



University of  
Stavanger

FACULTY OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

## MASTER'S THESIS

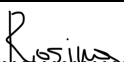
Programme of study: MLIMAS

Master in Literacy Studies

Spring semester, 2017

Open

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Supervisor: Oliver Traxel

Thesis title: Motivational strategies with particular emphasis on writing when teaching English in Norwegian schools

Keywords: motivation, English language writing, upper secondary level

No. of pages: 82  
+ appendices/other: 38

Stavanger, May 12, 2017

# UNIVERSITY OF STAVANGER

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## **Abstract**

The given thesis is a study of motivational strategies used by teachers when teaching English Writing in an upper secondary school in Norway. Writing is an important part of L2 learning, the skill that is complicated and hard to acquire. The ability to express oneself in writing is one of the five basic skills in the Norwegian *LK06* English subject curriculum. However, some Norwegian studies (e.g. Lehmann 1999; Nygaard 2010) indicate that Norwegian students' English writing skills are questionable. Writing skills are mostly acquired at schools so it is important to investigate how English Writing is taught at schools and how to improve pupils' writing proficiency using motivational techniques and strategies. According to Dörnyei, motivational strategies are methods and techniques used to generate and maintain learners' motivation (2001: 2). According to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei, the teacher's use of motivational strategies is generally believed to enhance student motivation, yet the literature has little empirical evidence to support this claim (2008: 55).

The data was collected from the questionnaires given to pupils and the interviews with three teachers of English who work in Norwegian schools with pupils from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. The study investigates both pupils' and teachers' experiences and attitudes to motivation in English subject and English Writing, which makes the given research useful for further studies in both motivation and teaching Writing in the Norwegian context. The thesis looks into how teachers provide a motivational environment during classes and what pupils consider motivating. The mixed research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, are used in the given research, namely semi-structured interviews with three teachers, and questionnaires answered by 100 pupils.

The summarized results of teachers' interviews showed that the teachers have a more or less similar attitude to motivation, emphasizing its importance in the long process of L2 learning. They tend to use similar motivational strategies during their Writing lessons. However, the teachers did not always use the most beneficial strategies due to the limited amount of time given to teaching Writing in English lessons.

The results of the pupils' questionnaires showed that the majority of the learners are quite motivated in studying the English language and Writing in particular. It is as well possible to conclude that self-motivated pupils who have a genuine interest in L2 learning are more interested in the positive result than the students motivated by teachers, parents or for some other reasons. However, the results as well indicate that the language teachers' motivational practice is linked to the levels of the learners' motivated learning behaviour as well as their motivational state.

This thesis intends to make a contribution to the research on English Writing teaching in upper secondary schools in Norway with the focus on motivation and to provide insights into the experiences and attitudes of teachers and pupils.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank those who have helped me with writing this thesis. First I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Oliver Traxel for his expertise, resourcefulness, his help and guidance in this long writing process. I would also like to thank the brilliant teachers of the faculty for their patience during the learning process and for motivating me, namely Jacob Stig Rønnow Thaisen, Ion Drew, Merja Riitta Stenroos and Brita Strand Rangnes.

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## **List of abbreviations**

ESL: English as a Second Language

GPA: Grade Point Average

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

*LKO6: The Knowledge Promotion Curriculum (Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet)*

NSD: Norwegian Social Science Data Service

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. The present study**

The proposed thesis will be a study of motivational strategies and techniques applied by teachers when teaching Writing in English classes, as a way of motivating pupils during their English learning process in Norwegian schools. According to Dörnyei, motivational strategies are methods and techniques used to generate and maintain learners' motivation (2001: 2). The aim of the study was to investigate what strategies teachers use to motivate or to keep pupils motivated during English lessons in upper secondary schools in Norway and to determine which strategies can be considered the most effective ones for teaching writing. The data was collected from interviews with three English teachers as well as the questionnaires given out to 100 pupils from 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. By using both qualitative and quantitative approaches the study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What kind of motivational techniques (strategies) are used by teachers for teaching Writing during English lessons in Norwegian schools and which ones of them teachers consider to be the most effective.
2. What is the possible solution of the motivational problem and formation of pupils' positive attitude towards English Writing and learning the English language.

## **1.2. The context and the practical significance of the research**

The subject of the research is the use of motivational strategies and techniques that hypothetically could increase or keep motivation in the long process of learning English and English Writing. The specifics of the study are explained by the fact that the English language in Norway is taught as L2.

Many scholars emphasise that learning a L2 is a long and hard process, requiring learners' persistence and commitment, which can only be achieved by a sufficient level of motivation in the classroom. The aspect of motivation was chosen due to its importance in the learning process, particularly in learning a L2. Scholars agree that motivation is a very important, yet very complex human characteristic, it is responsible for the choice of particular actions as well as the effort and the persistence expended on it. (Dörnyei 2001: 7; Gardner 2007: 2). Most pupils with sufficient motivation can achieve a working knowledge of L2 and even the brightest learners cannot go far without motivation (Dörnyei 2001: 5).

The research theory suggests that motivation plays a crucial role in a L2 learning process, and if a teacher uses effective motivational techniques pupils can improve their L2 knowledge. Vygotsky emphasises the importance of motivation in the learning process: "if we ignore the child's needs and the incentives which are effective in getting him to act, we will never be able to understand his advance from one developmental stage to the next, because every advance is connected to a marked change in motives, inclinations, and incentives." (1978: 92). The problem of motivation in the classroom has always been a topic of discussion among scholars, many works are devoted to this topic and it still has not lost its significance. Luis C. Moll writes that there is a clear separation between the approaches used for the analysis and study of what traditionally has been called basic or primary motivations and the approach for so-called secondary or social ones (1990: 79). This research will look into the existing types of motivations and approaches described by different scholars.

The current study will try to systemize the existing motivational techniques implemented in the educational process. The practical significance of the research will as well be determined by the findings and observations which might be beneficial for researchers, teachers and learners in identifying the role of motivated studying in L2 learning, and hopefully contribute to a better understanding of the pupils' learning experiences. In addition, the results of this study might be useful in the perspective of what needs to be changed, improved or paid attention to in the learning process.

### **1.3. The outline of the thesis**

The suggested structure of the research will consist of seven main chapters, followed by the References and Appendix. The research begins with the Introduction where the main points of the research are explained and highlighted, including the context and the practical significance of the research and the given outline. It is followed by Chapter two, which will provide background information about the English curriculum and children education in Norway, including subchapters about English writing in Norwegian schools and the “Knowledge Promotion” curriculum. Chapter three will give an outlook on the theory and the literature overview and will highlight such aspects as written language, children’s literacy and motivation in pedagogy and L2 teaching. Chapter four will provide an overview of the methodology, such as qualitative and quantitative methods used in this research, interviews and questionnaires with the teacher and pupils, and the process of collecting the research data, as well as validity, reliability and ethical issues. Furthermore, Chapter five will provide findings in a way of description of the processed data. Chapter six will present the discussion of the findings and they will be described in relation to the research questions and theory, as well as the limitations and implications of the study. In Chapter seven, the conclusion will be presented.

## **2. Background**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents background information that can be considered relevant for the study of motivational strategies and techniques applied by teachers when teaching Writing in English classes, as a way of motivating pupils during their English learning process in Norwegian schools. Section 2.2. gives the reader insight into the place of the English language in Norwegian school. The next section 2.3. gives an outlook on the structure of the Norwegian system of education - *The Knowledge Promotion Curriculum*. Section 2.4. provides information about teacher education in Norway and section 2.5. about teaching English Writing in Norwegian schools.

### **2.2. The English language in the Norwegian school system**

The English language is taught as a L2 in Norwegian schools and this subject takes a big place there. For the past few decades, Norway has become a country with a broad spectre of nationalities and the Norwegian Ministry of Education emphasises the importance of The English Subject. The common language is known as the *lingua franca* and the English language can be considered it in Norway.

It has been suggested that “the development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds” (Ministry of Education and Research 2013: 2). It can as well be mentioned that language and cultural competence promote better education perspectives and strengthen democratic involvement and co-citizenship. In further reference to the Ministry of Education and Research “the subject of English is structured into main subject areas with competence aims and the main subject areas supplement each other and must be considered together” (Ministry of Education and Research 2013: 2). It is possible to say that as the world becomes more and more connected and the culture in Norway becomes more and more globalized, it is important that Norwegians know how to communicate and

write in English<sup>1</sup>. Being able to perform writing skills is crucial for normal functioning in a modern society as many everyday tasks require one to know how to read and write (Grabe and Kaplan 1996: 3).

### **2.3. The “*Knowledge Promotion*” curriculum**

Norwegian children start school at the age of six and attend a 10-year obligatory school: primary school from first to seventh grade and lower secondary school from eighth to tenth grade. Children start learning English in the first grade as a compulsory subject in primary school and lower secondary school<sup>2</sup> the total of all the English lessons is 588. After pupils have finished lower secondary school, they can decide which upper secondary school they would like to attend and what programme to choose. English is a compulsory subject in both the general and vocational programmes in upper secondary school. In the general programmes, English is a five-hour-a-week course that lasts the whole of the first year. In the vocational programmes the course is spread over the first two years, with three hours in the first year and two hours in the second year. The same curriculum and learning goals apply to both courses.

After upper secondary school pupils can have the opportunity to enter universities or colleges. Pupils can choose two directions from upper secondary education: vocational and general programmes. The vocational system leads to a specific professional occupation such as:

- agriculture, fishing and forestry
- building and construction
- design, arts and crafts
- electricity and electronics
- healthcare

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.udir.no/k106/ENG1-03/Hele/Formaal/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/utdanning/grunnopplaring/artikler/innhold-vurdering-og-struktur/id2356931/>

- childhood and youth development,
- media and communication
- restaurant and food processing

These programmes consist of two years in school but there are also possibilities to continue with a third year in school instead of the apprenticeship, and students who choose to be able to attend universities or colleges.

The *LK06*, puts a great emphasis on the development of the basic skills. The curriculum as well presents a framework for five basic skills that are regarded as the basis for future learning. These basic skills include the ability to read, the ability to express oneself orally, in writing, to master numeracy, and the ability to use digital tools. The Framework for Basic Skills explains how the basic skills can be integrated into every subject curriculum and their importance for developing pupils' competence. By implementing these skills into every subject, one ensures that the skills are taught more frequently and that students are able to adapt and use them in other areas of learning (Framework for Basic Skills, 2012)<sup>3</sup>.

#### **2.4. Teachers' education in Norway**

To be able to work as a teacher in upper secondary schools in Norway, at least a Bachelor degree in two subjects is required. Many upper secondary schools give preferences to teachers with Master's degree for the teachers' main subject. The teacher as well needs to have a completed one-year Postgraduate Certificate of Education.<sup>4</sup> This course includes educational theory, subject-specific didactics, school practice and gives the teacher the competence to work at the intermediate, lower and upper secondary levels. It is as well important to take into consideration the Norwegian law on education given by the Norwegian

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.udir.no/Stottemeny/English/Curriculum-in-English/\\_english/Framework-for-Basic-Skills/](http://www.udir.no/Stottemeny/English/Curriculum-in-English/_english/Framework-for-Basic-Skills/)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.uis.no/studietilbud/laererutdanninger/praktisk-pedagogisk-utdanning-ppu/praktisk-pedagogisk-utdanning-heltid/studieplan-og-emner/>

Directorate for Education and Training. These regulations along with the LK06 curriculum create a framework for teachers that was developed individually for each subject.

## **2.5. English Writing in Norwegian schools**

The subject of English is a common core subject for all the upper secondary education in Norway and is divided into four subject areas: Language Learning; Oral Communication; Written Communication; Culture, Society and Literature. (Ministry of Education and Research 2013: 3). The ability to express oneself in writing is one of the five basic skills in the Norwegian *LK06* English subject curriculum, but some Norwegian studies (e.g. Lehmann 1999; Nygaard 2010) show that English writing skills of Norwegian pupils are inadequate. Therefore, it is important to investigate how teachers deal with the problem of motivating pupils and which of those methods aimed at improving pupils' writing skills can be considered the most effective ones.

Lehmann's two studies (1999; 2010) indicate that there seem to be problems concerning the level of English writing skills in Norwegian schools. The studies have concluded that Norwegian students' level of English writing skills is not as high as it needs to be. Both studies conducted within a two-years-time span had similar results and indicate that these problems might still exist in Norwegian schools. Lehmann's doctoral study of Norwegian students of English in higher education (1999) showed that many Norwegian students did not acquire sufficient skills in English in school that would be necessary later in life, higher education and professional life. Lehmann wrote that teachers of English put too much focus on the communicative aspect at the expense of accuracy. In another study, Nygaard (2010) found that the level of written accuracy in English was generally poor amongst upper secondary level students and argued that the English writing instruction in the earlier school levels should be improved.

Writing in English is a skill that is mostly learnt in school, and therefore it is important to investigate how writing and feedback are experienced in the school system and the attitudes towards it. Writing is a "set of skills which must be practised and learned through experience"



(Grabe and Kaplan 1996: 6). Learning to write includes amongst other things, training and instruction (Grabe and Kaplan 1996: 6), and this instruction is primarily done in a school context.

### **3. Theory and literature review**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical material that is relevant to this thesis. First of all, the concept of Written language is addressed in section 3.2. since the thesis is partially about L2 writing. Section 3.2.1. presents the theory on the importance of developing children's literacy from the early age. Section 3.2.2. presents the theory on the L2 Writing. Furthermore, section 3.2.3. which as well refers to Writing, presents the aspect and peculiarities of writing at school. In section 3.2.4. the aspect of teaching Spelling and Composition is presented. Section 3.3.1. presents the concept of Motivation. The theories of Motivation in Pedagogics are presented in the section 3.3.2. and the concept of Motivation in L2 learning is presented in the section 3.3.3. Finally, section 3.3.4 deals with Motivational Strategies.

#### **3.2. Written Language**

It is hard to overestimate the complexity of the written language. Being a complex activity, writing takes much time and practice to master, especially writing in a foreign language. The problem of mastering written language is a problem of formation of the need for writing. Vygotsky claims: "Written speech is not a simple translation of spoken language in written characters, and the mastery of the written language is not simply mastering writing technique. In this case, we would have to expect that together with the assimilation mechanism letters written language is as rich and developed as the spoken word and would like her as a translation - the original. But this is not the case in the development of written language" (1998: 45).

As it was stated above, teaching spelling and writing in general is a very important part of foreign language teaching. The term "*writing*" is quite ambiguous: it can refer either to the process of writing or to the written product, the term is also ambiguous between the composing aspects of writing, such as good handwriting and spelling. A child may be a poor speller but write well-structured stories, and be a good speller, but write badly structured

(Brindley 2005: 151). Writing is a communication tool, the ability to convert inner thoughts into writing. To reach this goal one should be able to master spelling and calligraphic skills, to build a sentence, composed on inner speech, and to be able to select appropriate lexical and grammatical units.

Both writing and speaking are the so-called productive (expressive) types of language activity but writing is even more complicated by a number of circumstances related to the conditions of the written form of communication. Writing is expressed in the fixation of certain content in graphic signs. And if speech is primary and the ability to speak comes to people naturally at an early age, writing is something taught to us, and this is a difficult process (Cook 2004: 36). Both speaking and writing can be seen from the idea of the selection of the necessary resources (which words are needed, how they combine in the statement) and to implement the plan by the means of the language, in speech and in writing. In the given research, writing skill has been viewed as the activity of marking coherent words on paper and a skill of composing an independent text. Writing is considered to be one of the instruments of cognition, contributing to the development of other skills such as verbalizing and reading.

According to Russian psychologists Ginkin and Bogojavlenskiy the difficulty of learning the written language can be explained by its psychological complexity: “Incorporating all the nerve-brain connections that are required for producing oral language, writing requires a number of additional connections” (Bogojavlensky 1966: 26). So, for the formation of a spoken word, hearing and speech productive connections are needed. They are needed as well for the formation of the written speech but in addition to the visual-auditory and speech-motor-graphic connections (Ginkin 1958: 86).

There are significant psychological and linguistic differences between speaking and writing. First of all, it should be said that the main difference between spoken and written language is its difference in permanency. Speech is an impermanent act where a speaker and a listener coexist in the same speech situation at the same moment in time. ‘...The ways in

which language relates to the situation have to vary between speech and writing. Because of the shared physical situation, the speaker does not have to spell out all the deictic links' (Cook 2004: 36). It is clear that a reader and a writer do not have to share the same speech situation or even same period of time. A written work can be read by anyone, anywhere, anytime, which is what makes it "permanent" (Cook 2004: 36).

Writing is, just like speaking, characterized by a three-part structure: a causative-motivational, an analytical and an executive. Vygotsky claims that a need or a desire to engage in communication or share something in writing serves as the causative-motivational part (Vygotsky 1998: 64). A speaker can see the immediate reaction of someone listening to each phrase he produces, whereas writing can only anticipate this reaction. A writer must often first explain the appropriate situation to the recipient, and only then can the recipient make his judgment. Data shared in a written form has to be fully described or it can cause misunderstanding. A writer is usually unable to add intonation to his speech, so he should be careful about how to build a phrase syntactically and pick up more adequate resources. Speech is often produced under severe time pressure but writing is usually not limited by time, so a writer is more focused on content than a speaker. A writer can choose the lexical composition of his speech but cannot use gestures and facial expressions, so a written text has to be grammatically well-structured.

Kellogg writes that the "...biological and cultural evolution of human species has resulted in a formidable array of consensual symbol systems, natural languages are ancient and extraordinary", but the development of writing systems occurred only after many millennia of oral language (1994: 8). It is a known fact that oral language competence underpins the development of literacy and later educational achievements "...our oral inheritance is as much a part of us as the ability to walk upright and use our hands" (Havelock 1991: 21). In contrast to speaking, learning to write successfully is dependent on a number of basic perceptual, cognitive, and language processes and poor performance in writing tasks can therefore be the behavioural manifestation of a wide range of developmental difficulties (Kellogg 1994).

Vygotsky suggested that the key to the art of free writing is to master the "abstraction, arbitrary inner speech," or, in other words, the art of the grammatical construction (Vygotsky 1998: 64). And it is impossible not to agree that written word differs from the spoken. In his Book "*The Psychology of Writing*" Kellogg mentions the connection between writing and creativity: "Writing, art, music, dance and other forms of symbol creation and manipulation reveal the very human process of giving meaning to the experience of life." Expressing meaning throughout symbols defines humanity and has deep philosophical roots and is one of the basic human needs. (Kellogg 1994: 3)

Although text production shares many components with oral language production, including lexical retrieval and syntactical formulation, writing places additional demands on the developing cognitive system. For example, children find producing a written narrative significantly more difficult than producing an oral narrative and the written mode takes up a more cognitive resource (Fayol 2012). To understand the nature of the relationship between oral and written language, it is necessary to consider both the subcomponents of the oral language system and the ways in which these components may directly or indirectly impact on the processing of written text. According to Sapir: "The written forms are secondary symbols of the spoken ones, symbols of symbols, yet so close is the correspondence that they may, not only in theory but in the actual practice of certain eye-readers and, possibly, in certain types of thinking, be entirely substituted for the spoken ones" (1921: 3-23). In other words, written activities in learning are closely related to the subject of speaking practice.

The four language systems speaking, including listening, writing, and reading develop in synchrony but writing development do not specifically identify the oral language as central to the writing process. Consideration of the components of the language system; phonology, the lexicon, grammar, and pragmatics (Dockrell and Connelly 2009: 46), leads to the clear prediction that these components will all impact on the production of written texts. Increased oral language facility is associated with increased written language proficiency. at the single word level, phonological processes impact directly on children's spelling development, the

mastery of which is a prerequisite to extended text generation. Over time these processes diverge. The focus of oral language is on elaboration whereas the focus of writing is the development of cohesion and knowledge transformation (Dockrell and Connelly 2009).

### **3.2.1. Developing children's literacy from the young age**

Literacy starts its development from the first years of a child's life. As it was stated earlier, reading and writing are closely related to each other, so it is important that parents read children's books to children from an early age. It is not only important for the sake of literacy development but also as an aspect of moral education. It is hard to overestimate the power of books in a child's life. A book should be a path that leads to the top of the intellectual, moral and aesthetic development. Picture books are a good way to start.

From the first year of life, children pay interest to the books with illustrations (so-called picture books). Later they start to develop the connection between an image and language. An illustration is the direct object, explanation, visual representation of what is described in the text. In addition, each illustrator is an artist who captures the spirit of the book using his imagination and creativity. The theory implements that just as a child learns its native language by looking at illustrations the same method can be used in second language learning. Using illustrated material during L2 classes helps pupils to develop skills of speaking and reading, to master reading and listening comprehension, to master grammatical skills and motivate pupils.

Using children's books with good illustrated work for both first or second language learners not only helps to give to the pupil a complete understanding of written material, but also gradually helps to educate their artistic sense. Illustrated material in books helps to develop thinking, imagination, aesthetic taste and makes a child more attentive and susceptible to the surrounding reality. According to Bodmer, illustrations serve to "expand, explain, interpret, or decorate a written text" (1992: 72). So the functions of illustration can be determined as:

- Educational
- Visualisational;
- Artistic function;
- Ideological education.

Pettersson assumes that there is a reason that picture books play an important role in our ability to write and read. We can be sure that people do not receive the same information from things they read, hear or see. The meaning of any language, verbal or visual, is resident not only in words but for example in colours, lines and in ourselves to a large degree. We have to learn to assign meaning to language symbols used. We have to learn the codes, and they differ in different societies and languages (1993: 4-5).

Vygotsky makes some conclusions about children's literacy (1983: 290-291): First of all, it is natural to start teaching writing to a child during pre-school years; writing should be paramount to children; the need in writing comes naturally to a child and it is important that parents would help to develop it. Vygotsky writes that if these conditions are consummated children will accept writing as a natural activity. But the given theory can be transferred into the school experience.

Drew mentions that skills that children get from their mother tongue classes can be transferred into second language classes (1998: 42-43). During L1 classes, children usually learn how to compose a sentence or spell letters for the first time, but writing and composing skills can and should be transferred to the second language classes. Cognitive mechanisms involved in language processing develop through cumulative experience and vary to the extent that structural properties differ from one language to another. Acquisition studies in L1 have shown that children are sensitized to the specific linguistic features of the language to which they are exposed in their early language development. Such linguistic conditions serve to shape cognitive skills and strategies appropriate to the second language learning (e.g., Berman 1986; MacWhinney & Bates 1989). It is possible to make a theory that the mechanisms

involved in word recognition also vary across languages due to structural variations in different orthographic systems.

### **3.2.2. L2 Writing**

Writing is complex and L2 writing is a difficult skill to acquire. It may even be the most difficult L2 skill. Hyland (2003: 2) writes that the area of L2 writing as scholarship emerged in the 1980s. Thus, it is a relatively new area of research. A number of theories have emerged in order to try to understand L2 writing; these theories have been taken up and put to work in classrooms. Hyland writes that each of these theories focused on the different aspect of writing such as:

- Language structures
- Text functions
- Themes and topics
- Creative expression
- Content
- Genre and context of writing

These six approaches together give insights to understanding the process of L2 writing. Writing instruction often uses a variety of these approaches, but some are more commonly used than other.

The first approach suggests a focus on language structures (Hyland 2003: 3). The given approach focuses on the text as a product. In this view, learning to write is learning about the linguistics, vocabulary, syntax and cohesion in a written language. This approach was commonly used in the 1960s.

A second approach focuses on text functions (Hyland 2003: 6). This approach focuses on learning how to write, a learner must acquire knowledge about patterns of writing and how



different language elements act in different ways of communicating, and how different types of texts have different functions and forms.

A third approach has its focus on the creative expression of the writer: Writing as a way of creating some personal message. Thus, teachers should give learners the freedom to create meaning. Hyland (2003: 9) writes that “Writing is an act of discovering meaning”. The most important element of this approach is the ability to express thoughts in writing.

The fourth approach is about the process of writing (Hyland 2003: 11). There are different stages of producing texts. Usually the writing process involves planning, writing and reviewing. The process starts with pre-writing such as searching for ideas and outlining the text. Then comes the text composing, which involves writing. The main factor is the feedback to the text. After the feedback is received the writer can edit the text. Post-writing activities can also include tasks. During the writing process, the teacher’s job is to guide the students through the process and help them develop their abilities to create, draft and refine ideas (Hyland 2003: 12).

The fifth approach is based on content; themes and topics that interest a writer may be the possible tasks.

The sixth approach focuses on genre. This approach is teaching the ways of using language for a purpose, by using different genres. Language is used to reach a purpose, and genre and the structures in the different genres are the tools for achieving it. Hyland (2003: 23) writes that even though many teachers use a mix of the different approaches, the most used approaches to teaching writing are the process and the genre approach.

The L2 writers meet many barriers on their way. The main difficulty for L2 writers is that they need to focus too much on how they formulate their ideas instead of focusing on organizing and structuring them. The other challenges are the social and cultural factors in writing in the language. Raimes writes: “There is no one answer to the question of how to teach writing in ESL classes. There are as many answers as there are teachers and teaching

styles, or learner and learning styles” (1983: 5). The most important thing is not to find the perfect approach, but a strategy that shows significant effects in the development of students’ writing.

According to Chomsky's universal grammar theory (1979), humans produce language through a deep structure that enables them to generate and transfer their own grammar to any other language. When people learn languages, they develop language skills which they naturally transfer to the skills learned in the first language (L1) to the second language (L2). O'Malley and Chamot define transfer as "the use of previous linguistic or prior skills to assist comprehension or production" (1990: 120). This indicates that while reading or writing in second language, learners transfer their first language knowledge or skills. This transfer process may either support (positive transfer) or detract (negative transfer) from learning.

Transfer can be facilitative, in areas where the two languages are identical. (Karim 2012: 49-50). It influences all aspects of L2 learning such as reading, writing and speaking. Bilingual reading research, for example, states that inefficient word recognition is associated with slow reading rates among otherwise fluent bilinguals. Depending on the lexical difference of two languages L2 learners may, or may not, have skills to use the knowledge effectively during lexical processing. However, there is not enough information concerning how such knowledge develops in the L2, particularly when the L1 and the L2 employ a typologically different orthographic system.

### **3.2.3. Writing at school**

In order to show the role of writing as a learning tool at school, it is necessary to consider the psychophysiological characteristics of writing. Writing down a thought means coding information into written signs. It is a very complex activity no matter what language is used. First of all, the mechanism of forming a written code consists of the same elements as the mechanism of forming an oral message: "programming of the semantically-grammatical part of the sentence, choice of words, syntagmatic programming, choice of sounds and intonations" (Leontjev 1969: 265). This activity also includes the process of matching

particular graphemes with their sound equivalents. The given statement suggests that the translation of the sound code into the graphic, and the opposite, is a diverse and complex activity. The system of written and spoken exercises in secondary school is executed in writing and aimed at teaching pupils to write and to speak.

In the past, researchers and teachers did not pay much attention to writing and referred to it as “talk written down” (Nunan 1999: 274). It is clear that writing and speaking are similar activities but there are some major differences. Written language, in comparison with speech is “used to communicate with others who are removed in time and space” (Nunan 1999: 275). Another distinction is that the written language must be “culturally transmitted” in other words “taught”, when the speech is “naturally acquired” (Grabe and Kaplan 1996: 6). Grabe and Kaplan write that “Writing is a technology, a set of skills which must be practiced and learned through experience” (1996: 6). Probably the biggest goal of teaching writing in L2 is to make a student an independent writer, but writing is not only a subject of studying but a tool as well. Pupils should learn to develop their dual roles as creators of meaning in their own texts and receivers of meaning in the texts written by others (Brindley 2005: 154-155). The purpose of teaching written language is to offer students a written communicative competence, which includes knowledge of written characters and forms of the written language.

The difficulties of teaching a written foreign language are as well linked to the creating of the special conditions needed for mastering the written language. These tasks include the formation of necessary graphic skills, the ability to produce the thought in accordance with the written style, and understanding of differences in style between speech and graphic form of a written text, as well as the intellectual readiness to create the content of the written work. The final training requirements of writing include the formation of students' practical ability to use foreign writing as a way of communicating on a high level.

Drew writes that successful writing depends on many factors, such as early writing, the level of the first language, the home environment, the link between reading and writing,

the integration of writing with the other language skills and implementation of writing strategies, such as process writing and group writing (1993: 65). Drew also makes a point that through their first language pupils get basic knowledge of the world around them and the cognitive skills necessary for them to produce writing. But even though writing in a first language and in a second language use very similar cognitive strategies when composing, it is wrong to assume that the act of writing on a second language is an equivalent to writing in a first language (Drew 1993: 45).

During L2 classes a big variety of the language skills is being practised, and development of other language skills can be followed by the development of writing skills. Writing often emerges naturally from listening, reading and talking, so all these activities should be included in second language classes. When we discuss, listen or talk it naturally increases our potential as writers. For example, oral discussion of a book in a classroom can be an inspiration for writing an essay (Drew 1993: 56). Written language can as well be seen as a stimulus for oral language. One of the examples is the different forms of oral language inspired by the texts in a course book, or some other texts. Oral and written language often interact in the classroom, and although spoken language is not always followed up by a written activity, it is certainly a good platform for it (Drew 2009: 111-112).

The content of teaching writing is different in different stages of learning, but it should always be consistent and move on from the simple to the complex. That is why in the primary and secondary stages of learning, composing is not seen as one of the learning objectives. Writing as an independent type of speech activity is used only by senior pupils at the final stage. The success of the final stage depends largely on how well the basic writing skills were formed. On the first stage of learning a foreign language, pupils are taught how to write letters and to pronounce the sounds. Here teaching writing closely interacts with learning how to read. It is important to simultaneously establish graphemic-phonemic correspondences at this stage. There is no use in being able to spell letters, unless you know what sounds they can transmit, and vice versa (Solovova 2002: 13). Teaching L2 writing at schools must be taken into account as many of the requirements that are provided by the programme are connected

with writing skills, for example the teaching programme suggests that at the end of secondary school pupils should be able to write a letter, an essay on a book, and a CV, not to mention pass the written test on listening and reading comprehension, etc. In general, the problem of teaching foreign written language at school is a problem of the formation of the students' need for writing.

Grabe and Kaplan (1996: 254) write about an important role of the teacher during the long process of learning L2 writing: "In planning a writing curriculum, the teacher must at various times be a motivator, an interpreter of the task, a designer of meaningful tasks, an organizer, a resource, a support person, an evaluator, and a reader for information". Teachers have as well many tasks when revising the pupils' work. They have at least three roles in performing this task: teachers are the audience, trainers and evaluators. In terms of motivation it is important to remember that the right approach to evaluation and feedback may serve as an effective tool of motivation.

It is probably important to mention mnemonic techniques, also referred to as mnemonic strategies, mnemonic devices, or simply mnemonics, which are systematic procedures designed to improve one's memory. These procedures are commonly used in L2 writing teaching practices, spelling in particular. The word "*mnemonic*" derives from the Greek goddess of memory, Mnemosyne, and means "*memory enhancing*." (Atkinson, Richard 1975: 825). The most comprehensive treatise on the historical development of mnemonic techniques may be found in Robert Alan Hrees's 1986 doctoral dissertation, in which it is noted that in preliterate cultures "history is preserved orally and the poets, like Homer, tell that history in their rich poetry, "recited by heart". The ancient Greeks prefaced such performances with a call to Mnemosyne, requesting her aid for a flowing and accurate recitation" (Hrees 1986: 7). Mnemonic techniques in L2 teaching work because they provide meaningful connections between informational items.

There are a lot of different methods of mnemonic memorization for teaching L2 writing. The most popular is the keyword method, which is designed to strengthen

associations between two or more items. Such items frequently consist of one or more pieces of information that a learner has not previously integrated as a unit. Considering the two types of writing and the use of mnemonics memorization for teaching writing, it should be some kinds of action that make the process of teacher writing easier (Naughton 2008: 67):

- verbal-pictorial associations (for remembering the spelling of a word);
- verbal-letter associations or pictograms (for remembering the spelling of a word);
- learning and rewriting text with S.T.O.R.Y. structure.

Essentially, this strategy "...uses pictures and other visual elements to enhance comprehension" (Naughton 2008: 67). Each letter of S.T.O.R.Y. structure represents an important story element of fiction texts, graphically and mnemonically. Students use this visual story map to support their understanding of a fiction story, picturing the different story elements and sketching them on paper. This mnemonic device is helpful for students who have difficulty remembering the five story elements.

When giving a feedback on written work it is also important that a teacher takes students' preferences about feedback into consideration (Hyland 2003:179). The form of feedback greatly affects motivation in the classroom. Different students have different preferences to feedback, so a dialogue with each student would be the best way to do it. Written feedback in general is highly appreciated by second language writers (Hyland 2003: 178). Usually, students prefer direct correction, but they also believe that they learn more when teachers simply underline what needs to be corrected (Chandler 2003: 291). Hyland (2003:178) as well suggests that many students prefer feedback on form in summative assessments. A student can always look back into the written feedback in order to address the mistakes that have been made or follow the progress in learning.

#### **3.2.4. Content of teaching Spelling and Composition**

There are different kinds of writing activities from composition to spelling. Words and their meanings are the building blocks of both written and oral communication, that is why it is important to pay attention to how spelling and composition are taught in school.

Spelling is not an easy skill to acquire, especially nowadays when many modern pupils rely on auto-correct and spell-check, however, a natural understanding of common spelling conventions is an important skill to acquire for early writers. Kemmer writes that the enforcers of spelling norms, schools and publishers, have so far maintained the current orthographic standards in printed documents, but because spelling norms are hard to acquire, given all the spelling-pronunciation mismatches, and writing has become so democratized through these technologies, the use of non-standard spellings (not just abbreviations) is increasingly widespread (1994: 98). However, despite this process of standardization, simplification does not reduce the difficulty of studying written language standards.

Likewise, Berninger found that primary-grade children who have difficulty with spelling avoid writing and develop a mindset that they cannot write, leading to arrested writing development (1991: 64). In contrast, learning spelling can enhance the early reading development by shaping children's knowledge of phonemic awareness, strengthening their grasp of the alphabetic principle, and making vocabulary easier to remember.

Systematic teaching of spelling will involve initial modelling of strategies, followed by guided and then independent practice. The teacher's role is to organize the examination of words in such way, that students understand how particular spelling features and patterns operate (Templeton & Morris 1999). According to Templeton & Morris (1999: 107) an explicit and systematic spelling teaching programme should:

- focus on teaching appropriate words related to:
  - the students' current levels of performance
  - the class programme and student needs
- explicitly teach spelling patterns

- teach in small blocks
- provide an opportunity for sufficient practice and feedback
- ensure maintenance of previously learned words
- provide for generalization of newly acquired spelling skills
- put an emphasis on the importance of correct spelling
- include dictionary skills
- be integrated across all Key Learning Areas.

There are a few theories on the teaching of compositional writing. One of them is based on differences between focusing on literature during teaching composition and focusing on "new rhetoric" (Carter 1990: 271). Supporters of the first approach do not deny the important role of literature in undergraduate education; rather, they question whether literature is the most effective vehicle for teaching writing. This approach to the teaching of writing emphasises textual features at the sentence level, unitary standards of "correctness" and the correction of mistakes. They as well pay attention to writing as a textual product (rather than an intellectual process), and the use of literary works both as exemplars of good writing and content wise. This approach often presumes a "teacher-centered" classroom focused on discussion of these literary works, with little explicit attention to the work of students in creating their own texts.

Supporters of the second approach focus on writing as a process (not just a product), invention and revision, audience and purpose, and context dependent criteria for good writing; it employs a "student-centered" classroom with emphasis on student texts, active learning strategies, and collaboration. Although research in composition does not yet provide definitive comparisons between these teaching methods.

There is as well another hypothesis on the teaching compositional writing. It is based on two different approaches: the first one concentrates on the process of producing a written text (writing-for-learning), and the second one on the result of written activity (writing-for-writing). A teacher should always be aware what he or she focuses their attention on:



“teaching the writing process or the product of writing, which means teaching pupils writing in different genres or teaching creative writing. In any case, it is a writing habit formation” (Byrne 1988: 29). Concentrating on the product of writing, the teacher is more interested in the purpose of writing and the final result, as well as the genre of written communication. The second approach suggests the emphasis on the different stages of the writing process: pre-writing phases, editing, re-drafting, producing a finished version. This approach requires trained teachers to follow the writing as a serious time-consuming work. Many school textbooks contain step-by-step instructions on how to compose a text, for both teachers and pupils. As an example, the following instruction suggests the given activities for putting together a good piece of work in writing (Byrne 1988: 31): a) Check language use; b) Check layout and punctuation; c) Check spelling; d) Check for unnecessary repetition; e) Decide on the information for each paragraph; f) Note down various ideas; g) Select the best ideas for inclusion; h) Write a clean copy of the corrected version.

According to Bazerman, there are six stages of instruction for written composition (Bazerman 1988: 82). The first one implements the development of the background knowledge and skills. For example, in order to write a good story, the pupil may need to learn the components of a typical story. At this stage, the self-regulatory component of goal setting might be introduced. At the second stage, a specific writing strategy is taught, for example "*Space*" for story writing, *S*: setting (characters, place and time); *P*: purpose (what starts the action?); *A*: action (how does the action unfold?); *C*: conclusion (how does the story end? how is the action resolved?); *E*: emotions (how do the main characters feel about the events of the story?). The third stage implements the use of the model of strategic writing: At this stage, the teacher demonstrates to the pupil how the strategies work in producing a good piece of writing. The teacher also models and reinforces goal setting, self-instructing, and self-monitoring. The fourth stage includes memorizing the strategy mnemonics: The strategy must be practised until it is memorized. At the fifth stage the teacher and pupils engage in supported collaborative practice: At this stage, the teacher and pupils practise writing together and jointly use their strategies and self-regulatory scripts (now including self-reinforcing), with the teacher decreasing support for both. The final sixth stage is all about an independent

performance: Strategy procedures and self-regulation scripts are reinforced, and the pupil is encouraged to fade their explicit use as they become automatic.

As outlined earlier, facilitating the self-regulatory dimensions of writing is embedded throughout the instructional process. Good writing requires not only the use of effective writing strategies but also mature self-regulation throughout the process of writing. These self-regulatory processes include (Salomon1998: 4):

- Self-awareness: To succeed with writing, students need to know that writing is difficult for them and, specifically, what their weak areas are so that they can compensate effectively.
- Goal setting: to succeed with writing, students need to know what they are trying to accomplish with their writing.
- Planning and organizing: written compositions are complex products with many components. To succeed, students need to know how to plan and organize their writing process.
- Self-instructing: to succeed with writing, students need strategies, but also need to acquire a habit of instructing themselves to use their strategies.
- Self-monitoring: to succeed with writing, students need to pay attention to the process and notice when they are missing a component or making mistakes.
- Self-correcting: to succeed with writing, students need to edit their work for mechanics (handwriting, spelling, grammar), elaboration, organization, and style.
- Self-reinforcing: to develop a positive sense of self as a writer and to maintain motivation, students need to reward themselves when they complete aspects of their writing and especially when they receive positive feedback from teachers.

### **3.3. Motivation**

### **3.3.1. The concept of motivation**

Motivation as a complex phenomenon which is of concern in many different disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, pedagogics, business and many of the scholars provided the definitions for motivation. Kleinginna and Kleinginna found 102 different motivation definitions and classified them into nine groups with different emphases. Two of them were focusing on internal mechanisms, three on functional processes, two groups with restrictive emphasis, and two emphasizing the comprehensive nature of motivation. In order to give one clear definition that all aspects would include Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) defined motivation as “an internal state or condition that serves to activate or energize behaviour and give it direction” (1981: 263).

The problem of motivation has always been interesting for psychological science and practice. The history of the study of motivation has its roots in the views of ancient philosophers as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and others. These views have further developed in the famous psychological theories of psychoanalysis, such as the theories of Gestalt, Levin, Rogers, Maslow, Vygotsky and Krashen.

Currently, the scholars note the existence of a large number of theories of motivation (about 50). This diversity can distinguish five basic approaches that have defined the methodology for developing modern concepts of motivation:

- the theory of needs
- behavioral sciences
- cognitive
- psychoanalytic
- activity-related

Most of the scholars agree that motivation is a set of beliefs, values and expectations as well as a set of behaviours such as persistence, engagement, requests for help and critical

problem-solving. Success or failure are usually reasoned by the combination of self-regulation, self-efficacy, goal-setting, interest. All these are as well influenced by a range of contextual and external factors: e.g. family, school, friends, sociocultural environment, teachers and many others. A lot depends on the personal qualities of an individual, optimistic pupils are more likely to succeed, and vice versa, motivated pupils are more optimistic and more willing to work on difficult tasks, form connections with others, enjoy the process of learning and expect success. Therefore, it is possible to say that positive motivation activates effective learning behaviour (Guthrie 2000: 237).

The motivational process and the meaning related to the word “*motivation*” are highly complex (Dörnyei 2001: 6). The problem of motivation is very relevant to the study of a foreign language, considering motivation as the main driving force in learning. Researchers have found out that the basis of occurrence of motives in the study of a foreign language is the needs, objective conditions of life and internal position of the personality itself. Here it should be mentioned the law of York-Dodson, which states that the effectiveness of any activity is dependent on the strength of its motivation: in other words, the steadier the motivation-the more effective is the activity (Khaydarov 2009: 221).

Motivation is broadly studied in psychology because it is fundamentally connected with emotions, personality, learning, memory, and with gaining an understanding of how behaviour is most effectively activated, organized, and directed toward the achievement of goals. There are two functionally interconnected sides in human behaviour: incentive-based and regulatory. Regulatory side provides the flexibility and stability of behaviour in different conditions and is realized through mental manifestations (sensation, perception, thinking, ability, temperament, character, emotions, etc.) Incentive–provides the activity and direction of behaviour. Describing this side behaviour is related to the concept of motivation. In psychology, the concept of motivation is used in two senses (Khaydarov 2009):

1) motivation is a system of factors causing the activity of an organism and determining the direction of human behaviour that includes the following education: needs, motives, intentions, goals, interests, aspirations;

2) motivation is a characteristic of the process, providing behavioural activity at a certain level, i.e. motivation.

Figuratively speaking, motivation is the root of a personality with all of its social-psychological characteristics (the orientation of the personality, its adjustment, self-conscience, and emotions) are formed and developed (Khaydarov 2009: 197). In this sense, motivation is the driving force of behaviour. However, there are some variations of this theory. Some theorists consider the state of motivation as a state of general arousal without any specific goal or focus, but as what is known as the total impulse or total attraction. In fact, they claim there is some particular behaviour that is dominant in this specific situation. Most other theorists, on the other hand, argue that motivational states are specific to certain drives and needs, and should always be analysed in terms of specific goals and direction.

According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009: 296) the learner ought to discover the possible scope of personal skills he/she possesses in order to grow according to their potential. Thus, the motivational development is aimed at the discovery of the array of possible selves, which can relate to the learners' hopes, wishes and fantasies, a motivational development that drives the learner into the future (Dörnyei 2009: 213). Indeed, in the study of human psychological motivation, this aspect is usually taken as an axiom. Therefore, motivation is often characterized by the idea that a specific behaviour or behavioural tendencies are observed due to the presence of a specific motivational state.

In his research, the Russian psychologist Khaydarov is giving the reference to B.I. Dodonov, who suggests that motivation consists of four components: 1. satisfaction from an activity; 2. the significance of its results for the individual; 3. the emotional force stimulating the activity; 4. the pressure imposed on the personality. Setting goals as well plays a significant role in theories of motivation. It must be taken into consideration that: 1) goals

regulate action, 2) difficult goals lead to more effective performance, 3) specific goals are always better than general, 4) pupils need feedback 5) evaluation of pupils shall be in accordance with previously set objectives (Khaydarov 2009: 175). In his Ph.D. thesis, Bugge as well mentions that the goal-setting components is a very important part of metacognitive knowledge, and the goal of any activity is the purpose behind it (2016: 46). When a learner is achieving his or her goals and discovers the pleasure of this process, it opens a big circle of self-regulated learning.

However, motivation is not a concept that can be used as the only explanation of behaviour. The Motivational States arise as a result of the numerous interactions and have a large number of other variables, such as the need or the intensity of the desire, the incentive value of goals, expectations, the availability of appropriate reactions (i.e. learned patterns of behaviour), the possible presence in conflict or contradiction of motives and unconscious factors (Celce-Murcia, Olshtein 2000: 34).

### **3.3.2. Theories of motivation in pedagogy**

The problem of formation of motivation is one of the most important ones in modern psychology and pedagogy. Moore noted that the position of the learner is not just the position of the pupil attending school, listening to teachers and carefully performing homework, it is the position of a man perfecting himself (Moore, Oaksford 2002: 76). Even though many scholars agree about the necessity of pupils' motivation in the process of learning, they tend to have different opinions on motivation itself. Language motivation is an important affective factor that influences language learning (Dörnyei 1998). Wigfield writes: "Motivation deals with...the choices individuals make about which activity to do or not to do, their degree of persistence at the chosen activities, and the amount of effort they put forth to do the activity" (2000: 140-141). To be motivated means to be moved to do something...Someone who is energized or activated toward an end, is considered to be motivated. (Ryan & Deci 2000: 54).

Most modern studies of motivation fall into several broad areas, among which it is important to highlight the following: (a) Behavioural, which focuses mainly on developing and improving theories of attraction and the theory of learning (b) Psychological, which focuses on the explanation of the complex, learned human behaviour patterns. Scholars as well have isolated such areas as: need for achievement, need for affiliation, need for a hierarchy of unconscious motivation. It should be noted that even though these theories may take different perspectives on motivation and often disagree in relation to how to define motivation theoretically and how to explain its operation, they all acknowledge the crucial role that the teacher can play in enhancing learners' motivational levels. Considering that, what teachers can do to enhance their learners' motivation assumes critical significance. All pupils in the classroom are different and require a personal approach, according to Celce-Murcia and Olshtein (2000) there are five levels of motivation in learning among pupils:

I - high level of motivation for educational activity. Students clearly follow all the instructions of the teacher, conscientious and responsible, and get very worried when getting an unsatisfactory mark.

II - a good school motivation. Students successfully cope with academic activities. This level of motivation is an average.

III - a positive attitude toward school. The school attracts students' extracurricular activities. Students feel quite well in school and socialize with classmates. Cognitive motives are less formed and the learning process does not attract them as much as a social aspect.

IV - low school motivation. Students attend school reluctantly, prefer to skip classes. Pupils experience serious difficulties in learning activities.

V - negative attitudes toward school, school disadaptation. Students experience serious difficulties in learning, do not cope with the training activity, experience problems in communicating with classmates, relationships with teachers. Students can be aggressive, refuse to perform tasks or follow different rules and regulations. These pupils are likely to have some neuro-psychiatric disorders (Celce-Murcia, Olshtein 2000: 34).

One of the most famous theories is Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) describes a social aspect of studying as the 'Zone of proximal development' (ZPD). The "Zone of proximal development" is explained as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978: 86). According to Vygotsky (1978: 87) in order to determine a person's mental development one has to not only pay attention to 'actual developmental level' to determine a person's mental development, but must also pay attention to their ZPD. Vygotsky writes "... what a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself or himself tomorrow" (Vygotsky 1978: 87). The ZPD is always developing and changing, so is a child capable of doing more difficult tasks.

Vygotsky writes: "Learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers" (1978: 90). The given theory emphasises the importance of social contact. Thus, such a type of learning is only possible when the learner relates to other people. Grabe and Kaplan (1996: 243) claim that the zone of proximal development can be as well connected to writing and that a 'socio-cognitive approach to writing evolved out of Vygotsky's theories.' ZPD can be applied to writing when a pupil learns to write in an apprenticeship with a qualified assistant who has a good qualification in the field. Thus, the teacher takes an important part in the process of teaching writing and motivating pupils. In other words, teachers' methods of motivation is an important aspect of learning according to Vygotsky's theory.

Gardner's social-psychological approach is also well known in the field and highly influential. It was originally proposed in the early 1960s and dominated the field for quite a while (e.g., Gardner & Tremblay 1994). Although, around the 1990s there has been a significant shift in the focus and nature of research on motivation in education and this shift gave rise to a range of new theories of motivation typically drawing on related research in the field of psychology, including expectancy-value theories, attribution theories, self- efficacy



theories (Dörnyei 2001; Oxford & Shearin 1994), self-worth theories (Stipek 2002), and value of success theories. Thus, “the cognitive-situated period of SL motivation research shifted the attention to classroom-specific aspects of motivation and created a fertile ground for educational implications directly relevant to classroom practice” (Dörnyei 2007: 111).

It is fair to say that pupils learning motivation is the "root" of educational process. And according to the studies of motivation in learning the positive influences upon this motivation increase the efficiency of education. The motivation to learn is connected to ones' motives. With regard to learning motives it is necessary to understand the psychological structure which induces and guides the learning process. It is the psychological structure that defines the quality and efficiency of the learning process. There is a great difference between the motivation to "get a good mark in an exam" and an aspiration to "form attitudes towards life" or to "change one's world-view" (Khaydarov 2009: 309). There are a variety of strategies that might help to increase motivation in the classroom (Khaydarov 2009):

- Recognize the complexity of motivation.
- Remember the initiation of motivation and its retention.
- Discuss with students the utility of performing an activity.
- Involve students in decision-making related to learning.
- Recognize the individuality of students.
- Strengthen internal motivation.

It is as well possible to allocate the other important factors such as the teacher personality, commitment, competence, teaching methods and low self-esteem of a pupil the experience of failure or lack of success (Khaydarov 2009: 309).

By ‘achievement motivation’ Heckhausen meant the motivation associated with the need of the individual to achieve success and to avoid failure. It is noted that achievement motivation is important in the activities under evaluation. Such activities include training activities, which are continually evaluated the level of knowledge and actions of students.

Thus, it was decided to explore the relationship between motivation and achievement motivation of successful learning (Heckhausen 2010).

According to Yuewu Wang, one of the best ways of increasing motivation in studying foreign languages is the development and setting of tasks that require effort to meet them. Tasks that give pupils the opportunity to communicate and a chance of self-development. If pupils are properly motivated, they are easily involved in the process of learning by themselves (Wang 2004). If their autonomy and independence are initiated by the teacher, pupils are eager to study independently and take responsibility for their work. Such pupils become active participants, authors, creators, while teachers play the role of leaders, organizers and consultants.

The description of the psychological schools, which determined the development of methods of teaching foreign languages, would be incomplete without the psycholinguistic model of Stephen Krashen, extremely popular in the past two decades in the United States. It consists of five hypotheses introduced in 1977, 1981, 1982, 1985:

1. The hypothesis about the difference between "acquisition" and "learning".
2. The hypothesis about the natural order of language learning.
3. The hypothesis of the monitor.
4. The hypothesis about the level of input.
5. The hypothesis of the role of sensual filter.

The hypothesis of the role of sensual filter (The Affective Filter Hypothesis) essentially takes into account the humanistic conception of the influence of the affective sphere on the assimilation of a foreign language. According to it, the acquisition is faster in the situation with a low level of anxiety, where there is no "protective" reaction. These and other barriers can be eliminated at the expense of: accessibility of information; creating a favourable psychological climate; given the sensitive component when entering information. Krashen names three variables crucial for success in L2 acquisition. They are: motivation,

self-confidence, and anxiety (1982: 31). Thus, it follows, less stressed or totally unstressed but self-confident, interested and motivated pupils can make successful learners.

### **3.3.3. Motivation in L2**

Motivation is essential when the goal is to learn a new language (Drew and Sørheim, 2009: 21). Many scholars agree about the necessity of pupils' motivation in the L2 acquisition, but they have different opinions on the nature of motivation. Some of them describe motivation as primarily cognitive in nature, and some see it as something that is being formed by social and contextual factors. Motivation research in L2 acquisition is usually associated with Gardner's social-psychological approach and the highly influential integrative-instrumental motivation dichotomy (originally proposed in the early 1960s), which dominated the field for quite a while (e.g., Gardner & Tremblay 1994). From around the 1990s there has been a significant shift in the focus and nature of research on L2 motivation. This shift gave rise to a range of new theories of L2 motivation typically drawing on related research in the field of psychology, including expectancy-value theories, attribution theories, self-efficacy theories (Dörnyei 2001; Oxford & Shearin 1994), self-worth theories (Stipek 2002), and value of success theories.

Overall, "the cognitive-situated period of L2 motivation research shifted the attention to classroom-specific aspects of motivation and created a ground for educational implications directly relevant to classroom practice" (Dörnyei 2007: 111). Dörnyei distinguishes three phases in L2 motivation research: a social- psychological period, a cognitive-situated period and a process-oriented period (2007).

As it was mentioned, well known theories on motivation in L2 acquisition belong to Gardner and Lambert (1972). They write about the separation between 'integrative' motivation and 'instrumental' motivation (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991: 173). Integrative motivation occurs when a pupil wishes to identify with another ethno-linguistic group, for example when children learn their first language. Instrumental motivation takes place when a

learner is motivated to learn a second language for utilitarian purposes, it can be future career or education opportunities. Thus, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991: 173) write that integrative motivation is more efficient and tend to sustain the longer and deeper interest in mastering L2. In accordance with the theory of the Russian child psychologist Markova, there are two groups of motives in learning (Markova 2003: 164):

1) Cognitive motives associated with the maintenance of educational activity and the process of its implementation. Levels of cognitive motives can ensure that the student has the "achievement motive". The data provide a cognitive explanation to overcome the difficulties of students in educational work, cause cognitive activity and initiative.

2) Social motives associated with social interactions of the student with other people. For example, "the motivation of well-being" is manifested in the desire to receive only encouragement from teachers, parents and friends. The motive of social cooperation is the basis of self-education and self-identity.

The internal motivation is directly connected with the object itself. It is often called procedural motivation. The influence of external motives (prestige, self-affirmation, etc.) may increase internal motivation, but they are not directly related to the content and process of the activity. One of the researchers of motivation in learning foreign languages, V. Apelt, names the following kinds of motivation: social, cognitive, communicative, self-actualization (self-actualisation), motives created by parents and teachers in relation to teaching (Apelt 1981). In addition, learning motivation can be divided into positive and negative. For example, a pupil understands that if he or she is going to study enough, the result will be an excellent mark for the exam. It is an example of positive motivation. If a pupil decided to study more just not to get expelled from school, it will be an example of negative motivation. The attitude of pupils to learning is connected with the formation of educational activity. Without taking into account the ability of pupils to learn, the teacher cannot positively change the essence of the attitude to school teaching. Therefore, a teacher has to develop a sense of "purpose-motivational" interaction with the pupil.

Some scholars emphasise the role of the teacher and motivational strategies in L2 learning (Guilloteaux and Dörnyei 2008). Motivational strategies used in a classroom greatly influence pupils' motivation. According to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008: 57) motivational strategies refer to:

- Instructional interventions applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate student motivation
- Self-regulating strategies that are used purposefully by individual students to manage the level of their own motivation

Pupils' attitude is also taken into consideration in the L2 motivational system put forward by Dörnyei (2005) and Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) and is built on the socio-educational model (Gardner 1985; Gardner and Lambert 1972). This system recognizes L2 motivation not as language learners' identification with others (how it was suggested in integrative motivation) but as language learners' identification with their future selves. The L2 self-motivation system comprises three major parts (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009: 29):

- the *Ideal L2 self*, which is “the L2-specific facet of one's ideal self”. The hypothesis of the L2 motivational self-system is that motivation is the result of pupils' psychological desires to reduce the gap between one's ideal self (i.e., one's vision of what one would like to become) and one's actual self (i.e., the state of one's actual, current self). For example, a learner who wants to be a fluent L2 user, and have an ability to confidently speak, write and communicate with international friends, is a good example of an effective L2 user (i.e., the *Ideal L2 self*). Such factors can act as a powerful motivator to reduce the gap between the here-and-now current-self state and the ideal end state.
- the *Ought-to L2 self*, the language-related attributes that “one believes one ought to possess in order to meet expectations of others and avoid possible negative outcomes”. If a pupil wants to be proficient in a L2 in order to comply with the social pressures in the surrounding environment and to “avoid failure”, the *Ought-to L2 self* is the main

motivator for L2 learning.

- the *L2 learning experience*, which are “situation-specific motives related to the immediate language learning environment and experience”. If a pupil highly enjoys the process of learning, e.g. fun learning sessions, education games, etc. it can serve a great motivation by itself.

It is possible to say that if proficiency in the L2 is a part of one's goal or, more specifically, one's “ideal or ought-to self”, future-self guides are powerful motivators for language development, because these guides provide directions for learners of how to put an effort in one's study and use self-regulation throughout the language learning process (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009).

This hypothesis of L2 motivational self-system has been validated in different contexts. Thus, most studies have discovered that the notion of the *Ideal L2 self* and *L2 learning experience* predict different motivated learning behaviours.<sup>5</sup> Motivational theories originating from such an individualistic approach see personal autonomy as the primary component in motivation (e.g. the self-determination theory, Deci and Ryan 1985). L2 motivation research is concentrated around a self-perspective principle but pays less attention to investigating cross-cultural differences in learners' self-images. Some variations of the self-components have been suggested by Taguchi et al. (2009), for example, for the majority of Chinese pupils the *L2 learning experience* is found to be less motivational than the *Ideal L2 self*. But for Japanese and Iranian pupils *L2 learning experience* is more important than the *Ideal L2 self*.

The role of English in the world's globalized community is particularly noteworthy. English has recently become a basic educational skill (Ushioda 2013) and not just a foreign language, so many learners have to learn two or more foreign languages at the same time.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.zoltandornyei.co.uk/uploads/2009-dornyei-mm.pdf>

Research on the simultaneous learning of several languages found out that learners' L2 self-conceptions are interrelated and when one of the languages is English, the self-conception for the other language may be negatively affected (Csizér and Dörnyei 2005).

### **3.3.4. Motivational Strategies**

Dörnyei defines motivational strategies as: “the motivational influences that are consciously exerted to achieve some systematic and enduring positive effect” (2001: 28). Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008: 58) write that motivational strategies fall into two categories: “(a) instructional interventions applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate student motivation and (b) self-regulating strategies used purposefully by individual learners to manage the level of their own motivation.”

Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) found a strong positive connection between teachers' motivational teaching practices and their learners' learning motivation in the classroom. According to that, language teachers could apply motivational strategies in order to improve their teaching practice by creating a more motivating classroom environment. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei write that motivational strategies are far more complex than the system or punishment and reward that most language teachers apply as their motivational teaching practice. The scholars specify that although there are a few different motivational techniques they all lack a theory-based framework. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008: 58) refer to the successful and systematic approach that was suggested by Dörnyei (2001: 29) and included four different requirements that language teacher should be able to meet in order to create a positive motivational climate in the classroom:

- A teacher should create motivational condition in the classroom. These conditions include a good teacher-student communication, pleasant environment and supportive atmosphere and generating a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms.

- A teacher should initiate learning motivation in the classroom in order to increase the learners' expectancy of success and develop positive attitudes toward the language course and language learning in general.
- A teacher should as well maintain the motivation level in the classroom and find the relevant tasks that would be educational, enjoyable and stimulating. Pupils should experience progress and success that would make them feel more confident and maintain a positive social image, even during potentially stressful practices such as speaking on a foreign language with limited vocabulary and language skills.
- A teacher should encourage self-evaluation and provide effective and positive feedback. Good feedback can encourage pupils and increase their inner motivation. The system of grades should also be presented in a motivational manner.

In their work "*English Teaching Strategies*", Drew and Sørheim (2009: 21) refer to Gardner and Lambert, who distinguish between *integrative* and *instrumental* motivation. If a pupil is fascinated by a language or culture and wants to acquire that language out of interest, it is referred to as *integrative* motivation. However, if a pupil wants to acquire a language for the purpose of external factors (job, education, etc.) the motivation is *instrumental* (Drew and Sørheim, 2009: 21). The combination of these two motivations makes the most influence on a pupil's motivation. The motivation can raise if learning is fun, relevant and if pupils experience success (Drew and Sørheim, 2009: 21).



## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In the given research, the researcher used mixed methods of data collection: qualitative, in the form of interviews with teachers and lesson observations, and quantitative, in the form of a pupil questionnaire.

An interview guide was prepared for the English teachers from Rogaland, Norway, in order to interview each of them individually. It was made in the format of a semi-structured interview, and the main questions were concentrated on the teachers' own experiences and attitudes to motivation in English lessons, and some of the questions were particularly about L2 writing motivation. In total, three English teachers from the case study schools were interviewed.

A questionnaire was prepared for the case study school pupils taught by the four interviewed English teachers. A total amount of 100 pupils from 8th and 9th grades were asked to answer a Likert-type questionnaire, ticking off 23 statements on a five-point scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The questionnaire included statements about the pupils' attitudes to Writing, the English language, teachers' practices and their inner motivation. Some questions concerned not only writing but other learning activities such as listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, vocabulary and so on. The pupils could also give the evaluation of teachers' techniques.

Since motivation cannot be observed directly, the research will employ both quantitative and qualitative approaches, in order to approach the topic from different angles and answer the research questions. The interviews will attempt to add insight into the results of questionnaires for which a quantitative data approach was chosen.

A mixed approach method was chosen to analyse the research results due to its flexibility. It will allow to analyse the results represented in figures (e.g. questionnaires results) along with the interview and observations that cannot be measured figuratively. In the mixed methods approach the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds using a quantitative approach, whereas a qualitative approach is the best for conducting and drawing conclusions from interviews and observations. Basit writes: “quantitative methodology is one in which the investigator primarily uses postpositivist claims for developing knowledge, employs strategies of inquiry that yield statistic data” (Basit 2010: 17).

The first section of this chapter gives an account of the nature of qualitative data collection, while the next focuses on the semi-structured interview. The subsections further describe the planning and making of the interviews, selection of informants, piloting and conducting the interviews as well as validity, reliability and ethics.

#### **4.2. Mixed method research**

The given thesis is based on mixed method research. Dörnyei writes: “A mixed method study involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study with some attempts to integrate the two approaches at one or more stage of the research process” (2007: 163). This type of research emerged in the 1970s and is widely used by researchers in social sciences since then, Dörnyei writes that this type of research “...opens up fruitful new avenues for research in the social sciences” (2007: 163).

The mixed type of research was chosen for different reasons, but the main reason is to give as complete picture as possible. The number of teacher interviews in this study is three, since these are combined with the quantitative research through pupils’ questionnaires, and therefore providing a good data overview and increasing the validity of the study. These two different research methods combined, complement each other and provide a broad understanding of the topic. Dörnyei (2007: 164) writes that these different types of research methods can provide a clearer and bigger picture of the object of study. Dörnyei (2007: 174)

as well points out that there are relatively few published studies that have used mixed methods, even though it can be considered as a good overall approach.

Mixed methods research seems like a good method for a research on the topic of “motivation”. This type of research seems to have a greater possibility to address complex and broad research concepts like motivation and provide more insight than only one topic would do. Thus, in the given research it was decided to implement qualitative methods of data collection in the form of teacher interviews, and a quantitative method for the pupil questionnaire.

### **4.3. Qualitative and quantitative methods**

In order to explore what motivational techniques are used by teachers and what is their influence on pupils’ interest in the English language and writing, a qualitative approach for data collection was chosen for the current research. This type of study usually focuses more on the individuals and the insights, rather than on the broad picture (Dörnyei 2007: 126). The purpose of the qualitative approach for data collection is to “understand and interpret social interactions” (Lichtman 2007: 10). Qualitative research is a flexible method of data collection and it focuses on describing and understanding a human practice and the reasons behind this practice. According to Dörnyei qualitative approach sets out to “...describe, understand and clarify a human experience” (2007: 126). The size of such study may vary, but this method works very well for case-study research. Basit writes “...the focus is on a detailed exploration of a small number of examples or participants who can elucidate a particular aspect of social reality. (2010: 16)”

The reason for choosing a qualitative method for the major part of data collection in this work was to get an insight into how teachers keep pupils motivated, which is one of the most important questions in modern pedagogics. The qualitative method for the biggest part of the given research was chosen due to the fact that the challenge of this type of research does not lie in getting enough data, but to obtain purposeful data (Dörnyei 2007: 125).

Another important aspect of the qualitative method is the data presentation. Due to the fact that in the qualitative research the biggest part of the material is usually presented textually, Dörnyei concludes that it has a tendency “to become increasingly long and bulky and messy” (2010: 125). Dörnyei as well points out, as a result of the qualitative method being fairly flexible, the data collection and the analysis in such a process “...are often circular and frequently overlap” (2007: 124). Therefore, the task of the researcher who is using the qualitative approach is to generate the data which is relevant to the aims of the study in order to answer the research questions. Lichtman writes that the researcher has to accept that he or she “serves as a filter through which information is gathered, processed and organized” (2010: 140). Dörnyei (2007: 125) concludes that the two main characteristics of a typical qualitative dataset are the tendency of qualitative data to become increasingly long and bulky and its’ unfocused and heterogeneous nature.

The difference between qualitative and quantitative methods is that qualitative research works best for exploring meanings and interpretation and is not focused on testing any specific hypotheses. Quantitative research, on the other hand, has been described as objective, generalizable and verification-oriented (Mackay and Gass 2005). It focuses on mutual features in groups. According to Dörnyei, in quantitative research is that the sample resembles and can represent the population (2007: 96). Thus, it is possible to say that qualitative approach to data collection can provide the researcher with rich and various data on the topic, while the quantitative approach can contribute by providing the more accurate proof. The given research combines these two different research methods for working on the interviews and questionnaires.

#### **4.4. The semi-structured interview**

According to Dörnyei, interviewing is the most commonly used method in qualitative inquiries (2007: 134). And it is indeed a very efficient way of collecting data because the researcher performs the role of the interviewer and can influence the process of data collection at any moment. The popularity of questionnaires as a quantitative method can

mostly be explained by the fact that they help to collect more data, although an interview is a better way of collection in-depth data. There are different types of interviews and different ways of organizing them. According to Dörnyei, the semi-structured interview is divided into different types according to its structure, and the typical length of a qualitative interview is about 30-60 minutes (2007: 134-135).

It was decided to use a semi-structured interview guide for the current research, and such structured, qualitative interviews should be prepared for in advance "...a pre-prepared, elaborate "interview schedule/guide" (Dörnyei 2007: 134), in contrary to an unstructured interview, which "allows maximum flexibility to follow the interviewee in unpredictable directions, with only minimal interference from the interviewer" (Dörnyei 2007: 135). According to Dörnyei (2007: 135), the semi-structured interview "offers a compromise between the two extremes: although there is a set of pre-prepared guiding questions and prompts, the format is open-ended and the interviewee is encouraged to elaborate on certain issues". This type of an interview allows the interviewer to ask supplementary questions during the interview session whenever it is needed. Basit writes "...the supplementary questions will be linked to the interviewees' responses to earlier pre-formulated questions" (2010: 103). Thus, the interviewer (the researcher) can ask more detailed questions on the topic of interest, and in this way elaborate answers of the informant can provide more significant and detailed data for the research. It is as well can be mentioned, that the semi-structured interview is the most favoured choice for research in educational contexts (Basit 2010: 103).

All the teachers' interviews were conducted in English. They were all English teachers and were comfortable with communicating in English. As it was mentioned before, the interviews were semi-structured, as this is the most common interview type in applied linguistics (Dörnyei 2007: 136). The semi-interview guide was prepared in advance with an opportunity for some elaborated data. Dörnyei writes that the most interesting data is often collected in these elaborations (2007: 137). The interview guide is an important tool for the researcher in the interview process and it is important that it is planned, worked with and tried

out (Dörnyei 2007: 137).

For the interviews to be successful there are many different aspects to keep in mind and procedures to follow. During the process of planning and setting up dates for the interviews, the informants were asked if they could reserve a group room for the session in their schools. The advantage of conducting the interviews at the teachers' school was that it was more convenient for them, so the chance that they would agree to participate was greater. Some preparations had been made before the interviews with the teachers. Firstly, an interview guide was created (see Appendix 1). It was also important that the interview was piloted in prior to the actual interview, therefore there was made one pilot session with a fellow student and one pilot session with the upper secondary school teacher of English beforehand. It would help the researcher to get an understanding on the time needed for the interview to check if all the questions were understood and if there was anything that needed to be changed before the actual interviews. The voice recorder on the mobile phone was as well tested during the pilot interviews (see Appendix 2). The pilot interview helped the researcher to find out whether some questions should be added, re-formulated or removed.

It was as well important to establish a friendly tone between the interviewer and interviewee for a successful and informative interview. Although the researcher did take some notes during the interviews, the sound recorder turned out to be a more reliable tool. As opposed to the note-taking method, the use of a sound recorder helped the researcher to concentrate on the process of the interview and helped greatly with the effectiveness of the communication. It is clear, that if a researcher is busy with taking notes it gets harder to follow the conversation, and the researcher might lose a chance to ask some important questions or ask for more open answers. It might as well affect the respondent, who will not feel that the researcher is participating in the conversation or paying enough attention. Seidman writes that in-depth interviews should be sound-recorded because it lets the researcher work more reliably with the words of participants, it provides the researcher with the opportunity to transcribe the interview word by word, to have the original data and to return to it anytime for accuracy (1998: 97). It was also important that the researcher paid full

attention to the respondents during the interview and was aware of other non-verbal communication of the interviewees, as the recording would not be able to get this information (Dörnyei 2007: 139).

When creating the interview guide, the researcher chose to mostly use open questions so that the interviewees could provide detailed and extensive answers. In the end of the interview, it was decided to include a yes/no section with closed questions to get answers for less important questions that will elaborate the result of the research without taking too much time. The interviews with the teachers aimed mostly to find out what practices, attitudes and beliefs they had concerning motivation in the English classroom and during their English writing classes.

The data processing was done shortly after the interview sessions. With the help of the recorder, the interviews were written down in the form of summaries.

#### **4.5. Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are a very common method in quantitative research (Dörnyei 2007: 95). Brown (2001: 6), as cited by Dörnyei (2007: 102), defines questionnaires as: “any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers.” Questionnaires can measure facts, behaviours and attitudes amongst a population and aim at “describing the characteristics of a population by examining a sample of that group” (Dörnyei 2007: 101-102). Thus, with the use of questionnaires, a researcher can get an overall picture on the topic of the research using a sample of the group).

The questionnaire as a method of data collection was chosen due to its multiple advantages, such as time, precision and quite clear results. It only took about 20 minutes for pupils to answer the questionnaire, it is a positive factor when collecting information from children who might not like the idea of a long process of data collection such as an interview.

Secondly, it was 100 pupils who participated in the research so it would be hard for the researcher to arrange so many interviews even if pupils would be divided into groups. On the contrary, one of the disadvantages of questionnaires is that they give only general data without in-depth information on the personal opinions.

The questionnaires aimed to find out how the pupils experience motivation towards learning English in general and towards learning English writing in particular and were analysed in a qualitative way in the Discussion Chapter. In total, 100 pupils from two 8th and two 9th grades were asked to answer a questionnaire, 50 pupils from 8<sup>th</sup> grades and 50 pupils from 9th grades, to be specific. The questionnaire was first written in English (see Appendix 3), and then translated into Norwegian (see Appendix 4). The reason for this was that the pupils, presumably, had different levels of English, and it was important that everybody would understand the questions in the questionnaires, which would increase the reliability of the research.

The pupils were asked to answer a Likert-type questionnaire, ticking off 12 statements on a scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” as follows, (“strongly agree”, “agree”, “neutral”, “disagree”, “strongly disagree”). This kind of closed-ended item is called the “Likert scale” (Dörnyei 2007: 105). The questionnaire included statements concerning the pupils’ attitudes to English subject, lessons, teaching practices of the teacher and English writing. Examples of questions in this section are: “I like to write in English” and “I receive enough writing practice in English at school”.

#### **4.6. Informants**

The two methods of data collection were used in the thesis: teacher interviews and pupils’ questionnaires. The study involved both teachers’ and pupils’ points of view, which gives a fuller picture on the topic of the study and increases its validity. Three English teachers from three different upper secondary schools participated in the research. And the total of 100 pupils from these teachers’ classes answered the questionnaires. The research



participants were chosen by the strategy of “convenience sampling” (Dörnyei 2007: 129). Dörnyei writes that convenience sampling is however, “...the least desirable, but the most common sampling strategy” (2007: 129). In that case, the researcher had to choose the participants who are available and are willing to participate in the study.

In this research, it was chosen to personally approach most participants of the study, although e-mails were sent to multiple schools in advance, however, not every school had an opportunity to participate. It was easier to find the participants for the questionnaires since their teachers participated in the interview, and most pupils agreed to take part in the research very willingly. The fact that all the participants were willing to cooperate made the task easier (Dörnyei 2007: 129).

Beforehand, it had to be decided what would be a sufficient number of the participants for the research, and what kind of participants they had to be (Dörnyei 2007: 96). In the beginning, it was planned to interview four teachers but one of them could not perform the interview, so the number was reduced to three, and since the interviews are the qualitative part of the study the number seems reasonable. However, the sample of the pupils had to represent the population, being a qualitative part of the research, so the number of 100 upper secondary school pupils from different schools seemed proper. The pupils-participants on purpose were divided evenly between schools and grades: 25 participants from 8<sup>th</sup> A grade, 25 participants from 8<sup>th</sup> B grade and 25 participants from 9<sup>th</sup> A grade and 25 from 9<sup>th</sup> B grade.

The sample represented population quite well since all four groups of pupils were from different schools and studied by different programmes. Most of the pupils willingly participated in the study, except for a few pupils in one of the schools, and these pupils had different levels of ability and knowledge of English. Diversity in sampling can help to increase the validity of the research.

The concept of validity is quite complex (Basit 2010: 63). In quantitative studies, validity can be reflected in the importance of sampling, development and statistical analysis (Basit 2010:

63). On the other hand, in qualitative methods of research validity can be represented “through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved and the participants approached” (Basit 2010: 64). Basit writes that qualitative researchers have to ensure that the process of gathering and analysing the data has been “scrupulous, honest and precise, and has addressed their research questions” (2010: 70). Basit as well emphasises that if validity is taken into consideration and the research is trustworthy and a qualitative study is according to Basit a “...unique and particular to a setting” then, “different data and findings, may still be reliable because they will interpret the data and report their findings in their own unique and idiosyncratic ways” (2010: 69-70).

#### **4.7. Ethics**

Ethics is an important part of the data collection process. Bailey (2007: 15) distinguishes three important ethical concerns to be met by the researcher: informed consent, deception, and confidentiality. First of all, to ensure the anonymity and protect the personal data of the participants, the information letter was sent to the Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD) for the approval, before the start of the research (see Appendix 5). This letter included both the teachers’ interview guide and the pupils’ questionnaire form. When filling out the NSD form the researcher tried to give full and correct information about the study. It is an obligatory procedure in Norway, and the researchers who intend to conduct their study in an educational institution have to get a letter of approval from NSD in order to protect the participants from deception and other ethical violations.

Second, all the information about the project was given beforehand to the informants and the same information was repeated at each interview session and before pupils filled out questionnaires. Informants were told that neither their names nor the name of the school would be mentioned in the research. The informants were asked if it was fine by them for the conversation to be recorded and signed the information sheet before the recording started. The participants were as well aware of the purpose of the research, the procedures used during the research, the risks and benefits of the research, the voluntary nature of the research

participation, their right to stop the research at any time, and the procedures used to protect confidentiality (Bailey 2007: 17-20).

Confidentiality is a very important issue, so it should be pointed out, that no names or places were mentioned during the recorded session or written on the questionnaire forms. The interview sessions were recorded on the personal recorder of the researcher, were not disclosed to anyone and were deleted shortly after interview transcription.

## **5. Findings**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The given chapter presents the findings of the research. Section 5.2 presents the findings from the pupil questionnaires. Subsequently, chapter 5.3 presents the data from the teachers' interviews. By using qualitative content analysis, the results of the interviews are presented in the form of a summary, as for the questionnaires the mixed approach was applied.

### **5.2. Pupils' questionnaires**

This section presents the findings from the questionnaires answered by the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade pupils from the case study schools, comprising 100 respondents in total. As it was stated earlier, the participants were divided evenly between four schools and four grades: 25 participants from 8<sup>th</sup> A grade, 25 participants from 8<sup>th</sup> B grade, 25 participants from 9<sup>th</sup> A grade, and 25 participants from 9<sup>th</sup> B grade.

The pupils' questionnaires were divided into four sections: personal data, motivation in learning English, writing in English and evaluating teachers' strategies. The analysis of the questionnaires shows that out of the 100 pupils involved, 47 were boys and 53 were girls. The Age of respondents was 13 (32%), 14 (54%) and 15 (14%) years old. The respondents wrote that their native languages were Norwegian (71%), then follows 6% Arabic, 5% Polish, 4% Urdu, 4% Swedish, 2% English, 2% Danish, 2% Somali, 1% Vietnamese, 1% Farsi, 1%Thailand, 1% Lithuanian. 93% of respondents answered that they can speak their native language fluently and 91% are using their native language at home. Besides their native language, pupils claim to have fluent knowledge of Norwegian (21%), English (9%), German (2%) and French (1%). The majority of pupils have already been studying English for 7-8 years (92%). On the question: "How would you characterize your current English skills on the scale from 1 to 5?" the majority of respondents (57%) answered from 4 to 5, 41% from 2-3, and only 2% characterized their knowledge as 1-2.

Table 1. Pupils' attitudes towards the English subject and motivation in learning the English language.

<b>*Number of respondents: 100</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I like the English subject.	171	23	4	2	-
I want to be able to speak English if I travel or talk to foreign people.	82	16	2	-	-
I think that English may be helpful in my future study/career.	53	20	19	6	2
I want to be able to speak more languages than just Norwegian.	74	17	5	4	-
I would like to improve my English skills to be able to use computers/ Internet or watch TV in English.	80	17	2	1	-

I learn English because I want to know more about other cultures, understand the world better.	69	15	13	2	1
I think foreign language study is part of a well-rounded education.	74	16	7	2	1
I only learn English because it's in the school curriculum/I would not learn English if I would not have to.	-	6	22	48	24

As table 1 shows, the majority of the pupils (71%) strongly agreed and 23% agreed that they like the English subject at school, opposed to only 6% of pupils who do not agree or answered “neither” to that statement. The same tendency can be seen with the regard to the statement, that pupils “want to be able to communicate in English while traveling or talking to foreign people” (82% strongly agreed and 16% agreed), compared to as little as 2% that answered “neither”. However, there was a greater spread in answers about whether “English may be helpful in the future study/career”: 53% strongly agreed, 20% agreed, 6% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed, 19% neither agreed nor disagreed. 74% of the respondents strongly agree and 17% agree with the statement “I want to be able to speak more languages than just Norwegian”, 4% were “disagree” and 5% chose to answer “neither”. The next statement was: “I would like to improve my English skills to be able to use computers/ Internet or watch TV in English.” Here it is possible to see that 80% of respondents are strongly agree and 17% agree that media and technologies play a big part in their wish to improve the English language skills, as opposed to only 1% that disagree to the statement and 2% that answered “neither”. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents (69%) answered “strongly agree” and 15% “agree” with the statement: “I learn English because I want to know more about other cultures, understand the world better.” Only 3% disagreed or strongly

disagreed with the statement and 13% answered “neither”. 74% of respondents strongly agreed and 16% agree that foreign language study is a part of a well-rounded education, 7% of respondents answered “neither” and only 3% answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree”. The last statement in the Table 1 was: “I only learn English because it’s in the school curriculum/I would not learn English if I would not have to.” 48% of respondents answered “disagree” and 24% strongly disagreed with that statement, as opposed to only 6% who agreed with the statement. However, 22% chose to answer “neither”.

Table 2. Pupils’ views on written English and school practice in Writing.

<b>*Number of respondents: 100</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I want to be able to read and write in English.	64	27	8	1	-
I like to write in English.	55	21	9	10	-
I think my writing skills have improved since the last semester.	48	19	21	8	4
I think that to write in English is harder than to speak.	27	25	20	19	9
I have enough English Writing practice at school.	16	23	27	32	2

I have enough grammar practice at school.	14	31	17	36	2
I have enough spelling practice at school.	17	27	24	29	3
I do a lot of writing in English in my free time as well (for example in social media)	38	32	13	11	6
I only write in English at school	8	17	15	28	32

Table 2 reflects pupils' views on written English and written school practices. The results show that the majority of pupils strongly agreed (64%) and agreed (27%) that they want to be able to read and write in English, with only 8% of pupils who answered neither and 1% who answered "disagree". 55% of respondents also marked that they strongly agreed and 21% agreed with the statement that they "like to write in English", 9% answered "neither" and 10% disagreed with the statement. The next statement was: "I think my writing skills have improved since the last semester", to which 48% marked the "strongly agree" variant, 19% agree, 21% neither, 8% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed. There was a greater spread in the numbers of answers on the next statement: "I think that to write in English is harder than to speak", where 27% are strongly agreed with the statement, 25% agreed, 20% answered "neither", 19% disagreed and 9% strongly disagreed. The next statement was: "I have enough English Writing practice at school" to which 16% strongly agreed, 23% agreed, 27% answered "neither", 32% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed. 14% of respondents chose the options "strongly agree" and 31% chose "agree" with the statement: "I have enough grammar practice at school". However, 17% of respondents chose



to answer “neither”, 36% disagreed 2% strongly disagreed to the statement. The next statement was: “I have enough spelling practice at school”, 17% strongly agreed with the statement, 27% agreed, 24% answered “neither”, 29% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. There was also a bigger spread in numbers of answers to the statement: “I do a lot of writing in English in my free time as well (for example in social media)” where 38% of respondents chose to strongly agree, and 32% agreed, with the statement. 13% of respondents chose the variant “neither”, 11% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed with that statement. To the statement: “I only write in English at school” 8% of respondents chose to “strongly agree” and 17% “agree”, while the majority chose to “strongly disagree” (32%) and “disagree” (28%). 15% of respondents chose the option “neither”

Table 3. Pupils’ views on evaluation system and teachers’ practices.

<b>*Number of respondents: 100</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I like when we do written task or tests at school so I can evaluate my skills.	35	44	19	2	-
I would feel more motivated in learning English if we did more various activities in class.	59	32	8	1	-
I like best to work in groups.	34	23	21	13	9
I like the idea of getting a mark for my written work, it motivates me.	47	20	15	12	6

I like to get written comments from the teacher on my written tasks, so I can improve.	43	37	13	4	3
I would prefer my teacher to comment my written work personally.	39	31	20	8	4

Table 3 represents students' views on the evaluation system and teachers' practices. It can be seen that to the majority of pupils strongly agreed (35%) and agreed (44%) with the statement: "I like when we do written tasks or tests at school so I can evaluate my skills". Only 2% have disagreed and 19% answered "neither". The next statement was: "I would feel more motivated in learning English if we did more various activities in class," to which the majority chose "strongly agree" (59%) and agree (32%), only 1% chose to disagree and 8% chose the answer "neither". There is a greater spread of answers on the next statement: "I like best to work in groups," that 34% "strongly agree" to and 23% "agree", however 9% "strongly disagree" and 9% "disagree", 21% chose the option "neither". The majority of respondents (47%) strongly agreed and agreed (20%) with the statement: "I like the idea of getting a mark for my written work, it motivates me." While only 6% strongly disagreed and 12% disagreed. 15% of respondents chose the option "neither". The next statement was: "I like to get written comments from the teacher on my written tasks, so I can improve." To that statement 43% chose to "strongly agree", 37% chose to "agree", 13% chose "neither", 4% chose "disagree" and 3% "strongly disagree". 39% Of respondents are "strongly agree" and 31% "agree" to the statement: "I would prefer my teacher to comment my written work personally." 20% of respondents chose the option "neither", 8% are "disagree" and 4% are "strongly disagree".

### 5.3. Interview with Rakel

Rakel was born in Norway and is 28 years old, she works as a teacher of English and has four years of teaching experience. Rakel has a bachelor degree in English, one year of Norwegian Literature study, one year of Religion study and she also finished a year course of pedagogics. She is teaching English to 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades in high school. Rakel tries to stay updated on new teaching strategies and she says that the teachers of her school usually have seminars where they can share teaching experience, for instance, they have an “English group” where they discuss strategies and learn from each other.

Rakel thinks that pupils’ oral language skills are generally better than writing skills. She means it has a lot to do with what “pupils are exposed to”, learners hear a lot of English, in songs, TV or media. Although pupils do write in English, it is mostly in social media, and it is not very accurate writing, so it is probably one of the main reasons of low academic writing skills in schools. In Rakel’s experience children also do not read so much and are not really that interested in doing it. She means that pupils themselves think that mastering English oral skills is more important than mastering written language. Rakel considers reading the best way of improving writing skills, therefore motivating pupils to read can be the key to success: “Probably finding the literature that children would find really interesting could do the trick, but a way of memorizing vocabulary is also a very effective technique for spelling teaching”. In her experience that is how she learned to write. Rakel mentions that pupils are always making the same mistakes when she checks their essays, so she tries to sort them (essays) out and focuses on explaining to pupils what they did wrong and revise some material. Thus, practising and working on these typical mistakes could also make a big difference. Rakel’s pupils’ written and oral skills are probably a little above average so she means it could be hard for her to say if skills of other pupils in other classes are sufficient enough to continue their further education in English, although she means that most of them would have problems with writing an academic style paper.

Rakel mentions that English is definitely one of the subjects most pupils like, probably because English is an international language and pupils know that they have to learn it and they will use it. However, she mentions that some pupils do not like English lessons and mostly because of oral presentations, “They feel that they get judged by each other”. Some of Rakel’s pupils have fear of speaking English in public and are not eager to do so.

Rakel thinks that many English teachers pay more attention to speaking practices and not writing during their lessons. She does it herself, because she means “...it is the way that one would use English most, in everyday life”. She thinks that oral English is the most important skill to master since few students will actually have to apply academic written English in their future life.

Rakel thinks that motivation is crucial for learning, and although our society is “exposed to English” pupils will learn something whether they want it or not, but pupils that progressed the most are the most motivated ones. For some pupils, the motivation is in the grades but some are interested in language, “...but mostly they are motivated by grades”, Rakel explains. Some pupils as well have started to think about their future education, which can also be motivating. Rakel gives questionnaires to pupils so they can evaluate her teaching techniques and see what can be improved.

In their school, they use books series that is called: “Searching”, which Rakel means is a bit outdated. There is a book for the teacher, a pupil’s book and an advanced version that she uses if she wants to challenge a student. This course lasts from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grades with new books each year and includes all different kinds of tasks like grammar exercises, vocabulary, sentence building, reading, essays and other.

There are two hours a week of English in Rakel’s school, so she tries to split the given time evenly on different types of tasks and she uses about 45 minutes a week on teaching writing, which she says is not enough. Usually, they do grammar, vocabulary exercises or written essays during lessons. Rakel means that producing longer texts is the biggest

challenge in Writing classes for her pupils, especially texts that "...require more advanced usage of words or linking words." According to Rakel, pupils struggle more with producing their own texts than writing an essay on a book. The biggest written tasks they had so far is when pupils had to write a text with 1500 words and they had to choose the topic themselves with the use of guidelines. However, Rakel says that teachers should not give pupils too many long essays or tasks requiring too much time "...because the most pupils will lose motivation quite fast and doing a little bit of writing every lesson is the best way". She says that "old-fashioned" way of just giving pupils "word-tests" every week is a very effective way to improve their vocabulary, so "...they have to memorize words to be able to get a good result during test".

When it comes to written feedback Rakel tries to not single out every mistake pupils make. She thinks it would not serve any purpose to do so because pupils can get demotivated in their writing. She usually has a conversation with a pupil after the written work is done and gives comments: "I try not to correct every mistake in your essay, but I see some mistakes that you do all over again and I can tell you what you can pay attention to." Usually, it is some simple mistakes like prepositions or verbs, but if a pupil is really good in writing she tends to correct more mistakes, because "...this pupil probably has the capacity to work on all these mistakes". Rakel's pupils do a lot of grammar exercises, translating texts into English and vice-versa, work in groups and do self-evaluations although they do not do so many dictations. They often work with articles, news and other written texts that Rakel finds on the internet. According to her "...every lesson pupils have to have some reading, some writing, and some talking, all the rest is optional".

Rakel tries to make lessons entertaining and "speak pupils' language". They do watch *Youtube* videos or movies but always with a purpose. For example, they watched "*Slumdog Millionaire*"<sup>6</sup> but pupils had to write a longer essay on the movie afterward. According to Rakel, such things motivate pupils because they find them interesting. They also play short

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1010048/>

games every time at the end of the lesson like “*Simon Says*”<sup>7</sup>. Tasks, when pupils have to use their imagination, can also be motivating ones.

In conclusion, Rakel wanted to add that only two hours of English a week is a very limited time, it gets hard to practise grammar, for instance. She says the curriculum is very large and they just have to “go through it, and they do not have the time to stop and address the problems and difficulties”.

#### **5.4. Interview with Magne**

Magne is an English teacher and has almost 7 years teacher experience. Magne has finished the teacher’s academy in Bergen and now he is teaching at two 9<sup>th</sup> grades, one 8<sup>th</sup> grade and he is also teaching three pupils who need extra lessons. Magne is always trying to stay updated with new evaluation techniques and very interested in didactics, feedback, and criteria, so he has subscribed to a teachers’ magazine sent monthly by *Utdanningsforbundet* (Ministry of Education).

Magne thinks that pupils’ English writing skills are actually better than their oral skills, probably because when pupils write they can take their time to form the sentence and to check if it is accurate, but speech happens fast, so they naturally make more mistakes. Magne says that “...this year they have reduced a bit of time spent on writing and they only get two hours to write a text, but in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade they will get a full day”. He says that it is generally assumed among pupils that their grades in English are better than in Norwegian when it comes to writing, and he thinks that an average GPA in Norway is better for written English than written Norwegian. This might be because in English teachers tend to look more into the language skills than the content, but in the Norwegian subject they look more into the story and content, says Magne. He himself was better in English than in Norwegian at school, says Magne.

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<sup>7</sup> A classic kids’ icebreaker/stationary game in which the leader, Simon, instructs people to do various actions. The goal is to only do something when Simon says so, and to do nothing when he does not.

Pupils probably focus more on writing correctly than on the content and storyline. But children are definitely exposed to a lot of English, especially online and TV, says Magne. English is the language of priority in Norway and children start to learn it in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and most of Magne's pupils are quite motivated to learn English because they understand that they will need it in the future. When Magne thinks about his most motivated students he mentioned a girl who lived in another country and was subjected to English since she was small "...she actively seeks out for difficult tasks and wants to be challenged, her parents are also very interested in good results, so they asked me to give her extra tasks". Magne as well had a 9<sup>th</sup> grade pupil who was "brilliant" in English and could produce ten pages of written text without a single mistake, but he was just genuinely interested in the English language. Written grade is based on one or two writing sessions every six months, same with the oral grade, that is based on one or two presentations. Other than that, it is based on "*Måltester*" (tests), he gives pupils glossary tests after every finished chapter. Pupils get the list of 18-24 words and they have to translate them or make a sentence using these words. Pupils as well do two evaluations of teaching techniques a year.

The problem is that many pupils tend to only look at their grades and not caring about anything else, according to Magne, even though teachers emphasise that the feedback is more important than the grade. In case a pupil only gets feedback then he or she tends to ask about the grade anyways, however if they only get the grade they do not care to get any feedback: "Pupils always ask if they are going to get a grade for some particular task, and if I say they would not they would find it difficult to understand why they have to do it at all." Magne reduces speaking English during classes only when they discuss texts or some sort of presentation, but when he is explaining a task or some grammatical material, he uses Norwegian. When he speaks in Norwegian more pupils participate in the class discussions.

According to Magne the best way to improve pupils' writing is by reading a lot. It says so in the curriculum as well: "...the more you read the better you will be in writing and vice versa". Magne tries to give pupils material to read but he says that in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade they

only have two hours of English a week, that is 45 minutes two times a week, and that is very little. However, in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, it is three hours, a bit more. In every lesson, Magne tries to incorporate some listening, some speaking, some writing and some reading. According to Magne most of his pupils' English skills are sufficient enough to continue their education in colleges. He is using the textbook programme called "New Flight"<sup>8</sup>, but he says "it could use an upgrade". Magne says that he focuses more on teaching writing than speaking. A typical lesson would begin with a talking practice, and then they would do some reading and then he gives out the writing task and afterward they discuss the results of the written work.

The biggest challenges of pupils in writing according to Magne would be adverbs and keeping the same tense in the same sentence: "...they can switch from the past to the future, it is the big problem for many". Some struggle with spelling and adverbs. Those who are better do more complicated mistakes. Essays are still very difficult for them in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades, so Magne prefers to give them tasks to write fairy tales, short texts, poems and stories instead: "...producing short stories are more motivating for children because they can finish writing them earlier". Magne's pupils really enjoy writing poems: "...especially one of the classes, because it is very personal and they tend to give a lot of themselves in these poems, almost like "goosebumps moments." In general, creative tasks are quite motivating for pupils, because they feel like it is related to them and more authentic. Magne gives his pupils a chance to do their homework in class if they are effective enough, however, if he sees that pupils are behind the learning plan he will give them homework, he says that it motivates them to finish the tasks that are supposed to be done in school.

During his lessons and when explaining new topics Magne always tries to "...give them an example that would make it more interesting, like a story, short film or a song, something they can relate to... and if they would not perform I can say that this task might become a homework" (*laughing*). "... or that you might need it for the next lesson or even a test." Magne also might tell pupils that he would take notes on "...who does well or who needs to improve, to motivate them a little bit".

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cappelendammundervisning.no/verk/new-flight-106175>



According to Magne, some of the classes have some kind of “common drive” as he calls it: “...if the leading group of pupils is good at the subject, then the rest will try to improve their skills as well, and opposite”. For example, in one of the classes he has four pupils who are “special need pupils” and they are probably subjected to a social factor in their class where English is “not cool”.

Just recently they had a “rap task” when pupils would write a *rap* about themselves or something that they are interested in, in one class four of the pupils performed and in another class six of the pupils performed. To encourage pupils Magne as well performed his own rap. Magnus likes to give to pupils the task where pupils have to write their own text or use imagination: “...these texts might be influenced by other texts, but when they can bring something unique to the table, those are the best moments when teaching a language.”

Generally, Magne addresses his questions to the whole class, but if he singles out a pupil it is mostly to get his attention back to the learning or if he knows that a pupil is capable of answering that question. However, Magne says that it is often the same few pupils who answer the questions because they have “a problem of growing social anxiety” in school and pupils prefer not to talk in public, especially if it is in English. Pupils find it embarrassing, so more and more of them refuse to do oral presentations in class, and only do it in front of the teacher. Some of the students speak English very well and for one of ten pupils it might be a real problem but Magne knows for a fact that many of the other pupils use it as an excuse to not having to do it. Some even do it just to fit in. Magne also says that he does not ask his pupils to read aloud in the class because he thinks that they are not really focusing on the context but try to read the text correctly, so he prefers to read to pupils himself.

## 5.5. Interview with Elisabeth

Elisabeth has been teaching English for about seven years. She has a Masters degree in Literacy Studies and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education. Elisabeth works in a school and teaches English to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and the 9<sup>th</sup> grade pupils, she really enjoys working as a teacher, however currently she does not work there full time, although she used to do so before. Elisabeth likes to stay updated as a teacher and has subscribed to a teachers' magazine, she is also interested in evaluation, feedback and children psychology.

The interview started with questions about writing in general and Elisabeth at once said that she only has two hours of English in total a week. When she was asked if she believed that pupils' writing skills are worse than oral skills, she answered: "Absolutely". She as well mentioned that students nowadays are quite good at speaking but the level of writing is not improving. This is probably because they do not concentrate their attention on learning to write and think that written language is not so important to master, Elisabeth added. However, she mentioned that she can partially agree to that. She would wish to have more time for teaching Writing during her lessons, but "...the time to cover everything is too limited". Elisabeth mentioned that in her 1<sup>st</sup> year class (8<sup>th</sup> grade) they had three lessons a week and it was easier to find time for Writing than with her 2<sup>nd</sup> year pupils (9<sup>th</sup> grade) who only had two lessons a week.

When Elisabeth was asked about the most common mistakes pupils make when writing she mentioned prepositions, spelling, sentence structure and some mistakes are influenced by the Norwegian language, but she concluded with that there was not enough time to practise writing. When planning the English lessons, she tries to include all the components of the language: writing, reading, listening, speaking. Some writing is done at every lesson and usually is represented in the form of various tasks, such as short essays, vocabulary practicing or grammatical exercises. Elisabeth also focused on the grammar, because many students still make grammatical mistakes as well as the style of writing, such as the difference between formal and informal English. She also pays attention to the structure of the text and process of writing, for example how a summary of a book should be written.

Elisabeth mentioned that most pupils struggle with an academic style of writing so they have to be taught how to write the different elements of a text such as paragraphs, introduction, and conclusion. The content can also be problematic for some pupils, but that just needs more practice, added Elisabeth.

Another important aspect of teaching writing is an individual approach. Elisabeth tries to help each pupil and provide guidance in their challenges in writing. Pupils are very different and have different abilities so they need an individual approach, that is one of the keys to successful teaching. Elisabeth likes to give pupils personal feedback after each writing task if she has an opportunity to do so. She as well always offers pupils to ask for guidance and come up to her in case something was unclear.

Elisabeth thinks that motivation is very important in the process of learning. There are many factors: pupils' inner motivation, their learning abilities and of course teachers' practices are important, too. She always tries to motivate her pupils using different motivational tools. First of all, it is important to have variation in tasks and activities, "...So we like to watch a short movie on the topic or read a book or an article. I try to find something that young people can relate to. They also enjoy sharing experiences, so I like to give them tasks to write some short texts, for example how they spent their vacation, it helps when it is a little bit personal, I guess." Elisabeth also mentioned that both teachers' feedback and a grade can influence the motivation of a pupil. She says that unfortunately grades are very important to pupils, and they are used to pay more attention to a grade than to the teachers' comments.

According to Elisabeth the best way of giving feedback was both written and oral. Usually Elisabeth marks every mistake in the text, however, she always tries to find some positive feedback for each student: "Probably if the grammar in the text is poor I would see if the context is good and give some positive feedback, a student should not be discouraged". She likes to explain to a pupil what mistakes were made and how to improve it in private if she has time because it is more personal than only giving written comments and marks.

Elisabeth would want pupils to know that it is fine to make mistakes when learning and not to concentrate too much on their insecurities but to work harder. She also wishes they had more time to work on writing during their lessons. If they had at least three lessons a week in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade as well it would be much better.

## **6. Discussion**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the findings of the research presented in Chapter 5. The findings from the student questionnaires are discussed in section 6.2. which focuses on the experiences the students have with English Writing and motivation towards the English language subject at school. The findings from the teachers' interviews are discussed in section 6.3. and will address the teachers' experiences and beliefs. Further, in section 6.4. these findings will be compared and analysed according to the expectations for the study, the theory, and literature that have been reviewed. The next two sections 6.5. and 6.6. will address the research questions:

1. What kind of motivational techniques (strategies) are used by teachers for teaching Writing during English lessons in Norwegian schools and which ones do they consider to be the most effective ones?
2. What is the possible solution of the motivational problem and formation of pupils' positive attitude towards English Writing and learning the English language?

Finally, implications, recommendations, and limitations of the study are discussed in sections 6.7. and 6.8.

### **6.2. The students' experiences with English Writing and motivation towards the English language subject at school**

The second research question addresses the pupils' experiences with English Writing and attitude towards learning the English language. This research question was investigated mostly by using student questionnaires but also teachers' interviews, in order to get the full perspective.

The majority of the pupils claimed to have a positive attitude towards the English language subject at school. According to the results of the questionnaires, pupils admit their wish to be able to use the English language, in both oral and written form. The teachers' answers in the interviews as well indicate that pupils can clearly see the need in mastering the English language for various reasons. They indicate such reasons as education, traveling, career and everyday life situations. All three teachers mention that most of the pupils like English lessons and consider English one of their favourite subjects. For example, Rakel mentioned that English is one of the subjects most pupils like, probably because English is an international language and pupils know that they have to learn it and they will use it. Magne also said that children are "...definitely exposed to a lot of English, especially online and TV". According to him, English is the language of priority in Norway and children start to learn it in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, so most of his pupils are quite motivated to learn it because they understand that they will use the acquired skills.

According to the research results, the motivation level for the English study is quite high among pupils, so it was important to investigate why still many pupils experience problems with mastering L2 writing. As it was mentioned earlier, Lehmann's two studies (1999; 2010) indicate that there are problems concerning the level of English writing skills in Norwegian schools. Both studies have concluded that Norwegian students' level of English writing skills is not as high as it needs to be. Written language skills are mostly acquired at schools and according to Grabe and Kaplan, Writing is a "set of skills which must be practiced and learned through experience" (1996: 6). There are quite strict requirements for pupils in mastering both written and oral skills in Norway, so it was important to investigate why the level of written English is still insufficient.

Pupils' questionnaires indicate that the majority of pupils like to write in English but consider it more difficult than speaking English, however, the results of the study suggest that the motivation for learning written English is quite high among the pupils. The majority of the pupils as well have indicated to be practising English writing outside school in their free time.

Most of the pupils admit that they do think that their written language skills have improved since the last semester, however, it was clearly stated by the pupils that they do not think that they had enough writing, spelling and grammar practices a school.

It was not expected to find out that two out of three English teachers consider teaching oral skills more important than writing skills, however, they admitted that “children are subjected to a lot of spoken English in their everyday life but their written language accuracy could be better.” For example, Elisabeth mentioned that pupils nowadays are quite good at speaking but the level of writing is not improving. Rakel also thinks that pupils’ oral language skills are generally better than writing skills. She means it has a lot to do with what “pupils are exposed to”, Rakel mentions, for example, the influence of TV, media, and internet. “Although pupils do write in English, it is mostly in social media, and it is not very accurate writing”. Magne was the only teacher who suggested that pupils’ English writing skills are actually better than their oral skills. He thinks it is due to the fact, that when pupils write they can take their time to form the sentence and to check if it is accurate, but speech happens fast so they naturally make more mistakes.

All three teachers as well mentioned that pupils only have two hours of English a week in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and three in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade which is an insufficient amount of time. Teachers emphasised that the time given to English lessons is far below the necessary amount for teaching pupils all the necessary skills, including Writing. That might be another reason for the insufficient level of writing skills among Norwegian pupils. Teachers also imply that teaching Writing, especially in a foreign language, is a time-consuming task and they ought to use the time of their lessons on speaking, listening, reading and other forms of activities. If compared to speaking, learning to write successfully is dependent on a number of basic perceptual, cognitive, and language processes and poor performance in Writing tasks can, therefore, be the behavioural manifestation of a wide range of developmental difficulties (Kellogg 1994).

It was also unexpected to find out that according to the teachers, most of the pupils are not eager to do any oral presentations due to the growing problem of social anxiety. Rakel mentioned that some pupils do not like English lessons mostly because of oral presentations, "...they feel that they get judged by each other". Some of Rakel's pupils are afraid of speaking English in public and are not eager to do so. Magne as well said that pupils find it embarrassing, so more and more of them refuse to do oral presentations in class, and only do it in front of the teacher. However, Magne remarked that for one out of ten pupils it might be a real problem, but he knows for a fact that many of the other pupils use it as an excuse to not having to do it and some just follow the example of other students. On the question of the English language being the subject that most pupils like Magne said that some of the classes have some kind of "common drive", if "the leading group of pupils" are good in the subject, then the rest will try to improve their skills as well, and opposite.

Such social factors are having a great impact on the motivation factor in the classroom. However, according to Dörnyei, a teacher should be able to maintain the motivation level in the classroom and find the relevant tasks that would be educational, enjoyable and stimulating (2001: 29). Pupils have to experience progress and success that would make them feel more confident and maintain a positive social image, even during stressful practices such as speaking a foreign language with limited vocabulary and language skills.

### **6.3. The teachers' practices when teaching the English language, in particular English Writing**

The first research question addresses the teachers' practices when teaching the English language, in particular English Writing and which of these techniques can be considered the most effective ones. This research question was investigated mostly by the teachers' interviews but also by student questionnaires in order to get the full perspective.

According to the Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development the role of the teacher in second language learning and pupils' motivation levels is extremely important: "... what a



child can do with assistance today she or he will be able to do by herself or himself tomorrow” (Vygotsky 1978: 87). It is possible to conclude that pupils’ positive attitude to the English Language subject is a result of a successful teachers’ motivational and educational practices.

According to the results of questionnaires the majority of pupils like to do different written tasks in order to evaluate their written language skills. Magne mentioned that Writing grade is based on one or two writing sessions every six months, the same with the oral grade, that is based on one or two presentations. Other than that, the grade is based on the tests that teachers give them. Pupils as well do two evaluations of teaching techniques a year.

When it comes to writing practice at school, teachers named such activities as: book summaries, essays, formal-style letters, vocabulary tests and exercises, grammar tests and exercises, academic style writing, fairy-tales, short texts, poems and stories. ZPD can be applied to Writing when a pupil learns to write in an apprenticeship with a qualified assistant who has a good qualification in the field. Thus, the teacher takes an important part in the process of teaching Writing and motivating pupils.

All teachers indicated that pupils struggle more with producing their own texts than writing an essay on a book. According to Elisabeth, most pupils have difficulties with the academic style of writing, “...so they have to be taught how to write the different elements of a text such as paragraphs, introduction and conclusion”. She as well mentioned mistakes in prepositions, spelling, sentence structure and mistakes that are influenced by the Norwegian language. Magne remarked that essays are still very difficult for his pupils, but the biggest challenges in writing would be “...adverbs and keeping the same tense in the same sentence”. Some pupils struggle with spelling and adverbs. Rakel said that pupils are always making the same mistakes when she checks their essays, so she tries to sort them (essays) out and focus on explaining to pupils what they did wrong and revise some material. Thus, practising and working on these typical mistakes could also make a big difference. Vygotsky writes: “Learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only

when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers” (1978: 90).

When asked about the best way to improve pupils’ writing, teachers mention reading. Rakel considers reading the best way of improving writing skills, therefore motivating pupils to read can be the key to success: “Probably finding the literature that children would find really interesting could do the trick, but a way of memorizing vocabulary is also a very effective technique for spelling teaching”. However, she remarks that pupils are not so motivated to read. Rakel as well said that teachers should not give pupils too many long essays or tasks requiring too much time “...because most of the pupils will lose motivation quite fast and doing a little bit of writing every lesson is the best way”.

Magne also considers reading a way to improve one’s writing skills: “...the more you read the better you will be in writing and vice versa”. He tries to give pupils material to read, but again he says that they only have two hours of English a week, and that is very little and they do not have enough time for practising reading. When asked about the reading material sources, teachers mentioned internet resources, books and articles on the topic of interest. Magnus as well mentioned that he does not ask his pupils to read out loud in class, because he thinks that they are not really focusing on the context but try to read the text correctly, so he prefers to read to pupils himself.

Rakel’s pupils do a lot of grammar exercises, translating texts into English and vice-versa, work in groups and do self-evaluations although they do not do so many dictations. They often work with articles, news and other written texts that Rakel finds on the internet. According to her “...every lesson pupils have to have some reading, some writing and some talking, all the rest is optional”.

All three teachers prefer to speak Norwegian during their classes, in order to make sure that pupils understood the learning material or tasks. Magne speaks English only when

they discuss texts or have some sort of presentation. Both Magne and Rakel said that when they speak Norwegian more pupils participate in the class discussions and activities.

#### **6.4. The teachers' motivational techniques**

The first research question addresses as well the teachers' motivational techniques and practices when teaching the English language, in particular, English Writing, and which of these techniques can be considered the most effective ones.

All teachers emphasised the importance of motivation when studying. Elisabeth mentioned that motivation is very important in the process of learning. In her opinion, there are many factors: pupils' inner motivation, their learning abilities and of course teachers' practices are important, too. She always tries to motivate her pupils and have a good variation in tasks and activities, "...So we like to watch a short movie on the topic or read a book or an article". Magne also said that he tries to "...give them (pupils) an example that would make it more interesting, like a story, short film or a song, something they can relate to". Rakel considers motivation to be crucial for learning. She says that "...for some pupils the motivation is in the grades but some are interested in language, "...but mostly they are motivated by grades". Rakel gives questionnaires to her pupils, in order to evaluate her teaching techniques and find out what kinds of educational activities children find the most motivating.

All teachers suggested that creative tasks and interesting activities make pupils more interested and motivated during the lessons. Rakel tries to make her lessons entertaining and "speak pupils' language". For instance, she mentions watching *Youtube* videos or movies but always with a purpose. They also play short games every time at the end of the lesson like "*Simon Says*". Tasks, where pupils can use their imagination, can as well be motivating ones. According to Rakel, such activities motivate pupils because they find them interesting and more personal. Elisabeth also mentioned that: "First of all, it is important to have variation in tasks and activities, "...So we like to watch a short movie on the topic or read a book or an

article. I try to find something that young people can relate to. They also enjoy sharing experiences, so I like to give them tasks to write some short texts, for example how they spent their vacation, it helps when it is a little bit personal, I guess.” Magne also tries to make every lesson different and interesting: “...give them an example that would make it more interesting, like a story, short film or a song, something they can relate to”. When talking about writing practices when pupils are producing their own text, Magne says that: “...these texts might be influenced by other texts, but when they can bring something unique to the table, those are the best moments when teaching a language.” Magne claimed that the “rap task” when pupils would write a *rap* about themselves or something that they are interested in, was a very successful practice.

### **6.5. The teachers’ evaluation strategies and feedback**

Another important aspect of teaching the English language and Writing in particular is teachers’ evaluation techniques and feedback. Hyland claims that it is important to have cohesion between students’ and teachers’ expectations (2003:179). According to the results of the pupils’ questionnaire, the majority of the pupils like the idea of getting a mark for their written works. Most of the pupils also appreciate getting written and personal feedback from teachers.

Elisabeth mentioned the importance of the personal approach to each pupil. She tries to provide the guidance to each pupil individually in their challenges in writing, according to her it is one of the keys to successful teaching. Elisabeth likes to give pupils personal feedback after each writing task if she has an opportunity to do so. She as well always offers pupils to ask for guidance and come up to her in case something was unclear.

All teachers concluded that such factors as teachers’ feedback and a grade can influence the motivation of a pupil. Both Elisabeth and Magne said that grades are very important to pupils and that they (pupils) are used to pay attention to grades rather than to teachers’ comments. According to Elisabeth, the best way of giving feedback was both

written and oral. Usually, she marks every mistake in the text, however, she always tries to find some positive feedback for each pupil: “Probably if the grammar in the text is poor, I would see if the context is good and give some positive feedback, a student should not be discouraged”. Rakel however, prefers not to mark every mistake in pupils’ written works. She thinks that they might find it discouraging and prefers to concentrate on one group of mistakes a time.

Elisabeth prefers to give oral feedback individually to each pupil if she has time for it. She finds it more personal than only giving written comments and marks. Elisabeth prefers to have a conversation after a bigger written work with each pupil and gives comments and advices.

## **6.6. Implications and recommendations**

The results of the research have practical implications and confirm the belief that pupils’ motivation is related to teachers’ motivational practice even though the self-motivated pupils usually have better results in learning. However, there is no reason to suggest that self-motivation is not influenced by teachers’ practices.

From the given study it is unclear whether teachers’ practices would benefit from special teachers’ motivational training as a part of teacher education and what kind of specific training in motivational strategies teachers have, however it can be suggested that it should be a methodological concern. From the results of the interviews it can be suggested that teachers are probably not fully aware of their motivational practices and base their methods on their professional experience. Finding the way to raise teachers’ awareness of how their motivating practices directly affect pupils’ motivation would help the future and existing teachers to be more functional during their lessons.

There are also not enough studies establishing a clear link between teachers practices and pupils’ behaviour, therefore these topics should be elaborated in the future in

psychological or pedagogical studies. It would be the first step of finding out what kinds of motivational strategies should be applied for the desirable result in the classroom and developing a special educational programme for English teachers. It can be implied that systematic and context-appropriate use of motivational strategies applied by teachers would have a positive effect on the level of the English language knowledge among pupils.

The findings of this study suggest that the pupils are interested in teachers' written and personal feedback but teachers do not always use the methods that are the most beneficial for pupils due to the time limitations during the English lessons. In their questionnaires, the majority of the learners specified that they are motivated to learn English and writing in particular, however teachers imply that to some degree pupils are more interested in learning oral language. According to the interviews many teachers pay more attention to teaching speaking rather than writing because of its applicability. It is as well clear that the time given for teaching the English language as a L2, in particular, Writing, is not sufficient according to all of the teachers. Pupils in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades have only two or three lessons of English each week, so it is not enough to practise various aspects of a foreign language learning. It would be beneficial to consider expanding time spent on learning English in high school.

### **6.7. Limitations of the study**

The limiting factors in the present study are the Norwegian language knowledge of the researcher, resources, time, and the choice of participants. The study is limited to only four participating upper secondary schools in Norway and a relatively small group of participants, however it cannot be implied that the sample of the participants do not represent the average. The limited sample size can be explained by the amount of schools and teachers who were willing to participate as well as the time and size limitations of the current study.

Regarding the sources, it was difficult to find so many resources which would specifically refer to the learning English as a L2 in a Norwegian context and most of the theoretical information on this topic was found in other researchers' works. The theoretical

information about English taught as L2 is taken from the literature on second language learning in general. Another aspect of limitation was the level of the Norwegian language of the researcher. It is not the native language for the researcher, so probably not all the material in the Norwegian language was properly searched through.

The study does not provide any data on whether or how pupils' motivation directly affected by teachers' motivational practices, because the motivation level cannot really be observed. There is no overview of the data records on the possible development of the raising motivational level among pupils or writing skills improvement. The study of the pupils' writing development over time with the use of teachers' motivational strategies would have been a different study, and something that could be elaborated further.

Due to the time limits, it was not possible to elaborate the research with lesson observations, pre-study and post-study pupils' focus-group interviews and teachers' interviews. It would as well be reasonable to get more detailed information from the learners, however, it was not possible to do so in this study due to the chosen methods of the research and time limitations.

## 7. Conclusion

This study examined what motivational strategies and techniques are applied by teachers when teaching the English language and particularly English Writing in upper secondary schools in Norway and which of those strategies both teachers and pupils consider motivating. Motivation in the educational arena is dependent upon instructional methods, materials and teacher-student relations (Drew and Sørheim, 2009: 21). There were two research questions addressed to the study:

- What kind of motivational techniques (strategies) are used by teachers for teaching Writing during English lessons in Norwegian schools?
- Which ones they consider to be the most effective and what is the possible solution of the motivational problem and formation of pupils' positive attitude towards English Writing and learning the English language?

The investigation relied on the comparison of the results from the pupils' questionnaires which were partially based on Dörnyei's (2001) motivational strategies framework scheme and the data from the teachers' interviews. According to the research results, the motivation level for the English study is quite high among pupils, so it was important to investigate why still many pupils experience problems with mastering L2 writing. Written language skills are mostly acquired at schools and there are quite strict requirements for pupils in mastering both written and oral skills in Norway.

In the previous research Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) found a strong positive connection between teachers' motivational practices and learners' learning motivation in the classroom, so it was interesting to investigate how teachers practise teaching and motivating pupils, since Writing is a problematic area according to other Norwegian studies (e.g. Lehmann 1999; Nygaard 2010). According to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei language teachers could apply motivational strategies in order to improve their teaching practice by creating a



more motivating classroom environment. The scholars specify that although there are a few different motivational techniques they all lack a theory-based framework.

The data for the research was obtained through the use of mixed methods research. The qualitative approach was used for teachers' interviews and the quantitative for pupils' questionnaires. The researcher interviewed three English teachers working with 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade-pupils and handed out a questionnaire consisting of 23 statements on the motivation to study English language, motivation towards writing in English and teacher's practices to 100 pupils from two 8th grades and two 9th grades. In order to show how the use of motivational strategies can be supported by some mainstream theories of L2 acquisition, the research was based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory. According to the theory, the role of the teacher in second language learning and pupils' motivation levels is extremely important: "what a child can do with assistance today she or he will be able to do by herself or himself tomorrow" (Vygotsky 1978: 87).

One of the key findings of the study was that two out of three English teachers consider teaching oral skills more important than writing skills, however they admitted that "children are subjected to a lot of spoken English in their everyday life but their written language accuracy could be better." According to Vygotsky the potential development is determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky 1978: 86). Teachers as well use more or less similar motivational strategies during their lessons but unfortunately do not have a clear functional system and are probably not fully aware of their motivational practices. Teachers claim to use videos, relevant books, articles, visual aids, games and positive feedback as some of their motivational strategies. All teachers emphasised the importance of the personal approach and a good guidance, however, they do not always use the motivational strategies that would be the most beneficial for the pupils for various reasons.

Concerning feedback, the best way is to give it personally after each Writing session, however teachers do not always practise it due to the lack of time. There are as well some

problems in the existing evaluation system. Teachers claim that pupils tend to pay a lot of attention to the grades and less to the feedback. Some teachers as well claim to use grades as a motivational tool, although according to Guilloteaux and Dörnyei motivational strategies are far more complex than the system of punishment and reward that the most language teachers apply as their motivational teaching practice (2008: 58). A teacher should encourage self-evaluation and provide effective and encouraging feedback. Good feedback can increase pupils' inner motivation. The system of grades should also be presented in a motivational manner (Guilloteaux and Dörnyei 2008: 58). Therefore, it would be beneficial to raise teachers' awareness of how their motivating practices directly affect pupils' motivation and potentially create a methodological framework that could be used by teachers during lessons. The link between teachers' practices and pupils' behaviour is a relatively new field that could be investigated further in psychological and pedagogical studies.

Another key finding of the study is the growing problem of the social awareness among pupils. According to the teachers some pupils refuse to perform educational activities that include some form of speaking in public. The teachers mention that some pupils are afraid of speaking English during classes and refuse to do oral presentations in class, and only do it in front of the teacher. Different social factors can have a great impact on the motivation level in the classroom. However, according to Dörnyei, a teacher should be able to maintain a high motivation level among pupils and find the relevant tasks that would be educational, enjoyable and stimulating (2001: 29). Pupils have to experience progress and success that would make them feel more confident and maintain a positive social image, even during stressful practices such as speaking a foreign language with limited vocabulary and language skills.

This thesis has contributed to the research on English writing and motivation in second language education in Norway. It has given insight into how pupils experience and how teachers practise motivational strategies during English lessons in an average upper secondary school. The results of the thesis have shown that the teachers in the study did not always have enough time for using the most beneficial motivating strategies and did not have

clear methodological framework to do so. What can be done in the future is a more thorough and prolonged study of how exactly teachers' Motivational Strategies applied during English lessons affect pupils' motivation. The first step would be finding out what kinds of motivational strategies should be applied for the desirable result in Norwegian classrooms. It can be implied that systematic and context-appropriate use of motivational strategies applied by teachers would have a positive effect on the level of English language knowledge among pupils. Creating a functional methodological framework should also be a methodological concern. Finding the way to raise teachers' awareness of how their motivating practices directly affect pupils' motivation would help the future and existing teachers to be more effective during their lessons and reach the educational goals.

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## **Appendix 1.**

### **Teacher Interview Guide**

#### ***Introduction***

The purpose of the interview is to get the necessary information for my master thesis in Literacy Studies at the University of Stavanger. All the data will be confidential and I will not give any names or personal information about the participants or the school number in my research. The interviews, however, will be recorded and I will take some notes.

I ask you to give me the objective information as well as your personal honest opinion on my questions. The questions are asked for the research purposes only and do not include any judging or elements of competition. I am genuinely interested in listening to your opinions and thoughts on the subject and hope that it will be a help for other English teachers in future.

*N.B. Questions marked with italics are additional questions that might not have been asked.*

#### ***Teacher's background and qualifications***

- *Gender*
- *Age*
- *Region of birth*
- How many years of teaching experience do you have?
- What qualifications do you have?
- Which classes do you teach in English? [or in which?]
- Do you attend any courses to improve your qualification from time to time?
- Do you try to stay updated on new teaching strategies and if you do where do you

prefer to get this information? (e.g. internet, magazines, books etc.)

### ***Teacher's experience***

- Some recent studies have concluded (Nygaard 2010) that the level of written accuracy in English was generally poor amongst upper secondary level students, would you agree that students' English oral skills are generally better than writing skills? *Why do you think it has happened?*
- What do you think is the best way of helping students to improve their writing?
- Would you consider general English skills in both writing and speaking for the post school graduates sufficient enough to continue their education at the University level?
- Would you agree that some English teachers pay more attention to teaching speaking and not writing in English?
- In your opinion, are pupils interested in the subject? What is the most difficult part about teaching English nowadays?
- What educational program do you currently use? What textbooks for pupils and yourself?
- How important is writing in your courses and how much time is spent on writing a week?
- How do you teach writing and why do you it that particular way?
- What are the biggest challenges for your students in writing?
- What kind of tasks make pupils get the best progress in writing in your opinion?

### ***Beliefs and attitudes***

- What is the role of motivation when learning a second language in your opinion?
- If you think of your most motivated students, what do you think motivates them the most?
- Is the role of grades in study motivation overrated or not, in your opinion?
- What motivational strategies do you consider to be the most effective ones? Which ones do use in your classes? And during writing classes?
- *Do you have any special techniques to keep your pupils motivated if they don't get the results they were hoping for?*
- What is your attitude towards tasks when pupils have to create something or use their imagination?
- Is doing some “fun learning” during classes an effective motivational tool, in your opinion? Do you practise it? If yes, what exactly do you do? (e.g. Readers' theatre, educational games, computer games, writing letters to friends, painting etc.)

### ***Practices***

- *Do you address questions mostly to the whole class or choose a particular pupil?*
- *Do you allow pupils to speak Norwegian in class?*
- *Do you assign homework to pupils?*
- *Do you evaluate pupils' English achievements using tests?*
- *Do you mostly follow the textbook?*
- *Do you give questionnaires to pupils to evaluate your teaching techniques. If not, do you do it in any other way?*
- *Do you lay down the norms to be followed in class?*
- *Do you make your pupils do grammar exercises?*
- *Do you make pupils do dictations?*
- *Do you make pupils translate Norwegian texts into English and vice-versa?*

- *Do you make pupils do pair work conversations?*
- *Do you put more emphasis on pupils' communicative competence, rather than on their discourse?*
- *Do you always speak English in class? Do pupils sometimes have problems to understand everything you say?*
- *Do you supplement the pupils' textbook with other materials? If yes, what kind of materials do you prefer?*
- *Do you surprise pupils with new activities in order to maintain their interest? What routines you would not change?*
- *Do pupils get to memorize lists of vocabulary?*
- *Do your pupils play educational games in class?*
- *Do your pupils read stories or some other kinds of texts in class?*
- *Do pupils write letters or other kinds of texts in class?*
- *Do pupils do project work?*
- *Do pupils do Readers' Theatre in class?*
- *Do pupils do self-evaluation and co-evaluation?*
- *Do pupils use dictionaries in class?*
- *Do pupils use the Internet, CDs or other kind of resources to do research?*
- *Do pupils do listening activities through audio or video, during your classes?*
- *Do pupils mostly work in small or big groups?*
- *Would you like to add any final comments about the topic?*

## **Appendix 2.**

### **Pilot Interview with Anne**

Anne have been teaching totally for 13 years and have a long experience of English teaching in lower secondary school (teaching English to 13- to 16-year-olds). Anne is now working with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. She had a basic teacher training education which includes a one-year university course in English (*engelsk grunnfag*), and an extra half year of English (*mellomfag*). Later Anne had done a part of *hovedfag*, which is the equivalent to a Master's degree.

Anne had 13 years of experience of teaching English writing, she thinks that is it true that pupils find it easier to speak than to write and that they find learning to write both spelling and grammar more time consuming and boring they learning new vocabulary or doing some other educational activities in a classroom. She also emphasised that it is indeed important to keep up their (pupils) motivation, because writing activities like essays or reports take long time and pupils may find it not so interesting. Anne thinks that adding some creative tasks or more unusual educational techniques might benefit and increase their motivation, for example using data programmes or media. Anne noted that Norwegian youth learn a lot from listening to music in English and watching movies in English language so they surely can speak quite well, but writing is more complicated. They (pupils) do not always speak grammatically correct but their writing reflects it better than their speech. Pupils generally have a rich vocabulary but their spelling is not always at its best, says Anne.

Anne says that she likes humanistic approach in teaching writing, for example to write an essay on how pupils spent their summer, they (pupils) usually like tasks when they can express their own opinion in writing or have some kind of freedom in choosing a topic. They (pupils) also to work in groups, because it is more social and more entertaining, it as well helps pupils who are a bit unconfident about their English or generally writing to be able to participate more easily: "...one of our last task was writing a blog, where they basically



describe their activities during the day”. They could as well add pictures to the blog. Anne thinks that pupils like such tasks a lot.

Anne works with the book called “Enter 8-10, Basic Skills” and recommends it to her pupils, it is a book for pupils in 8,9 and 10 grades and includes all kinds of tasks aiming at improving both grammatical and oral skills. She also likes that they are a lot of suggestions for interesting tasks for teachers, pupils can also prepare for exams using this book. The chapter on Writing, for example, includes "How to improve your writing", text-types, model-texts and examples and there is a chapter on Digital Skills: like finding information online, source criticism

Anne thinks that general knowledge of English after finishing school is generally quite fine for (videregående skole) high school, and even reading some (pensum) text in English. That is why English subject is obligatory in secondary school, however academic style writing could probably be improved among students: “Well I think writing is a big part of our learning plan, so I would say that we (teachers) spend a lot of time teaching writing, not less than speaking, at least... They (pupils) do speak better but I think it is because pupils themselves are more focused and practise more speaking activities.” Anne emphasises that it is important to follow learning plan, so the teacher can know how many hours of writing pupils are supposed to have.

Anne considers motivation an important part of a L2 study. She says that for one student, the language learning process is an important, meaningful process and he or she is motivated to learn the language (although the reasons may be different: motivation of higher achievement, focus on the goal, better education or career in the future and others. ); for another student, learning a new language is a heavy burden that he or she has to bear, and he (a student) does not hide his boredom and is just waiting for the end of the lesson.

Anne thinks that each teacher has faced a similar situation and frankly, often the teacher is the one to blame on the wrong behaviour of the student or inability to concentrate.

To a teacher who thinks critically, this is a sign that something has to be improved, probably. The obvious fact is that the ability to motivate students is a key skill of the teacher, of course. Creative and diverse tasks are of the best tools means Anne. She likes to give her pupils tasks where they can use their imagination, for example write a short story or a letter to a friend. Educational games, videos and media is also a “friend” of a teacher, says Anne.

When explaining new either grammatical or lexical material to the class (and Anne usually does it in both Norwegian and English), it is important to make sure that everyone understood it, so Anne often asks some questions to the whole class to see if someone wants to answer or has some additional questions to the topic. She thinks it is important to praise the initiative of the student, but also important not to push those who need a little bit more time to understand the new material, Anne thinks that it is the key to the good communication between a pupil and a teacher, which is important for motivation. Anne encourages pupils to speak English in the class but if they struggle they are allowed to speak in Norwegian. Anne gives her pupils home tasks approximately one day a week, she thinks it is good if they learn also to work by themselves, and maybe catch up on some topics they did not understand. The evaluations system includes various tests, both on grammatical and lexical material.

In the end Anne added that teaching writing is just as important as teaching speaking, so teachers should use equal time on these two activities, however it would be good to have more time to be able to teach students “more in depth”.

### Appendix 3.

#### **Pupils' questionnaire form: *Pupils' motivation towards the English subject and Writing in English.* (English version)**

##### ***Introduction***

Hello, my name is Julia Rosina and I am a Master student at the University of Stavanger. This questionnaire is part of my research project. Please carefully read the questions and give your answers based on the alternative that suits you best. I need all this data to see the learners' view on many important education questions and hopefully do some improvements Thank you very much for your participation!

Please do not write any names, everything is confidential and for research purposes only.

##### ***1. Pupils' background information***

Class:	
Gender:	
Age:	
What is your native language?	
What language do you speak at home?	
What other languages besides your native language can you speak fluently?	
Number of years studying English (including this year)?	
How would you characterize your current	

English skills on the scale from 1 to 5?	
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**2. Pupils' attitudes towards the English subject and motivation in learning English language. (Choose only one alternative)**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I like the English subject.					
I want to be able to speak English if I travel or talk to foreign people.					
I think that English may be helpful in my future study/career.					
I want to be able to speak more languages than just Norwegian.					
I would like to improve my English skills to be able to use computers/ Internet or watch TV in English.					

I learn English because I want to know more about other cultures, understand the world better.					
I think foreign language study is part of a well-rounded education.					
I only learn English because it's in the school curriculum/I would not learn English if I would not have to.					

**3. Pupils' views on written English and written school practices. (Choose only one alternative)**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I want to be able to read and write in English.					
I like to write in English.					

I think my writing skills have improved since the last semester.					
I think that to write in English is harder than to speak.					
I have enough English writing practice at school.					
I have enough grammar practice at school.					
I have enough spelling practice at school.					
I do a lot of writing in English in my free time as well (for example in social media)					
I only write in English at school					

**4. Pupils' views on evaluation system and teachers' practices.**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I like when we do written task or tests at school so I can evaluate my skills.					
I would feel more motivated in learning English if we did more various activities in class.					
I like best to work in groups.					
I like the idea of getting a mark for my written work, it motivates me.					
I like to get written comments from the teacher on my written tasks, so I can improve.					
I would prefer my teacher to comment my written work personally.					

I have enough spelling practice at school.					
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## Appendix 4.

### **Pupils' questionnaire form: *Pupils' motivation towards the English subject and Writing in English.* (Norwegian Version)**

#### ***Introduction***

Hei, jeg heter Julia Rosina. Jeg er en mastergrad student ved Universitetet i Stavanger. Dette spørreskjemaet er en del av mitt forskningsprosjekt. Vennligst les spørsmålene nøye og gi svarene dine basert på det alternativet som passer deg best. Jeg trenger alle disse dataene for å se lærernes syn på mange viktige utdannelsesspørsmål og forhåpentligvis gjøre noen forbedringer. Takk så mye for din deltakelse! Vennligst skriv ikke navn, alt er konfidensielt og kun for forskningsformål.

#### 1. Elevens bakgrunnsinformasjon

Klasse:	
Gendere:	
Alderen:	
Hva er ditt morsmål?	
Hvilket språk snakker du hjemme?	
Hvilke andre språk enn ditt morsmål kan du snakke flytende?	
Antall år som studerer engelsk (inkludert i år)?	
Hvordan ville du karakterisere dine nåværende engelsk ferdigheter på skalaen fra 1 til 5?	

**2. Elevens holdninger til engelskfaget og motivasjon til å lære engelsk. (Velg bare ett alternativ)**

	<b>Sterkt Enig</b>	<b>Enig</b>	<b>Hverken Eller</b>	<b>Uenig</b>	<b>Sterkt Uenig</b>
Jeg liker engelsk timer					
Jeg ønsker å kunne snakke engelsk for reiser til utlandet eller snakke med folk fra andre land.					
Jeg tror at engelsk kan være nyttig for mine fremtidige studier og karriere.					
Jeg ønsker å kunne snakke flere språk enn bare norsk.					

Jeg ønsker å lære engelsk så jeg kan bruke PC eller se TV.					
Jeg ønsker å lære engelsk bedre for å følge med hva som skjer i verden.					
Jeg tror at det å kunne et fremmed språk er en viktig del av en komplett utdanning.					
Jeg lærer kun engelsk fordi dette er en del av pensum, jeg ville ikke lært engelsk på egen hånd.					

**3. Elevens syn på skriftlig engelsk og skriftlig skolepraksis. (Velg bare ett alternativ).**

	<b>Sterkt Enig</b>	<b>Enig</b>	<b>Hverken Eller</b>	<b>Uenig</b>	<b>Sterkt Uenig</b>
Jeg ønsker å kunne lese og skrive engelsk.					

Jeg liker å skrive engelsk.					
Jeg tror at mine skriftlige egenskaper i engelsk har blitt bedre siden forrige semester.					
Jeg synes det er vanskeligere å skrive enn å snakke engelsk.					
Jeg har nok engelsk skrivetrening på skolen.					
Jeg har nok engelsk grammatikk trening på skolen.					
Jeg lærer nok nye ord og uttrykk i engelsk timer.					

Jeg skriver mye på engelsk i fritiden (for eksempel på sosiale media).					
Jeg skriver bare engelsk når jeg er på skolen.					

#### 4. Elevens syn på evalueringssystemet og lærernes praksis.

	<b>Sterkt Enig</b>	<b>Enig</b>	<b>Hverken Eller</b>	<b>Uenig</b>	<b>Sterkt Uenig</b>
Jeg liker når vi har tester eller prøver på skolen, så jeg kan evaluere mine kunnskaper.					
Jeg ville føle meg mer motivert når jeg lærte engelsk hvis vi gjorde flere ulike aktiviteter i klassen.					
Jeg liker best å jobbe i grupper.					
Å få karakterer på mitt arbeid, gir meg motivasjon.					

Jeg liker å få skriftlige kommentarer fra læreren på mine skriftlige oppgaver, så jeg kan forbedre meg.					
Jeg foretrekker min lærer å kommentere mitt skriftlige arbeid personlig.					

## Appendix 5.

### NSD Approval Letter



Oliver Martin Traxel  
Institutt for kultur- og språkvitenskap Universitetet i Stavanger  
Postboks 2557 Ullandhaug  
4036 STAVANGER

Vår dato: 09.02.2017 Vår ref: 51996 / 3 / BGH Deres dato: Deres ref:

#### TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 09.01.2017.  
Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

<i>51996</i>	<i>Motivational strategies with particular emphasis on writing when teaching</i>
	<i>English in Norwegian schools</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>Universitetet i Stavanger, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Oliver Martin Traxel</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Yulia Rosina</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstillende kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema,

<http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.05.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Kjersti Haugstvedt

Belinda Gloppen Helle

Kontaktperson: Belinda Gloppen Helle tlf: 55 58 28 74