



Faculty of educational sciences

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**Master's thesis**

**Teachers' beliefs on creative writing in  
English language teaching in Norway**

Læreres tanker om kreativ skiving i engelskundervisning i Norge

**Lektorutdanning i engelsk**

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## Abstract

**Title:** The use of creative writing in foreign language teaching in Norwegian VGS

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The use of creative writing in education has seen an upturn in the last decades due to increased knowledge about its area of use and application in the classroom. Whether or not this upturn is visible in the Norwegian VGS EFL classroom is questioned and investigated in this thesis. The teachers and their beliefs are the focus of this study. The empirical data is collected from the answers of 42 teachers in a questionnaire and in a group interview with two teachers, all teaching English in general studies in Norway.

The findings show how the teachers use creative writing less than academic writing in their classrooms. This has much to do with their lack of knowledge about creative writing and how it is not applied with conscious focus on development of writing skills but is rather seen as a time-consuming task that is fun, but not integral to learning and developing writing skills. Researchers within the area has a different take on this, however, and sees how creative writing can aid the development of specific writing skills amongst others, and how creative writing is process rather than a product. This lack of knowledge amongst the teachers about creative writing as a tool for foreign language learning also limits its use and position in the classroom. The implications of this is less varied writing and a limited possibility to use of the language in different writing tasks, which is discussed in this thesis.



# Sammendrag

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Bruken av kreativ skrijving i undervisning har fått et oppsving i de siste tiårene basert på økt kunnskap om bruksområde og bruksmåter i klasseromssituasjoner. Om dette oppsvinget er synlig i den norske videregående skolen i faget engelsk er undersøkt i denne masteroppgaven. Spesielt lærerne er i fokus i denne forskningen. Dataen fra forskningen er basert på er samlet fra svarene til 42 lærere i en spørreundersøkelse og fra to lærere i et gruppeintervju. Alle respondentene jobber som engelsklærer ved studiespesialiserende på videregående skoler i Norge.

Funnene fra forskningen viser at lærerne bruker kreativ skrijving mindre enn de bruker akademisk skrijving. Mye av grunnen til dette er deres mangel på kunnskap om kreativ skrijving og at de kanskje ikke bruker det bevisst for å utvikle skriveferdigheter, men ser heller på det som en tidskrevende oppgave som er gøy, men ikke en integrert del av læringen og utviklingen av skriveferdigheter. Forskere innen dette feltet ser annerledes på det, for de ser fordelene med kreativ skrijving og hvordan den kan være med på å utvikle blant annet skriveferdighetene og at kreativ skrijving er en prosess heller enn et produkt. Denne mangelen på kunnskap blant lærerne angående kreativ skrijving som et verktøy for læring i fremmedspråkundervisning begrenser deres bruk av kreativ skrijving og implikasjonen av dette er at elevene får en mer ensidig skriveopplæring og begrenset bruk av språket, som diskuteres i denne oppgaven.

# 1. Introduction

Creative writing does not fit easily into the academic field of education due to split views of definition and its debated position within language learning. It has, however, seen an upturn in popularity since the 1990's as a tool that can contribute to learning (Craft, 2005, p. 3). With a growing interest from educators, politicians and psychologists, creativity became more relevant for education during this period as researchers shifted the perspective on creativity from something only 'gifted' or 'special' people could apply, to a view of how anybody has the potential to be creative, given the correct environment for exploring it and a place where creativity is encouraged and appreciated (Sæbø, McCammon & O'Farrel, 2007). This shift gave more acceptance to and sparked a new interest in creativity within the field of education. Creative ability was now recognized as a useful tool for innovation and a high cognitive level of learning. This is also true within the field of English language teaching (ELT) where creative writing may be used as a tool of expression and to develop language skills. But to what extent is creative writing used in the ELT classroom as a tool for language learning in Norwegian VGS? My experience during a teacher practice period sparked my interest to find out more about this.

## 1.1 Background information

During a practice period in a VGS in 2015, I taught English in a first year IB (International Baccalaureate) class in Norway. IB classes are known for a more theoretical approach and academic rigor than the general studies classes in Norway. The pupils were working on a short story by Alice Walker, and after having gone through the typical traits of a short story (such as structure, setting, etc.) and working on the story using academic terms, I wanted to challenge them with a creative writing assignment. Their job was to use some features found in the story and apply them in a text by writing a letter from one character in the story, to another. Here, they had to not only recognize the textual evidence, but make use of them and understand them in a new way than they already had by taking the features and creating something from them on their own. When I announced the task, one pupil exclaimed "Finally! Something else than an essay."

The pupils truly enjoyed this task, and they expressed an enthusiasm I had not seen with them earlier. They managed to use the traits of the story well, and many understood the story better

after completing the assignment and writing the letter, saying that they now understood the dynamic between the two characters better because they had to see the textual features such as plot and character relations in a new light.

After this experience I became positive to using creative writing in teaching, but I was unsure where other teachers stood regarding this. Therefore, since this class period, I have been intrigued by the question of what position creative writing has in the Norwegian VGS English classroom. After some consideration, after searching for articles and studies by professors of education, and after close reading the subject curriculum and core curriculum in Norway, this question was still left unanswered. Hence, this became the starting point for my thesis, and what I wanted to research in my master dissertation.

## 1.2 Research focus and thesis

The goal behind my research is to find out more about the status of creative writing as a tool for English language learning (ELL) in some classrooms in Norway today and what the teachers think about it as a tool for language learning, specifically in writing. By shifting the focus towards the teachers, it is possible to see not only whether or not they report on using creative writing in their classrooms, but also the reasons they give for their beliefs and their choices about creative writing. Although it would be interesting to observe how the teachers use creative writing in their classrooms, the focus of this thesis is investigating their beliefs and habits regarding creative writing and discussing possible implications of these beliefs and habits for their pupils' writing skills.

**Therefore, my thesis aim is to investigate to what extent teachers use creative writing in their classrooms and teachers' beliefs about creative writing as a tool for ELT in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in Norwegian VGS.**

One aim in this investigation is to learn more about creative writing in education and to find out what the teachers think about creative writing and whether or how they apply it in their classrooms. By seeing their views in relation to the current documents from the directorate containing competence aims and learning goals in the core curriculum, we may be able to discuss what implications their thoughts on foreign language learning in English have for the position of creative writing and exercising of creative ability in ELT.

### 1.3 Overall research aim and sub-questions

As seen above, the overall aim for the research is to investigate beliefs the teachers have about creative writing in the classroom, but also the conceptual dilemmas they may face in consideration of documents from the Directorate of Education and what the curriculum says about the role of creative writing in VGS. As an extension, I will investigate how the teachers relate to creative writing and how this relation can have an effect of their teaching methods and learning goals. These aims connect the data I collect to a question of the position of creative writing and whether or not the teachers' beliefs about creative writing has an influence on what type of writing tasks the teachers assign to their pupils.

To go more in depth, some subordinate questions are asked in addition to the overall thesis aim. These questions will be subject to different methods, as I describe in chapter 3 about methodological choices. The different questions are included to shed light on the thesis from several angles to create a more overarching picture of why the status of creative writing in Norwegian schools is as it is today. The sub-questions are:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using creative writing in the ELT classroom?
2. To what degree and for what purpose do teachers report using creative writing in their classroom?
3. What reasons do the teachers give for using creative writing to this extent and what does it signify for their pupils' writing in English?

Research question one will create the basis of knowledge about the subject and inquiry, exploring both negative and positive issues related to creative writing in order to create an unbiased understanding of the topic. Research question two will turn to the teachers to find out to what extent creative writing is used and for what purpose, in order to investigate and understand what beliefs the teachers have about creative writing. Research question three takes a closer look at the reasons why it is used to that extent and what this use signifies for the language learning and especially for the pupils' writing skills in English language learning (ELL). All three sub-questions together will help answer the thesis in a way that includes both a grounding in previous research and theory as well as gathering and discussing empirical data.

## 1.4 Definition of terms

Some of the terms and concepts used in my project are debated terms which are hard to define which affects how the words and concepts are used and understood. Oddane also highlights this saying that the “...discussion of terms carries the argument about how the way we *think* about creativity and innovation also controls what we actually *do* when we try to realize the ambitions on this front” (Oddane, 2017, p. 17, own translation). How the terms are conceived also says something about how they are conceptualized and used, and the same goes for creativity and its similar terms. In the following, some of them are presented, but none of the terms are indefinitely locked in their definitions as that may have a limiting effect on them and their area of use. This uncertainty around the terms is worth noticing, something that will be addressed throughout the project. The definitions below are not adequate to cover their complexity but are included to give an idea of what some of the terms used on this thesis might entail. This thesis does not explicitly study creativity, but rather teacher’s beliefs about creative writing. Still, it is useful to understand the nature of creativity to understand the debate and challenges we might face in studying teachers’ beliefs.

### 1.4.1 Creativity, innovation and imagination

As we will come to see, creativity and creative writing does not occupy a lot of space in the curricula for Norwegian upper secondary English teaching. Words such as imagination and innovation are sometimes used, but whether these three terms can be used alongside each other is questionable. The terms (creativity, innovation and imagination) are important to understand in relation to this thesis because we need to understand what creativity means in relation to education in order to research it and one way to understand it is to see how creativity is both similar and different from innovation and imagination.

*Creativity* is a multi-faceted concept that is hard to define, and it depends a lot in which area or domain you seek within regarding how it may be defined. Within the field of education, it is also a challenge to differentiate between *creativity*, *imagination* and *innovation* and in some cases the terms are used interchangeably, especially *creativity* and *imagination*. The terms share many similarities, but they do not square and “... although invention is sometimes associated with creativity, it is certainly not a synonym” (Runco, 2007, p. 93). The concepts certainly overlap, but they are differentiated without having clear boundaries as to where they differ, which makes it fruitful not necessarily to look at the similarities but the differences.

One straightforward way to distinguish *creativity*, *imagination* and *innovation* is to see *creativity* as a cognitive and environmentally circumstantial feature whereas *imagination* is linked closer to visual and sensory factors. *Innovation* on the other hand is somewhat on the outside of the former two because it also includes the marked and product related areas (technical, organizational and economical) (Runco, 2014, p. 105; Craft, 2005, p. 22). *Creativity* and *imagination* can also be distinct in how creativity concerns producing novel ideas whereas imagination means activating such ideas and setting them to life.

The words ‘create’ or ‘creativity’ literally means ‘to grow’ (Piirto, 2004, p. 6). Its definition is harder to settle still. There is no one unison and universally accepted definition, but most researchers within the field of creativity define it as something that is ‘novel’ and ‘useful’ as discussed in Mark Runco’s article “The Standard Definition of Creativity” (2012). Some also add that it must be useful in a social setting while others claim that it is enough that it is useful for the holder itself, individually. This depends on whether it is seen in a cognitive theoretical perspective or a sociopsychological perspective.

Anna Craft (2005, p. 16) argue that

the very idea of the concept of creativity being at all limited [by definition] is paradoxical in itself, for it would seem that creativity is an open-ended concept. It is concerned with the development and application of possibilities – and thus is inherently *unlimited*.

Being unlimited serves as both an opportunity and a limitation to the concept of creativity all together. There should be no end-point to just how creative it may be possible to be. However, this may also prove to be one of its main issues; creativity may be too undefined for it to be easily applicable and taught in for example a classroom or used in for example a curriculum. “Demands of freedom and/or restriction cause a true challenge to the study of creativity” (Hoom, 2014, p. 5). Therefore, it is both valuable to define the term but at the same time be careful not to limit the concept. Here, it is important to remember, as Oddane argues, that the way we *think* about creativity also directs how it is used. In this thesis, I am not looking at creativity as a skill, but rather at creative writing as a tool for teaching and learning, taking an instrumental view of creative writing.

## 1.4.2 Creative writing

Creative writing can be defined as works of fiction where the writer uses its imagination to produce a text. The Oxford Dictionary defines creative writing as “writing, typically fiction or poetry, which displays imagination or invention (often contrasted with academic or journalistic writing)” (Creative writing, n.d). It is interesting to see how this definition contrasts creative writing with academic or journalistic writing and limits it to genres as for example fiction and poetry.

In this project, it is the teachers’ perception of creative writing that is being investigated and as we will see in chapter 4 and 5 their perception of creative writing is similar to the standardized dictionary definition above. The perception teachers have about creative writing can affect how teachers choose to use creative writing in their classrooms and the way teachers perceive creative writing may have either a direct or an indirect effect on to what extent the teachers use creative writing in their classrooms, seeing as their limited view of it may limit the use of it as well.

However, the definition above may not be covering in an educational setting, and it may be less useful to confine it to meaning writing poetry and short stories. Perhaps it is not fruitful to limit it to genres at all, but rather seeing it as Weldon (2010) does when he argues that creative writing is:

... an academic discipline which develops cognitive abilities related to the aesthetic, moral, ethical and social contexts of human experience ... Creative Writing encourages divergent forms of thinking, where the notion of being “correct” gives way to broader issues of value (p. 170).

Here, he makes creative writing a tool within the academic discipline which helps develop specific cognitive abilities and encourages different forms of thinking that does not necessarily require a right or wrong answer, and not tying it to specific genres. In this definition, creative writing takes on a more unlimited form – as well as a less concrete form. It is in this meeting point that creative writing and the lack of definition reaches an interlinked issue; if it is limited to writing short stories and poems it is given a smaller area of application, but if it is unlimited and rather seen as something general and open it is more relevant to apply in a lot of different educational settings but this also makes it harder to frame and use in the classroom. In addition, the difference between the process (writing, verb) and product (a

piece of writing, noun) is relevant in general when it comes to writing, not only creative writing, but the issue, as will be discussed in chapter 5, is that the teachers may not see the process-aspect of creative writing, but rather the product-aspect of it, and this affects the use of creative writing in education.

## 1.5 Value of research

The use of creativity and creative writing in school is a debated topic, as mentioned above and demonstrated in chapter 2 of this thesis. This debate has influenced educational policies and practice in the classroom in both direct and indirect ways. Anna Craft (2001, 2003, 2005) and Ellen Spencer, Bill Lucas and Guy Claxton (2012) have among others studied these influences in Great Britain and in the US. There is, however, a lack of records about how creative writing is used by teachers in the Norwegian schools and in the policy systems the teachers work by. This project will shed light on the application of creative writing in several Norwegian classrooms and study the link between competence aims in the curriculum and how the teachers practice creative writing.

One thing is knowing what benefits and challenges there are with creative writing within this area of education, but another is knowing what teachers believe about the topic. By addressing the teachers and their beliefs it is possible to learn more about the status of creative writing because teachers are the deciding factor on whether creative writing is employed in their classrooms or not. My research will provide some much-needed information about this area, and in effect it may point in a new direction of understanding what reasons lie behind the situation and position of creative writing as it is today.

As of today, there is not a lot of research about EFL teaching in relation to creative writing in Norway (Lund, 2015, p. 63). Some studies have been carried out on the topic of teacher students' competence when teaching writing (Drew, 1998) and of pupils' work with narrative competence in an international network (Larsen, 2009), but very little research is done from the teacher's perspective when it comes to writing and especially creative writing in ELT. The purpose and value of this research is therefore mapping out what circumstances lie beneath some teacher's beliefs and the choices they make about writing in their classrooms, a topic that has not been investigated before.



## 1.6 Structure

This introduction presents the basis of the project with background for topic, the thesis statement and research questions, some considerations about definitions, the research aim and the value of the research.

After this introduction five chapters follow. The first of them (chapter 2) is the theory chapter where the groundwork for understanding the field is presented, including former studies and theoretical foundations of creative ability and creative writing. This works as a starting point for the continued and more specified research that is conducted in this project and includes theory about creativity generally and about creativity in English Language Learning (ELL) specifically in addition to the place of creativity in the Norwegian school system (VGS level).

The next chapter (chapter 3) draws up the methodological lines of the project where the *how* will be explained, outlining the research design and method. The overall strategy for the project is specified and the two methods that will be applied is presented and explained with focus on area of use and purpose. This chapter also includes some considerations of validity and reliability and some limitations of the study.

In Chapter 4 I will present and analyze the empirical research with results from the data collection by going through the findings from both the questionnaire and the interview thoroughly. These findings create the basis for discussion, which will follow in chapter 5, where the findings and the theory will be drawn together to shed light on and answer the thesis and research questions. The final chapter (chapter 6) presents some concluding remarks. Sources, a table of figures and an appendix follows at the end.

## 2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter I will present the framework for the theory regarding the place of creativity and creative writing both in the Norwegian school system and in addition include some research done in EFL studies from classrooms outside Norway. Since there is a lack of material about creative writing in Norwegian EFL classrooms, some research from other countries where English is used as an L1 or L2 has been included. First, the guidelines given to the teachers from the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training is drawn out and highlighted especially in relation to what position creative writing has, and how this in turn creates dilemmas in the ELT classroom. Second, we take a quick look at some exams from previous years to see how the competence aims in the curriculum are reflected in the exams. After that some reflections about creative ability and creative writing in education generally are presented, with some focus on assessment, before we finally take a closer look at creative writing in second language education specifically. This lays the groundwork for comparison between the Norwegian status of creative writing compared to the international setting and general comprehension of what working with creative writing entails. Due to the debate among educators, researchers and policymakers about the cognitive functions of creativity it is fruitful to present and investigate some theory within this field and to address what creativity and creative writing is and also to see it in the more specified ELT setting theoretically.

### 2.1 Creativity and creative writing in Norwegian Education

This section focuses on the guidelines provided for the teachers by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training and whether the directions and tasks in former exams mention creativity or creative writing in relation to the English subject. The Directorate for Education and Training is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education in Norway and decides the content in education from kindergarten to upper secondary schools all over the country in addition to having the responsibility to create the exams. Their subject curriculum as well as the core curriculum works as guidelines for teachers and what their pupils are expected to learn in their classroom based on grade levels.

### 2.1.1 Subject curriculum

The English subject curriculum for Norwegian upper secondary (VGS) consists of competence aims split into four sections: oral communication, written communication, culture, society and literature and language learning. The competence aims for written communication will be the focus in this project, especially the ones which might touch upon creative writing. Although only two competence aims are mentioned here in this section, it does not rule out the possibility of seeing creative writing in connection with other competence aims, within the section called written communication as well as other sections of the curriculum. Here, two competence aims from the *written communication* category have been highlighted to show how creative writing may be relevant when addressing the competence aims and when teachers decide what methods to apply in their classroom teaching (Directorate for Education and Training, 2013):

- write different types of texts with structure and coherence suited to the purpose and situation
- evaluate and use suitable reading and writing strategies adapted for the purpose and type of text

These are examples of competence aims where it is clear that creative writing can be alternatives in order for them to be fully explored in addition to other methods, so as to produce “different types of texts”.

Creative writing is not mentioned explicitly in the English curriculum for VGS which means that the teachers are not obliged to implement it in their classrooms. The teachers are legally required to consult the competence aims and curriculum published by the Directorate for Education and Training, as well as to follow the Education Act. How they choose to teach based on the competence aims is fully up to the individual teacher. This means that creative writing is not something they have to implement in their classrooms but is rather an option for variation in their teaching.

Even though creative writing is not mentioned in the subject curriculum in foreign language learning of English in VGS, it is however mentioned in another part of the language learning in the Norwegian school system. Creative writing is mentioned specifically in the plan for writing practices for multilingual pupils in Norwegian language teaching, where it is stated that these pupils should get the opportunity to use both academic and creative writing

(Directorate for Education and Training, 2014, paragraph 10): “The Norwegian-teacher should, in addition to writing different types of texts, facilitate for creative writing to create a joy for writing” (own translation). Here, the focus is on academic writing, and it says that the teacher has a specific responsibility to aid them while writing technical text. Creative writing is mentioned more as an additional supplement to develop a joy for writing (translated from *skriveglede*).

It is interesting that creative writing is mentioned as a specific part in the plans for second language teaching for multilingual pupils in their Norwegian training, but not in the plans for pupils learning English as a foreign language (EFL), considering that both are ultimately second or foreign language learning subjects. This is relevant to the project because creative writing is not mentioned in the English subject curriculum of English as an L2, but it is, however, mentioned as something that can create a joy for writing (*skriveglede*) with pupils that is learning Norwegian as an L2. This means that the Directorate sees the value creative writing while learning an L2 but has only included it specifically in the L2 learning of Norwegian and not in the English subject curriculum for learning English as an L2. As a result, this might have an impact on how teachers choose to execute the language teaching in one classroom but not the other if they do it according to the aims expressed by the Directorate. This perspective is tied to the point that creativity and creative writing is not subject specific although it is manifested distinctly in different subjects (Craft, 2005, p. 78). Its position can be different from subject to subject, but the fact that its position is also different in foreign or second language learning is an interesting aspect for consider. Creative writing is, however, mentioned in the core curriculum where the general goals for the education in Norway are presented.

### **2.1.2 Core curriculum**

The core curriculum of education in Norway (*generell del av læreplanen*) is an overarching plan which states the goal for the overall education including the aims and essence of the training that happens throughout the school years. It is a quality framework that elaborates on the provisions of the education act and is regulated by legislation. In the core curriculum, there is a whole section dedicated to creative abilities. When it comes to upper secondary education, this section is included to “assist pupils in their personal development” and as “scientific thought and method” ((Directorate for Education and Training, 1997, p. 4), which

are two interesting aspects to put alongside each other, seeing as they focus on both personal development and scientific method.

The section that describes the creative abilities starts off by saying “The foremost aim of education is evolution” (Directorate for Education and Training, 1997, p. 11) and highlights how teachers shall teach their pupils to both learn about and bring with them the heritage while also being interested in creating new paths and finding new solutions and plans. It goes on by stating how “[c]reative thinking implies combining what one knows in order to solve new and perhaps unexpected practical tasks” (p. 14) and “[e]ducation must find that difficult balance between respect for established knowledge and the critical attitude that is necessary for developing new learning and for reorganizing information in new ways” (p. 15). It seems that the emphasis when it comes to creative thinking and ability closely regards the continuum of both heritage and former knowledge in the creation of learning. The core curriculum emphasize how development happens when pupils try to close the gap between what they do not know and what they need to find out which is an important point if learning is to take place. The method for which to do this is not specified, however, which opens up for the teachers to find methods for their pupils to solve tasks by applying their former knowledge to create new knowledge. These are the ideals that lay behind the emphasis in learning and in using pupils’ creative ability.

The core curriculum uses the words “creative talent” and describes it as “the ability to find new solutions to practical problems by untried moves and unused methods, by identifying new relationships through thinking and experimenting, by developing new standards for evaluation and collaboration, or by originating novel forms of artistic expression” (Directorate of Education and training, 1997, p. 11). In addition, creative talent is linked to the production of “buildings, paintings, music, dance and poetry” (p. 11). As will be presented in section 2.2 below, it has become more common to move away from the concept of creativity as a talent or something that is only evident in artistic expression and production in more recent years, and it is rather seen as an ability everybody has and something that becomes evident regardless of form even when it is not visible in a product (Piirto, 2004). How creative ability – or creative talent – is presented in the core curriculum may suggest that it represents a somewhat outdated perspective of what creativity means.

The core curriculum has not been updated since 1997. In the fall of 2017 the Directorate announced that they are working on a new curriculum but has not yet set the date for

implementation (Directorate of Education and Training, 2017). The plan was approved in 2016 in a White Paper (nr. 28, Fag – fordypning - forståelse) from the government (Directorate for Education and Training, 2016a) and the purpose behind the promotion is to allocate more focus on deep-level learning and specialized knowledge. In the White Paper, creativity is mentioned under the category *cognitive competence* on a list of components that are heavily emphasized as a basis for the ongoing preparation for a new curriculum (Directorate for Education and Training, 2016a, p. 14). This list is made based on a project called *Education 2030* which is an international project that creates a prospected framework for what competence pupils in OECD countries are suggested to depend on in the future. Creativity is also mentioned under one of the four categories that Ludvigsenutvalget recommend focusing on to build relevant pupil competence. Creativity is mentioned in the category “To explore and create”. Lastly, the White Paper mentions how the pupils should be allowed to unfold their imagination and find an interest in exploration and creation and goes on by saying how “creativity is an important trait both for the individual pupil and the Norwegian society” (Directorate for Education and Training, 2016a, pp. 23-24, own translation). Based on the emphasis creativity has in the White Paper, it suggests that its importance for development and innovation has been noticed and emphasized in a different manner than in the current core curriculum from 1997. However, creative writing is not mentioned as a method in realizing this scope. Still, it is important to know how the core curriculum includes creative ability as a goal in education, something creative writing can aid.

As of today, only new principles for the new curriculum have been stipulated as a working basis for the revised curriculum to come (Directorate for Education and training, 2018). In the new principles, under the section called “Critical thinking and ethical awareness”, it is pointed out how:

...critical reflection presupposes knowledge, but at the same time, it creates uncertainty and unpredictability. The teaching therefore needs to seek a balance between the respect for established knowledge and the exploratory and creative ways of thinking which is required to develop new knowledge (section 1.3, own translation).

This statement seems familiar to what is stated in the current core curriculum that is being replaced where it is mentioned that development happens in the meeting point of what we know and what we need to find out. The question of how learning happens in a balance between established knowledge and the solving of a problem which require creative thinking

is still evident in the work towards a new curriculum and suggests a continuation in this area regarding methods that require critical thinking and creative ability in solving tasks.

In the new principles, creativity is described as an ability (Norwegian: *evne*) one can use to solve problems and to ask challenging questions alongside other skills such as motoric, practical, cognitive, social and linguistic skills. However, this is only mentioned once and in general. Other than that, creativity is only mentioned in relation to art and culture or limited only to younger pupils (section 1.4) or in vocational programs and in apprenticeship (section 3.4). Creative writing is not mentioned once. The difference between the core curriculum and the new principles becomes evident in both length and content regarding creativity. The core curriculum from 1997 has four pages devoted to 'The creative human being' but the content is somewhat outdated in regard to theory within the field of creativity in education since it classifies creativity as *a talent*, which was more common before 1980. In the new principles, on the other hand, it is classified as *an ability*, which suggests it is something that can be developed rather than something only a few are born with. Although creativity and creative thinking does not occupy as much space in the new principles as it does in the core curriculum from 1997, it seems to have a more updated view on what creative ability entails. In addition, given the emphasis that is devoted to creative ability in the White Paper, it suggests that there might be more focus on it in the new core curriculum that is being developed. If that is the case, it might also be a possibility that creative writing will become a part of the competence aims in the English subject curriculum since the view on creative ability has been updated to seeing it as a process rather than a product. Nevertheless, one might only speculate until the new curricula are completed and implemented in 2020. In relation to this thesis, it would be interesting if the same research were to be conducted in another decade for comparison, after the new curricula were in place.

### **2.1.3 Examinations**

Given the limited, possibly non-existent, position of creative writing in the competence aims, it is also fruitful to see how this affects the position of creative writing in the exams given in upper secondary English in Norway. Since the competence aims are reflected in the shaping of the exam assignments it would be interesting to see what types of assignments have been given in the English exam the previous years because how the exams and competence aims are presented and emphasized in the official directories may have an impact on how teachers

choose to set up their learning. Creativity or creative writing is not explicitly mentioned in either.

The exam consists of two parts, one short answer and one long answer part. In the short answer part during the last couple of years there has tended to be a focus on the direction of the program of study the pupils take and typical traits and abilities you would apply to a possible job or career direction would require. This might partly be because the exam is the same for both general studies and the vocational programs and focuses on work after finalizing your education. An example of one assignment is taken from the English exam in the spring of 2016 (Directorate for education and Training, 2016b):

1A) The preparation material gives examples of how violations of norms and rules can make newspaper headlines. Create a short text showing what kinds of breaches of norms and rules you may find in the profession or trade you are aiming for. Do you think any of these breaches could become newspaper headlines?

This task is one of the short answer tasks, where you can choose between this one and another short answer task. Similar tasks have been given in other years. Other types of tasks have also been part of the choices, and they are quite open and free when it comes to content, but the tasks are clear in what they ask. Most of the tasks are formal and some tasks even concern reading prewritten texts and then typing out how it can be made more formal or asks the pupils to compare different text extracts and discussing their “language, structure and content” (spring 2015). Some variation in formats are mentioned, for example responses to letters (fall 2017 and spring 2015) or writing a news article (fall 2015). There seems to be more room for different approaches in the short answer portion of the exam compared to the long answer tasks where the tasks are more similar year to year, with a more emphasis on essays.

On the long answer portion of the exam, the assignments are quite uniform and share a similar tone through many years. Most of the tasks ask the pupils to “present and discuss” different topics. They can choose one out of the four long answer tasks but most of them are still of the same character. There are some tasks where the pupils can take some creative liberties regarding point of view (2D, fall 2017) and writing about personal experiences (2A, fall 2016). Still, most of the long answer tasks during the last three years follow a formal instruction where the pupils are expected to present and discuss a topic by writing an essay (Directorate for education and Training, 2015a; 2015b; 2016b; 2016c; 2017).



## 2.2 Creative ability

The section above points out what position creativity and creative writing has in the Norwegian curriculum and final exams, but what does creative ability mean? This is important to understand in this thesis because as stated in section 1.4, if educators are unsure of what creative ability and creative writing means it affects their use of it in the classroom. In addition, in order to investigate and conduct research about creative ability and writing, we need to understand the terms and their field of application.

There are hundreds, maybe thousands, of books about creativity. What it is, what it can be, how it may be applied and how to become more creative. There is even a two-volume *Encyclopedia of Creativity* (Runco & Pritzker, 1999). However, there is no one uniform definition of creativity, and how authors and experts choose to define it will be different depending on the time the definition is written, its intended area of use and context. But as musician Matt Callahan once said: “Something as porous as creativity defies definition, resist quantification and refuses access to those who seek to possess it like a Thing” (Callahan, 1997). Creativity is not something you can either have or not have, it is more complex than that. Runco (2014) calls the creative process multifaceted “and worse yet for those trying to define it, it is extremely complex” (Runco, 2014, xi). As we will come to see this lack of definition is also problematic for the educational field, as it affects the use of creative writing in the classroom.

Creativity is a relatively new term and it was not regularly used until the mid-twentieth century when J. P. Guilford used the word in the title of a speech to the American Psychological Association (which he was president of) in 1950, called “Creativity and Culture”. This speech “is often called the beginning of the modern interest in creativity” (Piirto, 2004, p. 9) which is relevant because it tells us something about how new creativity as a concept is in the academic arena. Following this, several researchers and psychologists labelled creativity as something that levelled with high intellect as a skill that only some “gifted” people possess and that it is not an ability everybody is born with or can develop and apply. This view turned the concept into a narrow set of skills that are quite different from today’s understanding of creativity. Piirto (2004) argues that what these psychologists meant was that these skills might be called divergent production, but not creativity in the same sense. Some decades later, it became less usual to list creative potential along with high IQ, artistic expression or physical ability in sports etc. Some people can be said to be more creative or

original than others, but not in the sense of it being related to having a more intellectual or gifted skillset than the next. This also applies in the educational setting which makes this development of the understanding of creativity important in relation to my thesis; all pupils have different strengths and abilities, but higher IQ or intelligence does not constitute to what extent one might be able to use one's creative abilities. My research is affected by this change of perspective on creative ability by looking at creative writing as a tool for learning rather than an explicit skill, as we come to see it in an educational setting.

## 2.3 Creative ability in education

If we are able to understand and develop our view of creative ability, it may also become more relevant in applying creative ability in the classroom. This development is important for my thesis because the focus on process rather than product changes the attention towards learning and developing pupil's creative ability rather than using it as a product for measurement which is problematic when talking about something that was discredited as an instrument of measurement following the years after the 60's. By looking at the process, cognitive outcomes rather become the priority.

The place of creative ability in education has seen a revolution in the last decades due to a re-conceptualization in the view of educational achievement (Craft, 2005, pp. 5-7). Around the 1960's it was common to look at creativity as a skill only some particular gifted people possessed. Back then the research within the field was heavily influenced by personality psychology and focused on distinct traits that either somebody had or could develop at an early age in order for them to become more creative. These component traits were placed into metrics and psychometric instruments which were created to 'measure' creative ability. This approach was later discredited after longitudinal research showed little connection between early creative abilities developing into 'giftedness' in people's later years. Instead the research of creativity moved "...to research focusing on the actual site of operations and practice, as well as towards philosophical discussions around the nature of creativity" (Craft, 2002; Craft, 2005, p. 15). Some decades later, in the 1980's, a trend developed towards the process approach, arguing that the focus should shift from personality to process. Changing the direction to exploring creative processes within anyone instead of narrowing down creative ability to something only someone was handed opened up for a different take on how creative thinking might aid learning in education (Sawyer et al. 2003, pp. 5-6). This process focus is

still relevant within the field of research on creativity today and has changed the way we see creative ability and potential for developing and using it.

### **2.3.1 Cognitive creativity and psychosocial creativity**

Creativity is a part of human cognition and it has been established that humans have an intuitive connection to creativity (Runco, 2014, p. 1) and that everyone inherently has creativity in them; it is a part of who we are and our personalities (Sawyer, 2013). This makes creativity a universal trait although it is culturally diverse. It is an ability that we all possess, and most people make use of habitually even though they may not think about it. However, “most psychologists agree that there is no such thing as “all-purpose-creativity”; people are creative in a particular area” (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 120) or a specific domain (Sawyer et al. 2003, p. 7) meaning that what is considered creative in the business trade is not necessarily considered creative in the artistic trade. In addition, the inventiveness has to be intended and it has to be based on prior knowledge in order for it to be useful. The difference creativity makes from simply remembering facts and words or have a basic understanding of something is that you reconstruct your knowledge and see it from a different perspective to gain a new insight. Seltzer and Bentley (1999) explains this in a macro context:

“While qualifications are still integral to personal success, it is no longer enough for students to show that they are capable of passing public examinations. To thrive on our economy defined by the innovative application of knowledge, we must be able to do more than absorb and feedback information. Learners and workers must draw on their entire spectrum of learning experience and apply what they have learned in new and creative ways. A central challenge for the education system is therefore to find ways of embedding learning in a range of meanings for context, where students can see their knowledge and skills creatively to make an impact on the world around them” (pp. 9-10).

Seltzer and Bentley not only highlight the difference between basic levels of learning and the application of knowledge in relation to creativity, they also include the learning experience as a whole and how it can be embedded in meaning based on context. This is why it is important to see the process as a whole, not only in everyday information intake to pass exams but the longitudinal perspective of how our learning experience shape our way of developing our skills and cognitive abilities. This is also true for language learning and relates to our knowledge about how context-based language learning helps build a better foundation for longitudinal knowledge creation (Harmer, 2015, pp. 69-70). An important factor here is

environmental circumstances. The creative process requires a continual reorganization of ideas and the educational institution is a chief platform to either enhance or halt this process depending on environmental possibilities and facilities. Creativity takes certain habits of mind; it is not separate from intelligence or from artistry, but part of the whole (Piirto, 2004). Shifting the perspective from equating creativity with ‘giftedness’ and rather focusing on how anybody can explore their creativity given the right environment has helped universalizing it (Craft, 2005, p.7), which is also true if creative ability is to be applied in the classroom.

When the focus shifts from cognitive traits to environmental facilities it also shifts to a more social approach to the creative processes. Because although the changing of perspective to gain knowledge has to happen within the persons own cognition, it is usually contextualized “into a social psychological framework that recognizes the important role of social structures in foresting individual creativity” (Jeffery and Craft 2001; Rhyammar and Broling 1999; in Craft, 2005, p. 14). In the psychosocial view, the cognitive process does not stand alone but is combined with other factors such as heredity and environment. In the case of education, and in relevance to this study, it depends on the purpose and outcome of creative thinking and production in the classroom or in other words, how or whether the teachers chose to apply creative ability when working with their pupils. One way to address that is by seeing it as interpersonal or intrapersonal creativity or high and little creativity.

### **2.3.2 High, little and mini-c creativity**

In most fields it is possible to differentiate between “high creativity and little-creativity” (Craft, 2005). Some also call it everyday creativity and eminent creativity (Runco, 2014). High creativity can be labelled as the groundbreaking creativity where something absolutely new is worked out, invented or used in a way that has not occurred before. This type is more specific and rare. For something to be high creativity it has to take up the position as something that fills in a gap that has previously been open, and it can change and impact other effects close by. Little-creativity on the other hand is the smaller more composed connections that not necessarily demands invention or innovation, but that gives the holder or receiver new perspectives and ideas about already existing concepts. Little creativity is at a more interpersonal micro level and does not set in motion vast effects in a groundbreaking matter. It sheds light on connections made in a new way rather than rocking the foundations of the base of our understanding. In teaching, the revolutionary high creativity is not the goal, it is the everyday connections that can be used to integrate perspectives that should be sought after.

The goal is not to create revolutionary ideas but to create meaningful content for the single pupil, class or school. Little-creativity does not necessarily produce ideas that will change the way we live, but how we see ideas and tasks, of how we think, and how tasks might be solved.

In 2007, Beghetto and Kaufman introduced a new element to the high and little creativity notion, namely the mini-c creativity. Where high creativity and little creativity can be seen as the micro and macro types of creativity, mini-c creativity takes on an even more distinct role. As seen in the introduction, creativity can be defined as the ability to produce novel ideas, and in high creativity those ideas are sometimes groundbreaking, and in little creativity they are smaller ideas and connections made interpersonally in closed environments. But in mini-c creativity the novel ideas are intrapersonal interpretations of experiences, actions or events. This means that novel ideas within mini-c creativity are not necessarily original or meaningful to others, but it is an intrapersonal judgement of novelty. The three types of creativity sometimes overlap, of course, and depending on the context it can also be several types. What distinguishes them is the difference between interpersonal or intrapersonal judgement of meaningfulness and impact. In relation to learning, Beghetto and Kaufman (2007, p.73) accentuate how cognitive scientists have long noted that:

information is not simply transmitted from the environment and passively received without any alteration. Rather, people filter and interpret information through the lens of their existing conceptions, personal histories, and past experiences. Indeed, as Moran and John-Steiner (2003) have explained, both cognitive development and later forms of creative expression started with an “internalization or appropriation of cultural tools and social interaction ... not just copying but rather a transformation or reorganization of incoming information and mental structures based on the individual’s characteristics and existing knowledge” (p. 73).

It is this process that Beghetto and Kaufman calls mini-c, but at the same time they underline how it is not the same as saying that creativity is learning. Rather, it is the knowledge development and transformative process of acquiring that knowledge that mini-c helps highlight. Learning and mini-c creativity follows the same “... creative, transformative process involved in developing personal knowledge and insight” (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007, pp. 73-74). Here, the longitudinal perspective of learning comes into focus because creativity is not something that can be learned in the duration of one class hour or even one school year. It is a way of looking at learning that points out how connections need to be made by linking

former and new knowledge together and by seeing it in a new light through creative and novel methods. By doing this, the new knowledge becomes more meaningful because it is drawn back to former experiences and existing conceptions especially if it is based on personal knowledge (or intrapersonal knowledge).

In an ELT setting it is interesting to consider how connections are made in the language that is learned compared to the language one already knows because in Norway, ELT is not about learning how to read or write, it is about learning how to read and write etc. in a new language. The former knowledge is then the language we already possess, and the new knowledge is the new language that is being learned. In this transition it is important to consider the former language and the contextual information we might have internalized. Take metaphors or expressions as examples. Metaphors are often culturally set and does not translate even though some languages have similar metaphors that describe the same thing only with different words. When pupils learn a new metaphor, it can be helpful to have knowledge about its meaning beforehand, which can make it easier to understand the metaphor even though it is in a new language using different words to express the same concept. It might be easier for a pupil to understand what “beat around the bush” means when they already know the expression “å gå rundt grøten” because it is new knowledge that is based on existing conceptions of the meaning of an expression, and this is something that can be learned using creative writing. The English expression then becomes more meaningful and the transformative perspective of learning by reorganizing knowledge leaves the pupil with a deeper understanding of the material over a longer period of time. By building on former knowledge the teacher “... emphasizes the significance of pupil engagement with existing and possible knowledge. Shaping new knowledge cannot occur without some understanding of what already exist” (Craft, 2005, p. 33). The difference is whether the information the pupil learn is simply remembered or if the pupil takes an active part by engaging and creating something both by using the knowledge they already possess and the knowledge they are taking in which has been demonstrated in Bloom’s taxonomy.

### **2.3.3 Bloom’s taxonomy**

On the top of Bloom’s taxonomy, we find the learning objective “create” which says a great deal about the value of applying creative ability and creative writing in education and the need for more knowledge about its use in the classrooms, as researched in this thesis. Bloom’s taxonomy is known to most educators and often serves as a general standard of seeing levels

of achievement or development of cognitive skills and processes. The taxonomy has been revised in different ways over the years, but the revised version I use in this project is made by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) and this is a two-dimensional version which in addition to the taxonomy addresses four dimensions of knowledge as seen in table 1.

concrete knowledge		abstract knowledge	
factual	conceptual	procedural	metacognitive*
knowledge of terminology knowledge of specific details and elements	knowledge of classifications and categories knowledge of principles and generalizations knowledge of theories, models, and structures	knowledge of subject-specific skills and algorithms knowledge of subject-specific techniques and methods knowledge of criteria for determining when to use appropriate procedures	strategic knowledge knowledge about cognitive tasks, including appropriate contextual and conditional knowledge self-knowledge

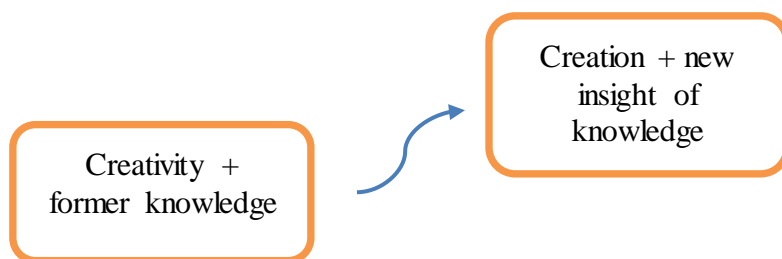
**Table 1.** Dimensions of knowledge in Anderson & Krathwohl's taxonomy (2001).

The knowledge dimension classifies four types of knowledge that learners may be expected to acquire or construct, ranging from factual knowledge to metacognitive knowledge. The metacognitive knowledge can be hard to identify, but in this model, it is “knowledge of [one’s own] cognition and about oneself in relation to various subject matters ...” (Anderson & Krathwol, 2001). Combined with the six already existing dimensions of cognitive process dimensions in the original taxonomy the table turns out as seen in figure 1:





aspect is the grounding in former knowledge and its reconstruction or reorganization. One does not necessarily have to create new knowledge, which would in that case be called high creativity (2.3.2). In an educational setting, it is namely the aspect of gaining or creating for oneself new insight into already existing knowledge that is emphasized for the individual pupil, or the little or mini-c creativity. It is the personal realization and insight that leads to learning within individuals. This is relevant because it underlines how teachers may approach the development of creative ability in their pupils so that they are able to reach the top of the table in the taxonomy. This knowledge is especially useful with a concept which is as complex as creative ability and the process of applying it in an educational setting.



**Figure 2.** *From creativity to creation of knowledge*

Figure 2 represents the process of using one's creativity in meeting with one's former knowledge to produce a creation/product and thus reaching the highest level on the hierarchy, namely the create-level. By seeing former knowledge in a creative perspective i.e. in a new light, the outcome can be a product with new insight on the former knowledge. It is this process that takes pupils to the highest level of the taxonomy table. This sounds good on paper, but the question then is how it is possible to reach this level and what the teachers can do to get their pupils to reach it. There are many factors that play a part in this equation and it depends a lot on context, environment, culture and the individuals at work, and since this is creation in relation to metacognition it becomes even more complicated. There is a reason why *to create* is at the top of the table; it is hardest to climb there. This poses a challenge both for the pupils and the teacher and may influence the position creative ability is given in the curricula, but also in the classroom – especially if it is not represented in the curricula as we saw in section 2.1. Nevertheless, having creation at the top says something about the value as well as the complexity of having to reconstruct your knowledge to create new knowledge, and what this can do for the outcome of language learning and teaching.

The different levels of the taxonomy table and their keywords could possibly also be used as pointers if the progress on the taxonomy shall be assessed when the teacher and pupils want to

find out where someone are positioned or how to reach a higher level. In the lowest, most basic parts of the table words such as ‘list’ and ‘recognize’ are used in accordance with how far along in the process one is. At the top, words such as ‘create’ and ‘reflect’ are listed high up, and these types of terms can also help set the level of assessment (Airasian & Miranda, 2002, p. 250). Whether the pupils simply remember or whether are they able to reflect and create themselves creates a difference in the evaluation of their work. These terms and the level the pupils can reach may work as pointers towards assessment. Nevertheless, assessment is one of the most complex parts of this process, and there may be other more specific ways to assess creative ability and creative writing especially.

## 2.4 Assessment of creative writing

One of the main issues with creative writing in education is the question of criteria and the validity of measurement of something as undefined and unlimited within it as creativity, which implicates the basis of assessment and what stance the person who assess has. As Nicole Anae describes creative writing she underlines how “the outcomes of creative writing are often unpredictable, often unknown in advance, highly individualized and distinctive, and can also depend on mode or genre used within the creative writing process...” (Harper 2013; Anae, 2014, p. 126). As a result of being individualized, creativity is an ability that sometimes relates to personal experiences and ideas where self-expression is of high relevance. This means that sometimes, when using your creativity in creative writing, you open yourself up more and may write more personal texts where your ideas are expressed in the solving of a task. This might seem intimidating to some pupils, especially if their texts are being assessed. Some might even withhold ideas in fear of criticism (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 121) and as a result they are not able to express themselves and their creative abilities and ideas. Adding assessment to the products of creative writing may have an unwanted affect on the creative process, but there are some alternative approaches to this issue.

### 2.4.1 The 5P-model

As we will come to see, some teachers in the empirical data mentioned assessment as one of the hardest aspects of creative writing in their classrooms because it is hard to find criteria that does not limit their pupils’ writing. In addition, as mentioned above, the product is not the most useful focus point about creative writing, but rather the process.

Oddane (2017) has created a model categorizing the different aspects of creativity and how the outcome may differ according to what approach you choose. This again can make it easier for those trying to apply creativity in for example their classroom by naming some alternative criteria for the different approaches. She calls it the 5P-model and the five P's are *process*, *press*, *person*, *partnership* and *product*. Depending on what approach the user chooses, it may be possible to find some more accurate and set criteria to relate to while addressing creativity in different situations, for example in the classroom. The 5P model is based on Mel Rhodes' "Four Ps of Creativity" model (Rhodes, 1961) which is a model that was created based on 56 definitions of creativity. Rhodes mentioned that he noticed how the definitions were not mutually exclusive but somewhat overlapping, which made him create four categories of what creativity could be (process, press, person, product). In the revised version, the fifth 'p' (the 'partnership-approach') was added because the more modern sociopsychological aspect of creativity suggests that new connections to knowledge can be made in cooperation with others and not necessarily in individual cognitive processes which also reflects the general development in learning theory – from a focus on solely cognitive processes to also including the social dimension, although both aspects may be included as a part of the whole.

In the 5P model the different approaches are described in the following keywords:

- Person » knowledge and emotions
- Process » cognitive processes, activity and problem solving
- Product » news value, element of surprise and esthetic value
- Press » motivation, environment and influence
- Partnership » cooperation and communities

The five p's work as pointers for central aspects of creativity, but do not exhaust the complex concept of creativity fully (Oddane, 2017, p. 32). The model first and foremost works as a framework for how teachers can approach creativity in an attempt to promote competence within the field. It becomes a point of reference in trying to understand the aspects behind what can lead to a product in the creative process and how different features influence the pupils in the process. However, the model is not a system model but rather a visual expression that is meant to give an immediate impression of creativity. The visual expression could be helpful for a teacher to use in the classroom to make the pupils understand what approaches you can have to creativity, but it does not work as a point of reference in assessing the products, only what approaches you can use to create.

These categories are therefore more useful in the process of creating, but maybe not as useful in assessing the product. This might in fact be a part of the point, because in Oddane's view, the person in charge of finding an answer to an open task have to experiment until they find a solution without being able to predict the consequence of their choices or of the final outcome (2017, p. 24). Here, the focus shifts from looking at the final product to looking at the problem-solving process instead, a process that might be of more importance when assessing creative activities. How pupils solve the task is more interesting to see than the product according to Oddane.

Maybe the assessment of creative activities is more fruitful in the process of solving a task rather than after it, because it is in the solving of the task the pupils need to be creative. This opens up for an understanding of assessment which demands much both from the teacher and the pupils. This is relevant for this study, because it relates back to how research on creative ability has changed its focus from product to process. The creativity does not necessarily have to come out as a product of creative writing in the shape of a short story or poem but may be more rightfully applied in the solving of tasks. By taking this understanding of creativity and creative writing into accord, the development of creative ability becomes a tool for learning rather than a skill only some people possess or a product only some pupils are able to produce.

### **2.4.2 Habits of creativity**

According to Ellen Spencer et al. (2012) the lack of criteria is an issue which affects creative writing and its area of use, its inclusion in frameworks for learning and may explain the reluctance amongst many teachers because it is hard for them to relate to creative writing when they do not know what it entails, how to define it or how to assess the writing. Spencer and her team conducted a study in the UK between 2010-2012 where they researched what criteria may be used in education to promote the employment of creative methods more actively. The study addressed some unresolved issues within the field especially regarding assessment and the teachers' reluctance towards it. Their conclusion was that the teachers needed to learn more about what creativity is and understand what it entails in order for them to encourage the development of their pupil's creative skills in an efficient and useful way. When the teachers know how to teach it, it also becomes clearer to the pupils what creative writing entails and leaves them with a better understanding of how they can improve and

identify their own development of their skills within the landscape of creative expression (Stana, 2016, p. 3).

To make the assessment of creative processes more tangible for teachers, Spencer et al. constructed a wheel set up in five 'habits', as they called it. By naming them 'habits' the researchers highlight the focus of time and consistency within the practice of the habits in order to make them a part of a process where something as complex as creative ability can be learned if you devote time and effort to it. The wheel was constructed as a tool for the teachers to use in a formative assessment situation where the goal was to map out areas where pupils could improve, rather than just logging previous behavior and result in the creative product. By creating a wheel consisting of five habits of creativity the practice has to become an integral part of the school's practice over a long period of time to secure the efficiency and usefulness of not just the wheel but of creativity as a part of the learning process.



**Figure 3.** Spencer et al (2012). *Habits of creativity and its assessment*

There have been several attempts to map creative performance (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2010; Root-Bernstein & Root-Bernstein, 1999) but Spencer et al. found that they categorized the creative forms too much (such as scientific or artistic endeavor) something they felt would not help in implementing such a system with the teachers. Rather, they wanted the traits to be

accessible and appropriate while being clearly linked to the core (Spencer et al. 2012, p. 34). They ended up with five habits of the creative mind along with three sub-habits for each. They are:

- Inquisitive
  - Wondering and questioning
  - Exploring and investigating
  - Challenging assumption
- Persistent
  - Sticking with difficulty
  - Daring to be different
  - Tolerating uncertainty
- Imaginative
  - Playing with possibilities
  - Making connection
  - Using intuition
- Collaborative
  - Sharing the product
  - Giving and receiving feedback
  - Cooperating appropriately
- Disciplined
  - Developing techniques
  - Reflecting critically
  - Crafting and improving

By listing these habits and their sub-habits, it becomes clearer what is meant by the different habits and to easier know what to emphasize while developing methods and plans the teachers can use in their tasks that address the different skills mentioned here. It also becomes clear that these habits and sub-habits are not exclusive to creative thinking, they relate to a lot of other skills and factors that are important in an educational and social setting (e.g. challenging assumption or cooperating appropriately). This again points back to the aspect of creativity that makes it relevant to other fields outside of the educational domain and how it is something we use without necessarily thinking about it, as seen in section 2.2. By acknowledging how creative ability is important and should be a part of our habits of problem solving, but also seeing how it is hard to apply in the classroom without having it in the

curricula, we pinpoint the issues raised in this thesis and understand more of the challenge teachers might face when deciding whether or how creative writing is applied. This is also why it is important to understand what creativity and creative ability means, because it might make it more fruitful if the pupils are going to reach the top of the taxonomy and create knowledge, as seen in section 2.3.3.

The five habits are aligned into a circle with different levels of depth, and it is these levels the teacher can rate based on how well they perceive the pupils succeed with the given criteria. This might be the closest a teacher can come to writing down physical traces of how the pupils express their creative abilities by ranging it in a form and assessing based on it. In order for such a system to work it is crucial that the teachers know how to use the model and how to interpret the sub-habits, for example 'using intuition' under the 'Imaginative' habit. The pupils also need to know how the model works and how they can develop their skills within the habits and sub-habits.

Oddane's 5P-model and Spencer et al.'s model share some traits in their listing of important factors in implementing creativity in general and creative writing specifically. Clear similarities are the focus on partnership and collaboration, personal traits and critical reflection, and these are important aspects in a creative approach. One difference is possibly the area of use of the two models. Oddane's model may be easier to use in the planning of lessons and methods that make use of creative thinking, but the five p's are not as consistent to use in a feedback situation or in mapping out progress in the pupil's creative ability. Here, Spencer's model is more consistent and clear in intended use. By labelling both the habits and the sub-habits, creative learning can be both broad and very specific depending on what the intention of the teaching is. In the complexity of concepts such as creativity and creative writing, the models work as pinpoints for where to start and how creativity can help develop the cognitive and sociopsychological skills in the pupils even though the particulars of the teaching depend on other factors in the context.

Spencer's study and model was made during a research project executed in schools with pupils within the age range from 5 to 14 years old in the United Kingdom, making them L1 users of English and functioning on a different curriculum and under other governmental plans than in Norway. The criteria may possibly also work as pinpoints for teachers of English as an L2 but are they as valid still? What then of creative writing in the L2 classroom,

can they work with the same criteria as L1 users and does creative writing have a similar effect in an L2 setting?

## 2.5 Creative writing in English language teaching (ELT)

The use of creative writing in Norwegian VGS ELT classrooms specifically has not previously been an area of research in Norway. However, there are some studies and researchers from other countries where English is taught as an L2 investigating the benefits and dilemmas of creative writing. There are also studies from L1 countries such as the United States of America and Great Britain but with L2 learners of English as the object of study. These studies can tell us something about experiences educators have with creative writing in EFL classrooms and these considerations are important to study if we are to understand the use of creative writing in education and will create a basis for the discussion of my empirical data in chapter 5.

### 2.5.1 Personal expression

Ekaterina Arshavskaya (2015) reports that her international English L2 class benefited from engaging in creative writing assignments during their course. She writes that her students experienced the written work to be more relevant and engaging when they worked with creative writing tasks. One of the most interesting aspects of her report is that first she mentions different beneficial features of writing creatively such as more awareness of content, more confidence in using a foreign language, a heightened experience of relevance and more engagement with the writing tasks. Arshavskaya then goes on to underline that creative writing can help develop creativity, imagination and innovative thinking as secondary to the other factors. This means that based on her research, she primarily emphasizes the individual developmental factors, and then moves on to write about how creative writing helps develop the imagination and creative skills. This is one of the aspects that says something about the area of application for creative writing; it not only seems beneficial in the specific area of creativity but has a wider scope to complement other thought processes and wider understanding of content within the person writing. Thinking back to section 2.3.2 about high, little, and mini-c creativity, this perspective helps connect it to language learning specifically. When Arshavskaya points out the personal development creative writing can bring to learning, it ties back to the theory of mini-c creativity and the intrapersonal connections that



can be made while writing creative texts where the students' knowledge can be applied in creative and innovative ways. These personal connections are one out of many key points in longitudinal learning where the relevance is heightened with the pupils.

However, Bilton and Sivasubramaniam (2009) found in an EFL education study that educators primarily focus on pupils' vocational needs without paying attention to students' maturational needs (Bilton and Sivasubramaniam, 2009, p. 303). In relation to my study, it is of interest to find out whether or not this is true for English education in Norwegian upper secondary schools as well, and this will be discussed in section 5.2. The question of what is important in teaching and learning in a foreign language is highlighted here with what these two researchers say. Both found that creative writing is helpful because the pupils found the writing to be more engaging and personally developmental, but how does this connect to language learning?

Ken Hyland (2003) calls the creative expression approach an orientation that takes the writer, rather than the form, as the point of departure. By placing the writer in the middle of the equation, the perspective on how writing is produced shifts towards the pupils' personal take on text production and writing. Their experiences and opinions become tools towards self-discovery which can help position themselves by addressing their social skills and writing skills. This expressivism is important because it encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs and other pupil's ideas. However, by shifting the perspective from the form-based emphasis and towards personal interpretations of your own and other's views, it becomes "difficult to extract from the approach any clear principles from which to evaluate 'good writing' .... As a result, the approach is most likely to be most successful in the hands of teachers who themselves write creatively" (Hyland, 2003, p. 10). Increased knowledge and first-hand experience with creative writing helps the teachers in the classroom situation if the teacher chooses to implement it, but as long as creative writing training is not a part of the education of teachers, the knowledge of creative writing in education is solely handed over to the teacher and their personal interest in it. Any lack of personal knowledge about creative writing may therefore influence the use of it in the classroom which makes it up to the individual teacher to decide whether or not to implement it. Considering the focus on Norwegian VGS in this study and the vague relation with creative writing in the curricula, depending the use of creative writing on the teachers' personal knowledge about it challenges its position in the classroom which will be discussed later on (5.3).

In addition, when the focus is on personal expression within creative writing it may seem complicated for a teacher to assess the written product. As seen in section 2.4, there are some existing criteria teachers and pupils can follow to implement creativity and creative writing in their classroom in an efficient way. However, based on what is stated in the curriculum, teachers are not explicitly required to use creative writing in their classrooms, but only to ‘write different types of texts ... suited to the purpose and situation’. How the teachers choose to solve this competence aim is up to the individual teacher and it does not guarantee the use of any specific tool or approach.

### **2.5.2 Are academic and creative writing opposites?**

As seen in the introduction, The Oxford Dictionary defined creative writing as “writing, typically fiction or poetry, which displays imagination or invention (often contrasted with academic or journalistic writing)” (Creative writing, n.d). Contrasting creative writing with academic or journalistic writing makes these types of writing seem opposite, but within the educational field, it may be more fruitful to look at it differently.

Spack & Sadow (1983) brings out an interesting point in their TESOL article when they argue that creative writing is not necessarily the opposite as academic writing. In fact, they argue that creative ability and creative writing can help the pupils develop their academic writing skills because they may experience a different use of ideas that might improve the final product regarding the presentation of perspectives and ideas. By seeing creative and academic writing as companions rather than opposites we are again talking of creative writing as a tool rather than a product, and in this case a tool to complement academic writing. When the Oxford Dictionary contrasts these types of writing, it also limits their uses and how the users of creative writing (in this study; the teachers and pupils) perceive it, as is the factor of importance in this thesis.

When creative and academic writing are used interchangeably, however, we move onto the idea of high, little and mini-c creativity again because even though the pupils may not come up with ideas that change how we see the world, their ideas are innovative for the holder itself and it creates knowledge on a micro level. The micro level is important in foreign language learning because even though it may not change the foundation of language, it is still a part of a process of creating knowledge with the individual pupil or class.

Instead of seeing creative and academic writing as opposites, it might be useful to find a more compounded connection between the two. ELT professor Alan Maley is a keen promoter of using creativity in education and has written several books on the subject. In one article he claims that:

[c]reative writing aids language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse. As learners manipulate the language in interesting and demanding ways in their attempt to express uniquely personal meanings (as they do in creative writing), they necessarily engage with the language at a deeper level of processing than with expository texts. The gains in grammatical accuracy, appropriacy and originality of lexical choice, and sensitivity to rhythm, rhyme, stress and intonation are significant (2010, paragraph 4).

Both Maley (2010) and Spack & Sadow (1983) underline how creative writing benefits language learning and aids academic development in a way that academic writing alone cannot reach, because it includes individual expression. This link between creative writing and academic writing is important to include so as not to categorize the two approaches as opposites, but rather methods that support each other in language learning and learning in general. Academic and creative writing cross paths, and both approaches may help develop skills and knowledge with both dissimilar and similar emphasis. By employing creative writing efficiently, the teacher and pupils need to have a basis of academic knowledge and the ability to convey meaning in a more formal way for it to make sense. On the other hand, academic writing also needs some creativity and imagination in structuring expression, presenting different perspectives and to use a correct and precise language. The point is that the one does not rule out the other, and the researchers above points out that creative and academic writing complement each other and generate development at a deeper level, as Maley (2010, paragraph 4) said. This is especially evident when using creative writing; the academic basis presupposes the creative and novel insight into knowledge. A balance between academic writing and creative writing is a good way to start according to the researchers within English language teaching, but as long as this is not reflected in the curriculum and exams in Norway, such a cooperation may be hard to achieve as will be discussed in chapter 5.

How can creative and academic writing complement each other on a practical level? There are numerous interesting and useful resources on how creative writing could be used in classrooms and the possibilities are endless when it comes to applying such methods in

classrooms, especially since teachers in Norway are free to choose how to teach through the list of competence aims. Nevertheless, Schoff (2016) points out how there might be a distance between plans and actions, and how plans of a more creative and free approach “may not be successful; they might seem extra, possibly fun, but not integral to our curricula because we do not see how they help us and our students meet our goals” (p. 32). The dilemma of visible and clear development is always present in education and perhaps especially in creative writing because as the researchers above highlight; creativity is highly abstract and creative writing is seen as important in the more fundamental and long-term parts of knowledge and cognitive ability. Progress in creative and imaginative writing may not be visible on paper and may seem frustrating and inefficient to teachers and pupils alike. As an effect some may refrain from using it to a certain extent and rather choose different approaches as we will see in chapter 4 and discuss in chapter 5.

## 2.6 Summary

Throughout this chapter, previous studies and theories about creative ability and creative writing in education generally and English language teaching specifically have been presented. In addition, we took a closer look at the position of creative writing in Norwegian curriculum in the English subject. Teachers in Norway have to follow the curriculum made by the Directorate of Education, and in this curriculum creative writing is not explicitly mentioned. The pupils are, however, encouraged to write “different types of texts” based on the competence aims in the subject curriculum. The core curriculum from 1997 devotes more space to creativity than the new principles but both emphasize the important balance between academic and exploratory/creative ways of thinking in order for new knowledge to be developed. This new knowledge or new insight is based on the principle behind Bloom’s taxonomy, where there are several different cognitive process dimensions, to ‘create’ being the foremost among them. This means that taking the knowledge you have and reorganizing it to create something new displays a high level of cognitive skill. This high level of knowledge is hard to define in simple terms and depends a lot on context and environment around the learning situation. Experts and researchers have not yet been able to find an absolute definition of what creative ability is, which in turn creates issues around the area of use and may also have an effect on whether teachers choose to implement creative writing in their teaching due to its elusiveness. How can you teach something that you cannot put into words? Some models have been created to try and make a framework for what creativity can be and

how creative ability can be developed over a long period of time. Such models highlight the person, who is supposed to use their personal traits and experiences in the process of developing their creative abilities, their cultural and social environment, their inquisitive nature and their ability to connect, challenge and question former conceptions in order to make new ones. In relation to English language teaching there are a number of benefits of applying creative writing in EFL classrooms where pupils and professors have experienced how creative writing can aid language development at all levels including grammar and discourse. The question is whether English teachers in Norwegian VGS choose to implement creative writing in their classrooms where they might face other, more pressing concerns, such as for example assessment and time constraints while working towards exams. In the following, the results from my data collection will be presented and analyzed and in chapter 5, my findings will be discussed in light of the theory presented here.

### 3. Methodology

In this chapter, I will present and explain the methodological basis for the research conducted in this project. As mentioned earlier, there is a lack of resources about to what degree and how creative writing is used in ELT learning in Norwegian VGS. Therefore, there was a need for primary data from empirical research in addition to reviewing secondary sources in order to address especially research question two and three:

- To what degree and for what purpose do teachers report using creative writing in their classroom?
- What reasons do the teachers give for using creative writing to this extent and what does it signify for their pupils' writing in English?

Section 3.1 will present the research objectives and overall research strategy as the basis of the project and 3.2 explains the methods used for data collection. Section 3.3 takes a closer look at the data collection and the framework for handling the data after it had been collected. Finally, in section 3.4 some limitations and considerations of reliability are discussed.

#### 3.1 Overall research strategy and objective

The purpose of my research is to find out what teachers think about creative writing in ELT and the reasons behind the extent of their application of creative writing in the classrooms. In Norway, every teacher decides for themselves how they execute classroom activity according to the governmentally issued teaching plans and curriculum, and this leaves the teachers with the decision in implementation of classroom activities. Whether creative writing is used or not is up to the teacher, and the reasons behind their choices is of particular interest because every teacher may think differently about what should be emphasized when learning a foreign language. The teachers are not obliged to use creative writing, and as we have seen, there are both benefits and dilemmas in using creative writing in English language teaching. Why do some teachers choose to apply creative writing more than others? How do they see teaching writing and assigning writing tasks differently than their colleagues, and are there other factors that come into play in this decision making? The objective of this study is therefore to find out some of the reasons why some teachers choose to apply creative writing in the classroom, and why some do not.

Based on the purpose of my research, the overall research strategy is the survey strategy, which has the aim to “to describe relevant characteristics of individual, groups, or organization” (Berends, 2006, p. 623). In this case, since the project seeks to investigate teachers’ beliefs, attitudes and practices, the respondents are a sample from a specific group of representatives, consisting of English teachers in Norwegian VGS, teaching the general studies course. By surveying this specific group, their perspective on the topic of creative writing will work as the main base for analysis and discussion.

## 3.2 Research methods

The survey strategy contains several methods of research, the two most common being questionnaire and interview (Berends, 2006, p. 625). In this project, I employ both questionnaire and interview in order to approach the thesis and research questions both in depth and width. Although the questionnaire is more quantitative and the interview more qualitative, neither is limited to one particular approach, they rather complement each other. This means that both the interview and the questionnaire are of qualitative as well as quantitative character, even though the interview is somewhat more qualitative as it asks for more detailed information from the respondents than the questionnaire does. The point is that the methods play off each other as well as highlight different areas of the thesis using a wide spectrum of data.

For some time, I also considered another approach in addition to the survey methods, namely observation. It would be interesting to see how the teachers acted in the classroom while their pupils were asked to write and work with written assignments. By including observation, we could gain insight into how the teachers worked with the pupils while writing and whether they advised some creative solutions to the written works or not. However, after the thesis of this project was narrowed down to teacher’s beliefs, I ended up with choosing the survey approach to directly address their beliefs rather than their actions in the classroom. Also, observing without the foundation of knowing about teachers’ beliefs would not be as beneficial without the foundation of knowledge gathered in the survey approach of this thesis. In addition, observation would require more time spent in a classroom where the pupils and the teacher do not necessarily make use of the method it would be interesting to observe. Therefore, the survey strategy with the more direct and personal methods of questionnaire and interview were applied for data collection of teacher’s beliefs.

Using two methods of empirical research makes this project a mixed methodology project. Mixed methodology makes social research more compounded as it explores different perspectives of the research focus and combines the paradigms of qualitative and quantitative research rather than dividing them. It also supports the development of theory as it does not require the researcher to use one form of empirical methods over another, but rather how they work together to support the discussion (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 34; Dornyei, 2007, p. 43). The methods allow me to gather more specified and personal information about the topic of creative writing from the teachers that are responsible for deciding how their teaching is implemented.

### **3.2.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was the first one of the two methods to be implemented. It consists of twenty questions to be answered by English teachers who are teaching in general studies in Norwegian VGS. The questionnaire was constructed electronically to ease the process of gathering the data, especially for the process after when the data was analysed. By collecting the data electronically, figures and graphs were automatically made by the website, and the data was easier to analyse and structure in the results chapter (chapter 4). The questionnaire was written in Norwegian because I was advised that the respondents would be more comfortable with answering in their native tongue even though they teach English.

The questionnaire starts with a collection of quantitative measurements of how much the teachers use creative writing and academic writing for both longer and shorter written tasks. Both shorter and longer written tasks were of interest so that the use of creative writing in those two formats could be put up to comparison, and maybe also clarify what priorities the teachers have while making and assigning different types of tasks. After questions about quantities, the questionnaire turned to open-answer rubrics where the teachers could use their own words to convey their beliefs about creative writing. The open-answer rubrics gave the respondents a chance to give a more nuanced answer without being imposed with suggestions of categories or suggestions from me in what they think about creative writing. However, the answers from the teachers turned out to be quite similar in what they emphasized in the different questions, leading to a conformed categorization of answers that could be grouped and analysed together. This uniformity across respondents was very interesting, indicating that the beliefs they had, they shared with others, and this allowed me to draw lines and



conclusions based on several responses. The categories and their analysis can be found in the next chapter (chapter 4).

The questionnaire was published online in a collective Facebook-group for English teachers in Norwegian schools at all levels, but it was indicated very clearly that only VGS teachers in general studies could answer. By posting it online, my group of representatives was more random, which has both advantages as disadvantages. The researcher cannot control who answers, regarding age, geographical location or other traits, but the random spread of teachers from different regions and ages also adds a good distribution to the respondents. On the other hand, this may also mean that the ones that do respond are interested in spending some time on this topic which possibly introduces a bias, but based on the variation in the answers, this did not turn out to be a major issue. Tufte (2011) points out that the requirement for being able to say something about the spread of a phenomenon based on quantitative data is to collect data from a selection that is representative for this group (p. 72) and by letting any teacher that met the requirements answer the questionnaire, it was possible to avoid asking only one school or school district that may be influenced by the same junctions. In other words, the goal was to get not one unison reflection by the same group, but multiple individual views on the same topic as seen by different teachers in Norway – wherever they live or however they teach.

As we have seen in the two first chapters, the definition of creative writing is debated and not straight-forward. This also proved to be a challenge when creating the questions for the questionnaire. At first, I did not include any definition of what was meant by *creative writing* or *academic writing*, thinking that the perception the teacher had of the two types of writing should dictate how they answered in terms of amount of creative writing vs academic writing. However, during the period the questionnaire was developed I realized that the two types should be explained in the questions. This was done to secure a more collective validity and more uniformity in how the teachers regarded the questions, so that the chance for misunderstandings would be minimized and the opportunity for comparison across respondents maximized. While this restriction might be necessary it may also contradict the discussion of definition of creative writing by itself as well as in comparison with academic writing. The conflicting issues of defining creative writing only became evident to me in the process of working with this dissertation, and by that time the questionnaire was already published and could not be changed. After having reflected upon this contradiction of defining (in simple terms) what creative writing might entail while discussing that creative

writing cannot be defined, made me decide to place more emphasis on the issues of definition in the discussion chapter (chapter 5), knowing that this is not reflected in the questions in the questionnaire. Still, seeing the answers to the questions, and seeing how the teachers conformed to the examples without objection feeds into this discussion of definition, which will take place in chapter 5.

The responses gathered through the questionnaire created a basis for data collection in the interview, allowing me to discover what areas could be explored more in depth in conversation with the teachers during the interview.

### **3.2.2 Interview**

Teacher's beliefs are of fundamental interest in this study, which puts the teacher in the focus of research. Two English teachers in VG1 general studies were interviewed together in a group interview, and they revealed different opinions about creative writing in ELT.

The questions for the interview were made in advance during the period when responses from the questionnaire started drawing out some lines based on the research questions, in addition to the information gathered from reading about theory on the subject. The interview is semi-structured, meaning that although the questions were written down based on said prior knowledge, they were also open to alteration as the interview went on, based on how the teachers responded. The structure is therefore also soft-wired, starting more generally, and then gradually narrowing down to the more specific topic of creative writing in ELT. This was so as not to influence the interviewees by limiting them. The questions are open-ended, meaning there is no right or wrong answer, or no limited selection of choices the interviewees must make while talking. The interview is structured so as not to put words or ideas in the minds of the interviewee in an effort to make the outcome factual and unbiased.

A qualitative look into the research questions is of importance in a study like this because although it is good to know to what extent creative writing is used by teachers, it is perhaps even more fruitful to know *why* some teachers may use this type of writing task more than others. This way, the present thesis is linked to theories and underlying explanations of what possibly enhances or hinders the use of creative writing and allows us to see areas in the execution of types of writing tasks that may be flawed or inadequate when linking the curriculum to the classroom. By talking to teachers, it is possible to gain an 'insider perspective' as Dornyei (2007) calls it, a perspective that concerns itself with how "it is only

the participants themselves who can reveal the meanings and interpretations of their experiences and actions” (p. 38). These meanings and attributes is what people bring to situations and it is these opinions that are important in qualitative research: subjective opinions in social phenomena (Dornyei, 2007, p. 38). Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) also highlights the importance of understanding meaning as perceived by the respondent prior to scientific explanation.

### 3.3 Framework for data analysis and analysis

The framework for the data collection addresses how the data was handled after collection. The data in this project consist of answers from the questionnaire and one interview with two interviewees. The answers from the questionnaire were written down in an excel document after all the responses had been collected so that it would be easier to see the answers in relation to each other and to detect patterns and categories for the analysis more easily. Some graphs were already made through the webpage (Google Forms), there graphs were created and added to continually as the answers came in, and the same graphs in the finished forms are used in the present analysis to highlight distribution.

The interview was recorded as it went along and transcribed after it was finished, in order to secure validity for the analysis and discussion of the data. The transcript ended up at 17 pages, so naturally the interview responses had to be segmented and reassembled so as to draw out important factors that related back to the research questions and thesis. The process of segmenting the material is done to find the most relevant topics in an initially disorganized interview where the answers usually are given out of order (Boeije, 2010, p. 77). It becomes necessary to collect the relevant answers together in categories to that the analysis turn out more clear and orderly. This also makes it easier to construct the findings around the theory in the discussion and to compare to the answers from the questionnaire in order to develop some of the issues and categories which materialized there.

### 3.4 Validity and reliability

In research projects with collection of primary data, it is always necessary to discuss the reliability and validity of the research methods. Depending on what method is used, validity and reliability is for the most part contextual, especially when it comes to qualitative data

collection. Since qualitative data cannot be measured in numbers but rather interpreted, it may be even more fruitful to talk about reliability by describing the context, the procedure of collection, the preparations and the procedure of revision and description of decisions that were made throughout the research. Some of these topics have been discussed in the sections above, but the subjectivity of the process also needs to be addressed. In this study, both the replies and the researcher's interpretations are to some extent subjective and depend on existing beliefs and – in the respondent's case – opinions about teaching and classroom practice. It is this interpretation of the results – not the methods or results themselves – that measure validity (Dornyei, 2007, p. 52). This means that it is the researcher's responsibility to process, present and discuss the results in a fair way by looking at the case from several angles. In order for the research to be reliable, it is the results that should inform the researcher and not the other way around. We can signify this by asking “are we measuring what we are supposed to measure?” (Tuftte, 2011, p. 73) and what is supposed to be measured in this dissertation is the use of creative writing and the reasons behind this use. The data collected from asking questions are subjective according to the respondents, and the data should be analyzed and discussed in an objective manner even though some subjective conceptions may surface. In other words: even though the researcher's position becomes an integral part of the inquiry (Haverkamp, 2005) it is important to be aware of your beliefs as a researcher without your beliefs being reflected in the results and making them unreliable.

By addressing these issues and by keeping the purpose of my research in mind the interpretations and discussions will hopefully turn out more balanced. In turn, the validity rises when the results reflect the purpose and approach so as to represent the reality of the matter (Johannessen, Tuftte & Christoffersen, 2010, p. 230).

Since the project includes personal responses from teachers the project had to be reported to The Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD). It was approved in October 2017 (cf. appendix).

### 3.5 Limitations

One of the main issues in research projects with a limited time scope and restrained possibilities for field work such as this is whether the collected data is representative. One matter is gathering enough respondents for the data to be factual and true to the actual situation which is being examined. How many is enough? There is no right or wrong answer

here, and it depends a lot both on what group of people are used as respondents and on what the thesis asks. Since this project employs both interview and a questionnaire the representativeness rises, but a lack of respondents creates a risk of not collecting substantial information. No matter how well-funded the research is, we can never examine all the members of a group of considerable size whose answers would be relevant to our research question. Therefore, we have to accept the fact that the results from our research “will always be a function of whom we have selected to obtain our data from” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 27).

Another matter is how the respondents share their thoughts, and in addition whether these thoughts are factual. The responses are subjective thoughts given by individual teachers, but even though they may be very specific to that teacher and not the whole population of teachers, they are still results that are worth considering. That is not saying that the results are consistent for *all* teachers in Norway, but that is not the goal of this study. Given the scope, the subjective approach is worth noting and considering when taking into account the representativeness of the respondents. Nevertheless, the results are still interesting and important to present and discuss in relation to the theory - especially since one of the methods is qualitative interviews, where the goal is finding subjective meaning and experience.

One last consideration about the data collection in this study regards the comparison that is made between creative and academic writing. These types of writing are compared in the question of to what extent the teachers use them, and it is important to point out that the present study does not posit that it is wrong or right to apply one or the other more. The question is rather to what extent they are used compared to each other, and what implications this use has, without saying that one method or type of writing is better than the other in all situations and for all purposes.

## 4. Results and analysis

The data material collected for this project needs to be analyzed in order to shed light on the research questions that initiated the data collection in the first place. By taking an active part in detangling and understanding the information that is gathered, the researcher is able to construct meaningful theories and interpretations based on the data in preparation to discuss the findings in light of the theory. This type of analysis "... entails taking coded information out of its entirety to reconstruct a new and research-based knowledge about a phenomenon" (Johannessen, Tufte & Christoffersen, 2010, p. 231, own translation). As a result, the analysis creates a simplified conception of reality to allow us to see patterns and the reasons behind these patterns. Most of the data material in this project is qualitative data which will help answering the research questions, and this material requires qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis makes use of segmentation which means disassembling data into relevant categories and breaking the data down into parts where the data becomes clear in relation to each other. This process is useful since the answers in qualitative research, especially semi-structured research such as the interview in this project, tends not to come in a neat and straightforward format, but in a jumbled order (Boeije, 2010, p. 77). Therefore, the material needs to be disassembled in the analysis to unfold meaning and reassembled while analyzing and discussing.

In this chapter, the results from the data collection will be presented and analyzed. First, some of the measurable and more quantitative data from the questionnaire will be presented, and then the more in-depth qualitative answers from the questionnaire and the interview will be analyzed to address the research questions:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using creative writing in the ELT classroom?
2. To what degree and for what purpose do teachers report using creative writing in their classroom?
3. What reasons do the teachers give for using creative writing to this extent and what does it signify for their pupils' writing in English?

All the questions are addressed in both the questionnaire and the interviews, but question 2 is of a more quantitative character and will be presented and analyzed first. Following is the

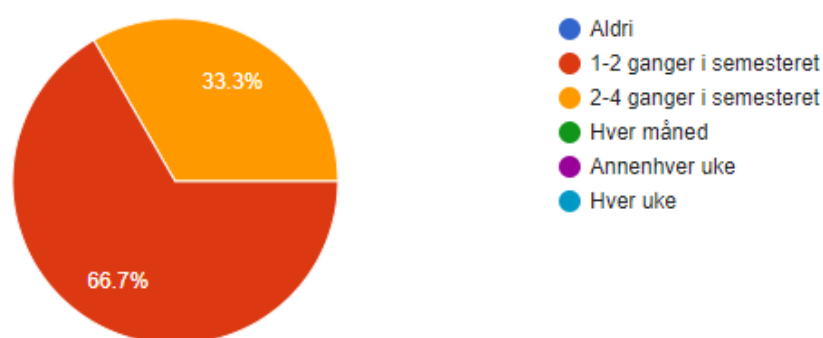
more qualitative look at *why* the teachers use creative writing to the extent they do and what beliefs they have about it.

The questionnaire gathered answers from 42 English teachers in general studies in VGS. Almost 80% of the respondents have worked as teachers for less than 15 years. The interview was a group interview with two teachers. One had worked in VGS for 7 years and the other for 18 years. To begin with, we will take a look at the questionnaire.

## 4.1 Distribution between academic and creative writing

The main purpose of the questionnaire was finding out to what extent teachers in VGS general studies English use creative writing in their classroom and why they use it to the extent they report. First, the teachers answered some questions about use of writing tasks (longer and shorter, creative and academic) in the classroom, and these answers were given in numbers.

The teachers were asked both how many times a semester they employ longer writing tasks that take some time to work with and shorter writing tasks that the pupils work with the same day or only for a few days. For the longer writing tasks, 66,7% of the teachers reported using it 1-2 times a semester and the rest (33,3%) reported using it 2-4 times a semester.

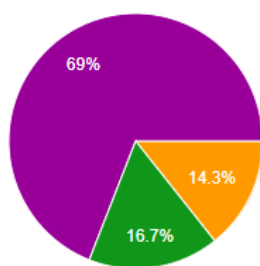


**Figure 4.** Frequency of long written task in percentage Q2

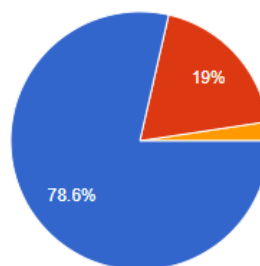
When teachers respond giving 1-4 longer written tasks a semester it is also relevant to find out how many of them are creative tasks and how many are academic tasks. It was specified in the questionnaire that what I meant by academic texts was for example essays, picture or text analysis and strictly technical tasks about a given topic. Creative texts were exemplified as for

example free writing, short stories, poems or other fully or partially fictional texts (reflections around the terms will be discussed in the next chapter). For longer texts, 69% of the teachers reported using academic writing 80-100% of the time. 17% said they use academic writing 60-80% of the time and the remaining 14% reported using academic writing 40-60% of the time for the longer written tasks. This means that most of the teachers mainly use academic writing in their longer writing tasks (between 60-100%).

When asked about how many of the longer texts were creative tasks, 79% said that they use creative writing 0-20% of the time and 19% said they use creative tasks 20-40% of the time. Based on the numbers and in the graphs (figure 2 and 3 below) it is clear that out of the 1-4 longer written tasks pupils usually hand in during a semester, most of them are of academic character.



● 0-20%  
 ● 20-40%  
 ● 40-60%  
 ● 60-80%  
 ● 80-100%

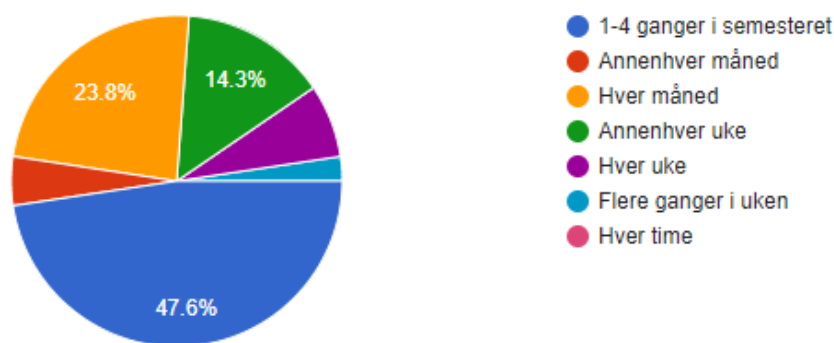


● 0-20%  
 ● 20-40%  
 ● 40-60%  
 ● 60-80%  
 ● 80-100%

**Figure 5.** Frequency of academic long tasks Q2b **Figure 6.** Frequency of creative long tasks Q2e

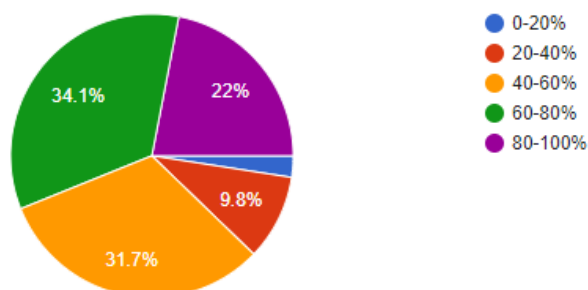
On the question of how often they use shorter texts on the other hand, the teachers' answers were somewhat more differentiated and evenly distributed. Almost half of them (47,6%) answered that they use shorter writing tasks only 1-4 times a semester, meaning there is almost an equal amount of longer and shorter written tasks during the semester. For the rest of the respondents, 23.8% reported using shorter writing tasks once every month and 14.3% once every other week. 7.1% of the teachers reported using short written tasks every week and only 2.5% (1 respondent) reported giving shorter written tasks several times a week.



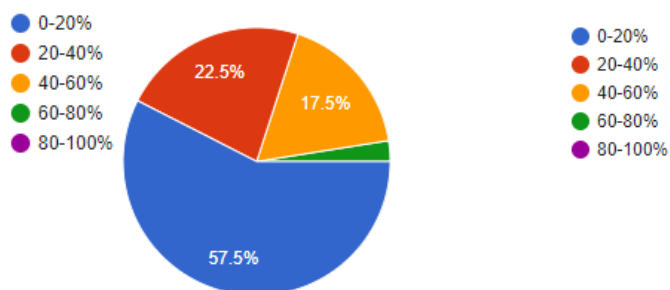


**Figure 7.** Frequency of smaller written tasks in percentage Q3a

Does the distribution between academic and creative tasks for shorter writing tasks match the distribution which was found for longer texts or do the teachers choose differently when they employ shorter texts in their classrooms? When it comes to shorter texts, the frequency of academic tasks is evenly distributed between the choices and most teachers report on using academic short tasks either 80-100% of the time (22%), 60-80% of the time (34%) or 40-60% of the time (32%). In other words, over half the teachers have answered that they use academic writing between 60-100% of the time and one quarter use it 40-60% of the time. On the creative side, 58% of the teachers report using creative writing only 0-20% of the time. 23% said that they use creative writing 20-40% and 18% said they use it 40-60%. Only 2.5% (one teacher) reported using creative tasks 80-100% when in short texts. This means that also the shorter writing tasks the teachers give their pupils – which are of higher frequency than the longer writing tasks – are more likely to be academic writing.



**Figure 8.** Amount short academic tasks Q3b



**Figure 9.** Amount short creative tasks Q3c

These results imply that teachers prefer to give academic tasks over creative tasks both when it comes to longer and shorter written tasks. For longer texts, the emphasis on academic writing is greater than for shorter texts, but still the emphasis on preference for academic tasks is clear in both categories. Why is this?

As seen in the theory there are both benefits and disadvantages to using creative writing in teaching, especially in foreign language teaching. Even though there are a number of benefits to creative writing with possibilities for a development of deep cognitive ways of thinking and new perspectives to be gained on prior knowledge, there could also be challenges in terms of the practical considerations when teachers consider using creative writing in their teaching. From the results presented above it is clear that the teachers prefer or have to give academic tasks. After eliciting numbers for distribution of academic and creative tasks, the questionnaire questions turned to ask for possible reasons behind this distribution. These questions were asked starting with “why do you...?” making them open-ended, meaning that there were no prewritten choices they could choose from, but rather an open rubric where the teachers could write a little about why they use creative writing to the extent they do. This was done to collect the teacher’s subjective meaning about their choices without potentially influencing their thoughts by having them choose from a prewritten list. This means that the answers I collected are the teachers’ initial thoughts on their use of creative writing based on their beliefs and possibly also their experiences with creative writing in their English classroom.

What is interesting about this approach is that it enabled me to discover not only what the different teachers emphasized but also how the answers often correlated with each other without me categorizing the issues beforehand. This came to light after the answers were gathered and systemized in an excel sheet, and it became clear that the teachers had similar answers to the same questions. In turn, the correlation created patterns for analysis which showed a distinction between academic and creative writing, and it became clearer that there are some shared beliefs about creative writing in the classroom among the teachers in this study. This correlation also helped outline some apparent reasons as to why the distribution between academic and creative writing tasks is somewhat uneven, since most of the teachers reported the following categories as challenges/impediments to using creative writing in the classroom: curriculum and exams, assessment, a lack of competence or knowledge about creative writing and perceptions of formal writing.

### 4.1.1 Curriculum and exams

One of the most consistent answers to the *why*-aspect of the data collection came in relation to what expectations the teachers faced through the subject curriculum and core curriculum as well as through the possibility for a final examination period. Many respondents reported that they did not make time for much else than academic writing because it is not as present in the competence aims and – as a consequence of that – usually not present in the final exam questions. In one of the open-answer rubrics 30 out of the 42 respondents answered that the exam was a part of the reasons why they did not implement creative writing as much in their writing tasks. Either they reported not ever having encountered creative tasks on any exam they had seen during their years of teaching or they did not feel it was as relevant while practicing towards the exam period and final exam.

Even though both these reported reasons point towards the exam, there is a difference between these two answers; one of them focuses on the exam itself while the other incorporates not only the exam but also the time leading up to it. This is an important difference because the emphasis shifts from a summative assessment focus to a teaching over a long period of time-focus. It is true that exams usually do not have a creative writing choice – at least not in the long answer part of the exam, as we saw in section 2.1.3 – but it is interesting that the lack of creative writing in the exam has an impact on the choice of teaching methods during the rest of the school year as well.

### 4.1.2 Assessment – an addition

Another issue the teachers in this study reported facing when deciding what types of tasks to give, was the issue of assessment. 38% of the teachers expressed having trouble with the correspondence between creative writing and assessment and many said they therefore prefer to give academic tasks, where the criteria for assessment are more straightforward. The lack of defined terms and set features in what creativity and creative writing is, as we saw in the introduction, discloses issues around how it can be measured in a school system where the pupils work towards the final assessment in the form of an exam.

Time constraint was also mentioned as an issue regarding assessment and the teachers (respondent 1, 6, 10, 12, 14) reported how it was hard for them to give feedback on written work as much as they would like because going through thirty texts each week in one class (for example) was not something they had capacity to do. Therefore, some said they ended up

choosing academic texts over creative texts for the most part because it is something they have to go through anyway and the possible writing tasks that are creative only come in addition – creating more work for them.

Restraints such as time and classroom capacity therefore also play a part in the choices teachers make about the types of tasks they give their pupils. One teacher (respondent 17) mentioned that if he/she ended up doing a creative writing task in the classroom, he/she did so without assessing the task and rather seeing it purely as writing practice or writing to use the language. This teacher also mentioned that he/she rather includes some creative tasks in oral activities instead. Respondent 33 said he/she would like to use more creative writing but does not have time to do so because of the number of pupils and the work it creates in relation to assessment.

In comparison, one teacher (respondent 23) listed the less clear assessment criteria as a good thing because it sets less demands for what the writing should contain and therefore made the pupils express themselves more freely. This was an interesting comment although it was only mentioned by one teacher, and this brings us to a discussion about the purpose of writing, especially creative writing, in a foreign language, which I will return to more both later in this chapter and more thoroughly in chapter 5, section 5.1.2.

One last issue that came up in relation to assessment was in answer 41, where the respondent said that assessment and instruction is hard when it comes to creative writing because he/she did not know how to instruct the pupils in the process. Here, the issue of assessment runs into the issue of lack of knowledge about the topic of creative writing which was mentioned by several as well. They mentioned that their own competence was not developed enough for them to feel qualified to teach creative writing as its own topic.

### **4.1.3 Teacher competence and student competence**

Teacher competence concerning creative writing was an interesting aspect that reoccurred in the answers the teachers gave in the questionnaire. Here, the respondents turned the emphasis over from their pupils and their classes to themselves. Six different teachers mentioned how it can be hard for them to use creative tasks in the classroom because they do not feel competent enough to instruct them in the process and how they do not know enough about creative writing themselves to teach it. The reasons ranged from not having enough experience with creative writing (respondents 42 and 12), not being competent enough to teach it (respondent

36 and 39) to the issue that creativity is hard to teach (respondent 5). Creative writing is not an integral part of the education for upper secondary teachers in Norway, so if they do not have any experience other than what they themselves got in the primary, lower secondary or upper secondary education some may naturally feel like they do not have enough experience to teach creative writing themselves.

The competence that the pupils bring from lower secondary school also came up as a factor for the extent of use in VGS and this was mentioned both in the questionnaire and the interview (section 4.4.5). Some respondents (e.g. respondent 5) answered that they felt the pupils needed to practice academic writing more because they had more experience with creative writing from lower secondary school. Since variation on this answer occurred in different places in the questionnaire, it was interesting to see and it might also give some more substance as to why there seems to be more focus on academic writing in VGS.

This can also be connected to the fact that many teachers seem to emphasize the transition to from upper secondary school into higher education when they say they prefer to assign academic writing tasks. It may mean that the teachers in VGS see these three years as an intermediate between lower secondary and higher education and that this is the pupil's opportunity to learn academic writing in preparation for college or university and for their future careers, according to the teachers. In other words, some teacher sees it as their task to give the pupils as much academic input as they can before the pupils start higher education and as a result the teachers may feel like there is not much room for creative writing because the pupils know that well enough from lower secondary school.

#### **4.1.4 Type of writing**

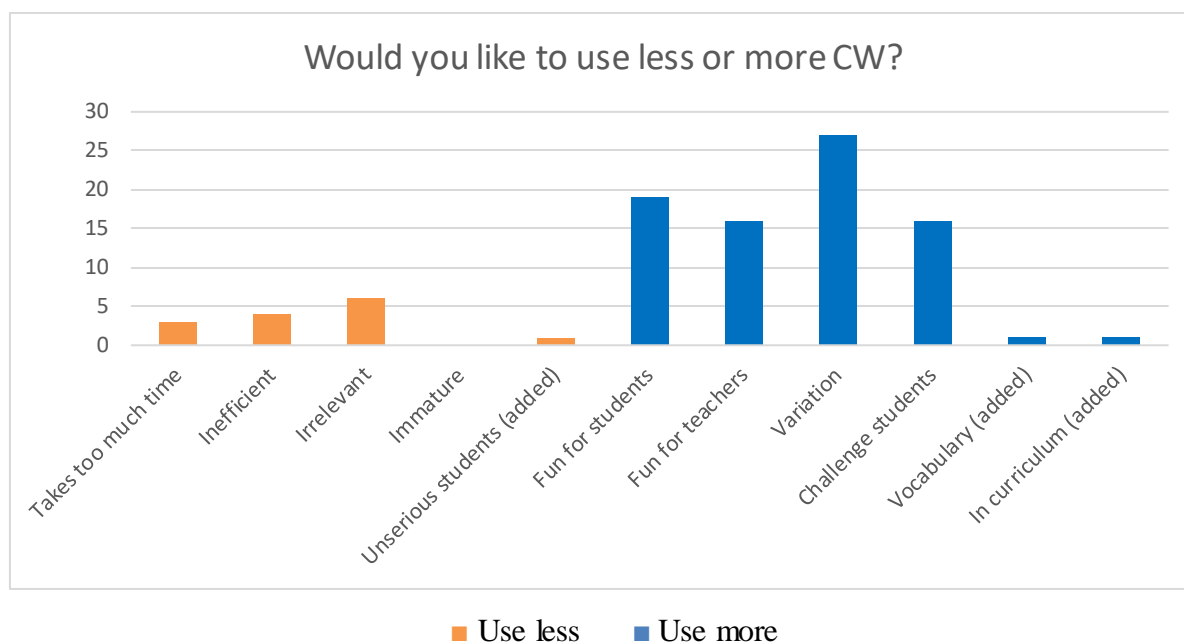
In relation to how the teachers see it as their task to prepare the pupils for higher education, there was another factor which came up in the questionnaire, namely the factor of formal language learning. Some teachers seem to differentiate academic and creative writing as formal writing and creative writing; seeing them as opposites. In the beginning of this project I listed some terms and their possible definitions, underlining the fact that some of these terms are hard to define simply because they depend on context and domain. In the definition given by the Oxford Dictionary, *creative writing* and *academic writing* are listed as contrasting types of writing, and the same tendency is also present in the answers from the teachers in how they use and interpret the meaning of those two terms. One teacher (respondent 31) paired academic writing and formal writing together and listed creative writing as something

different, which is interesting because it may suggest that the confusion around the definition in the field of education muddles the use of the term *creative writing* and affects the perception the teachers have of creative writing. As a consequence, the teachers' perceptions of what creative writing is also has consequences in the practical situation unfolding in the classrooms. One teacher (respondent 26) wrote that it is "more important to interpret and recognize formal features than [for the pupils] to write themselves" (own translation). On the other hand, one teacher (respondent 7) also reported that he/she sees more function in academic writing but reports that he/she "will rather try to teach the pupils to be creative within the academic genre". This was an interesting answer which presented an aspect I had not yet considered but found interesting due to the cross-over of methods and practical solutions in this teacher's writing practice.

## 4.2 Teacher's aspirations about creative writing

In section four of the questionnaire the respondents were asked to choose from two lists with four options (they could also add a point if they wanted to) on whether they would like to use creative writing more or less than they already do. 29 respondents answered that they would like to use it more and 12 respondents answered that they would like to use it less. The question was designed so that the respondents were supposed to choose from one of the two lists (one for "more" and one for "less") signaling whether they would like to use it either more or less, a list of the choices follow below. Some respondents chose options from both lists, showing that they misunderstood the task. Nevertheless, the results from this question still show that there were more teachers who reported wanting to use creative writing more in their classroom. In addition, it is interesting to see that the teachers who answered the questionnaire found reasons for wanting to use it both more and less, representing the dual sides of the use of creative writing, consisting both of advantages in using it as well as challenges. This duality is relevant to the discussion about creative writing presented in this thesis because many respondents said that they would like to use it more, but at the same time acknowledge the restrictions and issues that may arise if creative writing is to be a part of their teaching on a regular basis.

Still, 12 individuals answered wanting to use it less and 29 individuals answered wanting to use it more as seen – with the reasons for it – in the graph below:



**Graph 1.** Distribution of wish for less or more use of creative writing in variables

Most of the teachers reported that they wish they could use creative writing more, for different reasons. The most prominent reason was that implementing creative writing increased variation in the teaching (27 teachers answered this). Given how the curriculum requires the teachers to implement competence aims such as for example “write different types of texts with structure and coherence suited to the purpose and situation” (Directorate for Education and Training, 2013) it makes sense that teachers wish they could use methods such as creative writing with to secure teaching with variation. Amongst the other popular answers, many teachers also reported that it is fun for the pupils (19 teachers answered this) and fun for themselves as teachers (16 teachers answered this). This also relates to the variation aspect as variation is perceived as fun and making the teaching and learning more interesting for both the pupils and teachers.

On the other hand, this can also be true for the teachers who reported not wanting to use creative writing more. The most frequent answer there was that creative writing often feels irrelevant for their teaching (6 teachers answered this). This may be related to the answers in the question about why teachers use creative writing to the degree they do, where the notion that creative writing is irrelevant in the progress towards the exam or higher education was noted as an important factor for not using creative writing as much as academic writing. The other reason which was given for wanting to use creative writing less such as *working with creative writing takes too much time* (3 teachers answered this) and *it is inefficient* (4 teachers

answered this) can also be related back to answers given when the teachers were asked why they used creative writing to the extent they do. The different reasons may all be related and affect each other in the mind of the teacher when they plan their lessons and their tasks. The answers show that it is not one factor that stands out on either side; the reasons are all connected in a bigger picture and it makes more sense not to limit the less use of creative writing compared to academic writing only to one thing such as pressure in working towards the exam. In the bigger picture, that one factor can lead to others such as limited time and difficulties with assessment in the process. The reasons teachers give for their use of creative writing, no matter whether they are positive or negative towards these types of tasks, depends on several factors that come into play when teachers give their pupils tasks. If the teachers feel that creative writing is inefficient and takes too much time, they will most likely choose not to use it to a considerable extent because they would rather focus more directly on the exam, as many reported on doing. An important aspect of this is probably what part of teaching the teachers choose to focus on, what parts of the curriculum they feel is most valuable to implement and what wishes they have for their classrooms. The interesting part is that most of the teachers (70% or 29 out of 41) reported they wish they could use creative writing to a greater extent than they already do. This may suggest that the teachers see both the advantages to creative writing as well as some limitations, given the emphasis on positivity towards creative writing in the section asking them about how they *wish* they used it, and not how they actually do use it at this point. Seeing that the teachers feel differently about types of writing tasks implies that there are both advantages and disadvantages in using creative writing in teaching, as well as some challenges.

### 4.3 Advantages, disadvantages and challenges

For the last question in the questionnaire the teachers were asked about advantages, disadvantages and biggest challenge to creative writing in their opinion. The questions had open answer-rubrics, so in this section they also formulated their own answers.

In the question about advantages, 28 out of 42 teachers responded. One teacher (respondent 1) answered that he/she believed there was not a single advantage to creative writing in a VGS setting, but the other 27 responded with a number of advantages they saw in using creative writing. One of the most frequent advantages mentioned was that creative writing created a joy for writing in their pupils and in relation to this opened up for a different type of writing practice than when reciting and writing about facts in more academic texts. Some teachers



described it as a method to develop a different type of language (respondents 10, 16, 36 and 40) and also a way of developing other sides of the pupils and their way of thinking by means of expressing feelings and ideas (respondents 5, 11 and 31) or by seeing creative writing as a way to make room for self-expression (respondents 7 and 23).

The advantages that the teachers listed are distant from factors such as exams and assessment, and they are rather connected to a more comprehensive and personal side to the pupils' development, taking into consideration things such as personal opinion, ideas and expression, writing more freely and using a different type of language. In short, according to the teachers the advantages relate more to overarching factors of writing are how the pupils are able to use the language in a different and more open way than in academic writing, and how they can express themselves, develop their own ideas and show a joy for writing.

When asked about the disadvantages, the teachers responded somewhat similarly to the questions in the beginning of the questionnaire about why they tend to use creative writing less than academic writing. One teacher responded that he/she believed there were no disadvantages to creative writing (respondent 32) but 26 other respondents named some disadvantages. Most respondents said that assessment was one of the hardest things about creative writing (respondents 12, 24, 25 and 27). Many teachers also said that creative writing is not relevant enough for the exam (respondents 1, 5, 28, 37 and 39). Both of these reasons are reoccurring and seems to be two of the main reasons for the extent of use. Many teachers also said it takes too much time (respondents 6, 8, 10 and 14) which can also have something to do with the latter two where the teachers said that it takes too much time to assess and review, and if it takes away some of the time the teachers would rather spend on preparing for exams. Another issue that reoccurred was the teachers' experience with pupils that was reluctant to use creative writing, either because the pupils did not take it seriously (respondent 21), the teacher considered his/her pupils too immature (respondent 10) or the pupils had a hard time relating to the creative writing process (respondent 40). The disadvantages usually take the form of practical issues that may occur when the teachers try to fit creative writing into the schedule, issues with assessment or problems getting the pupils used to this kind of writing. The disadvantages do not necessarily concern creative writing as a method but rather point to the practical implications which may arise when planning, executing learning in the classroom or assessment.

The last question in this category was: “What is the biggest challenge when it comes to creative writing?”. Here, some of the answers given in the last question were repeated, but some new considerations were also added. Some of the issues were related to assessment and problems with finding good criteria for assessing creative texts (respondent 13) and the issue mentioned earlier in this chapter about teachers not having enough competence in teaching creative writing and making creative assignments (respondents 5, 6, 26 and 39). Two respondents also pointed out that it is hard to justify using creative writing when it is not explicitly mentioned in the curriculum for the English subject (respondents 16 and 38). To summarize, it is possible to see some similarities between the disadvantages and challenges which teachers see related to creative writing and why teachers may decide to use or refrain from using creative writing. The challenges are often practical and concern choices teachers have to make regarding time limitations and focus towards exams. As seen in section 2.1.3, creative writing is not a method that has been included in the exams during the last years, and many teachers also mention this as one of the main reasons for not applying creative writing to a great extent. Still, many teachers seem to see the benefits creative writing may have for pupils and their ability to think independently, developing their own ideas and opinions and developing a joy for writing. Whether or not the teachers choose to use creative writing in their classroom is up to them since it is not explicitly mentioned in the curriculum, and it is the teachers’ subjective take on creative writing that decides its position in teaching and not the core curriculum goals for creativity.

## 4.4 Interview

The interview was held with two English teachers simultaneously. One has been a teacher for 7 years and the other for 18 years and the two had different views on the position of creative writing in their classrooms which created an interesting discussion during the group interview. Both of them are also teachers in Norwegian (L1) which introduced an interesting aspect and insight into how they teach, what choices they make regarding how they plan their lessons and which emphasis they put in their written work both regarding their L1 classroom, their L2 classrooms and the interaction between the two.

The interview was semi-structured, meaning that although questions were made beforehand, the path of the conversation was laid down as it went along according to what the teachers brought up themselves about the topic of writing and eventually about creative writing and

academic writing specifically. This was so as not to limit either myself or the interviewees when something interesting was brought up. The questions were open-ended meaning that there was no right or wrong answer, but rather a way of bringing out their personal beliefs about writing and creative writing in their classrooms and what experiences they have gained while working as teachers. Therefore, the interview and this analysis of it is a participant-oriented analysis emphasizing their own interpretations of the given topic.

Both interviewees are Norwegian, and this is their mother tongue. Therefore, the interview was also done in Norwegian to ensure more free speech. One teacher is male and the other female, and their personal pronouns will be used in this presentation and analysis of their answers. Since they were interviewed together, the analysis will be structured into topics rather than going through one teacher after another as that would become too repetitive.

#### **4.4.1 Group interview with two teachers**

The interview started off in a general setting where the teachers were asked about how many years they had worked as teachers in VGS and what the best and hardest part about working as a teacher is. Already here the challenge of assessment and class size was brought up, something that was also brought up several times by different respondents in the questionnaire in relation to creative writing.

Then we moved onto the topic of writing and here several interesting reflections came up. Some of them were similar to the opinions the respondents mentioned in the questionnaire and this allowed me to go more in-depth about reoccurring issues.

While talking about writing generally, teacher 1 mentioned a task they had been working on regarding persuasive essays. She mentioned how she allowed her pupils to write about what they want as long as they argue about a case in a given structure as seen in excerpt 1:

1: ... Også får de liksom en mal, da, hvordan de skal bygge opp et avsnitt og sånn også tar vi bare en eller annen ... og det kan være hva som helst da at «det burde være forbudt med ananas på pizza» for eksempel. Også skal man ha bestemt seg for ja eller nei også skal man argumentere for det.

1: ... And then they get a template where they are supposed to build up a paragraph and then we take just something ... and it can be anything like “it should be illegal to put pineapple on your pizza” for example. And then they have to decide yes or no and argue about it.

#### ***Excerpt 1. Types of tasks***

Here, it is possible to see how they combine academic tasks with creative tasks. The pupils are given an assignment where they have to follow set guidelines to create an argumentative text with rules about paragraphs and structure but with a topic of their own choosing where they can be creative with the topic and in their argumentation. However, just after saying this teacher 1 said that they use these types of tasks when they arrange field day (fagdag) where they practice writing longer texts of a more academic purpose. She explained that most of the texts they write of a more open and creative tone are used for shorter writing tasks during class. The teachers have a book filled of writing prompts they use for that purpose:

1: Ja. For eksempel en [oppgave] jeg bruker som funker veldig bra er "skriv et kjærlighetsbrev til en du hater". Da må de liksom følge formatet, men de må gjøre om metaforene for eksempel. Så "dine øyne er som sølepytter" osv.

E: Det synes de sikkert er moro.

1 Ja, det er morsomt. Og da må de bruke språket aktivt. Så det er litt sånt småteri, sånn driver vi jo med da. Også burde de jo skrive noe hver time.

1: Yes. For example, one [task] I use that works well is "write a love letter to someone you hate". Then they have to follow the format, but they have to change the metaphors. So for example "your eyes are like potholes" etc.

E: They probably think that is fun.

1: Yes, that is fun. And then they have to use the language more actively. So there are these small things, we do those too. And they should write something every period.

### *Excerpt 2. Creative task and format*

She explains that writing prompts such as that one makes the pupils use the language more actively but still follows the format of a letter. Both of these assignments show how they combine academic and creative writing, but the difference is that the teachers are not always aware of it or it is not always the purpose when they assign the task.

## **4.4.2 Assessment**

Assessment was mentioned as a challenge by these teachers as well and their main issue is not necessarily how to give feedback but finding the time to assess the texts. As a result, their pupils are disappointed if they write a text they feel good about but are not assessed on it.

2: Og da har de slitt litt med å omstille seg rundt at jeg har sagt at dette ikke blir vurdert, det er bestått ikke bestått. Og da blir de litt skuffet; "men jeg har jo skrevet så godt, kan ikke du gå inn å vurdere det?".

2: And they have struggled to wrap their heads around not being assessed, it is pass or fail. And that disappoints them; "but I've written such a good text, can't you assess it?"

*Excerpt 3. Disappointment with not being assessed*

If the pupils feel like they have done a good job they are eager to make it count as a part of their grade but may not see the value behind writing a good text apart from basis for assessment. This is an important aspect of the writing practice in itself, but as it is not a part of the thesis of this project it will not be discussed further.

Teacher 1 also mentioned that when she assigns creative tasks she usually does so without assessing them but uses it rather to practice writing.

1: ... jeg skulle gjerne drevet mye med kreativ skrivning som jeg ikke trengte å ta inn som vurdering da, for jeg ser jo at de får boltra seg på en annen måte der og, mer kreativt rett og slett da. Men så har man jo x-antall timer, og som du [lærer 2] sier så kan man ikke ta inn en bunke i uka heller.

1: ... I would love to work a lot with creative writing that I did not need to collect for assessment, because then I notice they get to unfold in a different way there too, quite simply more creatively. But you have a limited amount of time and as you (teacher 2) say, you cannot collect a pile every week either.

*Excerpt 4. Amount of assessment*

The focus here is quite different; should the pupils write to be assessed or write to write? Many of the issues around whether or not the teachers are able to assess the texts concerns time constraint. Both here and in the questionnaire, teachers mentioned that they felt like they had to prioritize their time and mostly ended up choosing to focus on academic writing. In an attempt to save time and make more room for specific feedback, teacher 2 mentioned an interesting method he used to increase the efficiency of feedback and assessment.

2: ... Men da ble det løftet frem at disse lift-spørsmålene de arbeidet med, at de fikk lov til å stille spørsmål om sin egen tekst og hva som kunne forbedres og at det kunne være en løsning innimellom.

2: ... But then it was pointed out that these lift-questions they were working on, where they were allowed to ask two questions about their own text and what they could improve, that this could be a solution sometimes.

*Excerpt 5. Lift-questions as an aid in feedback*

These lift-questions shortened both the amount of work and time spent for the teacher in a situation where he could give the pupils feedback in a process towards assessment. He usually did this orally in the classroom as they were working with an assignment, something that had proved to be helpful no matter whether the task was of an academic or creative tone (or a mixture of both). Teacher 2 also pointed out that with the lift-questions it became easier to solve issues right then and there when the pupils were in the process of writing instead of assessing it and giving feedback weeks after they had completed the text. This exchange improved the pupil's investment and understanding of the modifications in their written texts during the process of making it.

According to teacher 1, more open tasks require the teacher to follow up more and review in a longer process to be sure that their pupils are heading the correct way.

1: Det er mange som sliter med å komme i gang da, det er jo særlig hvis man gir de litt sånn åpne oppgaver. ... Så jeg prøver å jobbe med det her med disposisjon da. for helst vil de få oppgaven, lese den med en gang og begynne å skrive. Men altså du må tvinge dem til å dra ned tempo sånn at du får dem til å skjønne hva de skal skrive om før de begynner.

1: Many struggle with the initiation process, especially if the tasks are more open ... so I try working with dispositions because they would rather just get the task, read it and start writing. But you have to force them to slow down and make them understand what they are writing about before they start.

#### *Excerpt 6. Open tasks*

When working with more open tasks teacher 1 has to cooperate more with the pupils and follow up more closely to be certain that they understand the task correctly. She also has to be certain that the pupils plan their writing process before they start writing to help them understand what they are supposed to do. Here, there might be a difference in what the task looks like because if the pupils start writing without really understanding the task, there might be a problem. It is interesting to see this, because teacher 2 explained that the writing tasks that work best for him is namely the open tasks.

E: Hvilke oppgaver merker dere elevene liker og hvilke synes de er vanskelig å gjøre?

E: What tasks do you notice the pupils like and which ones do they think are harder to do?

2: For meg er det sånn at hvor større frihet de har til å utforme oppgavene selv, jo bedre liker de det.

2: My impression is that the more freedom they have to shape the task themselves, the better they like it.

#### *Excerpt 7. Types of tasks the pupils like*

The difference between teacher 1 and teacher 2 here is whether they give the task first, then include them in the process or whether they are included while making the task, before they are assigned. Teacher 2 have a point here and it revolves around when the pupils are allowed a part in creating the task, they also get to write about something they are more interested in because they are interested in the question. Teacher 1 has another approach, and it may seem more protracted, but the reality is that this is the types of tasks they usually get on exams; tasks that they have not been a part of making and tasks they have to structure well to get the point across. The question is then: what types of writing tasks are more useful for learning? Should the teachers work towards practicing for exams or should they focus on writing and language learning apart from the pressure from the exam? This will be discussed in section 5.1.2.

### 4.4.3 Curriculum and exams

Several respondents in the questionnaire and both teachers in the interview brought up the curriculum as a factor when deciding the content of their teaching and especially when it comes to creative writing, since it is not explicitly mentioned in the competence aims. Especially teacher 2 focused on this but both times he mentioned this he related the competence aims to the exam (excerpt 8 and 9):

2: Ja, [engelsk] er et stort fag. Jeg synes det er vanskelig ut i fra de læreplanene vi har å vite hva vi skal satse på.

E: Ja, det er jo ikke så veldig spesifikt.

2: Det er jo ikke det. Hvert fall hvis det skal være eksamensforberedende.

2: Yes, [English] is a demanding subject. I feel like it is hard to know what to focus on based on the curriculum.

E: Yes, it is not particularly specific.

2: It is not. Especially if it is supposed to be preparation for exams.

#### *Excerpt 8. The subject of English in relation to curriculum and exams*

2: For meg er for eksempel ... fått kreativ skrivning inn i fagplanene, slik at vi kunne fått det på eksamen, slik at vi kunne hatt det underveis, ja gjerne.

2: To me for example ... getting creative writing into the curricula, so that we could get it in the exams, so that we could teach it along the way, yes please.

#### *Excerpt 9. Creative writing in the curriculum*

Teacher 2 highlights how the lack of specific aims for creative writing in the subject curriculum, and as a result the lack of use on the exams, makes it hard for him to find a way to implement it in the classroom. Still, he expresses an attitude towards creative writing that

implies that he is positive towards it and would like to use it more if it had a bigger position in the curriculum and in the exams. Exams are supposed to measure the pupil's knowledge based on the curriculum and the competence aims, so it is not unnatural that this is a part of the focus when teachers plan their teaching, in fact it is fundamental. Teacher 2 exclaim that he would like for the Directorate to implement creative writing in the curriculum so that he could find more room for it in his teaching because that would mean that it would be relevant in preparation for the exam. But as long as it is not a part of the subject curriculum it will also have a compromised position in his classroom.

#### 4.4.4 National competition in English writing

The teachers told me about a national writing competition (NM i engelsk) they had been a part of in the beginning of the year and they discovered something interesting while talking together about it during the interview.

2: I forrige uke så hadde vi en skrivekonkurranse i engelsk ...

1: En sånn fylkeskonkurranse.

E: Ja, ok.

2: Og da var det muligheter for å skrive kreativt, men det ... i en sånn form så virker det skremmende på ganske mange elever.

1: Nesten alle hadde gjort det hos meg.

2: De hadde valgt kreativ?

1: Ja.

2: Sier du det? For hos meg så tenkte jeg at "nei, det har de ikke lært her", så da gikk de for den andre, for formatskriving.

E: Så det var en mer faglig og en mer kreativ ...?

1: Ja, det var formal, creative eller audio visual [de kunne velge mellom].

2: Last week we had a writing competition in English ...

1: A competition for the whole county.

E: Yes, okay.

2: And then there was an option to write creatively, but it ... in a form like that it seems scary for quite a lot of pupils.

1: Almost everybody had done that with me.

2: They chose creative?

1: Yes.

2: Really? Because with me I thought that "no, they have not learned that here", so they went with the other one, the format writing.

E: So it was one more academic and one more creative ...?

1: Yes, it was one formal, one creative and one audio visual [task].

#### *Excerpt 10. National writing competition*

The teachers had experienced quite a different result in how many of their pupils chose the creative task in the writing competition. Both had expected their pupils not to choose the creative task, and in teacher 2's case it seemed to turn out as expected. But in teacher 1's class, most of the pupils chose the creative task. Following this realization, she continued to say:



1: ... jeg tror 80% av mine valgte creative writing jeg. Hos meg så savner de det nok veldig.

1: ... I think 80% of mine chose creative writing. They miss it a lot with me I think.

*Excerpt 11. Teacher 1 on the amount of creative writing in her classroom.*

Teacher 1 expressed an understanding of why so many of her pupils chose the creative task and acknowledges that her pupils miss creative writing tasks in her classroom. There can be a number of different reasons as to why so many of her pupils chose the creative assignments, but the interesting part is that she reflects upon the amount of creative writing she assigns her class and whether or not it is sufficient according to the pupils' wishes. The fact that she knows that her pupils miss doing creative writing tasks in her class is very interesting especially since she expresses a reluctance towards it during the interview which will be discussed more in-depth below.

#### **4.4.5 Reluctance towards creative writing**

Based what is said above, teacher 1 reflects upon how she seems to understand how her pupils miss creative writing tasks, and therefore chose such a task in a national writing competition within the county. When they got the chance to choose themselves, 80% of her pupils chose a type of task that she would normally not assign her pupils herself. There can be many reasons as to why they chose that particular task when they got the option, but the fact that she is aware that her pupils miss doing creative writing tasks is interesting especially regarding a reluctance that came forth during the interview. The excerpt above illustrate this, and this excerpt is a continuum of the former excerpt and followed what came up when talking about the writing competition:

1: Nei, men kreativ skrivning driver vi lite med. Det blir jo sånn som du sa med sånne writing prompts og på skrive dagen, jeg tror 80% av mine valgte creative writing jeg. Hos meg så savner de det nok veldig. Men en av grunnene til at.. eller det er to grunner da til at jeg gjør det lite: for det første så kommer det jo ikke på eksamen, og engelsk er jo ett år, ikke sant. Det er på VG1 så er det avsluttende. Så kan man jo ikke drive og dille med sånne ting som ... man må jo være litt eksamensretta. Og for det andre er det umulig å vurdere. For det blir jo kjedelig. Det blir sånn, for man leser tre setninger så kan man jo se hel handlingsforløpet, ikke sant

1: No, but we do not conduct a lot of creative writing. It turns out like you said with these writing prompts and on the day of writing [for the competition], I think 80% of mine chose creative writing. They miss it a lot with me I think. But one of the reasons is that ... or there are two reasons why I do not do it as much: first of all it does not come up on the exam, and English is only one year, right. It is VG1 so it is the final year [of English]. So you cannot bother with those kinds of things that... you have to be exam-oriented. And secondly it is impossible to assess. Because it gets boring. It becomes like, you read three sentences and then you see the whole storyline, right.

*Excerpt 11. Teacher 1 on reasons why she does not use creative writing as much.*

Through this excerpt it is possible to pick up an attitude towards creative writing tasks and it comes forth in how she expresses the reasons for the small amount of creative writing in her classroom. The main elements it is possible to pick up from this excerpt is that she believes creative writing not to be as relevant towards the exam and how it is hard to assess. She shares these beliefs with several other teachers that answered the same in the questionnaire. As we saw in the questionnaire, 30 out of 42 respondents answered that the focus on exams is a part of the reason why they tend not to use creative writing as much, and in addition, many answered that they felt assessment was hard when it comes to this because they do not know what criteria they can base their assessment on. The point is that the two reasons she lists here are reoccurring reasons for a less extent of use throughout the mass of teachers. Nevertheless, based on what is said it is also implied that there is an attitude towards creative writing as something you cannot “bother with” (“dille med”), which suggest that she sees it as unnecessary and irrelevant as a tool for language learning in the race towards exams at the end of the year.

Another matter that comes up in relation to the issue of assessment is that she has experienced how the texts often becomes too similar to each other which makes the process of assessing it tedious for her as a teacher. This also came up in the questionnaire where

some respondents reported having pupils that struggled with being creative and to understand how they could solve the task in an interesting way without making the story too predictable and unoriginal. In essence, this means that the teachers feel that their pupils are unable to produce quality texts and as an effect do not see the point of appointing and assigning such tasks. This aspect is quite incredible, thinking that if the task is creative, one would expect that it would result in different answers. This might tell us something about the type of tasks that are given, or the lack of opportunity taken in answering the task. Although it is outside the grasp of this thesis to wonder about what tasks are given, it is interesting to consider this answer, and it could serve well as a topic for further research later on.

Also, the above point is interesting considering how many also answered that they felt the pupils had enough experience with creative writing in lower secondary school and therefore did not have to apply it as much in upper secondary because they had enough training on it already. These two beliefs do not correlate with each other and says something about how the group of pupils you get can be very differing. Some may be able to express themselves well in a creative way because they were taught how to in lower secondary, but some may also not be adequate at it and may need more training in this kind of text writing and use of language. The fact that few teachers include differentiated pupil groups as a factor, but include two contrasting factors of either having enough experience from creative writing before or not being adequate at it by the time they reach VGS, gives away an idea that they see their groups of pupils in a predetermined fashion without considering what they might need more training in or what they have already covered in lower secondary.

One last matter that can be taken from this excerpt is how it may seem that teacher 1 is mainly talking about pupils writing stories when she refers to creative writing. She mentions how it is possible to predict the whole *storyline* based on the first three sentences, suggesting that what she means by creative writing is writing fictional stories for example in the form of a short story. This brings us back to the issues regarding lack of definition about what creative writing is which is a reoccurring question that arises while analyzing the results from both the interview and the questionnaire. It is unclear what the teachers consider to be creative writing and what they consider as academic writing, but what is clearer is that they tend to see them as two different things, sometimes also as opposites, which is interesting. Their outlook on what creative writing is may have had an effect on how they answered regarding the extent of use, and it can also have an impact on how it is used in the classroom.

## 4.5 Summary

The results presented in this chapter has been included in the process towards answering especially research question 1) “What are the advantages and disadvantages of using creative writing in the classroom?” and research question 2) “To what degree do teachers report on using creative writing in their classroom?”. These questions and the results creates the basis for further discussion of them in addition to research question 3) “What reasons do they give for using it to this extent and what does it signify for English language teaching in Norwegian VGS?” which has in part been addressed above and will reassembled and discussed in the next chapter.

The findings from the data collection allows me to point out several issues related to the use of creative writing in Norwegian ELT classrooms in Norwegian VGS. The majority of the teachers responded that they tend to employ academic writing more than creative writing in their classrooms, and there are a number of reasons behind this tendency, the most prominent one’s being time constraints, lack of knowledge about the concept and how to teach it, trouble with assessment and the fact that it is not as present in the subject curriculum and therefor also not in the exams. Still, many of the respondents see the benefits creative writing can have for their pupils when they are practicing writing in English as a foreign language and how it can help them develop their language skills by assigning such tasks in addition to other tasks. However, the practical problems seem to be the deciding factor when the teachers plan their writing tasks and as a result, creative writing is not used as much as some of the teachers wish they had the possibility to do. The teachers that were interviewed extended on this and reported different views on creative writing in the classroom. Teacher 1 was more reluctant towards it than teacher 2, naming assessment and time constraints towards exam the biggest issues related to it. Teacher 2 was more positive towards using creative writing but would like for it to be more present on the subject curriculum and in the exams, which again made even someone like him – that is initially positive towards creative writing – make other priorities when deciding what written tasks to assign.

These results presented and analyzed above are some of the more immediate reasons for the extent of use of creative writing in Norwegian ELT classrooms, but how does this relate back to the theory on the subject and what does these results signify for English language teaching in Norwegian VGS? This question constitutes research question three and will be the basis of discussion in the following chapter.

## 5. Discussion

The research aim for this project, as stated in the introduction, is to find out what beliefs some English teachers in Norwegian upper secondary schools have about the use of creative writing in their English language teaching. In the previous chapter, I presented results from my data collection (chapter 4) where 42 teachers answered a questionnaire and two teachers were interviewed about their thoughts on writing and creative writing in particular. The upper secondary English teachers were asked questions both about the quantity of creative versus academic writing in their teaching as well as their thoughts on how creative writing could be used and what challenges they might face while choosing their teaching material. This was done in order to investigate both the advantages and disadvantages of creative writing to give a more complete picture of what using creative writing in EFL education might entail. In this chapter, I will examine the data material collected in the research and discuss it in light of the theory presented in chapter 2 to answer the research questions posed in section 1.3:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using creative writing in the ELT classroom?
2. To what degree and for what purpose do teachers report using creative writing in their classroom?
3. What reasons do the teachers give for using creative writing to this extent and what does it signify for their pupils' writing in English?

Research question one and two were to some extent addressed in the previous chapters, but will, along with research question three, also be discussed in more detail in this chapter. Research question three will be the main focus of this chapter because it opens up for discussion and closer investigation of all the research questions and what significance the findings have for EFL teaching in Norwegian VGS. The main finding as presented in the former chapter is that creative writing is not used to a great extent in the EFL classrooms of the respondents, when compared to academic writing. This may have implications for the pupils in their language learning as it may limit their writing spectrum and their ability to apply the foreign language in different ways while writing, as we will come to see.

The results from the data collection shows that all the teachers in this study report on using creative writing less than academic writing. As previously mentioned (section 3.5), my aim is not to assess whether this is right or wrong, but rather discuss what *implications* it has for the pupils and their writing skills.

In this final chapter, these implications are the main focus, and they are based on the results seen in light of the theory. The chapter is structured to discuss these implications first, then we move on to discussing what purpose the teachers may have while assigning writing tasks and finally I discuss the teachers' understanding of creative writing and what implications their understanding may have on its use in their classrooms.

## 5.1 Creative writing as an addition to rather than a part of the teaching

One aspect which became apparent in my material is that the teachers mentioned that they had difficulty finding the time to implement different kinds of writing tasks in their classroom, especially tasks other than the types that occur on the exams, which are mostly academic tasks such as essays, as we saw in section 2.1.3. In the results chapter, section 4.1.2, this issue with time constraint surfaced particularly in relation to assessment. There were three reasons for that. First, the respondents said that academic writing tasks have a clearer framework as to how a text should be structured, worded and executed, which makes it easier for the teachers to teach and instruct on such tasks. Second, they also said that this framework made it easier to assess the texts, having guidelines by which to assess. Third, the respondents mentioned that “academic writing is something they have to go through either way”, which made the creative writing tasks they gave an addition to what they already have to do throughout the school year(s).

As an extension of this, some teachers mentioned how the assessment of creative tasks easily became subjective (respondents 11 and 31), based on what the individual teacher considered to be creative and innovative, which might be unfortunate in the assessment situation. Anae (2014) also underlined this as we saw in section 2.4 when arguing how “the outcomes of creative writing are often unpredictable, often unknown in advance, highly individualized and distinctive, and can also depend on mode or genre used within the creative writing process...” (Harper 2013; Anae, 2014, p. 126). By limiting the writing to set criteria, there is not as much room left for innovation and creativity, which may have an opposing effect if if

quells the creative process. Nevertheless, the lack of criteria makes it hard both for the students who write and for the teachers who assess.

As we saw earlier (section 2.1.1) creative writing is not an integral part of the subject curriculum and is therefore not something the teachers are required to implement in their teaching. In an article by Schoff (2016) it is argued that open writing tasks in the classroom might seem fun and enjoyable in the classroom environment, but teachers regularly see it as extra because such tasks are not an integral part of the curricula (Schoff, 2016, p. 32). The teachers' issues with time constraints, problems with assessment and a lack of guidelines therefore makes creative writing an addition, supporting Schoff's (2016) argument. All of this has two main implications. First, it challenges the variation in the classroom and secondly it has an implication for the role the subject curriculum plays in the classroom while working towards the exams.

### **5.1.1 Implication of variation in their teaching**

As stated in the introduction of this chapter, it is no mystery why most of the teachers applied more academic writing in their teaching, as they are teachers in the general studies program, preparing the pupils for higher education or employment. It is key that these pupils learn how to write argumentative texts and structure. Yet in section 4.2, 29 out of 42 respondents answered that they would like to use creative writing more than what they do, so they clearly have aspirations for their teaching to include this aspect.. The most prominent reason for wanting to include more creative writing, given by 27 teachers out of the 29 who wanted to use CW more, was that it would increase the element of variation in the teaching.

This is also true if we look to the pupils themselves. In the interview with the two teachers, teacher 1 mentioned that when the school and her class participated in a national competition for English writing, 80% of her pupils chose the creative writing task (the choices were creative writing, argumentative writing or an audio-visual form). She expressed an understanding that her pupils missed working with creative writing tasks in the daily teaching, and that this became clear during the writing competition. These examples from the interview as well as the results from the questionnaire presented in section 4.3 about the advantages of creative writing, show that most of the teachers are positive towards the concept of creative writing.

However, some other teachers (12 of 42) answered that they would like to use creative writing less than what they already do (see 4.2). Again, the most prominent reasons for this were related to issues such as assessment, focus on exams, time constraint and irrelevance. A recurring theme to the answers about why creative writing is not used is practical issues as the ones listed above, and this will be discussed further below (5.2). But, their answers also raise the question of what learning goals the teachers have in their classroom. As Seltzer and Bentley (1999) put it, directing the teaching solely towards exams causes an implication for the long-term learning in the educational system:

“While qualifications are still integral to personal success, it is no longer enough for students to show that they are capable of passing public examinations. To thrive on our economy defined by the innovative application of knowledge, **we must be able to do more than absorb and feedback information. Learners and workers must draw on their entire spectrum of learning experience and apply what they have learned in new and creative ways**” (pp. 9-10, my emphasis).

Seltzer and Bentley argue that it should not be enough for the educational system to aim for passing an exam by absorbing and restating information, but also be able to apply our knowledge in innovative ways. This brings out a larger question imposed in this thesis about the value of creative thinking and writing and also leaves me wondering about what focus the teachers focus on based on the curricula and exams, a focus that seems to be on assessment and passing exams. These goals are short-termed and lasts either a year or three years, if we are to include the whole course of general studies. The pressure of getting through the school system may affect the use of methods such as creative writing which is not short-termed but rather a string of habits (2.4.2) applied in the process of solving a task. If the teachers are able to see the connection of using creative writing to teach writing and develop writing skills in their pupils, their learning goals may also be different.

### **5.1.2 Implicating the teachers' learning goals in their writing tasks**

30 out of 42 teachers mentioned *working towards exams* as one of the main reasons as to why they did not spend much time on creative writing during the year (4.1.1). As Schoff (2016) argues, it can be hard for educators to “see how [creative tasks] help us and our students meet our goals” (p. 32). This can have several reasons, one being that it does not necessarily provide visible results during the course of a short time. Rather, creative writing is a method that continually develops together with the pupils' mental maturation as a part of



their way of thinking, a way of thinking that cannot directly be applied or taught – it is a longitudinal endeavor that demands learning goal which is different from doing well on the end-of-year exam. This again, has implications for the position of creative writing in the classroom because such writing does not have an explicit place in the curriculum or exams, so if the teachers emphasize the exam as one of the things that influence their choices of what to teach in the classroom, it is no wonder that creative writing becomes an addition rather than an integral part of the teaching.

However, creative and academic writing are not opposites, as we saw in section 2.5.2 and Spack and Sadow (1983) and Maley (2010) argue that they are rather types of writing that can complement each other in foreign language learning and writing. Especially Maley points out how “[c]reative writing aids language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse” and how pupils “...necessarily engage with the language at a deeper level of processing” gaining “...grammatical accuracy, appropriacy and originality of lexical choice, and sensitivity to rhythm, rhyme, stress and intonation...” (2010, paragraph 4). Based the results in the present study, we see that some teachers see these benefits and as a result use creative writing to some extent. However, most of the teachers may not consider the aspect of creative writing that involves developing grammar and vocabulary etc., but rather sees creative writing as an addition that takes time away from learning syntax and academic writing, the opposite of Maley’s argument

There is no quick fix to this dilemma and as Schoff (2016) argues, it is not enough to “sprinkling in creative activities here and there”, but rather “to provide a deeper foundation and deeper understanding of creativity” (p. 32) which makes me ask the question *how much is enough*. However, if creative writing is seen as an addition to the teaching the pupils will gain most from towards the exam and to use in higher education, then there is a different question to ask; what is the purpose behind the writing?

One teacher (respondent 26), when asked about whether he/she wanted more or less creative writing in his/her classroom, answered that it is “more important to interpret and recognize formal features than [for the students] to write themselves” (own translation). Of course, this is an opinion that exemplifies the different foci teachers can have while assigning writing during the year. Another teacher (respondent 11) reported that he/she gladly assigns creative writing tasks for shorter writing tasks, because the pupils benefit from using the language not only to convey facts, but to express their emotions and ideas (own translation).

In relation to this and the differences in learning goals among the teachers, researchers Beghetto and Kaufman (2007) highlight that the area of use for creative writing is more relevant for the longitudinal learning goals. If the goal is a good grade for the exam, then that ends by the end of the year, but if the goal is a maturation of knowledge and development of your students' own ideas then the goal is lifelong. It is clear which goal one is more realistic to attain from the teacher's perspective and this probably influences some of their choices in the classrooms as well. Beghetto and Kaufman, however, highlights that creativity is not the same as learning but rather a knowledge development that follows the same "... creative, transformative process involved in developing personal knowledge and insight" (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007, pp. 73-74). This means that creative writing is not something that can be learned but rather developed over a long period of time. However, it does not mean that this cannot also help in working towards short-term goals, as this transformative process can help in solving tasks as you go along throughout your education.

What Arshavskaya (2015) discovered when introducing creative writing tasks to her ESL/EFL classes at the University of Utah was that her students found writing more relevant and engaging. They became more aware of the content and gained more confidence in using a foreign language. Based on the answers from the data collection in the present study, several Norwegian teachers share the same experience. Some examples are amongst others one that reported that it motivates the pupils and gives them the opportunity to reflect on a topic in a different way, promotes empathy, inspires them to explore and enhance their general vocabulary (respondent 8). Another teacher said that it is important to play around with the language and practice with idioms and word choice (respondent 16).

The last example I will give is from respondent 31 and this example is, in my opinion, crucial because this perspective reoccurred throughout the research. This respondent (respondent 31) reported that the balance between creative and academic writing tasks were quite similar in his/her classroom because he/she has different areas of use for different goals. The respondent goes on by saying that creative writing has value for development on the human level but may not be as relevant in preparing the pupils for writing academically in higher education. Considering the theory on creative writing as seen throughout all of chapter 2, this does not necessarily align with the theory. In this perspective, this response relevant because it pinpoints the issues raised in this thesis regarding how creative writing can help the pupils use the language in a different way and developing other traits. For

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example, several respondents reported seeing how creative writing can help the pupils develop empathy, enhance the personal relevance and engagement (respondent 5, 11, 26, 31, 40), but few see the possibilities for using creative writing to develop academic traits. Respondent 31 said that the balance between academic and creative writing is quite equal in his/her classroom, but not for the reason of using both approaches to reach the same goal while working with competence aims towards the exam, but to use each approach for different reasons which challenges the balance between practical and personal emphasis in the classroom.

## 5.2 Teachers' emphasis on practical reasons over personal development

As previously mentioned, based on the data collected in this study (section 4.1.2) I found that many of the teachers saw creative writing as an addition rather than as an essential part of their teaching, emphasizing academic writing tasks to a larger extent than creative writing. Focus on exams, trouble with assessment, time constraint and work load were some of the main causes behind this view. What these reasons have in common is that they are practical issues related to the logistics of the classroom in working towards the exams.

The implication of this is a focus on the more practical sides of teaching rather than a more developmental and personal emphasis on language learning, in short, a focus in teaching rather than learning. In section 2.1.2 about the core curriculum in Norway, we saw that there is a whole section dedicated to creative abilities. In relation to upper secondary education, creative ability is included to assist pupil's in their personal development (Directorate for Education and Training, 1997, p. 4). The issue that arises here is that this emphasis on personal development in the core curriculum is not reflected in the competence aims in the subject curriculum, which leads many of the teachers not to focus on it, but rather see creative writing with personal expression as an addition and not something they would usually implement. What becomes clear from this is that the choices some of the teachers from the data collection made were practical rather than personal. The implication this has on the teaching is that the pupils' personal development and expression may fall short as the L2 teacher focuses on the vocational needs rather than emotional and maturational needs just as Bilton and Sivasubramaniam (2009) argued when saying that L2 educators primarily focus on the students' "vocational needs" (p. 303) without paying attention to students'

emotional or maturational needs. If this tendency is true for students and teachers throughout the duration of their education and teaching, the implication may be that the students do not feel the writing to be as relevant and engaging in comparison to what a more personal emphasis would serve. In relation to this project, it can also have an implication on the pupils' engagement with using the foreign language they are learning and their eagerness to write. At least this is what Arshavskaya (2015), found when she assigned more creative writing task for her EFL students, noticing that her students became more aware of content and became more confident in using English as a foreign language when indulging in personal expression through creative writing tasks, as mentioned earlier. If the pupils experience more engagement when writing creatively, it can, as extension, make them use the language more which again aids their foreign language learning.

The teachers in the data collection also saw how these sides to creative writing was a resource in their teaching. When asked about the benefits of creative writing (section 4.3), many of the teachers mentioned how creative writing helped the students to use the language in a different way than just reciting facts. They saw an opportunity to express their feelings and ideas (respondents 2, 5, 10, 11, 16, 19, 21, 23, 31, 36, 40, 42) to step out of their comfort zone and gain more confidence (answer 26), and creative writing can also help motivation and create a joy for writing (respondents 3, 8, 12, 14, 16, 23, 24, 25).

In short, the teachers see the benefits of using creative writing and how it can develop their student's more personal sides and how it can help them develop their language in a different, more engaging way. In addition, as mentioned in the results chapter (section 4.2), 29 out of the 42 respondents in the questionnaire reported wanting to use creative writing more, for several reasons – variation being the most prominent reason. However, although the teachers see the benefits, they still generally see creative writing as an addition, as something they can implement in the classroom only if there is time or need for it. The implication of this culminates with the vocational needs – focusing on competence aims and exams – as being the main part, setting aside the maturational needs of the students. Again, this is not wrong by its own means, but it confirms what Bilton and Sivasubramaniam (2009) argued.

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### 5.3 How is creative writing understood by the teachers in this study?

During the interview with the two teachers, teacher 1 mentioned that creative writing was not something she wanted to “bother with” (“dille med”, excerpt 11 in section 4.4.5). Yet the two teachers and the other respondents in the questionnaire expressed themselves differently when talking about creative writing in education while answering the questions I asked. The diverse perceptions and attitudes the teachers have about what creative writing actually is very likely to influence their use of creative writing as a tool for language learning. Oddane’s (2017) argument, as presented in the introduction, points out how the “...discussion of terms carries the argument about how the way we *think* about creativity and innovation also controls what we actually *do* when we try to realize the ambitions on this front” (Oddane, 2017, p. 17, own translation). In the case of this study, Oddane’s argument means that the way the users, in this case the teachers, think about creative writing influences to what extent it is applied in the classroom. Through gathering and analyzing the respondents’ beliefs about creative writing and its significance for the teachers’ teaching, I noticed a pattern of uncertainty about what creative writing entails, especially in an educational setting.

In the introduction to this project, we saw two different definitions of creative writing. First, the Oxford Dictionary defined creative writing as “writing, typically fiction or poetry, which displays imagination or invention (often contrasted with academic or journalistic writing)” (Creative writing, n.d). This definition contrasts creative writing with academic or journalistic writing and limits it to genres as for example fiction and poetry.

However, the definition above may not be adequate in an educational setting as it takes on a larger question of how writing is used in learning which will not suffice as long as the definition is limited to mean *writing poetry and short stories*. Perhaps it is not fruitful to limit the definition to genres at all, but rather seeing creative writing as Weldon (2010) does when he argues that creative writing is:

... an academic discipline which develops cognitive abilities related to the aesthetic, moral, ethical and social contexts of human experience ... Creative Writing encourages divergent forms of thinking, where the notion of being “correct” gives way to broader issues of value (p. 170).

Additionally, Alan Maley (2010) points out some possible outcomes of language use when creative writing is applied to the pupils' writing training:

As learners manipulate the language in interesting and demanding ways in their attempt to express uniquely personal meanings (as they do in creative writing), they necessarily engage with the language at a deeper level of processing than with expository texts (paragraph 4).

These two ways of looking at creative writing is more specific for the educational setting I am investigating in this study. Again, this is related to the mini-c creativity of appropriation and application of knowledge to create intrapersonal knowledge and insight by using creative writing to make it relevant for the pupils (2.3.2). This also supports and relates to the discussion in section 5.1.2 about how some teachers set developmental and maturational needs aside, all the while Maley (2010) and Weldon (2010) highlights the expression of personal meaning and development of ethical and social contexts of human beings in using creative writing in education.

Based on many of the responses in the present study, it is possible to see that the teachers' perception of creative writing is more similar to the general definition from the Oxford Dictionary than to the definitions and perspectives from the educational researchers (Weldon and Maley amongst others). Specifically, in the result sections 4.1.4 about the emphasis on academic rather than creative writing and in section 4.4.5 from the interview about teacher 1's reluctance towards creative writing, it is possible to pinpoint an uncertainty about how creative writing can be used which consequently may explain why many are reluctant to apply it in their classroom.

Furthermore, in the questionnaire several teachers mentioned that their reluctance towards creative writing could be because they felt they did not know enough about the subject themselves (respondents 6, 12, 36, 39, 42) giving explicit reasons such as not having enough competence about creative writing, not knowing how to teach it and not knowing what tasks to give. One teacher even mentioned not being creative enough to include creative writing tasks in the classroom, which is an interesting observation because one may speculate whether this teacher would benefit from some creative writing during his/her education as well. Nevertheless, these responses were specific about not knowing enough about creative writing to use it, and they come in addition to a number of other respondents that said that they failed to include creative writing because of the lack of criteria for assessment (38%) or

not having enough time to familiarize themselves with how to apply it in language acquisition (10%).

Consequently, there is a clear distance between the teachers' beliefs about creative writing and what the researchers in the field of education say about creative writing and its area of application. Some respondents see creative writing as more of a time thief and an undefined or irrelevant type of writing that does not aid the pupils as much compared to academic writing in the rush towards exams. This has a direct implication for the position creative writing has in the classrooms of these teachers. It can be argued that this is only fair considering the content of the subject curriculum and the exams from the past years as presented in section 2.1, yet research shows us that creative writing may be helpful also in reaching this short-term goal. However, it seems that among teachers, there is a supposition that creative writing entails writing poems, short stories or similar texts. The educational researchers mentioned above (Weldon, 2010; Maley, 2010), in addition to Beghetto and Kaufman (2007) and Moran and John-Steiner (2003), emphasizes creative writing as a *tool* for (foreign) language acquisition. This is also reflected in the thesis statement of this project ( ... my thesis aim is to investigate ... what the teacher's beliefs are about creative writing as a **tool** for ELT in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in Norwegian VGS). To sum up, there is a distance between what the teachers think about creative writing and what the educational researchers say creative writing can be used for, which pinpoints the issue in this thesis. The teachers seem to lack the knowledge about creative writing to apply it in their classroom as an effective and useful tool for foreign language writing.

Looking at the theory of educational perspectives of creative writing and comparing them to the responses from the data collection, it is possible to conclude that although some teachers see how creative writing could be used as a tool for language acquisition, they rather use academic writing tasks 60-100% of the time due to various reasons such as more focus on practical issues when deciding the content of their lectures, more emphasis on vocational rather than personal needs and lastly, as described here, not really understanding what creative writing entails in educational settings.

## 5.4 Summary

The teachers in this study reported using creative writing less than academic writing when assigning written tasks, and this may have some implications for the pupils' use of language.

Academic writing is a useful method in itself, but the teachers' view of creative writing might keep their pupils from developing their foreign language writing skills if they are not challenged with not only different types of tasks that might seem more relevant and indulging, but also by not teaching a way to think and go through the writing process in innovative ways. This might narrow down the pupils' ability to solve and write a task that takes them to the highest level in Bloom's taxonomy; to create. In addition, creative writing can, according to the theory, develop other traits such as empathy. Many of the teachers reported seeing the benefits of using creative writing but most discount it because they see it as an addition to the more academic writing tasks that their pupils might get more use of on the exam since creative writing is not mentioned explicitly in the core curriculum. Rather than seeing creative writing as a way to make a product, it might be more fruitful to see it how the ELT researchers see it, namely as a process rather than a product. This change in perspective may influence the position of creative writing as a tool for learning when solving a task.



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## 6. Conclusion

In this thesis I have investigated to what extent teachers of English in Norwegian VGS use creative writing in their classrooms, what beliefs these teachers have about their use of creative writing and what implications this use can have for their pupils' writing skills. Creative writing is not an explicit part of the subject curriculum at this level in Norway today, which means that teachers are not required to use it in their teaching. However, according to researchers within language education and based on my experience during my teaching practice periods, there are good reasons to include creative writing as a part of varied teaching in English language learning. To find out more about the position of creative writing in the teaching of English in Norwegian classrooms, I formulated and investigated the following research questions:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using creative writing in the ELT classroom?
2. To what degree and for what purpose do teachers report using creative writing in their classroom?
3. What reasons do the teachers give for using creative writing to this extent and what does it signify for their pupils' writing in English?

Creative writing in foreign language education has both advantages and disadvantages. Some of the advantages according to educational researchers of creative writing, as seen in chapter 2, are that creative writing may be more engaging, making the pupils more aware of content and giving them more confidence in using the foreign language Arshavskaya (2015) and that creative writing also aids academic writing and helps develop the pupils' grammar, vocabulary, discourse and accuracy in using the language (Maley, 2010; Spack & Sadow, 1983). Some of the teachers in the data collection elaborated on the advantages of creative writing saying that it makes the pupils use the language in different ways than just reciting facts, it makes the pupils use their imagination and express themselves, creative writing gives variation and creates a joy for writing. However, there are also some disadvantages to creative writing in the classroom. The main disadvantage is the lack of a universal definition of creative writing making it hard to work with and hard to teach. As a consequence, creative writing is also hard to assess because there is a lack of guidelines and criteria. The teachers also mentioned that creative writing takes time, time that they would rather spend on academic writing tasks in working towards exams.

These disadvantages became apparent when the teachers in the data collection were asked about to what extent they use creative writing in their classrooms. Most of the teachers reported that they use creative writing tasks less frequently than academic writing tasks, mainly for the same reasons as mentioned above (exams, time constraint, lack of knowledge about creative writing). My findings also suggest that the teachers have a limited awareness of what creative writing is and how it can be used, which is not surprising given that it is not an explicit part of the curricula. Many of the teachers who participated in the study seem to have an understanding of creative writing as writing poems and short stories, which is a very limited view that does not see creative writing as a tool for language learning or a method to solve writing tasks.

However, educational researchers on creative writing see creative writing as a process rather than a product (Anae, 2014; Oddane, 2017; Spencer et al., 2014; Maley, 2010). It is this process that may take the pupils to the highest part of Bloom's revised taxonomy where *to create* is positioned at the top (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). In this case, *to create* means that the pupils *create* new intrapersonal knowledge by seeing their prior knowledge in a new light by applying it in creative ways and learns something new by seeing it from a new perspective (2.3). This type of learning is called mini-c creativity (Beghetto and Kaufman, 2007). Novel ideas within mini-c creativity are not necessarily original or meaningful to others, but the ideas are intrapersonal judgements of novelty. Therefore, this type of learning does not necessarily create new knowledge but allows the pupil to see their prior knowledge in a new light by applying it in novel ways. The creative process requires a continual reorganization of ideas which makes this a long-term process. The educational institution is a chief platform to either accelerate or slow this process down depending on environmental possibilities and facilities, meaning that the educators need to be consistent in the application of creative writing in order for their pupils to develop mini-c creativity. This might be a good place to start if creative writing is to be a more integral part of development of writing skills, but mini-c creativity is also a quite delicate and intricate part of foreign language learning which may not take up much space in the thoughts of teachers when they plan their lessons and writing tasks.

What this signifies for foreign language learning is that creative writing may be hard to apply in a constructive way as long as it is not a part of the curricula or not directly relevant for the exam. Nevertheless, if creative writing in fact does aid even academic writing and the development of grammar, why is it not an integral part of teachers' writing plans? This study

has uncovered many possible explanations, several teachers mentioned, for example, in diverse ways that they either did not see the use of creative writing, did not know enough about it or did not know how to guide the pupils in their writing. Ultimately, this indicates that they are unsure of what creative writing in their classroom entails and how it can be used and applied, and as a result they see creative writing as an addition to, rather than a natural part of, their usual teaching plans. If creative writing is going to have a place in the Norwegian classroom, the teachers and pupils alike need to understand that creative writing is a process rather than a product, a way of thinking and solving a task rather than a product of that task.

The problem, as it were, is that this is not reflected in the curricula at this point, and the combination of creative writing not being included in the curricula, teachers' understanding of creative writing as something else than a process and the issues of definition of and criteria for creative writing may be influencing factors in creative writing being seen as an addition. It is not possible to structure a one-fits-all type of creative writing. There is, at least, not one way of teaching or executing it. It depends on the teachers' own creativity, and if the fate of creative writing is up to the individual teacher, the use of creative writing is diminished as long as it is not a part of a systemized application of creative ability over several years.

If we can establish a clear connection between engaging creative writing and clear development of writing skills, creative writing may be applied as both a short- and a long-term learning goal, not just helping pupils through their exams but also developing our way of solving tasks throughout life. In order to do this to happen, further research is needed.

Suggestions for further research:

- Investigate possibilities for applying creative writing based on the upcoming new curricula in Norway
- More research on the connection between creative writing and development of foreign language skills
- More research on how assessment is or can be conducted in relation to creative writing
- Pupils' perception and beliefs about creative writing in foreign language learning

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – Approval from NSD



Christina Sandhaug

2418 ELVERUM

Vår dato: 09.10.2017

Vår ref: 56115 / 3 / STM

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

### Forenklet vurdering fra NSD Personvernombudet for forskning

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 22.09.2017.

Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

<i>56115</i>	<i>The use of creative writing as a tool for EFL acquisition in Norwegian VGS</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>Høgskolen i Innlandet, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Christina Sandhaug</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Elisabeth Sundt</i>

### Vurdering

Etter gjennomgang av opplysningene i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg, vurderer vi at prosjektet er omfattet av personopplysningsloven § 31. Personopplysningene som blir samlet inn er ikke sensitive, prosjektet er samtykkebasert og har lav personvernulempe. Prosjektet har derfor fått en forenklet vurdering. Du kan gå i gang med prosjektet. Du har selvstendig ansvar for å følge vilkårene under og sette deg inn i veiledningen i dette brevet.

### Vilkår for vår vurdering

Vår anbefaling forutsetter at du gjennomfører prosjektet i tråd med:

- opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet
- krav til informert samtykke
- at du ikke innhenter [sensitive opplysninger](#)
- veiledning i dette brevet
- Høgskolen i Innlandet sine retningslinjer for datasikkerhet

### Veiledning

#### Krav til informert samtykke

Utvalget skal få skriftlig og/eller muntlig informasjon om prosjektet og samtykke til deltakelse.

Informasjon må minst omfatte:

- at Høgskolen i Innlandet er behandlingsansvarlig institusjon for prosjektet
- daglig ansvarlig (eventuelt student og veileder) sine kontaktopplysninger
- prosjektets formål og hva opplysningene skal brukes til

*Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.*

## Appendix 2 – Interview guide

### 1. Introduksjon

*Introdusere prosjektet uten å si for mye*

- a. Introdusere meg selv og oppgaven jeg jobber med uten å si spesifikt hva det handler om
- b. Informasjon om intervjuet og om svarene (svar ærlig og så nøye som mulig men om du er usikker så er det lov)
- c. Samtykke

### 2. Intervjuobjekt

*Få litt oversikt over intervjuobjektets lærerstil*

- a. Hvor lenge har du jobbet som lærer i vgs?
- b. Hva er det beste og det vanskeligste ved å jobbe som lærer?

### 3. Angående skrijving i klasserommet

*Få innsikt hvilken klasseromspraksis læreren har*

- a. Kan du nevne noen typer skriveoppgaver du gir elevene dine?
- b. Hvilken hensikt har de?
- c. Hvilke skriveoppgaver merker du de liker og hvilke er vanskeligst?
- d. Om du skal utfordre elevene dine med ulike typer skriveoppgaver, hvordan utfører du det?

### 4. Om kreativ skrijving i klasserommet

*Finne ut om læreren tyr til kreative skriveoppgaver (avhenger litt av svar i forrige punkt)*

- a. Hvordan vil du definere kreativ skrijving? Evt Hva vil du si kreativ skrijving innebærer?
- b. Hvordan er mengde fagskriving og kreativ skrijving fordelt ca i ditt klasserom?
- c. Hva er hensikten bak denne mengdefordelingen?

### 5. Kreativ skrijving

- a. Ser du på kreativ skrijving som hensiktsmessig/tidkrevende?
- b. Ser du på kreativ skrijving kun som hensiktsmessig for enkelte elever og ikke alle? Hvem?

### 6. Synes du at engelskundervisning burde vektlegge akademisk skrijving mer eller kreativ skrijving mer? Hvorfor?

### 7. Hva tenker du om egne oppgaver du gir til elevene hvor de kan være kreative?

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## Appendix 3 – Transcription group interview

E: Jeg skal skrive om forskjellige typer skriveoppgaver og hvilken hensikt det har, og hva lærere tenker om forskjellige typer skriveoppgaver i deres klasserom, litt fordeling mellom typer oppgaver og spesifikt hva dere tenker er hensiktsmessig for språkutviklinga i engelsk som et fremmedspråk. Jeg har både intervju og spørreskjema så både deres svar og andres svar teller inn som forskning.

Lærer 1: Ja.

E: Så bare prøv å svar så nøyaktig som mulig, det trenger ikke være helt nøyaktig, men det du tenker det er. Hvis du er usikker så er det lov selvfølgelig.

1: Ja, jeg skal ikke påberope meg å ha alle svara så det kan hende jeg, ja..

E: Og svarene ... du blir anonym. Det er ikke noe navn, og skal ikke nevne skolen eller navnet ditt. Så hvis du samtykker på det så..

1: Ja, det er greit det.

E: Ja, supert. Da bare stiller jeg litt grunnleggende spørsmål; hvor lenge du har jobba i videregående?

1: Det er sjuende året nå.

E: Sjuende året ja. Og har du jobbet noe i skolen før det eller?

1: Litt. Men ikke så mye. Jeg har jobbet med mye annet rart.

E: For du begynte å jobbe her etter du tok PPU?

1: Ja, eller jeg begynte her også tok jeg PPU samtidig. Så jeg begynte her i 2011 og da var jeg ferdig med PPU i.. Ja, jeg tok det over to år da så våren 2013 da. Så fikk jeg jo fast her da, nesten sånn, ja - kort tid etter det da. Så har jeg jobbet som norsklærer før, men egentlig mest med andre ting.

E: Så sju år.

1: Ja.

E: Hva synes du er det beste og vanskeligste med å jobbe som lærer?

1: Det beste er jo elevene selvfølgelig og at man får lov til å drive med sånne nerding som man syns er morsomt. Det vanskeligste er jo vurdering. Og tilpassa opplæring.

E: Ja. På grunn av størrelse på klassene?

1: Ja. For du får ikke gjort det rett og slett, hvis du ikke skal jobbe deg i hjel av det hver uke. Så vurdering og nivåinndelinga er vanskeligst syns jeg.

E: Mhm. Kan du nevne noen typer skriveoppgaver du gir elevene dine typisk i løpet av året?

1: Ja, innledningsvis så har jeg først og fremst VG1 studiespesialiserende. Så da snakker jeg om det nå, så kan vi eventuelt ta yrkesfag etterpå.

E: Ja, det er egentlig bare studiespesialiserende som er aktuelt for det er det jeg skriver om i oppgaven.

1: Ja, okei. Men da er det greit da. Da tar vi det.

E: Ja.

1: Nei altså, på høsten. Eller jeg kan jo si at det på skolen her da de siste to-tre årene så har vi hatt fokus på skrivning da. Tanker er at vi skal ha skrivning inn i alle fag og at elevene skal lære seg hvordan man skriver fagtekster i flere fag sånn at de skjønner at skrivning er ikke noe de bare driver med i norsken eller engelsken. Og da på høsten i VG1 da, så jobber vi med engelsken det som heter persuasive essay. Og da får elevene først en opplæring hvor vi snakker om hva det er og så ser vi på noen eksempler også trener vi på å skrive sammen. Da sitter de gjerne to og to, eller tre, jeg foretrekker to. Også deler de et dokument sånn at de samskriver da, for jeg vil ikke at en skriver og en sitter og ser på for de tror de funker, men det gjør det ikke. Også får de liksom en mal, da, hvordan de skal bygge opp et avsnitt og sånn også tar vi bare en eller annen ... og det kan være hva som helst da at det burde være forbudt med ananas på pizza for eksempel. Også skal man ha bestemt seg for ja eller nei også skal man argumentere for det. Og da begynner vi som sagt med litt samskriving også får de en oppgave som de skal levere inn også er det jo fagdag da, vi kaller det ikke helt heldagsprøver lenger, men fagdag hvor de da får sin første ordentlige vurdering med karakter, da. Vurdering har de jo fått allerede en gang.

Det synes jeg har funka ganske bra for da føler elevene seg trygge at de vet hva de skal gjøre. For etter den første runder som de leverte nå i høst for eksempel så var det ganske mange som ikke hadde skrevet et persuasive essay, da. Men bare skrevet noe hvor de kommer med masse påstander men ikke argumenterte for noe som helst. Så da de da kom til den skrivedagen i november så hadde det gått opp et lys for veldig mange. Da skrev alle et persuasive essay selv om alle ikke var like gode da. Men da var det noen som sa "Å men dette skjønnte jeg jo nå, altså hvorfor det ikke var et persuasive essay og hvorfor dette er det". Men det er jo klart det at for mange er det vanskelig med argumentasjon da. Man sliter med å se forskjellen på en påstand og et argument.

Jeg kan si litt om den skrivedagen da, eller fagdagen. Fordi inntil for et par år siden så hadde vi sånn "her har du et oppgavesett, fem timer, skriv og lever klokka ett-eller-annet". Men nå har vi det ikke på høsten, da gjør vi det sånn som vi har gjort i norsken en del år allerede at det er en prosess. Så de får oppgavene og tekstene så skal de lese tekstene og snakke om dem. For vi pleier som regel ikke å ha forberedelse da til en sånn dag. Også setter vi oss ned også skal de snakke sammen om oppgavene, altså hva er det oppgaven ber om også brainstormer de litt; hvilke argumenter kan vi finne her også skriver de litt. Og så har vi noe sånn hverandre-vurdering i løpet av dagen.

E: For da jobber de alltid sammen?

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1: Da skriver de individuelt, men poenget er at de skal jobbe aktivt med hverandre nesten hele dagen da. Og da får de på en måte bestillinger på hva de skal se etter, du skal ikke bare gi teksten og vite "hva syns du, liksom", for at den andre skal gi tilbakemeldinger så må de stille spørsmål til den som skal lese da. Som for eksempel "kan du se på temasetningene mine, er de gode? Hvordan er bindeordene?" eller generelt hva de trenger hjelp til da. Poenget er at de skal be om noe konkret og at de skal få tilbakemeldinger på det.

\*Lærer 2 kommer inn\*

E: Heihei!

1: Vi driver og snakker om fagdag vi da.

2: Ja, fagdag.

1: Da blir det jo i grunn et produkt på slutten av dagen som de har jobbet litt med selv og jobba litt med sammen med noen, da. Men alle leverer individuelt. Og det tror jeg funker ganske bra, og det tror jeg er mye mer åleiret enn å bare få et mysterium utlevert klokka åtte også skal de levere inn det på slutten av dagen. Men på våren blir det jo det da, for da blir det eksamenstrening.

E: Ja, for det er mer fagtekster dere øver på da?

1: Ja, vi skriver ikke noe skjønnlitterært. Nei.

2: Ja, bare for å hive meg på den, så har jo vi det privilegiet at vi har både norsk og engelsk så vi har arbeidsformer som vi har utviklet i norsken som bare kan overføres direkte til engelsken. For jeg så også at det fungerte bedre med fagdag, eller sånn underveis-jobbing som vi kunne gjøre på den nøyaktig samme måten.

1: Ja, og da kan de det og, ikke sant, for da gjør de det...

E: Ja, de kjenner det igjen fra andre timer. Det er jo nesten trygt at de kjenner det igjen og.

1: Ja, absolutt. Og når vi da skulle ha den fagdagen i engelsk eller norsk da, så sa de "Å, skal vi gjøre det sånn som vi gjorde i det andre. Så bra, det var åleiret".

E: Ja, for da kan de det.

1: Ja, og da vet de at de får litt hjelp og de kan komme til oss å spørre, og poenget er at det skal være en prosess da. Men da har vi bare hatt persvasive essay. Så nå skal vi begynne med kort svar, så må vi ta augmentative også. Men det er jo de store oppgavene da.

E: Ja, de dere må igjennom.

1: Ja, det er jo ikke bare det vi driver med skriving. Vi har begge to en sånn bok som heter "642 things to write about" [San Fransisco Writer's club, 2012] så vi tar innimellom sånne korte oppgaver de skal skrive om.

E: For det er på en måte sånne writers prompts?

1: Ja. For eksempel en jeg bruker som funker veldig bra er "skriv et kjærlighetsbrev til en du hater". Da må de liksom følge formatet, men de må gjøre om metaforene for eksempel. Så "dine øyne er som sølepytter" osv.

E: Det synes de sikkert er moro.

1: Ja, det er morsomt. Og da må de bruke språket aktivt. Så det er litt sånt småtteri, sånn driver vi jo med da. Også burde de jo skrive noe hver time. Jeg skal ikke påstå at de gjør det, men ...

E: Bare bruke språket rett og slett..

1: Ja. Og hvis vi ikke skriver så er det fordi vi har snakka så mye.

E: Så det blir hver uke selv om det ikke blir hver time.

1: Jajaja, ja.

2: Jeg har tatt ganske mye inn på itslearning fordi at jeg har en guttegruppe som ikke gjør noe som helst ...

1: Men vi skal bare snakke om studiespesialiserende.

E: Ja, jeg skriver om studiespesialiserende.

2: Okei. Men idrettsfag, kvalifiserer det ikke?

E: Jo, det er jo studiespesialiserende med idrett.

1: Ja, det teller.

2: Jo, men jeg har tatt mye på itslearning der også som jeg da har tatt inn fordi de guttene er ganske slappe. Og da har de slitt litt med å omstille seg rundt at jeg har sagt at dette ikke blir vurdert, det er bestått ikke bestått. Og da blir de litt skuffet; "men jeg har jo skrevet så godt, kan ikke du gå inn å vurdere det?".

E: Ja, de vil ha en god karakter på det?

2: Ja, ikke sant. Og jeg har jo ikke kapasitet til å vurdere en bunke i uken.

1: Nei, altså vi prøver jo å få dem til å skrive mye da. Og jeg jobber for eksempel litt med slang for å gjøre det litt morsomt og lære dem litt styggere ord og sånt \*ler\*. Ehm, og litt sånn idiommer og sånne ting og at de må bruke det både muntlig og kanskje skriftlig også men gjerne i små tekster, da.

E: Men hvordan typer oppgaver gir du de da, skriveoppgaver for å bruke det litt mer uformelle språket?

1: Nei, da blir det jo kanskje ... Da blir det jo ikke saktekst da selvfølgelig, da blir det jo en liten kort fortelling eller en dialog eller et eller annet sånt. For det er jo en annen ting vi



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jobber med, det er forskjellen på det formelle og det uformelle, ikke sant. For når de kommer fra ungdomsskolen ... Ja, det er bra den der ikke tar opp ansiktsuttrykk.. \*ler\*... De er de jo veldig flinke på det uformelle: "gonna, wanna, thru, cus" og det er jo ikke måte på. Så det må man jo bruke hvert fall tre måneder på å plukke av dem det. At de ikke kan skrive "shitload" for eksempel når de mener "veldig mye", ikke sant. Sånn at det er veldig mye tid som går med til det da at de må kutte ut disse forkortelsene så det er mye sånn skriveteknisk da. Så det jeg gjøre er at jeg har en sjekkliste med ganske mange ting på.

E: "Do's and don'ts" for språket, rett og slett?

1: Ja. Sånn for eksempel "capitalize your heading", "don't use contractions". Ja, det er en hel. delt inn litt i forskjellige temaer da, om det er formatering eller rettskriving, ikke sant. Også sier jeg "det forventer jeg, at dere bruker".

E: Ja, det er ikke noe valg.

1: Nei, sånn at det at de ikke har store bokstaver i overskrifter. Og det skal de bare, for hvis de bruker den sjekklista så får de det. Så jeg syns at det hjelper da, så jeg prøver å si det at hvis dere bare gjør ... bruker den lista mange nok ganger så trenger dere ikke å bruke den til slutt, for da bare vet dere det.

E: Ja, det skal gå automatisk.

1: Ja. For det blir mye for dem å huske på. Det er jo det.

2: Ja, det er et stort fag. Jeg synes det er vanskelig ut i fra de læreplanene vi har å vite hva vi skal satse på.

E: Ja, det er jo ikke så veldig spesifikt.

2: Det er jo ikke det. Hvert fall hvis det skal være eksamensforbredende. Så det er et veldig stort fag.

1: Så det blir jo en del trening på dette med avsnitt og særlig på høsten - hvordan bygge opp et avsnitt og hvordan bruke ordboka. For det er jo vanskelig for mange. Selv ordbok på nett, det er jo et mysterium for mange. At man skal slå opp infinitiv og ikke presens. Så det blir ganske mye sånn skriveteknisk da.

E: Både i små og store oppgaver?

1: Ja. Vi bruker jo nesten ikke læreboka.

2: Ja, jeg kunne egentlig ønske at jeg kunne bruke læreboka. Det gir en trygghet å kunne falle tilbake på en lærebok men den vi valgte for to år siden..

1: To år siden dessverre ja, for vi må ha den ett år til.

2: Den er så ... den følger ikke noen ender. Så det er bare helt sporadisk.

E: Det er noe jeg har hørt før. At man bruker den innimellom, men man kan ikke legge opp året etter den.

1: Nei. Men det som er med boka er det med skriving da. Så den har jo såne skrivekurs. Også med formelt og uformelt, bindeord og avsnittsoppbygging.

E: Gir den forslag på oppgaver og da eller?

1: Ja, forslag hvert fall. Noen funker bedre enn andre der også har vi funnet ut.

E: Hvilke oppgaver merker dere elevene liker og hvilke synes de er vanskelig å gjøre?

2: For meg er det sånn at hvor større frihet de har til å utforme oppgavene selv, jo bedre liker de det. Når vi har skivedag og de må gå inn på to oppgaver som vi har laget på forhånd så er ikke de så glad i det. Og det blir heller ikke så bra som når vi har arbeidet med persvasive essay og de fikk lov til å utvikle sine egne essay og skriver om ting de er opptatt av. Også kommer de på skivedag og blir pålagt til å være opptatt av "Arranged marriages" eller "meat-free mondays". Det blir spesifikke ting og det er ikke nødvendigvis at dette er noe de har følt på kroppen idet heletatt.

E: Nei, de har ikke noe mening om det?

2: Nei.

E: Så det blir på en måte en kombinasjon av at dere gir rammer men fortsatt litt frihet innenfor de rammene, så de kan bestemme litt selv, men på deres premisser?

Begge: Ja.

E: Så det funker bra?

1: Ja. Så har jeg - jeg vet ikke om du [lærer 2] gjorde det da du leste roman, du leste roman i engelsk du?

2: Ja.

1: Ja, så kjører jeg noe som heter "double entry journal", som vil si at de leser en roman, og på grunn av internett så vil man forsikre seg om at de leser og ikke bare ser filmen eller finner et sammendrag, så da skal de gå inn i hvert avsnitt - litt avhengig av hvordan boka er bygd opp da, for noen har jo veldig lange avsnitt, mens andre har en side eller to.

E: Så hele klassen leser ikke samme bok?

1: Noen ganger. Jeg har en runde hvor de gjøre det og en runde hvor de ikke gjør det. Og da skal de gå inn i hvert avsnitt og trekke ut ting som de synes er viktig, også skal de på en måte, ja kall det analysere da, litt hvorfor er det utdraget viktig da, hva er det de burde vite her. Og da må de jo aktivt gå inn og tenke litt over språket de leser i boka, ikke sant. Også bruke fagspråk for å snakke om en roman da. Fagspråk er jo viktig å få med. Så det syns de jo, mange synes det er forferdelig vanskelig, og noen syns det er ganske så morsomt da.

E: Kommer an på elevene, ja. Skriver de noe da eller snakker de sammen mest?

1: Da har vi hatt sånne muntlig fagsamtaler. Det jeg gjorde, som jeg har gjort et par ganger som jeg synes fungerer fint er at jeg velger ut si fem-seks ulike romaner, også sier jeg at de kan lese disse også må det være litt jevnt fordelt på gruppene. Så får de noe de skal forberede seg til, men det er klart dette blir jo muntlig da, så det gjelder jo ikke akkurat her. Også sitter vi i grupper da, også snakker de sammen, og det fungerer altså så fint. Det gjør vi da både i norsk og engelsk. Da synes de det er gøy å snakke om litteratur.

E: Ikke sant, da blir de engasjert. Godt å høre! Hvis dere skal utfordre elevene deres med ulike typer skriveoppgaver, hvordan utfører dere det da?

1: Tror jeg ville sagt at det meste er en utfordring, for å være helt ærlig \*ler\*. Neida, men det er jo å ha en del tydelige krav til temasetning og oppbygning, og det å ha tekniske - at de skal lære seg å bruke bindeord for eksempel å bruke synonymordbok og få et mer variert språk da, jeg vet ikke, kanskje det er den største utfordringen tror jeg.

2: Ja, for meg er det som jeg antydte i stedet så er det en utfordring å få alle sammen i gang. Jeg har 17 jenter som er superplikttoppfyllende som bare går i gang med en gang, også er det ganske mange av gutta som synes at den sports-youtube-snutten er litt viktigere å få med seg først, fordi det fristen er jo ikke før i overmorgen.

1: Også er det skirenn også er det håndballkamp og sånt. Ja.

2: \*ler\* Ja. Det er sånn typisk idrettsfag så er det utfordringer. Så for meg er det å klare å sette press på å få dem i gang. Får man de i gang så er de omtrent jevnt flinke.

1: Det er mange som sliter med å komme i gang da, det er jo særlig hvis man gir de litt sånn åpne oppgaver. Så da prøver jeg alltid å ha en deadline for når de skal ha bestemt seg for oppgaven, og den skal dere fortelle til meg, hva dere skal skrive om. Ikke det at jeg bryr meg så mye egentlig, men at denne timen skal de ha bestemt seg og ha kommet i gang med disposisjonen. Sånn at vi kan fortsette derfra.

E: Ja, så de ikke har bare hele fristen, men stykkevis rett og slett.

1: Ja. Så jeg prøver å jobbe med det her med disposisjon da. Også jeg har jo PreIB, også hadde jeg vært i IB her en dag [International baccalaureate]. Så var det en av gutta i PreIB som hadde blitt sittende å snakke med dattera mi da, så jeg fikk jo høre dette da jeg kom hjem. Og da hadde hun sagt til han at "du må ha disposisjon" og forklarte hvorfor da, og han bare "åh, men det høstes lurt ut!". For det har han ikke hørt før, skjønner du \*ler\*. Så tvinge dem med å jobbe med disposisjon, for helst vil de få oppgaven, lese den med en gang og begynne å skrive. Men altså du må tvinge dem til å dra ned tempo sånn at du får dem til å skjønne hva de skal skrive om før de begynner. De skal ikke ha ett avsnitt også "tja, mon tro hva neste avsnitt skal handle om da". Det blir jo dårligflyt da.

E: Så vil jeg gjerne snakke litt om kreativ skriving i klasserommet. Og hva dere vil si at kreativ skriving innebærer i engelskfaget?

2: Vi har nok mest dette her med sånne starter hvor du har en halvtime til å begynne med om det er lenge siden man har skrevet man kan dra frem og skrive noe kreativt. For eksempel "a

day in the life of an astronaut" eller noe som er helt utenfor. I forrige uke så hadde vi en skrivekonkurranse i engelsk ...

1: En sånn fylkeskonkurranse.

E: Ja, ok.

2: Og da var det muligheter for å skrive kreativt, men det ... i en sånn form så virker det skremmende på ganske mange elever.

1: Nesten alle hadde gjort det hos meg.

2: De hadde valgt kreativt?

1: Ja.

2: Sier du det? For hos meg så tenkte jeg at "nei, det har de ikke lært her", så da gikk de for den andre, for formatskriving.

E: Så det var en mer faglig og en mer kreativ...?

1: Ja, det var en formal, creative eller audio visual.

E: Ah, ok. Stilig at de hadde det tredje valget og.

2: Ja, ingen valgte det.

1: En valgte det hos meg, men han leverte ikke. For klart, da fikk du jo mer tid da, så da skulle de liksom bare jobbe med konseptet, for det var jo tre timer da også måtte de jo gå ut og filme. Du rekker jo ikke lage en film på tre timer. Men han leverte ikke.

Nei, men kreativ skrijving driver vi lite med. Det blir jo sånn som du sa med sånne writing prompts og på skrive dagen, jeg tror 80% av mine valgte creative writing jeg. Hos meg så savner de det nok veldig. Men en av grunnene til at.. eller det er to grunner da til at jeg gjør det lite: for det første så kommer det jo ikke på eksamen, og engelsk er jo ett år, ikke sant. Det er på VG1 så er det avsluttende. Så kan man jo ikke drive å dille med sånne ting som... man må jo være litt eksamensretta. Og for det andre er det umulig å vurdere. For det blir jo kjedelig. Det blir sånn, for man leser tre setninger så kan man jo se hel handlingsforløpet, ikke sant. "Åja, så de ble ikke sammen til slutt"...

E: Ah, så det blir forutsigbart?

1: Ja. Og de tror at en åpen slutt er "hopper han fra brua eller ikke?", ikke sant. Så jeg pleier å legge ut forbud mot selvmord om vi skriver kreativt \*ler\*.

E: Det blir rett og slett ikke så kreativt? \*ler\*

1: Nei, og hva er det da man skal bedømme da? Også føler jeg at de har gjort det der tre år på ungdomsskolen. Men det er klart de synes det er morsomt da.

E: Det blir ofte mer på sånne kortere oppgaver i klasserommet.

Begge: Ja.

2: Jeg har faktisk et mellomprosjekt her nå hvor jeg tenkte "hm, nå fikk jeg en ide", ja - få opp farten og hygge lite grann og gi en sånn oppgave i dag.

1: Det hadde jeg også tenkt.

E: Ja, så fordelingen mellom fagskriving og kreativ skrijving da. Du [lærer 1] vil kanskje si at det er mer på faglig da? Er du [lærer 2] enig i det?

2: Ja, det er nok det. Det er det vi vender tilbake på fordi det er det vi blir prøvet på føler vi til slutt.

1: Ja.

2: Nei, jeg har trukket vinnerloddet jeg, to ganger på rad. Så hele kullet har en 20% sjanse for å komme opp i noe, så er det min engelskklasse som har kommet opp hver gang. Det er ganske gode odds.

1: Så, nei så det blir jo det. Og det er jo rett og slett fordi at man må tenke litt mot eksamen, og der er det veldig lite kreativ skrijving.

E: Ja, tenker dere også da mot universitet og høgskole?

1: Ja, selvfølgelig.

E: Og arbeidslivet eventuelt?

1: Ja. Og hvis de skal fortsette med engelsk for eksempel, internasjonalt engelsk og litteraturkurset er det vel vi kjører nå i VG3 så trenger de også det. Da kan de ikke sitte der å finne på noveller. Og altså man må jo... jeg skulle gjerne drevet mye med kreativ skrijving som jeg ikke trengte å ta inn som vurdering da, for jeg ser jo at de får boltra seg en annen måte der og, mer kreativt rett og slett da. Men så har man jo x-antall timer, og som du [lærer 2] sier så kan man ikke ta inn en bunke i uka heller.

E: Nei. Hvor mange timer i uka har dere engelsk i VG1?

2: Altså det er 140 timers-fag. Og det betyr fem 45 minutters økter i uka. Men så blir de stort sett dratt ut en av de timene i uka. Slik at vi får det til halve dager og hele dager.

1: Vi har noen fagdager da også, utenom heldagsprøvene kan du si. Så har vi hvert fall en fagdag vi kan bruke til noe annet. Gjerner brukt det til muntlig.

E: Det bruker dere mengdetrening på kanskje?

1: Ja.

2: Ja, vi har jo forelsket oss i denne her fagsamtaleformen, og det kan ikke være grupper på større enn seks kanskje. Så tar det vanvittig mye tid om man skal ha hele klassen. Så det å ha noen tre timers dager her, det kan være fint det.

E: Ja, det er fint å ha alternativet i hvert fall.

1: Ja, nei så det blir hovedvekt eller hovedfokus på formell skriving da.

E: Mhm. På grunn av vurdering og eksamen stort sett.

1: Ja. Og at de går studieforberevende da. \*ler\*

E: Ja, ikke sant. Synes dere at den fordelingen (mellom kreativ og faglig) er ... skulle dere gjerne gjort noe med den eller synes dere den er som den burde være?

2: For meg er for eksempel ... fått kreativ skriving inn i fagplanene, slik at vi kunne fått det på eksamen, slik at vi kunne hatt det underveis, ja gjerne. Se på norskfaget for eksempel, når vi har gått gjennom novelletolkning så hadde det vært en fin link å ta det opp, bruke det du har lært til novelleskriving. Da hadde jeg en fin øvingsoppgave som fungerte rimelig bra fordi da var de litt mer bevisst, og det ble ikke en vanlig fortelling som de ellers presenter når de skal skrive kreativt men de dro inn fler av elementene de så i novellen.

1: Ja. Jeg er til dels enig i det.

2: Ja. Men gjerne, det er greit å slippe å måtte vurdere det.

1: Ja, for det er det som er så vanskelig, ikke sant. Hva skal du vurdere. For de kan noveller, det kan de fra rams. Alltid når de kommer fra ungdomsskolen og spør "ja, hva kjennetegner en novelle?". Tavla full. Men det er langt fra det til å skrive noe som vi fortsatt syns er litt ålreit etter 27 oppgaver.

E: Forskjell på å vite og bruke.

1: Ja. \*Ler\*.

2: Og dette å holde tilbake informasjon er vanskelig for en tenåring. De skal fortelle alt.

1: Og på ungdomsskolen tror jeg ofte de får en sånn kommentar "Å, dette var en lang og fin tekst", har jeg følelsen av. For de som liksom er flinke, de skriver mye ... og de tror at jo lengre, jo bedre. Og sånn er det jo ikke alltid. Nei.

2: Men jeg er gift med en engelsklærer på ungdomsskolen, så når jeg sier sånne ting så får jeg virkelig høre. "Vi driver faktisk ikke sånn der". \*ler\*. Men det at de har lært på rette måten, betyr ikke at de nødvendigvis gjør det eller tar opp før de kommer til oss.

E: Så det er en missing link å vite hva det er og vite hvordan man bruker det?

2: Ja. Og vi hadde en veldig interessant dag her i fjor hvor vi fikk sitte sammen med ungdomsskolelærerne i kommunen en dag, også sammenlignet vi litt hva folk lærte. Vi ville gjerne komme frem til hva vi hadde forhåpninger om da, slik at vi kunne få det noen lunde

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likt fra de ulike skolene. Og da ble vi også korrigert litt på hva de faktisk gjorde og underviste om som vi ikke kunne se så mye tegn av.

1: Men samtidig, det var jo ikke bare i kommunen, det var i fylket. Og da hører du jo sånne opplegg du sitter og hører på hvor de forteller om de har holdt på med noen greier i tre måneder og det har vært tre innleveringer med tilbakemelding før du skulle være ferdig med det endelige produktet og jeg sitter der og bare tenker "ja men dette høres jo helt fantastisk ut, men hvordan gjør de det?". "Nei, jeg har 12 elever da". Ikke sant? Ja, da gir det mening. Så når du har 30, som vi stort sett har i VG1, så ... det ligger jo en del begrensninger på hva du kan ta inn. Jeg skulle gjerne jobba i prosess hele tiden jeg, ikke sant. Fått inn tekster, alle tekstene hvert fall to ganger da. Men det går jo ikke. Så det er fysisk umulig, ikke sant.

2: Og nå på slutten ... for jeg har vært gjennom elevsamtaler med hele klassen min nå, også i engelsk. Og da vil jeg høre med hver og enkelt hva de ønsket seg mer av, og da var det dette med vurdering. Og se så også min situasjon at med 31 elever i den klassen, så rekker vi ikke gjennom disse bunkene. Men da ble det løftet frem at disse lift-spørsmålene de arbeidet med, at de fikk lov til å stille to spørsmål om hva ... om sin egen tekst og hva som kunne forbedres og at det kunne være en løsning innimellom. Da kunne du lest de på forhånd, også kunne du se spesielt etter den informasjonen. Og det å veksle litt på hva du ser etter, kanskje denne gangen ser du bare etter innledning, en annen gang ser du etter bindeord.

E: Så forskjellige spørsmål fra gang til gang?

2: Ja.

1: Jeg hadde jo det, det er norsk da, men jeg hadde norskessay da, i VG2 her i høst så gjorde vi det litt annerledes, og da hadde vi vurdering underveis. Og nesten alle i klassen min benytta seg av det, og de er en helt ... det er noen flinke, men helt middelmådig klasse, mye treere og firere. Men der ble så bra! Og det var liksom så mange skjønne bare hva de skulle gjøre, og da leverte de på itslearning, og jeg skrev det faktisk ut også, for vi hadde en halv fagdag som vi kunne bruke for det allerede hadde kommet litt i gang på forhånd. Også satte jeg meg ned med dem og så gjennom teksten og ikke at jeg sa hva de skulle skrive, men snakka om det da. Og dets syns de var skikkelig ålreit. Og ja som sagt så tror jeg jeg ga fem-seks seksere, og jeg pleier ikke å gi en eneste sekser i den klassa.

E: Det var etter dere hadde jobba med det?

1: Ja.

E: Også ny innlevering?

1: Ja. Så det er ikke noe tvil om at det er det som funker best. Men det er tidsbegrensinger da.

E: Ja, det er jo i en drømmeverden at man har tid til det hele tiden. Det er mye jobb, men det er jo effektivt da. når jobben er gjort. Det er bare det å få den jobben gjort.

1: Ja.

2: Ja, det er jo da helt på slutten av en skriveprosess og ta tid, for jeg har oppdaget dette i en runde av disse lift-spørsmålene. Da hadde de ikke lyst til å skrive de ned. De begynte å rope på meg og ville ha meg til å svare på de med en gang. Og det er jo kjempeeffektivt. Jeg får jo ikke tid til alle - men at de kunne bare pitche problemstillingen sin fort til meg også kunne jeg svare der og da. Det gikk også ... da tenkte jeg at det var ganske god læring. For da får de det mens de er opptatt av det, og ikke 14 dager etter at de hadde skrevet.

1: Nei, og hele poenget nesten da - for å si det litt dramatisk - er jo at de må bevisstgjøres på hva de driver med, ikke sant, de må ha et bevisst forhold. Ikke bare sitte der i tåka og skrive et eller annet.

E: Mhm, å levere og aldri se det igjen..

1: Ja. De må bevisstgjøres på språk, struktur og innhold og til prosessen. Og hvis man får til det tror jeg man får til gode skrivere. Det er alltid noen som er bedre enn andre, som det er med alt annet. Men skriving, altså det å bygge opp et avsnitt, det er jo en teknikk. Og klart, de som er gode skrivere, de bryter jo på en måte fri fra det, men for de aller fleste da, så er det en trygghet i å vite "først skal jeg ha temasetning, så skal du utdype" og så videre, ikke sant. Og det har jeg hatt mange elever på i PreIB som sier at de synes det er nyttig da. De sier jo så mye rart om ting de ikke har lært på ungdomsskolen, men altså, det sier de jo også i mine timer "nei, det har jeg aldri gjort!", også vet jo jeg at de har gjort det, ikke sant? Så man må ta det med en kilo salt, eller noe. alt de sier de ikke har lært på ungdomsskolen.

2: Har dere vært innom responsgruppen?

1: Så vidt.

2: Ja. For da, det å ha responsgruppe uansett om det er på skrive dagen eller under annet arbeid at, når de har skrevet et førsteutkast, at du da setter sammen grupper på fire hvor de gir hverandre respons på hva de har forstått. At for at det skal være vellykket må de ha helt spesifikke spørsmål. Hvis det bare var å gi konstruktiv tilbakemelding, så var det ikke så - fikk de ikke så mye ut av det.

1: Da får de sånn "jaa, det var fin tekst".

2: Men jeg har bevisst satt sammen grupper på fire, for hvis du kommer ellers på grupper med en svak leser eller skriver så får du ikke noe gode tilbakemeldinger. Mens selv om det tar ganske mye tid da, med grupper på fire ...

1: Ja. Utfordringen i min klasse var jo at noen ble litt for sosiale.

2: Ja.

1: De syns dette var litt for trivelig.

2: Ja, det er en utfordring. Men samtidig så, er du på fire så ligger det absolutt til rette for å kunne få noe positivt ut av det. Selv om det tar en time.

1: Ja, vi syns vel vi har kommet frem til at vi vil ha dem ut av den bobla, da hvor de tror at det å skrive er en ensom prosess med bare deg og arket.



2: Men vi er nok litt friere i norskundervisningen vår, fordi vi vet at den endelig vurderingen ikke kommer før tredjeklasse. Mens her må vi være ferdigvurdert i første.

1: Men det er jo også veldig viktig at de ser den vinkelen mellom særlig norsk og engelsk da. Og der er det jo som du [lærer 2] sa at vi har - de siste åra har vi hatt både norsk og engelsk i VG1 samtidig. I samme klasse.

2: For ikke å snakke om at vi rapper timer fra oss selv hver gang vi er inne i et godt prosjekt. \*ler\*. "Har dere lyst til å fortsette å skrive på det så gjør vi det altså, så tar vi det tilbake neste uke". Da kan vi ta så mye som sju eller åtte timer engelsk på en uke og da får du flyt i skrivningen.

1: Ja, det er jo den tida da som er den store fienden. Vi føler da - det blir spennende å se om det blir noen resultater på en eksamen etterhvert - men vi føler i alle fall at har kommet et stykke på vei med den skrivinga.

E: Ja, det høres ut som dere har effektive opplegg som er konkrete men som fortsatt kan bindes sammen som en helhet.

1: Ja, så det neste prosjektet som vi nå driver å jobbe med da er jo akkurat det med vurdering, hvor at vi må prøve å komme oss bort fra den klassiske vurderinga - skriv en tekst, lever, to uker senere får du tilbake med "du burde hatt komma der", liksom, som vi bruker fryktelig mye tid på, og som gir - all forskning sier har jeg skjønt - tilsier at det gir veldig liten effekt. Men der er vi ikke helt enda, og det er det den prosesskrivingen som - det er det man må gå mot. At man har færre tekster, men jobber mer med en tekst da. Men da blir jo elevene stressa også, ikke sant, for de er vant med å ha x-antall vurderinger, så de føler de vil ha flere da, for å bli mer representativt.

E: De skjønner ikke helt at det er prosessen og revideringa som også teller.

1: Og klart, som [lærer 2] sa var at vi har større mulighet til å gjøre det i norsk da, særlig på VG1, fordi det er årevis til vi skal sette karakteren. Men i engelsk så er det litt strammere timeplan.

E: Veldig interessante svar! Jeg har jo også hatt et spørreskjema om noe av de samme spørsmålene, ikke helt de samme, ikke like dyptgående, men er mye som kommer igjen om at det er eksamenspress, det er ikke relevant for eksamen, for videre studier. Det å gjøre det mer kreativt, å gjøre det mer åpent enn å fokusere på fag. Og de synes det er vanskeligere å lage oppgaver som er kreative, for de føler kanskje ikke at de er helt utforska på det området selv, hvordan man går frem med det selv. Synes dere det er vanskelig å lage åpne oppgaver?

1: Ja, det er veldig ofte som vi skulle hatt at vi tenker "åh, dette blir bra", også blir det ikke det. Fordi vi kommer en viss grad, også kommer til elevene halvveis. Vi tenker jo hvordan det skal være, men det er det ikke nødvendigvis for en 16 åring.

2: Også den perfekte oppgaven skal jo da i tillegg basere seg på tekster og vedlegg som det ikke skal finnes noe om på internett, slik at refleksjonen til eleven blir dens egen. Og vi er nok flinkere til det på norsk, altså. Nå har vi kommet dit at vi klarer å lage oppgaver det ikke finnes noe av.

1: Hvert fall på VG1 da. Blir litt verre når man kommer opp i trinnene. Men da må vi sammenligne da, tar nyere tekster og lager oppgaver til de.

E: Har dere noen eksempler på oppgaver som har funket kjempebra eller som eventuelt ikke funket i det hele tatt som dere kommer på? Enten suksess eller fiasko?

1: Ja, vi har hatt en oppgave som vi har kjørt et par ganger. Nå har vi ikke kjørt den på et par år da, fordi den ikke funka noe særlig. Man skulle skrive en tale, for man skulle reise til USA for eksempel da, også skulle man spesifikt velge publikum og tilpasse innholdet etter det. Og tanken var jo at de skulle vise kunnskap om landet, både kulturelt, geografisk og historisk og alt sånt. Men det ble jo så overfladisk, det ble bare sånn "all americans are fat", ikke sant. Det ble liksom på nivået der, og at de ikke tilpassa det nødvendigvis til publikum, og nei. Det ble bare tull. Så det kommer jeg hvert fall aldri til å gjøre igjen. Men det har vært en eksamensoppgave da, som har vært brukt. Det er der de er. De kan ikke nok. Og det er ganske vanskelig å sette seg inn i hva de kan da. Vi syns jo kanskje at de burde skjønne mer, så. Men noe som har funka bra, hva skal vi si om det da.

2: Litt vanskelig å si, jeg hadde veldig store forhåpninger til den oppgaven som jeg satte sammen til en tentamen med "arranged marriages". For da hadde alle elevene på skolen fra første klasse sett "Hva vil folk si" [Iram Haq, 2017] på kino også hadde flere klasser også sett filmen "East is east" [Damien O'Donnell, 2000] om arrangert ekteskap i pakistansk/engelske familier på 70-tallet. Men så ble det ikke så mye liv i de som jeg hadde håpet på i det heletatt. De klarte ikke skille - de begynte å si at alle arrangerte ekteskap var tvangsekteskap. Og kjærlighetsekteskap er de eneste som fungerte da.

1: For med det er det ingen som skiller seg. \*ler\*. Men sånn som du sa da var det jo når vi skulle skrive persvasive essay at de fikk skrive om noe som de ville selv, så er det kanskje den typen oppgave som kanskje funker best. Men vi prøver jo utover året da å kanskje tenke ikke det at vi prøver å finne ut av hva som kommer på eksamen, for det vet vi jo ikke. Det kan jo være absolutt hva som helst viser det seg. Men vi prøver å tenke litt mer i de baner da, at vi har gått litt mer bort litt mer rigide skillene; Storbritannia, USA, resten av verden-opplegget. Vi jobber fortsatt med de regionene, selvfølgelig, men kanskje før har det vært litt mer historietimer på engelsk på en måte, mens nå har vi begynt litt å trekke inn ting som skjer nå; #metoo, Trump og - ja. Ikke det at jeg mener å si at metoo er en gavepakke, men det er på en måte en gavepakke til engelskundervisninga da ikke sant. For det er jo ting som engasjerer og, ja. De føler at det har noe å si for dem, da. Så vi prøver vel kanskje også vri den historiske biten litt utpå sidelinja, men man trekker den inn mer for å belyse hvordan ting er i dag da, hvis du skjønner. I stedet for at de skal sitte og pugge når var den første ditt og når var den andre datt og sånt. For det får de jo aldri på eksamen.

2: Nei. Det eneste var at det var av og til kunne gi noen gode skrivere muligheten til å dra linjen bakover til hvorfor ting - stereotyper - hadde kommet og hvorfor ting var som det var sånn historisk ... historisk fundament.

1: Ja, man må jo ha med det litt liksom, men kanskje i litt mindre grad enn det vi har gjort før da. Nå snakker jeg for meg selv da.

E: For å se det i sammenheng, ja.

1: Ja. Det går jo med engelsk da så. Det er den store fordel med engelsk, i forhold til norsk for eksempel er den ulne læreplanen og den ulne eksamenen som gjør at du kan - hvis du er litt kreativ og har lyst da - det kan jo sikkert oppleves motsatt også, for det har jo syntes det også. Men nå bare tenker jeg «nei nå bare tar jeg det jeg vil jeg». Og skjer det noe; kommer det ut en ny sang som handler om et eller annet relevant, ja så bruker vi den. Prøver å få med litt nye filmer, prøver å gjøre det litt aktuelt da for elevene, og det tror jeg funker altså. Men det er klart at det krever litt jobb da.

E: Ja, det krever at man alltid er på hugget.

1: Ja, så man kan ikke holde på sånn hele tiden. Men så samarbeider vi jo veldig mye her på skolen og det er man jo så avhengig av. Ellers blir det jo boka liksom.

2: Og det er viktig, for en sånn utvikling, det må komme fra lærerne. Hvis det bare kommer teknisk at "dere skal ha teamsamarbeid i den timen, da - de har gjort det på alle fag og det fungerer ikke. Mens vi forså vidt - det fungerte jo så godt på norsk, så da måtte de ha det sånn hos de andre også. Men da hadde det ikke kommet fra lærerne som så behovet og ønsket. Og det er noe med det at du er litt sånn privatpraktiserende. Du har jo ikke i utgangspunktet lyst til å vise frem hva du driver med for bare noen som ikke synes det er bra nok og mange sånne ting som kommer inn. Og bare du får lagt det unna og ser at det her er vi sammen om og får ikke alltid til alt, men det blir mye bedre av å dele.

1: Og retter sammen og. Og det sier jeg til elevene at vi deler noen tekster hver, hver gang, for å være sikker på at vi ligger på cirka samme nivå. Det opplever de som veldig trygt da. For det er jo en ting elevene er opptatt av og det er rettferdighet. Hvis noen får gå fem minutter før noen andre ... Og hvordan de vet det mens de sitter der i klasserommet og ikke har telefon eller internett eller tilsynelatende, det vet jeg ikke helt. Men de vet det.

2: Også er det veldig greit at vi bare avviser den, når noen kommer med den "alle de andre får lov til å ..." men vi har jo et godt samarbeid med alle de andre og vet jo at det stemmer bare ikke \*ler\*.

1: For de er veldig opptatt av rettferdighet da.

1: Det som er gøy er jo det vi får gjort minst av til tider. Men det er jo verdens beste jobb da.

E: Mot slutten må jeg spørre siden du [lærer2] kom etter - hvor lenge du har jobbet i VGS?

2: I VGS siden 1999, og det er 19 år siden, da.

E: Også om det er samtykke at dette blir med i oppgaven da. Hverken du eller skolen blir navngitt.

2: Helt greit.

E: Supert. \*Forteller om oppgaven\* Fikk ideen når jeg var her i praksis. Hovedkarakterene skulle skrive brev til hverandre i oppgaven.

1: Brev sånn er jo veldig fint, eller prøve å skrive om den [novellen] fra et annet perspektiv for eksempel.

E: Ja, og bare bruke informasjonen fra tekstene på en annen måte, utover plot, themes og gjøre det til noe annet da, for da får du jo en annen forståelse for teksten.

1: Ja, og det er jo kjedelig, og det får du jo aldri heller på eksamen.

E: Ikke sant. Men jeg liker det at dere tar med det kreative inn i fagteksten. For eksempel å skrive om ananas på pizza, det er jo en kjempekreativ vinkling på det, men i en faglig setting. Og det har jeg ikke tenkt på før, så det..

1: Ja. Og kjøp deg den der "642 things to write about". De er skikkelig fine.

2: De er basert på tanken om at gode skrivere skriver litt hver dag.

E: Ja, for du kan jo ikke lære bort å være kreativ, men du kan på en måte øve på det da.

1: I helse og oppvekst bruke jeg en oppgave som var "you are lying in a field in an astronaut's suit on a surf board. What happened?"

E: Fantastisk, det er jo ikke sånne ting man finner overalt. Man får jo sikkert interessante svar på det.

1: Også har vi en ting som du og jeg har gjort noen ganger da at vi kommer med en setning, type litt sånn klisje "It was a dark and stormy night" også får de ett minutt til å skrive også skal de krølle sammen og kaste det rundt i klasserommet også får de en ny en også skal de fortsette ett minutt og krølle sammen og kaste, ikke sant. Kanskje jeg skal gjøre det i dag?

2: Ja, kanskje det var en ide? Vi har ikke gjort det i høst?

1: Nei. Da kan man jo bare starte et eller annet sted da, men man må på en måte ha en startsetning sånn at alle begynner likt, tror jeg er best.

E: Ja, for det har jeg også lest, at om man gir en oppgave som er for bred - "bare skriv en tekst, skriv hva du vil" så er det helt umulig.

1: Det går ikke.

E: Nei, så det er jo litt det som er problemet at oppgavene ikke er spesifikke nok selv om de er åpne. De vet ikke hvordan det skal gjennomføres.

1: Det var noe av det første jeg lærte meg. Jeg gjorde det i en helseklasse av alle ting. De skulle skrive en bestemt type tekst da, det var persvasive essay. Så sa jeg "bare skriv om hva dere vil" og de bare .....

E: \*ler\* Ja, vettskremt?

1: Det gikk jo ikke. Jeg tenkte jeg hadde vært skikkelig grei jeg da.

2: Har du time nå?

1: Nei, men jeg må forberede.

E: Ja men tusen takk for at jeg fikk komme. Dette var helt supert.

1: Bare hyggelig. Lykke til og så får du bare ta kontakt hvis det er noe.

## Appendix 4 – Questionnaire

The questionnaire was made in digital format using Google Forms, and the full questionnaire can be found here: <https://goo.gl/forms/8GWNd8obKjCZGDG03>

The responses are not included as an appendix because they are collected in the researcher's Google Forms-account. If the sensor wish to view the responses, I can be contacted.

### Spørreskjema til engelsklærere ved studiespesialiserende på VGS

#### Introduksjon

Velkommen! Denne spørreundersøkelsen er laget for å brukes i en masteroppgave om skriveoppgaver i VGS. Svar så ærlig du klarer, du er helt anonym. Om du er usikker, svar det du tror kan være mest riktig.

Takk for hjelpen! Mvh Elisabeth S.

#### 1. Åpningsspørsmål

- a. Hvilket trinn underviser du på ved din videregående skole?
- b. Hvor mange år har du jobbet som lærer?
- c. Hvor lange av årene var ved VGS?

#### 2. Om lengre skriveoppgaver i klassen

- a. Hvor mange ganger i semesteret gir du klassen lengre skriveoppgaver? (Med lengre skriveoppgaver menes oppgaver som tar opptil flere dager å jobbe med, eventuelt med revisjon).

Ingen	1	2-4	Hver måned	Annenhver uke	Hver uke	Mer/annet. Forklar.
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- b. Hvor mange av disse er akademiske oppgaver? (For eksempel essay, tekst- eller bildeanalyse og rene fagtekster osv)

0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
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- c. Hva er årsaken til at du bruker akademisk skriving?
- d. Hvorfor bruker du akademisk skriving til denne graden?
- e. Hvor mange av de lengre oppgavene er kreative oppgaver? (For eksempel noveller, friskriving, dikt og mer skjønnlitterære tekster osv)

0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
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- f. Hva er årsaken til at du bruker/ikke bruker kreativ skriving til lengre oppgaver?
- g. Hvorfor bruker du kreativ skriving til denne graden?

#### 3. Om kortere skriveoppgaver i klassen

- a. Hvor mange ganger i semesteret gir du klassen mindre skriveoppgaver? (Med mindre oppgaver menes oppgaver som skrives i klasserommet eller leveres til neste time/innen en-to dager).

1-4	Annenhver måned	Hver måned	Annenhver uke	Hver uke	Flere ganger i uken	Hver time
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- b. Hvor mange av disse er akademiske oppgaver? (For eksempel mindre tekst- eller bildeanalyser, ordforklaringer, tekstanalyse, definisjoner osv)

0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
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- c. Hvor mange av disse er kreative oppgaver? (For eksempel noveller, friskriving, dikt osv)

0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
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- d. Hva er årsaken til at du bruker/ikke bruker kreativ skriving til korte oppgaver?  
 e. Hvorfor bruker du kreativ skriving til denne graden i korte oppgaver?

#### 4. Om kreativ skriving i klasserommet

- a. Kunne du ønske at du brukte kreative skriveoppgaver mer eller mindre i ditt klasserom og hvorfor?

Vil bruke mer fordi

- Moro for elevene
- Moro for meg som lærer
- Varierte skriveoppgaver
- Utfordrer elevene
- Annet (hva?) \_\_\_\_\_

Vil bruke mindre fordi

- Tar opp for mye tid
- Er ikke effektivt nok
- Er irrelevant
- Er umodent
- Annet (hva?) \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Hva synes du er den største fordelen med kreativ skriving?

- c. Hva synes du er den største ulempen ved kreativ skriving?

- d. Hva synes du er den største utfordringen med kreativ skriving?

5. Jeg samtykker at disse svarene blir samlet og analysert som en del av en masteroppgave. Informasjonen vil ikke bli distribuert og deltakere kan ikke gjenkjennes.

- Ja
- Nei