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Bachelor thesis

Learners who are exposed to the English language at several levels are more open when it comes to language learning

Elever som er utsatt for det engelske språket på flere nivåer, er mer åpne når det kommer til tilegnelse av språk

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Norsk sammendrag

Tittel:	Elever som er utsatt for det engelske språket på flere nivåer, er mer åpne når det kommer til tilegnelse av språk

Forfatter: Jørgen Eye	
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Emneord: engelsk språklære, læringsmetoder, pedagogiske metoder, språktilegnelse, språkeksponering, læring med video, læring med videospill

Sammendrag: Denne bacheloroppgaven handler om hvordan språkeksponering gjennom flere nivåer kan øke elevenes motivasjon og ønske om språklæring. Eksponering til språk er ikke bare noe som skjer i skolen men overalt, og det er derfor viktig å ikke skille mellom bruken av teknologi og multimedia i skolen og i hjemmet. Språklæring ved bruken av noe utradisjonelle metoder som video og film og videospill kan muligens øke elevenes motivasjon, gjøre temaene mer kjente og forstå prosessen bak arbeidet og hvorfor man skal utføre det. Generelt sett blir det diskutert i denne oppgaven om eksponering til det engelske språket sammen med bruken av teknologi og multimedia, for å formidle språklæring, er mer gunstig enn tradisjonell språklæring alene.

Abstract

Title: Learners who are exposed to the English language at several levels are more open when it comes to language learning

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Abstract: This bachelor thesis is about how exposure to languages through several levels may increase the learner's motivation and willingness towards language learning. Exposure to languages does not only happen at school but everywhere, and therefore it is important not to differentiate between technology and multimedia inside and outside of school. Language learning with somewhat unconventional methods such as videos and films and video games could help increase the motivation of the learner, familiarize the subjects and make the learners better understand the working process and the purpose of the given tasks. In general, this thesis discusses whether increased exposure to the English language in addition to using new technology and multimedia, to convey the language learning, is more beneficial than traditional language learning alone.

Acknowledgements

1. Introduction

The reason why I chose this particular subject is because I have always enjoyed learning new words, especially in English. I believe that my fondness of the English language came from an exposure to it at a young age. I grew up learning English not only in school, but also at home, watching movies and TV-series and playing video/computer games. I especially remember when I was around 7 years old; I used to play a lot of click-and-play adventure games on the computer. Knowing only a handful of English phrases, most of these games proved difficult to understand as English was a foreign language for me at that time. After a while I picked up a few English words and phrases, and gradually started to understand the language better. I believe that by exposure to different types of media such as videos and games, learners will more easily acquire a foreign language than by the usage of traditional means only. This is what made me look into this exact topic.

Today, a lot of imported TV-shows and films aimed at children are being dubbed. There are already many films and TV-series for children that are made in Norway, thus containing Norwegian voices. So why are we dubbing international material? English may be taught in Norway as a foreign language, but it is a global language. Through social media, TV, Netflix and YouTube, films and commercials, English is brought to us as an international tool. It is a language for everyone, yet we are dubbing films and TV-series because children might not understand English. Would it not be better to actually expose them to it? That is one of the questions I will try to answer in my bachelor thesis, among other questions concerning exposure of English and the usage of dubbed films.

I will focus on how English language learners are exposed to the English language through different types media, especially through audio-visual elements such as video, and how exposure will affect the learners and perhaps improve the willingness of learning and improve their language skills. I will also discuss language learning in medias such video games, as they often share some similarities with films. My main focus in this thesis will be how multimedia can be used as a tool of learning and how it may improve the vocabulary and the interest of the language in the learners. When regarding exposure to videos, I want to find out if the usage of dubbed films is hindering students' English language learning and vocabulary acquisition, in contrast to subtitled films. Based on this, my hypothesis is: **Learners who are exposed to the English language at several levels are more open when it comes to language learning.**

2. Method

In this paper I will mainly be using previous written research and theories, also referred to as literature review. In Christoffersen & Johannessen's (2012) book about methodical research, *Forskningsmetode for lærerutdanningene*, they argue that data collection does not necessarily have to be observation or interviewing subject, but you can also use literature reviews as a tool. I will be using scientific literature about the topics I have chosen to write about. Literature review means that you use previous written material and analyze it from a specific point of view. In this thesis it is essential that I use research about language learning, acquisition of language and how video and video games can be used as a learning tool. I will include theories about how language learners learn in different ways and what methods that can be used to acquire language skills and increased vocabulary. This paper will focus on theories ranging from language acquisition to general sociocultural theories about learning, focus and motivation.

The first chapter of this paper deals with how video can be used to acquire language skills, and in the first subchapter I have included pedagogical theories. When it comes to the topic of subtitling and dubbing, there has not been much research done on Norwegian students regarding language learning. I have therefore included studies from outside of Norway with findings that can be applied to all language learning students in general. The studies I have chosen to include deal with how viewers of a given video digest the information and by exposure to it, learn in different ways.

I chose to include e a research article about incidental language learning published by Sage Publications, which is written on behalf of the Association for Psychological Science (Saffran, Newport, Aslin, Tunick & Barrueco, 1997). Another source I included on this particular subject is a research program about incidental reading of subtitles while watching TV and films (d'Ydewalle & De Bruycker, 2007). The reason why I included this research program is because it strengthened my thesis and added valuable information to the topic of incidental language learning.

I will also be using myself as an informant, as I have been, and still are, a language learning student. The reason why I chose this is because I do not have much experience from a teacher's perspective, but I have been a student and can relate to the issues at hand. The thesis is mainly written from a teacher's perspective, but I will draw from the experiences I have encountered as a student. This can be a strength, but it can also be seen as a weakness, because my experiences may color my writing. Therefore, it is essential that I stay objective and not let my own opinions derail this thesis.

3.   Theory and reflections

In this chapter I will present previously written material and reflect on the theories presented. I will also include some pedagogical methods specific to English as a subject.

3.1   Using video to acquire language skills

3.1.1 Video as a learning tool

Using video as a learning tool in education may prove beneficial. Videos often contain both audiovisual elements such as voices, music and picture, and textual elements such as captions and subtitles. The usage of audio in schools as an educational tool is not something new and most Norwegian students are familiar with it. Listening to CDs either it being songs or audiobooks or audio-clips from the internet will potentially improve the pronunciation of the learners and increase their vocabulary. There is also a greater chance of developing better oral skills just by listening, and language learners may even acquire native-like accents by listening to recorded audio. Because of this, the practice of listening should be included in the English lessons regularly (Drew & Sørheim, 2009).

I mentioned that audio has traditionally been used in education as a learning aid. When it comes to video I cannot say that it has gotten the same acknowledgement as audio. During my years in school as a student, the usage of video as education was seldom an option and my impression of if from the teacher's point-of-view, was that video should be avoided unless necessary, and that it was more of a reward than a beneficial learning tool. English language learners today, especially children and teenagers, are used to the modern technologies we have at our disposal and they use a lot of their time being online chatting, watching videos on YouTube and in general being in front of a screen. Drew and Sørheim writes that it is reasonable to use these media as tools in language learning. If not, there could develop a mismatch of the learner's experience inside and outside of school.

3.1.2 Using video as a learning tool in the classroom

When it comes to the general usage of video in class, Drew and Sørheim further explain that "using film in class should not primarily be a form of entertainment, as it would be at home or in the cinema, but rather a form of education, even though it may be fun at the same time". In

this statement the focus is on video being a form of entertainment versus it being purely educational, thus realizing a dilemma, whether the usage of video in the classroom would benefit the students educationally more than it being entertaining. It is mentioned that video could be both entertaining and educational, but should the idea of video in the classroom be drawn into a debate of pros and cons? When we talk about videos being educational rather than entertaining, we should perhaps shift our focus towards what language learners might find the most profiting, rather than what educators believe is best suited in general. Many would agree that learning should be educational rather than entertaining, but fewer would perhaps agree that learning should not be entertaining, or fun, at the same time.

Regarding the structure and organization of the language teaching, lessons including movies, video clips etc. should be carefully planned, as with all other teaching. There are several ways to proceed with the planning, but one approach mentioned by Björk, Eschenbach and Svenhard (2014) is to divide the lessons into the same way one does with written texts. This includes pre-, during-, and after-viewing. Examples of pre-viewing activities are studying film posters or film-covers, and then the students describe what they see, what they think the film is about and whether or not they would like to watch it at the cinema. This way the students make up their minds about the contents of the film based on superficial elements such as the title, while strengthening their vocabulary. In addition, the students describe situations, the story, and the relations between the characters by studying still pictures of the film. Pre-reading enables the students to build of anticipation of what they are going to experience, their knowledge of the film before seeing it will help better understand it, and they acquire cultural and historical knowledge necessary to better understand it.

The during-viewing deals with how students work with shorter segments of video both in an analytic and creative-productive way. After having watched one part of a film, the students are then told to describe the main characters, additionally, a chart containing the traits of several of the characters are given to the students, where they have to connect the traits with the correct characters. The creative and productive element in this method requires the students to use their own backgrounds and fantasy to fill the empty spots. Another great way of working with character development and the different roles, is the watch the bonus material if available. This feature often includes interviews of the actors and sometimes narrations by them and the creators, explaining the story and the characters. This can be a quite helpful tool as the students can learn from and also compare their analysis and description of the film with the one provided in the bonus material.

The after-viewing method focuses on the video or the film in an overall perspective. This method can help improving the vocabulary of the students and preparing them for oral presentations. One activity for this method could be to create an alternative ending to the film or continuing the story, involving the students in the story, making them the creators. Another activity is to discuss the story of the film, but from a different perspective of the one used in the film. This way the students must draw from what they have learnt but also rely on their imagination. This method allows them to be creative and develop their language skills, and some students may even find this method to be much more prominent and including, as it allows them to think freely, and not basing their answers on the dilemma of being either right of wrong.

Björk, Eschenbach and Svenhard (2014) say that each of these methods could be used separately, but perhaps it is most beneficial if all of them are included. These kind of activities and tasks enables the students to work with the given material before they experience it, while watching it, and after watching it. Many of the features included in these methods are similar to those we find in for instance book-reviews and the activities connected to them. The same way students may be asked to write a review of a book they have to read, watching a film and writing a film-review share much of the same techniques, but the latter may be more interesting for the students. A combination of both could also be promising regarding both entertainment and educational qualities.

When students are told they should work with something that sounds interesting and perhaps, something they already have an established positive relationship with, we can talk about motivation being the driver for educational qualities. When we talk about motivation as a concept in the classroom, we should first address what the students depend on regarding the motivation in second language or foreign language learning. One assumption is based upon the idea that students are motivated into learning a second language as a result of the language learning situation being interesting and even pleasant and meaningful. It is likely that videos are helping students create beneficial learning situations, for instance if a language learner wants to understand the lyrics of their favorite singers, or being able to comprehend a film or a TV-series.

3.1.3 Exposure to languages at home

Language exposure is happening everywhere, through films, video games and TV. Learning at school is not the only answer, and exposure to languages does not only happen in schools but also at home, for instance when you watch a DVD-film or a YouTube clip, or a show or series on TV, or are playing a video or console game. As mentioned earlier, interest and motivation are important factors when it comes to language learning, but should be cautiously tread upon in the classroom, as there is a need to distinguish a difference between reward and work. Traditional learning for instance in the classroom is often intended learning, where the students know they are being taught and perhaps that they need to focus. The students are familiar whit this learning situation as a method used by the teachers. In contrast to the intended learning at school, language learning can also experience language learning, especially with exposure through channels such as the audiovisual and textual, and it most cases, the learning is not intended. When someone is exposed to a language for instance when watching a film, and they pick up some new foreign words, they are learning but perhaps not knowing it, making the learning process incidental (Saffran et al., 1997).

A research program about incidental reading of the subtitles in films was conducted in the mid-1990s by d'Ydewalle and De Bruycker (2007). The data collected strengthened the assumption that by watching a film that had subtitles, the viewers were reading the subtitles in the mother languages but also hearing the actors speaking in a foreign language, thus contributing to the incidental vocabulary acquisition of the given foreign language (d'Ydewalle & De Bruycker, 2007). Incidental language learning may be an important and possibly necessary way of acquiring new language skills, both in the classroom and at home. The idea of incidental learning is often tied to the fact that students will learn more and perhaps better if they feel satisfied, their interest are kept and they feel somewhat entertained.

In most cases when someone is watching TV, a learning process is happening but the viewer might not be aware of it, either it being a show about cooking, football, or a sitcom. If you feel drawn to something that happens in front of you it is often easy to continue watching or listening. The process of watching something on TV and meanwhile being able to learn for instance new foreign words, could be tied to the sociocultural theory about learning by doing, which I will discuss at the end of this paper. In the next chapter I will focus on the practice of dubbing and subtitling, and how viewers might benefit more from watching original content in contrast to dubbed/voiced-over content, regarding language acquisition through exposure.

3.2 The practice of dubbing and subtitling

3.2.1 A brief history of dubbing in Europe

A lot of original English material is being dubbed to the respective national languages of the importing countries. In larger European countries such as France, Italy and Germany, a lot more TV-shows are being dubbed than in the Scandinavian countries. One reason for this could be because of historical reasons regarding the UK and USA as big actors of the movie industry during the 1900s, with Nazi Germany and Italy as opposing forces during the world wars, as all part were great distributors of films (Taylor, 1998). Miika Blinn (2008) writes in his Doctoral Program that due to a political regime change, nationalism became more important, and a policy of censorship were encouraging more dubbing in imported material. He further argues that because of the increasing internationalization and globalization we see today, many Germans are wondering whether subtitling would be the better choice, for reasons such as educational, economical and aesthetical.

3.2.2 The situation of dubbing versus subtitling

Based on the history of Europe and USA during the last century it might not be that difficult to understand how and why film and video-material are being dubbed, but due to the globalization and the spread of English, many people today, especially younger people are favoring original non-dubbed videos, instead of dubbed videos. A 2015 poll asked three age groups in France whether they preferred to watch foreign movies that were dubbed or the original version with subtitles. In the first age group, age 18-34, 53% said they preferred watching the dubbed version, whereas 46% said they preferred the subtitled version. The second age group, age 35-64, had 77% who favored the dubbed version, where only 22% favored the original version. The last and third age group, age 65 years and older, had fairly similar answer to that of age group two, with 75% favoring the dubbed version, whereas 22% chose the original version (Statista, 2015).

Based on this poll, it could seem that a tendency for preferring original/subtitled videos are becoming more popular with the younger generations in France. Since France is traditionally a "dubbing-country", this growth is interesting but perhaps not unexpected. The English language is becoming more popular in France and there is an increasing amount of younger people who speak proficient English in comparison to the older generations.

3.2.3 Dubbing and subtitling in Norway

Countries such as France, Italy, Germany and Spain, are known for dubbing a lot of imported material, but the Scandinavian countries on the other hand seems to focus more on original content with subtitling. Historically speaking, there has not been an increased nationalism of the Norwegian language, especially regarding films, during the last century, in comparison to other larger European countries. English was early adopted as a cultural language from both the UK and USA, from radio and TV, to the Norwegian audience. Professor emeritus Arthur O. Sandved at the University of Oslo, writes in an article about the history of teaching English in Norway, that after world war II, American history became a more important subject in higher educations, and professor Sigmund Skard felt that it was his responsibility to integrate American studies into the English subject. English is taught today as an obligatory subject in school from year one to eleven. Though the English language is being taught as a foreign language, the national curriculum states that it is a global language used as a communication tool with people from all around the world (Udir, 2013).

Nearly all imported films and TV-shows aimed at teenagers and adults in Norway are subtitled and not dubbed. The Norwegian government-owned channel NRK (Norsk rikskringkasting AS) supplies its audience with content from both near and far. The daughter-channel NRK-super creates and imports content aimed at children and teenagers and most of the imported content is being dubbed. Professor Øystein A. Vangsnes, a language researcher at the University of Tromsø in Norway, says in an article in the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* (2012), that dubbing removes opportunities of language exposure to children. He mentions that this does not only apply to the exposure of the Nordic languages, but also English. He further states that the usage of subtitles instead of dubbing would give children a chance to increase their reading skills (Spersrud Haug, 2013). In another Norwegian newspaper, *Bergens Tidende*, Vangheim argues that subtitling could be a positive force when regarding language learning, not only for learning foreign languages, but also for a better understand of Norwegian (Holger Ursin, 2012).

3.2.4 Dubbing and incidental learning

In an article about incidental language learning, Maribel Montero Perez and Piet Desmet (2012) discuss how watching a video together with captions the first time will benefit the learner more than watching with captions only the second time. Not only is the video alone

beneficial for language development, but the subtitles are actually crucial when together with the video when shown for the first time. The viewers of the video will more easily grasp the content of the video and when the video is shown a second time, the viewers remember more easily the words and recall the meaning given by the video. Koolstra, Peeters and Spinhof (2002) use the term unintentional learning effects, which is when a viewer acquire skills not directly related to the programs content, in comparison to intentional information acquisition where the viewers gain information from a program which were intended from the producer's side. They further mentions that watching television is an active process, because the viewers experience exposure of text and sound, especially when watching a subtitled program. When regarding foreign-language acquisition, Koolstra et. al. points out that watching a subtitled program where the spoken language is a foreign one, the viewers will still learn foreign words.

The exposure of languages happens all around us, and this idea is especially important when regarding children and teenagers, as they are they are part of the younger generation, a generation that is perhaps the most exposed to the new media of this modern and globalized world we live in. This generation play the most video games, they watch the most movies and TV, and perhaps are the most vivid users on the internet. Therefore, it might be important to acknowledge these facts and incorporate them into the schools, instead of making the students differentiate between the inside and outside of school as two completely different worlds. Why not make use of the young learner's expertise on the field of movies and the internet, instead of creating barriers separating this concept into the idea of education versus entertainment, reward versus work.

3.2.5 Language exposure through dubbing and subtitling

It is understandable that TV-shows and films created for children are dubbed and not showed in the original language, whether it being German or English, especially when we are talking about preschoolers, but when the material is aimed at children and teenagers that are learning English at school as an obligatory subject, the subject English does not necessarily become any more familiar with the increased practice of dubbing. From a learning-perspective, any video that is dubbed from a foreign language into Norwegian will potentially remove eventual learning opportunities from its viewers. One could argue that a certain amount of material should be dubbed, one reason being for better understanding, and another reason being that material dubbed into Norwegian will strengthen the Norwegian language skill of its viewers and give the viewers an increased vocabulary. A question that could be asker here is how much

of the content language learners experience should be in Norwegian, and how much should be shown in its original form? As mentioned earlier, most of the content from TV-show and dedicated children's TV-channels are either originally in Norwegian, or being dubbed into Norwegian. The practice of dubbing does not only happen with films and TV-shows, but also with toys, commercials, books, board games and video/console-games. The latter is quite popular among young children, especially such games that are made for learning-specific reasons.

3.3 Different approaches to language acquisition

3.3.1 Language learning through listening

There are many ways how to use a language, as there are many ways how to learn. Language learners acquire skills and knowledge by using the language, by writing and speaking, and by listening. Jonathan Newton (2009, chapter 3) refers to the quote of Nunan (1998) that "over 50 percent of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening". He furthermore states that we take the importance of listening for granted, and that listening is perhaps the least understood of the four skills in the classroom, regarding language learning, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing (Cabrera, 2002). In the daily life of most people these four skills play an important role. We learn how to speak so we can communicate and make ourselves understood, but we also learn how to listen, so we can understand each other. As I mentioned earlier, working with films and videos in the classroom does not only involve watching them, we also listen to what is being said, but maybe most importantly, we use what hear and see to further engage in discussions, enabling us to socialize and communicate.

Furthermore, Newton mentions that listening is giving the learners information about the language, which can be used to build up knowledge. It is after the knowledge has been built up that the learners can start communicating in the given language. He calls the listening period a "time of observation and learning which provides the basis for the other language skills". When a learner is overburdened by too much to focus on, the learning process may be hindered. When the learner is not too focused on several skills at the same time, it will be beneficial, and Newton refers to this as a cognitive benefit.

When it comes to listening activities in the classroom, Drew and Sørheim mention listening without a specific purpose and listening with a specific purpose. The first method happens when the learners are listening to someone, in this case the teacher, which uses the English language in the classroom as a tool of interaction. By letting the students listen to a story, either told from a book, a CD or the internet, it is just for pleasure. In other cases, the students can listen to a text, where they then will use what they heard and discuss it with the other students. This can stimulate associations and inspire the students to start a dialogue, the same way reading a text would do. The other method conveys the usage of listening on purpose, e.g. when someone is giving out important information, and the listener is focusing on the important details of the given information. This method can help learners improve their listening skills and is beneficial when regarding concentration in the classroom.

3.3.2 Learning a language with videos

When you are learning a language, you are not only using your listening senses, but every single sense available. All students learn in their own unique way, and therefore a single way of teaching is not necessarily the best solution. Leaver (2005) refers to different types of memory in the students, called "sensory preferences". The memories are channels used to acquire new information through their eyes, ears and via touch. Some students may acquire new information best when reading, some while listening, where some find the usage of motoric skills the most beneficial, mainly touch and tactile response.

Different students may have different types of sensory preferences, and when using video as a learning tool in the classroom, the teacher may find its usage promising because of how students with different types of learning memories may benefit from watching the same video. Students that prefer aural learning will benefit from watching a video most, while the students that prefer oral learning will gain more from post-watching where the video or film are being discussed. Despite different preferences, most students will benefit from all parts of the video-learning process, either it being pre-viewing or post-viewing (Lialikhova, 2014)

3.3.3 Learning languages with video games

As with videos and films, video games can also be used as a learning tool, both inside and outside classroom. There are some examples of video games being used in the classroom, but in most cases the usage of the games is somewhat restricted to certain school subjects, such as dedicated educational math games or cognitive developing games, in many cases, aimed at the

younger students. Examples of such games used in the Norwegian school are the Josefine-series published by Egmont and the Mons and Marte-series by the Nasjonalt Læremiddelsenter.

One particular video game that has become quite popular amongst both adults and children the past few years is Minecraft, a video game available on consoles, mobile phones and computers. Minecraft is a building game or simulator, where the goal is to design a world, with houses, farms, shaping the landscape, where all your materials consists of cube-shaped forms. Some schools have started implementing this game into the classroom, using it as a learning tool in subjects such as mathematics and arts and crafts (iktsenteret, 2013).

Walker and White (2013) write about the natural affinity that children have with technology, and that this is not something that should not be taken for granted when discussing the usage of technology in education. When it comes to video- and console-games, many children and teenagers are quite familiar with it a lot young peoples, and also adults, play video games regularly. A question that arises when we talk about video games and education is in what way they are educational, and how can they be used in I classroom situation. It is worth mentioning the term digital literacies, which is multimodal and includes elements such as text, video, images, either still or living, and sounds. Examples of different types of digital literacies can vary from YouTube video-clips, blogs, websites, digital presentations and video games.

Video games often contain most of these elements, and therefore a game with a narrative voice for instance, and text to assist the players with the understanding of the story, may be beneficial when it comes to language learning. Not all video games are suited for the classroom, and the idea of playing a video game at school should not be the focus, but rather the eventual learning outcome of using video games in general as educational learning tools, and how the students are already somewhat affiliated with the technologies video games use. As many video games contain the same audiovisual elements as videos and films, one could argue that video games containing for instance English voices, either it being a narrator telling a story, or the characters in the game speaking English, the idea of learning a language through the usage of films could be used applied to video games.

As I mentioned earlier, students should not be shown a movie solely on the idea of it being a reward, where they should instead be familiar with the usage of videos and films in the education as a learning tool. The same idea should also be applied to the usage of video games,

as many students would perhaps believe they are rewarded and are allowed to play video games, instead of implementing its usage as a common educational tool. Walker and White (2013) suggests using "escape the room" games, which are often click-and-play oriented, that being games which are played by controlling for instance a character in a given space, where there are objects to collect and puzzles to solve. They also argue if children already are habitual game players, they will be aware of the concept of such types of games. The educational features of such games include increased vocabulary by exploring new places and discovering objects. In these games the players are introduced to the objects and places either through textual or audial elements. There are also translation tools in some of the games which the players can use to translate phrases or words given in the games, and the games can be played in various different languages, therefore making them available to both beginners and advanced language learners. Additionally, there are walkthrough of the games on the internet which the players can access to learn how to further progress in the game if they got stuck or there is a particular thing or place in the game that requires further explanation. Walker and White further argue that such games provide language input and reading practice for the students. They refer to this method of playing games as a "dialogic pedagogy".

When it comes to the debate about the usage of video games in the classroom, Walker and White mentions how many teachers would feel uncomfortable regarding the whole class playing video games at school, whereas such practices are best suited out of class. They then argue that the teachers could focus on language learning and that they might organize tasks connected to the games where they talk about the vocabulary and syntax of the language used.

In the book *Understanding Digital Literacies*, Hafner and Jones (2012, p. 113) compare the reviews of video games with that of films, arguing that they both share similar styles of language. Video games include titles and can be described by elements such as its setting, story and plot and characters. Similar to watching a film at the cinema or reading a book, when playing video games, one will often experience a story. The main difference is that the story which the games tell are interactive. This means that the players are able to control the situation and change the way the story develops. This happens trough different modes, referred to as visual and aural, and verbal and textual.

Considering the fact that most video games contain textual elements, Hafner and Jones are suggesting that "a video game can be seen as a complex kind of text, one that encourages new forms of 'reading´ and 'writing´". Encouragement is an important factor when it comes to

language teaching, and in the next section I will include theories from the sociocultural perspective, regarding how students are encouraged to learn, and how different ways of learning are affecting the student's willingness to learn and acquire new languages.

3.3.4 Language acquisition – a learning process

There are different theories about what is happening when we are learning, and when regarding cognition, there are three questions that could be asked, giving us some answers. The first question is whether or not it exists different types of memory, e.g. short term- and long term-memory and episodic and semantic memory. The second question is about what forms of representations there are, e.g. visual, verbal, and semantic. The third question focuses on how the knowledge is structured in the respective memory systems. These questions are important regarding the learning process of the students. We need to know what form of presentation one should chose, for instance if we chose to tell the students a story, show some drawings or pictures, use movement, e.g. dancing, or videos or films. It is important to think about what kind of activity that is the most adequate to the students (Imsen, 2009). Professor Imsen also mentions Vygotsky's theories about language and how it can be seen as a tool which helps us acquire common knowledge and culture. The unifying norms and the significant symbols of the language helps us becoming incorporated in the social community, regarding the social elements of both thought and speech. This way, the language becomes a carrying structure during the development of the intellectual mind.

Regarding sociocultural theory, Vygotsky talked about the fundamental concept that the human mind was mediated. Vygotsky believed that humans were not directly acting on the physical world, but instead relied on a certain set of tools and activities, allowing the humans to reshape the world. Different tools, symbols and sign are used to regulate and mediate the relationship towards others and also ourselves. Among such tools we find the arithmetic systems, which is the original study of numbers, the study of music, art, and also including the perhaps most important, the study of language. Languages are constantly being reshaped by its users, as a result of them being able to provide psychological and communicative demands (Lantolf, 2002)

3.3.5 Motivation

When it comes to the acquisition of language, the learning progress is often dependent upon the motivation of the learner, but also upon the motivation of the teacher. When students are

told to do something, they may complete the given task without knowing why they did it, resulting in a lack of motivation for future tasks. The American psychologist John Dewey said "Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results" (Jan Stanchfield).

Dewey meant that there was an unsolvable connection between knowledge and activity. It is worth mentioning that Dewey did not necessarily believe that activities alone were the only supporting pillars when it comes to qualitative learning processes in the school. Learning is a dynamic process, not only as a result of doing, but also by reflection of what we are doing, and what we are going to do (Lillejord, 2013)

4. Learners who are exposed to the English language at several levels are more open when it comes to language learning

During this writing process I have come across several arguments that support my hypothesis. Drew & Sørheim (2009) amongst others argue that by listening to a CD or an audiobook the pronunciation of the learners will potentially improve, and their vocabulary will increase. Students may even acquire native-like accents by listening to previously recorded material. This type of educational process is not unknown in Norwegian classrooms.

Exposure to the English language is something learners run into in their everyday life. Interest and motivation are crucial factors when it comes to language learning, but one should separate between reward and work when bringing different types of media in the classroom. Students know when they are being taught when they are at school, and they may focus on what the teacher is presenting. But when they sit on their computers at home, watching a film or playing a game, they might pick up words and phrases and use them in the future. This is what we call incidental learning (d'Ydewalle, G., & De Bruycker, W., 2007). When it comes to learning in the class room and at home, incidental language learning may be an important and possibly necessary way of acquiring new language skills. Incidental learning is also happening when watching a video together with captions the first time, which is more beneficial than watching it a second time with captions. Video games can also be used as a learning tool, just like video, audio and films. In general, the usage of video games is restricted to certain school subjects, for instance mathematics, language subjects and arts and crafts, amongst others. Video games often contain audiovisual and textual elements, and they are in many ways similar to films or even novels.

In my opinion these arguments/explanations help support my hypothesis. There might be other linguists that would argue otherwise, but since I have chosen to focus on the advantages that exposure to language gives, I did not see it fit to integrate the more negative attitudes towards this topic.

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