found by dividing the score from all pupils with the number of pupils: that is to say 966: 22. After the pupils had read the text and done the exercises explained in section 4.2, the average score increased from 43.9 points to 50.6 points. This gives a total increase of 6.7 points. For a teacher the results must be said to be quite encouraging because, as mentioned in section 3.5, they show that to work explicitly with words really gives good learning effect even if time and effort spent on the task is not very extensive. Table 5.2 below presents the scores on the RPE tests from girls and boys separately.

Table 5.2 Test scores on RPE by gender

	Girls				Boys		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference		Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Total scores	354	419	65		612	695	83
Average scores	44.3	52.3	8.1		43.7	49.6	5.9

Table 5.2 shows that the girls learnt more than the boys from the work done with the text and the exercises. Before working with the words the girls scored only slightly higher than the boys, but after having worked with the exercises the girls improved their scores by 8.1 points compared to the boys' 5.9 improvement. The results from these tests confirm the gender related differences noted in section 3.4 when it comes to how hard girls and boys work with the tasks given. The girls were not much better than the boys initially, but when they were given the tasks they worked hard to improve their knowledge, while many of their masculine peers did not take the task too seriously. The results are also shown visually below by bar charts in figure 5.1.
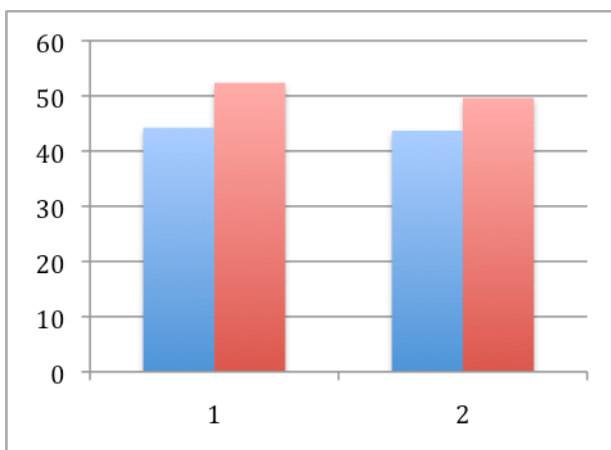
Figure 5.1 Graphic presentation of scores for girls (series 1) and boys (series 2) on RPE

Another finding in the study, not shown in the table, but still interesting, is the movement in the knowledge among the pupils from totally unfamiliar to partly familiar. On the post-test few pupils stated that they had not seen the words they were tested for earlier, while most pupils had seen the words before and could translate them correctly. This partial knowledge of a word may help the reader recognize words in a sentence, and to understand the overall meaning of a text becomes easier. Many pupils also achieved the highest level of knowledge (see section 4.2.8) after having worked with the words for a very limited time. This enables them to produce language both in writing and in speech, and is an encouragement for the teacher to emphasize vocabulary in the learning situation. The conclusion from the RPE study is that the pupils had a considerable improvement in the learning and retention of some target words after having worked with them for a very limited time, and this suggests that explicit working with words is a good way to help pupils to vocabulary growth.

5.2 Results from the RO study

The same pupils as in RPE were tested for 12 words before they read a novel and then tested again for the same words after the reading was done. The words were: *disadvantages, relief, impression, permission*, *expect, refuse, accept, disapprove, deceive*, *polite, immediately, fortunately* (see section 4.3.2 for details). The total scores for the pupils on the tests are shown in table 5.3 below while the complete table containing the scores from the individual pupils is found in Appendix 3.

Table 5.3 Test scores on RO

	Total		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Total scores	849	968	119
Average scores	38.6	44	5.4

Table 5.3 displays that the average score on the tests was 38.6 points before the pupils read the novel and 44 points after the reading was done. The average score of the 12 words increased by 5.4 points after the pupils had read the novel. As the figures suggest the pupils learnt words by just reading a novel without working explicitly with the target words.

Table 5.4 presents the results on the RO tests for girls and boys separately.

Table 5.4 Test scores on RO by gender

	Girls				Boys		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference		Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Total scores	293	350	57		556	618	62
Average scores	36.6	43.8	7.1		39.7	44.1	4.4

Table 5.4 shows that the girls had a lower score than the boys before the reading started, but they increased their score with 7.1 points compared to the boys' 4.4 points improvement. Again the girls seem to put more effort to the tasks given, and better results appear to be the reward. The conclusion on the RO study supports Krashen's theory that comprehensible input is enough for learning, in that just reading a novel gives vocabulary growth. However, the results only tell us about the retention of some words and not language acquisition per se. The results are also shown in bar charts in figure 5.2 to give a visual view of the differences.
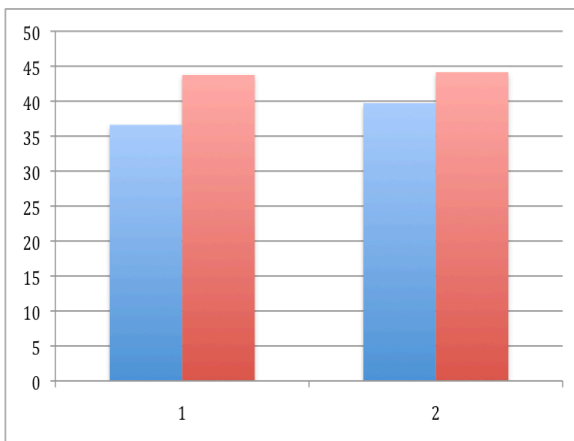
Figure 5.2 Graphic presentation of scores for girls (series 1) and boys (series 2) on RO

Figure 5.2 shows the scores for girls and boys on the RO tests pre and post reading a novel. The figure shows clearly that the girls improved their learning and retention of the target words considerably more than did the boys in this study.

5.3 Comparison of the RPE and the RO studies

The average score on the RPE test was 43.9 before the pupils had worked with the words, while the average score on the RO test was 38.6. This reveals that many words were familiar to the pupils before the tests were done, but more words were known on the RPE test. When the exercises were done and the novel read, the total scores increased by 6.7 points on the RPE and by 5.4 points on the RO test. Table 5.5 below shows the test scores on RO and RPE.

Table 5.5 Comparison of average test scores on RO and average test scores on RPE

	Total				Total		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference		Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
Average scores	38.6	44	5.4		43.9	50.6	6.7

Bar charts have been made to visually show the average scores on the different tests in the two studies.
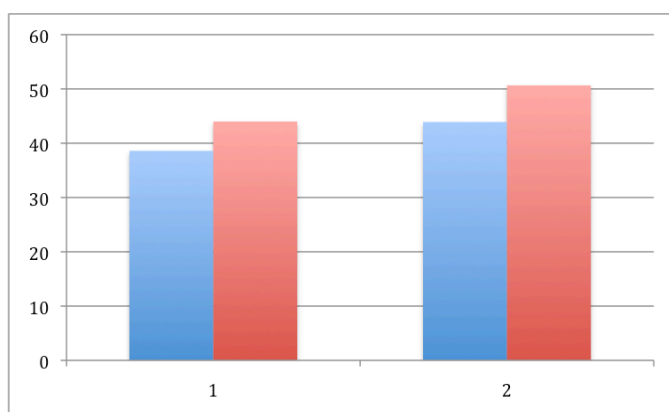
Figure 5.3 Comparsion of average scores on RO (series 1) and RPE (series 2)

Series 1 in Figure 5.3 shows the average scores for the pre-test and the post-test for RO before and after the pupils have read a novel. Series 2 presents the scores on the RPE tests before and after the pupils have read a text and worked with target words in different exercises. As can be seen in figure 5.3 the difference is considerably larger between the pre- and the post-test in the RPE study than in the RO study.

5.3.1 Summing up and comments on the RPE and the RO studies

The scores on the post-test, when the pupils had been working with different exercises where the target words were dealt with showed that working consciously with words gives a very good learning effect. Extensive reading without working consciously with the target words also gives a learning effect, but at least in this study, not to the same extent. The findings are fully consistent with the conclusion in the studies by Paribakht and Wesche referred to in section 3.5. The aim of their study was to show whether reading only was as effective in vocabulary development as reading plus exercises. Their conclusion was that both treatments resulted in increased vocabulary knowledge, but that the group working with exercises as well as reading learnt more words and learnt them better. The findings in my two studies suggest the same: only reading gives a learning

effect, while reading plus exercises results in even better learning.

Another important finding in my two studies is the divergence in the figures between boys' and girls' scores, with the girls improving their vocabulary far more than the boys in both studies. On the RPE test the girls' score increased by 8.1 points while the boys' score increased by 5.9 points. On the RO test the girls improved their score by 7.1 points and the boys by 4.4 points. Boys' and girls' different behavior has been noted already in section 3.4, where a study (Nordahl, 2006) found that boys in general show less work effort in school and are less motivated than girls. The boys do not work as hard as the girls do either, and the RPE and RO studies confirm this difference. A question for further study might be how to deal with the divergence.

Finally difficulties when it comes to comparing studies must be noted. There are always different variables that may influence on the results which the researcher cannot control. The pupils in these studies were the same and the tests followed the same procedures with the same instruments, but factors such as e.g. motivation and time spent on studying, are difficult variables to control. Pupils are not always very persevering and their motivation to work with the tests could have dropped after the first study was completed. Another important factor that might influence the results is the different degree of difficulty of the words. The kind of words used in the tests is probably responsible for at least some of the divergence (see section 4.2.6 and 4.3.3 for details on the words). There were more pupils who did not know the words at all before working with them on the second study, the RO, and unfamiliar words need more time to be learnt. Despite possible difficulties with a comparison, it seems plausible to conclude that just reading gives vocabulary growth; however, explicit working with vocabulary provides even better learning outcomes.

5.4 Pupils' and teachers' questionnaires

As mentioned in section 4.3 two questionnaires were used in this thesis to find out about vocabulary work in some Norwegian schools: one questionnaire for pupils and one for teachers. In this section the responses to both pupils' and teachers' questionnaires will be presented and commented on. The complete questionnaires are found in Appendices 5 and 6, while the questions will be presented here and the responses will be given for all questions in turn. The questions given to the teachers were mostly identical to those given to the pupils: only section 5.4.4 in the questionnaire had additional questions directed to the teachers only, and some formulations were different to make the questions easier to understand for the pupils. For each question first the responses from the total group of pupils will be shown in number and percentage and then gender will be separated for the pupils to show possible differences between boys and girls. Teachers' responses will then be given and relations between pupils' and teachers' answers will be looked at. As mentioned in section

4.3.2 a total of 190 tenth grade pupils answered the questionnaire; 98 of these were girls and 92 boys. A total of 24 teachers participated in the study. The questionnaire was divided into different sections. Below the results will be presented as follows: In section 5.4.1 responses to questions about the four main skills are dealt with. Section 5.4.2 presents pupils' and teachers' thoughts on teacher's language. In section 5.4.3 what input was found important in the learning of English is presented. Section 5.4.4 reveals what learning strategies the pupils used, while section 5.4.5 maps how successful pupils and teachers thought the pupils are in English. Finally, obstacles in the learning process are treated in section 5.4.6.

5.4.1 The four main skills

This section of the questionnaire dealt with how much time pupils and teachers estimated to spend in class on the four main skills; viz. reading, writing, speaking and listening, and how much English they thought the teacher spoke in class.

5.4.1.1 Time spent on reading

As mentioned in section 3.5 reading is an activity found to be of great importance for the pupils' academic development, and the first question concerned reading. The question was: 'How much time in class do you spend on reading?' As most tables presented will be similar in outline, a brief explication of the columns is given. The left column in the table shows the percentage the pupils could tick off for how much time they thought they spent on the different activities in class. The next column illustrates the total number of pupils and their estimation of time spent in class on this activity and the calculated percentage. The last columns display the answers given by boys and girls separately in numbers and percentages. The responses are presented below in table 5.6.

Table 5.6 Pupils' estimated time spent on reading, total and by gender

Percentages indicated	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
0-25%	53	27.9		27	29.3	26	26.5
26-50%	106	55.8		54	58.7	52	53.1
51-75%	27	14.2		10	10.9	17	17.3
76-100%	4	2.1		1	1.1	3	3.1
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.6, 27.9% of the pupils stated that they spend less than 25% on reading in class. 55.8% claimed to spend between 26% and 50% of their time on reading, and only 14.2% of the pupils said that they spend between 51% and 75% on this activity in class. 2.1% of the pupils claimed to spend more than 76% of their time in class on reading. The gender difference was not

very large; however, the girls tended to say they spend more time on reading than did the boys.

Table 5.7 gives the teachers' responses to the same question compared with the pupils'.

Table 5.7 Teachers' estimation on time spent on reading in class compared with pupils'

Percentages indicated	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
0-25%	8	33.3		53	27.9
26-50%	11	45.8		106	55.8
51-75%	4	16.7		27	14.2
76-100%	1	4.2		4	2.1
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.7 shows that 33.3% of the teachers estimated their pupils to spend less than 25% of time in class on reading while 45.8% thought the pupils spend between 26 and 50% on this activity. A total of 16.7% estimated the pupils to read between 51% and 75% of the time in class and finally 4.2% said the pupils read more than 76% of time in class. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that more pupils than teachers estimated to spend between 26% and 50% of the time in class on reading, otherwise the difference is not very considerable. This means that the teachers and the pupils generally agreed in their estimations on the amount of time spent on reading in class.

5.4.1.2 Time spent on writing

The next question dealt with was writing. Writing is quite a wide concept that might include writing essays, writing from the blackboard and doing exercises. Pupils and teachers might interpret the concept slightly differently, but the answers might still give us an indication on how much time in class is spent on this activity. The question was: 'How much time in class do you spend on writing?' The responses are presented below in table 5.8

Table 5.8 Pupils' estimated time spent on writing, total and by gender

Percentages indicated	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
0-25%	43	22.6		20	21.7	23	23.5
26-50%	91	47.9		48	52.2	43	43.9
51-75%	51	26.8		20	21.7	31	31.6
76-100%	5	2.6		4	4.3	1	1.0
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.8 illustrates that 22.6% of the pupils estimated that they spend less than 25% of their time

in class on writing. 47.9% claimed to spend between 26% and 50% on writing and 26.8% said they spend between 51% and 75% of their time in class on writing. Only 2.6% stated that they spend more than 76% of time in class on writing. There is a small difference between boys and girls on this question. Girls estimated to spend slightly more time on writing than did boys. 31.6% of the girls claimed to spend between 51% and 75% of the time on writing while this percentage was 21.7 among the boys. As the numbers indicate writing is an activity carried out in class.

Table 5.9 shows the teachers' responses to the question on time spent in class on writing.

Table 5.9 Teachers' estimation on time spent on writing in class compared with pupils'

Percentages indicated	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
0-25%	12	50		43	22.6
26-50%	10	41.7		91	47.9
51-75%	2	8.3		51	26.8
76-100%	0	0.0		5	2.6
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.9, half of the teachers reported that they spend less than 25% of time in class on writing. 41.7% claimed to spend between 26% and 50% on this activity and 8.3% said that their pupils write between 51-75% of time in class. No teachers responded that they spent more than 75% of time in class on writing activities. Compared with the pupils' responses far more teachers than pupils claimed to spend less than 25% of time in class on writing. The percentage of pupils that responded to spend between 51% and 75% is much higher than for the teachers. These numbers show that teachers and pupils differ in their estimation of time spent on writing in class with the pupils claiming to spend more time on this activity. An explanation for this deviation might be that teachers only think of writing essays or other longer writings, while pupils include writing from the blackboard, doing written exercises etc.

5.4.1.3 Time spent on listening

The following question dealt with listening. Listening might include different inputs. Most textbooks have the texts on cd's, which means that the pupils might both read and listen at the same time. Pupils also listen to films and teacher speaking as well as to other pupils giving 'minitalks' or other performances. The pupils were asked how much time in class they spend on listening. The responses are presented below in table 5.10.

Table 5.10 Pupils' estimated time spent on listening, total and by gender

Percentages indicated	Total			Male			Female	
	n	%		n	%		n	%
0-25%	32	16.8		15	16.3		17	17.3
26-50%	56	29.5		23	25.0		33	33.7
51-75%	81	42.6		42	45.7		39	39.8
76-100%	21	11.1		12	13.0		9	9.2
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0		98	100.0

Table 5.10 shows that 16.8% of the pupils reported to spend less than 25% of their time in class on listening. 29.5% of the pupils estimated that they spend between 26% and 50% on listening and 42.6% claimed to spend between 51% and 75% of their time in class on listening. 11.1% alleged to spend more than 76% of their time in class on listening. The boys reported to spend more time on listening than did the girls. 45.7% of the boys claimed to spend between 51% and 75% on listening while the number for girls was 39.8%. 13% of the boys stated that they spend more than 76% of time in class on listening while this percentage for the girls was 9.2. The numbers in the table shows that listening is an activity the pupils estimated that they spend time on in class.

Table 5.11 presents teachers' and pupils' responses to the question on listening.

Table 5.11 Teachers' estimation on time spent on listening in class compared with pupils'

Percentages indicated	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
0-25%	17	70.8		32	16.8
26-50%	6	25.0		56	29.5
51-75%	1	4.2		81	42.6
76-100%	0.0	0.0		21	11.1
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.11 shows that 70.8% of the teachers claimed their pupils to spend less than 25% of time in class on listening. A total of 25% claimed to spend between 26% and 50% of time in class on this activity, while the rest, 4.2%, said their pupils spend between 51% and 75% percent of their time in class on listening. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows a deviation in the estimation of time spent in class on listening. Pupils in general claimed to spend more time on this activity than the teachers. Again it is hard to explain the difference, however one reason might be that most texts are both on paper and on CD, and perhaps the teachers think of this activity as reading while the pupils understand the same activity as listening. Yet another explanation might be that the teachers forget that while they are speaking the pupils are actually listening.

5.4.1.4 Time spent on speaking

The next question dealt with speaking, and the pupils were asked: 'How much time in class do you spend on speaking'? The responses are presented below in table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Pupils' estimated time spent on speaking, total and by gender

Percentages indicated	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
0-25%	64	33.7		28	30.4	36	36.7
26-50%	72	37.9		39	42.4	33	33.7
51-75%	44	23.2		17	18.5	27	27.6
76-100%	10	5.3		8	8.7	2	2.0
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.12 displays that 33.7% of the pupils estimated to spend less than 25% of their time in class on speaking. 37.9% claimed to spend between 26% and 50% on speaking and 23.2% said they spend between 51% and 75% of time in class on this activity. A total of 5.3% of the pupils stated that they spend more than 76% of their time in class on speaking. The gender difference is not striking, but more boys (42.4%) than girls (33.7%) said they spend between 26% and 50% of their time on speaking, while more girls (27.6%) than boys (18.5%) stated to spend between 51% and 75% of their time on speaking. The responses to the question about amount of time spent on speaking suggest that pupils do speak English in class.

Table 5.13 presents the teachers' responses to the estimated time spent on speaking in class.

Table 5.13 Teachers' estimation on time spent on speaking in class compared with pupils'

Percentages indicated	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
0-25%	14	58.3		64	33.7
26-50%	7	29.2		72	37.9
51-75%	2	8.3		44	23.2
76-100%	1	4.2		10	5.3
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

According to table 5.13, a total of 58.3% of the teachers evaluated their pupils to spend less than 25% of time in class on speaking. 29.2% claimed to spend between 26% and 50% on speaking and 8.3% said they spend more than 51% of the time in class on this activity. Only 4.2% of the teachers estimated their pupils to spend more than 76% of time in class on speaking. When comparing these responses with the responses from the pupils, again there is a deviation with the pupils claiming to

spend more time on this activity.

5.4.1.5 Summing up on the four skills

To compare the responses a simplified table is made where the percentages are divided into above and below 50%. Table 5.14 shows the percentage the pupils estimated to spend on reading, writing, listening and speaking respectively.

Table 5.14 Pupils' estimated time spent on the four skills compared in percentage

Percentages indicated	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking
0- 50%	83.7	70.5	46.3	71.6
51-100%	16.3	29.4	53.7	28.5

As can be seen in table 5.14 listening stands out as the activity estimated by the pupils to be most done in class, with 53.7% of them claiming to spend more than 51% of time in class on this activity. The productive parts of the language, speaking and writing, are estimated by the pupils to be activities far less practiced in class, with about 70% of the pupils claiming to spend less than 50% of time in class on these activities. When it comes to reading, only 16.3% of the pupils estimated to spend more than 51% of their time in class on this activity.

Table 5.15 shows the percentage the teachers estimated to spend on reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Table 5.15 Teachers' estimated time spent on the four skills compared in percentages

Percentages indicated	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking
0- 50%	79.1	91.7	95.8	87.5
51-100%	20.9	8.3	4.2	12.5

Table 5.15 illustrates that teachers claimed their pupils to spend most time in class on reading, followed by speaking and writing. According to the teachers least time in class was spent on listening.

As mentioned in section 2.6 the National curriculum states that the pupils must be prepared for the four main skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. The responses to this questionnaire indicate that all four areas are covered in the classroom. The figures differ for pupils and teachers; however, the scores give us estimation on what kind of activities some Norwegian pupils spend

time on during their English classes at school. Reading, as mentioned in section 3.5, is said to be very important for pupils' linguistic development, thus since the pupils estimated to spend least time on this activity, it seems reasonable to suggest that teachers give reading in class even higher priority.

5.4.2 Teacher's use of English in class

The next question in the questionnaire concerns the language used by the teachers in class. Do they speak English or Norwegian? The pupils were asked: 'How much English does your teacher speak in class?' The responses are presented below in table 5.16.

Table 5.16 Pupils' estimation of teachers' use of English in class, total and by gender

Percentages indicated	Total			Male			Female	
	n	%		n	%		n	%
0-25%	26	13.7		11	12.0		15	15.3
26-50%	41	21.6		19	20.7		22	22.4
51-75%	50	26.3		29	31.5		21	21.4
76-100%	73	38.4		33	35.9		40	40.8
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0		98	100.0

Table 5.16 shows that 13.7% of the pupils said that the teacher speaks English less than 25% of time in class while 21.6% estimated that the teacher speaks English between 26% and 50%. A total of 26.3% of the pupils stated that the teacher speaks English 51%-75% of time in class and 38.4% estimated the percentage to be between 76% and 100%. There is a difference among the genders with more boys claiming the teacher to speak English between 51% and 75%, but more girls than boys allege their teacher to speak English more than 76% of the time in class.

Table 5.17 presents the teachers' responses to the question how much time they speak English in class compared with the pupils.'

Table 5.17 Teachers' and pupils' estimation of English spoken by the teacher in class

Percentages indicated	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
0-25%	4	16.7		26	13.7
26-50%	5	20.8		41	21.6
51-75%	3	12.5		50	26.3
76-100%	12	50.0		73	38.4
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.17 reveals that 16.7% of the teachers claimed to speak English less than 25% of the time in class and a total of 20.8% alleged to speak English between 26% and 50% of the time. A total of 20.8% of the teachers said they speak English between 26% and 50% of the time in class while 12.5% claimed to speak English between 51% and 75% of time in class. Finally 50% of the teachers estimated the time they speak English in class to be more than 76%. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that more pupils than teachers estimated the teachers' language in class to be English between 51% and 75%. On the other hand more teachers than pupils claimed the teachers' language to be English more than 76% of time in class. The responses signify that there is a certain difference in the estimation of teachers' use of English in class, however the difference is not very considerable.

The figures must be said to be quite positive when the pupils claimed that more than one third of the teachers (38.4%) speak English three fourths of the time in class and only one third (21.6% + 13.7%) speak English less than half of the time. Teachers' responses were even more positive than pupils' with half of them claiming to speak English more than three fourth of the time in class.

Among others, Simensen (1998:236) emphasizes the importance of using the target language in the classroom. She presents monolingual teaching as one out of three fundamental principles in good teaching. Why some teachers speak little English in class will be pure speculation, but limited knowledge of the importance of input in the second language may be one reason. Another reason might be that they want to make sure all pupils understand what they say and thus choose to speak Norwegian. A more serious reason would be that some teachers simply do not have enough oral skills themselves to use the language. Oliver (2006) refers to Rugesæter who, in an unpublished article claims that most teachers in English in primary school have no education in English after secondary school. Research from 1999 by Statistics Norway found that 70% of the teachers in primary school, and 50% of the teachers in upper primary school had no formal education in English. In lower secondary school 20% of the teachers of English had no formal education. If the education of English among the teachers in school today still is deficient, this certainly has a negative effect on the pupils' English training. It is hard for teachers to function as models and English speaking supervisors and to find appropriate input for the individual pupils, if they do not have the professional education needed. The training at the beginner level is of great importance for the overall learning of English, and unskilled teachers will give pupils less basic knowledge than wished for when attending secondary school. An interesting and important question for further study would be to find out why some teachers do not use English even more in the teaching.

5.4.3 Importance of various inputs

Many different sources can be applied to achieve the aims of 'The Knowledge Promotion.' This section reveals what input pupils and teachers evaluated to be most important for the learning of English in class. Ten different inputs and their importance in class were asked for and are commented on below. The inputs were: (1)'Teacher speaking', (2) textbook, (3) magazines, (4) newspapers, (5) novels, (6) the Internet, (7) films, (8) computer games, (9) exercises and (10) music. The question was: 'How important do you think the following inputs are for your learning of English in class?'

5.4.3.1 'Teacher speaking'

The first input the pupils had to evaluate was how important they thought 'teacher speaking' is in class. Table 5.18 presents the responses to this question.

Table 5.18 Pupils' responses on the importance of 'teacher speaking', total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	6	3.2		3	3.3	3	3.1
A bit important	6	3.2		4	4.3	2	2.0
Important	45	23.7		20	21.7	25	25.5
Very important	77	40.5		40	43.5	37	37.8
Extremely important	56	29.5		25	27.2	31	31.6
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.18 indicates that pupils assessed 'teacher speaking' to be very important for their learning of English. Only 3.2% claimed 'teacher speaking' not to be important and 3.2% assessed 'teacher speaking' to be a bit important. Important was estimated by 23.7% of the pupils while 40.5% of the pupils evaluated 'teacher speaking' to be very important. Finally a total of 29.5% saw 'teacher speaking' as extremely important. The genders did not have very different estimation of the importance of 'teacher speaking'.

Table 5.19 presents the teachers' responses to this input.

Table 5.19 Teachers' estimation on importance of 'teacher speaking' compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	0	0.0		6	3.2
A bit important	1	4.2		6	3.2
Important	10	41.7		45	23.7
Very important	9	37.5		77	40.5
Extremely important	4	16.7		56	29.5
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.19 shows that no teachers evaluated their 'speaking' in class not to be important. 4.2% of the teachers thought their 'speaking' in class is only a bit important while 41.7% saw their own 'speaking' as important. A total of 37.5% of the teachers thought their 'speaking 'in class is very important, while 16.7% assessed their 'speaking' to be extremely important. The responses show that all teachers except for 4.2% of them evaluated their speaking in class to be important, very important or extremely important. These figures indicate that the teachers who have responded to this questionnaire are aware of the important role their language in the classroom has for the pupils' learning of English. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that more pupils than teachers estimated the importance of 'teacher speaking' to be extremely important, while more teachers than pupils thought 'teacher speaking' was important. However the numbers reveals that generally teachers and pupils agreed that 'teacher speaking' is important for pupils' learning of English in class.

For teachers it must be said to be a positive finding that the pupils evaluate their speaking in class this much, however it might also be experienced as quite demanding. What the teacher says and how he or she says it is estimated to be of considerable importance to the pupils, and this puts quite a pressure on the teacher and also on the teacher training.

5.4.3.2 Textbook

The next input pupils and teachers were asked to evaluate was the textbook. The question was how important they thought the textbook is for their learning of English. Table 5.20 gives the responses to this question.

Table 5.20 Pupils' responses on the importance of textbook, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	8	4.2		4	4.3	4	4.1
A bit important	21	11.1		13	14.1	8	8.2
Important	56	29.5		26	28.3	30	30.6
Very important	80	42.1		35	38.0	45	45.9
Extremely important	25	13.2		14	15.2	11	11.2
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As table 5.20 shows, the textbook was also evaluated to be important for the pupils, but not quite as important as 'teacher speaking'. A total of 4.2% evaluated the textbook not to be important while 11.1% thought the textbook was a bit important. 29.5% of the pupils evaluated the textbook to be important while 42.1% saw the textbook as very important. The textbook was assessed to be extremely important by 13.2% of the pupils. The genders were quite alike in their evaluation of the importance of the textbook.

The teachers responded to the importance of this input as shown in table 5.21 below. The figures are compared with the pupils' responses.

Table 5.21 Teachers' estimation on importance of textbook compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	0	0.0		8	4.2
A bit important	1	4.2		21	11.1
Important	12	50.0		56	29.5
Very important	10	41.7		80	42.1
Extremely important	1	4.2		25	13.2
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.21 reveals that teachers saw the textbook as important within their English teaching. No teachers evaluated the textbook not to be important and only 4.2% said the textbook is a bit important. A total of 50% thought the textbook is important while 41.7% of the teachers assessed the textbook to be a very important input in class. 4.2% of the teachers evaluated the textbook to be extremely important. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that more pupils than teachers estimated the textbook to be important with 50% of the teachers and 29.5% of the pupils answering positively to this alternative, while more pupils saw the textbook as only a bit important or not important. However 13.2% of the pupils evaluated the textbook to be extremely important while the percentage for the teachers was 4.2 on this grade. This means that there is a certain deviance in the estimation of importance of textbook in class, but teachers and pupils agreed that the textbook is an important input in the English classroom.

The figures indicate that teachers still use the textbook in their teaching. The relative high score on the value of this input suggests that the pupils see the textbook as valuable in their learning of English, but it might as well signify that the teacher use the textbook a lot and therefore the pupils judge the textbook as important.

5.4.3.3 Magazines

How important pupils evaluated magazines to be for the learning of English in class was the next question. Table 5.22 presents the responses given by pupils.

Table 5.22 Pupils' responses on the importance of magazines, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	27	14.2		14	15.2	13	13.3
A bit important	58	30.5		28	30.4	30	30.6
Important	56	29.5		21	22.8	35	35.7
Very important	37	19.5		21	22.8	16	16.3
Extremely important	12	6.3		8	8.7	4	4.1
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.22 shows that pupils evaluated magazines to be an important input in the classroom. A total of 14.2% of the pupils found magazines to be unimportant while 30.5% evaluated magazines to be a bit important and 29.5% important. 19.5% of the pupils assessed magazines to be very important and 6.3% said magazines were extremely important as input in class. The genders varied a bit in their evaluation on how important they saw magazines as input, with more girls than boys finding magazines important, while more boys than girls found magazines to be very or extremely important.

Teachers' responses to magazines' importance as input in class are presented in table 5.23 compared with pupils' responses.

Table 5.23 Teachers' estimation on importance of magazines compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	3	12.5		27	14.2
A bit important	18	75.0		58	30.5
Important	2	8.3		56	29.5
Very important	0	0.0		37	19.5
Extremely important	1	4.2		12	6.3
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.23 most teachers did not see magazines as very important in their teaching. A total of 12.5% evaluated magazines not to be important while as many as 75% of the teachers assessed magazines only to be a bit important in the learning of English in class. 8.3% evaluated magazines as being important, no teachers found them to be very important and only 4.2% said that magazines are extremely important as input in class. Compared with the pupils' responses the deviance is striking. In general the pupils estimated magazines to be far more important as input in class than did the teachers with more than half of the pupils finding magazines to be important, very important or extremely important in class.

5.4.3.4 Newspapers

The next input asked about was newspapers. Table 5.24 presents the responses to how important the pupils estimated newspapers to be in their learning of English in class.

Table 5.24 Pupils' responses on the importance of newspapers, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	26	13.7		17	18.5	9	9.2
A bit important	64	33.7		24	26.1	40	40.8
Important	60	31.6		30	32.6	30	30.6
Very important	26	13.7		10	10.9	16	16.3
Extremely important	14	7.4		11	12.0	3	3.1
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.24 shows that 13.7% of the pupils found newspapers not to be important, 33.7% estimated them to be a bit important while 31.6% said they are important. A total of 13.7% stated that newspapers are important input in class and finally 7.4% of the pupils found newspapers to be extremely important. The genders varied in their evaluation, with more boys than girls claiming newspapers not to be important and extremely important, while more girls than boys said newspapers were a bit important or very important.

The teachers' responses to this question compared with the pupils' are presented in table 5.25 below.

Table 5.25 Teachers' estimation on importance of newspapers compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	3	12.5		26	13.7
A bit important	16	66.7		64	33.7
Important	4	16.7		60	31.6
Very important	0	0.0		26	13.7
Extremely important	1	4.2		14	7.4
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.25 shows that most teachers in this questionnaire did not assess newspapers to be an important input in the teaching of English in class. A total of 12.5% evaluated newspapers not to be important while as many as 66.7% thought newspapers are only a bit important. 16.7% of the teachers found newspapers to be important, none of them evaluated newspapers to be very important, while finally 4.2% saw newspapers as an extremely important input in class.

A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that more pupils than teachers estimated newspapers to be important an input in class. About half of the pupils evaluated newspapers to be important, very important or extremely important, while only one fifth of the teachers agreed with this. This means that there is a notable difference in the estimation of the importance of newspapers as input in class.

5.4.3.5 Novels

The Knowledge Promotion states that tenth graders are supposed to read and discuss different genres, among them novels. Table 5.26 presents the responses to the question of how important the pupils thought novels are for their learning of English in class.

Table 5.26 Pupils' responses on the importance of novels, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	18	9.5		14	15.2	4	4.1
A bit important	41	21.6		24	26.1	17	17.3
Important	60	31.6		30	32.6	30	30.6
Very important	52	27.4		16	17.4	36	36.7
Extremely important	19	10.0		8	8.7	11	11.2
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.26 displays that many pupils saw novels as important for their learning of English. A total of 9.5% claimed novels not to be important while 21.6% judged novels to be a bit important. 31.6% thought novels are important for their learning of English while 27.4% evaluated novels to be very important. 10% of the pupils saw novels as extremely important. The genders differed in their assessment in how important they evaluated novels to be in the learning of English in class. Generally the girls saw novels as more important than did the boys.

Table 5.27 presents the teachers' responses to the importance of novels in class compared with pupils'.

Table 5.27 Teachers' estimation on importance of novels compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	1	4.2		18	9.5
A bit important	4	16.7		41	21.6
Important	14	58.3		60	31.6
Very important	4	16.7		52	27.4
Extremely important	1	4.2		19	10.0
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.27 reveals that teachers judged novels to be important as an input in their teaching. A total of 4.2% of the teachers found novels not to be important while 16.7% evaluated novels to be a bit important. As many as 58.3% thought novels were important, while 16.7% evaluated novels to be very important. Finally 4.2% of the teachers assessed novels to be extremely important as input in class. Comparing the teachers' responses with the pupils' a certain deviation is found with teachers finding novels to be more important than pupils, however both groups evaluated novels to be important. About 80% of the teachers evaluated novels to be important, very important or extremely important while this percentage for the pupils was 70.

5.4.3.6 The Internet

Another relatively new input in the English teaching is the Internet. Internet is a learning tool with many possibilities. Some schools have good access to computers with Internet and are then able to offer the medium to the pupils for teaching purposes, while other schools have more limited access to computers. This tool might therefore be used with different frequency not necessarily for pedagogical reasons, but economy and space might limit the amount of computers available. Table 5.28 presents how the pupils estimated the importance of the Internet to be in class.

Table 5.28 Pupils' responses on the importance of the Internet, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	2	1.1		1	1.1	1	1.0
A bit important	20	10.5		7	7.6	13	13.3
Important	49	25.8		20	21.7	29	29.6
Very important	48	25.3		24	26.1	24	24.5
Extremely important	57	30.0		33	35.9	24	24.5
Total	176	92.6		85	92.4	91	92.9
Answers missing	14	7.4		7	7.6	7	7.1
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As table 5.28 suggests the responses show that pupils saw the Internet as very important for the learning of English. Only 1.1% evaluated the Internet not to be important while 10.5% found the Internet to be a bit important for their learning of English in class. A total of 25.8% evaluated the Internet to be important and 25.3% saw the Internet as very important. 30% of the pupils evaluated the Internet to be extremely important for their learning of English in class. There was a difference between girls and boys on this question with the boys evaluating the Internet to be more important than did the girls. 35.9% of the boys claimed the Internet to be extremely important while the percentage among the girls was 24.5. As the figures in table 5.28 show, 14 pupils did not give a

response to this question. The responses missing are from the school where the pupils answered the questionnaire on paper. Due to copy problems the cell to tick off an answer had disappeared and this problem made 14 pupils skip the question.

The teachers' responses to the question how important Internet is in the teaching of English in class appear in table 5.29. The responses are compared to those of the pupils.

Table 5.29 Teachers' estimation on importance of the Internet compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	0	0.0		2	1.1
A bit important	2	8.3		20	10.5
Important	10	66.7		49	25.8
Very important	4	16.7		48	25.3
Extremely important	2	8.3		57	30.0
Total	24	100.0		176	92.6
Answers missing	0	0		14	7.4
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.29 displays that the Internet is considered by the teachers to be an important input in class. No teachers evaluated the Internet not to be important while 8.3% said that the Internet was a bit important. A total of 66.7% of the teachers evaluated the Internet to be important while 16.7% thought the Internet is very important as an input in the English teaching. Among the teachers in this questionnaire 8.3% evaluated the Internet as extremely important in class. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that both groups evaluated the Internet to be an important input in class, however the pupils estimated the Internet to be more important than did the teachers. More than half of the pupils evaluated the Internet to be very or extremely important, while this was the answer given by only one fourth of the teachers.

5.4.3.7 Films
Whether pupils saw films as important for their learning of English is the issue dealt with in this section. Table 5.30 presents the responses to the question of how important the pupils evaluated films to be in the learning of English in class.

Table 5.30 Pupils' responses on the importance of films, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total		Male		Female	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Not important	2	1.1	1	1.1	1	1.0
A bit important	15	7.9	6	6.5	9	9.2
Important	39	20.5	20	21.7	19	19.4
Very important	59	31.1	25	27.2	34	34.7
Extremely important	75	39.5	40	43.5	35	35.7
Total	190	100.0	92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.30 shows that films also were viewed to be a very important input for the learning of English in class by many of the pupils. No more than 1.1% evaluated films not to be important and 7.9% assessed this source to be a bit important, while 20.5% stated films to be important in the learning of English in class. A total of 31.1% estimated films to be very important and finally 39.5% of the pupils evaluated films to be extremely important. The genders differed in their evaluation of this input with the boys finding films to be even more important than did the girls. 43.5% of the boys evaluated films to be extremely important, while 35.7% of the girls saw films as extremely important. This high score on films indicates that pupils like to be entertained in their learning process, boys even more so than girls.

Table 5.31 presents teachers' and pupils' responses to the question how important they evaluated films to be as input in class.

Table 5.31 Teachers' estimation on importance of films compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers		Pupils	
	n	%	n	%
Not important	1	4.2	2	1.1
A bit important	6	25.0	15	7.9
Important	14	58.3	39	20.5
Very important	2	8.3	59	31.1
Extremely important	1	4.2	75	39.5
Total	24	100.0	190	100.0

Table 5.31 shows that many teachers evaluated films as being important input in class. Only 4.2% responded that films are not important as input in class while 25% assessed films to be only a bit important. As many as 58.3% of the teachers evaluated films to be important while 8.3% said films were very important and finally 4.2% of the teachers stated films to be an extremely important input in class. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that many more pupils than teachers, about 70% of the pupils compared to about 12% of the teachers, estimated films to be very important or extremely important. The figures suggest that both teachers and pupils

evaluated films to be important, but pupils to a higher degree that teachers.

5.4.3.8 Computer games

As noted in section 3.5 computer games are important to young people, and the responses shown in table 5.32 give an indication to the question on how important pupils think computer games are for their learning of English in class.

Table 5.32 Pupils' responses on the importance of computer games, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	41	21.6		7	7.6	34	34.7
A bit important	45	23.7		15	16.3	30	30.6
Important	32	16.8		19	20.7	13	13.3
Very important	25	13.2		13	14.1	12	12.2
Extremely important	46	24.2		38	41.3	8	8.2
Total	189	99.5		92	100.0	97	99.0
Answers Missing	1	0.5		0.0	0.0	1	1.0
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.32 shows that the pupils were divided in their view on how important they thought computer games are as input for their learning of English in class. 21.6% evaluated computer games not to be important while 23.7% saw computer games as a bit important. 16.8% assessed these games to be important and 13,2% said computer games were very important for their learning of English. A total of 24.2% stated computer games as being extremely important. The most striking with these figures is the remarkable difference among boys and girls in their evaluation of the importance of computer games in their learning of English in class. 7.6% of the boys evaluated computer games as not being important, while this percentage for the girls was 34.7. 30.6% of the girls saw computer games as only a bit important while this percentage for the boys was 16.3. Computer games considered to be extremely important for the learning of English in class had the score 41.3% for the boys and 8.2% for the girls. This considerable difference suggests that entertainment activities appeal first and foremost to the boys. One pupil did not answer this question, probably only an oversight.

The responses by teachers and by pupils on how important they found computer games to be as input in English are presented in table 5.33 below.

Table 5.33 Teachers' estimation on importance of computer games compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	8	33.3		41	21.6
A bit important	11	45.8		45	23.7
Important	3	12.5		32	16.8
Very important	1	4.2		25	13.2
Extremely important	1	4.2		46	24.2
Total	24	100.0		189	99.5
Answers missing	0	0.0		1	0.5
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.33 displays that as many as 33.3% of the teachers evaluated computer games not to be important input in class. A total of 45.8% found computer games to be only a bit important while 12.5% assessed computer games to be important. Only 4.2% evaluated these games to be very important and the same number said computer games were extremely important as input in class. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that pupils evaluated computer games higher than did the teachers. More than one third of the pupils assessed computer games to be very or extremely important as an input in class while less than ten percentages of the teachers gave these high scores to computer games as input.

5.4.3.9 Exercises

Pupils and teachers might interpret this concept differently, from meaning only written exercises to both oral and written exercises and perhaps different tasks done on the computer. However, the responses given in table 5.34 will give an indication on how pupils evaluated the importance of exercises in their learning of English in class.

Table 5.34 Pupils' responses on the importance of exercises, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	10	5.3		5	5.4	5	5.1
A bit important	14	7.4		10	10.9	4	4.1
Important	40	21.1		19	20.7	21	21.4
Very important	71	37.4		30	32.6	41	41.8
Extremely important	53	27.9		26	28.3	27	27.6
Total	188	98.9		90	97.8	98	100.0
Answers missing	2	1.1		2	2.2	0.0	0.0
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As can be seen from table 5.34, exercises are also evaluated to be important by many of the pupils. Only 5.3% assessed exercises not to be important and 7.4% saw exercises as a bit important. 21.1% evaluated exercises to be important in the learning of English and 37.4% responded that exercises are very important. Finally 27.9% evaluated exercises to be extremely important for the learning of English in class. The difference among the genders was not striking, but the girls tended to see exercises as more important than boys, something the numbers in the category very important shows, where a total of 32.6% of the boys and 41.8% of the girls chose this alternative. Two boys did not answer this question.

Table 5.35 presents the responses to how the teachers evaluated the importance of exercises to be in the learning of English in class compared with pupils.

Table 5.35 Teachers' estimation on importance of exercises compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	1	4.2		10	5.3
A bit important	0	0.0		14	7.4
Important	8	33.3		40	21.1
Very important	13	54.2		71	37.4
Extremely important	2	8.3		53	27.9
Total	24	100.0		188	98.9
Answers missing	0	0.0		2	1.1
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.35 indicates that many teachers evaluated exercises as very important in their work. 4.2% evaluated exercises not to be important and no teachers claimed exercises to be only a bit important while 33.3% saw exercises as important input in class. A total of 54.2% found exercises to be very important and finally 8.3% evaluated exercises to be an extremely important input in the vocabulary-learning task in class. A comparison between the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that more teachers than pupils estimated exercises to be important and very important while more pupils than teachers said exercises were extremely important. Even if the numbers vary, it might generally be said that both groups found exercises to be quite important input in class in the vocabulary learning process.

5.4.3.10 Music

As noted in section 3.5 young people are great consumers of music and on average they listen to music 89 minutes a day and much of the music is English. Music might be an important input for the learning of vocabulary and the next question was: 'How important is music for your learning of

English in class'? Table 5.36 presents the responses to this question.

Table 5.36 Pupils' responses on the importance of music, total and by gender

Grade of importance	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Not important	10	5.3		1	1.1	9	9.2
A bit important	45	23.7		20	21.7	25	25.5
Important	38	20.0		14	15.2	24	24.5
Very important	38	20.0		17	18.5	21	21.4
Extremely important	55	28.9		37	40.2	18	18.4
Total	186	97.9		89	96.7	97	99.0
Answer missing	4	2.1		3	3.3	1	1.0
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

The responses in Table 5.36 give an indication of a young generation seeing music as quite important for their learning of English. 5.3% evaluated music not to be important while 23.7% saw music as a bit important. 20.0% evaluated music to be important and the same number found music to be very important. Almost one third of the pupils, 28.9%, estimated music to be extremely important: 40.2% of the boys and 18.4% of the girls. Again a huge difference among the genders in the evaluation of an input can be noted. The figures indicate that especially boys evaluated music as important for learning of English in class. It must be noted that three boys and one girl did not answer this question.

The teachers' responses compared to the pupils' are presented below in table 5.37.

Table 5.37 Teachers' estimation on importance of music compared with pupils'

Grade of importance	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Not important	0	0.0		10	5.3
A bit important	10	41.7		45	23.7
Important	8	33.3		38	20.0
Very important	5	20.8		38	20.0
Extremely important	1	4.2		55	28.9
Total	24	100.0		186	97.9
Answers missing	0	0.0		4	2.1
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.37, no teachers evaluated music not to be important while 41.7% of the teachers assessed music only to be a bit important. A total of 33.3% said they thought music is important as an input in class and 20.8% of the teachers evaluated music to be very important. 4.2% of the teachers reported music to be extremely important as input in class. A comparison between

the teachers' and the pupils' estimations shows that more pupils than teachers estimated music to be very important or extremely important with almost half of the pupils giving these scores while the same scores were given by only one fourth of the teachers. The scores generally show that teachers and pupils found music to be important as an input in class, however the pupils more so than the teachers.

5.4.3.11 Summing up on types of input

In section 5.4 different teaching materials and the pupils' evaluation of the importance of these different resources for the learning of English in class have been looked at. All inputs were evaluated to be important for the teaching of English in class, to greater or lesser extent, by both teachers and pupils. The inputs evaluated to be most important in class by the teachers were exercises and 'teacher speaking' followed by the textbook. For pupils, on the other hand, inputs with practical connotations as films, the Internet and music were highly evaluated. Section 3.5 showed that use of the Internet, listening to music and video gaming have increased enormously during the last decade among the young people, and the figures in this questionnaire on inputs might reflect this development.

Another major finding in section 5.4 is that girls and boys like to learn in different ways. Boys' high scores on films, computer games and music suggest that boys appreciate learning activities with practical connotations. More boys than girls drop out of school (*St.meld*. nr. 31, 2007-2008) and extended use of music, film and computer games in the teaching might be one out of many ways to try to motivate boys to endure and maybe help at least some of them to complete secondary school. A conclusion on this section on input must be that there are many different inputs available in the teaching of English, and they might be important to a different extent, however there are also many aspects to consider for the teacher when planning what input to use in a language course.

5.4.4 Learning strategies

This section deals with learning strategies the pupils use when dealing with difficult words. 11 different strategies were asked for and will be commented on below. The pupils could tick off as many statements as they wanted. The question was: 'How do you deal with difficult words in class?' The alternatives were: (1) 'I don't spend time on vocabulary', (2) 'I guess from the other words in the sentence', (3) 'I know all the words we are dealing with', (4) 'I find out the meaning of words myself by using a dictionary', (5) 'I find out the meaning myself by asking classmates', (6) 'I find out the meaning by asking the teacher', (7) 'the teacher shows objects', (8) 'the teacher performs actions', (9) 'the teacher shows pictures or diagrams', (10) 'the teacher explains the word

in the first language (translation)', (11) 'the teacher explains the word in English'.

5.4.4.1 'I don't spend time on vocabulary'

The first alternative the pupils could tick off for was that they do not spend time on difficult words. Table 5.38 shows how many pupils claimed not to spend time on difficult words in class.

Table 5.38 Pupils' responses to 'I don't spend time on vocabulary, total and by gender'

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	29	15.3		21	22.8	8	8.2
Disagree	161	84.7		71	77.2	90	91.8
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.38, 84.7% of the pupils indicated that they do work with difficult words. However there was a considerable difference between boys and girls here, with 22.8% of the boys claiming not to work with difficult words while this percentage for the girls was only 8.2.

Teachers' and pupils' responses to whether they spend time on vocabulary appear below in table 5.39.

Table 5.39 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'I don't spend time on vocabulary'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	1	4.2		29	15.3
Disagree	23	95.8		161	84.7
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.39 shows that most teachers claimed that they do spend time on vocabulary: 95.8% of the teachers said they spend time on vocabulary in class. A comparison between the teachers' and pupils' responses shows that both groups reported to spend time on vocabulary, but pupils not fully to the same extent as the teachers.

5.4.4.2 Guessing from the other words in the sentence

According to Nation (2001:233) guessing words from context is an important language learning strategy. The strategy asked for in this section was if the pupils guess an unknown word by looking at other words in the sentence. This question was not given to the teachers. Table 5.40 shows how many pupils claimed to use this strategy.

Table 5.40 Pupils' responses to 'I guess from the other words in the sentence', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	79	41.6		32	34.8	47	48.0
Disagree	111	58.4		60	65.2	51	52.0
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.40 quite a few pupils stated that they use this method. A total of 48% of the girls and 34.8% of the boys said they guess unknown words from the context.

5.4.4.3 'I know all the words'

The next question tried to map to which degree there are difficult words for the pupils to work with. The pupils could tick off if they knew all the words they were dealing with. This question was directed to the pupils only. Table 5.41 shows the responses to the question.

Table 5.41 Pupils' responses to 'I know all the words we are dealing with', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	41	21.6		26	28.3	15	15.3
Disagree	149	78.4		66	71.7	83	84.7
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.41 shows that 78.4% of the pupils indicated that they do not know all the words they are dealing with in class. This shows that most of the pupils have challenges when it comes to vocabulary, but 21.6% claimed to know all the words they are dealing with, and if that is the case quite a few pupils are not challenged enough on vocabulary. Again input is at stake and the best learning effect is according to Krashen (in Lightbown and Spada, 1999:39) claimed to be when the input is understandable but slightly above the level of the learner, and if one fifth of the pupils know all the words they are dealing with material used in the teaching must be looked at carefully. A total of 28.3% of the boys claimed to know all the words dealt with in class while the percentage for the girls was 15.3%. It might be true that the boys know more words than the girls, but again it might as well be that the boys are more confident than the girls, as noted in section 3.4.

5.4.4.4 Use of dictionary

Another way to work with difficult words is to use a dictionary. When the pupils start at lower secondary school they get a bilingual (Norwegian-English, English-Norwegian) dictionary where the words are translated from Norwegian to English and also from English to Norwegian. Although

the practice varies, the pupils are supposed to bring the dictionary to class when English is on the agenda. Table 5.42 presents the responses to the question how many pupils use a dictionary as a strategy to find out the meaning of difficult words.

Table 5.42 Pupils' responses to 'I find out the meaning of words myself by Using a dictionary', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	116	61.1		50	54.3	66	67.3
Disagree	74	38.9		42	45.7	32	32.7
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.42 reveals that a dictionary is a much used tool within vocabulary acquisition, with 61.1% of the pupils claiming to use this strategy. 67.3% of the girls and 54.3% of the boys stated that they use a dictionary to find out the meaning of words. As noted in section 3.5 girls tend to work harder than boys at school, and looking up in a dictionary is to some pupils quite laborious, which might be a reason why more girls than boys choose this strategy.

Table 5.43 presents the responses from teachers compared to pupils to the question whether pupils use a dictionary in class.

Table 5.43 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'the pupils find out the meaning themselves by using a dictionary'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	19	79.2		116	61.1
Disagree	5	20.8		74	38.9
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.43 reveals that a dictionary is a method used in the language learning process, with 79.2% of the teachers stating that their pupils use this strategy while 61.1% of the pupils also claimed to use a dictionary as a language learning strategy.

5.4.4.5 Asking classmates

In Norwegian classes there are often 30 pupils and one teacher. The pupils might be a resource for each other and one learning strategy is to ask classmates about a target word. The question dealt with below is if the pupils ask their classmates for help with difficult words. Table 5.44 presents the

responses to this question.

Table 5.44 Pupils' responses to 'I find out the meaning myself by 'Asking classmates', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	113	59.5		51	55.4	62	63.3
Disagree	77	40.5		41	44.6	36	36.7
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.44 classmates are considered valuable collaborators in vocabulary work with 59.5% of the pupils affirming that they ask their peers about difficult words. 63.3% of the girls and 55.4% of the boys claimed to ask their classmates about words they do not know. Again a difference is noted among the genders with the girls being more active than the boys.

Whether teachers responded that pupils use this strategy is shown in table 5.45. Pupils' own evaluation is also presented in the table.

Table 5.45 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Asking classmates'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	17	70.8		113	59.5
Disagree	7	29.2		77	40.5
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.45 displays that 70.8% of the teachers responded that the pupils use this strategy, while the percentage for pupils was 59.5.

5.4.4.6 Asking the teacher

Section 5.4.3.1 indicates that the teacher is evaluated to be of great significance to the pupils. The question asked was whether the teacher is used as a strategy to help the pupils find out the meaning of words. This question was given to the pupils only. The responses are presented below in table 5.46.

Table 5.46 Pupils' responses to 'Asking the teacher', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	122	64.2		60	65.2	62	63.3
Disagree	68	35.8		32	34.8	36	36.7
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

In table 5.46 the importance of the teacher in the classroom again is revealed with 64.2% of the pupils stating that they use asking the teacher about unknown words as a strategy to find out the meaning of words. 63.3% of the girls and 64.2% of the boys claimed to use this strategy, thus there was not much difference in gender to the use of this strategy.

5.4.4.7 Teacher showing objects

The next strategy asked for was if teachers in lower secondary schools show objects to convey the meaning of words. Table 5.47 presents the responses to this question.

Table 5.47 Pupils' responses to 'The teacher shows objects', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	39	20.5		27	29.3	12	12.2
Disagree	151	79.5		65	70.7	86	87.8
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

According to table 5.47, 20.5% of the pupils reported this strategy to be used by the teacher. 29.3% of the boys and 12.2% of the girls indicated that this method is used in lower secondary school. It is hard to say why more boys than girls stated this method to be used, however one possibility might be that teachers with many boys in class use this method more than others; another reason might be that boys notice this method more than girls.

Table 5.48 displays the responses to the use of this strategy in percentages from both teachers and pupils.

Table 5.48 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'The teacher shows objects'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	10	41.7		39	20.5
Disagree	14	58.3		151	79.5
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.48 displays that 41.7% of the teachers claimed to be active helpers in the pupils' learning process by showing objects. Only 20.5% of the pupils agreed that this strategy is used in class.

5.4.4.8 Teacher performing actions

Another strategy to teach pupils words in class is for the teacher to perform actions. This strategy might be interpreted in different ways, but an active teacher trying to show a word with his or her body must be an expected interpretation of the statement. The question is whether teachers perform actions in class as a learning strategy in vocabulary acquisition. Table 5.49 below shows the pupils' responses.

Table 5.49 Pupils' responses to 'The teacher performs actions', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	30	15.8		20	21.7	10	10.2
Disagree	160	84.2		72	78.3	88	89.8
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.49 reveals that according to the pupils performing of actions to convey the meaning of words is not a very widespread used strategy among teachers in lower secondary school. 84.2% of the pupils stated that their teachers do not perform actions to convey the meaning of words. Nevertheless 15.8% of the pupils asserted that their teacher performed actions in the language learning process. Ten percent more boys than girls stated that their teacher used this strategy to convey the meaning of unknown words.

Table 5.50 shows the responses from teachers and pupils whether teachers in lower secondary schools perform actions to convey the meaning of unknown words.

Table 5.50 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Teacher performing actions'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	9	37.5		30	15.8
Disagree	15	62.5		160	84.2
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.50 demonstrates that 37.5% of the teachers claimed that they perform actions to show the meaning of words in class. 15.8% of the pupils said their teachers perform actions in class in the work with vocabulary. A certain difference is found here among teachers and pupils, but perhaps an interpretation of the concept 'performing actions' is responsible for most of the difference.

5.4.4.9 Teacher showing pictures or diagrams

To show pictures and diagrams is also a method used in language learning. Instead of talking about numbers and words teachers might show the words dealt with in pictures and diagrams. Table 5.51 presents the responses to the question whether teachers use this strategy.

Table 5.51 Pupils' responses to 'The teacher shows pictures or diagrams', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	23	12.1		13	14.1	10	10.2
Disagree	167	87.9		79	85.9	88	89.8
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.51 shows that 12.1% of the pupils claimed that the teacher uses pictures or diagrams to illustrate the meaning of unknown words. 14.1% of the boys and 10.2% of the girls reported this strategy to be used, thus the difference among the genders was not substantial.

Table 5.52 presents the responses from teachers and pupils to the question whether showing pictures or diagrams is a strategy used by teachers.

Table 5.52 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Teacher showing pictures or diagrams'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	3	12.5		23	12.1
Disagree	21	87.5		167	87.9
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.52 shows that 12.5% of the teachers stated that they show pictures or diagrams as a vocabulary learning strategy in class and the pupils fully agreed with the teachers.

5.4.4.10 Translation into the first language

A well-known strategy in language learning is translation. Table 5.53 presents the responses to the statement that the teacher defines the word in the first language (translation).

Table 5.53 Pupils' responses to 'The teacher defines the word in the first language', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	88	46.3		42	45.7	46	46.9
Disagree	102	53.7		50	54.3	52	53.1
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.53 shows that translation is a strategy used by many teachers. As many as 46.3% of the pupils stated that the teacher translates difficult words from English to Norwegian in class as a strategy to cope with difficult words. Girls and boys agreed very much as to what extent this strategy was used.

Table 5.54 shows the responses given by teachers and pupils on how many reported teachers to translate difficult words as a strategy used in class.

Table 5.54 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Teacher explaining in the first language'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	17	70.8		88	46.3
Disagree	7	29.2		102	53.7
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.54 shows that 70.8% of the teachers claimed to explain words in the first language as a strategy in the learning process. A total of 46.3% of the pupils agreed to this statement.

5.4.4.11 Defining words in the second language

Another way to work with words is to explain the word in the target language.

Table 5.55 shows how many pupils claimed that teachers define difficult English words in English.

Table 5.55 Pupils' responses to 'The teacher defines the word in the second language', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	96	50.5		45	48.9	51	52.0
Disagree	93	48.9		46	50.0	47	48.0
Total	189	99.5		91	98.9	98	100.0
Answers missing	1	0.5		1	1.1	0.0	0.0
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As shown in table 5.55, according to 50.5% of the pupils, teachers define English words with other words in English to explain difficult words. These figures suggest that explaining a word in the second language is considered a much-used strategy in vocabulary learning, at least among the teachers is this study. There was no big difference among the genders in their estimation of the use of this strategy. One pupil did not answer the question.

Table 5.56 presents the responses to the question whether the teachers use English to explain difficult words in class. Responses are given from teachers and pupils.

Table 5.56 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Teacher explains in English'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	22	91.7		96	50.5
Disagree	2	8.3		93	48.9
Total	24	100.0		189	99.5
Answers missing	0	0.0		1	0.5
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.56 as many as 91.7% of the teachers claimed to explain difficult words in English. The pupils did not agree to this extended use of this strategy, only 50.5% of them reported that teachers use this method as a language learning strategy. Again it is hard to explain the difference; however, one reason might be that teachers explain difficult words in English from time to time, but not often enough to make the pupils notice it as a learning strategy.

5.4.4.12 Context clues

The last strategy asked for was directed to the teachers only. The question was if the teacher provides language context clues to explain the meaning of difficult words. Table 5.57 shows whether this strategy was claimed used in class.

Table 5.57 Teachers' responses to 'Context clues'

	Teachers	
	n	%
Agree	14	58.3
Disagree	10	41.7
Total	24	100.0

Table 5.57 shows that 58.3% of the teachers claimed to provide 'Context clues' to help pupils to find the meaning of difficult words.

5.4.4.13 Summing up on learning strategies

The responses to the questions about learning strategies show that many strategies are used in class to deal with difficult words. To sum up on learning strategies a table has been made to show all strategies in relation.

Table 5.58 Pupils' responses to learning strategies in percentage

Learning strategies	%
I find out the meaning by asking the teacher	64.2
I find out the meaning of words myself by using a dictionary	61.1
I find out the meaning myself by asking classmates	59.5
The teacher explains the word in English	50.5
The teacher explains the word in the first language	46.3
I guess from the other words in the sentence	41.6
I know all the words we are dealing with	21.6
The teacher shows objects	20.5
The teacher performs actions	15.8
I don't spend time on vocabulary	15.3
The teacher shows pictures or diagrams	12.1

As table 5.58 shows, asking the teacher was the strategy claimed to be most used, with 64.2% of the pupils stating to use this strategy in the language learning process. Looking up in a dictionary was a strategy used by 61.1% of the pupils and asking classmates followed with 59.5%. The teacher defining the words both in Norwegian and in English was also estimated to be important to the pupils in their language learning process.

The teachers claimed explaining in English as the strategy most used followed by use of a dictionary, translation and asking classmates. These figures indicate that teachers and pupils agree to a large extent as to which strategies are most used in class. The divergence among the genders was notable in the use of strategies. When looking at the four learning strategies where the pupils have to be active, viz. guessing from context, use of dictionary, asking classmates and asking the teacher, the girls used the strategies far more than the boys. Summing up the figures, these four strategies achieved 209.7 points for the boys and 241.9 points for the girls. Dividing the numbers to 4, we find that 52.4% of the boys used these strategies while the percentage for the girls on average was 60.5. These numbers suggest that the girls use learning strategies more than the boys do. Nation (1982, in Schmitt and McCarthy,1997:245) argues that those students who were most successful in vocabulary learning used several vocabulary learning strategies, and if that is the case another answer might be found as to why girls perform better than boys in school. 22.8% of the boys also admitted that they do not spend time on vocabulary, while this percentage for the girls is 8.2. These numbers complement each other and indicate, as suggested in section 3.4, that girls are more active in the learning process than boys. Many of the strategies used involve the teacher, and this shows again that the teacher is salient in the pupils' language learning process. According to the responses

on this questionnaire Norwegian pupils do use several strategies in language learning, and this might then be one factor as to why, as will be noted in the next section, pupils feel successful in English.

5.4.5 Self evaluation

In this section the responses are presented to pupils' self-evaluation about how good they think they are in English. The question was simply: 'How good do you think you are in English'? What it means to be good is of course a very wide, inaccurate concept and the definition of what it means to be good at English will vary a lot; however, the responses to this question will give an idea about how successful the pupils think they are in English. Table 5.59 presents the responses to this issue.

Table 5.59 Pupils' responses to 'How good do you think you are in English'? Total and by gender

Grade of success	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Bad	2	1.1		2	2.2	0	0.0
Not very good	25	13.2		8	8.7	17	17.3
Good	68	35.8		34	37.0	34	34.7
Very good	68	35.8		31	33.7	37	37.8
Extremely good	27	14.2		17	18.5	10	10.2
Total	190	100%		92	100.0	98	100.0

It might be difficult to know how bad the pupils think their English has to be in order to be bad, but with only 1.1% of the pupils saying they think they are bad in English, the scores on table 5.59 give a clear indication of young people feeling successful in English. A total of 13.2% thought they are not very good at English while 35.8% evaluated their own English skills to be good. The same number stated that they are very good at English and finally, as many as 14.2% of the pupils evaluated their English skills to be extremely good. The figures indicate that pupils in general feel they master the language, and this must be seen as a solid, positive feedback to the school system regarding English education in Norwegian schools.

The genders varied in their self-evaluation. A total of 17.3% of the girls stated that they are not very good at English, while this percentage for the boys was 8.7. Again this is a difference that may be rooted in reality, but looking at the variable 'extremely good' where 18.5% of the boys and 10.2% of the girls gave a positive answer, it seems that self-confidence is at stake. As noted in section 3.4, results on tests in English tend to show the girls to be slightly better than the boys.

Teachers were asked about how successful they think their pupils are in acquiring vocabulary on average. Table 5.60 presents the responses to this question.

Table 5.60 Teachers' responses to 'Degree of success'

Degree of success	n	%
Extremely unsuccessful	0	0.0
Not very successful	0	0.0
Successful	21	87.5
Very successful	1	4.2
Extremely successful	2	8.4
Total	24	0

Table 5.60 reveals that no teachers saw the pupils as extremely unsuccessful or not very successful and 87.5% of the teachers evaluated their pupils to be successful. A total of 4.2% of the teachers assessed their pupils to be very successful and 8.4% saw the pupils as extremely successful. The term 'successful' might of course be given different values, however the figures indicate that according to the teachers in this study, Norwegian pupils are prosperous within English vocabulary acquisition. Section 5.3.5 showed that the pupils also evaluated themselves to be successful in English, and this is essential knowledge to build upon because success breeds success, and when pupils know they are good at something they might be motivated to work even harder to become even better. However although many pupils are successful learners of English, there are pupils struggling, and it is important that the teachers take into account the different levels in class, and prepare the teaching based on the individual pupil's skills to be sure to give all pupils a possibility to prosperity and growth.

5.4.6 Obstacles in the learning process

This section deals with the question of why pupils think they do not learn even more English in class. Six possible reasons were suggested and the pupils have stated one or more reasons. The reasons suggested were: (1) 'My teacher is not good enough in English', (2) 'There are too many students in class', (3) 'There is too much to learn', (4) 'I am not motivated to learn English', (5) 'There is too much noise in class' and (6) 'The pupils differ too much in their knowledge of English'. Teachers have also responded to this question.

5.4.6.1 'My teacher is not good enough in English'

The first statement concerns the teacher's knowledge of English. Previous sections have shown that the teachers are assessed as very important for the pupils' learning of English and this question tries to find out if the pupils are satisfied with the teachers' knowledge of English. Table 5.61 shows pupils' answers to the utterance 'My teacher is not good enough in English'.

Table 5.61 Pupils' responses to 'My teacher is not good enough in English', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	38	20.0		16	17.4	22	22.4
Disagree	152	80.0		76	82.6	76	77.6
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.61 shows that 80% of the pupils evaluated their teachers to be good enough in English. 80% is a high score and shows that many teachers are estimated to be well qualified by their pupils, but 20% thought that the teachers are not good enough, which means that one fifth of the pupils were not satisfied with the qualities of their teachers in English. It would have been interesting to interview some pupils to find out in what they assessed the teachers not to be good enough. Were their grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation skills not good enough, or were their methods and pedagogical skills the problem? Those are important questions for further investigation, but unfortunately out of range for this study.

'I am not good enough as an English teacher' was the statement the teachers were asked to respond to and table 5.62 presents the teachers' responses compared to the pupils'.

Table 5.62 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'The teacher is not good enough'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	2	8.3		38	20.0
Disagree	22	91.7		152	80.0
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.62 shows that most teachers, at least in this study, experience that they are good enough as teachers in English. A total of 91.7% of the teachers thought their skills were sufficient for language teaching in lower secondary school. The pupils agreed that most teachers are good enough, but among them 20% stated that their English teacher was not good enough.

5.4.6.2 'Too many pupils in class'

Another factor that might prevent pupils from learning even more English in class is the fact that many classrooms have as many as 30 pupils. The possibilities for the teacher to give each pupil personal attention is thus limited. The statement below tries to capture if the pupils saw this as a problem. Table 5.63 presents the responses to how the pupils evaluated the statement 'There are too many pupils in class'.

Table 5.63 Pupils' responses to 'There are too many pupils in class', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	57	30.0		27	29.3	30	30.6
Disagree	133	70.0		65	70.7	68	69.4
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.63 reveals that 70% of the pupils responded that the amount of pupils in class did not prevent them in the vocabulary learning task, but still the fact that 30% see the number of pupils in class as an obstacle for their learning makes it a problem worth looking at. There was no notable difference in the opinion on this issue among the genders.

Table 5.64 shows how many teachers agreed with the statement that too many pupils in class is an obstacle for pupils' learning of English.

Table 5.64 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Too many pupils in class'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	10	41.7		57	30.0
Disagree	14	58.3		133	70.0
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.64 shows that 41.7% of the teachers experienced too many pupils in class to be an obstacle in the learning process. However, more than half, 58.3% did not see this is an obstacle for the learning of English words in class. 30% of the pupils agreed that too many pupils in class might be a problem in the learning process.

5.4.6.3 'Too much to learn'

The curriculum in English for tenth graders is quite wide-ranging. The pupils are supposed to learn a lot in many different areas from culture to literature and also language related issues. To some pupils this might be quite overwhelming, and table 5.65 shows how the pupils evaluated the amount of subject matter they have to get through in class.

Table 5.65 Pupils' responses to 'There is too much to learn', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	69	36.3		41	44.6	28	28.6
Disagree	121	63.7		51	55.4	70	71.4
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.65 shows that 36.3% of the pupils thought there is too much to learn in class. However, it is hard to know what kind of pupils think there is too much to learn. Initially it is easy to assume the pupils who struggle with the learning of English to assess the amount of learning to be too much, but it might as well be the more conscientious pupils who tend to do all they have to do and do everything properly. The figures reveal that it also is a gender related phenomenon. Only 28.6% of the girls thought there is too much to learn, while the percentage for the boys was 44.6%. This is slightly unexpected because, as noted in section 3.4, girls tend to work hard, do what they are told and what they think is important for their learning, and that could have made them critical to the amount of work to do. The boys, on the other hand, who often are more relaxed, thought there is too much to learn. This might reflect the assumption that boys are lazy and as a result of that think there is too much; yet another alternative is that the curriculum actually is too extensive. When 36.3% of the pupils thought there is too much to learn, this means that many pupils feel the amount of culture and language they have to learn at school as being quite demanding, and to some this might just be too much.

Teachers were asked if the curriculum in English was assessed to be too comprehensive and their responses to the statement appear in table 5.66 below compared to pupils'.

Table 5.66 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Too big a curriculum'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	9	37.5		69	36.3
Disagree	15	62.5		121	63.7
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.66 displays that 37.5% of the teachers thought the curriculum is too extensive while 62.5% did not see this as an obstacle. The pupils' answers were consistent with the teachers'.

5.4.6.4 Motivation

In section 3.4 some aspects of motivation were elucidated. Motivation is said to be a very important factor in the classroom and can make all learners successful in a second language. The pupils in this questionnaire were asked whether they are not motivated to learn English, and table 5.67 presents the responses to this statement.

Table 5.67 Pupils' responses to 'I am not motivated to learn English', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	51	26.8		29	31.5	22	22.4
Disagree	139	73.2		63	68.5	76	77.6
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

As can be seen in table 5.67, 26.8% of the pupils replied they are not motivated to learn English and 73.2% stated that they are motivated. The number of pupils not being motivated is high and needs to be looked at. Why are they not motivated? Is it e.g. the teacher that is the problem or the textbooks? Is school in general the problem, or are the methods used in class not motivating? The gender difference is noteworthy, with 22.4% of the girls saying they are not motivated while the percentage among the boys is 31.5. Thus questions as the following may be asked: Is the Norwegian school organized more for girls than for boys? When reading texts, are the texts more suitable for girls than for boys? Section 5.4.3 showed that boys and girls like to learn in different ways with the boys valuing input with practical connotations even more than did the girls. This knowledge might be worth bringing in to the classroom to try to capture the boys' interest to motivate them for learning. Even if most pupils claimed to be motivated, 27 out of 100 of the tenth graders in this questionnaire said they are not motivated to learn English. Knowing that motivation can make all learners successful, how to motivate should be a routine issue when planning lessons.

Table 5.68 shows the teachers' responses compared with pupils' to the question whether lack of motivation among the pupils is an obstacle for the learning of English vocabulary.

Table 5.68 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Lack of motivation'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	16	66.7		51	26.8
Disagree	8	33.3		139	73.2
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.68 reveals that 66.7% of the teachers assessed unmotivated pupils to be an obstacle in the learning process, while 33.3% did not think this was a hindrance in the learning of English. With two thirds of the teachers stating lack of motivation to be an obstacle, this must be said to be a very high score, and an important issue for further study. Among the pupils 26.8% stated that they were not motivated to learn English. However a difference in the question among teachers and pupils should be noted: the pupils were just asked about their own motivation and not if motivation in

general was a felt problem.

5.4.6.5 Noise

PISA[10] 2006 showed that Norwegian pupils score below the OECD-average in reading, mathematics and sciences. There has even been a decline in the period between 2000 and 2006. This relatively poor performance of Norwegian pupils on international tests has been debated both in the media and among school staff, and lack of order in class has been pointed out as one possible reason for these results. In 'Elevundersøkelsen'[11], a total of 30% of the pupils stated that other pupils making noise in class often or always disturb them. The pupils' well being was high; however, the learning conditions could have been better. In this questionnaire the pupils could pick out noise in class as one obstacle for why they do not learn even more English in class. Table 5.69 presents the responses to the statement 'There is too much noise in class'.

Table 5.69 Pupils' responses to 'There is too much noise in class', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	62	32.6		27	29.3	35	35.7
Disagree	128	67.4		65	70.7	63	64.3
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.69 displays that 67.4% of the pupils did not see noise in class as a problem for their learning of English. Still it was a felt problem by a considerable percentage of the pupils with 35.7% of the girls and 29.3% of the boys saying there is too much noise in class. Too much might be difficult to quantify or define, but obviously quite a few pupils see noise in class as an obstacle for their learning of English. The problem is on the agenda in many schools, but maybe even more could have been done in society in general and in families in particular to deal with this situation.

Table 5.70 presents the responses given by the teachers whether they think too much noise in class is an obstacle for the learning of English in class. The responses are compared with the pupils'.

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[10] Programme for International Student Assessment. PISA is an international project that aims to compare the 15-year-old's expertise and skills in areas of reading, mathematics and science every three years.
[11] A required survey for pupils in 7th and 10th grade and in the first grade of secondary training where pupils give reports on their learning environment

Table 5.70 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Too much noise'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	3	12.5		62	32.6
Disagree	21	87.5		128	67.4
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.70 displays that only 12.5% of the teachers experienced noise in class as a problem. Most teachers did not see too much noise in class as an obstacle in the learning process with 87.5% of the teachers responding negatively to this statement. Compared with the pupils' responses many more pupils stated noise in class to be a problem.

5.4.6.6 Gap in level among the pupils

The Norwegian compulsory school system has as a main goal to provide equal conditions for all pupils and even out social differences. According to the Ministry of Education and Research (2010), education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and no segregation must be done. Primary and lower secondary education is based on the principle of an equal and adapted education for all in an inclusive unified school where everyone is given the same opportunities to develop their abilities. This gives all children a possibility to be integrated in a class no matter nationality, ability or handicap, and socially this is a win-win situation where the pupils learn to socialize with different people. When it comes to the academic aspect, the gains are more doubtful. With 30 pupils from all backgrounds with totally different knowledge in subjects together in one class, the different level among the pupils might present a problem. Results on a European test by Bonnet (2002) show a relatively large standard deviation and the distribution of results in each classroom is also considerable. Combined with the rather large overall spread this means that there is a pronounced spread of English proficiency within classrooms. The data reveals a tremendous challenge for Norwegian teachers of English. Table 5.71 presents the pupils' responses to the statement 'The pupils differ too much in their knowledge of English'.

Table 5.71 Pupils' responses to 'The pupils differ too much in their knowledge of English', total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Agree	59	31.1		35	38.0	24	24.5
Disagree	131	68.9		57	62.0	74	75.5
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.71 demonstrates that 31.1% of the pupils saw the difference in pupils' knowledge of English as an obstacle to their learning. There was a divergence between boys and girls, with 38% of the boys and 24.5% of the girls seeing this as a problem. Almost 70% of the pupils did not see the difference in level as a problem, so maybe the social aspect is more important to them than the academic part.

The teachers were asked whether they see the gap in levels among the pupils as a problem for the learning of English in class. Table 5.72 presents teachers' responses compared with the pupils' to this question.

Table 5.72 Teachers' and pupils' responses to 'Difference in level'

	Teachers			Pupils	
	n	%		n	%
Agree	21	87.5		59	31.1
Disagree	3	12.5		131	68.9
Total	24	100.0		190	100.0

Table 5.72 illustrates that difference in level was an experienced problem for most of the teachers. As many as 87.5% of the teachers evaluated different knowledge among the pupils to be one of the biggest obstacles in the learning of English in class. Only 12.5% of the teachers did not see difference in level as a problem. Far fewer pupils, 31.1%, stated difference in level among the pupils to be a problem in the learning of vocabulary in class.

5.4.6.7 Summing up on obstacles

The responses to the question on obstacles in the learning of English in class show that pupils viewed many factors as influencing negatively on their learning. Table 5.73 presents the total responses to this issue in percentage.

Table 5.73 Obstacles in percentage, affirmative answers by pupils

My teacher is not good enough in English	20.0%
I am not motivated to learn English	26.8%
There are too many pupils in class	30.0%
The pupils differ too much in their knowledge of English	31.1%
There is too much noise in class	32.6%
There is too much to learn	36.3%

As table 5.73 shows none of the alternatives stood out as notably more essential than others to the pupils; however, too much to learn got the highest score, with 36.3% of the pupils ticking this off as an obstacle in the learning process. Noise in class, different level, too many pupils and lack of motivation follow. Finally 20% of the pupils reported their teacher as not being good enough in English. As noted earlier the teacher is salient for the pupils' learning, and that being the case, the percentage of not being satisfied should be considered too high even if 80% were satisfied. A more detailed study on this particular phenomenon to find out in what aspects the teachers are not good enough would have been an important issue for further study. The pupils did not have any possibility to add obstacles they see in their learning process, which is of course a drawback with such a study; however, the obstacles presented to the pupils are all possible hindrances for the learning of English words in the classroom, and by removing or at least reduce some obstacles, more learning might occur.

To sum up on teachers' evaluation on obstacles for learning of English in class, table 5.74 has been made to show the responses to all obstacles.

Table 5.74 Obstacles in percentage, affirmative answers by teachers

'I am not good enough as an English teacher'	8.3%
'Too much noise in class'	12.5%
'Too big a curriculum'	37.5%
'Too many pupils in class'	41.7%
'Lack of motivation among the pupils'	66.7%
'Too big a difference in the level among the pupils'	87.5%

Table 5.74 shows that to the teachers in this study the difference in level among the pupils was viewed as the far most significant obstacle in the learning of English words in class. 87.5% of the teachers saw as a problem that the pupils have very varied knowledge and abilities. With 30 pupils in class and one teacher the task is sizeable when some pupils can communicate in written as well as in oral English while other pupils hardly can say a word or make a simple sentence in English.

Pupils who know the meanings of many words catch on to and understand new ideas and concepts much faster than do those pupils with limited vocabularies.

However important the teachers found the gap in level among the pupils, the pupils did not agree that this was the main obstacle, they pointed at too much to learn as the biggest obstacle with 36.3% of the pupils giving this option affirmative answer. Another felt problem in class was lack of motivation among the pupils. 66.7% of the teachers saw this as a problem. Almost one third of the pupils also evaluated this to be an obstacle, and, as stated in section 3.4, motivation is said to be the root of all human behavior, and then lack of motivation in a classroom might result in limited learning. Too many pupils in class and too much to learn were also pointed out to be experienced problems in class, and to make Norwegian schools even better, all these are factors worth having a closer look at. Noise in class was not seen as a widespread problem and most of the teachers thought their English skills suffice for the teaching of English in class.

5.4.7 Aspects of the teaching

This section was for the teachers only to try to figure out what they find to be most important in their teaching. There are many different aspects of English as a school-subject, and the teachers were asked about what they saw as most important in their teaching of English in class. Four alternatives were given, namely: (1) 'Making the pupils able to communicate in English', (2) 'teaching the pupils about different cultures through English', (3) 'teaching the pupils English grammar' and (4) 'teaching the pupils English vocabulary'. The question was:' What do you evaluate as most important in your teaching of English'?

5.4.7.1 Ability to communicate

The first alternative given was 'Making the pupils able to communicate in English'. Table 5.75 presents the responses to this option.

Table 5.75 Teachers' responses to 'Able to communicate'

	n	%
Agree	22	91.7
Disagree	2	8.3
Total	24	100.0

Table 5.75 shows that 91.7% of the teachers stated being 'Able to communicate' to be the most important aspect of the teaching of English.

5.4.7.2 Different cultures

The second alternative dealt with the cultural aspect of the curriculum. The teachers were asked whether they evaluated teaching about different cultures as being most important in the teaching of English in class. Table 5.76 shows how many teachers saw this as the most important aspect of their teaching.

Table 5.76 Teachers' responses to 'Different cultures'

	n	%
Agree	4	16.7
Disagree	20	83.3
Total	24	100.0

Table 5.76 shows that teaching about different cultures is not seen as the most important aspect of the teaching of English in class among most of the teachers in this questionnaire. Only 16.7% of the teachers stated this to be the most important aspect in the teaching of English in class.

5.4.7.3 Grammar

In the next question whether teaching the pupils English grammar is seen as the most important aspect of the teaching of English was asked for. Table 5.77 presents the teachers' responses to this alternative.

Table 5.77 Teachers' responses to 'Grammar'

	n	%
Agree	4	16.7
Disagree	20	83.3
Total	24	100.0

Table 5.77 demonstrates that only 16.7% of the teachers in this study evaluated grammar to be the most important aspect of the teaching of English in class.

5.4.7.4 Vocabulary

The last alternative given as an option about what teachers evaluated as most important in their teaching of English in class was teaching the pupils English vocabulary. Table 5.78 gives the responses to this alternative.

Table 5.78 Teachers' responses to 'Vocabulary'

	n	%
Agree	15	62.5
Disagree	9	37.5
Total	24	100.0

Table 5.78 displays that vocabulary also was seen as important in the teaching of English, with 62.5% of the teachers stating that teaching the pupils vocabulary was the most important aspect in the teaching of English in class.

5.4.7.5 Summing up on the aspect of teaching

Among the teachers in this study there is no doubt about what they saw as the most important aspect of their teaching. To make the pupils able to communicate was said to be far the most essential in their teaching of English in class with 91.7% stating this to be most important. Vocabulary was also assessed to be of great value, but teaching grammar was not estimated as being the most important aspect in the teaching of English in class, nor was learning about different cultures. Table 5.79 presents all the responses in percentage.

Table 5.79 Teachers' responses to 'Aspects of teaching' in percentage

Aspects of teaching	%
Able to communicate	91.7
Vocabulary	62.5
Different cultures	16.7
Grammar	16.7

As table 5.79 shows 'able to communicate' and 'vocabulary' are seen as important aspects in the teaching of English.

5.4.8 Native speakers

The last question of the questionnaire maps how many of the pupils are native speakers of Norwegian. Table 5.80 presents the numbers.

Table 5.80 Pupils' responses to 'Are you a native speaker of Norwegian'? Total and by gender

	Total			Male		Female	
	n	%		n	%	n	%
Yes	168	88.4		82	89.1	86	87.8
No	22	11.6		10	10.9	12	12.2
Total	190	100.0		92	100.0	98	100.0

Table 5.80 shows that 88.4% of the responding pupils in this questionnaire stated that they are native speakers of Norwegian.

It could have been interesting to look at differences between native speakers and non-native speakers of Norwegian in their learning of English, but that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

5.4.9 Summing up

In this chapter the two methods Reading Plus Exercises and Reading Only were tried out and the results of the methods were presented and discussed to find out which one was best for vocabulary growth. The tests showed that Reading Only led to vocabulary growth, however Reading Plus exercises resulted in even larger vocabulary development. Although the results were restricted to a limited number of pupils, the tendency was clear and suggested that working consciously with vocabulary is worthwhile. Then the results from the two questionnaires to pupils and teachers were presented and commented on. The responses showed that vocabulary is dealt with in class in different ways, and pupils experience to be successful in their learning of vocabulary. Nevertheless there are challenges, and especially factors like motivation, teachers' skills and different level among the pupils were mentioned by both pupils and teachers as obstacles in the learning of English vocabulary in class, and should be looked at more thoroughly. Girls and boys also responded that they prefer different approaches to the learning task, which also is important for future studies in an attempt to create conditions to possibly make the pupils even more successful in their language learning process.

CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

6.1 Historical trends and theories

The aim of this thesis was to shed light on vocabulary, to look at and compare two teaching methodologies and also to find out how some Norwegian tenth grade pupils in lower secondary school and their teachers work with English vocabulary. To achieve this aim different theories were presented and discussed briefly in chapter 2, among them Behaviouristic theory and Structural Linguistics, and some historical trends were also thrown light upon. There have been many ways to look at how humans learn, and historical explanatory models influence deeply the way we look at learning today. Researchers struggled, but when Chomsky launched his theory about a universal grammar in all people, this became an influential theory in language learning. In perspective it is easy to find limitations and weaknesses with different theories and models for how we learn; humans are no more seen as copycats as for example behaviourists suggested, but even if society has changed, many lessons are brought on from our ancestors. Chomsky's theory has been important to research in the language field up till now and today linguists see humans as unique individuals able to explore and create language in unlimited ways. Further what has been done in the Norwegian schools historically was looked at to give a better understanding of the situation in the classrooms today. Theories on how we learn have influenced the ways to teach in school, and have also had impact on what areas to highlight in the teaching of languages. From focusing on grammar as the most important aspect of language learning, communication and vocabulary learning have now taken over as the essential ingredients in successful language-learning courses. The curriculum at school has changed alongside with changes in society; however, even if it is quite wide and determined by government today, schools and teachers still have their freedom to choose texts and methods of their own choice in the teaching, and therefore the possibility to give pupils individual challenges and success in language learning.

6.1.1 Words

Chapter 3 introduced the centre of the vocabulary teaching field; the word. The purpose of this chapter was to find out what a word actually is, what it means to know a word and also to give some reflections as to how words can be learnt. The conclusion is that words are multifaceted and knowing a word has many aspects. Do you know a word if you can recognise it when you see it, or do you have to be able to use it yourself to claim that you know a word? The answer is: it is not a question of knowing or not, it is a question to what degree you know. Another important aspect discussed in the chapter was if all words are equally important to learn. The English language is

very rich in vocabulary, and research seems to conclude that it is reasonable to learn high frequency words before specialised words. An important task for a teacher is then to help pupils to find out which words to learn, and by learning these words communication both orally and in writing can be a manageable task for most pupils. Factors influencing language learning such as motivation, aptitude and learning strategies were presented and discussed and found to be important elements in the language learning process. How to work with words is of great importance in the teaching and learning of English, and a lot of input in the target language with different exercises to secure the retention of words appears to be a good way to learn and retain words. Research in some classrooms, referred to in section 3.5, also showed that class organization and characteristics of teacher talk influenced the vocabulary acquisition, and teacher-directed activities were positive for language learning. Other issues recognized were that the word in itself and the learner's proximity to the target language influenced the learning process. Graves (2006: 57) pinpointed many of the language learning aspects mentioned in this chapter with his conclusion: 'Students can only develop rich and powerful vocabularies if they engage in many and varied activities that invite, motivate, and prompt them to learn and use sophisticated and appropriate words'.

6.1.2 Reading studies and questionnaires

Chapters 4 and 5 of the thesis presented methods and results from my own research. First two different methods were tried out in my own class to test how to work with words. One method was to read a text and do exercises containing the target words afterwards; the other method was extensive reading. In this study reading plus exercises turned out to be the best method to learn and retain new words.

Second, questionnaires were sent out to pupils and teachers asking about their work with and reflections on the English subject in class. Much information came up in the questionnaires; however, to me two findings stand out as more salient than others. First, the pupils' evaluated teachers to be very important in the language learning process. Pupils regarded teachers' talk to be the most important input in class. As a teacher it is encouraging to be highly valued and also satisfying to see the pupils flourish, but at the same time the language learning in class demands a well-trained teacher staff able to use a rich English language in the pupils' process of vocabulary acquisition, and as noted in section 5.4.2.quite a few teachers in English do not have sufficient qualifications in English. Teacher qualifications and teacher training are important issues in the discussion as to why Norwegian pupils do not score higher on international tests. The other finding, especially important for teachers and teachers' planning of the lessons, is that girls and boys differ in their approach to learning. Girls tend to accept the methods chosen by the teachers and learn irrespective of strategy, while boys are more hesitant and prefer practical approaches to the

language learning. This difference among the genders is an aspect to be aware of in the planning of a language-learning lesson, and by keeping the divergence in mind, more motivated pupils might be a positive outcome. Food for thought is also the finding that as many as 87.5% of the teachers see the difference in level among the pupils as an obstacle for learning of words in class. As noted earlier in section 2.6, to the social democratic government the social aspect with pupils from all kinds of backgrounds with different abilities working together in a heterogeneous unity is a main aim. School is not only for learning different subjects, but also for learning to respect each other and to associate with different people. To find a way to deal with the large gap in knowledge between the pupils and at the same time show respect for the individual must be an important area for future research.

6.1.3 Pedagogical challenges and possibilities

There are many findings in this thesis worth further examination, but for me as a teacher the pedagogical aspect is a main issue. What I really hope future research will try to find out more about is in what way the teachers can be even better tutors for their pupils in the language learning process. About 20% of the pupil-respondents in this thesis claimed that their teachers were not good enough, and it would be of great value to find out in what way they are not good enough and what can be done to improve the situation. Most teachers responding to this study have a solid education in English, but as noted in section 5.4.2 studies have revealed that especially teachers in primary school, where the foundation for the learning of English is laid, have limited education in English. This is an important issue and well worth further focus.

Changing the teacher training will take time, but this study has suggested some aspects to look at in the teaching of English that might give Norwegian pupils a better base for vocabulary acquisition. As noted in section 3.4, Lightbown and Spada (1999:57) underlined the importance of the teacher in the second language-learning classroom and the significance of creating motivational conditions at the beginning of a task, and to generate the motivation. They also highlighted the importance for the teacher to find tasks to match the learner's capacity. Beck at al (2002:8) looked at what words would be most beneficial to learn. They divided words into three tires where the words in the second tire, high frequency words for mature language users, were said to be very productive to learn, because of the large role they play in a language user's repertoire. Schmitt (2000:14) claimed that the best practise to ensure the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary includes a principled selection of vocabulary and an instruction methodology that encourages meaningful engagement with words over a number of recyclings. Adding my own findings to this research, working consciously with vocabulary no doubt gives a learning effect when it comes to vocabulary growth. By motivating the pupils, finding appropriate input and tasks and teach the

pupils how to learn, the foundation for vocabulary growth is laid.

This thesis has shown that vocabulary is a complex, important field within language learning. Working consciously with words gives a learning effect, and pupils in Norwegian schools work with vocabulary and experience that they are prosperous in their language-learning task. However, there are challenges, and to acquire teachers with solid English skills in the classroom must be an important issue for securing prosperous pupils thirsting for knowledge within the English subject in the future.

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Appendix 1

RPE Exercises

Exercise 1: Underline the target words in the reading text. (I write the words on the blackboard)

Exercise 2: Match the words with the definitions

1	lodge	a)	a person that belongs to the sex that cannot have babies
2	herd	b)	a very short period of time
3	male	c)	a hut where people stay on holiday
4	huge	d)	if something frightens you it makes you feel afraid
5	frighten	e)	a large group of animals
6	leaf	f)	something that is impressive impresses people
7	cub	g)	a young wild animal
8	impressive	h)	something that you hope to achieve
9	breath	i)	notice
10	moment	j)	the air you take into and let out of your lungs
11	spot	k)	the parts of a tree that are flat, thin and usually green
12	goal	l)	extremely large

Exercise 3: Try to change the grammatical category of the words or change the words in another way. For example: lodge- lodging

Exercise 4: The odd one out. Which word does not belong to the group? Underline the word.

a)	b)	c)	d)	e)	f)	g)
impressive	hour	find	child	frighten	leaf	car
dark	year	spot	baby	happiness	branch	bus
light	moment	think	cub	joy	trunk	lorry
red	apple	nice	human	relief	pink	male

h)	i)	j)	k)	l)
smell	enormous	group	lodge	window
listen	gigantic	crowd	bread	goal
breath	strong	herd	cheese	apple
walk	huge	ground	milk	laugh

Exercise 5: Fill in the target words.

In South Africa there are many national parks where people go to see animals in the wild. They stay in _____ and are taken on rides in open Jeeps with a ranger and a tracker who know where the animals go to look for food. This special day a group of Norwegian tourists are sitting in a jeep and a _____ lion has been spotted .The large lion male with an _____ mane is coming towards the jeep. Holding their _____ the tourists watch the lion come closer. They

hope that nothing will_____ the male lion because they know that he then may be dangerous. Later the same day there is a cheetah with four _____ and a white rhino grazing with her baby. In the park there are also _____ black, elephants and _____ of warthogs. Small _____of nyala are also grazing around in the park. The scenery is impressive and it is with regret the tourists leave the park to turn home to the lodges again when the darkness is coming upon them.

Appendix 2

Scores on the Reading Plus Exercises tests

	Total	Total	Total	Girls		Boys	
	RPE pre	RPE post	Difference	RPE pre	PRE post	RPE pre	RPE post
Pupil 1	49	41	-8			49	41
Pupil 2	40	47	7			40	47
Pupil 3	44	45	1	44	45		
Pupil 4	54	59	5	54	59		
Pupil 5	47	46	-1			47	46
Pupil 6	35	57	22	35	57		
Pupil 7	43	55	12			43	55
Pupil 8	37	50	13			37	50
Pupil 9	48	59	11			48	59
Pupil 10	49	58	9			49	58
Pupil 11	59	60	1	59	60		
Pupil 12	38	40	2	38	40		
Pupil 13	53	58	5			53	58
Pupil 14	38	48	10			38	48
Pupil 15	39	42	3	39	42		
Pupil 16	48	59	11	48	59		
Pupil 17	37	57	20	37	57		
Pupil 18	50	58	8			50	58
Pupil 19	42	58	16			42	58
Pupil 20	29	27	-2			29	27
Pupil 21	45	48	3			45	48
Pupil 22	42	42	0			42	42
Total	966	1114		354	419	612	695
Average	43,91	50,64		44,25	52,38	43,71	49,64
Difference			6,73	1-2	8,13	1-2	5,93

Appendix 3

Scores on the Reading Only tests

Pupils	Total Pre reading	Total Post reading	Total Difference	Girls Pre	Post	Boys Pre	Post
Pupil 1	32	32	0			32	32
Pupil 2	40	35	-5			40	35
Pupil 3	59	60	1	59	60		
Pupil 4	39	34	-5			39	34
Pupil 5	41	45	4	41	45		
Pupil 6	49	52	3			49	52
Pupil 7	48	55	7			48	55
Pupil 8	32	57	15			32	57
Pupil 9	49	53	4			49	53
Pupil 10	31	44	13	31	44		
Pupil 11	33	32	-1	33	32		
Pupil 12	29	28	-1			29	28
Pupil 13	52	56	4	52	56		
Pupil 14	31	34	3	31	34		
Pupil 15	32	56	24	32	56		
Pupil 16	32	59	27			32	59
Pupil 17	50	53	3			50	53
Pupil 18	21	28	7			21	28
Pupil 19	55	60	5			55	60
Pupil 20	35	44	9			35	44
Pupil 21	45	28	-17			45	28
Pupil 22	14	23	9	14	23		
Total	849	968	119	293	350	556	618
Average	38.59	44		36.62	43.75	39.71	44.14
Difference			5.41		7.13		4.43

Appendix 4

Lettter to headmasters

Monique Eide
Gaddevåggata 15
6900 FLORØ
tlf.97125225

Florø 04.06.09

Til rektor

Nettundersøkelse for engelsklærere

Engelskfaget er i stadig utvikling, og er det språket som benyttes i internasjonal, mellommenneskelig kommunikasjon. For at engelskfaget om mulig skal bli enda bedre er det viktig å se på hvordan faget faktisk jobbes med i skolen. Som engelsklærer ved Flora ungdomsskole har jeg sett at vokabularinnlæring er en stor utfordring for mange elever. Jeg holder nå på med en masteroppgave i engelsk med fokus på vokabular. Prosjektet mitt går blant annet ut på å finne ut hvordan tiendeklasseelever og lærere jobber med å lære engelske ord. Vedlagt følger lenker til to spørreskjemaer, ett for lærere og ett for elever i en klasse.

Flora ungdomsskole er trukket ut til å delta i undersøkelsen, og siden det er få skoler med, er det viktig at skolene som er valgt ut deltar. Jeg ber om at alle engelsklærere i tiendeklasse svarer på det nettbaserte spørreskjemaet. Skjemaet tar 5 minutter å fylle ut. Svarene vil være anonyme.

Følgende link skal benyttes av lærere:
http://gandalf.aksis.uib.no/reg/survey/teacher.html

Nettundersøkelse for elever i en utvalgt 10. klasse

Vedlagt er også et kort, nettbasert spørreskjema for elever. Vær vennlig og distribuer skjemaet til en av tiendeklassene ved deres skole. Adressen kan skrives på tavlen av lærer slik at alle elevene kan svare samtidig, det vil da ta om lag 5 minutter.
http://gandalf.aksis.uib.no/reg/survey/pupil.html

Koden til skolen deres er: Pxx for elevene og Txx for lærerne

Tusen takk for at du tar deg tid til å formidle dette til engelsklærerne ved din skole.   Sommerferien er like rundt hjørnet, så det er fint om skjemaene blir besvart innen fredag 12.06.09

På forhånd takk

Vennlig hilsen
Monique Eide

Appendix 5

Questionnaire for pupils

Jeg håper du vil ta deg tid til å svare på denne spørreundersøkelsen. Det vil gi meg som master student i engelsk mye nyttig informasjon om hvordan norske elever jobber med å lære seg engelske ord på skolen. Jeg skal bruke informasjonen i oppgaven min, men svarene vil selvfølgelig være anonyme.
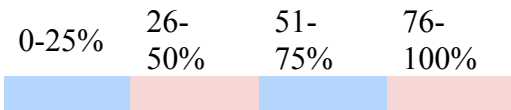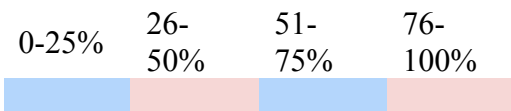
(1) How much time in class do you spend on reading?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%

(2) How much time in class do you spend on writing?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
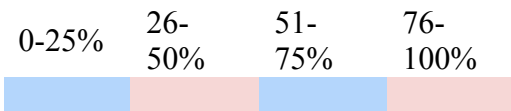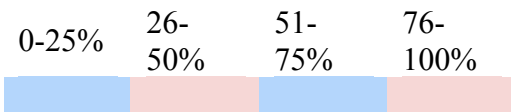
(3) How much time in class do you spend on listening?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%

(4) How much time in class do you spend on speaking?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%

(5) How much English does your teacher speak in class?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%

(6) How important do you think the following inputs are for your learning of English in class?

Teacher speaking	Not important	A bit important	Important	Very important	Extremely important
Textbook					
Magazines					
Newspapers					
Novels					
Internet					
Films					
Computer games					
Music					
Exercises					

(7) How do you deal with difficult words in class?

Here you can tick off as many statements as you want

☐   I don't spend time on vocabulary

☐   I guess from the other words in the sentence

☐   I know all the words we are dealing with

☐   I find out the meaning of words myself by using a dictionary

☐   I find out the meaning myself by asking classmates

☐   I find out the meaning by asking the teacher

☐   The teacher shows objects

☐   The teacher performs actions

☐   The teacher shows pictures or diagrams

☐   The teacher explains the word in the first language (translation)

☐   The teacher explains the word in English

(8) How good do you think you are in English?

Extremely good   very good   good   not very good   bad
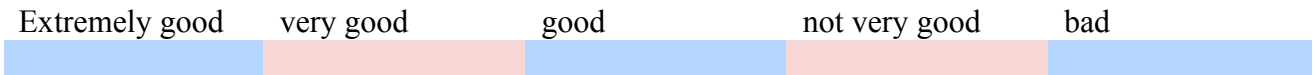
(9) Why don't you learn even more English in class?

Please give one or more reasons.

☐   My teacher is not good enough in English

☐   There are too many students in class

☐   It is too much to learn

☐   I am not motivated to learn English

☐   There is too much noise in class

☐   The pupils differ too much in their knowledge of English

(10) Are you a:

Boy   girl
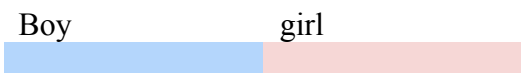
(11) Are you a native speaker of Norwegian?

Yes   no
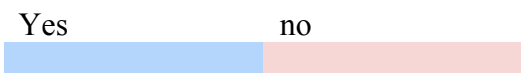
(12)Kode

The end

Thanks a lot for your cooperation

(It has to be noted that this questionnaire originally is an online questionnaire, thus the layout is very different on the net. The original version can be found on this address: http://gandalf.aksis.uib.no/reg/survey/pupil.html).
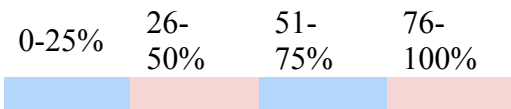
Appendix 6

Questionnaire for teachers

This is part of a master degree in English on vocabulary, and by spending 5 minutes of your time you will help the student and also shed light on the vocabulary work in some Norwegian schools. The answers will be anonymous.
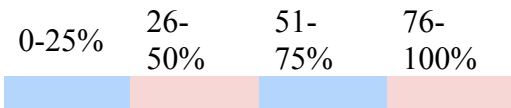
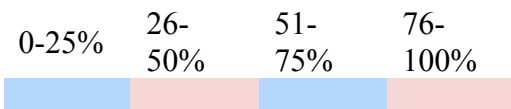**(1) How much time in class do your pupils spend on reading?**

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%

(2) How much time in class do your pupils spend on writing?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
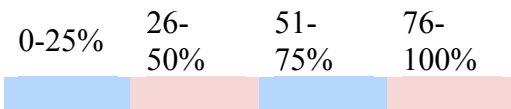
(3) How much time in class do your pupils spend on listening?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%

(4) How much time in class do your pupils spend on speaking?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%

(5) How much English do you speak in class yourself?

0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
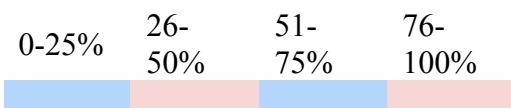
6) How do you evaluate the following inputs in class?

Teacher speaking	Not important	A bit important	Important	Very important	Extremely important
Textbook					
Magazines					
Newspapers					
Novels					
Internet					
Films					
Computer games					
Music					
Exercises					

(7) How do you deal with difficult words in class?

Here you can tick off as many statements as you want

☐   I don't spend time on vocabulary

☐   The pupils find out the meaning of words themselves by helping each other

☐   The pupils find out the meaning themselves by using a dictionary

☐   I show objects

☐   I perform actions

☐   I show pictures or diagrams

☐   I explain the word in the first language (translation)

☐   I explain the word in English I provide language context clues

(8) What do you evaluate as most important in your teaching of English?

Please tick off one or more statements.

☐   Making the pupils able to communicate in English

☐   Teaching the pupils about different cultures through English

☐   Teaching the pupils English grammar

☐   Teaching the pupils English vocabulary

(9) How successful do you think your pupils are in acquiring vocabulary on average?

Extremely successful	very successful	successful	not very successful	extremely unsuccessful
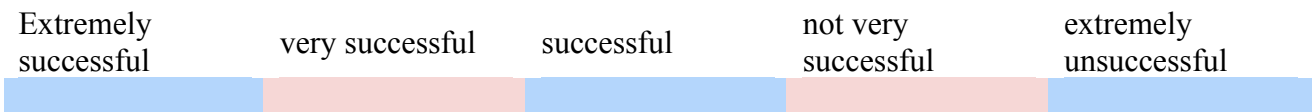
(10) What do you see as the biggest obstacles in the pupils´ learning process?
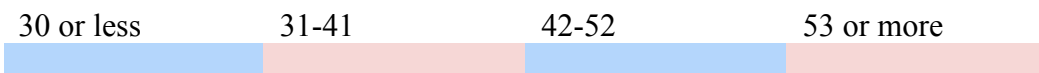
Please tick off one or more statements.

☐   I am not good enough as an English teacher

☐   Too many pupils in class

☐   Too big a curriculum

☐   Lack of motivation among the pupils

☐   Too much noise in class
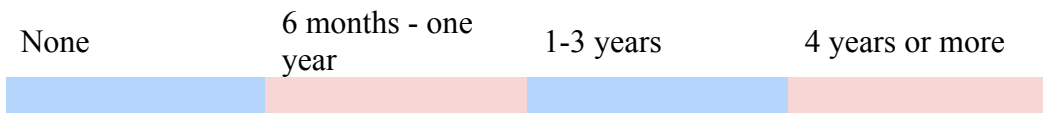
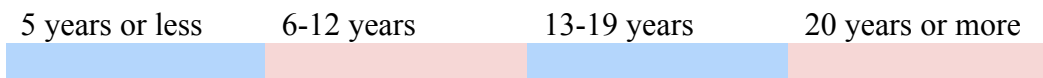☐   Too big a difference in the level among the pupils

(11) Are you:

male	female

(12) Your age:
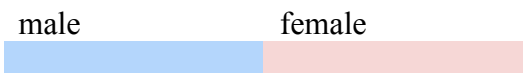
30 or less	31-41	42-52	53 or more

(13) How many years of education do you have in the subject of English after secondary school?

None	6 months - one year	1-3 years	4 years or more

(14) How many years have you worked as an English teacher?

5 years or less	6-12 years	13-19 years	20 years or more

(15) Have you lived in an English-speaking country?

Never	3 to 12 months	1-2 years	3-5 years	6 years or more

(16) Kode

The end

Thanks a lot for your cooperation

(This questionnaire can also be found on the net on the address:
http://gandalf.aksis.uib.no/reg/survey/teacher.html).