



**Inland Norway
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Applied Sciences**

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Master's Thesis

**Singing your way to better speaking
skills**

Using songs in the 1-7 EFL classroom

Grunnskolelærerutdanning 1-7

2022

Acknowledgements

The process of writing this thesis has been long and hard, but it has also offered many joyful moments and a ton of laughter. There were times where this project was extremely overwhelming, and I questioned how on earth I would finish this. In the end, it was completed and a thank is due to many people:

I want to thank the teachers that agreed to participate. Thanks for letting me interview you and digging into your thoughts on the matter. There wouldn't be a thesis without you.

I want to thank my supervisors, Siri Frst Skogmo and Gjertrud Flermoen Stenbrenden. Thanks for guiding me through this process. Your help and comments have been invaluable.

I want to thank my family, the whole bunch. Thanks for always supporting and believing in me. Especially thanks to my older, and sometimes wiser sister, Stine. I would not have made it through these five years if it wasn't for your help and guidance. Also, a big thanks to my cousins, Hanne and Ragnhild, your support means everything to me. Thanks for all your feedback and comments on my assignments. I would not have made it without you.

Mariell, without you I would have focused a lot more on my own thesis, but you have made this experience so much better. I have had some of my best years thanks to you.

A big thanks to you, June, who have kept me company during these last months. I'll always remember our lunch breaks that we've spent watching Friends.

Last, but not least, I want to thank all my friends, especially my fellow English people. We have had so much fun these past five years and I would not have been able to complete these five years without you.

Thank you all.

Hamar, May 2022

Camilla Johannessen

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Abstract

Title: Singing your way to better speaking skills

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Year: 2022

Pages: 94 (excluding appendices)

Previous research on using songs to teach language, indicates that singing in the classroom can benefit students' language learning. This study investigates three elementary school teachers' attitudes on using English songs in the Norwegian EFL classroom to teach speaking skills and pronunciation. In addition, it also explores *why* and *how* the participants employ songs in their classrooms. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather the data for this study.

The research findings in this thesis suggest that singing in the foreign language classroom can benefit the students in several ways. It can improve students' grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as it can create stronger and safer learning environments, in addition to improve the relationship between peers and student-teacher relationships. The teachers who participated in this study have no official qualifications in music, but they are all active singers both inside and outside the classroom. The teachers reported similar beliefs on how and why they employ songs in their English lessons, and they only differ in their thoughts on target pronunciation. The research findings suggest that the participants in this study are overall positive to the use of songs in their EFL classrooms, however, they do not use songs *primarily* for teaching speaking skills and pronunciation. They rather use songs as an overall method to expose the students to the language, and to improve their language skills in general.

Norsk sammendrag

Tittel: Syng deg til bedre språkferdigheter

Forfatter: Camilla Johannessen

År: 2022

Sider: 94 (ikke medregnet vedlegg)

Tidligere forskning på bruk av sang til å lære språk, tilsier at sang i klasserommet kan forbedre elevenes språkinnlæring. Denne studien undersøker tre barneskolelæreres holdninger og syn på bruk av engelske sanger i det engelskspråklige klasserommet for å lære bort språklige ferdigheter og uttale. I tillegg forskes det på *hvorfor* og *hvordan* de tre lærerne bruker sanger i deres klasserom. Semi-strukturerte intervjuer ble benyttet til innsamlingen av dataen til dette prosjektet.

Funnene i denne studien indikerer at det å synge i det fremmedspråklige klasserommet kan være til fordel for elevene på flere måter. Det kan forbedre elevenes grammatikk, vokabular og uttale, i tillegg til å styrke klasse miljøet, elev-elev relasjoner og lærer-elev relasjoner. De tre lærerne som deltok i dette prosjektet har ingen formelle kvalifikasjoner i musikk, men de er alle aktive sangere både i og utenfor klasserommet. Lærerne rapporterte relativt like holdninger og syn på hvorfor de bruker sanger i klasserommet. De hadde derimot litt ulike tanker når det kom til å lære bort en spesifikk uttale. Selv om det kommer frem at de tre lærerne er positive til bruk av sang i klasserommet, viser forskningsfunnene at respondentene i denne studien ikke nødvendigvis fokuserer på språkferdigheter og uttale når de bruker sanger, men at de blir brukt for å eksponere elevene for språket og for å forbedre språkinnlæringen generelt.

1 Introduction

*Billet does not rhyme with ballet,
 Bouquet, wallet, mallet, chalet.
 Blood and flood are not like food,
 Nor is mould like should and would.
 Viscous, viscount, load and broad,
 Toward, to forward, to reward.
 And your pronunciation's OK
 When you correctly say croquet,
 Rounded, wounded, grieve and sieve,
 Friend and fiend, alive and live.¹*

This thesis will explore how using songs in the English language classroom can benefit language learning, social development, and building a safe teaching and learning environment. It will do so by investigating how three English teachers in Norwegian elementary schools use songs to improve the students' speaking skills and pronunciation when teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) through in-depth interviews. The research was conducted by utilizing qualitative methods (in-depth, semi-structured interviews) supported by secondary data in the form of previous research and existing theories.

Teaching English in Norwegian elementary schools comes with many responsibilities. The students have several aims to achieve during their English lessons, and one of these aims is communication. Communication is about having meaningful interactions with one or several others, both in writing and orally. Oral skills is one of the four basic skills in the English subject curriculum, which shows how essential it is to work with oral communication in school. An essential part of successful communication is pronunciation. Being able to pronounce is what makes others understand you in communication. Schools and education in many parts of the world, as well as Norway, have often focused on teaching grammar and the rules of the written language. The Norwegian national tests focus on these language aspects. However, students will also benefit from knowing how to communicate successfully in speaking situations. In spoken communication, there is a need for a wide and appropriate vocabulary, but one also needs the skills and ability to pronounce these words correctly and

¹ Excerpt from the poem "The Chaos" written by G. Nilst Trenité in 1922.

in a manner that conveys the intended message. Lacking these skills can result in unsuccessful communication, which underscores the importance of practicing these skills in educational situations. We live in a world that is becoming increasingly globalized, and knowing the English language is not just a benefit, but also a necessity. Many would consider English to be the second language of most Norwegian students, but as the world is becoming more globalized, the classrooms are becoming increasingly multicultural. Many researchers, including Rindal (2012, pp. 22-23), discuss whether young Norwegian learners fall under the category of learning English as a foreign or as a second language (see section 1.5.1). In this thesis, I have chosen to consider English in Norway as the students' EFL.

Previous research suggests that employing English songs in a foreign language classroom to teach speaking skills and pronunciation is an efficient way of working with pronunciation (Lund, 2012, p. 2; Davis, 2017, p. 451). Not only can singing improve students' pronunciation, but it also comes with many other benefits. Such benefits are improving other language aspects, like vocabulary and grammar, and not least creating a safer and better learning environment. However, previous research has also found that many teachers are reluctant to apply songs in their EFL classroom as they feel unqualified to do so (Alisaari & Heikkola, 2017, p. 241). This raises questions about why some teachers are hesitant while others use songs in every English lesson, and what makes teachers feel unqualified to use songs in their foreign language teaching classrooms.

I have been interested in this topic for a long time, as songs and music were a big part of my childhood. I strongly believe that has helped me understand and acquire English pronunciation. I have been singing mostly English songs as long as I can remember, even when I was too young to understand the content or even read the lyrics. The songs were learned by listening and imitating. The songs brought me joy and that joy was what made me keep singing the same songs over and over again. By listening to the English songs and singing them repeatedly, I learned how different words sounded and was able to both replicate and recognize them later.

Today, children are exposed to the English language frequently, and many are exposed to it through listening to songs. Most children have been sung to as babies and toddlers, and were introduced to songs early in life, often in their first language (L1). Many children also learn much about their first language, like vocabulary and grammar, when singing. Most children

also love to sing and dance, and this is often seen as something fun and motivating. To take something that they are familiar with, singing, and turn it into something they can learn from, might benefit their language skills, as the learning can be more fun and motivating for the learners.

Whether or not my childhood singing improved my pronunciation is hard to confirm, but I do believe that it contributed in some way. Children have been singing in classrooms for many years, but the interesting question is why teachers use songs as a part of their teaching, and what singing can teach children. Therefore, I want to explore if singing English songs can benefit learners' speaking skills and pronunciation in the Norwegian elementary school. My approach is to investigate teachers' attitudes towards using songs in the EFL classroom and find out how and why they are using songs.

1.1 Research aim and purpose

The overarching aim of this thesis is to discuss teacher's attitudes towards the use of English songs in the Norwegian elementary school to improve their students' speaking skills and pronunciation.

The thesis aims to answer these research questions:

1. *What are (some) teachers' attitudes towards using English songs in the Norwegian EFL classroom?*
2. *Why and how are teachers using songs to teach English speaking skills in the Norwegian EFL classroom?*

Speaking skills and pronunciation are essential components of language acquisition and vital parts of mastering the art of communication. Even though English is a world language, and the acquisition of English has been researched thoroughly, Derwing and Munro highlight the need for more research on second language (L2) pronunciation (2005, p. 380). They further explain that other language aspects, such as grammar and vocabulary, are more well researched, and that the research on the "relation between accent and pronunciation teaching" are lacking, so teachers often must rely on their own practice without much direction (2005, p. 379). This might lead to poor and less pronunciation teaching, even though there is a great need for explicit and good pronunciation teaching. Learning communicative competence and

pronunciation are essential for being able to communicate using the English language, and by the lack of research on the matter, it is challenging knowing how to work with pronunciation in the EFL classroom.

By gaining insight into how three teachers in the Norwegian elementary school perceive and implement English songs and how they approach the use of songs in the EFL classroom, it can provide suggestions on how this might apply in the Norwegian context. As there is a great focus on working with oral communication, it will be interesting to see if using songs in the EFL classroom makes a difference for the students' pronunciation learning and the development of speaking skills.

1.2 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR)

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is not a nationally administered document for reference followed in the Norwegian education system. However, it has influenced and inspired some parts of the English subject curriculum, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Ludvigsen et al., 2014, p. 79). The Common European Framework of Reference contains a detailed description of different language levels and what they entail in these levels. As the English subject curriculum is fairly scarce on its instructions and expectations when it comes to language levels and ways to measure the students learning, this framework can be of assistance for EFL teachers. The aim of the continuous work of the CEFR is “to ensure quality inclusive education as a right of all citizens” and one of the main principles is “the promotion of the positive formulation of educational aims and outcomes at all levels” (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 21).

The CEFR is mostly known for its language proficiency scales, which describes what learners should be able to do at each of the six levels. The six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2) have become common terms used when describing learners' language proficiency.

Norwegian learners of the English language are highly ranked in the English Proficiency Index (Education first, 2016; Iannuzzi & Rindal, 2017). The Norwegian learners of English

are ranked in the group with very high proficiency (Education first, p. 9, 2016), which corresponds to CEFR level C1 (Education first, n.d).

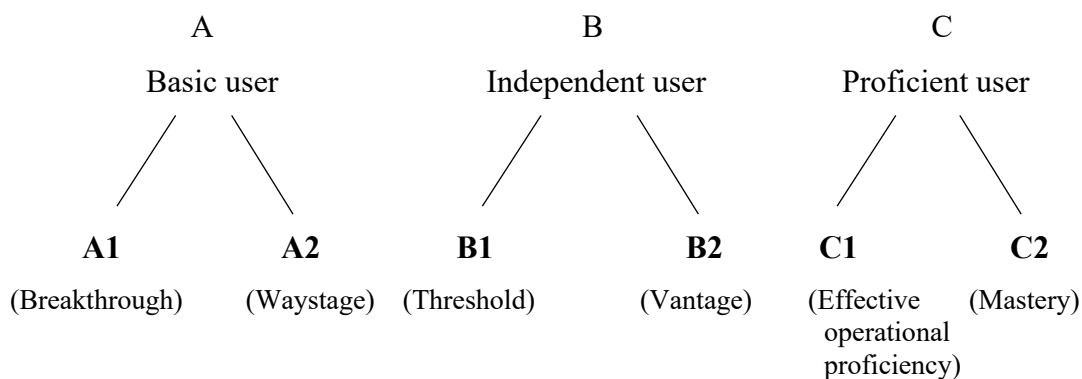


Figure 1: The CEFR's reference levels

The Council of Europe clearly communicates that level C2, mastery, “is not intended to imply native-speaker or near native-speaker competence” (2020, p. 37). It further says that the intention is to “characterize the degree of precision, appropriateness and ease with the language which typifies the speech of those who have been highly successful learners” (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 37).

Proficient user	C2	Can understand virtually all types of texts. Can summarise information from different oral and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent user	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with users of the target language quite possible without imposing strain on either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic user	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where someone lives, people they know and things they have. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Table 1: Summary of The Common Reference Levels

This table from the CEFR (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 175) has summarized what learners can do at each of the different reference levels. It explains what is expected at each of the levels. Level A1 and A2, basic user, describes that the expectations at these levels are that the learner is able to understand and use a simple and familiar language. At this level, they are able to themselves and describe experiences. When it comes to level B1 and B2, independent user, the learner is able to use the language to a greater extent. When the level of an independent user is reached, the learner is able to use the language more spontaneously, and they have a pretty good understanding of the language. The highest level, C1 and C2, proficient user, the learner's knowledge of the language is excellent. At level C1 and C2, the learner is using the language fluently, and they are able to participate in conversations that

contain vocabulary beyond their interests and can read longer and complex texts. Having reached the level of proficient user, the learner can use the language fluently for the appropriate setting (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 175).

The Common European Framework of Reference features many different aspects of language learning, such as reception which includes oral and reading comprehension, production which includes oral and written production, interaction which includes oral, written, and online interaction, and mediation. As this thesis focuses on the oral aspect of language, such as communication, speaking skills, and pronunciation, the following tables present a detailed description of the CERF's levels in overall oral production, and overall oral interaction.

	Overall oral production
C2	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured discourse with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
C1	Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.
B2	Can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.
	Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to their field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.
B1	Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within their field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.
A2	Can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes, etc. as a short series of simple phrases and sentences linked into a list.
A1	Can produce simple, mainly isolated phrases about people and places.
Pre-A1	Can produce short phrases about themselves, giving basic personal information (e.g. name, address, family, nationality).

Table 2: Overall oral production

This table on 'overall oral production' (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 62) presents what the learner is able to do at each of the reference levels when it comes to oral production. Note that this table also includes a pre-A1 level, which presents the bare minimum expectations that can be measured. This is where the learner is able to present themselves in a short and precise manner. The learner's language ability at level A1 and A2 is to produce simple phrases and sentences revolving people, places, daily routines, and likes and dislikes. The expectations and demands on level A1 and A2, are similar to competence aims that is found

in the English subject curriculum after Year 2 and Year 4. The next level, B1 and B2, is again more complex. When having reached this reference level, the learner is using the language more fluently, and can give more detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects. The highest level, C1 and C2, is quite similar to level B1 and B2, but at C1 and C2, the learner is able to describe and present more detailed and complex subjects. At this level, they are also able to do this with a fluent and well-structured language (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 62).

	Overall oral interaction
C2	Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning. Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of modification devices. Can backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.
C1	Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions. There is little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies; only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.
B2	Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. Can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what they want to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.
	Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with users of the target language, quite possible without imposing strain on either party. Can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, and account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments.
B1	Can communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to their interests and professional field. Can exchange, check and confirm information, deal with less routine situations and explain why something is a problem. Can express thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music, etc.
	Can exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling. Can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics, and express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).
A2	Can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations, provided the other person helps if necessary. Can manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort; can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations.
	Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters to do with work and free time. Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of their own accord.
A1	Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition at a slower rate, rephrasing and repair. Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.
Pre-A1	Can ask and answer questions about themselves and daily routines, using short, formulaic expressions and relying on gestures to reinforce the information.

Table 3: Overall oral interaction

This table on ‘overall oral interaction’ (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 72) describes what learners of the language can do at each level. The Council of Europe describe oral interactions as something that “include both spoken interaction and live, face-to-face signing” (2020, p. 71). This table also includes a pre-A1 level, which is where the learner can “ask and answer simple questions about themselves and their daily routines” (2020, p. 72). At this pre-A1 level, the learners are also inclined to use gestures to ensure that the information comes across to the recipient. At level A1 and A2, the learner of the language is able to somewhat participate in interactions and communications with others. They are better at conveying simple and short messages but are struggling to keep up with the other part of the interaction is conveying. Reaching the top half of level A2, the learners are now able to participate in interactions and conversations with more ease. At level B1 and B2, the learners now know how to use the language fluently in spontaneous conversations and interactions. They can convey their message without too much restriction, and without the need of gestures. Again, at level C1 and C2, the learners have gained a greater amount of knowledge and language skills. At this level, the learners are able to use the language effortlessly with fluency in spontaneous settings. The learners have also gained an understanding of the language’s more complex aspect, such as idioms (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 72). As mentioned above, the intention of level C1 and C2, proficient user, is not to sound like a native, or near-native speaker. This is also confirmed in these tables, as the levels do not mention any specific pronunciation, but only the learner’s knowledge, abilities, and skills.

As seen in both the English subject curriculum and in the CEFR’s levels, the students are to acquire much knowledge and many skills in the target language and learn how to use the language in interactions and in communication with others, but any target pronunciation is not mentioned. The English subject curriculum contains several competence aims that teachers are working towards. Looking at and using the reference levels presented in the CEFR can make the competence aims clearer, and they can benefit the teachers in their work in the English language classroom. The two tables mentioned above, ‘overall oral production’ and ‘overall oral interaction’ contain a more detailed description of what is expected of the learners at each level. Being an English teacher without too much guidance on what students should learn when it comes to speaking skills explicitly, using the CERF’s tables for extra guidance and support can help the teachers with this task.

1.3 The Core curriculum

The core curriculum presents and contextualizes what the Norwegian education system is bound by law to include in their practice. The core curriculum emphasizes the responsibility the school has when it comes to educating and developing the students' competence in primary and secondary training. Teaching different subjects in school make up a substantial part of teachers' daily work, but they are also to teach the students how to become independent and democratic citizens in Norwegian society. This learning happens through working with the different subjects in school.

1.3.1 Principles for education and all-round development

In the chapter on *principles for education and all-round development*, the Ministry of Education and Research states that a part of the schools' assignment is to both educate the students, as well work with their all-round development (2017, p. 12). This might seem like an intimidating task, but as the Ministry of Education and Research states, "education and all-round development are interlinked" (2017, p.12), so these are not two separate parts of teaching, as they happen side by side.

There are many aspects included in students' education and "all-round development" and ways to work with these in school. The Ministry of Education and Research explains how the students' all-round development shall give the students the opportunity to enhance their learning, skills, and abilities (2017, p. 12). These skills and abilities are crucial to make the students succeed in school and later in their lives. The all-round education is acquired through many various activities and challenges. The Ministry of Education and Research presents that these activities and challenges includes spontaneous play and that "physical and aesthetic activities which promote the joy of movement and mastering" (2017, p. 12). By implementing singing in the classroom, students may improve their learning, all-round development, and their language skills and abilities.

1.3.2 Social learning and development

"School shall support and contribute to the social learning and development of the pupils through work with subjects and everyday affairs in school" (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 12). This is the first line in the core curriculums chapter on *social learning*

and development. This illustrates the importance of students in the Norwegian school system are learning and developing their social skills. The Ministry of Education and Research states that the students' "academic and social learning and development are interconnected (2017, p. 12). Further, the ministry states that:

The ability to understand what others think, feel and experience is the basis for empathy and friendship between pupils. Dialogue is crucial in social learning, and the school must teach the value and importance of a listening dialogue to deal with opposition. When interacting with their pupils, the teachers must promote communication and collaboration that will give the pupils the confidence and courage to express their own opinions and to point out issues on the behalf of others. To learn to listen to others and also argue for one's own views will give the pupils the platform for dealing with disagreements and conflicts, and for seeking solutions together. Everyone must learn to cooperate, function together with others and develop the ability to participate and take responsibility.

(The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, pp. 12-13).

The paragraph above demonstrates how crucial it is that teachers work with communicative competence and teach the students how they need to communicate to be able to express their feelings and opinions. It is also worth noting that communication these days does not always happen in the students first language, and many are communicating using the English language. Whether communication happens in the students first, second, or foreign language, they should be able to express themselves in an appropriate manner, as well as know how to work through conflicts and disagreements. Expressing feelings and thoughts, and learning how to function with others, often from different nationalities, can be challenging, especially in a second or foreign language. This adds more pressure on teaching the students communicative competence and speaking skills.

In an article on singing in the classroom, Ellis argues that singing together in the classroom is not only beneficial for language learning, but it also offers the students the opportunity to improve and develop their social skills (2016). As stated in the Core curriculum (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 12), social learning is an essential part of the school's responsibility. Implementing songs in the classroom can help to ensure the students social development.

1.3.3 An inclusive learning environment

Not only are the schools responsible for the students' education and all-round development, but they are also responsible for creating a safe learning space for the students. The Ministry of Education and Research highlights the significance of developing "an inclusive environment that promotes health, well-being and learning for all" (2017, p. 18). It is important that the students feel safe, comfortable, and included at school to be able to be educated and enhance their learning. The Ministry of Education and Research defines a safe and supportive learning environment as "the basis for a positive culture where pupils are encouraged and stimulated to develop academically and socially", and that if this is not achieved, the students learning may be inhibited (2017, p. 18).

To be able to educate the students into independent individuals that can take part in a dynamic and democratic world, the Ministry of Education and Research states that students must partake in the learning environment which includes the teachers as well as their co-students (2017, p. 18). In other words, the feeling of belonging and being included is majorly affected by the students' relations with their teachers and peers, and this relationship will impact the students' learning and confidence. Having a negative relationship with teachers and students may harm the students' feeling of belonging, which can then have a negative impact on the students learning. Singing together in the classroom as a shared experience is a way of improving and creating an inclusive learning environment (Wheeler, 2014), which is essential for the students learning.

1.4 The English subject curriculum in Norway

Teaching English in Norwegian schools involves many different aspects that are to be covered in a small amount of time, this is further elaborated on in section 1.5. The English subject in the Norwegian school system also includes, in addition to language, literature and culture. One of the purposes of the English subject is to teach the students how to communicate with others, both in writing and orally. This is evident in the chapter "relevance and central values" in LK20, which explains how the students are supposed to be able to communicate and connect with others, locally and globally using the English language (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). Not only should the students be capable of conversing with others, but various competence aims in the English subject

curriculum also mention that the students are supposed to use songs as one of the ways to explore and learn pronunciation patterns. There are three competence aims that specifically mention this. After Year 2: “listen to and explore the English alphabet and pronunciation patterns through play and singing”, after Year 4: “explore and use the English alphabet and pronunciation patterns in a variety of playing, singing and language-learning activities”, and after Year 7: “explore and use pronunciation patterns and words and expressions in play, singing and role playing” (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). These competence aims span all years in elementary school, which shows that singing and pronunciation are considered vital from the beginning to the end of elementary school. This clearly shows that songs are considered by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training to be an essential part of the EFL classroom, and that teachers are expected to use songs and that it can be a tool when it comes to learning pronunciation and speaking skills.

However, despite including ways of working with pronunciation, the English subject curriculum does not mention what kind of pronunciation the teachers are supposed to teach (Rindal & Iannuzzi, 2020, p. 118), it focuses more on students achieving communicative competence, and being able to produce meaningful conversations. That indicates that there is no common English accent to aim for when learning to speak English, or at least not one which is recommended to teachers. Which can make it challenging for teachers to teach pronunciation in a systematic way.

1.4.1 Core elements in the curriculum

The core elements in the English subject curriculum include communication, language learning, and working with English texts as important aspects of the subject. Communication is about making meaningful conversations and interactions by using the target language (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). It further states that the students should learn to use English in adapted situations through authentic and practical settings (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). Singing could be an example of such an authentic and practical setting.

Language learning in the core elements refers to knowing the English language and understanding how it is structured (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training,

2020). When learning the language, one also needs to learn the “pronunciation of the phonemes, vocabulary, word structure, syntax and text composition” as this gives the students the knowledge needed in order to decide and know how they can interact and communicate with others (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). A part of understanding the structure of the language includes understanding the pronunciation of phonemes. Phonemes is the term used for the pronunciation of the different letters in the alphabet. However, the letters are often different phonemes, based on their placement in the word and in combination with other letters. The English alphabet consists of 26 letters, yet there are 19 vowel sounds and 25 consonant sounds. This means that some letters have multiple sound variations. Therefore, it is not only necessary for the students to learn the alphabet, but also how to pronounce the different phonemes in order to achieve a sufficiently accurate pronunciation.

Working with English texts is a substantial part of language learning. The curriculum uses a broad definition of the term *texts*. Texts are not only written but can also be defined as using speech to present a message (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). Using songs as a tool in the students’ language learning can introduce the students to both written and oral texts. Authentic texts are texts that are often written and used by native speakers, which shows and demonstrates how the language is used by native speakers. By including English songs that are written by and to English speakers, allows the non-native students to experience the target language how it is used by the native speakers. According to Brown, this lets the students see that they are learning a real language, and it might strengthen the relevance of what is happening inside the classroom to what they will need and use outside the classroom (2007, p. 311).

1.4.2 Oral skills as a basic skill

Five basic skills for learning are established and implemented in all disciplines in elementary and lower secondary school in the Knowledge Promotion (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2012, p. 5). The importance of oral competence in Norwegian schools can be shown in the fact that 'oral skills' is one of the five basic skills stated. The following is how oral skills is defined in the English subject curriculum:

Oral skills in English refers to creating meaning through listening, talking and engaging in conversation. This means presenting information, adapting the language to the purpose, the receiver and the situation and choosing suitable strategies. Developing oral skills in English means using the spoken language gradually more accurately and with more nuances in order to communicate on different topics in formal and informal situations with a variety of receivers with varying linguistic backgrounds.

(The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020).

Oral skills is one of four basic skills in the English subject curriculum. Even though the subject curriculum contains five basic skills, there are only four basic skills in the English subject curriculum since numeracy is no longer a part of the English subject. Oral skills is described as being able to make meaning through listening, speaking, and conversing (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). All these three aspects of oral skills require an understanding of the English pronunciation patterns. To acquire oral skills in English it is important that the learners' language competence increases so that their communicative skills can keep developing (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). The fact that oral skills is a specific and clear part of the English subject curriculum in Norway, illustrates how important it is considered to be for language learning.

1.5 English subject teaching in Norway

Even though there has been an increased attention to the English subject in the Norwegian education system, the subject has been mandatory since 1969 (Fenner, 2018, pp. 23-24), and became integrated in all Years from 1-10 with the new curriculum in 1997 (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training). Flognfeldt and Lund claim in a textbook for teacher students that the aim all English teachers are reaching for is to make sure that their students achieve communicative competence. Further, they state that to achieve this the focus should be on vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (2016, p. 21). Flognfeldt and Lund (2016) say, in the context of learning to communicate in a second language (L2), that the aim is that "our messages are understood the way they were intended" (p. 21). That means that only knowing the correct grammatical structure of a language and having a wide vocabulary is not sufficient in order to have meaningful conversations, one would also need to know how to pronounce these words correctly. If one has acquired the needed vocabulary for

communication and pronounce it wrong, the meaning of the word or the sentence might end up not making sense and then the message one was trying to convey is not understood how it was intended.

The English subject curriculum in Norway (see section 1.4) explains and demonstrates what Norwegian students are supposed to learn with and through the English subject. The subject curriculum includes a part that explains what the English subject means in the Norwegian educational context. This part is called 'about the subject' and consists of the subject's relevance and central values, core elements, interdisciplinary topics, and basic skills. This part contextualizes why Norwegian students need the English subject, and that learning the English language is more than learning how to use it, and that one should also learn to understand and respect other cultures and interact with them. The other main part of the English subject curriculum is the competence aims and assessment. The competence aims that concerns the elementary schools are divided into what students should have learnt after Year 2, 4, and 7. These aims tell the teachers more concrete what the students are supposed to learn. The competence aims can be quite wide and comprehensive and gives no guidelines on how each of the aims should be reached. This gives the teachers full control on how they choose to work with the competence aims in the English subject curriculum.

Even though English is an important subject in school, it is not the only one. A certain amount of time is set aside in Norwegian elementary schools for teaching English. There are 366 hours dedicated to English over the course of a child's 7 years in elementary school (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). According to The Education Act (1998), students attend school for at least 38 weeks every year. From Year 1 through Year 4, 138 hours are devoted to English instruction (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020), for a total of 34,5 hours every year. If the total hours are divided equally, the amount is slightly higher in years 5-7, giving 76 hours each year. When we divide the hours by the total number of weeks pupils are expected to attend school each year, we get 2 hours per week in Years 5-7 and less than one hour per week in Years 1-4. In Year 5-7, the Norwegian subject has 3,8 hours of dedicated time, nearly double that of English. Learning speaking skills and pronunciation takes time and having enough time can be an issue. Since Norwegian elementary school students are taught English for few hours a week, it can be interesting to explore the usefulness of songs in pronunciation teaching to see if it is worth dedicating time to, and to see if it can help expedite the process of learning English.

1.5.1 The status of English in Norway

English is taught in Norwegian elementary schools as a second or a foreign language. Cambridge dictionary defines ESL as “the teaching of English to speakers of other languages who live in a country where English is an official or important language” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.), as is the case for the vast majority of Norwegian learners. EFL is defined as “the teaching of English to students whose first language is not English” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). Even though English is not an official language in Norway, one could argue that it indeed is an important language. Most Norwegians meet the English language on a daily basis, and many even use it themselves frequently. As Norwegian learners, where most of the students do not have English as their first language (L1), it would make sense to use the term EFL when talking about learning English in a Norwegian context. However, English is an essential language for many Norwegians, so it could be argued that the term ESL should be applied in the Norwegian context.

Which term is best suited for Norwegian learners is still a complex discussion among researchers. Rindal (2014, p. 213) states that “English has traditionally been labelled a *foreign* language” in Norway, but since it is frequently used by Norwegians, both in social and work context, it “no longer feels *foreign* to Norwegians” (Rindal, 2012, p. 1). Rindal explains that English is neither a first, second, nor foreign language for young Norwegian learners (2012, p. 22). This indicates that neither the term EFL nor ESL applies to the Norwegian learners, but that the students fall in between the two categories. Rindal refers to the English language’s status as “unclear or *transitional*” in Norway (2020, p. 38). However, for the sake of clarity throughout this thesis, I will use the term EFL when referring to the Norwegian learners of English. There are also many students who have other first languages than Norwegian, so English might be the third or fourth language they are learning.

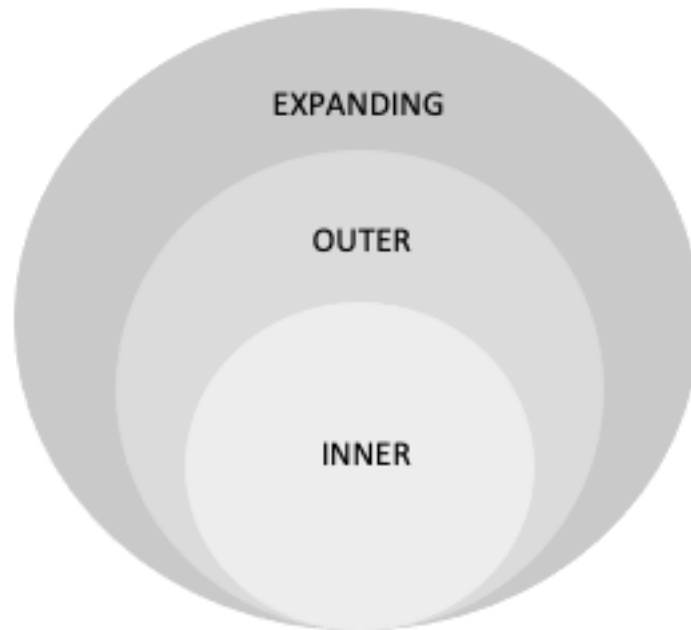


Figure 2: Kachru's concentric circles of English in its simplest form

Kachru designed this model (seen in Rindal 2020, p. 25) to illustrate the role of the English language in different parts of the world. The inner circle represents speakers who has English as their first language, the native speakers; USA, England, South Africa, etc. (Rindal, 2020, p. 26). The outer circle represents countries where English is an official second language; India, Singapore, Nigeria, etc. (ibid.). The expanding circle is where all countries where English has been taught as a foreign language in school and is important for other aspects such as tourism and business; Norway, Japan, the Netherlands, etc. (ibid.).

Rindal explains that “countries in the expanding circle have traditionally looked to the inner circle” for models of the English language, especially when it comes to pronunciation, as imitating the native speakers as closely as possible often had successful outcomes for the people in the expanding circle (2020, p. 26). There has, however, been a shift in the status of the role of the English language since this model was designed. Rindal states that these concentric circles no longer present the English language in different parts of the world correctly (2020, p. 27). Furthermore, she argues that many ESL and EFL speakers are more proficient and has more knowledge about the English language than many native speakers. As the English language is more common and used by many more people these days, fewer people are looking at what used to be the inner circle as role models for language and pronunciation. The many varieties of English are more commonly used, and fewer are

targeting the native-like pronunciation. This is also evident in Norwegian education, as the goal of the English subject is not to acquire a native or native-like accent.

1.5.2 The *Nativeness principle* and the *Intelligibility principle*

Two ideologies that are often used when discussing pronunciation teaching are the *nativeness principle* and the *intelligibility principle*. Levis published an article on these two principles in 2005, where he explained these two as contradictory principles, as they “were rooted in fundamentally different approaches to language teaching even though the practices associated with the two principles often overlapped and looked similar” (Levis, 2020, p. 5). The *nativeness principle* and the *intelligibility principle* describe two different expectations of learning or teaching pronunciation in a second or foreign language. The former expects the learner to achieve a native-like pronunciation, whereas the latter expects the learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, and ability needed in order to be able to make oneself understood in communication with others (Levis, 2005, p. 307). Levis claims that “the intelligibility principle better reflects the reality of accent diversity in English” (2020, p. 5).

By aiming for a native-like accent, it then excludes nations and regions where English is an important but not an official language. Further, Levis states that by employing the nativeness principle, and aiming toward a so-called ideal native-like pronunciation accent, it then makes learning a second or foreign language nearly impossible for the majority of the learners (2020, p. 5). As clearly shown in both the English subject curriculum and in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), the goal is not to sound like an English native-speaker, which invalidates the nativeness principle in pronunciation teaching.

When working with speaking skills and pronunciation in the EFL classroom, the teachers strive for building the students oral English competence and abilities. However, Levis problematizes the nativeness principle as it assumes that the only way to speak a foreign language is to sound like a native speaker, and if one does not master this, then you have failed (2020, p. 5). However, not sounding like a native speaker does not mean that one cannot make oneself understood and communicate with others, as is the goal in the English language classroom in Norwegian schools (see section 1.2 and 1.4).



Figure 3: Intelligibility as central to oral communication

This figure (figure 3, from Levis, 2020, p. 12) illustrates the relationship between the intelligibility principle and oral communication. Levis states that in this figure (figure 3), the intelligibility principle is the “ultimate goal in oral communication” (Levis, 2008, cited in Levis, 2020, p. 10). The figure above, illustrates the relationship between different aspects of language learning using the intelligibility principle. As Levis argues, pronunciation is an essential part of communication, and cannot be avoided. Furthermore, he states that pronunciation is “important for L2 learning insofar as it influences intelligibility (2020, p. 11). As shown in figure 3, pronunciation is not the only aspect featured in intelligibility. *Lexicon, pronunciation, and grammar* all overlap each other in this figure, but *other linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of language* remain separate. This is because there is minimal research on how other aspects of communication, such as gestures, non-verbal communication, etc. relates with aspects that is known to affect intelligibility (Levis, 2020, p. 11). As Levis argues, the intelligibility principle is “the superior way to think about pronunciation in teaching and learning” (2020, p. 5). This is because learning a second or a foreign language comes with more aspects and abilities other than the expectation of learning how to sound like a native speaker, which is not deemed necessary.

1.6 The structure of the thesis

The present chapter contextualizes my study by providing a background for why this topic was chosen for this master's thesis, what this study is aiming to research, and why. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework and previous research relevant to teaching speaking skills and pronunciation. In chapter 3, the research design is outlined, including the research method, and the participants are presented. At the end of chapter 3, the framework of the data analysis is presented, and possible limitations and ethical considerations are mentioned. In chapter 4, the research findings are presented, and these will be discussed in chapter 5. Finally, the concluding remarks and suggestions on further research will be presented in chapter 6.

1.7 Summary of the chapter

This chapter aimed to present what this study is about and why it is needed, by presenting English (pronunciation) teaching in the Norwegian context. It is evident that acquiring a good and understandable pronunciation is of importance and that it is a crucial part of the English subject in the Norwegian elementary school. The English subject curriculum, the teachers legal document that tells them what the students have to learn, highlights communication as crucial. It also includes pronunciation teaching, as well as the use of songs. Not only are the schools responsible for educating the students in different subjects, but they are also responsible for the students' all-round development and social learning, as stated in the Core curriculum. The Common European Framework of Reference has also been explored, as this has influenced the development of the English subject curriculum, and it can be used by teachers if more guidance on oral language proficiency.

2 Theory and previous research

In this chapter I present and discuss theory and previous research and form the theoretical framework for the thesis. This chapter consists of theory and previous research on topics such as using music and songs in the classroom, teaching pronunciation and teaching pronunciation in a foreign or second language, if there is a correct accent to learn when learning English, teachers' perspective on teaching pronunciation, and how one can learn speaking skills and pronunciation by employing songs. The purpose of this study is to find out what teachers think about using English songs in the EFL classroom to teach speaking skills and pronunciation, as well as *if* and *how* they use songs.

2.1 What is the goal of pronunciation teaching?

As stated earlier, Norwegian learners do not qualify as having either ESL or EFL (Rindal, 2012, p. 22), as the English language is an important, but not an official language in Norway (see section 1.5.1). However, English is still a new and foreign language for many to learn, and it comes with its challenges. The English subject curriculum does not contain any guidelines on what pronunciation accent the students should learn (see section 1.4), which indicates that this is open for each teacher's interpretation. The English subject curriculum and its lack of guidelines on pronunciation teaching puts Norwegian EFL learners in the category of the intelligibility principle (see section 1.5.2), where they aim towards being able to make themselves understood using the English language, and not sounding like a native speaker.

A sufficiently clear and accurate pronunciation would indicate that the students know how to pronounce English somewhat correctly, even though there is no target accent. When there is no official standard of pronunciation, Rindal and Iannuzzi write that students often are influenced by the accents they hear (2020, p. 118). It is then likely that the language they are presented with at school is their most considerable influence, at least when working with younger students, such as in elementary schools. There has been a long tradition of focusing on British English in schools and universities in Norway (Rindal, 2010, paragraph 1.1). This probably influenced teachers to try to aim for a more British pronunciation. However, with the frequent exposure to the English language these days, children are often exposed to American pronunciation as well. By being exposed to mainly these two accents, it is not

unlikely for students to acquire a mix of these. This is not necessarily an issue, as the goal in English teaching in Norway is not to gain a native-like pronunciation but to be able to communicate with other speakers of English (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020).

Although the newest curriculum, LK20, does not specify what accent students should learn, it has not always been like that. *Mønsterplan 74* (M74) and *Mønsterplan 87* (M87) both contained what pronunciation accent students should acquire. In *Mønsterplan 74*, it is specifically stated that students should learn English Standard Pronunciation, but if a student speaks American English, a British pronunciation accent should not be forced (The Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, 1974, p. 149). On the other hand, *Mønsterplan 87* does not state that the students should learn an English Standard Pronunciation, but that they “should learn to use a normalized variety of British or American English” (The Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, 1987, p. 210, my translation). The aim of acquiring a British or American English accent was taken out of the English subject curriculum when the next curriculum was implemented, which indicates that what type of English pronunciation the students learn is no longer of the essence.

In 2013, Rindal conducted another study, where she researched which English accents 70 students in upper secondary school aim for, where the students could choose between *British*, *American*, *other*, *Norwegian*, *Neutral*, and *I don't care* (Rindal 2020, p. 120). The students' responses showed that most of them care what accent they aim for and that most of them aimed for an American accent (Rindal, 2020, pp. 120-121). However, there was not a big difference between the students who answered American and those who answered British. As these are the two accents' students are mostly exposed to, it does not come as a big surprise that these are the accents most of them aim for. This study was conducted on older students who consciously choose a pronunciation accent. Whether younger students are capable of the same choice is hard to say, as Rindal's study only included older students in upper secondary school. Younger students are probably more influenced by the accents they are exposed to through media and their teachers, which makes the teacher an important language role model.

Hancock (2018) argues that pronunciation teaching should focus on the communication aspect and that targeting an American or a British accent is unnecessary. Moreover, Haukland and Rindal (2017) explain that most people communicating with others in English do not

have English as their L1, which makes a native-like pronunciation less critical, and having a Norwegian English accent can actually be beneficial (pp. 83-84). Haukland conducted a study in 2016 where people from 27 different countries listened to different audio clips with different English accents, including a Norwegian English accent, and how the listeners perceived and felt about the different accents. The results from Haukland's (2016) study showed that most of the participants found the Norwegian English accent just as easy, if not easier, to understand than British and American accents. It also showed that the Norwegian participants were the ones who disliked the Norwegian English accent the most, so this can indicate that Norwegian speakers of English have higher standards when it comes to their own pronunciation than others do. It can seem like people are most critical of their 'local' accent than other less familiar and more exotic foreign accents.

Whether one should be aiming toward a specific pronunciation or not is also featured in the Common European Framework of Reference (see section 1.2), where each of the reference levels describe what the learners are able to do at each level, and it does not specify what pronunciation or accent is the target. CEFR clearly demonstrates that a native-like pronunciation is not the goal.

2.2 Using music and songs in the classroom

In a study on Finnish teachers' beliefs about using songs in the classroom, Alisaari and Heikkola showed that most teachers consider using songs a beneficial part of language acquisition (2017, p. 241). However, they discovered that actually singing the songs, rather than just listening to them, is not done very often. According to Alisaari and Heikkola (2017, p. 241), this could be because teachers are unsure of their own voice and are reluctant to put themselves in the spotlight. Nonetheless, Alisaari and Heikkola (2017) claim that there is a plethora of study on "reasons for the scarce use of songs [...] in the language classroom in order to promote the use of these techniques" (p. 241).

Music and songs have a long tradition in classrooms. Davis says that though songs have been applied in the classrooms for young learners for decades to improve language learning, such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, empirical research on the use remains scarce (2017, p. 445). Young and Ilari found that the use of music and songs in the classroom are

often neglected, and that they remain low in schools' hierarchy, even with the recent growth of music for young children (2019, p. 1). There can be several reasons as to why this is, such as teachers feeling inadequate to sing in their classrooms or struggling to find appropriate songs to use (this is further discussed in section 5.5).

Nilan argues that music and songs are often part of children's lives right from birth (2019, p. 22). With singing being an already familiar activity for children, it makes sense to exploit this and bring it into the classroom to promote learning speaking skills and pronunciation.

Melville-Clark states that music helps children to learn more about themselves and the world around them, and it gives them the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings (2006, p. 1) by singing songs that make them feel certain ways and using songs as an outlet. One of the competence aims in the English subject curriculum states that students should be able to express their thoughts and feelings (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020), which offers a great opportunity and reason to bring songs into the English language classroom.

Ellis (2016) writes that "children love songs, rhymes and chants" and that they are excellent for language learning, such as phrases, words, and sentences in these texts are often repeated. According to Tegge, songs can also "affect the formation of memories and learning, including verbal learning" (2018, p. 275). Not only can music and rhymes improve the students learning, Ellis also expresses that it helps students develop their "concentration, memory and co-ordination", in addition to that it is motivating and improves the students' confidence (2016). Singing together, according to Dumais (2014), gives the students an opportunity to play with the English language orally and in a shared experience, which Ellis (2016) further argues is a great way to develop and improve the students' social skills. Not only can songs improve the English language learners' social skills, Levetin argues that "music and experiencing music in social settings can motivate us, affect our mood, lower anxiety, and have positive (mental) effects" (Levetin, 2008, cited in Tegge, 2018, p. 275).

Singing in the classroom is not only beneficial for the student's motivation and language learning. Wheeler (2014) states that singing in an EFL classroom also provides the students with the opportunities to learn about different cultures, which is also an essential part of the English subject curriculum in Norwegian elementary schools. Some students might be scared or reluctant to sing, especially in a foreign language. However, singing together in unison can

offer the students a safe space where their voice is not the one in focus (Wheeler, 2014). As time goes on, the students might even have gained enough confidence that they want to sing louder and maybe even sing solo, which only encourages more language learning.

Both songs and poetry can be great tools to use in teaching. Reilly and Ward argue that songs and rhymes are factors that play a big role in children's language learning, and if they are used with dance and mime, the children's physical development is also improved (1997, p. 23). There is usually not a significant difference between poetry and songs. Songs are often poetry with music added to the lyrics. Reilly and Ward write that "the language in traditional songs is rich and colorful" and that rhymes can encourage the students' exploration of how the words in the rhymes sound (1997, p. 23). Since rhymes can encourage students learning, and singing can introduce rich language, it could then be a great asset to use songs with rhymes in teaching.

Munden and Skjærstad (2018) conducted a study on the use of poetry in Norwegian EFL classrooms. As poetry and songs are relatively similar, they chose to include songs and nursery rhymes in their definition of 'poetry'. Munden and Skjærstad (2018) explored 101 Norwegian elementary school teachers' practices about employing poetry in the English language classroom. The results showed that teachers use songs and poems to work with many aspects of language learning, such as comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Munden & Skjærstad, 2018, pp. 4-5). This indicates that songs (and poems) can be utilized for a number of different reasons and that students can learn a significant amount of language by singing and working with poems. On the other hand, the researchers disclose that they cannot be sure that the use of poetry and songs are the reason behind the learning or if the learning happens because the students are being taught explicitly (2018, p. 7). However, the results in Munden and Skjærstad's study do show that teachers think employing poetry and songs in the EFL classroom is of high value and can lead to more learning.

Songs and poetry often include rhymes, rhythm, and intonation. Children are great at imitating sounds, and even though one cannot expect perfect pronunciation in a foreign language at such a young age, they are great at mimicking intonation (Reilly & Ward, 1997, p. 23). According to Reilly and Ward, students will often have no problem, or find it boring, to repeat the same words or phrases when singing or working with rhymes or poetry (1997, p.

23). This will then be beneficial for the students' pronunciation learning, as the students can practice the sounds over and over again.

2.3 Creating an encouraging and safe learning environment

A crucial part of all learning is a safe, encouraging learning environment. Prashanti and Ramnarayan highlight the importance of a good learning environment as it influences the students learning ability (2020, p. 550). A learning environment that feels safe for the students allows them to make errors without feeling embarrassed or ashamed, which then gives the teachers the opportunity to correct their mistakes, which then again leads to more learning. When practicing speaking skills and pronunciation, it is even more important that the students feel safe and supported in their classroom. Working with something 'public' as speaking and pronunciation can require more effort from the students as they are expressing themselves out loud and not on paper. When speaking out loud, it can be more intimidating and scarier for the students.

There are several aspects to creating a safe and supportive learning environment. Prashanti and Ramnarayan (2020, p. 550) have listed ten maxims that are crucial;

1. Don't undervalue the relationship with students.
2. Don't use fear, threat, or sarcasm to establish control.
3. Don't show off knowledge: show them concern.
4. Don't reduce students understanding to marks and grades.
5. Don't forget students' diverse talents and ways of learning.
6. Don't make classrooms suffocating: allow ventilation of ideas.
7. Don't give feedback that evaluates and expresses secondary feelings.
8. Don't forget to set high expectations.
9. Don't underrate the value of student cohesiveness.
10. Don't miss teaching the students the way they learn best. (Prashanti & Ramnarayan, 2020, p. 550).

These maxims are essential to keep in mind in all classrooms, especially in elementary schools. The students are still trying to find out who they are, what they can, and how they learn best. The relationship between the students and the teacher plays a crucial part in the EFL classroom as they are still quite fragile and need a teacher who understands and cares for them in order to ensure learning.

Lah writes that the learning environment should not only be safe but should also stimulate and support the students (2020, p. 139). A classroom is filled with different people with different personalities and skills. To make sure that everyone takes part in the learning taking place in the classroom, Lah (2020) states that the teacher needs “to adapt the conditions to different personalities” (p. 139). This also ensures an encouraging and supportive classroom. Lah (2020, p. 139) further states that learning is not only essential for cognitive development but that it also develops each individual as a whole.

When working with and teaching younger students, their personal development is in focus, in addition to teaching subjects. Lah emphasizes the importance of the relationship between the students and the teacher and that teachers who offer support are the best at improving the students’ self-esteem (2020, p. 140). The English language classroom can be challenging for the students as it is a place where they are introduced to a new language, and they should step out of their comfort zone and try to use the target language. As this may be scary to some students, the classroom needs to be a place where it is allowed to make mistakes and try out new things without the students fearing being judged by the other students or the teacher.

Another challenge that may arise is language anxiety. Language anxiety is a phenomenon that can inhibit the students’ language and pronunciation learning (Horwitz, 2010, p.154). There are several different sources as to why students might be anxious when it comes to learning a second or foreign language. Horwitz et al., (1986, p. 127) present communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety as the main factors that trigger the learners’ language anxiety. As communication is one of the main aspects in the English subject in Norwegian education, it is crucial that students learn how to cope with communication apprehension, which according to Horwitz et al., is “a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with other people (1986, p. 127). Further, Horwitz et al., state that teachers have two ways of dealing with students with language anxiety, 1) they can help the students “to cope with the existing anxiety-provoking situation; or 2) they can make the learning context less stressful” (1986, p. 131).

Young identifies six potential sources of language anxiety from three aspects: the learner, the teacher, and the instructional practice (1991). Further, Young claims that language anxiety is caused by (a) personal and interpersonal anxiety, (b) learner beliefs about

language learning, (c) instructor beliefs about language teaching, (d) instructor-learner interactions, (e) classroom procedures, and (f) language testing (1991, p. 427).

To avoid and to help students to cope with their language anxiety, it is therefore crucial that the teacher works on creating a safe learning environment where the students do not have to feel anxious.

Dolean conducted a study on the effects of teaching songs to students with foreign language anxiety on 106 8th grade students in learning French in Romania. Dolean writes that the teachers' choice of teaching strategies and methods in the foreign language classroom impacts the anxiety level of foreign language learners (2015, p. 640) (also see Young 1991).

Further, Dolean states that “music can enhance the cognitive variables involved in (second) language learning performance” (2015, p. 620). Thiessen and Saffran (2009, cited in Dolean, 2015, p. 640) showed that young children and infants had better recall of a melody when lyrics were added to the music. This strengthens the argument of how and why music and songs can improve children's language learning.

As a result of Dolean's study, it was found that the students anxiety levels did decrease after the teacher employed songs in the French language classroom. It is important to note that the student's anxiety level was self-reported before and after the experiment (Dolean, 2015, p. 649). Even though the students reported a decreased level of foreign language anxiety, the results showed that this was mostly the case for “classes with a rather high anxiety” and not in the classes where the students anxiety levels were low before conducting the experiment (Dolean, 2015, p. 650).

Not only is a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment, necessary for the students learning, but it is also crucial when it comes to the student's all-round development (see section 1.3.1). It is written in the Core curriculum that a vast part of the school's responsibilities is to ensure students both education and improve their all-round development (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 12). An essential part of educating the students, as well as improving and developing their all-round development, is having a safe, supportive, and encouraging learning environment. Even though Dolean's study found that employing songs in the French language classroom had the best effect on students with high

anxiety levels (2015, p. 650), it still should be considered in foreign language classrooms to avoid students developing foreign language anxiety.

2.4 Pronunciation in a second or foreign language

Learning a second or foreign language is not like learning a first language most of the time. Drew and Sørheim explain that unless the child has grown up bilingual, the acquisition of a second or foreign language happens in a completely different setting than learning a first language (2009, p. 17). When learning a first language, one is exposed to this language several times every day; however, when learning a second or foreign language, one is much less exposed. Drew and Sørheim (2009) also highlight that one is likely to be older when learning a second or foreign language, as well as that the second or foreign “language is not essential for communication” (p. 18), which means that one can get through the days without using it.

On the one hand, Norwegian learners of English are less exposed to the target language, English, than to Norwegian or their first language. On the other hand, English has become more used in everyday life in Norway. Rindal (2020) describes English as the “largest and most widely used” (p. 24) global language and as *the lingua franca*. Further, she points out that most of the new speakers of English are non-native speakers and rather the ones who have English as a second or foreign language (Jenkins, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 2010, cited in Rindal 2020, pp. 24-25). This demonstrates how important the English language has become and is, therefore, an essential part of the Norwegian education system. Drew and Sørheim argue for the importance of letting the students hear the target language and that this is crucial for their language learning (2009, pp. 48-49). Although English is an important language in Norway, and many students are frequently exposed to the target language, it does not mean that all students are. That makes it more vital for students to be exposed to and hear the English language in school.

The *nativeness* principle and the *intelligibility* principle are two ideologies which have influenced pronunciation research for a long time (see section 1.5.2). Levis (2005, p. 370) explains that the nativeness principle meant that learners of a foreign language should strive to achieve a native-like pronunciation, and the intelligibility principle means that learners

should be able to make themselves understood. Bøhn and Hansen (2017) argue that the intelligibility principle is more relevant in foreign language teaching than the nativeness principle, at least for communication purposes, as one does not need a native-like pronunciation in order to be able to communicate with others. With the frequent exposure to different varieties of English, and not only American or British English, but the learners are also influenced by many different English accents. By being influenced by so many English varieties, it can be challenging for the students to choose one accent and be consistent when speaking. As the main goal of learning English is to be able to make oneself understood and to be able to communicate, it should not matter too much which accent they speak, as long as they reach that goal.

2.5 Teaching pronunciation

Pronunciation has been taught in schools for many decades. However, Morley (1991) critiqued the process of ESL pronunciation teaching as it was flawed and too focused on “meaningless noncommunicative drill-and-exercise gambits” (p. 486). During the 1980s and 1990s, there was a shift in pronunciation teaching in the ESL curriculum where more programs engaged in developing better pronunciation practices (Morley, 1991, p. 488). Norwegians are generally considered competent users of the English language. This claim is supported by the English Proficiency Index, which places Norway as the 4th best out of 72² countries based on their English competence (Iannuzzi & Rindal, 2017; Education First 2016). The English Proficiency Index is a standardized test that tests reading and listening skills to classify the test takers language ability into one of the CEFR’s six levels (see section 1.2) (Education first). This high ranking may be caused by the number of children and teenagers who engage with the English language on a daily basis through social media, gaming, movies, etc. Although Norwegians already seem like competent English language users, it does not mean that there is no need for pronunciation teaching.

Pronunciation is one of many vital aspects of language learning (Skulstad, 2018, p. 43), and it is essential for communication (see for example Fraser, 2000). As mentioned briefly in section 1.1, research on second language pronunciation is severely lacking (Derwing &

² There has been changes in this ranking since Iannuzzi and Rindal published their article. Norway is now ranked as number 5 out of 112 countries/regions, and ranked 4th best out of 35 in Europe (Education first, 2021)

Munro, 2005). As a result, teaching pronunciation in an educational context has been left to each teacher, which can be of concern if the teachers do not have enough competence in this field.

As mentioned above (see section 2.2), children are great imitators, which is an excellent method for learning pronunciation and may be exploited by employing songs. Learning pronunciation, however, requires more than listening and repeating, according to Hancock (2018). Pronunciation involves different language aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, speaking, and listening. However, according to Hancock (2018), a crucial step to learning pronunciation is to retrain the muscles in use when speaking to be able to make new sounds. The voice articulators, our tongue, lips, jaw, and vocal cord need to be retrained as these parts are what actually are used when pronouncing words (Hancock, 2018). By letting the students sing, they will hopefully be able to retrain their voice articulators to master the target language.

In a study by Bai and Yuan on 16 non-native teacher's beliefs and practices about pronunciation teaching in Hong Kong, it was found that "these non-native English teachers understood the importance and goal of pronunciation teaching but appeared unconfident and ill-prepared in their teaching" (Bai & Yuan, 2019, p. 134). Based on this, one can draw connections between the research done in Finland and in Hong Kong. Teachers in these two studies are aware of the benefits of utilizing songs in the EFL classroom but are still reluctant to employ them. The results in Bai and Yuan's (2019, p. 137) research show that the teachers who participated strongly think that an accurate pronunciation not only affects the students' ability to communicate effectively but that it also improves their self-confidence and motivation, which are two crucial aspects when it comes to learning.

Based on previous research done on the topic of using songs in the EFL classroom, there is a strong indication that songs should be utilized more than they currently are. Especially since singing has many benefits when it comes to language learning. Melville-Clark (2006, p. 14) writes that many teachers are uncomfortable with their singing voice, but if one manages to break that barrier, it will benefit the students singing, as they view their teachers as role models.

Tegge conducted a study on 568 teachers practices by investigating English language teachers' attitudes towards and use of songs in L2 adult classrooms around the world (there were 568 participants originally, but only 398 completed the entire questionnaire). The participants represent 41 different countries, some countries where English is the official language, in addition to countries where English is not an official language, but an important one. Even though this study explores teachers' attitudes toward using songs in an adult classroom, it can still give information on the attitudes that regards teachers working with younger students as well. The results in Tegge's study showed that many of the teachers who participated view using songs in the English language classroom as a beneficial and creative learning tool (2018, p. 283). The teachers answered that one of the most important factors for using songs is repetition (Tegge, 2018, p. 281), as it allows the students to sing the song several times without getting bored (Tegge, 2018, p. 281; Reilly & Ward, 1997, p. 23). Another benefit of using songs in the English language classroom found in Tegge's study was that students are likely, almost guaranteed, to encounter songs at home and outside of the classroom, which Tegge states reinforces the learning (2018, p. 281).

Among all the positive attitudes toward employing songs in the English language classroom, the results in Tegge's study also presented some arising challenges. The most common challenges were struggling to find suitable songs and the time investment needed in order to find the songs, prepare, and implement the songs in the classroom (Tegge, 2018, p. 281). As this study was conducted on teachers instructing adults, it might impact the teachers struggles to find suitable songs. When working with younger students, such as students in lower elementary school, finding appropriate songs might not be as challenging.

In this investigation on 389 (the participants who answered the questionnaire to the full) English teachers' attitudes towards using songs, only 85 of them reported not using songs in their teaching (Tegge, 2018, p. 282). This might be due to the challenges mentioned in the paragraph above. However, only ten of the 85 participants who do not use songs, reported that they do not think songs are useful for teaching language (Tegge, 2018, p. 282). This shows that majority of the study's participants see the usefulness of employing songs, even many of the teachers who do not use them.

2.6 Using songs to teach speaking

Songs are an excellent resource when learning a foreign language, argues Lund (2012, p. 1) in an article on the untapped potential of songs in the EFL classroom. This can be seen in both the English subject curriculum and English textbooks (Lund, 2012, p. 1). After Year 4, students are expected to explore and employ the English alphabet and pronunciation patterns in a range of playing, singing, and language-learning activities (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). According to Lund, using songs to learn English might motivate students because it is frequently perceived as a fun activity that they can participate in (2012, p. 2). It is difficult to determine whether this applies to students of all ages, but many younger students seem to like these activities. Lund (2012) further states that “we learn our native language as well as foreign languages through listening and imitating” (p. 2, my translation) and that we can both listen and imitate what we hear by applying songs. However, in order for this strategy to be effective, it must be used repeatedly (Lund, 2012, p. 2). It is unlikely that a song will be learned after only listening to it once or twice. It is necessary to listen to the song several times in order to learn it, repeat it, and actually be able to perform it.

Ludke (2009) states that “songs provide an excellent opportunity to practice pronunciation” (p. 24), despite the fact that there is no target accent to aspire for when learning English in Norway. She also emphasizes the need to select music fit for one’s own students. Ludke highlights the significance of selecting songs with an appropriate pace that are not too demanding or ambitious for the students (2009, p. 24). The songs should be appropriate for the student’s age range, and the lyrics should not be too difficult for them to pronounce. It is also important to keep in mind the vocabulary and subject presented in the songs.

Not only can singing be a gateway to motivating the younger students to learn. Davis (2017, p. 446) states that researchers have found numerous connections between language and music and that music can “be used to support language structures” (p. 446). The fact that music and language learning are combined makes a strong argument for implementing songs in the classroom, as singing can contribute to the students’ language learning. However, Davis argues that although singing in the classroom is motivational and beneficial for the students as a group, the results are mixed when looking at the individual students (2017, p. 450). This is caused by students who are not participating and who are less motivated. As music and

singing together in the classroom serves many great benefits and are an excellent tool for language learning (Lund, 2012; Ludke, 2009; Davis, 2017), Davis (2017, p. 451) argues for more research on how music and singing impact learners pronunciation.

Asmaradhani et al., (2018) write about improving Indonesian students' pronunciation using songs. They show that using songs to work with students' pronunciation has been found useful and effective, and that many students who are reluctant learners of the English language are singing English songs with a native-like pronunciation (2018, p. 77). When listening to songs and singing them, students are able to imitate the sounds they hear, which can improve their English pronunciation. According to Asmaradhani et al., if teachers focus on teaching students' pronunciation by employing English songs in the EFL classroom, students will be able to "understand how to distinguish sounds in minimal pairs, both vowels and consonants" (2018, p. 77). Pronunciation in the English language can be complicated for EFL learners as the orthography often does not match the pronunciation of the words. However, using songs to practice pronunciation will also, according to Asmaradhani et al., (2018, pp. 77-78), stimulate the learners as it offers a good learning atmosphere, in addition to being a fun and motivating learning activity. As Ravin expresses "English is not a phonetic language. Often a letter does not correspond to only one sound. As a result, it is extremely challenging to learn the pronunciation of a word simply from its spelling" (2012). The poem "The Chaos" by Trenité (1922) in the introduction, demonstrates this. This poem consists of words that are written similarly but pronounced completely different.

Whether to use written lyrics when teaching speaking skills and pronunciation through songs can be challenging to decide. When working with younger students, it can be more beneficial to learn the songs by listening and repeating them without reading the lyrics. This is because the younger students are just starting to read in their L1, and by introducing English written lyrics that make the words look like they are pronounced in a different way than they actually are, can confuse the students. However, when the students reach a higher language level, the use of lyrics can be helpful.

Even though using songs to improve students' speaking skills and pronunciation should be utilized in the EFL classroom, Asmaradhani et al., note that there are a few crucial steps to keep in mind when choosing which songs to bring into the English language classroom (2018, pp. 81-82). The most important thing to consider is the students' age and language

level, as the songs the teachers are using should be appropriate for each group of students. Another essential aspect of choosing the right songs is the authenticity of the songs, according to Asmaradhani et al., (2018, pp. 81-82). Asmaradhani et al., (2018, pp. 81-82) write about the authenticity of purpose, response or task, and conditions. They highlight the importance of choosing real world songs that capture the student and offers them knowledge, and at the same time are appropriate and relevant for the students learning (Asmaradhani et al., 2018, pp. 81-82).

Although songs have great potential in the EFL classroom, some things should still be considered. The songs should be appropriate for the students, the language should not be too challenging, but it is important not to underestimate the students' abilities. The choice of songs is not the only crucial part of teaching pronunciation by utilizing songs. Stokes and Buchdahl (2014) write that songs can be viewed as a gateway into learning a new language and that they offer much depth into the new language and the country the song is originated from, as it can contain cultural aspects.

2.7 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has aimed to present and review the previous research and theory linked to the discussion of the research findings. I have presented theory and research on several aspects of teaching pronunciation and using music and songs in the classroom. It is evident that music and singing in the English language classroom offers many benefits, such as improving students' language learning, developing their social skills, and creating safe and supporting learning environments in the classrooms. The chapter also uncovered some arising challenges that often stop teachers from implementing songs in their classrooms. Some teachers are not comfortable singing, some struggle to find appropriate songs, and some teachers do not think that using songs are benefiting their students' language learning.

I have explored and discussed whether or not there is a 'correct' pronunciation to acquire when learning English as a second or foreign language. There has been a shift of the status of the English language in the recent years, and there are more people with English as a second or a foreign language, than people with English as a first language. Neither the English subject curriculum nor the CEFR mention what kind of English (or languages in general in

the CEFR) learners should aim towards. The CEFR specifically states that acquiring a native-like pronunciation is not the goal when learning a new language.

Even though the research on if singing can improve pronunciation is lacking, it has still been found as a great tool for language learning. Songs in the classroom can improve students' language learning, such as grammar, intonation, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Singing in the classroom is not only beneficial for language learning, but it can also improve the student's relationship with each other and their teacher, which creates a better learning atmosphere and environment. A safe and encouraging learning environment is the key for successful education. As students spend many hours a day at school, feeling safe and supported are crucial for their learning. Foreign language anxiety is something that can hinder the students learning and having a safe learning environment can help avoid the students feeling anxious.

3 Method

Previous research and theory clearly indicate that employing songs to teach speaking skills and pronunciation can be very efficient and valuable in an EFL classroom. However, it is also evident that some teachers might not employ this method due to the fact that they feel inadequate in using this approach (see section 2.2), or for other reasons, such as struggling to find suitable songs, or time restrictions (see section 2.5). In order to explore this issue further, I have chosen to focus on the teachers' perspectives on implementing songs in the English language classroom and how they are using them. This chapter will present the methodological approach, with the chosen research methods and limitations, how the interview guide utilized in the study was designed, the participants in the study, and how the interviews were conducted. Thirdly, the transcription and analysis, and limitations for this study are presented.

3.1 Research focus and methodological considerations

My aim with this project is to acquire an understanding of the teachers' perceptions and beliefs on using songs for pronunciation teaching and improving students' speaking skills in the EFL classroom, as well as their teaching methods and the reasons behind these. Qualitative interviews as a research method allowed me to explore how teachers view the use of songs to teach speaking skills and pronunciation, as well as gain insight into their practices. Although, through questionnaires I could reach a higher number of teachers, there would be no follow-up questions and no possibility for exploring their answers more in-depth. Observation is also a research method that could have been used as an addition to semi-structured interviews. This could have shown in practice how the teachers use songs, and I could have seen if their answers to the interview questions match their teaching. However, learning pronunciation is a complex task that does not happen in an hour, it needs continuous work. By observing a few lessons, it would be hard to conclude if the songs are improving the students' speaking skills and pronunciation. That is why the chosen research method for this study is qualitative interviews. As the informants in this study are teachers, this study will not provide data on whether or not using songs will improve students' speaking skills and pronunciation. This study researches the teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards using songs in their English language classrooms, and will provide data on their practices, and beliefs on if singing can be used as a teaching method to teach speaking skills and pronunciation.

3.2 Qualitative research methods

In my project, I have decided to use a qualitative data collection method for my study. The qualitative research method emphasizes the necessity of understanding the viewpoints of the participants (Migliorini & Rania, 2017, p. 132) In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to collect detailed information from the research participants. It is simpler for the researcher to comprehend how the participants arrived at specific views and viewpoints by gaining in-depth knowledge about them (Migliorini & Rania, 2017, p. 132). Interviews and observations are the most popular ways to gather data in qualitative research since they are the instruments used to establish a relationship between the researcher and the study participants (Thagaard, 2013, p. 13). The advantage of qualitative research is that it allows for flexibility, which may allow the researcher to account for the perspectives of the participants in their study (Brown, 2010, p. 240). When it comes to the quality of the data obtained, the relationship between the researcher and the participants is crucial. When conducting cross-cultural interviews, the interview is done in the researcher's language or in the participants language (Choi, et al., 2012, p. 653). The interviews could have been conducted in English since both the researcher, and the informants know English; however, without knowing the informants' levels of English, it was hard to determine whether they would feel comfortable or restricted if it was done in English. All the interviews were conducted entirely in Norwegian to ensure the informants could speak freely without too much thought on how their answers were phrased. By conducting the interviews in Norwegian, as it offered a more natural setting, it also benefited the relationship between me and the informants, as it might have felt more like a conversation than an interview.

According to Buckingham an interview can allow the researcher and the interviewee to delve deeper into the interview topic, potentially leading to more in-depth views on the questions (2016, p. 66). An in-depth interview, a qualitative research approach, is a type of interview that lasts a few hours and consists of open-ended questions (Jacobsen, 2020, p. 413).

"Interviews may be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured" and a semi-structured interview is a more flexible style of interview that allows the researcher to acquire more descriptive data (Buckingham, 2016, p. 67). The questions can be tailored to each interviewee and altered depending on the circumstances in a semi-structured interview. Based on this, I decided that a semi-structured interview would be the most beneficial approach for this thesis because it would allow me to ask follow-up questions and clarifying questions as needed. I

conducted the interviews with an interview guide (see appendix A) to ensure that I would gather the data I needed, but by having semi-structured interviews, the interviews could be reorganized based on the information gained along the way.

3.3 Interview guide

Before conducting the interviews, I designed an interview guide (see appendix A) based on my research questions and some knowledge I had about the topic. In order to get information on teachers' attitudes on using songs in the EFL classroom linked to teaching pronunciation, the questions asked were based on *if* and *how* they use songs in the EFL classroom. Johnsen writes that researchers will benefit from creating an interview guide prior to the interviews (2018, p. 204). This guide will help the researcher find out what types of questions should be used in order to answer the research questions. According to Johnsen, the interview guide will also remind the researcher about the purpose of the interview (2018, p. 204). The interview guide designed for this study included the main questions that needed to be asked to acquire information about the teachers' practices, such as if they use songs in their English teaching, and if they ever use songs to practice pronunciation. The participants were also asked about their preference on 'specific pronunciation accents' and how they employ songs in their English language classrooms. Since the interviews were semi-structured, each of the interviews also contained follow-up questions based on the answers to each question, which allowed for more in-depth answers that explained more in detail about the teachers' practices. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian to allow a more natural setting, as this was the informants' first language.

During the process of designing the interview guide, I kept in mind the main research aim, uncovering teachers' attitudes towards using songs as an approach for teaching speaking skills and pronunciation, and *if* and *how* they do it. As a pilot study, one of my co-students was a test interviewee and gave me feedback on that the order of some of the questions should be rearranged. Through this feedback, I was able to improve my interview guide before I conducted any interviews for my study. This also ensured this study's reliability (see more on reliability in section 3.7).

3.4 Participants

After receiving feedback and revising the interview guide and getting approval from The Norwegian Centre for Research and Data (NSD) (see appendix C), I started reaching out to suitable informants through personal contacts with connections to teachers in Norwegian elementary schools. To gather enough valid data, I aimed to conduct two or three interviews, and I was fortunate that the first three people I came in contact with were willing and able to participate.

Based on my research questions, I formulated criteria for the selection of informants. In addition to limiting my informants to teachers in elementary schools, my aim was to interview teachers with experience from first and second grade, as it may be assumed that, based on their level of literacy, primarily listen to the songs without written lyrics. However, one of the teachers I interviewed had experience mostly from Year 5-7. Although I primarily wanted to interview teachers with experience from the lower grades, having an informant that works with the older students in elementary school gave me data that shows how teachers from all years of elementary school can use songs to work with speaking skills and pronunciation in the English language classroom.

The three participants in this study all have many years' experience as elementary school teachers, and they are qualified English teachers with a minimum of 30 credits in English. One of the informants has primarily worked in Years 1-4, one has experience from 1-7, and one has only worked in Years 5-7. Prior to the interviews I had no knowledge about the participants teaching practices and whether or not they used songs in their classroom. However, I would assume that the teachers that chose to participate in my project, knowing that the study focused on the use of music and songs in the English language classroom, have some experience with it and are interested in music and singing.

The following are brief presentations of the informants. Pseudonyms are employed to keep the participants anonymous, and any other details that might identify the teachers have not been included.

Name	Regina
L1	Norwegian
Formal qualifications	30 credits in English
Teaching experience	18 years in elementary school 18 years in preschool 3 years in university

Name	Sally
L1	Norwegian
Formal qualifications	60 credits in English
Teaching experience	25 years in elementary school, mostly in Years 1-4

Name	Tom
L1	Norwegian
Formal qualifications	30 credits in English
Teaching experience	26 years in elementary school, only in Years 5-7 1 year in 'voksenoppl�ering'

Table 4: Presentation of the participants

3.5 Conducting the interviews

The interviews were conducted in person and in Norwegian, as this offered a more normal and relaxed setting for both the informants and me (see section 3.2). By doing the interviews in person and in Norwegian, the thought was that it would feel like a conversation and that the teachers would feel more comfortable talking freely. I asked the informants where it would be convenient for them to do the interview, and two of them preferred to be interviewed at their workplace. The third informant asked if we could do the interview in my apartment. At the start of every interview, the informants were given the consent form (see appendix B), informing them about this study, that they would be anonymous, and that they could withdraw their consent at any given time with no explanation. The interviews were recorded on UIOs (The University in Oslo) application *Diktafon* and the audio recordings were stored in *Nettskjema*. After asking the questions I had prepared and the relevant follow-

up questions in each interview, the informants were asked if they wanted to add or comment on anything. These final questions allowed for the informants to say anything that came to mind about the topic we were talking about, which, in this case, made the informants express more of their thoughts on the matter.

The first few questions asked were easy questions such as how long the teachers have worked as teachers, how many credits they have in the English subject, and how long they have taught English. These questions were used to ease the participants into the interview, as well as giving me information about the teacher's qualifications and experience. In addition, they were also asked about their relationship with music outside the school, as well as inside the classroom. The remaining questions were designed so that they would give me an understanding of how each of the participants view using English songs in the EFL classroom and how they do it in practice.

3.6 Transcriptions and framework for analysis

The interviews were conducted a few weeks apart, and the audio recordings were transcribed after all the interviews had been completed. I chose to transcribe the majority of the three interviews, as I did not know what would be relevant at that point. Anything off-topic and potentially identifying the teachers or students were not transcribed, such as anecdotes about students that were not relevant to the topic of the interviews. Since the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, they were transcribed in Norwegian (appendices D, E and F). Any part of the transcriptions included in this thesis is translated into English by the author.

When transcribing the interviews, the focus was on what the participants said, and not how it was said. I did not include the participants thinking process, or when they said something 'wrong'. The interviews were used to give the researcher an understanding of how the teachers practice using songs in their English language classrooms, not how they presented their answers. When being interviewed the participants often started sentences and reformulated them as they spoke. Kvale explains that "transcriptions are translations from an oral to a written language, where the constructions on the way involve a series of judgements and decisions" (2007, p. 93). To avoid judging and interpreting the answers the informants gave, I focused on listening to the words they said when transcribing the interviews. To give

an accurate representation of the interviews, and what the participants said, some of the pauses were included in the transcriptions, but as the point here is not to submit the interviews to discourse analysis, length of pauses, overlaps, etc. have not been transcribed.

After transcribing the collected data, the next step was to code and categorize it. Deterding and Waters write that “coding is the actual work of analyzing the interview data that have been collected” (2021, p. 712). Kennedy and Thornberg explain that when the collected data in qualitative research are analyzed to an already existing theoretical framework, it is called a deductive method (2018, p. 50). Reichertz (2007, cited in Kennedy & Thornberg, 2018, p. 50) writes that a deductive method starts off with a specific theory and then goes on to examine how the raw data backs up this theory. On the other hand, an inductive method, takes basis in the collected and analyzed data (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p. 331). The approach to coding the transcribed data in this project was by employing a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is suited for both inductive (data-driven) and deductive (theory-driven) analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p. 298). As a mix of inductive and deductive analysis were applied to make the codes, the analytic approach can be referred to as a deductive and inductive thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is, according to Clarke and Braun, suitable for both small and large data sets, as it “provides accessible and systematic procedures for generating codes and themes from qualitative data” (2017, pp. 297-298). This is the method used to code and categorize the collected data in this study, as the codes were made after the transcriptions had been done, but that would also fit in with the theory and previous research relevant for this study.

As stated by Clarke and Braun, a thematic analysis aims to “identify, and interpret, key, but not necessarily all, features of the data, guided by the research question” (2017, p. 297). This analytic tool is guiding the researcher through the coding of the data. When analyzing the data collected in this project, a thematic analysis was applied, as I identified and interpreted the relevant data that was collected through the interviews, where an interview guide was employed in order to get data that will answer the research questions of this thesis.

The codes and categories were not made up prior to the interviews, but after they had been transcribed. However, I had some knowledge about the topic to some extent and based the interview questions on this, as well as the theoretical framework. As there were no premade codes for this project, the codes originated from the previous research and theory as well as

the information gathered in the interviews, and as according to Kennedy and Thornberg (2018, p. 50), the theory and previous research were used as an analytical tool when coding and analyzing the data. One advantage of deducing from theory in qualitative research is that the theory helps researchers attend to details and nuances in the data that otherwise might be overlooked (Kennedy & Thornberg, 2018, p. 50). As the codes were designed based on previous research and theory and the collected data, I employed a mix of deductive (theory-driven) and inductive (data-driven) analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p. 298).

By looking at the theory and previous research combined with the data collected in the interviews, I came up with six codes, or categories; teachers' background, classroom and teaching environment, auditory learning, specific pronunciation, repetition and practice, and how and why the teachers use songs in their teaching. These codes are employed in the next chapter on results (chapter 4).

3.7 Possible limitations and ethical considerations

This study does not aim for understanding how *all* teachers in Norway perceive using songs in the EFL classroom to teach speaking skills and pronunciation, but it explores three teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices. By only interviewing three teachers, this thesis is therefore limited to the data collected from these interviews. It is not then said that this is the common practice amongst all teachers, but it is what the interviewees expressed as their practices when it comes to using songs in their EFL classrooms. Another fallback could be that the teachers are not doing what they said, but they answered with what they think they do. This could be further investigated by observing some of their English lessons. For this master's thesis, I wanted an overall understanding of what the teachers are doing, or at least what they think they are doing, and not look at what they did in one specific lesson. Learning pronunciation is a part of language learning that takes time and is not completed in a few lessons. Another limitation is that I, the researcher, have never conducted interviews before. Looking back at the interviews and the interview guide, I would have liked to have designed a more detailed interview guide with more questions that would have given an even better insight into the teachers' practices. One question that was not asked was if the participants had any negative thoughts on the matter. I would also have liked to have asked about the teachers' thoughts and experiences with foreign language anxiety. However, the teachers

were aware of the topic of this study beforehand, and the consensus from the three teachers on using music and songs in the classroom was very positive. All in all, if I were to do this again, I would have collected more data from the participants.

Reliability in research refers to how the measuring instrument is stable and will provide the same outcomes and results exclusive of who is measuring (Kvernmo, 2010, p. 60).

Golafshani states that the examination of trustworthiness is vital to ensure reliability in qualitative research (2003, p. 601). In other words, reliability in qualitative research “refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to be the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasion” (Hammersley, 1992, p. 67, cited in Long & Johnson, 2000, p. 30). When conducting qualitative research, the reliability often lies on whether the researcher is transparent in their work, explaining their methods and backgrounds for the interpretations made in the process (Kvernmo, 2010, p. 68). Kvernmo further states that when using qualitative interviews as a research method to uncover the participants “meanings, descriptions and experiences” (my translation), these answers are not considered as reliable, as the informants will not answer the same word for word if asked the same questions again (2010, p. 69). However, the informants will most likely give an answer that corresponds with the first answer they gave, even if it is not word by word. Unless something has happened that have made they change their point of view on the matter, which can alter their previous answers. This can be a fallback when researching the participants beliefs and attitudes.

A way to strengthens the study’s reliability is to compare the results to similar studies done on the same matter (Kvernmo, 2010, p. 69). Comparing and examining results from different studies on the same topic will indicate whether or not the results are unique or if they correspond to a more common practice.

The questions asked in this study were designed to be as objective as possible. This was done to ensure high reliability. Holand states that high reliability means that someone else could ask the same participants the same questions, and get the same answers (2018, p. 99). I also tried to ensure reliability by having participants from different parts of Norway and without knowing their teaching practices prior, as well as asking open questions.

The validity in qualitative research depends on the researcher studying what they are meant to research. Basham et al., defines the concept of validity as “the concept we think we are measuring is actually what we are measuring rather than some other concept” (2010, p. 54). The degree of validity depends on the collection of data gathered from the informants, and how it is interpreted (Kvernmo, 2010, p. 70). Kvernmo states that whether or not a study is valid will always be up for debate, and when researching the informants’ beliefs and experiences, the validity will depend on the conduction of the study (2010, p. 70).

As mentioned above, this study’s validity is restricted since it is based on three teachers’ attitudes and experiences. Holand writes that a study with a high validity would mean that the collected data are valid for the entire population (2018, p. 100). Due to the fact that this particular study is based on three teachers’ attitudes and experiences, I cannot argue that these answers are common practice. However, the insight gained points to authentic beliefs and experiences for these teachers.

3.8 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has presented the research focus and the methodological considerations in this study. First, the research focus and methodological considerations, including the chosen research method chosen for this project was presented. The chosen research method was semi-structured qualitative interviews, as this was the best way for the researcher to get an understanding and insight in the informants’ beliefs and attitudes toward using English songs in their Norwegian EFL classrooms. Then, qualitative research methods were explored in more detail, before presenting the interview guide (see appendix A). The interview guide designed for this study included the main questions that needed to be answered in order to answer this project’s research questions. The interview questions involved the teacher’s relationship with music and singing inside and outside the classrooms, *if* they use songs in their English teaching, *why* and *how* they use songs, and what they use songs for.

The next subchapter presented the participants, how I got in contact with them, and the participants’ qualifications and experience. After that, the conduction of the interviews and the transcriptions and analysis were presented. The three interview recordings were transcribed after all the interviews had been conducted. Both the interviews and transcriptions

were conducted in Norwegian and all direct quotes from the interviews in this thesis are translated by the present writer.

The framework of data analysis explored the chosen analysis used to code and categorize the data collected from the interviews. The chosen method was a mix between a deductive and inductive thematic analysis. This is due to that I had some knowledge about the topic of this thesis in prior to the process and based my interview questions on this. It is also because there were no codes made up in prior to the interviews, and these were made after the interviews had been transcribed. Lastly, this chapter presented the possible limitations and ethical considerations for this study.

4 Research findings

This chapter presents the research findings of this study. After the interviews were completed and transcribed, the collected data needed to be analyzed. The chapter is structured after the codes made after the transcription of the interviews (see section 3.6) – teacher’s background, classroom and teaching atmosphere, auditory learning, repetition and practice, and how the teachers use songs in their teaching. In order to keep the participants identities anonymous, the pseudonyms Regina, Tom, And Sally are used. The teachers’ backgrounds are included in the data as it can be relevant to their beliefs and attitudes toward using songs in their English language teaching.

4.1 Teachers’ background

As mentioned in section 3.4, all participants have a minimum of 30 credits in the English subject, which is the requirement for a qualified English teacher, and Sally has 60 credits. All three teachers are active singers outside of the classroom, something I was not aware of before conducting the interviews. One of the informants, Tom, describes himself as a musician and takes part in different performances that includes both acting and singing.

Regina, Tom, and Sally all have most of their teaching experience from elementary school, and Regina and Sally have mostly worked and taught in years 1-4, whereas Tom has never taught below 4th grade and has most of his experience from teaching students in years 5-7. Tom and Regina also have teaching experience from working with older students and adults. Regina worked at a university as a practice teacher for three years and Tom taught adults at *voksenopplæring* for a year. After Tom taught adults for a year, he then started working at the elementary school where he is currently employed.

As mentioned above, all three participants also have experience with music and singing outside the classroom. Regina says she has a good relationship with music and that she:

- (1) I sing in a choir, and I have always been fond of music and singing. I have always played and listened to all kinds of music, but I have no official qualifications other

than what I had in my teacher education, which was not a lot. As a kindergarten teacher or elementary school teacher you use songs a lot (see appendix D)³.

Sally also comes from a similar background as Regina:

- (2) I really like to sing, and I sing a lot outside of the classroom, in addition to singing a lot inside the classroom (see appendix E).

Tom, however, has even more experience with music and performance. When asked what his relationship was with music in his personal time, he said:

- (3) Music and singing are big parts of my life. I really like to sing in Norwegian, but I do also sing a lot in English. I am a musician and have many assignments and projects with music, and I sing in a choir. So yes, there is a lot of singing, both solo with a piano accompanying me, in duos, trios, there is a lot of performances, cabarets, etc. It is a lot. Then I bring it with me into the English lessons (see appendix F).

4.2 Classroom and teaching environment

There was no explicit interview question about this, but all three participants stated that singing together strengthens the classroom and teaching atmosphere and learning environment. The students create stronger bonds and relations with each other and the teacher by singing together. Regina (see appendix D) mentions that singing strengthens the classroom atmosphere because the students are experiencing something together. Further, even though some students might be reluctant to speak English out loud and hear their own voice, singing together breaks that barrier as *everyone* is singing, and *their* voice and English are not in focus.

Tom (see appendix F) talked about how vital singing together in the classroom is, not only for learning a new language, but also because it can increase the students' self-confidence by

³ As mentioned previously, all direct quotes from the transcriptions have been translated from Norwegian to English by me. In order to keep the meaning, I have chosen not to translate word by word, but translated to the best of my efforts to be as correct to the Norwegian direct quote as possible. All transcriptions are included in the appendices, so they can be checked.

feeling that they can master and succeed at something. He also mentioned that the students sometimes forget that they are learning when they are singing, as the focus is on the song. Tom specifically mentions that music and singing together has strengthened his relationship with his students:

- (4) It helps bonding and building relationships. If I meet students I had several years ago, the one thing they always mention, whether or not they liked music, is the music lessons, the singing, the performances, the things we experienced together. We experienced that joy through music, and we shared that experience together (see appendix F).

Not only does Tom argue for the shared experience that happens when singing together, but he also thinks that students who might struggle in other subjects might find joy and confidence when singing in the classroom. He tells a story about a student who did not really excel in subjects, but had a love for singing:

- (5) We were working with ‘The Cup song’ where he was the best at playing the rhythm with the cup, and then all of a sudden, he could teach the other students, and I think that is so important for increasing self-confidence. And that is what matters the most, no matter what they are learning, but having that self-confidence and believing that *they* can do something, that they are not afraid of trying. So, I think that music and songs in English, or in other subjects, can help bring that confidence out (see appendix F).

When finishing the interview Tom added a comment on how he is positive to the use of music and singing in the English subject, and all subjects. He said:

- (6) Yes, I am very positive towards it. I think that it matters a lot and I think that if you experience something positive together, that it might be easier to do a more boring task later. It [singing] fills you with good energy and that is important. And as I said, I think that it builds stronger relationships among the students and between me and them. I have noticed that a lot (see appendix F).

4.3 Auditory learning

Two of the informants (Regina and Sally) who mostly have experience from Years 1-4, rarely or never use written lyrics when teaching songs; the teacher with experience from Years 5-7 (Tom) teaches songs with and without written lyrics. Sally (see appendix E) says that she teaches songs by singing, not through lyrics. She explains that since she mainly taught the younger learners, they start by singing the song and then she asks the students if there was anything that they did not understand. She further mentions that they do not go through and translate every word because the students should get used to interpreting and understanding a song or a text without knowing every single word, but they should understand it based on the content. Sally also thinks that her students are more eager when she introduces a song without using the written lyrics:

- (7) Most of them likes to sing, at least when it is a natural part of what we do. So, they join and we do use songs with movements and that are fun, and this is safe for the students as this is something we do repeatedly, and they know that it happens every day (see appendix E).

Tom (see appendix F) teaches songs with and without lyrics. He says that the students often see the text when they are learning a new song, but sometimes he teaches them by letting the students listen and repeat.

- (8) It can be a bit of both, but they often see the lyrics so they can learn it. I think that it is very useful, but they can learn it by ear sometimes (see appendix F).

Regina talks about how she uses songs, as well as rhymes in her teaching. Both songs and rhymes have a rhythmical aspect to them, and there is a plethora of songs and rhymes to choose from that the students find interesting. Since Regina mostly has experience teaching English to the younger students, she sometimes uses written lyrics:

- (9) I have tried to establish and work up a 'song bank' where the students know the songs inside out, and all you have to do is say the title of the song and snap your fingers and they start singing (see appendix D).

Another important part of auditory learning, according to the participants, is to immerse the students in the language and letting them listen to it as much as possible. Tom, Sally, and Regina reported in their interviews that they speak English in their classrooms as much as possible to ensure that the students are exposed to the language as much as possible.

4.4 Specific pronunciation

One of the participants (Regina) said that they did aim for a specific pronunciation accent or that they at least were very aware of which accent they used when speaking and singing. The other two said that they did not aim for a specific accent but focused on students learning how to make themselves understood and pronounce the words correctly. Sally (see appendix E) states that there was more focus on a British pronunciation when she first started her teaching career. Now the focus is on having a functional pronunciation. When I asked Sally whether or not she has noticed any difference with the students since the focus on British pronunciation shifted, she said:

- (10) No, not really. I have not noticed any difference with the students, but I have noticed the parents asking about it and saying “*aren’t they supposed to learn the correct Oxford English? Because they will need that to be perceived as British speakers*” (see appendix E).

Sally then had to explain to the parents that this is not the aim when learning English anymore, and that the focus is on the students being able to use the language and make themselves understood in communication, in addition to understanding the one/s you are interacting/conversing with.

Tom has a similar practice to Sally when it comes to teaching a specific pronunciation. He also thinks that pronunciation teaching is a natural part of learning songs. When I asked Tom if he has a preferred pronunciation he teaches his students, his answer was:

- (11) I don’t think that I focus on a ‘correct’[accent], and I don’t care if you talk British English or American, or, and many are really good [at pronunciation] since they are exposed to a lot of English, especially the ‘gaming guys’, they are really excellent at

pronunciation. So, I don't think I have a specific standard, and that you shouldn't have. However, I think that we should aim for the correct pronunciation of the different words (see appendix F).

Regina, on the other hand, has more thoughts on specific pronunciation in the teaching. She (see appendix D) says that she is aware of her own accent when teaching and aims for a British pronunciation. Further, she explains that even though the students repeat the pronunciation they hear, it has happened that she comments on the students' pronunciation.

For Regina, having a British accent is more aesthetically pleasing, and it sounds better. However, she says that the most crucial part is that the students can make themselves understood and communicate. She says that:

- (12) I know that the aim with the English subject is for the kids to be able to make themselves understood and that they are capable to communicate. But I think that it has something to do with aesthetics, and in my ears, is British English very nice and pleasant to listen to, especially in rhymes and songs. So, for me it is more about the aesthetics, I don't tell it to the kids, but that is how I think and hopefully sound (see appendix D).

Further, when I asked Regina how she works with pronunciation in the English language classroom, she said:

- (13) As a teacher in the lower elementary school, the main method is to let the students hear the language and that that is the most important way to introduce pronunciation to the students. And you might experience students who struggle with certain types of sounds, and then you have to teach them how to use the mouth and voice articulators so they can make those sounds (see appendix D).

Even though the teachers differ on their thoughts on target pronunciation, they all reported that they have noticed an improvement in their students English speaking skills in the recent years, due to the frequent exposure of the English language through social media platforms, games, and songs, etc.

4.5 Repetition and practice

There are many ways of approaching language learning. However, all three informants mention the importance of letting the students hear the language by practicing and repeating words and challenging sounds. A benefit of using songs is that they often repeat the same words and phrases, at least songs aimed towards children.

Sally says that it is important that the students have many opportunities to practice their pronunciation, and that through using songs, as well as rhymes, the students are repeating words and phrases. And that pronunciation needs to be practiced by practicing sounds and becoming aware of how you pronounce the words.

Regina says that after she introduces a song, it has to be repeated frequently. Often multiple times a day, and maybe at the same times every morning at the beginning of the school day or at the beginning of every English lesson.

Tom says that they work a lot with repetition, and that they are repeating sounds. The students often hear a sentence, repeat it, hearing a new sentence, and repeating that. When I asked Tom how he uses songs to teach pronunciation, he said that he plays the song and then the students repeat.

4.6 How and why the teachers use songs in their teaching

All three informants introduce and use songs in a similar way in their classrooms. They are all familiar with the songs that comes with the English textbooks, as well as the world of songs they can find on the internet. Regina and Sally have used the songs from the textbooks, but Tom does not really like those songs. Since all three participants are actively singing outside the classroom, they all are comfortable singing themselves in the classroom.

I also asked Sally about her relationship with music and songs in her teaching, and she said:

- (14) Yes, I use music and songs a lot, really in all teaching. I use it as a start-up and to build and strengthen the learning environment. And I use it very consciously in the English subject because when learning a song, you also learn phrases and sentences

and some grammar. Pronunciation then becomes a natural part of singing because it happens in a context, and where there is sound [melody]. And then the students can speak English without them really being aware of that this is what they are doing. And I have also used it with the idea that they should not have to feel that they have to make the sentences themselves, but that they sing lyrics of the song. By using songs in the classroom and having a conscious relationship with it, it can offer many opportunities for free. You can sing because it is nice, and also for the music. You can also expand your vocabulary and improve sentence structure and grammar and the other aspects in the English language (see appendix E).

Sally says that she does use the songs that come with the textbooks as these songs are tied to the theme they are working with. In addition to these, she also uses songs she finds through her computer or iPad, as this offers an easy way to find more songs to go with themes she is teaching. I then asked Sally if she usually sticks to the songs that come with the textbooks or if she also sings herself:

- (15) No, I sing myself. I try to do a mix where we just sing, sing with just music added, and sing with the English voice from the soundtrack from the textbooks (see appendix E).

I asked the teachers if they use specific songs to teach specific topics or themes. When I asked Sally this, she expressed:

- (16) No, I do use the ones that come with the textbooks available at the school I work at. There's a lot of focus on music and songs in English, so there usually are songs to every chapter, and to the different themes. So, I have always used those songs. And now through all the digital tools like computers and iPad's, there's a plethora of British songs, children's songs, and rhymes, that is easily available and accessible. The good thing about that is we can use songs aimed at English native speakers, which is a nice addition to the songs the textbook's publishers have chosen to include. It has been a good combination, and it is interesting to see how the songs the publisher of the textbooks has chosen and the children's songs I find on the internet differ (see appendix E).

Tom and Regina had a different answer to the same question. Tom sometimes uses specific songs to teach specific themes, but he does not have any examples. If he finds a suitable song for what he is working with, then he will use it. Regina said she often uses rhymes, and sometimes songs to teach specific themes or topics:

- (17) When we're working with specific phonetics maybe. There's a poem called 'Jack and Jill', and I have to admit that I don't remember what that sound is called.⁴ This is a poem where you force the students to learn how to make that sound. There are many more examples which I can't think of right now, but this is one of the things that makes using rhymes and songs very good. It can make you practice different phonetics and sounds (see appendix D).

Another interesting thing Sally mentioned was that the songs from the textbooks, are more often than not, pronounced with a British accent. She further said she uses a lot of songs with American accent as well, but it depends on where you find the songs you are using.

I also asked Sally about her relationship with music and songs in her teaching, and she said:

- (14) Yes, I use music and songs a lot, really in all teaching. I use it as a start-up and to build and strengthen the learning environment. And I use it very consciously in the English subject because when learning a song, you also learn phrases and sentences and some grammar. Pronunciation then becomes a natural part of singing because it happens in a context, and where there is sound [melody]. And then the students can speak English without them really being aware of that this is what they are doing. And I have also used it with the idea that they should not have to feel that they have to make the sentences themselves, but that they sing lyrics of the song. By using songs in the classroom and having a conscious relationship with it, it can offer many opportunities for free. You can sing because it is nice, and also for the music. You can also widen your vocabulary and improve sentence structure and grammar and the other aspects in the English language (see appendix E).

⁴ Regina is talking about the grapheme J, and the consonantal phoneme dʒ

As all three teachers are confident and comfortable taking charge of the singing in their classrooms, and often prefer to do so. On the question on whether Tom prefers to sing himself or if he prefers to use pre-recorded songs, he said:

- (18) It depends. I often accompany the songs with playing the piano, and there are sing-back tracks that comes with the textbooks, but some of the songs are... I do not like them. I do not use everything or anything. I would rather find something myself, and I do that a lot and then play piano to it. I prefer being in control (see appendix F).

Regina is not opposed to using the pre-recorded material from the textbooks, but as a choir singer, she also likes to use her own voice in the classroom. After talking about using CDs, I asked Regina if she likes to use pre-recorded song, and her answer was:

- (19) Yes, I do. But as choir singer, I also try to use my own voice. It is not just because I am a choir singer, but I recognize that it is a good way to present the songs to the students (see appendix D).

4.7 Summary of research findings

The research found that Tom, Sally, and Regina are all very positive when it comes to using English songs in their English language teaching classrooms. They all have experience with music and singing outside of school. Tom even takes part in shows, performances and is, in fact a musician. The three teachers are comfortable with singing in their classrooms, as they enjoy music and sing during their time off. Tom, Sally, and Regina bring their love for music and singing into their EFL classrooms as it comes with many benefits. None of the teachers have any official qualifications in music, but they all have relatively similar practices when it comes to how they use the songs in their teaching. They all like to take control and sing the songs themselves. Sally and Regina also use the prerecorded songs that come with the English textbooks they use. Tom, on the other hand, does not like these songs and prefers to find songs on his own.

Not only do the three participants think that songs are great for teaching language. They all reported how important singing together in the classroom is for the learning environment.

The shared experience of singing together not only improves the learning environment, but it also creates stronger and better relationships between the students and the students and the teacher. It became clear in the research findings that the three teachers do not use songs primarily to teach and practice speaking skills and pronunciation. The reasons for using songs are many, such as teaching grammar and vocabulary, it is motivating and fun for the students, it strengthens the relations in the classroom, as well as improving the learning environment, and to teach pronunciation.

All three participants agree that the goal of English teaching is for the students to learn communicative competence and making themselves understood in conversation with others. Tom and Sally do not teach with a preferred or 'correct' accent in mind, as this is not the focus of the English subject. Regina, on the other hand, has a preferred accent. Even though she knows and says that the goal of English teaching is that her students can make themselves understood, she prefers a British English accent. This is because she finds British English pronunciation more aesthetically pleasing than American English pronunciation.

All in all, the consensus from Tom, Sally, and Regina is that songs are extremely valuable in the classroom, and not only the English language classroom. They are all very positive to the use of songs in the classroom, to teach both language and strengthening the relations in the classroom and the learning environment. Even though pronunciation is not the primary focus, it is a part of it. All three participants only reported positive attitudes and beliefs of employing English songs in their English language classrooms.

5 Discussion

As stated in chapter 1, this thesis is about gaining an understanding of three teachers' attitudes towards and beliefs about employing English songs in the Norwegian elementary school classroom to improve the students' speaking skills and pronunciation. To shed light on this, I have interviewed three elementary school teachers to collect data on their EFL classroom practices on employing songs to teach speaking skills and pronunciation. The three teachers were asked about their attitudes and practices toward music and songs, both inside and outside the classroom, how they work with pronunciation teaching, if they use songs for pronunciation teaching, and how they use the songs in their English language classrooms. As stated in sections 2.2 and 2.5, the research on teaching pronunciation through songs is limited, the aim for this thesis is therefore to contribute to this research by providing data on this matter, which I presented in the previous chapter.

In this chapter, I discuss the main findings from the collected data presented in chapter 4 and view this in the light of previous research and theory (chapter 2). As summarized in the previous section, the three informants are all positive to the use of songs in their English teaching, and their practices are relatively similar, but they differ on having a preferred pronunciation. This project is aiming to understand three teachers' attitudes on using songs to teach speaking skills and pronunciation, and *how* and *why* they use songs, as stated in the research questions. Therefore, this chapter is structured into six subchapters: why use songs to teach speaking skills, using songs to teach pronunciation, how to use songs to teach speaking skills, the benefits of using songs, the challenges that arises when employing songs in the classroom, and a summary at the end.

5.1 Why use songs to teach speaking skills

As mentioned in section 1.4.1, oral communication, speaking skills, and pronunciation are essential parts of learning a second or foreign language. Learning a new language differs from learning a first language (Drew & Sørheim, 2009, p, 17). Firstly, it is difficult for students to obtain a similar proficiency in a new language in comparison to their first language (L1), as they are not exposed to it in the same way. The students are usually older when learning a foreign language, which affects their language learning (ibid.). It is a fair assumption to make that the students are more exposed to their native language than English,

which is the target language. However, they are frequently exposed to the English language, through social media platforms, movies, games, etc. By implementing English songs in the English language classrooms, it offers the students the opportunity to practice and keep developing their speaking skills and pronunciation.

The participant Tom reported that he has noticed an improvement in his students' oral English in the last years. Sally explains that she has noticed a change in the students' English language skills, mainly their speaking skills, in the recent years due to the fact that children are more exposed to the English language through songs, games, and other various ways. Regina has also noticed this with her students without being able to confirm how they have improved their oral skills. However, she has noticed overhearing her students talking English where they might not know what they are saying or what it means, but that they are repeating what they have heard in different settings. Even though the students might not know what they are saying or if they are not saying it correctly, Regina still thinks that the students being able to use the English language by themselves encourages them and might motivate them to keep using the language.

As students today are more exposed to the language and influenced by what they see and hear, it can make them learn words and phrases from songs that they do not necessarily know the meaning behind. This can be seen as one of the consequences by students being more exposed to the English language through different channels. According to several researchers (Ludke, 2009, p. 24; Lund, 2012, p.1, Davis, 2017, p. 446; Stokes and Buchdal, 2014; Ellis, 2016), singing is great for language learning, amongst other things, like developing social skills, concentration, memory, and co-ordination. It is evident that there are many benefits of employing songs in the classroom. As students are more familiarized with the English language from an earlier age than in previous generations, the teacher should use this benefit to their advantage to further build on students' knowledge and skills.

5.2 Using songs to teach pronunciation

As seen in both the theory, previous research, and the collected data, the focus on learning a second or a foreign language is not necessarily to sound like a native or near-native speaker. It is to have sufficient knowledge and skills to make oneself understood when communicating

with others. By reviewing the English subject curriculum, CEFR, and the theoretical framework (chapter 2), it is evident that acquiring a native-like, or near native-like, pronunciation is not something that needs to be strived for. Yet, as seen in Rindal's study (see section 2.1) many learners of the English language choose to aim for a British or American pronunciation, even though this is not a teaching focus. The reason behind this could be that these are the two English accents most learners are frequently exposed to.

The English subject curriculum in Norway emphasizes that the students are supposed to learn how to use the English language in communication with others, both in writing and orally (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020). However, the term *pronunciation* is not given much attention and the curriculum does not state what kind of pronunciation or accent the students should learn, but only that they need to achieve communicative competence (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2020) (see also section 1.4).

Rindal and Iannuzzi argue that the lack of an official standard or target pronunciation forces teachers' to "look elsewhere for models of pronunciation or target accents to present to students" (2020, p. 118). One way to introduce the students to models of pronunciation could be to show them video clips where English is spoken, or by implementing English songs in the English language classroom. Even though many students aim towards a British English or American English target pronunciation (see Rindal's study in section 2.1), there are many other English accents that may influence the students' pronunciation. However, as learners of new languages often are influenced by the pronunciation of the accents they are mostly exposed to (Rindal & Iannuzzi, 2020, p. 118), it would make sense that many lean towards a British or American target accent, as these are the two accents they most likely are exposed to in a Norwegian context, as these accents are often used in songs, TV series, movies, etc.

All three participants in this study have strong opinions on their teaching practice regarding what kind of pronunciation they focus on during their lessons. Both Sally and Tom state in their interviews (see appendix E and F) that they have no preferred target pronunciation when teaching English. The key factor for both of them is that their students have enough knowledge and good enough language skills that they are able to use the language in communication. Regina, however, focuses more on a British pronunciation when teaching English (see appendix D). She says that the overall aim is for the students to be able to

communicate with others, no matter what accent they have, but that she still prefers a British English accent as this is more “aesthetically pleasing” to her. Even though she prefers the British accent, she was clear that she does not force her students to learn this accent. She does, however, consciously speak British English in her English teaching. As mentioned above, children and young students are often influenced by the accents that they hear (Rindal & Iannuzzi, 2020, p. 118) and they are good at imitating the sounds and intonation they hear (Reilly & Ward, 1997, p. 23). It is possible, and even likely, that her students are influenced by her British accent.

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (section 1.5) corresponds with the English subject curriculum in that it does not state or mention what pronunciation one is aiming for when learning a second or a foreign language. The CEFR even states explicitly that having a native-like, or a near native-like pronunciation, is not the goal when acquiring a second or foreign language (The Council of Europe, 2020, p. 37). All three teachers participating in this study do somewhat agree on this matter. Looking at the tables from CEFR (tables 1, 2, and 3), the CEFR framework describes different reference levels of what learners are able to do at each level. The aims are that the learners can use and understand the language on different levels. Tom, Regina, and Sally all agree that the main focus when teaching speaking skills and pronunciation in their classrooms, is that their students gain enough language knowledge, skills, and abilities to use the language in communication and making themselves understood.

As the CEFR’s levels of reference presented in tables 1, 2, and 3, demonstrate the learner’s language abilities at each level, it can help teachers with guidance on what to teach the students to get them to a sufficient reference level. The competence aims in the English subject curriculum and the CEFR’s levels of reference are both quite vague when it comes to what learners of new languages should specifically be taught. However, as clearly expressed in both the English subject curriculum and in the CEFR’s levels, students should acquire enough language knowledge and skills to be able to use the language. The choice of a target accent, if learners choose one, is not the important part of acquiring a new language. Even though acquiring a target pronunciation is not the goal of foreign language learning, one still has to have basic knowledge when it comes to speaking skills and pronunciation. As English is not an orthographic language and contains more phonemes than letters in the alphabet (see section 1.4.1 and 2.6), learning English pronunciation is not a simple task. Although one does

not have to appear British or American when speaking English, one does have to be able to pronounce the words somewhat correctly in order to be understood and to be able to communicate with others, which is the goal of learning a new or foreign language.

The three participants in this study have all noticed a difference in their students' English competence as the world has become more globalized, and with the use of social media, games, and songs, where they have been more frequent exposure to the English language. As Rindal argues, the status of the English language in Norway is "unclear or *transitional*" (2020, p. 38). The reason for this is that English is not an official language in Norway, but it indeed is an important language in the Norwegian society (see section 1.5.1). With the world becoming more globalized, the students are more exposed to the English language on a daily basis, and some are probably already familiar with the English language by the time they start school. This does not necessarily mean that there is less need for teaching English in school. As Tom stated in his interview (see appendix F), he has noticed an improvement in how much English his students know and how good they are at speaking English from an early age. Tom especially thinks that video games have contributed to this learning, as he has noticed that those students he calls the 'gaming guys' have particularly good speaking skills.

Whether or not the students have acquired a sufficiently accurate pronunciation and speaking skills from video games or social media, the teachers still have to teach their students speaking skills and pronunciation to ensure that all students achieve the same communicative competence basis. According to Rindal (2020, p. 118), the status of the English language in Norway is uncertain, and it is neither a second nor a foreign language. This should have no bearing on how the English language is taught. It is still a crucial language that many, if not all, students will require in their schooling and everyday lives, as well as later in life. The informants reported that they all use as much English in their English lessons as possible to let the students listen and be exposed to the English language as much as possible. Tom, Sally, and Regina also state that they have noticed a difference in their students' oral English as they are now more exposed to the English language from an earlier age. Regina (see appendix D) said that students often are exposed to English, usually American English, through ad campaigns, and from other sources (not specified in the interview). Because of this, the influence of the English language has become much greater. Furthermore, she talked about letting the students 'bathe in English' as this helps the students acquire the language, and one way to do that is through music and songs, and often pop songs.

Songs, and some poetry, often repeat words, phrases, and sentences, which will allow students to practice them repeatedly. Repeating the same words and phrases many times can be perceived as a boring and unmotivating task. However, repeating the same words and phrases when singing might motivate the students (Reilly & Ward, 1997, p. 23; Ellis, 2016) as this is often perceived as something fun, where they sometimes forget that they are learning. Repeating and practicing sounds are great ways to acquire a new language, which makes songs a great tool for this. Lund (2012, p. 2) states that learning a language, both our first, second, or foreign, is done through listening and imitating, and it has to be done repeatedly.

Not only does previous research and theory highlight the importance of practice and repetition, the teachers participating in this study also pointed out the importance of this and how they practice this in their English language classrooms. Sally (see appendix E) expressed that her students get to practice pronunciation through songs and rhymes, and that this is a crucial part of learning and becoming aware of one's own pronunciation and speaking skills. Also, Regina and Tom state that repetition and practice are the best way to learn pronunciation. This is also how the three teachers introduce and use songs in their English language classroom. They are all firm believers of allowing the students to hear the song and then repeat it, often phrase by phrase or sentence by sentence, in order to let them learn the song as well as this offers the opportunity to practice and repeat the words, phrases, and sentences.

Regina is probably not alone with her thoughts on aiming for a British English in her teaching. Rindal states that schools and universities have had a long tradition of focusing on British English (2010, paragraph 1.1). Teachers that have been teaching for many years probably had their English lectures in university and in the rest of their education focusing on British English, and they have implemented that implicitly into their own teaching. As Sally explained in her interview (see appendix E), learning a specific accent was given greater attention during her education and in her first years of teaching, and then the curriculum shifted its focus on pronunciation teaching. As the English subject curriculum no longer stated that students should aim towards a British or American accent, Sally no longer focused on that, as this was no longer a goal to reach in the English subject. This is also when Sally shifted her focus on pronunciation teaching and no longer focused on a teaching her students a British accent. However, Sally has gotten questions from the parents of her students why

they are not learning a British pronunciation, as this is something they will need to be perceived as British speakers. This attitude from the parents indicates that there was a greater focus on, and expectations that a British accent was the aim to reach when learning English in the previous decades. This attitude from the parents can also come from that schools used to focus on a British pronunciation, at least according to *Mønsterplan 74*. In *Mønsterplan 74*, it was specified that the students should acquire a British pronunciation (The Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, 1974, p. 149). When *Mønsterplan 87* was introduced, it no longer specified that the students should learn a Standard English Pronunciation, but an American or British pronunciation accent (The Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, 1987, p. 210). With the newest curriculum, LK20, and more exposure to different varieties of English, the students are supposed to learn or use what kind of accent they choose, but they have to be able to use that when communicating with others.

The findings from studies by Rindal and Haukland (see section 2.1), where they researched different aspects of pronunciation supports this. Rindal conducted a study in 2013 where she researched which accent Norwegian learners of English aim for when speaking English. The results in this study showed that the majority of the participants chose to aim toward an American or a British pronunciation accent. This is probably since these are the two English accents Norwegian learners are exposed to the most. Even though this study was conducted on older students in upper secondary school, it can be an indication of the language and accent they have been influenced by in their previous English lessons in elementary school. On the other hand, Haukland (2016) researched how listeners from different nationalities perceived different accents they heard on audio clips. The participants of Haukland's study (2016), said that the Norwegian English accent was just as easy to understand as the American or British accent, based on the audio clips they listened to. In fact, some of them found the Norwegian English accent easier to understand and preferred this accent. Many of the people who have English as a second or foreign language are used to hearing different English accents, and some of these might be close to their own English accent, which then can make it easier to understand. The only listeners who disliked the Norwegian English accent were the Norwegian listeners. This then indicates that communicative competence is more important to teach the students rather than strictly teaching them a specific pronunciation accent.

As the goal of learning English is to learn how to take part in conversations with others, and as seen in the results of Haukland's study (2016), one does not need a British or American accent to be understood. Even though there is no need for a native like, or near-native like pronunciation accent, Haukland's study (2016) showed that Norwegian learners of English are the most critical to the Norwegian English accent. Why this is, is not clear. It could be because Norwegians are generally good users of the English language and that makes the standard higher. The Norwegian education system also focuses on teaching English from an early age, so many learners are in fact above average when it comes to speaking English. This, added with the frequent exposure to the English language, gives Norwegian learners the tools needed to acquire a good English pronunciation. That may be the reasons why Norwegians are more critical of their own English accent, than others are. As reported by the informants in their interviews, they have noticed a difference in their students' English language competence, specifically their oral language, since they have been more frequently exposed to the English language in the recent years. This also highlights the three teachers' positive outlook on using English songs in the Norwegian EFL classroom, as it further improves the student's vocabulary, pronunciation, and speaking skills.

5.3 How to use songs to teach speaking skills

This subchapter will explore how the results on chapter 4 is tied into the research question on how teachers are using songs to teach English speaking skills in the Norwegian EFL classroom. As presented in section 2.2, there is not a major difference between songs and poetry, and they are both valuable teaching methods in the English language classroom. As seen in the results in both Munden and Skjærstad's study (2018) and in the data collected for this study, many teachers use both poetry and songs in the classroom for the same reasons as comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Throughout the interview with Regina (see appendix D), she used the two terms *poetry* and *songs* interchangeably, as she uses both of them in her teaching and often in the same way. Reilly and Ward point out that rhymes, which is often found in poetry and songs, can help the students experience and explore how different rhymes sound (1997, p. 23). This shows that poetry and rhymes in the classroom can increase students' awareness and learning of the English language sounds.

However, songs aimed toward children have an added bonus in that they can often include moves, in addition to the musical aspect. By integrating movements when singing, Reilly and Ward states that this will improve the student's physical development (1997, p. 23), in addition to improving students' memory (Ellis, 2016). Singing together as a shared experience will also develop and improve the students' social skills (Ellis, 2016). Knowing that, implementing poetry and songs in the English language classroom can improve the student's language learning, and their physical and social development, it is a strong argument as to why teachers should work implement songs in their classroom. Some teachers are reluctant to use songs and sing in their classrooms for various reasons, which are further discussed in section 5.5. A solution to this could be to start with implementing poetry, as this gives the students many of the same benefits as singing, but it might be perceived as less scary and uncomfortable. When working with poetry, teachers have to use their own voice, but not sing. Reading poetry requires reading with passion and intonation, but so does a lot of texts when reading aloud. If the main concern the teacher has is their own singing voice, using poetry will give the students many of the same benefits as using songs, but the teacher does not have to sing.

When working with younger students it might be beneficial to teach songs without written lyrics, as they are probably not that far advanced in their second or foreign language yet. This is, however, not an obstacle to use songs with the youngest students, as children are great at repeating and imitating what they hear (see section 2.2). This is also supported by the results found in this study. Sally and Regina, who have most of their teaching experience from the lower years of elementary school (Years 1-4), commented upon that they never or rarely use written lyrics when working with songs in their English language classrooms, and their students are learning the songs by listening and repeating. However, Tom, who has only worked with older students in elementary school, teaches songs both by listening and repeating and through using the written lyrics. One reason behind choosing not to use written lyrics with the youngest students is that they are still learning to read in their first language and introducing English written lyrics can confuse them. On the other hand, using written lyrics with the older students offers the opportunity to work with more aspects of the music, such as comparing words, spelling, and sounds.

In this study, there were many similarities between the respondents' answers. None of the teachers participating in this study have any formal qualifications in music, yet their practices

are very similar. They all see the value and usefulness of using songs in their teaching, not only for language learning but also to strengthen the personal bonds and relationships in the classroom. As much as they use songs and music in their classrooms for other aspects than language learning, the informants also see and notice a lot of language learning benefits of using songs in their English teaching. Regina said that she wishes she was more structured and systematic when using songs as she thinks this would have benefited her students even more. As research on using music and songs in the classroom, especially to teach pronunciation, is severely lacking, clear guidelines and tips on how to use music and songs in the classroom, are also lacking. As seen in the theoretical framework (chapter 2) and the research findings (chapter 4) of this study, employing songs in the classroom offers many benefits to language learning. Conducting more research on how teachers can use songs in their foreign language classrooms to teach speaking skills and pronunciation, can immensely improve students' foreign language learning and improve classroom environments.

5.4 Benefits of using songs to teach speaking skills

Previous research, theory, and the collected data indicate that singing in the English language classroom offers many language learning opportunities, as well as other benefits, such as stronger relations in the classroom and a safer and stronger classroom and teaching environment and atmosphere. All three informants in this study commented on how singing together in the classroom contributes to the learning atmosphere. This was not something they were explicitly asked about in the interviews, but they all expressed strong beliefs that this is one of the benefits of employing songs in the English language classroom. Both Prashanti and Ramnarayan (2020) and Lah (2020) write about the importance of having a safe and encouraging learning environment, as this benefits the students by stimulating their learning and supporting them. As reported by this study's participants, singing in the classroom strengthens the classroom and learning environment. A strong learning environment makes students feel safe, which is crucial for facilitating a safe learning environment.

The relationship between peers and student-teacher relationships is crucial when it comes to students feeling safe and welcome at school. Lah emphasizes that learning not only benefits the student's cognitive development, but it also forms and develops each student as an

individual (2020, p. 139). As children need stability and a safe environment around them to learn, the relationship with their teachers is essential. Tom (see appendix F) said that he builds better and stronger relations with his students by singing together in the English language classroom. He said that the fact that they are sharing that musical experience not only benefits his relations with his students but also the students' relations with each other. That in itself is a strong argument for why teachers should implement songs in their teaching. A safe learning environment can help ensure that the students are learning what they should. It at least makes school a good place to be and can help their attitudes toward going to school, not only at the present time, but also in the years to come. The question on how singing in the English language classroom can affect the learning environment was not a question in the interview guide (see appendix A). However, all three teachers brought it up during their interviews. This shows how important singing in the classroom is, as the participants all commented on how much singing together as a shared experience strengthens the classroom and learning environment.

Singing together in the classroom allows the students to practice their speaking and pronunciation skills without having *their* voices on display. This is because they are singing in unison which decreases the students' chance of feeling like they are the ones in focus and that everyone is listening to them. This can benefit the students that are reluctant and struggling to speak English out loud in front of their peers. Having a safe learning environment and not having to have their own voice be heard can help the students avoid or cope with language anxiety.

There are many different benefits of and arguments in support of implementing songs in the classroom, and especially the EFL classroom. After interviewing the three participants it became clear that they use songs in their teaching for many different reasons, however, the main reason they use songs is not necessarily to practice pronunciation. From the interviews, it seems like the participant use songs as it is fun and motivating for the students', and at the same time can contribute to their language learning, improve, and strengthen the classroom learning environment and the relations in the classroom. Working with speaking skills and pronunciation seems like an added bonus of using songs for the participants. From what is gathered in the interviews, the reasons behind using songs in the classroom are many and being able to practice speaking skills and pronunciation are two of them. Since the teachers all see benefits and enjoy using songs in their teaching, the question of why they do not use

them to teach and practice pronunciation more can be questioned. Tom, Sally, and Regina all reported that the aim of the English subject is for the students to acquire enough language knowledge and skills to be able to communicate with others. This requires several skills, such as vocabulary and grammar, but also a sufficiently accurate pronunciation. So why the participants do not use more time to practice pronunciation is hard to determine. It could be because of the time restriction (see section 1.5), or because when using songs, teachers can work on several language aspects at the same time, without focusing too much on one of the aspects.

An obstacle that can have a negative impact on students' language learning is language anxiety. I argue that using songs might combat this potential issue, as the focus is not solely on the language. When utilizing songs, you also have to focus on the melody and remember the lyrics. As Young presents, there are three main aspects from which language anxiety can emerge from: the learner, the teacher, and the instructional practice (1991). Language anxiety can stop the students from reaching their full learning potential, so it is important that teachers work with these three aspects to try to avoid language anxiety in their classroom. As Melville-Clark points out, singing in the classroom is not only helping the students' language acquisition but can also contribute to the students' self-awareness, and it can help them to learn more about themselves through exploring and expressing their feelings and thoughts through songs (2006, p.1). Language anxiety can be avoided by ensuring that the students feel safe and comfortable in their classroom (see section 2.3). As none of the participants reported any challenges in employing songs in the English language classroom, it is hard to know how they would have worked with students' foreign language anxiety. Perhaps, the fact that the teachers frequently implement songs in their teaching is helping the students avoid foreign language anxiety.

Foreign language anxiety is an aspect of language anxiety. In Dolean's study (2015) (see section 2.3), it was proved that music and songs in the classroom could ease the students' language anxiety. Also, according to Thiessen and Saffran (2009, cited in Dolean, 2015, p. 640), young children have a better recall of a melody when there are added lyrics. This shows that music and songs in the classroom improve the students' learning and reduce their foreign language anxiety. Singing together in the classroom creates stronger and safer learning environments which help reduce the students' anxiety. When students are less anxious in the classroom, they are likely more able to relax and enjoy their school days and have better

opportunities of experiencing a safe and supportive learning environment and atmosphere. These are all strong arguments as to why teachers should employ music and singing in their foreign language classrooms, as well as in other subjects.

5.5 Challenges of using songs to teach speaking skills

The data collected in the interviews did not show that the participants had any issues with reluctant students in their classrooms. A reason for this could be that the participants are actively singing themselves, so the students are then more eager to sing. The participants also explained that singing is a shared experience, so no one is expected to sing alone or have their own voice on display, which might make singing less scary for the students. Sally said that she does not have a lot of experience with students who are reluctant to sing, but if some students stay silent while the rest is singing, she does not tell them to sing as it might make them more uncomfortable. She lets those students remain silent, and hopefully, after realizing that singing together might not be as scary as they thought, they might start partaking in the singing later on. As presented in the previous section, employing songs in the English language classroom has many benefits.

Nonetheless, there are still challenges that arise with this teaching approach. As Alisaari and Heikkola found in their study, there are many teachers who are not comfortable singing in their classrooms as they are not comfortable with their own singing voices (2017, p. 241). If teachers avoid using music and singing in their classrooms because they are not singers and do not think they have a good singing voice, it is still possible to use songs by playing pre-recorded songs. However, Melville-Clark suggests that teachers try to break that barrier, as hearing the teacher sing can positively influence the students to sing themselves (2006, p. 14). It is then more likely that the students will sing and give of themselves if they see their teaching doing it. However, this does mean that the teacher should have a sufficiently accurate pronunciation to be a good language role model in the English language classroom. There are not only reluctant teachers when it comes to singing. Some students might also be reluctant to sing in the classroom, perhaps even more than teachers. As Wheeler states, singing together and not putting each student's voice on display can help ease the students into partaking in the singing (2014). To make the students feel safe and comfortable singing in the classroom, especially in a foreign language where they might struggle with some of the

words, it is therefore crucial that the teacher is also singing. Creating a better and stronger classroom and learning environment by singing together as a shared experience is also beneficial for avoiding language anxiety. If the students feel safe, encouraged, and not put on the spot in the classroom, singing together can help stop the students from developing foreign language anxiety (see section 2.3). Though the informants did not report any language anxiety, they all mentioned how much singing together improves the learning environment and strengthens the relationship between the students and between the teachers and the students.

Even though songs have been used in classrooms for decades, Young and Ilari found that songs and music are often neglected in the classroom and that “children’s musical activity remains low on the scholarly hierarchy” (2019, p.1). The reason behind this might be connected to the results in Alisaari and Heikkola’s study (2017), where teachers do not feel competent or comfortable singing in their classrooms. However, the results in the present study do not support these findings. All three participants in my study frequently employ music and songs in their classrooms, so they are very likely to be positive. Sally even stated that she has always taught using songs, so she has no knowledge of how it is to teach without employing songs in her classroom. Although the teachers who participated in this study sing in their classrooms, they also have other experience with music and singing, and have been actively singing most of their lives, which may explain why they are comfortable utilizing songs in their English language classrooms. Another reason that songs are often neglected in the classroom could be impacted by teachers not having access to or knowing appropriate songs that can be used. Tom, Sally, and Regina all commented on how their textbooks come with a CD or recordings that are linked to the different themes and topics in the books. As Tom expressed, he rarely reaches for these songs, as he thinks there are better songs to choose from, and with easy access to several sources online, he often searches there.

As Tegge discovered in her study, finding suitable songs to use in the language classroom was a challenge for several of the respondents (2018, p. 281). However, if one struggles to find appropriate songs to sing, CDs or recordings that often come with the English textbooks can be a great way to start implementing songs in the classroom. In the present study, Sally also said that these days where there are iPads or computers in every classroom, the internet has a plethora of songs to choose from. Even though there are a plethora of songs to choose from, either from textbooks or different internet sources, Asmaradhani et al., note that there

are some things to consider when choosing songs (see section 2.6). It is still important to ensure that the songs are appropriate for the student group regarding their age and language level (2018, pp. 81-82.) If the songs become too complicated or challenging for the students, it is likely that they will struggle and not learn as much as they could have if the songs were at an appropriate level. By appropriate, it means that the songs contain relevant vocabulary for the students that are not too challenging and that the songs in general are at a manageable pace. However, as there are excess amounts of songs to choose from, this should not be an obstacle to implementing songs in the English language classroom.

Another challenge could be the restricted hours teachers have available for teaching English. As explained in section 1.5, teachers in Norwegian elementary schools have between 1-2 hours each week dedicated to the English subject. With this time restriction and the fact that these hours have to be divided to cover all aspects of the English subject, teachers may not be inclined to use their lessons on singing, at least not if they do not see the benefits of using songs in the classroom. As Regina reported in her interview, she likes to work up a ‘song bank’ with the students. This allows Regina not to take up too much of the students’ English lessons on learning new songs. Repeating the same song two or three times in a week’s worth of English lessons allows the students to learn new songs without using all their allotted time for English on primely singing. However, songs can also be used for learning vocabulary, grammar, and culture.

Theory and previous research (see Tegge 2018; Horwitz, 2010; Horwitz, 1986, in sections 2.3 and 2.5) show that there can be some arising challenges when implementing songs in the foreign language classroom. After interviewing the three participants, it is clear that they do not experience many challenges with using music and songs in their classrooms. Regina stated in her interview that she only has positive experiences with using music and songs in her English language classroom. This is because you can structure it to make the lessons playful and full of humor at the same time as it can teach the students ‘correct’ pronunciation. Sally and Tom also share the same attitudes and beliefs as Regina. Tom said that he is extremely positive about music and songs in all subjects. It offers both the opportunity to strengthen the classroom atmosphere and environment, and it motivates the students for further work. The motivation comes from the fact that most students, especially the younger ones, according to Ellis (2016), find singing a fun and enjoyable activity.

5.6 Summary of the discussion

The results in this project are interesting. The participants are all frequent users of music and songs in their English language teaching and structure this teaching similarly. However, none of them has been taught how to employ songs in the classroom. They all do it how they feel and think it should be done. Tom, Sally, and Regina employ songs by letting the students listen to the songs first before repeating words, phrases, and sentences. The informants all like to take control and sing the songs themselves in order to control the pace and what to repeat. Then the students get to listen, repeat, and practice singing the songs. Previous research indicates that many teachers neglect songs in their classrooms due to many different reasons (see sections 2.2 and 2.5). If teachers, especially foreign language teachers, are instructed on how to use songs in their teaching, the outcomes could be excellent. This study shows that implementing songs in the foreign language classrooms is beneficial for students' language learning, social and cognitive development. It reduces foreign language anxiety and creates safer and stronger learning environments for the students. Suppose one is able to structure and systemize the use of songs in the English language classroom or other foreign language classrooms. In that case, one could teach students speaking skills and pronunciation in a more efficient and motivating manner.

6 Concluding remarks

6.1 General summary of the thesis

The study has aimed to collect data in order to answer this thesis research questions:

1. *What are (some) teachers' attitudes towards using English songs in the Norwegian EFL classroom?*
2. *Why and how are teachers using songs to teach English speaking skills in the Norwegian EFL classroom?*

This thesis has explored and discussed teachers' beliefs about the usefulness of employing songs as a teaching tool to teach and improve Norwegian elementary school students' speaking skills and pronunciation. The theoretical framework and research findings indicate that songs can be used as a useful teaching approach, and there are several benefits of employing songs in the English language classroom. Singing together in the classroom can improve the students' language learning, such as grammar, intonation, vocabulary, in addition to pronunciation. Singing can also help students' foreign language anxiety by providing safer learning environments. However, I have also shown that the participants in this study do not use songs primarily for teaching speaking skills and pronunciation. Using songs to improve the students' pronunciation and speaking skills is clearly only one of the aspects of employing songs in the English language classroom.

My research findings indicate that the three teachers in this study share similar beliefs and attitudes toward using songs in their English language classrooms to teach speaking skills and pronunciation. All three teachers also have a relationship with music in their personal lives but at different levels. Two of the teachers are active singers and have been singing most of their lives. The last teacher is also an active singer and works with singing in shows and productions in addition to teaching. Their positive attitudes towards songs in teaching might not come as a surprise as all the informants are active singers outside of the classroom. They also agreed to participate in this study, knowing that I was researching teachers' beliefs and attitudes on using music and songs in the English language classroom.

The teachers further presented similar views on how they implement and teach songs in their English language classrooms. They are all firm believers in using their own voices and singing themselves in the classroom. Singing themselves gives them control, and they can

take charge of how fast they are going through the songs and repeat what they think is necessary to repeat. Two of the teachers, Sally, and Regina, also use prerecorded songs that followed the themes and topics in the textbooks. On the other hand, Tom, does not like these songs, so he prefers to find songs on his own that are suitable to the different themes and topics. The participants all think that repetition and practice are two of the key features of using songs to teach English pronunciation and speaking skills. Songs often repeat the same words and phrases, which allows the students to repeat the same sounds without experiencing it as boring and unmotivating. To sing a song repeatedly is also something the teachers mention as essential, as this offers even more opportunities for the students to repeat sounds. When the students have learned a song, the teachers can use it for other purposes, such as a start-up for the day or for the English lesson.

One of the aspects where the teachers reported different views was whether if they teach a specific accent or if they have a preferred pronunciation. Two of the teachers expressed that they focus on teaching the students the knowledge and skills needed in order to be able to communicate using the English language. One teacher said that there was a greater focus on teaching British English during her education and in her first years of teaching, but that shifted as the English subject curriculum shifted its focus on the matter. One teacher does have a preferred pronunciation accent when teaching English. Regina stated that the aim of the English subject is to teach the students communicative competence, no matter what accent they learn or choose to use. However, in Regina's ears, British English sounds more aesthetically pleasing than American English. From the interview with Regina, it does not seem like she corrects the students if they speak American English. Still, she consciously uses British English herself, which can influence the students' pronunciation. Even though Regina has a preferred accent, the teachers all agree that teaching students' communicative competence is the primary goal.

The teachers all reported that they are extremely positive about the use of songs in their classrooms. They commented that songs are great in all subjects, not only in the English language classroom. They use songs for many different purposes, including teaching pronunciation and speaking skills. All teachers reported, without being asked, that songs and singing together in the classroom have a significant positive impact on the learning environment. One of the teachers also reported that sharing the experience of singing together

makes the student-student relationships and teacher-student relationships stronger and more trusting.

It is evident that the three teachers who participated in this study have positive attitudes toward using English songs in the EFL classrooms and believe that it improves students' English language learning. Even though they think that songs can be used to teach pronunciation and speaking skills, they do not primarily use songs for this reason. Their reasons for using songs are a combination of several aspects, and language learning is only one of them. The teachers use songs because singing English songs in the classroom offers many benefits, such as general language teaching, creating better and safer learning environments, and as start-ups for the school day or English lesson. To answer the first research question – the teachers who participated in this project all have positive attitudes toward using English songs in the EFL classroom. They enjoy doing so as it improves learning, in addition to that this approach makes learning more motivating and enjoyable.

To answer the second research question – the teachers do not use songs *primarily* for pronunciation teaching and improving speaking skills. Still, they do use songs for several reasons, such as improving the students' grammar, vocabulary, social skills, and to create better and stronger relationships in the classroom, and to improve the learning environment. However, the theoretical framework compiled for this thesis shows that songs are a useful tool for this purpose, but that the research specifically on pronunciation teaching is lacking, especially in combination with singing. The participants in this study all have a relatively similar practice regarding *how* they employ songs in their English language classrooms. They use their own voices to sing with the students and prefer to sing themselves instead of playing pre-recorded songs. This is because it gives the teacher control over how fast they go through the songs, and they can choose which parts of the songs they want to focus on or repeat. To teach the students the different songs, they often play or sing them once first, then let the students try to sing along. According to the three teachers, the most important aspect of teaching songs is repeating words, phrases, sentences, and the entire song. This ensures that the students can practice the sounds in order to be able to pronounce them correctly.

6.2 Suggestions on further research on using songs to teach pronunciation

As mentioned in possible limitations in section 3.7, this study is limited to three Norwegian elementary school teachers' attitudes on using songs in the EFL classroom to teach speaking skills and pronunciation. Another limitation is the data collected for this project. Looking back, I would have liked to have collected more data on the teachers' experiences with using songs in their teaching, especially any challenges, or experiences with foreign language anxiety. This is a topic that could also be explored through action research. It could be interesting to conduct an experiment with two classes, teaching the same vocabulary and focusing on the pronunciation, but only in one of the groups through songs. This was too challenging in the present study due to several reasons: such an experiment would take time, and, in a pandemic, gaining access to different schools has been very difficult. However, I think that conducting action research on the topic could provide some valuable data on this topic, which is already lacking research. The present study aims to prepare the ground for such research through insight into different aspects of teaching with songs from a teacher's perspective.

Various research on this topic (how songs can be used to teach pronunciation), has expressed the lack of research in the field. Yet, the researchers who have investigated the topic have found that songs are useful in language learning. Further research on this topic is needed and can lead to better practices on employing songs and music in the English language classroom, which in my opinion, will benefit and improve students' pronunciation and speaking skills. By providing more research on this matter, we can enable teachers to employ songs as a teaching method for teaching pronunciation and speaking skills in ways that benefits the student's language learning. As previously mentioned, none of the participants in this study have any formal qualifications in music, yet they all see the value of singing together in the classrooms. Providing foreign language teachers with knowledge and data on *how* and *why* they should use songs as a teaching tool can bring more teachers to start implementing songs in their EFL classrooms.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview guide

Erfaring som lærer:

Erfaring som barneskolelærer:

Erfaring som engelsklærer:

Hvor mange studiepoeng i engelsk:

På hvilket trinn underviser du nå?

1. Hvor mye erfaring har du med engelskundervisning på småtrinnet?
2. Hvordan jobber du med uttale i engelskundervisningen?
3. Hva er ditt forhold til musikk og sang utenfor skolesammenheng?
4. Hva er ditt forhold til å bruke musikk og sang i engelskundervisningen?
5. Bruker du spesifikke sanger til å lære spesifikke ting?
 - a. Hvis ja, til hva?
6. Bruker du ferdig innspilte sanger eller synger du selv?
 - a. Hvorfor?
7. Bruker du sanger til å lære bort uttale?
 - a. Hvis ja:
 - b. Har du merket en forskjell i elevenes uttale etter bruk av sang?
 - i. Hvordan?
 - c. Hvordan bruker du sang til å lære bort uttale?
 - i. F.eks. elevene gjentar, synger selv, osv.
8. Hvis du ikke bruker sanger:
 - a. Hvordan lærer du bort uttale?
9. Hva ser du på som «korrekt» uttale og hvorfor?

Har du noen spørsmål eller noe du vil legge til?

*Denne intervjuguiden blir brukt som et utgangspunkt. Intervjuet kan bestå av flere oppfølgingsspørsmål som ikke er nevnt, ut ifra hva informanten svarer og hvilken retning intervjuet tar.

Appendix B

Consent form

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjekt

Bakgrunn og formål med studien

I forbindelse med min masteroppgave i Grunnskolelærerutdanning 1-7 ved Høgskolen i Innlandet ønsker jeg å undersøke barneskolelæreres syn på bruk av sang i engelskundervisningen, med fokus på læring av uttale.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i prosjektet?

Datainnsamlingen vil foregå gjennom intervjuer med lærere på barneskolen, helst noen med erfaring fra 1. og 2. klasse. Intervjuet vil da være om læreres erfaring med sang i engelskundervisningen.

Hva skjer med informasjonen som blir innhentet?

Ingen personopplysninger vil bli delt offentlig. Det er kun jeg og mine veiledere som vil ha tilgang til dette under prosjektet. Alle personopplysninger vil være konfidensielt og informanter blir anonymisert i prosjektet.

Det kommer til å bli tatt lydopptak av intervjuene som senere blir transkribert. Alle personopplysninger og lydopptak vil bli slettet etter innlevering av prosjektet, som etter planen blir levert senest 01.10.22.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Om du ved senere anledning ønsker å trekke ditt samtykke kan du gjøre det ved å gi meg beskjed. Du trenger ikke å begrunne dette.

På oppdrag fra personvernombudet har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personregelverket.

Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har andre spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med:

Camilla Johannessen

Telefon: [REDACTED]

Mail: [REDACTED]

Veiledere:

Siri Først Skogmo

Gjertrud Flermoen Stenbrenden

Appendix C

Approval from NSD

Meldeskjema for behandling av personopplysninger

25/04/2022, 13:49



Vurdering

Referansenummer

989393

Prosjektittel

Singing your way to better pronunciation

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Høgskolen i Innlandet / Fakultet for lærerutdanning og pedagogikk / Institutt for humanistiske fag

Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

Gjertrud Flermoen Stenbrenden, [REDACTED]

Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

Kontaktinformasjon, student

Camilla Johannessen, [REDACTED]

Prosjektperiode

01.09.2021 - 01.10.2022

Vurdering (1)

08.09.2021 - Vurdert

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 08.09.2021. Behandlingen kan starte.

DEL PROSJEKTET MED PROSJEKTANSVARLIG

For studenter er det obligatorisk å dele prosjektet med prosjektansvarlig (veileder). Del ved å trykke på knappen «Del prosjekt» i menylinjen øverst i meldeskjemaet. Prosjektansvarlig bes akseptere invitasjonen innen en uke. Om invitasjonen utløper, må han/hun inviteres på nytt.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET

Appendix D

Transcription of Regina's interview

Meg: Først da hvor mange år har du med erfaring som lærer?

Regina: I fra 2003 i grunnskolen. Jeg har 3 år på høyskolen, jobba der som praksisveileder, også har jeg jobba som førskolelærer i fra 1982 til 2003 minus de 3 årene på høyskolen ja.

Meg: Ja, barneskolelærer sa du, har du alltid vært engelsklærer eller hvor mange år?

Regina: Nei altså når du *jeg (pause)* Som førskolelærer lærer og for å bli lærer i småskolen så må du ta en utdanning som heter småskolepedagogikk eller 6 til 10 års pedagogikk som det het da jeg tok det. Og der er engelsk en liten del og gjennom den utdanningen så får du en viss kompetanse som engelsklærer. Etter at jeg var ferdig den utdanninga og hadde jobba her i flere år, så tok jeg videreutdanning i engelsk, slik at nå er jeg formelt kvalifisert for å undervise i engelsk i fra første til syvende trinn.

Meg: Så da har du 30 studiepoeng i engelsk?

Regina: Ja.

Meg: Ja, da snakka du litt om hvor mye erfaring da med engelsk midt på småtrinnet. Har det vært litt sånn hele tiden eller du hatt noen perioder har vært engelsklærer?

Regina: Jeg har, nei jeg har ingen perioder hvor jeg har hatt spesifikt engelskfaget, nei. *(pause)* Men, dette innbiller jeg meg er litt kanskje litt ulikt fra skole til skole. Her hos oss så har vi jo vært så heldige at vi har, eller ledelsen, har jobba hardt for bestandig å ha 2 lærere på trinnet og i mitt tilfelle så har vi ofte gjort det sånn at vi har delt på fag i noen perioder så vi har hatt ansvaret for enkeltfag i noen tema i en periode for eksempel. For vi har hatt ansvar for å planlegge da engelskdelen av et tema for eksempel, jeg har ikke vært engelsklærer bare. Nei.

Meg: Nei, men du har jo hatt engelskfaget?

Regina: Ja. Jeg har undervist i engelsk jaja.

Meg: Hvordan har du da jobba med uttale?

Regina: Som lærer på småskoletrinnet så er jo hva skal jeg si, hovedmetoden er jo da å la elevene høre språket og det har vært den viktigste måten å introdusere uttale for elevene på. Og så hender det at du når du oppdager da elever som ikke får til noen typer lyder at du kan gå inn da og å undervise spesifikt i munnen munnmotorikk bruk av tunge lepper tenner for å få til ulike typer lyder.

Meg: Når du da sier de skal høre språket, er det da at du snakker, leser, hører dere på noen tekster?

Regina: Ja, begge deler. men for min del så har jeg brukt meg selv mest, ja.

Meg: Hva er ditt forhold til musikk og sang sånn utenfor klasserommet?

Regina: Ja, jeg jeg er korsanger. Alltid vært glad i musikk, bestandig spilt mye musikk, *(pause)* all slags musikk, har sunget i kor som jeg sa. Jeg har ingen annen formell utdanning enn det enn det vi har hatt i lærerutdanning eller førskolelærerutdanning i utdanningen på 6 til 10 års-pedagogikken, og det har vært svært lite musikk. Som barnehagelærer eller førskolelærer så bruker du jo veldig mye sang. Vi må regulere sang, dikt som språkstimulering, men også merker jo også at rytmikk for eksempel kan være med på å hjelpe elever rent språklig så det har det har stor effekt.

Meg: Ja, du driver mye med musikk og har mye erfaring der, men hvordan er ditt forhold til å bruke det i engelskundervisningen?

Regina: Ja, det er det samme forholdet jeg har til det i engelsk som når du skal jobbe med å utvikle norsk språk da og norske leseferdigheter eller leseferdigheter på norsk. Så jeg ser på det som viktig, og ser på det som en veldig effektiv måte å bli introdusert for det engelske språket på.

Meg: Er det noe spesielt du fokuserer på med språket da og hvis spesifikke sanger?

Regina: Engelskmennene har jo et enormt tilfang på særlig på rim og regler og rhymes og nursery rhymes, også sanger, og særlig etter at eller underveis i det den engelske utdanningen jeg tok, 30 studiepoeng, så fikk vi veldig mange gode tips henvendelser til bøker, til hefter, til plater, cd, som det fantes mange av disse engelske skattene på egentlig. Men noen spesielle nei, det det det er ingen som jeg har lagt spesielt vekt på. Jeg har brukt det som og passer best der og da.

Meg: Ja, så finne sanger til ulike temaer?

Regina: Ja, og men altså hvordan du bruker sanger, det kan jo være i forbindelse med det finnes jo et utall alfabetsanger, av datosanger, og bursdagssanger av sanger som handler om været så det er veldig mye å ta av, og en viktig metode når du underviser engelsk på i grunnutdanninga i begynneropplæringen, første-, andre-, og tredjeklasse og kanskje fjerde er jo det som omtales som everyday practice, hvor du prater engelsk med ungene og lurer dem til å kommunisere med deg uten at dem kan det egentlig. Å la dem få høre da engelske språket både i form av tale og i form av rim og regler og vi i form av sang.

Meg: Men det er masse som har fått masse ideer og tips så da regner jeg med at du bruker kanskje litt ferdig innspilte sanger?

Regina: Ja, det gjør jeg. Men som korsanger så har jeg også prøvd å formidle det med meg selv ja og så bruker min egen stemme.

Meg: Så er det en god blanding?

Regina: Ja vil jeg si ja. Nei, det er ikke for at jeg er korsanger, men det er fordi at jeg skjønner at det er det noen måte å presentere det på ja.

Meg: Har du noen gang brukt sanger til å lære bort uttale? Tenkt på det sånn spesifikt?

Regina: Ja, kanskje ja det er kanskje spesielt rim og regler. Også sanger.

Meg: Ja, når det hadde ikke vært noe spesifikt tema eller?

Regina: Det kanskje var, det har vært spesifikk fonetikk kanskje. *(pause)* Det er et dikt som heter 'Jack and Jill', nå må jeg innrømme at jeg ikke husker den hva den lyden heter, men det er jo en lyd da som eller et dikt av hvor du tvinger elevene til å lære seg til å si *lager lyd*, ikke sant og mange sånne eksempler uten at jeg kommer på det nå, men det er den her er her er eller tilfanget av engelske rim og regler og sanger veldig bra å bruke sånne sammenhenger i fonetikk og i lydinnlæringen.

Meg: Skiller du noe på rim og regler og sanger eller går det litt sånn om hverandre?

Regina: For meg har det gjort det egentlig ja. Det er jo det, hva skal jeg si, sånn rent musikalsk så er den rytmen du kan oppleve i et dikt eller et barnerim eller en nattregle, det er jo veldig musikalsk og veldig rytmisk, jeg opplever at det engelske språket eller på engelsk så er det veldig mange fine sånne rim som er veldig fengende og det er jo på en måte har jeg en sånn musikalsk verdi i seg selv det altså rytme er et musikalsk element som jeg tror som det er veldig lurt å bruke både i norsk og engelsk.

Meg: Når du har jobbet med rim og regler, er det sånn at elevene hører på deg eller er de med og leser?

Regina: Begge deler

Meg: Hva med sanger?

Regina: Det er begge deler ja. Jeg har forsøkt å etablere en sånn sangbank både på norsk og engelsk. Det er noen sanger som på en måte sitter i ryggmargen på dem som en kan å bare knipse i tommeltotten så vet man skal synge etter å ha sagt tittelen eller å sangene kan dem og, det viser jo stor glede av å synge.

Meg: Har du merket noe forskjell på hvis du synger selv eller om du bruker ferdig innspilt sanger på hvor fort elevene kanskje lærer seg er sangen eller reglene?

Regina: Jeg håper kanskje at hvis det er et mål at elevene skal lære samtidig, at det er det jo ofte for min del i hvert fall, så er det lettere kanskje få til det når du kan bruke deg selv for da kan du ha de lange pausene, du kan tolke, gjenta når du vil det, du kan få til å synge når du vil det stedet for å trykke på stryker på en iPad eller på en spiller av noe slag så det er jeg opplever at du er frie når det kan sangen godt selv da bruker ditt eget instrument, kroppen, stemmen.

Meg: Men hvordan synes du det er hvis du tenker på de litt yngre elevene da og hvis du introduserer en sang eller rim og regler med tekst hvordan opplever du at elevene tar det?

Regina: Ja, med de yngste så skal dem lære det så lærer de det best, opplever jeg, med by heart, altså utenat og gjennom øre og det å gjenta ja og da er det jo ikke fokus på lyden der og da, da er det å få inn rytmen, kanskje få med rimordene, rimelydene og snerten i diktet eller sangen eller reglene som jeg synes er det viktigste og som jeg opplevde at er en veldig effektiv måte å lære på da når den får rytmen og takten og tempoet for eksempel

Meg: Så du går ikke inn med de yngste da og terper på ... (avbrutt)? Uttalen der

Regina: Nei, det gjør jeg ikke. Ikke med de yngste. (*pause*) Det er ikke riktig å si det, fordi at jeg er jo bevisst på måten jeg uttaler det på, men jeg sier ikke at nå må de om du får og tunga ut mellom tennene slik at du får til th-lyden det sier jeg ikke, men jeg er, vil jeg påstå, et språklig forbilde som er bevisst på å være. Så på den måten så terper jeg jo uttale da uten at jeg nevner det.

Meg: Så kanskje ved å gjenta (Regina: ja) litt flere ganger da?

Regina: Ja, det er jo ofte sånn at når du har introdusert en sang eller ei regle så er det noe som må gjentas ofte. Flere ganger om dagen, kanskje til faste tidspunkter hver morgen før skoledagen, når skoledagen starter, før mat, i starten på engelsktimen hvis du har den engelsktimen, så det er viktig å ha systematikk på det.

Meg: ja den repetisjonen ja, altså er det sånn når du bruker da sanger og dikt at du synger og elevene gjentar og er med på sangen selv eller får de lov til å hoppe ut og prøve med en gang eller har du noe ... (avbrutt)?

Regina: Det varierer veldig. Men jeg introduserer en ny sang eller en ny regle helt for meg selv først. så den får høre og så kan det hende vi tar frase for frase, eller setning for setning eller hva den her også og gjentar det så det er så det er sånn veldig standard vil jeg tro at du først helhet så del for del og så helhet med tanke på innlæring det er det har det fungerer bra.

Meg: er det litt sånn.. hvis man tenker på læreplanen da og engelsk så er det jo aldri noe spesifikt om hva slags type engelsk elevene skal lære, men har du noen tanker om hva du mener er en så å si «korrekt» uttale eller hvordan fokuserer du på det, hvis du gjør det?

Regina: jeg innbiller meg at når jeg snakker engelsk så snakker jeg nesten sånn Queens English, ehh, hvert fall britisk engelsk. Og ja jeg har noen tanker om det

Meg: Men mener du at elevene skal gjenta den?

Regina: Ja men da hvis du da ikke har hørt noen annen form for engelsk før når det gjelder den sangen så gjentar de jo på samme måten, og jeg må si at jeg har jo tatt meg selv i mange ganger og påpekt uttale hvis det har vært det ja slang eller amerikansk engelsk eller uten at det har det har jeg ikke noe med, jeg vet jo det at målet med å kunne nå målet med engelskundervisning er ungene skal kunne gjøre seg forstått og er i stand til å kommunisere. Men, jeg synes at det har liksom sånn estetisk å gjøre for meg da i mine ører så er ofte det der britisk engelske ofte veldig fint i engelske rim og regler og sanger så det er litt sånn estetisk opplevelse fra min side altså. [Jeg] forteller ikke det til ungene, men det er sånn jeg tenker og sånn jeg forhåpentligvis høres ut da.

Meg: Men så har du noen rim da som der du nesten må snakke britisk for at det skal rime eller amerikansk for at det skal rime

Regina: Ja, det finnes jo det finnes jo diktbøker, rim og regler bøker, som er som er av nyere dato som jeg merker og når jeg leser at det har det har masse impulser i fra særlig kanskje fra amerikansk engelsk og, (*pause*) får kanskje inn humor på en annen måte da jeg vet ikke det er

hvert fall morsomme dikt med litt sånn slang og sånn altså som vi som vi leker med. (ja jeg har en sånn diktsamling du kan se)

Meg: For det er det noen har du noen spesifikke sånn sanger som du vet er gode som du ofte kommer tilbake til når du underviser?

Regina: Ja, jeg har det ja. Det er noen sanger som klassen kan godt som vi har sunget fra førstetrinn som vi ofte starter engelsktimer med, ja det er noen.

Meg: Når du da starter den engelsktimen med den sangen er det for engelsklæringen sin del eller er det litt mer sånn ...

Regina: For å skru på engelsk-bryteren.

Meg: Og du merker at det funker?

Regina: Da er ingen tvil. da ja, det funker.

Meg: Men hvordan opplever du at elevene som du har hatt da, kanskje litt forskjellige grupper også, hvor mottagelig er de for bruk av sang og rim og regler i klasserommet?

Regina: Jeg opplever at elevene er veldig mottakelig for det, og jo yngre dem er jo bedre er det. Så jeg opplever det og det det skaper motivasjon

Meg: Men har du har du har du eventuelt jobbet med tema uten eventuelt å bruke sang eller noe sånt først har på en måte sanger rim og regler gjort at du har hørt noen forskjell i elevenes uttale?

Regina: Ja, det vil jeg si. Det handler også litt om tror jeg hvor trygge dem er. En utfordring som jeg ofte står i er jo at ja det hvert fall når det kommer til tredje klasse kanskje at dem synes der litt er rart og litt flaut å høre sin egen stemme høre seg selv snakke engelsk og kanskje tenke at dette får jeg ikke til eller redd for hva han ved siden av vil si eller sånn så det så det er det det er en utfordring. Kan være det. Mens noen er noen er så lite i stand til å bry seg om det at dem prater og det er veldig flott.

Meg: Men tror det er på grunn av engelsken eller sangen eller en blanding?

Regina: Jeg tror det er begge deler faktisk, men kanskje mest på grunn av engelsken ja og jeg opplever det opplever det som en som en større barriere i tale enn i sang det gjelder å tørre å snakke helt å høre seg selv høre sin egen stemme og la andre

Meg: Hvorfor tenker du at det er at det er en forskjell der?

Regina: Nei, kanskje det har noe med at ofte så synger vi jo stort sett bare sammen. Det er ikke enetale det når vi synger ene, enge-sang, solosang, det gjør vi som regel sammen og da er det da høres det bra ut

Meg: Da har man den tryggheten kanskje?

Regina: ja kanskje ja

Meg: Veldig interessant. Det var egentlig det meste jeg lurte på lurer på er det noen når du noen spørsmål er det noe du vil legge til da hvis vi snakker om bruk av sand i i engelskundervisning og uttale

Regina: jeg tror det er viktig, (*pause*) og jeg tror man kan være enda mer systematisk enn det jeg har vært. Kanskje lete fram, det finnes jo vi må regler og sanger sånn hvorfor enkelte typer lyder er mer framtrepende enn andre, ord som har lyder sånn som dukker opp ofte i dikt for eksempel å være enda mer bevisst på det for å øve uttale det tror jeg så lenge det blir framstilt og bakt inn på en måte med humor som ofte regler er, så tror jeg det er veldig effektivt ... og sang og

Meg: Så jeg forstår det som at du mener at det har, at sang, rim og regler er en positiv innvirkning på elevenes uttale?

Regina: Absolutt. Ja, det er ja mine helt klare erfaring ja.

Meg: Har det noen andre fordeler eller ulemper ved seg enn det vi allerede har snakket om? Kan det være med på å styrke ..?

Regina: Ja, sang styrker klassesamhold. Det er jo på en måte det er et tverrfaglig det har ikke noe med engelske jeg har forså vidt da men, sang som uttrykksmiddel og metode er veldig bra når det gjelder det klassesamhold, følelsen av å gjøre noe sammen. Men jeg har jo erfart gjennom mange år at mange elever de fleste har jo nå et mye nærmere forhold til det engelske språket gjennom bruk av internettet og tilgangen dem har der, på godt og vondt, og mange er veldig fortrolig med ja hverdagsfraser og med amerikansk engelsk eller asiatisk engelsk for den del altså det det mange barn som har mye erfaring med engelsk som dem ikke har fått på skolen

Meg: Men har du merket noe forskjell på det det siste årene at det har påvirket elevenes uttale? At jeg er noe mer ... avbrutt

Regina: Jeg kan ikke si det for sikkert, men du hører jo når barn snakker engelsk spontant så er det jo ofte med ja amerikansk engelsk, Americana English, og jo altså ungene er utsatt for voldsomme sanne kampanjer og påvirkning i fra alle hold og mye av det går jo på engelsk og man er jo veldig mottakelig så det så det er ingen tvil om at påvirker... den engelske engelskspråklige påvirkningen har blitt mye større ja det er min erfaring

Meg: Ja, og hvordan merker du det på elevene?

Regina: Nei, det det er som jeg sa det. Du kan du kan oppleve å bli (*pause*) å overhøre elever snakke engelsk. Det er jo fint da og på en måte men det er ikke alltid de skjønner hva de sier for det er jo en del sanne slanguttrykk da som hvor kanskje betydningen er noen annen enn det elevene tror de sier det men den poenget jeg tror jeg fordi hvis du da ha er litt nøye med hva dem får høre så er det en ålreit påvirkning. Det tror jeg det er. Vi snakker jo i engelsk å bade ungene i det engelske språket, og det det dem får muligheten til å bade både her og der nå i engelsk språk så det og det er jo en musikk popmusikk er jo ofte på engelsk og noen elever er jo veldig gode til å til å synge engelsk popmusikk, engelskspråklig pop musikk, da synger dem på den måten dem har hørt det, selv om mange ganger blir feil ord og sånn, men spiller det var stor glede av det da tro at dem synger på engelsk.

Meg: Det kan gå på noe med motivasjon og kanskje? At de føler at mestringen er der.

Regina: Ja, absolutt. og det er at av det og den er spontane leken med språket som en følge av påvirkninger fra andre fra medier er jo er jo helt uten vurdering, det er helt uten risiko for at noen skal på en måte ta deg for det, så jeg tror det tror det er bra ja. så lenge det er så lenge det ikke er helt feil innhold eller helt feil impulser, inntrykk man får på bilder man ser i forbindelse med det eller hva den der da så det det er litt ja

Meg: Så vi kan kanskje konstatere med at du har god erfaring og positive erfaringer da med bruk av sang og rim og regler?

Regina: Med sang og musikk i engelsk det har jeg bare positive erfaringer med. Som jeg sa så tror jeg det det også for min egen del så det kan det kan struktureres og du kan systematisere det på en måte som gjør at du beholder leken, du beholder humoren, men at du allikevel kan få påvirka barna mer/med rett uttale, rytme med språkklang, altså med alt dette som med engelsk barnelitteratur, rim og regler egentlig er fullt av

Meg: Hvis du ikke har noen fler kommentarer eller noe du vil legge til

Regina: Nei, det tror jeg ikke nå nei.

Meg: Da kan vi stoppe det der.

Appendix E

Transcription of Sally's interview

Meg: Først er det mange sånne småting, med hvor mange år eller hvor mye erfaring har du som lærer?

Sally: Jeg har jobbet som lærer siden 1993. Så det betyr jo da (*pause*) hvor mange år er det? 29. Ja, siden 1993.

Meg: Har alle de vært på barneskole?

Sally: Bortsett fra det første året så alle vært på barneskolen, ja.

Meg: Ja, og hvor mye erfaring har du som engelsklærer?

Sally: Jeg har vært engelsklærer i alle de årene. Jeg har et årsstudie i engelsk, altså det som tilsvarer vel 60 studiepoeng. Er det det? Ja. Det het årshet den gangen.

Oppklaring i antall studiepoeng. Sally har dobbelt så mange studiepoeng som det man må ha for å undervise Engelsk i barneskolen i dag, hun har altså 60 studiepoeng.

Meg: Men du har i hvert fall nok, du er kvalifisert engelsklærer

Sally: ja jeg har jo på en måte dobbelt da det man må ha

Meg: Ja, da har du 60 [studiepoeng]. Hvor mye erfaring har du med engelskundervisning på småtrinnet?

Sally: Jeg har jobba på småtrinnet med aller mest, jeg har vel bare en gang fulgt en klasse opp til sjuende sånn at det er på første til fjerde som jeg har jobbet mest og jeg har alltid hatt engelsk i min egen klasse. Jeg har aldri vært faglærer bare i engelsk, men jeg har alltid hatt engelsk i egen klasse.

Meg: Hvordan jobber du da med uttale i engelskundervisningen din?

Sally: De første årene så var det nok mer fokus på litt sånn engelsk, britisk uttale og så har det jo etter hvert etter mindre fokus på at uttalen skal være på en måte korrekt britisk, og vel mer opptatt av altså det funksjonelle i det. Så jeg, men jeg har alltid snakket mye engelsk selv og gjerne sagt ting på engelsk og så oversatt det til norsk, men jeg har tenkt at det er viktig at de hører mye engelsk. Så jeg har alltid vært opptatt av å snakke engelsk selv og nå ja men at det er mindre det har blitt mindre fokus etter hvert på at det er en bestemt engelsk uttale som er den riktige. Ehm, det går litt mer med tonefall og sånt men er opptatt av at man skal øve på lyder og bli bevisst på hvordan man uttaler, altså øver på forskjellen på enkel og dobbel v og disse her litt sånn og stemt og ustemte s og, ja.

Meg: Så du jobber ikke mot en bestemt «korrekt» uttale?

Sally: Nei. Nei, det var det mer fokus på når jeg tok utdannelsen og de første årene og så har vel og læreplanen endret seg der, hvis jeg nå husker riktig, på at det er på en måte fokus på

det at du skal grunn av kommunisere. Sånn at det å uttale ordene riktig sånn at man får på en måte en uttalelse som gjør at folk skjønner hva du mener, men du trenger, målet er ikke at alle skal høres ut som at de studerte i Oxford. Og en, kanskje en større bevissthet på at det man i norsk skole har på en måte dyrket fram som den korrekte engelske måten er det jo de færreste engelskmenn som snakker.

Meg: Det er sant

Sally: Så det å bli bevisst på at dette er jo faktisk en overklasse dialekt vi har vært veldig opptatt av at norske skolebarn skulle lære, mens det å skjønne at engelskuttale er jo og veldig sammensatt. *(pause)* Jeg husker første gang jeg var i Skottland, for meg jeg hadde veldig lite bevissthet på hvor annerledes altså den skotske dialekten på en måte av det engelske da og følte jo da at jeg har gjort da hadde jeg akkurat det er engelsk et år og med litt for veldig fokus på Oxford English også så at det skulle være veldig korrekt og kom satt jo nesten med en følelse av at det er men jeg snakker om de er enkle de er å bedre uttale og det er jo ganske tulle for det hadde jeg jo selvfølgelig ikke, men jeg hadde jo en på mange måter er helt altså mer Oxford men det det blir jo en litt rar egentlig en rar tenkemåte at man skal fremme den overklasse-engelsken

Meg: Har du merket noen forskjell på elevene fra da det var mer fokus på det britiske til det nå er bare fokus på å kunne gjøre seg forstått? Med hvordan de klarer å ta til seg språket?

Sally: Nei, egentlig ikke og det er kanskje mest fordi at jeg da jeg jobbet mest med de små som gjør at det det ble det var mest da egentlig i utdannelsen og mest da i årene jeg jobbet på mellomtrinnet. Men, men jeg kan ikke egentlig si at jeg merket det hos elevene, men jeg merker det litt hos foreldre som har etterspurt, «*jammen skal de ikke lære den korrekte Oxford English? For det vil de jo trenge at hvis de skal kunne framstå som britisktalende*» Og da måtte du jo da forklare at det er faktisk ikke et mål, nei. Målet er at vi skal lære engelsk, det er ordforråd, det er setningsoppbygging, det er forståelse, det å kunne våge å bruke det men det er ikke lenger et mål at de skal høres ut som de kommer fra Oxford. Så der har jeg merket det.

Meg: Så litt over en annen retning nå, hva er ditt forhold til musikk og sang utenfor skolesammenheng?

Sally: Ja, jeg er jo veldig glad i å synge og jeg synger mye utenom skolen og jeg synger mye i skolen

Meg: Ja, for da går neste på hva er ditt forhold til å bruke musikk og sang i engelskundervisning?

Sally: Ja, jeg brukte musikk og sang mye, egentlig i all undervisning både som på en måte oppstart og litt sånn å bygge klassemiljø, fordi at det gjør man mye gjennom å bruke sanger. Og jeg brukte det veldig bevisst i engelsken fordi at det er med å lære når man lærer en sang, så lærer man jo fraser og setninger og en del grammatikk og det blir på et vis naturlig å uttale det fordi at det skjer i en sammenheng og når du da har lyden med og så kan elevene snakke engelsk uten at de egentlig blir så bevisst på at det er det de gjør. Og jeg har og brukt det med tanke på at de skal da, altså ikke måtte føle at de at de må lage setningene selv, men at da så synger de jo teksten som er. Så man får veldig mye gratis ved å ha et bevisst forhold til sang og bruke det både fordi det er hyggelig og for musikken og det blir litt sånn ja bra

gjennom det, og så får du trent ordforråd og setningsoppbygging og grammatikk og alt det som ligger i engelsk

Meg: Bruker du noen spesifikke sanger til å lære bort spesifikke ting? Eller er det bare grammatikken, ordforrådet, sånn generelt?

Sally: Nei, jeg bruker altså det som er da er at de forskjellige læreverkene som har vært i bruk der jeg har jobbet har jo veldig fokus på sanger i engelsken sånn at de har hatt sanger gjerne til hvert kapittel, til de forskjellige temaene, sånn at jeg har jo alltid brukt de sangene som læreverket har lagt opp til for da er det jo knytta til de forskjellige temaene. Og så har jeg også nå etter hvert som man har fått mer digitale, altså nå som vi har iPad og PC, og alt det så er det jo helt utømmelig med britiske barnesanger og regler og sånn som musikk, sånn at de siste årene etter at vi fikk de digitale hjelpemidlene, så var det lettere å finne fram til sanger knyttet til helt bestemte tema. For da ser man nå, og det som er fint med det er jo at da bruker vi jo sanger som er laget for engelskspråklige barn og det blir også, det har jeg tenkt at det gir et tilfang på en ny måte enn når forlaget har funnet sanger for de norske barna. Så det har vært en veldig fin kombinasjon og det har se, assen er det de som jobber i skoleverket og lager på en måte pedagogiske verktøy for engelske skolebarn, hvordan er det de tenker og så kan man bruke det samme. Og så vet jeg jo da at det vi bruker med dem jeg jobber da med første-, andre-, tredjeklassinger er jo da gjerne ting som egentlig er til hvert fall barnehagebarn, fordi at de har jo altså et annet forhold til språket, men det fungerer veldig fint. Så etter at de mulighetene kom så har det vært lettere å finne fram en sånn spesifikk ting som for eksempel øve ordforråd, grammatikk og.. ja.. så det har vært ja jeg har både brukt det på en måte noen ganger vil som veldig bevisst tenkte vi skal ha en sånn sang andre ganger bare jeg skal ha en sang, ja.

Meg: Du nevnte at det var mange britisk sanger, er det mer overvekt av britisk enn amerikansk uttale i disse læreverkene?

Sally: Ja, det tror jeg. I hvert fall i de som, ja, jeg tror svaret er ja.

(Meg: Ja, jeg jeg vet ikke, det er derfor jeg spør)

Meg: Det er litt interessant med tanke på at de har fjernet det at alt skal være så britiske og det er ikke et mål lenger da. At man fortsatt får det inn på den britiske måten

Sally: Ja, ja, men så er det nok og med amerikansk uttale sånn at det er nok litt sånn forskjellig fra hvilke sider man finner og velger fra.

Meg: Ehh, for du sa du finner mye på nett om læreverker men synger du også selv eller er det alltid? ... *avbrutt*

Sally: Nei, jeg synger og selv, sånn at jeg prøver å ha en blanding av at vi bare synger og kunne synge med musikk til og synger sammen med den engelske stemmen og i læreverkene, som f.eks. Stairs, som jeg har brukt her, som jo og har laget sing back, sånn at du først øver teksten sammen med musikken, og på neste spor, det er jo fra den gangen vi hadde CD-er, så på neste spor var det jo bare med musikken. Sånn at jeg har tenkt at, jeg har prøvd å veksle på det og også bruke en del sanner, på en måte, rim og regler og sånt og, men også (små?) sanger som man synger uten sånn at det er noe med å få også få en opplevelse av å høre mer sin egen stemme

Meg: Men når du lærer bort sanger gjør det på en spesiell måte eller setter du i gang med å synge eller setter på CD-en eller går du gjennom tekst først eller?

Sally: Nei, når jeg lærer bort sanger så gjør jeg det gjerne ved å synge. Og så kanskje heller etterpå se på ja var det noe dere ikke skjønnte men også som man har blitt mer bevisst på de siste årene og trene opp den ferdigheten med at du skal ikke nødvendigvis forklare hva alle ordene betyr fordi at elevene skal trene seg, at de altså venner seg til å skjønne hovedinnholdet i en tekst og det har vi jo sett veldig tydelig at hvis de vender seg til at di skal oversette ord for ord så mister de den ferdigheten. Så det er jo og noe som er fint med sanger, at man kan synge og så kan man forklare litt hva sangen handler om uten at de nødvendigvis skjønner alle ordene, alle sammen i alle fall. Så gjør kanskje noen det, og noen kanskje ikke så kan man kanskje forklare noe av det, sånn at de som er sentrale, men ofte så så starter vi med å synge og så ta forklaringen etter hvert sånn at det skal være, det skal være en sang. Den musikalske opplevelsen skal også viktig, det skal ikke først og fremst være en være en tekst med musikk til, men det skal være en sang

Meg: Når du jobber med de yngste da går det på det muntlige, bruker du tekster eller noe da?

Sally: Nei, nei, da bruker jeg ikke tekster. (*pause*) da sørger jeg for, passer på at en del av de på en måte oppstartsangene, jeg starter alltid økter, i hvert fall første time da, med en 4-5 sanger og at en del av de er noen faste som good morning sanger og tellesanger og litt sånn forskjellig som at det og skal være på engelsk, sånn at det skal komme inn naturlig at vi synger litt på Norsk og så synger vi litt på engelsk, og ja. Så da bare synger jeg, så forklarer man litt sånn, liksom ja så blir de med etter hvert.

Meg: Merker du at elevene er mer ivrige hvis du starter med sang eller hvis du introduserer en ny sang, et nytt tema med en sang da, enn hvis du hadde gått rett på en tekst?

Sally: Ja, det det synes jeg at de er. Det, det, de aller fleste av de liker jo å synge og i alle fall når det blir en naturlig del av det vi gjør, så blir de med og så bruker jo da og en del sanger med bevegelser og med litt sånn morsomt innhold og at det gir en trygghet i det fordi at det blir en sånn gjentakende ting sånn at de vet at dette skjer hver dag, nå synger vi den og så synger vi den også synger med det på engelsk, så de liker det

Meg: Det er bra. Ehh, merker du en forskjell i elevenes uttale når du bruker sang og hvis du ikke bruker sang?

Sally: Det er veldig vanskelig å si fordi at jeg har jo alltid brukt sang(er), men det jeg har merket er jo, og det er mulig at det er utenfor dette temaet ditt da, men at barn nå i dag er mye mer omgitt av engelsk så den generelle uttalen og språkforståelsen og på en måte ordforrådet til veldig mange er mye større, sånn at det det merkes veldig godt at de vi møter engelsk i mange sanger og bruker det i mange spill sammenhenger, men jeg synes det er vanskelig å si om jeg merker forskjell på om jeg bruker sang eller ikke fordi at jeg har alltid brukt sang, og jeg ser at det funker, ja

Meg: Men du du merker forskjell på elevene fordi de er utsatt for mye mer engelsk?

Sally: Ja

Meg: Men på en positiv måte?

Sally: Ja, på en positiv måte ja. Ja, ja, så det er jo, det er jo en ting som man har merket sånn i løpet av de snart 30 årene jeg har jobbet som lærer at det har skjedd en veldig endring at de de møter engelsk veldig mange sammenhenger

Meg: Merker du at elevene har mer erfaring når de begynner, allerede på skolen?

Sally: Jaja, ja, allerede når de begynner

Meg: Da har jeg egentlig vært gjennom det meste som jeg lurte på, jeg vil jo, jeg har i hvert fall fått inntrykk av at du er veldig positiv (Sally: det stemmer) til bruk av sang (Sally: ja) i engelsken. Så jeg lurte egentlig på er det noe har du noen spørsmål eller noe du vil legge til?

Sally: *Tenkepause.* Eh, nei egentlig ikke, men det jeg jo på en måte ser både altså sammen med det med sangen er jo det med rim og regler, og at det er jo litt av det samme det med at det blir noe som blir gjentakende, noe som man delvis eller altså som man lærer utenat og at det at det er rim i det, at det er rytme i det, at det er noe en del av det som og på en måte er viktig i det og med bevegelser og jeg tenker at det også møter et behov for å på en måte få ta imot kunnskap med hele kroppen da men den aktive eleven å ta inn inntrykk alle sansene og det er veldig viktig og så jeg tror at det er jeg tenker at ved å holde mus.. sangen vedlike både i engelskundervisningen og også i andre fag er veldig viktig fordi at det er nok flere lærere nå som synger mindre eller som og som er veldig avhengig av å ha singback har litt sånn musikk og sang i bakgrunnen og at det er veldig dumt fordi det det appellerer veldig til elevene og få lov til å synge

Meg: Jeg kom på en ting, ofte så er det noen elever som vegrer seg litt for det å snakke engelsk høyt. Har du noe erfaring med at elever som vegrer seg synes det er greit å synge engelsk sammen?

Sally: Nei, ikke egentlig som at jeg at jeg har merket det sånn veldig tydelig. Det som er viktig der synes jeg jo er at de skal få mange muligheter til å uttale, uten at det er så mange som må høre de. Sånn at både det å bruke sang, men hvis noen ikke synger så lar jeg de bare være fordi for noen er det usikkerhet og et at når de skal snakke sammen og at det foregår at det er to og to, og at det er masse altså at det er lyd rundt, driver jo ikke med det lenger det er én og én som leser engelskleksen høyt sånn på rad, men at man legger opp til at de skal våge og at en måte å gjøre det på er jo at jeg som lærer og snakker mye engelsk sånn at de får et naturlig forhold til det. Og at man bruker noe av det som man får fra sangen og det er jo dette med på en måte gjentakelse av de samme frasene og at det er det vi bruker når de for at de skal våge å snakke, at de får faste ting de skal se så kan vi kanskje bare sette inn enkeltord, så det å bruke den der med at det kan lære seg en frase så skal man bruke den enten det er å synge eller snakke. Men jeg synes det er vanskelig å, jeg har liksom ikke hatt et sånt forskerblikk på ...

Meg: Nei, man har sjeldent det når man står der selv. Men ja, det var egentlig det jeg lurte på, så takk

Sally: Ja, bare hyggelig

Appendix F

Transcription of Tom's interview

Meg: Så er det bare først, noen sånne korte spørsmål da. Sånn hvor lenge har du jobbet som lærer?

Tom: Ja, ehh, jeg har jo jobbet på samme skole i, er på 26. året. Driver og venter på denne gullklokka jeg skulle få.. *Mer om gullklokka. Har jobbet på samme skole i 25, snart 26 år.*

Meg: Har du jobbet noen andre steder tidligere?

Tom: Jeg har jobbet på inn.. hva heter det? Voksenopplæring heter det. I Kongsvinger, det var i 94/95. Det var veldig morsomt.

Meg: Så meste av erfaringen er på samme ...*avbrutt* sted?

Tom: Ja, er på samme sted. Jeg har vært i praksis der da jeg gikk på lærerskolen til og med.

Meg: Det er jo bra. Og da er alt det på barneskole. Har du hatt engelsk hele tiden eller har du ...?

Tom: Husker ikke akkurat hvor mange år, men nå er jeg første året i år på veldig mange år jeg ikke har engelsk. For nå er det ei anna som har engelsk fordi det er en så enorm rettemengde, eller sånn gi tilbakemeldinger i både Norsk og engelsk har jeg gjort i alle år som jeg kan huske, og det er så stor mengde jobb, at nå bestemte vi at nå skal vi fordele basisfag på tre. Så nå er det første året jeg ikke har både engelsk og Norsk, det er noen fordeler med å ha begge fag og, fordi du kan linke opp og jobbe med verb samtidig og sammenligne, men jeg sammenligner fortsatt engelsk og norsk en del, men ja så hadde engelsk veldig lenge hvert fall. Jeg hadde jo ikke det i utdanning, så jeg tok en årsenhet på høgskolen for noen år siden.

Meg: Så du har 30 studiepoeng i engelsk?

Tom: Ja, det er det jeg har.

Meg: Og hvilket trinn underviser du på nå?

Tom: 5. Nå er det ny klasse.

Meg: Vi snakket jo om at, du har jo hatt engelsk nesten hele tiden, men har du mye erfaring med engelsk på småtrinnet?

Tom: Ingen ting, jeg har aldri vært lavere enn fjerde. Og stort sett (*pause*) Det har vel bare vært en gang, fjerde, og så femte, sjette og syvende. Så mest mellomtrinnet

Meg: Så hvordan jobber du med uttale i engelskundervisningen på mellomtrinnet?

Tom: Hvordan jeg jobber med det?

Meg: Mmm (ja)

Tom: Ehh, jeg er jo veldig lei meg for at jeg selv ikke har bodd eller oppholdt meg i et engelsktalende land. For å liksom ha det helt sånn på plass selv, jeg gjør jo så godt meg kan, men det blir jo til at man snakker bare engelsk i engelsktimene og det er jo aldri ellers engelsk nesten. *(pause)* Og de er jo mye råere på uttale mange av elevene etter hvert, og de som spiller mye og ja sånn og sånn, men vi jobber jo mye med sånn gjentakelse for eksempel, lyder, snakker om endelser, for eksempel den *ed*. Åssen det er viktig å uttale på forskjellig måter, prøve å lage en bevissthet rundt ord og hvordan de er bygd opp og gjenkjenne liksom et ord, «hvordan ser du noen sammenheng her er det? jo det er den lyden igjen, den er der og». Altså at man snakker om ord da og gjør dem interessert i (Meg: mye praktisk?) Tom: Ja, jeg er interessert i ord, ordleker, mye sang da og musikk, og når jeg har engelsk så legger jeg ut leseleksen med lydfil, og ber dem når vi går igjennom leseleksen, se i boka hvordan ordet skrives for det er veldig enda mer ulikt på engelsk enn det er på Norsk. Mens de da lytter og gjentar og så har de lekse å høre en setning – gjenta, høre en setning – gjenta. Og så ber jeg dem å se på filmer på engelsk, gjerne en film du kjenner godt, så limer du over eller sett på engelsk tekst og lyd, for da er det noe med at hjernen er mer bevisst på å høre etter engelsken. Hvis du har Norsk tekst så leser du gjerne den og glemmer å høre etter helt. Ja, så det driver jeg og gnåler om hele tiden. Ja, så tror det, det er jo sånn vi lærer vårt eget språk da, mye repetisjon og det er naturlig tale liksom, omgi deg mest mulig i/med engelsk.

Meg: Du nevnte jo litt musikk og sang, hva er ditt forhold til det utenfor skolen?

Tom: Det er jo ganske både godt og stort, eller hva man skal si. Jeg driver mye med musikk og sang hele tida. Nå liker jeg veldig godt å synge på norsk selv, men, men jeg synger jo også mye på engelsk selv, men ja, er jo musiker og har mye spilloppdrag og synger i damenes aftenkor. Ja, veldig mye sang og musikk alene med piano, og duo, trio, det er masse forskjellige konstellasjoner og kabareter og forestillinger og. *(pause)* Det er mye. Så drar jeg det jo med inn i engelskundervisningen da.

Meg: Ja, du gjør det. På hvilken måte?

Tom: Ja, flott overgang her. Nå må jeg bare ha briller. *Tom leser notater som han har skrevet ned i forkant av dette intervjuet.* Ja, nei, jeg tenker jo at det er enormt bra verktøy, musikk, også for å lære nytt språk, fordi det er mye repetisjon i sånn til vers og så kommer refrenget om igjen. Man kan snakke om teksten for å utvide ordforråd og styrke ordforråd, og jeg tenker ting hvis man synger fester seg lettere, og hvis du også legger til bevegelse når du driver med noe sanger så fester det seg jo enda bedre i hele systemet. Ehm, så er det litt lyspunkt i hverdagen, de elsker å synge, den klassen jeg hadde egentlig, og den har nå enda mer kanskje. Og det å finne noe som smitter, sanger som, altså det smitter litt når noen synger

og det blir hyggelig stemning og fint og du glemmer litt at du driver og lærer noe egentlig i tillegg da. Så jeg bruker det veldig mye. Også nå driver vi og øver, og selv om jeg har Norsk så bruker jeg masse engelske sanger og går gjennom tekster og snakker om det og, som sagt. Ja, de er veldig glad i det, og det lager en sånn egen stemning og både for individet og det kollektive eller samholdet da i en klasse, så tenker jeg det bygger glede og tilhørighet og kan overføres litt til andre fag og jeg tenker at jeg å bli bedre kjent med elevene gjennom musikken. Så jeg føler at vi får en annen greie sammen da, som gjør at jeg kan også komme nærmere i andre fag og i timen og.

Meg: Så du føler det hjelper deg å bygge relasjoner?

Tom: Ja, jeg føler det. *(pause)* Det hjelper med å bygge relasjoner og de elevene jeg har hatt i årevis som jeg møter som er voksne, det de alltid snakker om, om de likte musikk eller ikke, det jeg visste ikke hva faktisk ikke den gangen kanskje, men det de snakker om er musikktime, sangen, forestillingene, det vi opplevde sammen på den måten. Så det er noe som skjer i oss tror jeg. *(pause)* Vi opplever den gleden med musikk og gjør noe sammen og, kanskje var fremført for andre og det er et eller annet bra med det. Ja, så jeg tenker det bygger relasjoner også, veldig, og litt sånn gruppe dynamisk. Elever som kanskje ikke har gjort seg bemerket på noe annet plutselig er de kjempeflinke til å synge, eller en jeg hadde ja tidligere, vi hadde en 'The Cup song' på engelsk ikke sant og, han ja, en som kanskje ikke fikk det alt mulig annet som var den beste på de koppegreiene *(snakker om en kjent sang hvor man bruker en kopp til å lage rytmen)*, ikke sant så ja plutselig så kan han ha en musikktime for alle de andre, også tenker jeg hvor viktig er ikke det da og for selvbildet og selvtilliten. Og det er kanskje, det trumfer vel alt, for å lære, uansett hva, så er det selvbildet, selvtilliten din, troa på at du får til noe, tørre å prøve, som trumfer. Og da tror jeg musikk og sang i engelsk, eller i andre fag også, er med på å kunne løfte det. For mange hvert fall. Ja, så... tenker jeg det skaper motivasjon for å lære og, å lære tekster og ...

Meg: For når du bruker engelsk, eller musikk i engelsk da, bruker du å lære bort noe spesifikt? Spesielle sanger til spesielle tema, eller?

Tom: Mmm, det kan det jo være. Og det følger jo ofte med sanger i læreverk også, men nå finner jeg jo som regel, gjerne noe også på egenhånd. Ja, det kan være det og, men ikke nødvendigvis. Jeg tenker at det er mye som blir litt sånn universelt på en måte da. At hvis du lærer en sang også snakker vi litt om ord og oversetter. Jeg ofte tatt en sang og så lager jeg linjer sånn at de kan få oversette til norsk og så kan vi snakke om ordstilling og hvordan det er forskjellig på norsk og engelsk og de får en annen interesse når det er en sang og som de liker og som vi skal synge og det blir liksom en pakke da. Så, nå husker jeg ikke hva du spurt om jeg..

Meg: Jeg spurte om spesifikke sanger til spesifikke ting..

Tom: Ja, ja, nei, ja, noen ganger når de hører til tema så er det naturlig

Meg: Hvis det popper opp noe som passer så ...

Tom: Ja, gjerne. Hvis det passer så, ja da tar jeg gjerne det. Nå har vi jo, ja for eksempel, ja (*pause*) men det blir jo norsk da, men synger vi Kamilla og tyven så tar vi også med historien om Kamilla og tyven og ser en film, og vi lager en liten pakke. Sånn gjør jeg det jo engelsk og. At ja, vi kan se en liten filmsnutt eller vi kan snakke om historien bak den sangen eller hvorfor den viktig, hva tenkte den som skrev den. Altså det blir en sånn greie rundt

Meg: Så du drar det sammen med inn i resten av opplegget?

Tom: Ja, ja. Kan godt begynne med sangen, ikke nødvendigvis med et opplegg og så ble det en sang som passa. Det kan også være en sang som fører til et opplegg rundt, som enten kan lager eller finner eller, ja så snakk om ord og stavelser og språkstruktur, rytme, mønster i språket, utvide vokabularet, og lære utenat, det er også og så at vi kan bruke egne eller de tekstene når de skriver selv da, at det er, har en overføringsverdi, tenker jeg.

Meg: Når du da jobber med noe sånt i engelsk da, gir du de teksten, eller er det det med å lære gjennom høring eller?

Tom: Nei, det kan nok være litt av begge deler, men ofte så ser de jo teksten sånn at de lærer, det er vel det jeg bruker oftest. Så tenker jeg det er også veldig nyttig da, men noen ganger kan man jo lære på øre og. Jeg har noen sånne småsanger som den bruker vi som avbrekk, bevegelse, singing in the rain, også bevegelser til, ja så er det jo det å bli kjent med den engelskspråklige barnekulturen. Det er også en veldig viktig del av det å synge engelske sanger. Som kanskje er vanligere i engelsktalende land da.

Meg: Bruker du å... Synger du selv i klasserommet eller pleier du å bruke innspilt?

Tom: Det er også veldig forskjellig. Jeg spiller jo ofte piano til, ellers ligger det jo singbackgreier på, i læreverkene følger det jo ofte med, men noen sanger er litt, jeg orker dem egentlig ikke. Jeg bruker ikke alt og hva som helst. Da vil jeg heller finne noe, og jeg finner jo veldig mange sanger selv, og spiller til selv.

Meg: Så du foretrekker å ta styringen litt selv?

Tom: Jeg foretrekker bare å ta styringen på det som funker og finne ut av resten selv. og «singelgreier» fra læreverkene bruker jeg sjeldent, ikke veldig ofte. jeg bruker ikke alt og hva som helst. da vil jeg heller finne noe.. (*pause*) jeg finner veldig mange sanger selv og så heller til (*pause*) jeg foretrekker bare å ta styring og ta det som funker og finne ut av resten selv. Det er det jeg gjør.

Meg: Merker du noen forskjell på elevene på måten, eller hvor raskt eller hvordan de lærer sangen om du spiller eller om de hører på noe ferdig?

Tom: Nå hadde jeg tenkt, for nå har vi akkurat lært oss cup song i den klassen her. Og jeg tenkte 5. klasse, vi hadde den i 7. forrige gang, kanskje litt vanskelig tekst, men vi kan jo bare høre på den litt, også skal vi lære oss (*pause*). Men da satt det liksom, det var så bra. Så tenkte jeg, for vanligvis går jeg gjennom nøye, «hva står det her? Og hva handler det om?». Men da tok jeg heller mer sånn «hva handler denne sangen om?», istedenfor linje for linje. For noen blir det litt kjedelig, også fiksa de det på en måte. Så da snakket vi heller bare sånn om innholdet i sangen, «hva er det den betyr da?». Ja, så, men andre ganger går jeg jo linje for linje, ord for ord, og inn i ord og nøye gjennom. Så det er veldig forskjell på det. Så hvis man spiller selv så har man litt mer mulighet til å stoppe, og ta om igjen og det er jo fordelen med det da. Så blir jeg alltid veldig begeistret når man kan dra frem et piano, ja det er, det tar liksom aldri slutt (at elever blir imponert, begeistret...»*kan du spille piano?*) Det er stas. Det går kanskje over, men akkurat nå er det stas.

Meg: Men bruker du sanger til å lære bort uttale?

Tom: Ja, det gjør man jo litt automatisk og så, altså jeg tenker at vi engelsklærere som vare snakker engelsk i engelsktimer, så må jeg alltid ta litt sats og tenker, jeg føler at man må gjøre seg litt lite gran for å liksom få til det og ha det selveste tonefallet. Mens når man synger så blir jo det litt sånn visket ut. Så jeg tenker for meg å synge engelsk er jo mer behagelig, for min egen del da. Jeg føler jeg er god i grammatikk, jeg er god i... jeg kan alt rundt, men det er det at jeg snakker det så lite. Så jeg tenker at, ja vi øver jo uttale, men da kommer man jo litt bort fra det der med tonefallet og, for det er jo en melodi som tar det. Så derfor så blir det litt annerledes, men da har man mer fokus på selve ordet kanskje.

Meg: Hvordan jobber du med det? [uttale] Er det på samme måte som at du spiller og de gjentar?

Tom: Det kan det være ja.

Meg: Er det noen ord eller sånne ja, typiske ting da, du merker er vanskelig der du kanskje må...

Tom: Ja, det er særlig de endingene faktisk. De maste veldig om det på den utdanningen der jeg tok engelsk, hvordan man kan si *played*, hvordan man skal si *ed*, *id*. Det er det mange som trenger trening i for eksempel, og stemte S'er og den *W/V* lyden for eksempel. Det er jo veldig mange sånne ting vi kan trene litt ekstra på og si om igjen om igjen, for å bli bevisst da. Jeg tenker det handler så mye om å bli bevisst og bli interessert i ord, og da overføres... nå driver jeg med et opplegg, men det er i norsk, og der driver vi med rettskrivingsopplegg. 10 og 10 ord, og de skal jobbe med de som lekser hjemme, og det jeg merker nå, så mange har begynt å spørre om ord, «hvordan skrives det? Er det noe stum lyd der?», og det gjorde de ikke de første ukene i det hele tatt. (*pause*) Så det er akkurat som om de våkner litt og skjønner at det går an å tenke på et ord på mange måter, både betydningsmessig og ortografisk og det gjelder jo på engelsk og. La dem bli interessert og jeg står jo og hopper rett opp og ned for jeg syntes det så gøy meg engelsk, og føler kanskje av og til at jeg lærer bort,

kanskje litt overvanskelige ting, men jeg synes det er så morsomt og så er det noen som får det til så blir de jo så glad. Så tenker jeg at ok, så tar vi det nå, så får flere skjønne det neste runde, så ja, sånn er det bare.

Meg: Har du noe du ser på som en så kalt «korrekt» uttale? Noe dere jobber mot når dere har engelsk?

Tom: Jeg tenker at jeg har ikke noe fokus på korrekt, og samme for meg om du snakker britisk engelsk eller amerikansk eller, og mange er jo veldig gode fordi de omgir seg med så mye engelsk og spiller, de spillgutta, de er jo helt rå mange av dem på uttale, og den forrige klassen de var helt ekstremt ja, gode i engelsk. Muntlig særlig da. Så (*pause*) jeg tenker at jeg har ikke noe sånn standard, det skal man ikke ha. Men jeg tenker at vi skal nærme oss riktig måte å uttale ord på, at det ikke de leser lydrett for det er det jo mange som gjør, særlig for eksempel i 5. trinn, at vi liksom skal lære oss hvordan de uttales, men om de snakker sånn eller sånn, om de er perfekt sånn eller sånn, det kan man ikke si noe på, men at man kan korrigere og hjelpe det er også viktig hvis noen sier noe, uttaler noe feil, at man ikke sier det, men bare gjentar riktig. Sånn at det blir korrigert på en litt hyggelig, umerkelig måte. Men allikevel blir korrigert, for jeg tenker jo at det er viktig.

Meg: Så du tenker, hvis jeg forstår deg riktig, at så lenge man kan gjøre seg forstått så er det...?

Tom: Ja, det er det jeg tenker at er viktig, å gjøre seg forstått, det er jo det som er målet.

Meg: Du snakket jo litt om disse gaminggutta og at deres engelske språk er ganske avansert. Har du som har jobbet som lærer ganske mange år, har du merket noe forskjell elevenes engelsk muntlige ferdigheter nå og for eksempel 10 år siden?

Tom: Ja, jeg har det. Jeg synes de er helt rå, mange som sagt, i muntlig. Men det jeg også har merket som er helt motsatt egentlig da, er at, jeg hadde nemlig (*pause*) jeg jobba sammen med ei som jeg hadde i engelsk på samme skole for 20 år siden og hun har spart på alle mine engelskopplegg som hun tok med en dag. Det var veldig interessant, fordi der hadde jeg jo mye høyere krav for 20 år siden enn jeg har til de elevene i dag. Så det er også noe som har skjedd andre veien at vi tør liksom ikke helt å kreve det samme lenger av dem, men det var 20 gloser i 5. klasse som handlet om middelalder-ord liksom. Så tenkte jeg «var jeg helt gal?», men nei da, de fikk det jo til. Og hun hadde med seg gloseprøvene sine, og alt riktig og. Vi krevde, både jeg og jeg tror mange andre, jeg tror de krevde så mye mer av dem og forventet så mye mer av de elevene før. Jeg fikk helt hakeslepp, men samtidig så synes jeg jo også de i utgangspunktet har, omgir seg mye mer med engelsk, så vi er, mange er flinkere særlig muntlig da. Men vi er litt for redde for å stille krav og det å pugge gloser det skal man jo liksom ikke gjøre sier noen, men jeg er litt uenig i det. Jeg tenker at det er godt å ha noen sanne ord i bunn da, som du kan dra med videre og overføre til andre ord hvor du ser en sammenheng, som jeg sa i stad. Da tenker jeg at det å pugge noen gloser det.. jeg tenker det kan komme naturlig og jeg bruker dem da i setninger og jeg plukker dem fra tekstene vi jobber med, ikke sant. Så det er jo en sammenheng, jeg er enig i at det ikke skal komme fra

løse lufta. Når det er fra en tekst, du kan lære dem (*pause*) du kan skrive setninger, en historie med det hva som helst, det er en sammenheng. Lære utenat, og ha en gloseprøve. Jeg tenker at det er... jeg ser at jeg lurt, og det gjør noe med bevisstheten rundt ord og oppbygningen av setninger og det er alltid gjort både Norsk og engelsk og det rare er at de liker det litt, fordi jeg tror det er litt som at det blir mer sånn som må ha matte liksom det er noen som liker det fordi det er så oversiktlig. Det er det det er, ikke noe mer, du trenger ikke å bruke fantasien, du trenger ikke skrive, eller produsere masse tekst. Det er bare ordet du skal kunne, så skriver du det. Rett og galt, og noen ganger er det godt at ting bare er rett og galt, og ikke alt mulig mellom som er så svevende da for mange. Så jeg opplever de som kanskje kan slite litt med andre typer produksjoner av tekster og ting og lesing og alt som krevers, de liker og ha gloser fordi det er så konkret. Det tror jeg.

Meg: Og du merker at det funker?

Tom: Ja, jeg synes det funker. Jeg mener det gjør det altså, men jeg vet at det er blitt sagt at «nei, du skal ikke ha gloser på den måten da..». og ikke pugge, og ikke sånn og ikke sånn, men, jeg mener det funker.

Meg: Da har jeg egentlig gått gjennom mye av det jeg lurer på. Så jeg bare lurer på om du har noen spørsmål eller om det er noe du vil legge til?

Tom: Nei, jeg tror ikke det. Kommer sikkert på noe når jeg kommer hjem. Nei, jeg tror ikke det altså.

Meg: Men hvis jeg har hørt og skjønt deg riktig, så kan vi hvert fall si at du er positiv da, med tanke på bruk av sang og musikk

Tom: Ja, veldig! Veldig positiv til alt, til sang og musikk i alle fag. Ja, jeg er veldig positiv til det, tror det har mye og si for alt i ja, og jeg tenker det.. opplever du noe positivt sammen og et samhold med å synge så er det litt lettere å gjøre en litt kjedeligere engelskoppgave etterpå. Det er liksom ja.. du blir fylt av god energi og det.. det er viktig. Og som jeg sa med relasjoner og, det tror jeg bygges blant elever og mellom meg og dem ved.. jeg merker det kjempegodt. *Ser over notatene sine for å se om det er noe mer å legge til.* Nei, det er nok bra, tror jeg.

Historie om en elev fra elevsamtaler som ikke er så god i å lese norsk, men behersker lesing i engelsk mye bedre.