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**Master's Thesis
Hva skal til for at elever føler seg
komfortable med å snakke engelsk?**

**Confident Speakers: What Does It Take for Students
to Become Confident English Speakers?**

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Abstract

Confident speakers: What does it take for students to become confident speakers? Previous research has found that self-confidence is a vital part of language learning (Nazarova and Umurova, 2016, p. 47). This thesis aims to answer the questions of how upper secondary students define confident speakers as well as what students need from their teachers in order to become confident speakers. Data was gathered from interviews with five upper secondary school students to answer the research questions. The LK20 has several competence aims that focuses on communication and confidence which emphasizes the importance of understanding how teachers can best help their students to develop self-confidence. The study found that the concept of self-confidence, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence all connect. The participants in the study expressed an understanding of self-confidence and were all aware of what would make them more confident English speakers. It was found that the setting the participants felt most confident in is group work. By participating in group work students are able to use English in a safe environment where they can feel confident using the English language, this allows for their language knowledge to develop.

Norsk sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven har som hensikt å undersøke hvordan elever i videregående skole definerer det å være komfortabel med å uttrykke seg muntlig på engelsk, samt hva elevene trenger fra lærerne sine for å oppnå dette. Tidligere forskning har kommet frem til at selvtillit er en essensiell del av språklæring (Nazarova og Umurova, 2016, s. 47). Det ble samlet inn data fra intervjuer med fem elever fra videregående skole for å svare på forskningsspørsmålene. LK20 har flere kompetansemål som fokuserer på kommunikasjon og selvtillit, noe som understreker viktigheten av å forstå hvordan lærere best kan hjelpe elevene sine med å utvikle selvtillit. Studien viser at begrepene selvtillit, mestringstro, vilje til å kommunisere og kommunikativ kompetanse henger sammen. Deltakerne i studien uttrykte en forståelse av begrepet selvtillit og var alle klar over hva de trengte for å bli tryggere når de snakker engelsk. Gruppearbeid var den settingen hvor deltakerne følte seg mest komfortable med å snakke engelsk. Ved å delta i gruppearbeid kan elevene bruke engelsk i et trygt miljø, noe som gir elevene gode muligheter for å videreutvikle sin engelskspråklige kompetanse.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In this thesis I will examine speaker confidence from the perspective of upper secondary school students with the aim of getting an understanding of how students define confident speakers and how teachers can help their students become confident speakers. By evaluating speaker confidence from the perspective of Norwegian upper secondary school students I believe it will allow for teachers to gain an insight into how they can best help their students achieve self-confidence when speaking English. The new curriculum (LK20) states that “Through working with the subject the pupils shall become confident users of English so that they can use English to learn, communicate and connect with others” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 2). In order for students to be confident users of English, they need to attain confidence in their abilities and language knowledge. Using English for communication is a part of the new curriculum. Ismailova (2020) states “The importance of teaching and learning foreign languages is growing with every passing day and a foreign language is not only a subject but a tool for productive cross-cultural communication” (p. 167). English is not just a school subject, as the world has evolved and is continuously evolving, being able to communicate across cultures is of increasing importance. This thesis will discuss the relationship between confidence and communication through the use of previous research, theoretical framework, and the interviews conducted. Being a confident English user is a part of the new curriculum therefore research on student confidence is a quintessential step to expose its relevance and necessity for every user. However, measuring confidence is not a straightforward task. It is not possible for an observer to determine a person’s self-confidence. While one might be able to gauge a general sense of confidence from observation only the person in question is able to express their level of confidence. For this reason, the interview participants were asked to place themselves on a scale of one to ten, where one, having no confidence at all, to ten, being completely confident in their abilities. This was surveyed to acquire a more robust understanding of how the participants perceive themselves and to be better equipped to analyze the rest of their responses.

Self-confidence is defined as: “Confidence in oneself and in one’s powers and abilities” (Merriam Webster). In relation to speaker confidence these abilities refer to being able to communicate in L2. Language knowledge and communicative competence are two of the

abilities students need to feel confident about. Having self-confidence is an important factor when it comes to language learning. Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) give a more detailed definition of self-confidence “Self-confidence is defined as an individual’s overall evaluation or appraisal of themselves, whether they approve or disapprove of themselves or self-esteem and competition that are associated with self-concept” (p.5). Self-esteem is similar to self-worth. It refers to the extent of our acceptance and approval of ourselves as well as our worth. Self-concept refers to how a person perceives, thinks, and evaluates themselves. It is about how a person sees themselves (McLeod, 2008). While a person might look or act confident, true confidence is not something we can measure from the outside. Self-confidence is personal and it cannot be accurately measured without access to the person's thoughts or feelings. Molberg (2010) writes: “Basically, L2 self-confidence is not explained by pupils’ real competence in the target language, but rather their perceived competence and their anxiety using the language actively in the classroom” (p.9). A confident speaker must be confident in their ability to get their point across, but that might not always be enough. Real competence refers to actual abilities and perceived competence refers to the abilities a person believes they have. Language anxiety refers to a fear or worry associated with either learning or using a foreign language. Some of the worries learners experience is towards forgetting the parts of the language they already know, going blank when attempting to speak without preparation, and the feelings they experience when asked by a teacher to speak in the target language (Alamer & Almulhim, 2021, p. 2). It is important to understand the effect language anxiety has on language learning in order to create a safe learning environment for our students.

Edwards and Roger states, “The lack of confidence in understanding the contributions of the other speaker(s) may also make an individual less likely to initiate communication or seek out opportunities to use the target language,” (2015, p. 13). Listening skills play a role in being able to communicate. Rehearsed phrases and paragraphs will not help you hold a conversation if the person you are speaking to does not stick to the script you had planned out in your head. “Self-confidence is one of the most influential variables which affect the process of learning. It is one of the central drives in human beings and can exercise a determining influence on a person’s life, for good or bad” (Abdulhussain, Jabor & Ghani, 2017, p.2-3). The world we live in is becoming more and more diverse which is why being able to communicate with people who do not speak

our first language is increasing in importance. It is not only when we leave the country that we are met with situations or people that require communication in English. Warschauer (2000) states this about the English language: “It connects people around the world and provides a means to struggle and to give meaning to those connections. If English is imposing the world on our students, we as TESOL professionals can enable them, through English, to impose their voices on the world” (p.530). For students in today's society the classroom is not the only place they will be faced with English as the language used for communication. No matter what career path our students choose to go down, they will find themselves in situations where they will need to communicate in English. This is why it is so important that we teach our students to become confident English speakers.

Motivation is a key factor when it comes to language learning. There are numerous ways a person can be motivated to learn a new language. According to Dörnyei (1994) self-confidence is a part of the motivational process of language learning (p. 277). With self-confidence being a factor for the motivation of language learning it is important that we understand how we can help our students become confident. One of the competence aims for Vg1 reads as follows “Express himself or herself in a nuanced and precise manner with fluency and coherence, using idiomatic expressions and varied sentence structures adapted to the purpose, receiver and situation” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 12). In order to achieve this competence aim, it would seem that students need to be comfortable and even confident in their English-speaking abilities. There are several competence aims in the LK20 that connect to speaker confidence. The interdisciplinary topic *Health and life skills* focuses on developing students’ ability to express themselves in English, both through writing and speaking. In the Ministry of Education and Research (2019) it is stated that:

This forms the basis for being able to express their feelings, thoughts, experiences and opinions and can provide new perspectives on different ways of thinking and communication patterns, as well as on the pupils’ own way of life and that of others. (p.3)

While this does not mention confidence, it is hard to imagine that students are able to express and share their feelings, thoughts, experiences, and opinions without having some self-confidence. Sharing personal information is not always easy for students, and the aspect of doing so in English can be an added stressor that does require a sense of confidence. The Education Act

states that one of the principles for education is social learning and development. “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” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 11).

Confidence seems to be a recurring theme in the LK20 and the Education Act underlining the importance of the matter. Understanding how to help students develop their self-confidence is vital to ensure that the students are capable of meeting the criteria. By including some of the competence aims that have a direct link to self-confidence I hope to emphasize the importance of helping students become self-confident when using English for communication.

1.2 Relevance and Purpose of the Research

The world and our society is constantly changing and this has opened up for more diversity. English is not just a subject at school but also a language that our students will encounter outside of the classroom. I believe that communication is a vital part of language learning. Due to globalization English is everywhere which is why it is increasingly important that we teach our students to be confident and comfortable communicating in English. We are constantly put in situations where we meet Non-Norwegian speaking people, even in Norway, which is why I believe that being able to communicate in English is important. While communication can be effective even from speakers with a low sense of self-confidence, I believe it is important for our students to be able to feel confident and comfortable when placed in situations where they have to communicate in English. The choice of interviewing students as opposed to teachers was made due to the fact that self-confidence is a personal feeling that can not be determined from anyone other than the person in question. In order to get a better understanding of speaker confidence and how teachers can help their students become more confident speakers we need to hear from the perspective of the students.

1.3 Research Questions

This thesis examines the concept of speaker confidence and aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do upper secondary school students define confident speakers?

2. What do students need from their teachers in order to become confident English speakers?

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter one consists of background information on the topic of speaker confidence and the importance of it, the relevance and purpose of the thesis, and the research questions. The second chapter will present a relevant theoretical framework. This chapter explains the concepts and theories of self-confidence, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence. Chapter three presents previous research conducted on the concepts and theories of self-confidence, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence. Chapter four explains the methodological approach chosen and states how the study was conducted as well as the validity, reliability, and any ethical concerns. Chapter five presents the findings from the study and includes a selection of interview questions and responses. Chapter six is the discussion chapter of the thesis, which will discuss the findings in relation to the chosen theoretical framework and previous research. The last chapter is the conclusion where the research questions will be answered in accordance with the findings. The thesis will be summarized and limitations and suggestions for future research will be presented.

1.5 Summary

The preceding chapter has introduced speaker confidence as the topic of the thesis as well as presented background information for the following chapters. The background information introduced the term self-confidence and linked it to relevant competence aims from the LK20. Two definitions were given for self-confidence, a general one and a more descriptive one. The relevance and purpose of the study was clearly stated to establish the reasonings for conducting this research. Communication is a major goal for language learning and that is where speaker confidence comes in. The two research questions 1) How do upper secondary school students define confident speakers? and 2) What do students need from their teacher in order to become confident speakers? were introduced. The last component of chapter one laid out the structure of the thesis.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a relevant theoretical framework. Speaker confidence refers to the confidence a person has when speaking. The construct of L2 self-confidence refers to how a language learners' self-confidence and anxiety are socially constructed within the language learner from the experiences the language learner has had (Norton, 2000). These experiences can be both positive and negative. They can consist of situations where a learner struggled to be understood, revived positive feedback from a teacher, had a conversation where communication felt easy, and so much more. L2 self-confidence relates to a person believing they have the ability to communicate adaptively and efficiently in the L2 (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998). The theory of self-efficacy relates to the concept of self-confidence and is therefore included in the theoretical framework. Both the concept of self-confidence and self-efficacy revolves around the individual's feelings and beliefs in themselves and their ability. Self-efficacy is a broad concept therefore I have chosen to focus on the relationship between teacher self-efficacy, student self-efficacy, and student's ability due to the fact that I am seeking to answer the question of how teachers can help students develop their self-confidence. Willingness to communicate is an important aspect of language learning and it can have an impact on a student's self-confidence. I have chosen to focus on the variables that impact a student's willingness to communicate as it pertains to situations where students will find themselves more or less likely to communicate. Communication is a big part of speaker confidence as it is the primary activity that takes place which is why it is important to recognize what impacts a student's willingness to communicate. Communicative competence relates to speaker confidence in the sense that speaking is all about communication. Having communicative competence can help students reach a higher level of self-confidence. I have chosen to focus on how teachers can teach and promote communicative competence in the classroom as well as communication strategies which is one of the components of communicative competence that is directly linked to oral communication. The communicative competence section also has a subsection dedicated to communicative language teaching as it is a teaching approach that focuses on developing communicative competence and meaningful use of language. Ismailova (2020) states that "The most obvious advantage in communicative language teaching is that of the increase of fluency in the target language. The approach also leads to gains

in the areas of grammatical/sociolinguistic/discourse/strategic competence through communication” (p. 169). A communicative language teaching approach does not only help students develop their communication skills, but their general language knowledge. MacIntyre (2020) explains the relation between self-confidence, communicative competence, and willingness to communicate by saying:

Such a state of confidence is heavily influenced by the level of communication competence previously attained in the target language, but also implies that, in the moment, negative emotions such as anxiety are not interfering too much with communication. Combining the notion of having something to say with the self-confidence to say it creates the behavioral intention to communicate at a particular time, which by definition is WTC. (p. 115).

This shows that self-confidence, communicative competence, and willingness to communicate are all concepts that have an impact on each other. Being able to efficiently communicate requires communicative competence which helps with a sense of self-confidence which helps with willingness to communicate. All of the aspects combined can have a positive impact on language learning.

Motivation is a key component of language learning, and self-confidence is a factor when it comes to acquiring language learning motivation. Motivation and self-confidence are often discussed together in research, but for the purpose of this thesis motivation will not be discussed in detail as I believe it is important to separate the two concepts. Motivation research focuses on what impacts a student’s motivation. “Motivation is one of the main determinants of second/foreign language (L2) learning achievement and, accordingly, the last three decades have seen a considerable amount of research that investigates the nature and role of motivation in the L2 learning process” (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 273). Motivation comes in different shapes and forms. What motivates one student might not motivate another. When it comes to research on second language learning researchers often distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Dörnyei (1994) describes the two motivation types as following: “Extrinsically motivated behaviors are the ones that the individual performs to receive some extrinsic reward (e.g., good grades) or to avoid punishment. With intrinsically motivated behaviors the rewards are internal (e.g., the joy of doing a particular activity or satisfying one’s curiosity)” (p. 275). Self-

confidence plays a bigger role on motivation than motivation does for self-confidence, which is why I have chosen to focus on different theories and concepts that better fit with my overall research on speaker confidence.

2.2 The L2 Self-Confidence Construct

Edwards and Roger (2015) set out to look at the process of how learners develop self-confidence in their second language. “The importance of the L2 self-confidence construct and its relevance to learners both inside and outside the language classroom is self-evident” (Edwards and Roger, 2015, p. 1). The L2 self-confidence structure was established by Norton (2000). Norton (2000) found that through the lived experiences of language learners’ self-confidence and anxiety are socially constructed within the language learner. Edwards and Roger (2015) use the definition for L2 self-confidence created by MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels (1998) “corresponds to the overall belief in being able to communicate in the L2 in an adaptive and efficient manner” (p. 2). Shifting the focus from only the spoken words to taking in the nonverbal cues from an interaction has been termed holistic comprehension by Edwards and Roger (2015). “Holistic comprehension refers to a learner drawing not only on the linguistic elements of a communicative setting to understand the message, but also on all the carriers of meaning, including body language and facial expression” (Edwards and Roger, 2015, p. 14). This is what the participant was able to do after more time practicing his L2. Self-confidence is a significant factor when it comes to language learning and has a direct impact on the performance. “The students who lack confidence are usually found to be extremely fearful and timid, moving away from expressing their opinions and even unable to utter a complete meaningful sentence in class” (Edwards and Roger, 2015, p. 19). Without self-confidence students lack the ability to participate in class in a meaningful way that will improve their language learning.

Abdulhussain, Jabor, and Ghani (2017) argue that self-confidence is one of the most important variables that affect the process of learning (pp. 2-3). “It is one of the central drives in human beings and can exercise a determining influence on a person’s life, for good or bad” (Abdulhussain, Jabor & Ghani, 2017, p. 3). Self-confidence both in and out of the classroom impacts the lives of students. The aim of the study conducted by Abdulhussain, Jabor, and Ghani (2017) is to show the effect self-confidence has on English language learning (p.3). Confident

students are willing to take risks and are less likely to give up; these two abilities are important when it comes to language learning. Self-confidence also influences student's willingness to participate in oral classroom activities (p. 4). Abdulhussain, Jabor, and Ghani (2017) sum it up by saying "In other words, we can say that where there is self-confidence, there will be good communication, while lack of self-confidence is thought to be the most strong and dangerous barrier for effective communication" (p. 4). While self-confidence may lead to better communication it does not necessarily mean that as long as there is self-confidence there will be good communication. There are other factors that must be present for good communication to occur. While fluency is not necessary for good communication, a basic knowledge and some vocabulary is necessary in order to communicate efficiently. Communication is one of the main goals for language teaching and in order to achieve good communication students need to be presented with the tools they need to communicate. These tools can include vocabulary, knowledge of grammar, and listening comprehension. And hopefully with these tools' students are able to build their self-confidence. Students who lack self-confidence tend to be uncomfortable using oral language, they worry about their performance and the criticism that might follow (p. 5). There is literature documenting the correlation between self-confidence and academic achievement. Increase in self-confidence shows an increase in academic achievement in the same way that a decrease in self-confidence shows decreases in academic achievements (p. 5). It is hard to perform with a lack of self-confidence. Especially for the oral aspect. Students who have low self-confidence are not likely to participate in oral activities which can both affect their grade as they are not partaking in classroom activities as well as their overall language knowledge. By not participating in class students are not as likely to develop their language knowledge as they do not practice using the language.

Abdulhussain, Jabor, and Ghani (2017) bring up the term language anxiety and categorize it as one of the most prominent and pervasive emotions (p. 6). "Students with anxiety attending the class will feel afraid and nervous to cooperate with teachers and then they cannot concentrate on the learning topic points and waste their energy, or they just want to flee the learning task" (Abdulhussain, Jabor & Ghani, 2017, p. 6). As we see from this description of language anxiety, it makes language learning near impossible. Abdulhussain, Jabor, and Ghani (2017) administered a questionnaire to their participants asking about their feelings and worries about using and

studying the English language. The results showed that students feel scared or worried when “speaking English to my professor, if my classmates speak better English than I do, classmates will get a higher grade than I will and making a mistake if I speak English” (Abdulhussain, Jabor & Ghani, 2017, p. 15). The problems seen in the results are categorized as problems related to the students, problems related to others, and problems related to gender. The problems related to the students are personal and involve making mistakes and getting low grades. The problems related to others involve fear of being corrected and being laughed at. The problems related to gender show that males have higher self-confidence than females (pp.15-16). Abdulhussain, Jabor, and Ghani (2017) suggest that the females’ lack of confidence comes from social traditions and culture, which causes shyness and hesitation when speaking to strangers, professors, and classmates (p. 16).

2.1.1 Communication Apprehension

The term communication apprehension was first used by McCroskey in 1970. It refers to people's fears, or anxiety related to oral communication (McCroskey, 1970). Communication apprehension will henceforth be referred to as CA. McCroskey (1984) presents the different types of communication apprehension; they range from trait like CA to state like CA (p. 15). I have chosen to focus on generalized-context CA and situational CA. According to McCroskey (1984) generalized-context CA is about the context. A person might feel highly apprehensive about communicating in a specific context and have no apprehensions in a different context. Fear of public speaking is an example of generalized-context CA (p. 16). In a classroom setting students can show CA towards presentations but not towards group work. There could also be students who experience CA when speaking to the teacher one on one, but not when they are a part of a group speaking to the teacher. The second type of CA is defined as “Situational CA is viewed as *a transitory orientation toward communication with a given person or group of people*” (McCroskey, 1984, p. 18). CA in this case is dependent on the person or persons taking part in the communication. Students may feel CA when speaking to a teacher and at the same time show no CA when speaking to a classmate. Under situational CA there is person-group CA. Person-group CA is concerned with the prior history or lived experiences of communication between the individual and the person or group (p. 18). Based on past communication encounters with a specific person or group, either negative or positive experiences can impact a person’s

CA. When it comes to what can increase a person's CA McCroskey (1984) states "Probably nothing can increase CA more than being conspicuous in one's environment" (p. 25). While some people enjoy attention, others do not. Especially if it is in a setting, they are not entirely comfortable with. Drawing attention to yourself or having someone else draw attention to yourself can be uncomfortable. In a foreign language classroom being called on or being expected to hold a presentation can make students experience an increased feeling of CA. According to McCroskey (1984), positive experiences when engaging in communication behaviors leads to positive expectations for said behaviors. This allows us to make those behaviors a part of our communicative repertoire. As we get older, we are able to draw from past experiences that had positive outcomes to choose the appropriate communication behaviors for the current situations we find ourselves in (p. 28). By being aware of what works and what does not work when communicating students may be able to alter and adjust their communication behavior in a way that will result in a positive communication outcome. McCroskey (1984) states "To the extent our behaviors continue to be reinforced, we develop stronger positive expectations, and our communication behavior becomes more regularly predictable. In addition, we develop confidence in our ability to communicate effectively" (p. 28). By seeing their communication encounters succeed students are able use their past experiences to choose communication behaviors that will be appropriate for current communication encounters. This allows for the students to predict the outcomes of their communication which can lead to them developing a higher sense of self-confidence.

2.2 Self-Efficacy Theory and the Connection to Self-Confidence

Self-efficacy was introduced by Bandura (1994) and relates to the beliefs a person has that determines how they feel, think, behave, and motivate themselves (p. 2). According to Bandura (1994) "A strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well-being in many ways. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided" (p. 2). Already here we see the connection to self-confidence and especially speaker confidence. If we think of the difficult tasks mentioned and see them as conversations or oral performances, a confident speaker is much more likely to participate because they believe they are capable of being a part of the conversation or holding a presentation. On the other hand, we have the people who doubt their

capabilities, they often try to avoid difficult tasks (p. 2). Bandura (1994) states “When faced with difficult tasks, they dwell on their personal deficiencies, on the obstacles they will encounter, and all kinds of adverse outcomes rather than concentrate on how to perform successfully” (p. 2). With this statement it is clear that self-efficacy and self-confidence seem to go hand in hand. Having low self-efficacy and low self-confidence leads to avoidance of tasks. Using this to talk about speaker confidence we see how it would seem like avoiding classroom discussions, answering questions, and seeking out opportunities to communicate is something that these students would try to avoid at all costs.

There are four main sources of influence that can develop a person’s self-efficacy. The first and most effective way is through mastery experiences (p. 2). “Successes build a robust belief in one’s personal efficacy” (Bandura, 1994, p. 2). A feeling of accomplishment is always a good feeling and can increase a person’s efficacy. In terms of speaker confidence this can look like receiving a good grade on a presentation, receiving positive verbal feedback after a classroom discussion or effectively communicating in the target language outside the classroom. The second way to increase self-efficacy is through experiences observed (p. 3). By observing people determined to be similar to oneself succeed can help strengthen the observer’s belief that they are capable of succeeding at the same or similar tasks. This only impacts a person if they view the model as similar to themselves. If they believe the model to be a better or worse speaker than themselves it will not have an impact on their efficacy (p. 3). Bandura (1994) states “Through their behavior and expressed ways of thinking, competent models transmit knowledge and teach observers effective skills and strategies for managing environmental demands” (p. 3). In a classroom setting these models can consist of classmates and outside of the classroom it could be friends or family members. The third way to increase self-efficacy is through social persuasion. “People who are persuaded verbally that they possess the capabilities to master given activities are likely to mobilize greater effort and sustain it than if they harbor self-doubts and dwell on personal deficiencies when problems arise” (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). Keeping this in mind a ‘good job’ or ‘great work’ from a teacher can go a long way when it comes to increasing a student’s self-efficacy. Persuasion is not always positive, negative persuasion can impact a student’s efficacy in a way that will persuade them to avoid difficult activities and to quickly give up when faced with challenges (p. 3). The fourth and last way to impact a person’s self-efficacy is by

reducing stress reactions and altering negative emotional dispositions and misinterpretations of physical state (p. 3). It is the perception and interpretation of emotional and physical reactions that is important, not the intensity. "People who have a high sense of efficacy are likely to view their state of affective arousal as an energizing facilitator of performance, whereas those who are beset by self-doubts regard their arousal as a debilitator" (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). Emotions and reactions strengthen the performance of people with high self-efficacy while it weakens the performance of people with low self-efficacy. Positive moods, negative moods, stress and tension are the emotional states that can cause reactions (p. 3). Having a low sense of self-confidence and experiencing stress around communication situations can lead to negative moods that can result in weaker performances from the students.

It is when children develop and master cognitive skills that they develop a sense of their intellectual efficacy. Cognitive ability is defined as "The skills involved in performing the tasks associated with perception, learning, memory, understanding, awareness, reasoning, judgment, intuition, and language" (The APA Dictionary of Psychology). Intellectual efficacy is not something that can be mastered; it is a growing concept that can change over time both positively and negatively (p. 11). Bandura (1994) says:

Many social factors, apart from the formal instruction, such as peer modeling of cognitive skills, social comparison with the performances of other students, motivational enhancement through goals and positive incentives, and teachers' interpretations of children's successes and failures in ways that reflect favorably or unfavorably on their ability also affect children's judgments of their intellectual efficacy. (p. 11)

It is important for teachers to create a learning environment that can help students develop their cognitive skills and intellectual efficacy (p. 11). The development of intellectual efficacy primarily takes place in the classroom. Intellectual efficacy relates to a person's overall efficacy. While this talks about children and the formative years for cognitive skills and intellectual efficacy it is valid for this thesis as efficacy is something that changes over time (p. 11). Being a confident speaker one day does not necessarily mean that you will be one next year. As a student gets older their English classes get more advanced and require more of them. "Students' belief in their capabilities to master academic activities affects their aspirations, their level of interest in academic activities, and their academic accomplishments" (p. 11). When students reach upper

secondary school, they are going through changes and learning how to take on new responsibilities as well as more responsibilities. “Adolescents expand and strengthen their sense of efficacy by learning how to deal successfully with potentially troublesome matters in which they are unpracticed as well as with advantageous life events” (Bandura, 1994, p. 12). Having a higher sense of self-efficacy will make the transition from childhood to adulthood easier for students. They are able to take on new challenges knowing that they are capable due to past feelings of mastering different tasks (p. 12). As we go through life we are met with new challenges and demands, and a high sense of efficacy is needed in order to succeed. “Succeeding periods of life present new types of functioning. The nature and scope of perceived self-efficacy undergo changes throughout the course of the lifespan” (Bandura, 1994, p. 15). We all experience highs and lows in life, and our self-efficacy will go up and down as we are faced with new challenges. This is why it is important for teachers to promote self-efficacy in the classroom so our students can learn how to develop their self-efficacy. This also applies to speaker confidence. As the situations we find ourselves in changes so can our confidence level around speaking. The first time you appear in court as a lawyer you might not be as confident as the 20th time you appear in court. The same goes for having your first client meeting in English. Confidence comes and goes which is why it is important to know how we can help our students become more confident.

2.3 Willingness to Communicate

L2 willingness to communicate is defined by MacIntyre et al. (1998) as “A readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” (p. 547). This says that L2 willingness to communicate is being ready and willing to communicate in L2 when encountering situations needing the use of L2. Henceforth willingness to communicate will be referred to as WTC. MacIntyre et al. (1998) have a twofold aim for their article. The first aim is to look at the linguistic, communicative, and social psychological variables that affect a person’s WTC. The second aim is to suggest relations among the above-mentioned variables by outlining a comprehensive conceptual model that may describe, explain and predict L2 communication (p. 545). “There are many variables that have the potential to change an individual’s WTC” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p.546). A person’s willingness to communicate can change with the situation they find themselves in, most of them affecting the speaker's comfort level. WTC in L1

does not directly correlate with WTC in L2. The variables that affect our WTC in L1 can be enhanced in L2. “The differences between L1 and L2 WTC may be due to the uncertainty inherent in L2 use that interacts in a more complex manner with those variables that influence L1 WTC” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 546). This again brings us back to comfort level. Adding some uncertainty about the L2 can make WTC more difficult. A lack of confidence in using L2 can lead to low WTC for students.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) state that the language of discourse brings the most drastic course to an individual’s WTC: “It is clear that changing the language of communication introduces a major change in the communication setting because it has the potential to affect many of the variables that contribute to WTC” (p. 546). Communicating in a second or foreign language can add a stress factor. The lack of confidence in abilities to use the target language can have a great impact on a person's WTC. Students who have a high WTC in classes where the native language is being used may show a lower WTC in the foreign language classroom. MacIntyre et al. present a heuristic model that shows the range of possible influences on a person’s WTC in the L2 (p. 546). The figure has six layers which are labeled as follows: communication behavior, behavioral intention, situated antecedents, motivational propensities, affective-cognitive context, and societal and individual context. Communication behavior refers to using the L2. These behaviors can be things like reading a newspaper article written in L2, watching a movie or a tv show in L2, and oral participation in class (p. 547). While speaking in class strictly refers to the classroom, reading newspapers and watching tv are actions students can take outside of the classroom to improve their WTC. MacIntyre et al. argues that “The ultimate goal of the learning process should be to engender in language students the willingness to seek out communication opportunities and the willingness actually to communicate in them” (p. 547). If we want our students to seek out communication opportunities and for them to communicate, we need to instill our students with the confidence needed to communicate and to seek out communication opportunities.

Behavioral intention refers to WTC, both verbal and nonverbal communication. MacIntyre et al. (1998) believe that teaching students to seek out opportunities for L2 communication should be a goal of language learning. The process of learning a language can be complicated, but by seeking

out opportunities for L2 communication students are able to practice what they are learning. However, MacIntyre et al. (1998) does not believe that verbal communication is the only way to show WTC:

For example, if a teacher poses a question to her or his students, several of them may feel confident enough to answer and have the desire to speak. Let us assume that students are asked to raise their hands before speaking. Even if only one student among many actually verbalizes the answer, all of the students who raise their hands express WTC in the L2 (p. 547).

WTC is not just verbal communication; willingness is a big part of WTC. By raising their hands, the students are showing their willingness. Not all situations allow for verbal responses by everyone present, but the nonverbal acts such as the raising of a hand shows the willingness.

Situated antecedents are split into two, “(a) the desire to communicate with a specific person and (b) state self-confidence” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 548). From the top three layers of the figure, it was found that the most determining factor of WTC was the desire to interact with a specific person and state self-confidence (p. 550). This emphasizes the importance for our students to be confident speakers. In order to get better at something, you need practice, to learn how to use the language you need to use it. As long as the target language is the language being used the students are practicing. Both formal and informal uses of the target language can help improve knowledge and performance. Through the use of the target language students may become more confident in their abilities. Communicating improves language skills which can increase confidence. And in order to have WTC you need to have some confidence.

Motivational propensities have three variables to it, interindividual motivation, intergroup motivation, and L2 confidence (p. 551). “There are two components to L2 confidence: The first component is cognitive and corresponds to the self-evaluation of L2 skills, a judgment made by the speaker about the degree of mastery achieved in the L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 551). Self-confidence in L2 is related to the speaker’s own view on their competence. This judgment can include feelings about their vocabulary, pronunciation, and grades received. While the first component is about language skills, the second component focuses on the experiences while using L2. “The second component is affective and corresponds to language anxiety, specifically,

the discomfort experienced when using a L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 551). This shows that anxiety and discomfort plays a role in a person’s L2 self-confidence. Anxiety and discomfort can come from past experiences where a speaker might not have gotten their point across, been misunderstood or not having understood something themselves. “Communicative competence and communication experience, along with the interlocutor’s pattern of personality variables, help determine L2 self-confidence, which is primarily defined by judgments of proficiency and feelings of apprehension” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 551). Communicative competence which will be further discussed in section 3.5 can be developed in the students. By increasing their communicative competence, they might feel more comfortable which could result in a higher WTC. Communication experience relies on previous experiences lived when using the target language, while negative experiences cannot be changed, experiencing more positive experiences can influence the students WTC. Creating a safe environment in the classroom could help eliminate or at least decrease the negative communication experiences that students may encounter. These variables that are a part of motivational propensities lead to situated antecedents.

The affective and cognitive context are individual and based on an individual’s motives and attitudes (p. 552). A desire to integrate into the L2 community can promote language learning (p. 553). Social situations can have an impact on WTC (p. 554). A person may have a high WTC in the classroom and a lower WTC in real world communication settings. This can also be the other way around. A student might be more willing to communicate with their classmates and friends and less willing to communicate with the teacher. Communicative competence is also a factor in the affective and cognitive context (p. 554).

The figure created by MacIntyre et al. found 30 variables that may have an impact on L2 WTC (p. 558). WTC can change depending on the situation the individual finds themselves in. “By considering why a person is willing to talk at one time and not another, we can appreciate the important factors influencing classroom communication and ‘real world’ contact” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 558). The 30 variables found help explain why WTC changes. MacIntyre et al. view their model as work in progress that may guide theory and research towards the ultimate goal of

language learning (p. 559). The ultimate goal of language learning they refer to is “authentic communication between persons of different languages and cultural backgrounds” (p. 558).

A later article by MacIntyre (2020) found that language learning does not begin or end at specific times, it is a continuous process (p. 120). “As people communicate with each other, interpreting verbal and nonverbal cues, WTC can potentially change at any moment” (p. 120). The change in WTC can be caused by many things, a person may say something insulting which could result in a change of WTC. However, this can be fixed in the form of an apology again changing the WTC (p. 120). In a classroom setting this could occur with a change of topic that a person feels they lack knowledge about and therefore have nothing to contribute with. Just like the apology this can be resolved by changing the topic again to something all speakers have knowledge of.

According to Bouhenika (2015) risk taking is seen as “the tendency to engage in behaviours that can be harmful, dangerous, frightening, with a large room for pain, criticism, embarrassment and even loss: yet, at the same time it provides the opportunity for positive outcomes to appear” (p. 85). In terms of language learning not all of the aspects listed above are relevant. Frightening, criticism, and embarrassment are the aspects that relate to language learning. Bouhenika (2015) argues that “risk taking as a personality variable has a vital positive impact on achieving native-like spoken English proficiency” (p. 91). By taking risks students are exposing themselves to more opportunities to develop their language skills. When we talk about risk-taking in language learning and especially in relation to oral performance, we are talking about expressing opinions, sharing thoughts and experiences, answering questions, engaging in conversations.

2.4 Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is defined as “everything that a speaker needs to know in order to communicate appropriately within a particular community” (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 142). The construct of communicative competence includes linguistic competence, as knowledge of the language is needed. Linguistic competence is “Knowledge of the specific components and levels of a language, and knowledge that is required for their appropriate use in communication activities” (p. 142). Saville-Troike (2012) outlines the aspects of communicative competence needed for successful participation in speech activities like conversations (p. 177). Knowledge of

conversational structure, knowledge of contextualization cues, and knowledge of communication strategies. Knowledge of conversational structure includes rules for turn taking, topic maintenance and shift, and adjacency pairs (p. 177). Adjacency pairs refers to “whether a question should be immediately followed by a response, or a compliment by acknowledgment, and especially what response or acknowledgment is appropriate or inappropriate” (p. 177). Conversational structures differ in different languages which is why it is an important part of language learning. This knowledge will help students with their use of the target language outside of the classroom. What is considered polite and appropriate in a person’s L1 might not be in the L2. The second aspect is knowledge of contextualization cues. Contextualization cues are defined as “elements of communication that allow people to express and interpret meaning beyond the referential meaning that the surface structure of messages provides” (p. 177). The cues may consist of the choice of what vocabulary to use, when to include pauses and stops, where to place stress and intonation (p. 177). Sociocultural knowledge is another part of the cues that allow for appropriate interpretation of meaning (p. 177). Due to the fact that contextualization cues are cultural, it can be a challenge for language learners. The best way for language learners to develop knowledge of contextualization cues is through feedback from culturally sensitive native speakers (p. 177). In Norwegian upper secondary school being a native English speaker is not a requirement for teaching English. However, native-like speakers should be able to help students develop their knowledge of contextualization cues. The last aspect is knowledge of communication strategies which consist of the knowledge of how to compensate for lack of L2 linguistic resources or communication strategies (pp. 177-178). This knowledge consists of being able to assess and correct misunderstandings, making use of interlocutor collaborations, and sustaining interpersonal interactions (p. 178). Communication strategies include avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, appeal for assistance, and mime (p. 178). Saville-Troike (2012) states “Knowledge of communication strategies is particularly important for early L2 learners who want and need to participate in speaking activities because they allow talk to continue in a situation when it might otherwise cease” (p. 178). By employing these strategies language learners may be able to continue with the conversation and in the process develop a greater knowledge of the target language. The importance of communicative competence on spoken language abilities has been emphasized through the three aspects introduced above. Developing this type of competence may impact a student’s self-confidence.

As they develop a higher communicative competence, they may become more comfortable using the language which in turn will strengthen their sense of self-confidence when it comes to speaking English.

Canale and Swain's (1980) theory of communicative competence includes three main components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence (p. 28). Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology (p. 29). The second component is sociolinguistic competence and has two sets of rules: rules of discourse and sociocultural rules of use (p. 30). When we talk about sociocultural rules of use, we are referring to appropriate communication in terms of topic, settings, role of participants, and norms of interaction (p. 30). The last component is strategic competence and refers to verbal and non-verbal communication strategies. These strategies can be used when there is a breakdown in communication due to lack of language competence (p. 30). Being a confident speaker is all about communication which is why it is important that our students have communicative competence. Communicative competence gives our students the skills they need in order to effectively communicate and getting one step closer to being confident speakers.

Keeping in mind the ultimate goal of language learning that MacIntyre et al. (1998) mentioned, "authentic communication between persons of different languages and cultural backgrounds" (p. 558). We can see the need for communicative competence in language learning. Fushino (2010) discusses the benefits of group work on communicative competence. By working in smaller groups students are presented with opportunities to interact naturally with each other in the target language. Participating in these types of activities will help students develop their communicative competence (p. 700). While group work in a classroom setting does not include participants with different language and cultural backgrounds it does allow for natural conversations which is important for developing communicative competence. "Perceived L2 communicative competence is students' self-perception of their ability to communicate in an L2" (p. 703). Believing that you are able to communicate in the target language has a direct impact on self-confidence, this is why teaching communicative competence is important in order to help students become confident English speakers.

According to Sarimsakova (2019) ‘competence’ is deemed a controversial term in general and applied linguistics (p. 166). “In methodology the term ‘competence’ is used as characteristics of the achieved level of the language proficiency” (Sarimsakova, 2019, p. 166). Communicative competence was first introduced in the late 1960s, combining the knowledge of the language with the performance of the language (p. 166). Sarimsakova (2019) brings up the challenge of assessing competence without assessing performance (p. 167). The communicative competence has had some changes to its definition as time has gone by and more research has been conducted. The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) uses the communicative competence model created by Van Ek (p. 168). The model presents a framework that includes six dimensions of communicative competence; linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, sociocultural competence, and social competence (p. 167). Linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, and sociolinguistic competence have all been described earlier in this chapter. Social competence is however not mentioned by the other authors discussing communicative competence. Sarimaskova (2019) states that social competence refers to having the will and the skill set necessary to engage in communication with others. Attitudes, motivation, and self-confidence plays a role in social competence (p. 167). Engaging in social interactions is a necessity for communication. Students who are encouraged to develop their communicative competence cannot put their knowledge to use without engaging in interaction with others.

Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) defines communicative competence as “being able to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately in the target language and culture” (p. 157). Communicative competence moves beyond knowledge of the language and towards the use of the language. Being able to communicate in an appropriate way both in regard to the language and the culture. Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) created a communicative competence model that includes five components. These components are discourse competence, linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, intercultural competence, and strategic competence (p. 161). “This communicative competence model emphasized the importance of the four language skills since they are viewed as the manifestations of interpreting and producing a spoken or written

piece of discourse which, as previously mentioned, is the core competence of the model” (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2008, p. 161). The figure shows the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening pointing towards discourse competence.

The focus of the article written by Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) is to help teachers understand the concept of communicative competence and how to teach it in the classroom (p. 158). Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) suggests activities that teach communicative competence through the four language skills. They propose a cultural project that has three main stages: explanation, collection, and implementation (p. 162). Explanation focuses on explaining the concept and the project. The collection stage is where the students are asked to gather the needed material outside of the classroom. Lastly the implementation stage is where students participate in different activities using the four language skills that help develop communicative competence (pp. 162-163). Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) list a variety of activities that can be used in the classroom. Most of the speaking activities suggested are group work activities. This emphasizes the positive impact group work has on communicative competence. Role-playing and interviews are two of the suggested speaking activities (p. 165). They conclude their article by stating “It is our position that crucial to that development is an understanding of discourse as the key competence with the rest of the competencies (i.e. linguistic, pragmatic, intercultural and strategic) shaping it” (p. 168). This is being stated with the idea that communicative competence is one of the major goals of L2 teaching (p.168).

2.4.1 Communicative Language Teaching and Interactive Learning

According to Savignon (1987) Communicative language teaching is an approach to second or foreign language teaching that moves beyond grammar instruction to focus on meaning (p. 235). Communication is the focal point of communicative language teaching. Rather than focusing on proper grammar, conveying and interpreting meaning is what communicative language teaching focuses on. It has been established earlier on in this thesis that confidence can increase the efficiency of communication and that communicative competence can increase self-confidence. Therefore, if teachers were to use the communicative language teaching approach it might help students become more confident English speakers. Savignon (1987) states “The importance of meaningful language use at all stages in the acquisition of second or foreign language communicative skills has come to be recognized by researchers and teachers around the world,

and many curricular innovations have been developed in response” (p. 235). Having perfect grammar does not equal good communication. By shifting the focus to meaningful language use students are becoming better communicators by developing their communicative skills. Since the communicative language teaching approach focuses more on meaningful use of language it aligns with the competence aims for VG1 listed in the LK20. In order to understand communicative language teaching, one must have a grasp on the term communicative competence. Section 2.4 discusses communicative competence in detail, it refers to the knowledge a person must acquire to be able to appropriately communicate (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 142). Interpreting or negotiating meaning between speaker and hearer or author and reader is communication (p. 236). Communication occurs when the meaning behind the utterance or sentence is negotiated. “A communicative classroom allows learners to experience language as well as to analyze it” (Savignon, 1987, p. 237). By communicating and observing communication students are presented with L2 communication opportunities as well as a chance to analyze the language structure. Thereby contributing to higher communicative competence which in turn might boost their confidence level when speaking.

Thamarana (2014) states that “The communicative approach is concerned with the unique individual needs of each learner. By making the language relevant to the world rather than the classroom, learners can acquire the desired skills rapidly and agreeably” (p. 64). By focusing on the real world and not just scenarios found in textbooks, students might be more engaged in the learning process. Bringing the real world into the classroom can be a way for students to understand how to put what they are learning to use. It is also a way to increase students WTC by using relevant tv shows, movies, news, or trends to keep discussions interesting for the students. “Since language is a means of communication and CLT may enable the learners to effectively communicate in real life situation, it is inferred that CLT may fulfill the actual goal of teaching a language which is to improve learners' communicative competence” (Thamarana, 2014, p. 69). As it has been mentioned previously in the thesis communication is the main goal of language teaching. Due to this it only makes sense that teachers would use a teaching approach most suitable for teaching communication. Implementing a communicative language teaching approach in the classroom students might be able to improve their communicative competence which can improve their communication which can make them more confident speakers.

Akbarova (2021) states that “Learners in CLT classes practice real-life situations, in order to be more convenient when they are using the target language out of the classroom. In CLT, the most important factor that needs to be required by learners is to express their thoughts or request their needs in everyday situations without worrying about having perfect grammar” (p. 21). With communication being a major, if not the main, goal of language learning, a communicative language teaching classroom prepares the students for the communication encounters they will face outside of the classroom. Being able to effectively communicate is seen to be more important than the accuracy of grammar with this teaching approach. Akbarova (2021) argues that the communicative language teaching approach is the approach most focused on student-centered and interactive classrooms with co-operative and content-based classroom activities (p. 21). It is through interactive and content-based activities that students get a chance to practice their language skills in a student-centered environment that can be seen as similar to situations they will find outside of the classroom. With student-centered classrooms students have greater responsibility for their own learning. Group work and pair work are commonly used with the communicative language teaching approach. When working with other students, they need to express their own ideas, thoughts, and opinions as well as being open to listening to the ideas presented by their group members (p. 23). Akbarova (2021) argues that “This responsibility to participate can often lead to an increased sense of confidence in using target language” (p. 23). No one wants to be the only person not contributing when working in a group. When students feel that they must contribute they may be able to focus more on the context rather than the oral performance which can increase their confidence as they are not worrying about how they sound, rather what they are saying.

2.5 Summary

Chapter two has presented a theoretical framework that will be used to analyze and discuss the findings of the study. By looking at self-confidence, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence we can see the connection these theories and concepts have on speaker confidence. The concept of L2 self-confidence was explained and the importance of self-confidence on language learning was stated. Language anxiety was shown to be a factor of speaker confidence. Self-confidence affects oral performance, without self-confidence a student

might not be able to express their thoughts, opinions or ideas which in turn has an effect on their language learning. Due to self-confidence affecting oral performance it also affects academic achievement, a weak performance is more likely to get a lower grade. Self-efficacy can be developed in the classroom through accomplishments, observing, persuasion, and reducing stress reactions and altering negative emotions. A student's WTC can change at any point, and understanding the variables that affect students WTC is therefore important. WTC refers to all forms of communication and intention to speak is also a sign of WTC. Having the competence to communicate plays a major role in successful communication, WTC, and self-confidence. The oral aspect of communicative competence includes knowledge of conversation structure, knowledge of contextualization cues, and knowledge of communication strategies. Mastering communication strategies will help students to become confident speakers. The communicative language teaching approach is a way for teachers to make the classroom more interactive and focused on the use of language. This allows for more communication opportunities which can help students increase their speaking confidence.

3 Previous Research

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents previous research relevant to the topic of speaker confidence. These studies on self-confidence, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence brings up interesting findings that will be discussed in relation to the findings of this study. The articles chosen to be presented here focus mainly on the oral aspect of these theories.

3.2 Studies on Self-Confidence

Previous research has found that self-confidence is a vital part of language learning (Nazarova and Umurova, 2016, p. 47). Believing in yourself and your abilities to learn a new language is a determining factor when it comes to the process of learning the language. “Some researchers believe that speaking skills are an important part of the curriculum in language teaching, and the ability to speak in a foreign language is at the very heart of what it means to be able to use a foreign language” (Nazarova and Umurova, 2016, p. 47). Communication is one of the main goals of language learning, and oral communication is just as important as written. With findings that suggest self-confidence is a vital part of language learning and that being able to speak the foreign language is essential to being able to use the foreign language, the question of how we can help our students become confident speakers seems to be extremely relevant for second language teaching. There has been found a direct correlation between students’ self-confidence and their speaking behavior in L2 (p. 47) which brings up the concept of willingness to communicate and shows the connection between self-confidence and willingness to communicate. It has also been found that speaking activities are a great way to help students develop their self-confidence (p. 49). By putting their language knowledge to use, students are able to experience L2 communication.

A study conducted by Edwards and Roger (2015) follows a student learning English over a two-year period. Two separate interviews with the participant were conducted. The first interview focused on the period between 2003 and 2010, the second interview occurred two years after the first (Edwards and Roger, 2015). This allows the researchers to see the changes in the participants' confidence as the language knowledge develops. Listening comprehension was a major factor for the participant when it came to developing linguistic self-confidence. During the

second interview the participant did no longer see listening comprehension just as listening to the words being spoken, but also paying attention to facial expressions and body language (Edwards and Roger, 2015, p.11). Nonverbal communication is still communication. By taking note of facial expressions and body language learners might be able make more sense of the meaning behind the utterance even if they do not understand all the words spoken. The study showed that having ‘control’ over the language situation is something that helps students gain self-confidence as well as increase their motivation, and therefore their language proficiency (Edwards and Roger, 2015, p. 15). The definition used for L2 self-confidence in the article is the definition presented by McIntyre et al. (1998) that states that L2 self-confidence “Corresponds to the overall belief in being able to communicate in the L2 in an adaptive and efficient manner” (p. 551). Edwards and Roger (2015) concluded that their findings were consistent with the definition of L2 self-confidence presented by MacIntyre et al. (1998). Edwards and Roger (2015) state the following:

Additionally, the findings are consistent with previous studies showing that both language proficiency and self-confidence are likely to improve over time spent in a target-language environment if the individual has regular contact with speakers of that community and is either ‘forced’ or seeks out opportunities to use the language. (p. 12)

Classrooms can be a target-language environment. Students are “forced” to speak in the classroom and might seek opportunities outside the classroom through the people they interact with, social media, etc. The study showed that: “Increased linguistic self-confidence therefore often helps to improve language proficiency. In turn, improved linguistic competence will often result in higher self-confidence in the language” (Edwards & Roger, 2015, p. 18). Self-confidence and language proficiency relate in the way that they both help improve the other aspect. In terms of speaker confidence, as proficiency increases the user will inherently be more confident in the speech they produce. Likewise, the more confident a user becomes, the more proficient the user becomes. Practicing is the key to getting better at anything, not just language learning. But when it comes to learning a language, using the language is a key factor for improving proficiency.

Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) define self-confidence as “an individual’s overall evaluation or appraisal of themselves, whether they approve or disapprove of themselves, like or dislike

themselves” (p. 5). The results of their study showed that a negative mindset, lack of vocabulary, lack of ability, and lack of motivation also affected the students’ self-confidence (p. 10). Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) conducted a study that aims to look at students’ self-confidence in public speaking. “Self-confidence is an essential thing in creating good communication, especially in public speaking” (Nadiah, Arina, & Ikhrom, 2019, p. 1). Throughout their schooling students will be faced with situations that require public speaking. In these instances, it can be either the public speaking or just the speaking part that prevents students from showcasing their knowledge on the topic they are presenting. Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) define public speaking as “the act of speaking to a group of people ” (p.4). As a student this is something that will commonly occur, whether it be from holding a presentation, asking a question or answering a question in class. Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) state that practicing public speaking is a good way to increase self-confidence (p. 2). In their study Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) found that public speaking and self-confidence go hand in hand. Therefore, their research on public speaking cannot eliminate the factor of self-confidence on public speaking (2019, p. 2). Standing in front of a room full of people can be a nerve-racking experience for some people. Adding the factor of using a L2 and it is clear that it can be an uncomfortable experience. By developing speaker confidence these situations can be less nerve-racking and uncomfortable for our students. A descriptive qualitative method was chosen for their study. This included collecting data from a questionnaire, observation and interviews (p. 6). The first method was observation, where the students' verbal and nonverbal performance was observed. Six students were interviewed. Lastly 30 students were given a questionnaire (p. 6). It was found that the speakers were able to connect with the audience while giving presentations. Being able to connect and interact with the audience does show some sense of confidence. This means that the students were capable of not reading from a manuscript and looked at the audience. The observation showed that the students did not have clear pronunciation. Not having clear pronunciation might indicate that the students did not feel very confident when presenting. Presentations are a common way of assessing students in the classroom. When students enter the real world their chosen career might not require presentations of any sort. However, due to formal assessment criterias in upper secondary school, being confident speakers might help students achieve their academic goals. As the main focus of this thesis is on speaker confidence it is important to point out that presentations are an aspect where students are less likely to be

confident. The researchers did not see any enthusiasm from the students speaking (pp. 7-8). A lack of enthusiasm from the students speaking does not necessarily have to do with their confidence, although it could be a factor. It is hard to show enthusiasm when you are doubting yourself and your abilities. The questionnaire revealed that the students' self-confidence in public speaking was not high, they placed themselves in the uncertain category. The uncertain category is equivalent to an adequate level. The interview results suggested two main factors for the lack of confidence. One being the lack of preparation and the second having an absence of practice (p. 9). The study found that the students did not have a high level of self-confidence. Through the observations it was found that both the verbal and nonverbal performance of the students matched the students' own idea of their self-confidence (p.10). The students expressed a low sense of self-confidence and it was found to match their performance. This shows that the students lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to complete the tasks. The students did not believe they were capable of performing and it showed.

Maclellan (2013) conducted a study that examined how teachers can enable learner self-confidence. Maclellan found that in order for teachers to be able to enable learner self-confidence they must be willing to partake in constructive conversations regarding the accuracy of learners' own judgment (p. 10). Teachers need to be aware of learners' judgments of confidence and the objective accuracy of learner performance and make the learners aware of it as well (p. 10). Accuracy and certainty are keywords here. A student's certainty of their belief is what leads them to make a judgment (p. 6). It is important for students to recognize the skills and abilities they have and to be able to utilize them to solve tasks. If a student is asked a question in class their judgment of whether or not they know the answer will play a part in their level of confidence when answering the teacher. According to Maclellan (2013) "Influences on self-confidence thus appear to originate in two sources: opportunities to confirm or enhance wellbeing (which allow learners to talk about how they are thinking and feeling); and opportunities to enhance domain knowledge (which provides learners with additional resources with which to think)" (p. 12). Both of these sources can be present in a classroom setting if the teacher facilitates it. Expressing their thoughts and feelings on topics and issues in the classroom is important for the students in order for them to feel heard and included in the classroom. Not only does it create a safe and secure environment where they can express concerns, but it also

allows for learning to take place. Maclellan (2013) concludes the study by stating “It is through engaging teachers’ own reflections on the conceptual artifacts of what self-confidence is, how self-confidence judgments are made and the susceptibility of self-confidence judgments to external factors, that they themselves can be better equipped to enable learners” (p. 13). In order to help students, become confident speakers, teachers must understand what factors determine a person's confidence level as well as what factors impact self-confidence judgments. Positive feedback can help students become aware of the skills they have. And constructive feedback can help students recognize what they need to work on.

Clément et al. (1994) conducted a study on English language acquisition with the focus being on motivation, self-confidence, group cohesion (p.417). By examining foreign language classrooms from a social psychological perspective Clément et al. (1994) found that “Self-confidence influences L2 proficiency both directly and indirectly through the students’ attitude toward and effort expended on learning English” (p. 441). With findings that suggest that self-confidence influences L2 proficiency the importance of teachers promoting self-confidence is undeniable. In a second language classroom L2 proficiency is a goal which is why each and every factor that has the potential to increase students L2 proficiency level should be explored.

Clément et al (1994) found that “On the one hand, good classroom atmosphere promotes student involvement and activity while moderating anxiety and promoting self-confidence. On the other hand, the student brings into the classroom a level of self-confidence and anxiety related to extra-curricular experiences with the language, the quality and quantity of which would then influence classroom behavior, achievement and anxiety” (p. 442). These findings suggest that a student’s self-confidence when using L2 is influenced both inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers can create a safe space for students to feel confident when using the language, but the lived experiences students have had while using the language also plays a role for their confidence level in the classroom. This means that negative experiences outside of the classroom are brought into the classroom by the student which could overpower a teacher's attempt to promote self-confidence. An increase in positive experiences may outweigh the previous negative experiences in a way that can positively affect a student’s self-confidence.

3.2.1 Self-Confidence and Communication Apprehension

Mahdi (2015) conducted a study investigating strategies and techniques to use in order to foster speaker confidence in EFL students (p. 162). Being confident in oral communication can be seen as more challenging than written at times, oral communication happens faster and leaves less time for processing. “Students with English as a foreign language generally regard being confident in oral communication in the target language as very challenging. This is mainly due to oral communication apprehension” (Mahdi, 2015, p. 163). As discussed in chapter two section 2.1.1 communication apprehension refers to a fear or anxiety towards speaking. In order for English language students to be confident speakers they need to overcome feelings of high CA. Mahdi (2015) found that EFL students' oral CA is dependent on their confidence level. Students that experience a lack of confidence are found to be apprehensive towards effectively communicating in English (p. 163). When students have a fear or feelings of anxiety in regard to oral communication it is no wonder that their confidence level is low. Mahdi (2015) states that “The curriculum for the EFL class is usually designed with the average student in mind and does not allow for individual differences, which can lead to an increasing lack of interest on the part of the students and therefore ever-growing communication apprehension” (p. 166). When students are not interested it increases their level of participation. Students might not want to speak up if the topic being discussed in class is of disinterest or something, they have no knowledge of. By keeping the students' interest in mind, teachers might be able to gear the lessons towards a topic the students might enjoy which can lower their CA. Mahdi (2015) found that through the use of help-seeking strategies and modified output strategies learners become equipped with techniques that allow them to prolong communication after communication breakdown occurs (p. 168). Teaching students communication strategies may lower their CA as they might feel that they possess the necessary tools to keep a conversation going if the lack of language knowledge should become a problem. In support of the earlier findings Mahdi (2015) also found that students with a low sense of self-confidence can usually be found to suffer from communication apprehension (p. 170). When students feel less confident, they are less likely to participate in communication activities. Mahdi (2015) ends the study by stating that

It can be concluded that confidence has a significant impact on EFL students' oral communication apprehension. Although these are considered to be quite different, they

interconnect in second language learning. With increased confidence, EFL students can be free from oral communication comprehension. (p. 170)

As it has been previously established in this thesis, confidence relates to all of the theories presented. Confidence helps foster language learning, just as language learning fosters confidence. The more confident a student is the more likely they are to partake in oral communication which results in greater language knowledge.

Communication apprehension is at times referred to as foreign language anxiety. Park and Lee (2006) state that self-confidence is one of the personal factors that correlate with anxiety. When a student feels they are lacking knowledge and abilities to use the target language their self-confidence is negatively influenced (p. 197). The aim of their study is to look at the relationship between anxiety, self-confidence, and oral performance in English. The objects of the study are Korean English learners (p. 198). “Research on self-esteem and second language acquisition has shown that it is an important affective variable in successful second language acquisition” (Park & Lee, 2006, p. 198). There are three components to foreign language anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension refers to a person’s anxiety or fear in response to communication with others, this can be real or anticipated communication (p. 199). Communication apprehension can have a direct impact on a student’s confidence when speaking. The fear of real or anticipated communication can influence a student’s speaking confidence in a negative way as it all revolves around oral communication. Test anxiety refers to the anxiety or fear surrounding evaluation (p. 199). Being confident when holding a presentation is made a lot harder when the fear of the grade you will receive is occupying your mind. The last component, fear of negative evaluation, refers to the anxiety or fear associated with a person’s desire to make a good impression on others (p.199). This can relate to a fear of participating in classroom activities, being afraid of being laughed at or saying something incorrect when answering questions in class or contributing to a discussion.

Park and Lee (2006) administered questionnaires about confidence and anxiety about English oral performance to 132 Korean college students attending English classes (p. 200). The findings showed that for the Korean English learner’s self-confidence consists of four factors: situational confidence, communication confidence, language potential confidence, and language ability

confidence (p. 202). It was found that expectation of comprehension of spoken English and expectation of producing spoken English were the two things that created anxiety for the learners (p. 203). The results showed that there was a positive relation between self-confidence and oral performance, and a negative relation between anxiety and oral performance (p. 205). Self-confidence was shown to be related to having the ability to use the language for communication and anxiety related to not having enough knowledge of the language, Park and Lee (2006) state the following:

The correlation analysis of anxiety/confidence and the elements of oral performance showed that confidence was more closely correlated with the L2 learner's attitude and interaction including communication strategies and social conversation skills of oral performance, while anxiety was more negatively correlated with the L2 learner's range of oral performance such as vocabulary and grammar. (p. 197)

Park and Lee (2006) conclude their study by suggesting that teachers need to pay more attention to their students' self-confidence and anxiety, and that they should strive to remove as much anxiety as possible and build their self-confidence (p. 206).

3.3 Studies on Self-Efficacy

The term self-efficacy involves a person's judgments or capabilities to perform certain tasks or activities (Zimmerman, 1995, p. 203). Corkett, Hatt and Benevides (2011) conducted a study that looks at the relationship between student self-efficacy, teacher self-efficacy, and student's ability. The researchers hypothesize that a teachers' self-efficacy for teaching literacy impacts student self-efficacy as well as literacy development (p. 67). From the previous research done by Corkett, Hatt and Benevides (2011) they found that a teacher-centered approach does not promote or help teach student self-efficacy (p. 67). With self-efficacy being an important factor for a student's education and development, it is important to teach in a way that promotes the development of self-efficacy in our students. Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides (2011) state that "The way students think, feel, and behave in academic situations is largely influenced by beliefs in their own abilities" (p.67). This can be closely linked to a students' confidence in their own abilities. A students' behavior in class can correlate with their comfort and confidence level. "Students use their personal accomplishments to gauge their ability, resulting in a positive correlation between self-efficacy and achievement. This positive correlation increases in

accuracy as students mature because their self-efficacy becomes more highly related to their actual achievement” (Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides, 2011, p. 67). The positive correlation increases in accuracy as students mature and are better able to judge their abilities and skills. As they age students can better gauge their knowledge and see the connection between their academic achievements and their abilities. Therefore, making them better at seeing the correlation between self-efficacy and achievements. Self-efficacy has to correlate with skills and abilities. The skills mentioned consist of communication, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the case of language learning, it also includes a knowledge of the target language such as vocabulary and grammar. As Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides (2011) stated, maturity does impact students' own opinion on their self-efficacy as they are more likely to know what their skills are. Self-efficacy is formed through personal experiences as well as witnessing the experiences of their peers (p. 68). By observing students, they believe to be at the same level as, they can gauge whether or not they could be able to successfully complete a task. Another factor that can form self-efficacy is verbal persuasion. This can come from parents, teachers, and peers (p. 68). Students receive comments and feedback that they use to determine their self-efficacy. When we talk about verbal persuasion, we are talking about verbal feedback that will persuade a person that they have the abilities to succeed with the task at hand. Although it does not have to be positive to be considered verbal persuasion, negative feedback will work in the opposite way by persuading a person that they are not capable of succeeding. When positive verbal persuasion is used from an early age, it is a good tool to help students develop self-efficacy (Lopez-Garrido, 2020). There is a connection to self-confidence here. Positive verbal persuasion can not only impact a student’s self-efficacy but also their confidence. In general, self-efficacy and self-confidence correlate on multiple aspects. Both concepts are developed by the students and have to do with how they see themselves and how they judge their capabilities.

The study conducted by Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides (2011) used six different grade six classes in Ontario as their objects. The classes that were picked included two of the highest performing grade six classes, two of the average performing, and two of the lowest performing grade six classes. There were 6 teachers and 122 students (p. 74). The Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement – III(WJ-III-ACH) was administered to verify the students’ current reading and writing ability levels. The students and teachers were given a questionnaire with 30 questions (p.

75). The WJ-III-ACH is a standardized test for academic achievement. The test measures general achievement ability, oral language ability, and specific achievement skills (Dean, 2011). From the results Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides (2011) were able to determine that “the teachers and students in the current study did not share similar perceptions of the students’ self-efficacy” (pp. 89-90). This shows that the students either believed they were more capable of performing tasks than they actually were or that they believed they were less capable of performing tasks than what they actually were. While the teacher who observes the students and their abilities was better at determining what the students were capable of doing. “Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people’s beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives” (Bandura, 1994, p. 2). The results showed correlation between how the teachers perceived the students’ self-efficacy and the students’ abilities. There was no correlation found between students reported self-efficacy and their abilities (p. 90). “While teachers may have been able to accurately perceive how students’ self-efficacy for reading and writing reflects their actual ability, it appears as though the grade six students in the current study have not yet developed their self-efficacy based on their actual reading and writing abilities” (Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides, 2011, p. 90). This brings us back to the maturity mentioned earlier. The students are not able to see the connection between their self-efficacy and their actual abilities. It was found that the teachers’ perception of the students’ self-efficacy had a direct link to the students’ abilities whereas the students’ self-efficacy did not show any correlation with their actual abilities. The student’s actual abilities were determined by the teachers through different assessments (p. 95). Since self-efficacy revolves around a person's belief about their capabilities, it can help promote self-confidence in our students. However, it can also have a negative effect. A student might have high self-efficacy due to their lack of English vocabulary. They believe they are lacking in the vocabulary aspect and their high level of self-efficacy will reveal that they are right about their lacking vocabulary which can have a negative effect on their self-confidence. Knowing that they do not have the needed vocabulary to take part in a conversation can lead to a low level of confidence when presented with an opportunity to engage in conversation.

Mayhuddin et al. (2006) conducted a study examining the relationship between students’ English language achievement and their self-efficacy (p. 61). The definition for self-efficacy used by

Mayhuddin et al. (2006) is the definition introduced by Bandura (1994) that says that self-efficacy is the beliefs a person has in their abilities that determine how they behave, feel, think, and motivate themselves (p. 2). The correlational analysis done by Mayhuddin et al. (2006) found there to be a positive correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement (p. 68). When students have a higher sense of self-efficacy they perform better academically. This may be due to the fact that students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to partake in challenging tasks and they do not give up as easily as students with lower self-efficacy. Mayhuddin et al. (2006) found that the presence of self-efficacy or self-perceptions of competence lead to successful academic achievements (p. 68). Having high self-efficacy allows students to face challenges rather than turn away from them which results in progress when it comes to language learning. "In summary, again as had been said earlier, the key element is the beliefs the students have of themselves and this will lead to confidence and competence in doing the task" (p. 68). Through self-efficacy students are able to see their capabilities which allows them to be confident in their competence. At first this might only relate to specific tasks, but as students develop their self-efficacy this confidence to solve specific tasks might turn into a general sense of confidence in the use of the English language.

3.4 Studies on Willingness to Communicate

A case study looking at the connection between foreign language enjoyment, foreign language anxiety, and willingness to communicate conducted by Dewaele, Jean-Marc, and Pavelescu (2019) found that "Learners' personality and their experiences inside and outside the English classroom shaped their emotions which had direct and indirect repercussions on their WTC" (pp. 1-2). Both positive and negative lived experiences when using L2 to communicate can have an impact on students WTC. Previously successful communications can encourage a student to keep communicating, whereas failed communications can reduce a student's future WTC. Foreign language enjoyment (FLE) refers to the enjoyment or positive emotions experienced by students in the foreign language classroom (Dewaele and MacIntyre, 2014). Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) describe foreign language anxiety (FLA) to be feelings of apprehension, nervousness, tension, and worry associated with language learning (p. 125). Dewaele, Jean-Marc, and Pavelescu (2019) define emotions as "mere instances that people construct based on their past emotional experiences and their predictions created in their brains" (p. 2). While not the only

factor, past experiences are a common factor for all of the theories and concepts that this thesis discusses. Self-confidence, self-efficacy, and willingness to communicate are all impacted by a student's past experiences. The findings of the study showed the situational changes to WTC. WTC was found to be high when the student was participating in activities that they enjoyed. Activities that the student found to be boring showed a decrease in their WTC (p. 12). The third chapter introduced previous research that was found to be relevant to the current study. The studies selected cover the topics of self-confidence, language anxiety, and willingness to communicate. The findings revealed in this chapter will be used to analyze the findings from the interviews conducted for this thesis in the discussion chapter.

A study examining the effect of teachers on a learners' willingness to communicate conducted by Zarrinabadi (2014) found that teacher's wait time, error correction methods, teacher support, and topic selections were the main factors influencing learners' WTC (pp. 291-292). Teachers' wait time refers to the time a teacher waits for the students to respond (p. 292). If a teacher calls on a student to answer a question and quickly moves on to another student, not allowing for hesitation or processing time it influences a student's WTC and can lead to unwillingness to communicate (p. 292). Not having enough time to reflect on how to best express themselves can be discouraging and it can also lead to a lower sense of self-confidence as the students might not get the desired message across. Creating a safe space is an important aspect of language teaching. This is where error correction methods come in. Zarrinabadi (2014) found that when error correction happens as soon as the mistake is made it reduces WTC (p. 293). When interrupted and corrected the student does not get to finish expressing the message and might get discouraged to keep speaking. The third factor is teacher support. It was found that students felt more WTC when their teacher showed their support. This was done by simple responses such as 'yes' or 'good', smiling, or saying 'thank you' at the end of a student's speech (p. 294). Knowing that the teacher is listening and showing interest can help encourage students to speak up which can strengthen their WTC. The last factor influencing a learners' WTC is selection of topics. The study found that when the students found the topics to be familiar and interesting, as well as something they had knowledge of their WTC increased (p. 292). When it comes to topic selection, keeping the students' age and interests in mind might be a way to help ensure that the selected topic will encourage WTC rather than discourage it.

Gahunga (2009) conducted a study examining the relationship between self-efficacy, language learning strategies, and foreign language ability. Lee (2010) describes learning strategies as problem skills, thinking skills, learning-to-learn skills and learning skills (p. 134). Specific actions taken by a learner to make learning easier, faster, and more enjoyable. Gahunga (2009) found that the use of language learning strategies was linked to language ability (p. 7). Through the implementation of learning strategies language learning became easier and more manageable. The students had the necessary tools to overcome the problems they encountered in relation to language learning (p. 7). Gahunga (2009) found the correlation between language learning strategy use and language ability to be on the lower side (p. 7). According to Gahunga (2009) “Learners need to be active in order to be successful. They need to be actively engaged in communicative activities where they can experiment and try out what they know without the fear of making mistakes, and where they can interact with classmates through pair or group work” (pp. 10-11). Through interactive activities in groups students are able to put theory into practice. When using the language knowledge they possess through interactive activities they are able to practice what they know as well as acquire new knowledge in a safe and comfortable environment. Gahunga (2009) found that by increasing students’ use of language learning strategies their self-efficacy and their language ability will increase as well (p. 13). With an increase in language learning strategies students are better equipped to handle language learning situations. This allows them to develop their self-efficacy and their language knowledge.

3.5 Studies on Communicative Competence

Inuzuka (2001) conducted a study to understand how we can encourage students to acquire communication strategies in junior high school classrooms (N.P.). Communication strategy is one of the components of communicative competence and is also referred to as strategic competence by some scholars (Inuzuka, 2001). Inuzuka (2001) defines communication strategy or strategic competence as “the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and, where necessary, enable the learner to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occur” (N.P.). From this definition we can see that having knowledge of communication strategies can lead to better and more efficient communication which in turn can lead to more confident speakers. The concept of

communication strategies will be further expanded on in chapter three. Inuzuka (2001) found that when students were not understood they were unable to keep the conversation going. This is where communication strategies come in handy. By being able to deploy different strategies, the students could have maintained a fluid conversation. The findings further showed that depending on the student's level of linguistic ability there were different tendencies when it came to the use of communication strategies. The elementary level student uses appeal for help as their communication strategy. The intermediate level student uses message abandonment, appeal for help and follow-up questions as communication strategies. Lastly the advanced level student uses repetition requests, appeal for help, topic avoidance to maintain the conversation, and response (Inuzuka, 2001). The findings showed that as the students' progress in their language knowledge they also develop a greater sense of communication strategies. After completion of the study Inuzuka (2001) determined that teaching communication strategies was a necessity in English language classrooms. While the objects of this study were 8th graders it is relevant for this study due to the fact that an upper secondary school classroom can have learners of every level as it was shown in the research conducted by Inuzuka (2001).

Xue (2013) conducted a study that investigates the effects of group work on English communicative competence (p. 1). Group work has proven to be an important instructional practice in the field of L2 education over the last decades (p. 3). Xue (2013) states "sufficient grammatical knowledge and competence serves as an essential basis for EFL learners' clear and accurate expression and transfer of their opinions and intentions" (p. 8). By using the word 'sufficient' it is suggested that having some grammatical knowledge is enough for students to be able to express themselves. The findings showed that the participants of the study found group work to improve their grammatical competence and included elements such as pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and sentence structure (p. 8). Group work allows for opportunities to communicate and lets the students use the knowledge they have as well as develop new knowledge by practicing their skills and observing other students use their language skills. Xue (2013) found that group work helped students improve their vocabulary by listening to the other group members. It was also found that the knowledge of sentence structures improved (p. 9). By participating in group work the students are able to learn from the other group members and thereby develop their competence. The findings revealed that group work helped improve the

student's ability to employ appropriate communication strategies to make up for a lack of language knowledge and to repair communication breakdowns (p. 11). Communication strategies is the most relevant component of communicative competence when it comes to oral communication. Through the use of communication strategies students can become more efficient communicators and it may also make them more confident English speakers.

3.5.1 Studies on Communicative Language Teaching and Interactive Learning

Through the use of interactive classroom activities students may develop their WTC as well as their speaker confidence. By implementing a communicative language teaching approach in the classroom teachers are promoting self-confidence, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence. Jeyasala (2014) conducted a study examining the use of interactive activities and the influence it has on effective communication in English (p. 164). Interaction in the language classroom involves the exchange of information between students and teachers or students and students, through interaction students are able to increase their language knowledge as well as use the language knowledge they have already acquired (p. 165). By being able to use the language students are able to see how their knowledge can result in effective communication, thereby a sense of confidence in relation to speaking may be developed or increased. Based on the findings Jeyasala (2014) argues that group work is extremely effective in the sense that it allows second language learners to develop their oral proficiency through increased interactions (p. 165). Group work allows for more interaction between the students as there are fewer participants making it so that each student has more opportunities to speak. Group work also allows for a more comfortable setting where students may feel more confident in terms of stating their opinions or thoughts. Through classroom observation "It was found that creating a motivating and interacting classroom environment would improve teaching-learning outcomes, especially the proficiency in the English language learning among students" (Jeyasala, 2014, p. 168). These findings show that interactive classrooms have a positive influence on language learning. By creating opportunities for students to interact they have more opportunities to increase their language knowledge. "It was also noticed that group work, discussion and sharing with the peers, with the teacher and with the whole class made the students active and maximized their interest and involvement in interactive activities, resulting in the enhancement of speaking skills" (pp. 168-169). As students engage in the interactive classroom activities, they

become more involved in their learning and through contributing they are improving their speaking skills. “Providing feedback about the activities, all students expressed that these two interactive activities had made them feel more interactive and confident, become self-aware and self-motivated, enthusiastic and develop initiative in the learning” (p. 169). By participating in interactive activities students are able to get more out of the experience and may develop a greater sense of confidence as they are able to put their knowledge to use and see the outcomes it produces.

Omar et al. (2020) set out to investigate students’ perceptions of the impact interactive language learning activities has on their English-speaking abilities. Self-confidence was found to be a key element influencing the student’s English language speaking abilities (p. 1011). The more self-confident a student is in their speaking abilities the more likely they are to speak which results in improved language knowledge and communicative competence. This finding highlights the importance of teachers promoting self-confidence in the classroom. Omar et al. (2020) found that “Thus, the highest mean showed that interactive language learning activities increased their confidence to use English language with their friends. It was because interactive language learning activities provide learners a positive environment to speak English language” (pp. 1014-1015). By participating in interactive activities students are able to use the English language in a safe environment that can help boost their confidence. Omar et al. (2020) also found that through the use of interactive language learning activities the participants felt more inclined to express their opinions and try out new vocabulary words (p. 1015). In an interactive classroom the threshold for contributing to classroom activities is not as high as it might be in classrooms that are more teacher centered. Interactive language learning activities allows students to participate in both language learning and socializing with friends and classmates. From their study, Omar et al. (2020) found that “Some of the learners acquired different knowledge or information throughout the learning process. Their ability to understand things were different and interactive language learning activities provided the opportunities for the learners to put everything that they had learnt in written form to practice” (p. 1015). Interactive language learning activities allow for oral communication. Through these types of activities students are able to develop their communicative competence as the language knowledge they possess is being used orally. Not only are students able to use what they know, but they may also develop more language

knowledge through the process of oral communication. Based on the findings Omar et al. (2020) suggest that the participants believed that having self-confidence, motivation, and a safe classroom environment had a positive impact on their speaking skills (p. 1015).

3.5 Summary

Chapter three has presented previous research relevant to discuss the overall focus of this thesis. The previous research on self-confidence focused on how self-confidence develops over time, the factors that influence student self-confidence, and the relationship between self-confidence and language anxiety. The previous research on self-efficacy looked at the factors influencing self-efficacy and how perceived self-efficacy does not always align with actual abilities. The section also gave an overview of how teachers can promote self-efficacy in their students. The previous research on willingness to communicate introduced different factors that have been found to impact students WTC as well as steps to take to increase students WTC. The last section covers previous research on communicative competence and focuses on how to prompt communicative competence. As well as how the use of communicative strategies can impact student's self-confidence and WTC.

4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and describes the methodology used in this thesis. The suitability of research strategy and method selection will be taken into consideration, as well as the ethical considerations of the research. With the focus being on speaker confidence and the research questions geared towards students' opinions, interviews were chosen as the research method. Section 3.1 discusses the choice of method. Section 3.2 presents a brief description of qualitative research. Section 3.2.1 explains the interview as a research method. Section 3.3 explains the selection process. Section 3.4 covers the process of collecting data. Section 3.5 argues for the validity and reliability of the research. Section 3.6 outlines the ethical concerns surrounding the research. And the last section, 3.7, gives a brief summary of the chapter.

4.2 Choice of Method

This thesis aims to look at speaker confidence from the perspective of students. I am looking for thoughts and opinions and not numerical data, due to this the data analysis is interpretive and not statistical. As I aim to answer my research questions through interpreting data collected from upper secondary school students about their thoughts and feelings, I chose to use interviews as my research method. During the early stages of the project I considered using observations as a method. But after some careful consideration I came to the conclusion that it would not give me the answers I was looking for. Since self-confidence is purely based on an individual's feelings and thoughts it can not be measured by outsiders and would therefore not lead to any substantial findings. This led me to choosing interviews as my research method, believing it would give me the most insight into the students' thoughts, feelings, and opinions about speaker confidence. By conducting interviews I was able to get a better understanding of the participants' thoughts, opinions, and experiences. The main advantage of interviews is the flexibility provided (Alamri, 2019, p. 66). Due to the flexibility provided during interviews participants may be more inclined to reveal more information about themselves which can enrich the collected data (p. 66). "This effective instrument allows the interviewer to effectively explore the interviewee's thoughts, feelings and opinions" (Alamri, 2019, p. 66). By allowing for more in-depth responses and follow up questions the participants are free to divulge any information they desire. Another advantage of using interviews as a research method is that it allows for explanations and clarifications (p. 66). Explanations and clarifications can come from both the interviewer and the

participant depending on whether it is a question or an answer that is unclear. Recording is another valuable advantage of interviews. Voice or video recordings can help with the transcribing, coding, and analyzing (p. 66). One of the main disadvantages with conducting interviews is the fact that it is very time consuming. Arranging interviews, conducting the interviews, transcribing the interviews, and analyzing the data are all time-consuming aspects using interviews as a research method (p. 66). There are different types of interviews to choose from when selecting interviews as a research method. To determine what type of interview to conduct the aim or research questions must be taken into consideration. As different types of interviews produce different types of data it is important to choose the type of interview that is best suited to answer the research questions of the study. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews as it allows for the option to ask follow up questions and ask for elaboration on responses.

4.3 Qualitative Research

Qualitative and quantitative methods answer different types of research questions. Quantitative research is concerned with quantifying social or other phenomena and focuses on a smaller number of attributes from many cases whereas qualitative research is more concerned with understanding the meaning of social or other phenomena and focuses on a larger number of attributes across a few cases (Tuli, 2010, p.106). A qualitative research method of interviews was chosen due to the fact that I seek the opinions of students. Through semi structured interviews the participants will be able to share their opinions and beliefs in a way that benefits the research. When discussing qualitative research and researchers who use qualitative research methods Denzin and Lincoln (2011) state “They seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning” (p. 8). This study is looking at student’s personal feelings, thoughts, and experiences with speaking English which is something a qualitative study can answer. This method is best suited when it comes to answering the research questions as I was able to talk to multiple students one on one which resulted in information that helped answer my research questions. As this thesis is focused on speaker confidence it is important to note what qualitative research in applied linguistics looks like. Paltridge and Phakiti (2015) state “Qualitative research in applied linguistics typically seeks to make sense of language, language learning or use in context, or a social phenomenon as it occurs in natural settings such as social

and classroom settings” (p. 14). The object of this research is to examine speaker confidence, what it is, what it looks like, how it is developed, what it means, and how teachers can help develop confidence in their students. This is in line with the definition for qualitative research in relation to applied linguistics.

4.3.1 Interview as Research Method

The three most common types of interviews are structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. During a structured interview the interviewer asks the interviewees a series of pre-established questions only allowing for a limited number of response categories (Qu & Dumay, 2011, p. 244). Using structured interviews allows for the study of a larger sample as using the same questions for all interviewees makes analyzing the responses less time consuming than semi-structured or unstructured interviews (p. 244). The unstructured interview process assumes that the interviewer does not know all the necessary questions in advance (p. 245). This allows for more of a conversation than what a structured or semi-structured interview does. The last type of interview is the semi-structured interview which is the type I chose to conduct for this study. “The semi-structured interview involves prepared questioning guided by identified themes in a consistent and systematic manner interposed with probes designed to elicit more elaborate responses” (p. 246). By probing for elaborate responses, the interviewer is able to dig deeper and collect more detailed responses from the interviewees. Semi-structured interviews allow us to see the world from the perspective of the interviewee (p. 247). Looking at speaker confidence from the perspective of students is the aim of this thesis which is why semi-structured interviews are a suitable research method.

4.4 Selection Process

The choice of interviewing students and not teachers was made early on in the process, as I am interested in looking at what students think of speaking English. Self-confidence as it has been established in the introduction chapter is “an individual’s overall evaluation or appraisal of themselves, whether they approve or disapprove of themselves or self-esteem and competition that are associated with self-concept” (Nadiyah, Arina, and Ikhrom, 2019, p.5). Due to this the only way to examine self-confidence is by having students as my research objects. In the search for interview participants, I used the connections I had, by reaching out to coworkers and family members who are upper secondary school students. Through the two first participants I was able

to get in touch with more interview participants that fit the criteria of being an upper secondary school student and having English as one of their subjects at school. I decided to interview five participants for the study. Conducting, transcribing, and translating interviews is a lengthy process which is why I landed on the number of participants that I chose. I also believe that collecting data from five participants ensures that there are enough participants to draw similarities and differences from. I chose to interview upper secondary school students because they have had English classes for several years and are likely to have formed an opinion on the oral aspect of English class through their experience. I also believed that by choosing upper secondary school students they would most likely understand the concept of self-confidence and would be able to express their opinions on the topic. This makes them suitable to help answer my research questions. Participants from four different high schools were interviewed. By selecting participants from different schools, their classroom environments and teachers would be different meaning that they might have different experiences in the classroom. Three of the participants are male and two are female. Due to the scope and time frame of this study cross-sectional research was the most suitable option. When conducting cross-sectional research data is collected from one or more persons or groups at the same time or over a short period of time (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015, p. 12). All participants were interviewed one time within two weeks of each other.

4.5 Data Collection

An interview guide consisting of 16 questions was prepared before the interviews took place. The questions were created to give insight into how the students felt about speaking English, where their confidence level was at, how their teachers helped them, and how they wished their teachers would help them. The interview questions were formulated after determining the focus and the research questions of the thesis to be best suited to gather data that would help answer the research questions. Reading theory and previous research also helped form the questions for the interview guide. The first questions relate to how students define confidence and what factors play a part in being a confident speaker as well as whether or not the participants find themselves to be confident English speakers. The participants are asked questions about their feelings around speaking English in the classroom, their level of participation, and the role their teacher plays in terms of developing self-confidence. By asking questions directly linked to self-confidence I

ensured that the data provided by the participants would give me insight into the topic of speaker confidence. The interviews took place in March 2022. The participants choose the location of the interviews, this was done in order to ensure that the participants would be as comfortable as possible. Three of the interviews took place in homes and the other two at a coffee shop. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian. Audio recordings of the interviews were done to ensure that I didn't miss anything the participants said and to make it feel more like a conversation. All of the interviews were transcribed and translated into English by me. The interviews varied in length as some participants had more to say than others. While I intended for the interviews to be semi structured, the extra questions asked related more to having the participants elaborate on what they had said or reformulating the question rather than introducing new questions. As a first-time interviewer I quickly noticed that interviews differ a lot from conversations. When I started the analyzing part, I realized that there were some places I should have asked for elaboration and some follow up questions came to mind. However, I feel like I got better at the interviewing process as I conducted the different interviews. I believe this to be a natural progression of any research project. As the project went on, I developed new skills and improved existing skills. The perceptions I had at the beginning of the research project changed as the process went on and I find myself to be a better researcher after working on this project. The major challenge with the interviews presented itself during the third interview where I struggled to get the participant to talk. The participant was very disinterested and seemed to be in a rush, and it is clearly shown in their responses. I struggled with getting useful information from them. While most of the participants felt pretty confident speaking English, I was able to interview one student who was not which I believe to be an advantage as it gives more room for a discussion on the different levels of confidence.

4.6 Validity and Reliability

Validity in qualitative research is used to describe the legitimacy of the research and can also be referred to as trustworthiness and reliability in qualitative research is seen as dependability (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015, p. 20). The participants were randomly selected in order to achieve a representative sample of the whole population. I believe the participants gave honest answers and shared their true opinions and experiences. By letting the participants be in charge of where the interviews would take place and ensuring them of their anonymity a safe space was created

where the participants could feel comfortable sharing information. Reliability is concerned with consistency. Results should be able to be reproduced if the research is repeated (Middleton, 2022). The reliability of the study is ensured by audio recordings of the interviews, transcribing the interviews, and translating the interviews. The voice recordings are not available to be listened to in order to ensure the anonymity and privacy of the participants. The transcribed interviews can be seen in appendix 2. The interview transcriptions show that all of the participants were asked the same question. The interview guide is included in appendix 1.

4.7 Ethical Concerns

I was granted permission from the NSD (Norwegian Center for Research Data) to conduct my research after submitting an application that included the interview guide and information on how the collected data would be stored as well as what personal information about the participants would be collected and stored. The ethical concerns in qualitative research revolve around anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent (Sanjari et al., 2014, p. 1). No information about the participants including name, date of birth or address has been collected or written down. As gender is not relevant to my research of speaker confidence, I have included the number of participants from each gender but not stated which participant is what gender. Confidentiality is ensured by using the recording app called *Diktafon*. All recordings were done using the app, the audio files are uploaded to the website where I am the sole person with access to the login information. After 60 days the recordings are deleted. The documents containing the transcribed and translated interviews are labeled participant A through E. The last ethical concern is informed consent. All participants asked to participate were given an informational document with details about the study. The documents explain how the information gathered will be collected, stored, and used. As well as information about how their anonymity will be ensured. The documents also inform the participants of their right to pull out of the study at any point. By using interviews as a method, I was able to get a deeper and more detailed understanding of how the students view confidence, what aspects are important to them when it comes to being confident speakers, and what they need from their teachers in order to develop a higher sense of self-confidence when it comes to speaking English.

4.8 Summary

Chapter three covers the methodology of the thesis. The different sections present information in regard to the chosen method, qualitative research, interviews as a research method, the selection process, the data selection process, validity and reliability, and the ethical concerns. Interviews were the method deemed most suitable in order to help answer the research questions about speaker confidence. Different types of interviews were introduced and the choice for using semi-structured interviews was explained due to the research questions this thesis aims to answer. An interview guide was created based on the overall research questions and by looking at previous research and theories. All participants are current upper secondary school students with English as one of their subjects. The explanation for interviewing students and not teachers lay with the focus of the thesis.

5 Results

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will present the findings from the interviews conducted. The findings are categorized in a way that correlates to the theoretical framework. I have chosen to present some of the questions from the interviews that provide the most useful information in regard to answering the research questions of this thesis. The first part will look at the student's opinions surrounding self-confidence, and secondly, I will look at self-efficacy. Next are the questions regarding student's willingness to communicate, and the last section will cover communicative competence. The questions presented in this chapter include the responses of all participants in order to show similarities and differences in their answers. The participants will be identified as participant A, B, C, D, and E.

Coding of the interviews revealed themes and categories related to a sense of confidence, abilities and language knowledge, type and place of communication. The codes that lead to a sense of confidence was trusting yourself, believing in yourself, and feeling secure. For abilities and knowledge, it was topic, grammar, vocabulary. The type and place of communication code was group work, one on one conversations, presentations, answering questions, online interactions, classrooms, and depending on the situation. A sense of confidence is the main category. Abilities and knowledge, type of communication, and place of communication all lead back to a sense of confidence.

5.2 Questions Related to Self-Confidence

My goal for this section was to look at how students define self-confidence and what they consider to be important factors for confident speakers.

Question 1: How would you define confidence?

“Being able to trust yourself, your abilities, and being secure with yourself” (Participant A).

“Being 100% sure that you are right. I'm not sure. Making your own choices. I think maybe that is a part of being confident” (Participant B).

“Believing in yourself and your ideas” (Participant C).

“Maybe not thinking so much about what you are saying, what you are thinking, and the people around you. That things flow naturally. That you don’t second guess yourself” (Participant D).

“Not being scared to talk in front of people. Being able to be yourself. Maybe loving yourself” (Participant E).

The definitions given by the participants are similar in nature and similar to the definition used in the introduction chapter by Merriam-Webster which leads me to believe that the students are aware of the concept and that they have experienced feelings connected to self-confidence.

Question 2: What do you think it means to be a confident speaker?

“Having a good vocabulary and being able to reflect” (Participant A).

“Being good with words, having some knowledge about speaking. I guess it depends on who you are speaking to, if it is an audience or group or a friend. I think by speaking you are being a little confident” (Participant B).

“That you don’t stutter, that you’re not afraid of making mistakes when speaking” (Participant C).

“About the same as I said before. That you say what you mean, that you can think without having to stop talking. Having the courage to speak. You can stutter and say something wrong or use the wrong word even when you are confident. Trying to get the message across, I think that might be important” (Participant D).

“Knowledge of the topic and being able to speak in front of people” (Participant E).

Here we see some variation in the participants' answers. Having the courage or ability to speak in front of people is a common answer here. Some of the answers seen here seem to be more in relation to public speaking, such as holding presentations, and not the more informal communication situations.

Question 14: Is your confidence level dependent on the number of people you are speaking to or with?

“It depends on whether I know what I’m talking about or not. If I’m just reading from a script or don’t have knowledge about the topic, I’m usually not very confident. If I have knowledge on the topic I can talk in front of more people. I feel more calm and have better English when it is a one on one conversation” (Participant A).

“I would say it is worse to give a presentation rather than do group work. I don’t have a problem with presentations, but I prefer to do group work. With group work there aren’t as many people looking at you so it makes me feel more comfortable” (Participant B).

“No” (Participant C).

“Maybe a little, but I don’t think it has too much of an impact on me. Of course, I think a little more about what I’m saying if it is formal or in front of larger groups. But at the same time, I feel confident. We did an in depth project in smaller groups. Three students and the teacher were listening to the presentation and that wasn’t too bad. I didn’t worry about the people listening, more about the content. I might be a little more scared or less confident if there are more people. Overall, I would say it has somewhat of an impact on me” (Participant D).

“Yes, I would say so. Smaller groups are better” (Participant E).

The majority of the participants preferred smaller groups and stated that they felt more confident speaking in front of fewer people. When it comes to presentations it seems that having knowledge of the topic is a major factor for both participant A and D.

5.3 Questions Related to Self-Efficacy

This section covers self-efficacy and shows how the students perceive their abilities of speaking the English language and the connection to their self-confidence.

Question 3: Do you feel confident when speaking English? Why or why not?

“It depends. Sometimes I feel confident when I speak English, other times I don’t. It depends on the situation” (Participant A).

“I don’t feel very confident, but I feel like it comes almost naturally because I grew up with English around me. For as long as I can remember I have heard English so in a way it comes pretty naturally. There will always be an extra thought process before speaking but that isn’t a problem” (Participant B).

“Yes, I am sure of myself” (Participant C).

“When I had international English I felt very confident because we spoke English multiple days a week. I feel pretty comfortable with English, so I feel confident in the classroom. When I meet people in real life and have to switch to English quickly it can be a little different. I forget some words, but I am able to express myself” (Participant D).

“No, I don’t feel that I know English well enough” (Participant E).

For this question we can see that some students feel more confident when speaking English than others. The knowledge of the language or the lack of it plays a role here as well as the situation the students find themselves in.

Question 16: On a scale of 1 to 10 where would you place yourself. With 1 being not confident and 10 being confident when speaking English?

“7,5 maybe” (Participant A).

“8” (Participant B).

“8” (Participant C).

“Maybe 8” (Participant D).

“It would have to be a 6 or 7” (Participant E).

The responses to this question surprised me a little. For some of the participants the answers made sense, but for others not so much. The way other questions were answered it would make sense for some of the participants to place themselves a little lower on the scale.

5.4 Questions Related to Willingness to Communicate

This section looks at the participants willingness to communicate both inside and outside of the classroom. These questions aim to look at a correlation between the participants willingness to communicate and their confidence level.

Question 8: In what setting do you usually speak English?

“Online, maybe. When I’m gaming with other people I often speak English” (Participant A).

“In the classroom. On social media and when traveling” (Participant B).

“Classroom, internet, when I’m gaming with foreigners” (Participant C).

“I work in a toy store and sometimes people come in that don’t speak Norwegian so we speak English. And sometimes when I’m joking around with friends. But I don’t use it enough” (Participant D).

“In the classroom. At restaurants where the staff are not Norwegian and in other countries” (Participant E).

We can see from these responses that the participants do use some spoken English outside of the classroom. Online seems to be the most common place outside of the classroom as well as when interacting with non-Norwegian speakers.

Question 11: Do you actively participate in classroom discussions?

“If I have to, I do, but I don’t volunteer. Sometimes maybe, it depends on the topic” (Participant A).

“I do” (Participant B).

“No” (Participant C).

“I do” (Participant D).

“No, but we don’t have a lot of discussions. My class isn’t very talkative. If I’m asked questions, then yes” (Participant E).

This was one of the questions where the participants did not contribute much. Participant C showed little excitement for participating in the interviews, I also got the impression that the participant did not care much for school in general. Participant B and D shared a mutual feeling of wanting to contribute to the classroom discussions and liked engaging in conversations.

Question 12: Do you feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom?

“Yes, I’m not scared of speaking English” (Participant A).

“That’s another thing. Not a lot of students raise their hands, so you're usually the only one or one of maybe four people who raise their hands. It is often the same people talking. It makes it a little difficult to raise your hand because you are the only one talking and everyone is looking at you” (Participant B).

“Yes” (Participant C).

“I do, but I can tell not everyone is. I think what would make me more comfortable was if more people were actively participating. Then it would be a lower threshold for speaking. I think that would help, and in a way that is what I have been trying to do. Make space for others and if someone says something that I think was good I could say it. Praise each other in a way” (Participant D).

“Not very comfortable. If it’s a few sentences then yes, but not with presentations or reading out loud” (Participant E).

Here we see that lack of participation from classmates is a factor of feeling comfortable and confident when speaking in the classroom.

5.5 Questions Related to Communicative Competence

The last section covers communicative competence and looks at the impact the participants believe that their knowledge of the English language contributes to their self-confidence when speaking.

Question 4: In what ways does your knowledge of the English language factor into your confidence level when speaking?

“It’s important to have some knowledge but if I don’t know a word I try to come up with a different word or describe it. I try to make the best out of the situation” (Participant A).

“I don’t know. I think I have heard a lot of English words that lay in the back of my brain and in a way, I know them. Even though I might not be as good at understanding what the English word actually means when I try to translate it to Norwegian. It might take me some time. But I feel secure when I speak” (Participant B).

“In a good way” (Participant C).

“I would say that the knowledge I have about English makes me more comfortable when speaking. I feel like I know a lot even though I’m not an expert. I think a teacher would be able to hear my mistakes, but I don’t think most people would see something wrong with my English. In that way I’m confident and comfortable” (Participant D).

“It is more about my knowledge on the topic” (Participant E).

Participants A, B, and D had similar ideas about the language knowledge impacting their confidence level when speaking English. Participant E had a difficult time separating her feelings from giving presentations and having normal conversations.

Question 5: What factors do you believe are important in order to be a confident speaker?

“Being secure with yourself like I said earlier. Not thinking too much about the result when you are speaking. Don’t stress. Trust yourself. Have some English knowledge. Being able to speak in front of people and strangers” (Participant A).

“You need to have some knowledge. For example, if you are going to speak English you need to know some English. Of course, you can always use simple phrases and add some things, but then you might not be sure if you are right or not. You don’t always think about if what you are saying is correct or not” (Participant B).

“Having heard a lot of English, knowing that what you are saying is grammatically correct. Knowing that you are pronouncing things right” (Participant C).

“You need to have a certain grasp of the grammar and have a vocabulary. And that you use it a little every day. I notice I’m using it less now than what I did last year, but I use social media and watch TV in English. So, in a way that’s where I hear the language. There are also a lot of English words in Norwegian, but it is not the same” (Participant D).

“You have to have general confidence. Knowledge of the topic, practice, and experience” (Participant E).

There seems to be consensus that knowledge of the language does play a part in being a confident speaker. Being able to effectively communicate does require some knowledge of the language a person is trying to communicate in.

Question 6 and 7: How does your teacher help you feel confident and what are some other ways your teacher could help you feel more confident?

“Well, she gives me some tips when I’m not confident. She has tips on how I can improve. She is a new teacher, so she has a lot of knowledge. So, I get help when I don’t feel confident speaking English. She could ask me more questions and be open” (Participant A).

“I don’t have the best English teacher, and I’m not his favorite student. He likes it when we talk a lot. I can in a way feel confident around him. If someone is holding a presentation or talking in groups, we speak English and sometimes we say the wrong things. He interrupts the person to correct them, but he does it in a kind of aggressive way. So, he doesn’t help me feel very confident when speaking. We have grammar classes where the focus is only on grammar and how to structure sentences. That makes

me feel more confident in my writing. I would say that I am better at speaking than writing. I think most people feel this way. So grammar classes help me feel more confident” (Participant B).

“I already feel confident, I don’t think there are any ways he can make me feel more confident” (Participant C).

“I don’t think there is anything that directly impacts our confidence. It is more about how to develop the language. It might be from positive feedback, at least for oral. “That was good”, “You should work more on this”. That might be what strengthens our confidence the most. Maybe creating a safer environment where we don’t have to be afraid of making mistakes. Not correcting us if we raise our hand in front of the class to speak, some people might feel uncomfortable being corrected in front of the whole class. The teacher can say it to the person or if it is a common mistake address it in front of the class, but not right after” (Participant D).

“He doesn’t. I have a bad teacher. I think having one on one conversations multiple times before having to speak in front of more people. If you are new in a class and have to talk in front of a lot of people it’s better to have spoken English with the teacher first. Practice in smaller groups” (Participant E).

We see some varied responses from the participants here. Two participants mentioned not being corrected in front of the whole class. Some of the participants expressed negative feelings towards their teachers. Suggestions for how their teachers could help them included not interrupting to point out mistakes, more practice in smaller groups, and being asked more questions.

5.6 Summary

Chapter four has presented the findings of the interviews conducted. The selection of questions and responses to present in this chapter were chosen to show how the participants expressed their thoughts and feelings on the topic of confidence. Subheadings related to the theories and

previous research discussed in chapter two and three were created to show how the questions and responses connect to the theory. The results show that the participants had similar opinions on certain things, but it also shows that there are different factors impacting their self-confidence.

6 Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This thesis aims to examine speaker confidence and to answer the following two research questions: How do upper secondary school students define confident speakers? And what do students need from their teachers in order to become confident English speakers? By conducting interviews with five upper secondary school students and looking at previous research and theories the findings will be discussed in relation to the research questions. The data suggests that the participants have an understanding of the concept of self-confidence as well as L2 self-confidence and that they are able to recognize the factors that have a positive and negative impact on their self-confidence. The data support the theory that communicative competence is essential to language learning. The analysis identifies several factors that impact the participants WTC in the classroom. The factors seen in the findings have both positive and negative effects on the participants WTC. This chapter will discuss the most important findings from the research in relation to previous research and theoretical framework introduced earlier in the thesis.

6.2 Speaker Confidence from the Perspective of Students

The findings show that all students understand the concept of self-confidence. The participants define confidence in correlation with the definitions presented in chapter one by the Merriam-Webster dictionary and Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019). Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) defined confidence by including an individual's like or dislike of themselves (p. 5). Participant E had a similar idea when defining confidence, they said that loving themselves was a part of feeling confident. While only one of the participants had this belief, it certainly is interesting. Learning to like or love ourselves is not always an easy thing to do, and it might be even more challenging during the years a person attends upper secondary school. Teenagers go through a lot of developmental changes and are given more responsibilities when they reach upper secondary school. There is also the social aspect of upper secondary school, trying to fit in, make friends, and please authoritarian figures. With all of this liking or loving themselves might not be the easiest thing, however like self-confidence their feelings towards themselves can change based on the situations they find themselves in. The participants did at times focus on public speaking more than general conversational speaking and in the previous research chapter we saw that Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) found public speaking and self-confidence to go hand in hand.

The findings from the interviews conducted shows that the participants believe that having knowledge of the language is important for their confidence. Needing some knowledge of grammar and vocabulary was found to be factors impacting speaker confidence. This correlates with findings of the study conducted by Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) where lack of vocabulary and lack of ability had a negative effect on the student's self-confidence (p.10). Being able to express yourself and your opinions can be difficult even in your native language, trying to express yourself in a foreign language when you are lacking the necessary knowledge can be increasingly challenging, and not to mention a deterrent in language expression. It is clear that this does affect a person's self-confidence. One of the responses given during the interview implies that speaking up can be difficult and challenging, "I think by speaking you are being a little confident" (Participant B). From this response we can infer that the results or the utterances produced are not of importance, but the act of speaking in itself shows confidence.

Park and Lee's (2006) study revealed four components to learners' self-confidence. The four components are: situational confidence, communication confidence, language potential confidence, and language ability confidence (p. 202). Situational confidence is present in the study at hand, the interviews revealed that the participants do show tendencies of situational confidence. When it comes to speaking in front of the whole class or giving a presentation the participants find themselves to be less confident than when they are doing group work or having one on one conversations. The second component is communication confidence and revolves around confidence when communicating. From the results we see that not all of the participants feel confident when communicating. The findings also revealed that communication confidence varied based on the situations that students find themselves in. Language potential confidence was not found in the results, the participants were not asked questions about the future nor did they naturally bring up the future themselves. Although we can infer from some of the answers about the lack of English language knowledge that their confidence level might improve as a result of their language skills improving. Language ability confidence is another component that was seen in the findings. Some of the participants stated that they did not necessarily lose confidence by not knowing the right word to use, rather they would describe it or use other

words to express themselves. While one participant had low self-confidence due to the lack of knowledge and abilities to use English for communication.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) found that L2 self-confidence relates to the speaker's own view of their competence. The findings from the interviews showed that while the participants did not always believe themselves to be confident, they still placed themselves very high on the scale of confidence level when speaking English. Real competence and perceived competence are two different things. Molberg (2010) writes: "Basically, L2 self-confidence is not explained by pupils' real competence in the target language, but rather their perceived competence and their anxiety using the language actively in the classroom" (p.9). Keeping this in mind, the participants might believe they are not capable of performing certain tasks using the English language even though they do possess the specific knowledge needed to succeed. It can also be the other way around where the students believe they are capable of completing a task that they do not acquire the specific knowledge needed to succeed. The participants might have experienced positive communication experiences which has led them to believe that they possess the necessary knowledge to communicate even if they do feel that they lack some language knowledge.

The findings showed that the participants believe confidence to be more about trusting themselves and their abilities rather than always having correct English. Making mistakes is a part of language learning, and the participants stated that not being afraid of making mistakes is a sign of confidence. From the findings I would therefore argue that self-confidence does not have to relate to competence. Not being afraid of making mistakes can be seen as risk taking behavior. Bouhenika (2015) states that risk taking has a positive impact on language proficiency (p. 91). The findings show that the most confident participants were the ones that were not afraid of making mistakes thereby showing a risk-taking personality. At least in connection to language learning. This might mean that the participants who stated that they were not afraid of making mistakes have a higher language proficiency and therefore also a higher sense of self-confidence.

The interview conducted by Nadiah, Arina, and Ikhrom (2019) showed that one of the factors for lack of confidence was lack of preparation and practice (p. 9). This finding was also seen in the present study. Some of the participants shared the feeling of being less confident when they were asked to speak at times when they were unprepared. This can come from not having read material in preparation for a class discussion, not feeling prepared to hold a presentation, or being asked to answer a question out of the blue.

Edwards and Roger (2015) found that students with low self-confidence are often fearful and timid and try to avoid expressing their opinions and have a hard time uttering complete sentences in class (p. 19). Participant E was the participant that placed themselves the lowest on the scale of confidence when speaking English and clearly stated that they did not feel confident speaking English. The participant did not actively participate in classroom discussion, did not like holding presentations or reading out loud. The findings described above correlates to what Edwards and Roger (2015) found in their study. Participant E's lack of confidence impacts their WTC. By not taking an active part in classroom activities students are not getting the most out of the language learning. While listening to teachers and classmates can help develop language knowledge, the students who avoid speaking are not getting to put their knowledge to use. By actively participating students can practise what they have learned, see what works and what does not work in oral communication situations, as well as develop more knowledge and communicative competence. Participant E expressed high CA. As participant E expressed that holding presentations, reading out loud, and participating in discussion were the things they did not feel comfortable with, generalized-context CA is the most fitting type of CA. As generalized-context CA refers to CA in specific contexts like public speaking (McCroskey, 1984). Participant E found themselves to be more confident working in groups or having one on one conversations, this shows that Participant E has low CA when there are less people paying attention to them, and high CA when all eyes are on them. McCroskey (1984) stated that the biggest impact on a person's CA is feeling conspicuous in one's environment, which supports the findings discussed about participant E.

The findings show that most of the participants use English outside of the classroom, mainly through online activities. While the participant's most likely do not go online seeking for

opportunities to communicate in English, they are aware of the fact that they will be met with those opportunities when doing so. MacIntyre et al. (1998) stress the importance of teaching students to seek out opportunities for L2 communication (p. 547). By making the conscious choice of going online the participants are in a way seeking out opportunities or at least knowingly creating opportunities for L2 communication. While we see some WTC outside of the classroom, not all of the participants are as willing to communicate in the classroom. Rather than seeking out opportunities for communication they are waiting until they are forced to communicate by being called on to answer questions. Two of the participants experienced that not many of their classmates participated in classroom activities and discussions which can lead to some discomfort around actively participating in oral activities. When the same couple of students speak up in every class it can be challenging for the silent students to participate, but it can also make it uncomfortable for the students who are actively participating. This can lead to negative experiences when using L2 and impact a student's WTC. MacIntyre et al. (1998) states that feelings of discomfort experienced when using L2 to communicate can lead to a decrease in a student's WTC (p. 551). The two participants who expressed that not many of their classmates participated in class did also state that they do actively participate in classroom discussions. Even though they actively participate and expressed that they felt confident speaking English, they experienced discomfort when using English in the classroom.

Abdulhussain, Jabor & Ghani (2017) categorized the problems shown in their results as problems related to the student, problems related to others, and problems related to gender (pp. 15-16). The last problem related to gender does not apply to the current study. From the findings presented above we see that the problems related to the student and the problems related to others are present in this study as well. While only one participant showed problems related to the student I still believe it is important to include. The participants' problems revolved around not feeling competent from the lack of knowledge of the English language. Problems related to others were mentioned by a couple of the participants, this was expressed through classmates not actively participating in classroom activities and being interrupted and corrected by the teacher in front of the entire class. The uneasiness of being interrupted and corrected in front of the class was also found in the study conducted by Zarrinabadi (2014). On the spot correction was found to be a factor that reduces students WTC; these findings correlate to the current findings. Not only was

on the spot correction found to negatively impact the participants WTC, it was also found to have a negative impact on the participants level of confidence.

As discussed in the article written by Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) communicative competence focuses on the use of language. Their definition of communicative competence mentions effective and appropriate use of target language and culture (p. 157). This connects back to one of the competence aims for VG1 where the students need to be able to adapt their communication to the fit the purpose, receiver, and situation (udir). The participants mentioned different situations where they use English and how some situations call for more formal language than others. From this we can infer that the participants have some communicative competence or at least an understanding of situational language use. Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008) offer suggestions for teachers on how they can promote communicative competence in the classroom and activities to help teach this. The findings show that the participants were not all happy with their teachers and suggested some ways that their teachers could help them feel more confident. Group work was the activity the participants believed would benefit them the most when it came to developing a higher sense of self-confidence. This supports the theory presented by Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2008), most of their suggested speaking activities were centered around group work.

It does seem that the students believe that the knowledge of the language has an impact on the performance of the language, this corresponds with what Sarimsakova (2019) stated about competence and the use of language (p. 166). The interviews revealed that group work and one on one conversations were activities that the students felt more confident participating in. One participant also said that they would like to have one on one conversations with the teacher. This finding correlates with Maclellan's (2013) study on how teachers can enable self-confidence in their students. Maclellan argued that learner-learner and learner-teacher interactions are important for promoting self-confidence in students (p. 10).

The participants who felt that they were confident when speaking English did not necessarily believe their English was perfect, but they were able to use the language to communicate in an efficient way. Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides (2011) state that a student's thoughts, feelings, and

behavior in the classroom is influenced by their confidence in their abilities (p. 67). Being able to get your message across and effectively communicate even with a limited vocabulary or grammar knowledge is a sign of confidence. As participant D said, even though some words are missing they are still able to express themselves. While participant E did not feel confident due to the lack of English language knowledge, participant D was still able to feel confident because they could get their point across. An example of this can be to describe what you are trying to say or use a synonym for the missing word, but this does require some knowledge of communication strategies as discussed above as well as some vocabulary knowledge and being willing to take a risk and make mistakes.

6.3 Promoting Speaker Confidence in the Classroom

The findings show us that a general knowledge of the English language, especially grammar and vocabulary, are factors the participants deem to have an impact on their speaker confidence. This tells us that by increasing students' English language knowledge could also increase their confidence. Xue (2013) found that through group work students were able to practice, improve, and learn sentence structures and vocabulary words. By including group work in the classroom, teachers might be able to increase the students' English language knowledge as well as their self-confidence. As previously established the participants clearly stated that they believed group work to be the setting they felt most confident in. This finding is supported by the study conducted by Omar et. Al (2020), they found that interactive language learning activities, such as group work, increase the participants' speaker confidence (pp. 1014-1015). Working with classmates in smaller groups allows for a more relaxed learning environment where students can feel more comfortable and confident expressing their ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

The findings suggest that the participants would benefit from a communicative language teaching approach. The participants share similar feelings towards group work and on the spot correction. Some participants share information about their use of communication strategies which is developed through communicative competence teaching. One participant expressed a lack of English language knowledge to be the reason for a low sense of self-confidence. Through the use of a communicative language teaching approach there is a focus on communicative competence which does mainly focus on the communication aspect of language learning, but it

also has the ability to improve language knowledge. As making mistakes is a natural part of language learning, a communicative teaching approach does not include on the spot correction. Meaningful language use in the center of the approach and therefore mistakes that do not lead to communication breakdown should not be corrected as soon as it occurs.

The findings show that the students found participating in group work to be a situation where they felt the highest sense of self-confidence. This suggests that group work can help promote speaker confidence for students. Another effect of group work was found by Xeu (2013) to be communication competence, especially communication strategies. By creating activities such as group work that help students feel comfortable and confident it encourages language learning and promotes communicative competence. The findings show us that some of the participants are able to use communication strategies. For participants A and D not knowing a specific word did not lead to communication breakdown or failed communication as they were able to use different words to get their message across. As Saville-Troike (2012) stated knowledge of communication strategies is of extreme importance to L2 learners. By employing communication strategies students are able to compensate for their lack of language knowledge. As mentioned above participants A and D use communication strategies to get their message across and are therefore able to have successful and efficient communication.

Not being afraid to make mistakes was another factor that almost unanimously was agreed upon by participants. In the study Park and Lee (2006) conducted the participants experienced anxiety in relation to comprehension of spoken English and producing spoken English (p. 205). Whereas the participant's in this study believed that you can still be confident while making mistakes, in fact not being afraid of making mistakes reflects confidence. It is not easy to say why some students feel anxiety towards making mistakes and why some feel that it is a part of having self-confidence. Lived experiences might tell us why some students feel anxiety towards making mistakes and why some students feel making mistakes is a part of being confident. The previous research conducted on self-efficacy by Corkett, Hatt, and Benevides (2011) found that personal experiences is one of the things that form self-efficacy. Dewaele, Jean-Marc, and Pavelescu (2019) state that lived experiences impact students WTC. And Norton (2000) argues that lived experiences play a part on language learners' self-confidence. These findings, both from

previous research and the current study, show the connection between the different concepts. With previous L2 communication experiences having the ability to impact both WTC and self-confidence, it is important that teachers try to only create positive L2 experiences in the classroom. If the students build their self-confidence and WTC in the classroom, they are more equipped to handle communication situations outside of the classroom. By including the teaching of communicative competence as well students can develop the tools needed to overcome misunderstandings and communication breakdowns. Having self-confidence, WTC, and communicative competence may allow the students to continue the conversation even if there is a breakdown in communication.

Two of the participants brought up being interrupted and corrected in front of the whole class and they saw this as a negative thing. Banduar (1994) states “By constricting activities and undermining motivation, disbelief in one’s capabilities creates its own behavioral validation” (p. 3). This act by teachers can have a negative impact on students’ self-confidence and willingness to communicate as we see from the findings. The fear of being interrupted and corrected can make students less likely to participate, thereby constricting their activities and undermining their motivation. Their self-confidence becomes weakened as they start to question their capabilities and so does their willingness to communicate.

6.4 Summary

The first part of the interviews asks students about their beliefs on confidence and what it means to be a confident speaker. From the findings we see that all of the interview’s participants proved to have a similar understanding of the concept of self-confidence, and their definitions aligned with the theoretical definitions provided earlier in the thesis to be about a person’s overall belief in themselves and their abilities. Aligning with previous research conducted, language knowledge was pointed out as one of the main factors that impact student’s speaker confidence. Lack of vocabulary and lack of ability was found to have a negative impact on speaker confidence. Making mistakes is a natural part of language learning. The study found that not being afraid of making mistakes is a sign of speaker confidence. This finding did not align with previous research conducted where participants expressed anxiety towards making mistakes (Park & Lee, 2006). Situational confidence was seen in the results. The participants felt more

confident participating in one-on-one conversations and group work than they did giving presentations. The results also showed language ability confidence, however not all participants agreed that lacking language ability affected their confidence. This can be due to communications strategies. The more advanced English speakers are able to employ more communication strategies which in turn does not weaken their level of confidence when communicating. The findings showed that some of the participants lacked WTC in the classroom but not outside of the classroom. The participants willingly put themselves in situations where they had to use English to communicate, these situations were found to be video games and other online platforms. Only two of the five participants expressed WTC in the classroom. The findings show that being interrupted and corrected, also called on the spot correcting, had a negative impact on the student's speaker confidence. It also increased the students WTC. Participant E stated that by helping the students develop their language knowledge teachers can increase their student's self-confidence. Participant B stated that grammar instruction makes them feel more confident. And participant D stated that one-on-one conversations with the teacher and group work would make them feel more confident. A communicative language teaching approach might work for students like participant E and D in order to make them feel more confident. Through interactive group work activities language knowledge is increased at the same time as the small group setting allows for a safe and comfortable learning environment. Sauvignon (1987) states that in a communicative classroom, students are able to experience the use of language and at the same time they are able to analyze the language as it is being used (p. 237). For students like participant B, the analyzing part may enable the students to focus on the grammar being used thereby improving their grammatical knowledge. Which in turn increases their sense of confidence.

7 Summary and Conclusion

With the ever-changing world we live in, the English language is becoming a more predominant language every day. We no longer have to leave Norway or search high and low for English communication opportunities. With English becoming more and more a part of our daily lives, teaching our students to communicate efficiently and effectively is becoming increasingly more important. However, efficient and effective communication should also include a sense of speaker confidence. This thesis has attempted to answer the question of what a confident speaker is and how teachers can help their students become confident speakers through the use of previous research, a theoretical framework, and by conducting interviews. The concepts of self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence have all been shown to be connected to the concept of self-confidence. All of the concepts lead to self-confidence, but self-confidence also has an impact on developing self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence.

Linguistic self-confidence has been studied for many years as it is an important factor for language learning. The construct of L2 self-confidence implies that a language learners' self-confidence and anxiety is socially constructed from the lived language experiences the learners has had (Norton, 2000). With lived experiences being a major aspect of language learners' self-confidence, it is important to make sure the experiences that are within our control are pleasant. For language teachers the experiences that are within their control are the experiences within the classroom. By ensuring that our students are having positive experiences in the language classroom we can help our students on their way to becoming confident L2 speakers. Creating a safe environment for students where they feel they can freely and openly express their opinions, thoughts, and beliefs without fear of judgment is essential. Making mistakes is a part of language learning. It is therefore essential that students are in an environment where they do not have to be afraid of making mistakes.

The discussion of the theoretical framework introduced in chapter two, the previous research introduced in chapter three, and the findings presented in chapter five shows the indisputable importance of speaker confidence. Students need to be given the tools they need in order to become confident speakers. By promoting self-efficacy students learn to see the connection

between their performance and their abilities. Students with higher self-efficacy are better equipped at taking on new and challenging tasks, and as a language learner it is important to not shy away from situations where learning takes place. Creating a safe and supportive environment for communication can help influence students WTC in a positive way. Students with a high WTC are able to practice what they know and learn from their mistakes. By teaching communicative competence, especially communication strategies, students will be better equipped to handle communication breakdowns. The combination of including these three concepts in the English language classroom can help students become more confident English speakers.

The LK20 has shown the relevance and importance of helping our students become confident users of the English language, and especially to become confident speakers. The following list consists of three competence aims expressed in the LK20:

- “Through working with the subject the pupils shall become confident users of English so that they can use English to learn, communicate and connect with others” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 2).
- “Express himself or herself in a nuanced and precise manner with fluency and coherence, using idiomatic expressions and varied sentence structures adapted to the purpose, receiver and situation” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 12).
- “This forms the basis for being able to express their feelings, thoughts, experiences and opinions and can provide new perspectives on different ways of thinking and communication patterns, as well as on the pupils’ own way of life and that of others” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 3).

By promoting self-confidence, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, and communicative competence teachers can help their students achieve the competence aims required of them. As previously stated, the relevance of speaker confidence is clear when looking at the LK20. This thesis has provided research that can show teachers how they can best help their students become confident speakers as well as ways to meet these competence aims related to confidence. The correlation between the LK20 competence aims and the focal point of communicative language

teaching is undeniable. Through the use of communicative language teaching students learn to use the language for communication.

To answer the first research question: How do upper secondary school students define confident speakers? A definition has been drawn up based on the responses given by the participants during the interviews. The participants define confident speakers to be people who trust and believe in themselves, their ideas, and their abilities. Confident speakers are not afraid to make mistakes and they speak up about their opinions. The different answers given by the participants show that upper secondary school students are aware of the term self-confidence and have a similar understanding of what confident speakers are.

To answer the second research question: What do students need from their teachers to become confident English speakers? By discussing the findings of the interviews in relation to previous research and theories, suggestions for how teachers can help their students become confident English speakers has been established. The findings show the importance of using group work in the classroom. Students feel more comfortable and confident speaking English in smaller groups. The previous research and theories support this finding. Group work may help students develop their language knowledge, their WTC, and their communicative competence, which has been shown to increase their L2 confidence and their speaker confidence. Through the use of the communicative language teaching approach and interactive language learning activities students are able to develop the skills necessary to use English both in and out of the classroom. On the spot correction was found to be a major discouragement for students. Being corrected in front of the whole class draws negative attention to the student which can create an uneasy feeling and not to mention decrease the students self-confidence. CA was seen to impact when students felt comfortable and confident participating in oral communication activities. As students are able to develop language knowledge through communicating it is important that teachers are aware of the students with CA, and the different settings they experience low and high CA. This can allow for a safer and more comfortable environment for the students where they can use the L2 confidently. By letting students experience positive L2 communication in settings they find themselves confident in such as in small groups, it allows them to build on their language

knowledge and develop greater communicative competence which may lead the students to become more confident in using L2 in other settings as well.

The need for English language students to be confident speakers has been shown throughout the thesis. Communication is a vital part of life and being able to communicate in English is proving to be a necessity. Language learning affects students' confidence just as confidence affects students' language learning. By promoting communicative competence and using interactive learning activities in the classroom students are presented with the best opportunities to develop their speaker confidence.

7.1 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

One of the limitations found in this study is the use of a single method to collect data. While a lot of useful data was collected, including another method on top of the interviews would allow for a broader examination of speaker confidence. A larger study using triangulation might produce more insight into speaker confidence. Including a larger sample size might show more diverse opinions. While a questionnaire does not allow for as detailed questioning as interviews does, it does open up for a larger sampling size, and using triangulation allows to pick some participants to conduct interviews with which would include more detailed and descriptive data. By conducting a questionnaire first the researcher would see the participants level of confidence before the interview process started and would be able to pick participants displaying different levels of confidence. Most of the participants in this study expressed a high level of self-confidence. It could be interesting to conduct a study where more participants had a lower level of self-confidence to see if there would be other concerns expressed about using English for oral communication. As many of the concepts discussed in this thesis are changeable, a longitudinal study following upper secondary students from the first day of class until graduation could be beneficial. It would allow the researchers to see when and why the changes in confidence, self-efficacy, and WTC are happening.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide

1. How would you define confidence?
2. What do you think it means to be a confident speaker?
3. Do you feel confident when speaking English? Why or why not?
4. In what ways does your knowledge of the English language factor into your confidence level when speaking?
5. What factors do you believe are important in order to be a confident speaker?
6. How does your teacher help you feel confident?
7. Is there something your teacher could do to help you become a more confident speaker?
8. In what setting do you usually speak English?
9. Do you feel that it is important for you to be a confident English speaker?
10. Is there more use of spoken English or Norwegian in your English class?
11. Do you actively participate in classroom discussion?
12. Do you feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom?
13. Are there times you do not feel confident in the classroom? Why or why not?
14. Is your confidence level dependent on the size of the group you are speaking in?
15. Would you say that being comfortable affects your confidence? Why or why not?
16. On a scale of 1 to 10 where would you place yourself. With 1 being not confident and 10 being confident when speaking English?

Appendix 2

Participant A

1. How would you define confidence?

Being able to trust yourself, your abilities, and being secure with yourself.

2. What do you think it means to be a confident speaker?

Having a good vocabulary and being able to reflect.

3. Do you feel confident when speaking English? Why or why not?

It depends. Sometimes I feel confident when I speak English, other times I don't. It depends on the situation.

4. In what ways does your knowledge of the English language factor into your confidence level when speaking?

It is important to have some knowledge but if I don't know a word I try to come up with a different word or describe it. I try to make the best out of the situation.

5. What factors do you believe are important in order to be a confident speaker?

Being secure with yourself like I said earlier. Not thinking too much about the result when you are speaking. Don't stress. Trust yourself. Have some English knowledge.

Being able to speak in front of people and strangers.

6. How does your teacher help you feel confident?

Well, she gives me some tips when I'm not confident. She has tips on how I can improve. She is a new teacher, so she has a lot of knowledge. So, I get help when I don't feel confident speaking English.

7. Is there something your teacher could do to help you become a more confident speaker?

Ask me questions, be open.

8. In what setting do you usually speak English?

Online, maybe. When I'm gaming with other people I often speak English.

9. Do you feel that it is important for you to be a confident English speaker?

In some cases. Not all. Maybe during presentations, it is important to be confident when speaking English. But if you are just talking to friends or online it is not as important.

10. Is there more use of spoken English or Norwegian in your English class?

I have English 2 now so we only speak English. In English 1 we only spoke Norwegian.

11. Do you actively participate in classroom discussion?

If I have to, I do, but I don't volunteer. Sometimes maybe, it depends on the topic.

12. Do you feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom?

Yes, I'm not scared of speaking English.

13. Are there times you do not feel confident in the classroom? Why or why not?

Yes, when I don't have a lot of knowledge about the topic or when I'm unprepared.

14. Is your confidence level dependent on the size of the group you are speaking in?

It depends on whether I know what I'm talking about or not. If I'm just reading from a script or don't have knowledge about the topic, I'm usually not very confident. If I have knowledge on the topic I can talk in front of more people. I feel more calm and have better English when it is a one on one conversation.

15. Would you say that being comfortable affects your confidence? Why or why not?

Not always.

16. On a scale of 1 to 10 where would you place yourself. With 1 being not confident and 10 being confident when speaking English?

7,5 maybe.

Participant B

1. How would you define confidence?

Being a 100% sure that you are right. I'm not sure. Making your own choices. I think maybe that is a part of being confident.

2. What do you think it means to be a confident speaker?

Being good with words, having some knowledge about speaking. I guess it depends on who you are speaking to, if it is an audience or group or a friend. I think by speaking you are being a little confident.

3. Do you feel confident when speaking English? Why or why not?

I don't feel very confident, but I feel like it comes almost naturally because I grew up with English around me. For as long as I can remember I have heard English so in a way it comes pretty naturally. There will always be an extra thought process before speaking but that isn't a problem.

4. In what ways does your knowledge of the English language factor into your confidence level when speaking?

I don't know. I think I have heard a lot of English words that lay in the back of my brain and in a way, I know them. Even though I might not be as good at understanding what the English word actually means when I try to translate it to Norwegian. It might take me some time. But I feel secure when I speak.

5. What factors do you believe are important in order to be a confident speaker?

You need to have some knowledge. For example, if you are going to speak English you need to know some English. Of course, you can always use simple phrases and add some things, but then you might not be sure if you are right or not. You don't always think about if what you are saying is correct or not.

6. How does your teacher help you feel confident?

I don't have the best English teacher, and I'm not his favorite student. He likes it when we talk a lot. I can in a way feel confident around him. If someone is holding a presentation or talking in groups, we speak English and sometimes we say the wrong things. He interrupts the person to correct them, but he does it in a kind of aggressive way. So, he doesn't help me feel very confident when speaking

7. Is there something your teacher could do to help you become a more confident speaker?

We have grammar classes where the focus is only on grammar and how to structure sentences. That makes me more confident in my writing. I would say that I am better at speaking than writing. I think most people feel this way. So grammar classes help me feel more confident.

8. In what setting do you usually speak English?

In the classroom and online.

9. Do you feel that it is important for you to be a confident English speaker?

I don't think so. You can have a casual conversation in English where it doesn't matter if you are grammatically correct or if you're using slang. During those conversations I don't think it is important to be confident.

10. Is there more use of spoken English or Norwegian in your English class?

We are supposed to speak English at all times, I try to do my best to only speak English. There aren't that many people in my class who are good enough to only speak English. So, we do speak a lot of Norwegian.

11. Do you actively participate in classroom discussion?

I do.

12. Do you feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom?

That's another thing. Not a lot of students raise their hands, so you're usually the only one or one of maybe four people who raise their hands. It is often the same people talking. It makes it a little difficult to raise your hand because you are the only one talking and everyone is looking at you.

13. Are there times you do not feel confident in the classroom? Why or why not?

I usually feel very confident in the classroom.

14. Is your confidence level dependent on the size of the group you are speaking in?

I would say it is worse to give a presentation rather than do group work. I don't have a problem with presentations, but I prefer to do group work. With group work there aren't as many people looking at you so it makes me feel more comfortable.

15. Would you say that being comfortable affects your confidence? Why or why not?

Yes, a lot. I believe that is the most important aspect.

16. On a scale of 1 to 10 where would you place yourself. With 1 being not confident and 10 being confident when speaking English?

8.

Participant C

1. How would you define confidence?

Believing in yourself and your ideas.

2. What do you think it means to be a confident speaker?

That you don't stutter, that you're not afraid of making mistakes when speaking.

3. Do you feel confident when speaking English? Why or why not?

Yes, I am sure of myself.

4. In what ways does your knowledge of the English language factor into your confidence level when speaking?

In a good way.

5. What factors do you believe are important in order to be a confident speaker?

Having heard a lot of English, knowing that what you are saying is grammatically correct. Knowing that you are pronouncing things right.

6. How does your teacher help you feel confident?

I already feel confident, I don't think there are any ways he can make me feel more confident.

7. Is there something your teacher could do to help you become a more confident speaker?

Not that I can think of.

8. In what setting do you usually speak English?

Classroom, internet, when I'm gaming with foreigners.

9. Do you feel that it is important for you to be a confident English speaker?

Yes.

10. Is there more use of spoken English or Norwegian in your English class?

Mainly English.

11. Do you actively participate in classroom discussion?

No.

12. Do you feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom?

Yes.

13. Are there times you do not feel confident in the classroom? Why or why not?

No.

14. Is your confidence level dependent on the size of the group you are speaking in?

No.

15. Would you say that being comfortable affects your confidence? Why or why not?

Yes.

16. On a scale of 1 to 10 where would you place yourself. With 1 being not confident and 10 being confident when speaking English?

8.

Participant D

1. How would you define confidence?

Maybe not thinking so much about what you are saying, what you are thinking, and the people around you. That things go by themselves. That you don't second guess yourself.

2. What do you think it means to be a confident speaker?

About the same as I said before. That you say what you mean, that you can think without having to stop talking. Having the courage to speak. You can stutter and say something wrong or use the wrong word even when you are confident. Trying to get the message across, I think that might be important.

3. Do you feel confident when speaking English? Why or why not?

When I had international English I felt very confident because we spoke English multiple days a week. I feel pretty comfortable with English, so I feel confident in the classroom. When I meet people in real life and have to switch to English quickly it can be a little different. I forget some words, but I am able to express myself.

4. In what ways does your knowledge of the English language factor into your confidence level when speaking?

I would say that the knowledge I have about English makes me more comfortable when speaking. I feel like I know a lot even though I'm not an expert. I think a teacher would be able to hear my mistakes, but I don't think most people would see something wrong with my English. In that way I'm confident and comfortable.

5. What factors do you believe are important in order to be a confident speaker?

You need to have a certain grasp of the grammar and have a vocabulary. And that you use it a little every day. I notice I'm using it less now than what I did last year, but I use social media and watch TV in English. So, in a way that's where I hear the language. There are also a lot of English words in Norwegian, but it is not the same.

6. How does your teacher help you feel confident?

I don't think there is anything that directly impacts our confidence. It is more about how to develop the language. It might be from positive feedback, at least for oral.

“That was good”, “You should work more on this”. That might be what strengthens our confidence the most.

7. Is there something your teacher could do to help you become a more confident speaker?

Maybe creating a safer environment where we don’t have to be afraid of making mistakes. Not correcting us if we raise our hand in front of the class to speak, some people might feel uncomfortable being corrected in front of the whole class. The teacher can say it to the person or if it is a common mistake address it in front of the class, but not right after.

8. In what setting do you usually speak English?

I work in a toy store and sometimes people come in that don’t speak Norwegian so we speak English. And sometimes when I’m joking around with friends. But I don’t use it enough.

9. Do you feel that it is important for you to be a confident English speaker?

I’m not sure, in a way you have to be confident in order to not be afraid of speaking and to give a little of yourself. But I don’t know, I don’t feel like I can answer for those who might not be as confident. I don’t know how it is for them. In bigger groups, in front of the class, and when giving presentations it can be a more difficult if you’re not confident. But in smaller groups it is easier.

10. Is there more use of spoken English or Norwegian in your English class?

We are supposed to only speak English in English class, when raising our hands to answer questions or during discussions. Usually during group work too, but then a little Norwegian could be used. I think it usually happens.

11. Do you actively participate in classroom discussion?

I do.

12. Do you feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom?

I do, but I can tell not everyone is. I think what would make me more comfortable was if more people were actively participating. Then it would be a lower threshold for speaking. I think that would help, and in a way that is what I have been trying to do. Make space for others and if someone says something that I think was good I could say it. Praise each other in a way.

13. Are there times you do not feel confident in the classroom? Why or why not?

Maybe when I get questions I'm not prepared for and have to think. When what I'm thinking isn't necessarily correct or if there are a lot of new and difficult words. Something like that.

14. Is your confidence level dependent on the size of the group you are speaking in?

Maybe a little, but I don't think it has too much of an impact on me. Of course, I think a little more about what I'm saying if it is formal or in front of larger groups. But at the same time, I feel confident. We did an in depth project in smaller groups. Three students and the teacher were listening to the presentation and that wasn't too bad. I didn't worry about the people listening, more about the content. I might be a little more scared or less confident if there are more people. Overall, I would say it has somewhat of an impact on me.

15. Would you say that being comfortable affects your confidence? Why or why not?

Yes, absolutely.

16. On a scale of 1 to 10 where would you place yourself. With 1 being not confident and 10 being confident when speaking English?

Maybe 8.

Participant E

1. How would you define confidence?

Not being scared to talk in front of people. Being able to be yourself. Maybe loving yourself.

2. What do you think it means to be a confident speaker?

Knowledge of the topic and being able to speak in front of people.

3. Do you feel confident when speaking English? Why or why not?

No, I don't feel that I know English well enough.

4. In what ways does your knowledge of the English language factor into your confidence level when speaking?

It is more about my knowledge on the topic.

5. What factors do you believe are important in order to be a confident speaker?

You have to have general confidence. Knowledge of the topic, practice, and experience.

6. How does your teacher help you feel confident?

He doesn't. I have a bad teacher.

7. Is there something your teacher could do to help you become a more confident speaker?

I think having one on one conversations multiple times before having to speak in front of more people. If you are new in a class and have to talk in front of a lot of people it's better to have talked English with the teacher first. Practice in smaller groups.

8. In what setting do you usually speak English?

In the classroom. At restaurants where the staff are not Norwegian and in other countries.

9. Do you feel that it is important for you to be a confident English speaker?

Yes, but you can also fake confidence. If you're stressed, you can pretend to be confident.

10. Is there more use of spoken English or Norwegian in your English class?

Norwegian.

11. Do you actively participate in classroom discussion?

No, but we don't have a lot of discussions. My class isn't very talkative. If I'm asked questions, then yes.

12. Do you feel comfortable speaking English in the classroom?

Not very comfortable. If it's a few sentences yes, but not presentations or reading out loud.

13. Are there times you do not feel confident in the classroom? Why or why not?

Yes, presentations and reading out loud.

14. Is your confidence level dependent on the size of the group you are speaking in?.

Yes, I would say so. Smaller groups are better.

15. Would you say that being comfortable affects your confidence? Why or why not?

I think it does. Confidence and comfort is kind of connected. Some people are comfortable talking in front of people, therefore confident. But if you're not comfortable you're not confident.

16. On a scale of 1 to 10 where would you place yourself. With 1 being not confident and 10 being confident when speaking English?

It would have to be a 6 or 7.