

Approaches to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Reading Instruction in Norwegian Primary Schools

Doctoral Thesis by

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Abstract

This thesis is based on a multi-perspective study of English as a foreign language (EFL) reading instruction in Norwegian fourth- and fifth grades. The research focuses on the teaching of reading and investigates the use of four different approaches to EFL reading instruction: a textbook-based approach, an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers, a combination of a textbook-based and graded readers approach, and the Australian Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP) approach.

The main aim was to find out how EFL reading was taught in fourth- and fifth grades. Sub-aims were first to find out which materials, activities, and instructional practices the grade 4 and 5 teachers used to teach English reading; second, to find out how the above-mentioned reading approaches enabled differentiation in reading instruction; third, to find out how the reading approaches differed in the reading interaction between teachers and students; and finally, to discover the teachers' perceptions of their English reading instruction and best practice.

The study used a mixed methods approach consisting of quantitative and qualitative data from two primary sources: first, a questionnaire sent to teachers throughout Norway, and second, a case study of four schools (one using a textbook-based approach, one using the EYLP approach, and two whose approach was a combination of textbook and graded readers). Although it had originally been the intention, it was not possible to research a school using an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers. Data in the case study schools was collected through observations and teacher and student interviews. The study draws on research within first language (L1), second language (L2), and foreign language (FL) reading development and instruction, classroom interaction, differentiation, and reading comprehension.

In terms of materials, the questionnaire results showed that the textbook was the predominant text source used by teachers, although others, especially graded readers, were used to varying degrees.

In terms of practices, the questionnaire showed that intensive reading, translation, and choral reading aloud were frequent practices, while individual silent reading and extensive reading were less common. Both the questionnaire and the case study found that a major challenge was providing adequate differentiated teaching to meet individual students' abilities and needs, especially given the variation in students' reading abilities. This challenge was most commonly addressed through materials for independent reading or homework.

Regarding interaction between the teachers and students, teacher use of recitation and explicit feedback techniques were prominent in the four case study schools across all the approaches. In contrast, coaching and modeling were infrequently employed.

Although many teachers perceived a connection between students' L1 and L2 reading ability, there was nevertheless infrequent collaboration between the L1 and L2 teachers. Moreover, in the case study schools, there was little explicit instruction on transferring reading strategies and comprehension skills from L1 to L2.

Each of the studied approaches had its merits and drawbacks. However, an approach combining a textbook and graded readers appeared to be a feasible compromise in the Norwegian EFL context. In addition, the EYLP approach contained a number of features, such as guided reading in level-differentiated groups and the opportunity for extensive reading, that can have a positive effect on students' reading development.

One of the implications for improving current EFL reading instruction in Norwegian primary education is the need for greater focus in teacher training on reading strategies, purposes, differentiation, and interaction techniques that support developing comprehension skills. In addition, more time spent on students working in smaller level-differentiated reading groups with the teacher, and more time on extensive reading, especially of level-differentiated texts at home, could potentially enhance students' reading motivation and development.

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Explanation of the transcriptions

The transcriptions were taken from the recorded observations at the case study schools. The transcriptions are presented as they were spoken by the participants, namely their language was not corrected. When the language was so unclear that it disrupted comprehension, notes have been added in brackets. All exchanges have been transcribed using the original language spoken. Norwegian words are indicated in italics. Translations of Norwegian utterances are listed in parentheses at the end of the speaker's turn. However, if the speaker code-switched within the speaking turn, the English translation is presented immediately after the Norwegian utterance.

The following conventions were used for the transcriptions. The abbreviation T is used for the teacher. The letter S is used to designate a student. When specific students are noted, the first letter of their name is used. When student names were unknown, S followed by a number is used to distinguish the students when more than one student was involved in the interaction with the teacher. Other conventions used are:

... indicating a drop in the conversation

.. indicating a pause

(...) indicating that the word or phrase was not audible on the recording

[...] indicating that a section of the utterance not pertaining to the main idea being communicated was removed

Exceptionally long pauses are noted in the parentheses. Finally, when specifically relevant, additional information, such as actions that are necessary to understand the context, are listed in brackets [].

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1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to study the teaching of reading among English foreign language (EFL) learners in the fourth- and fifth grades in Norway. Grades 4 and 5 cover the important transition from basic primary (grade 4) to the intermediate (grade 5) levels. It is a descriptive mixed methods study based on multiple data sources: a questionnaire to teachers, interviews with teachers and students, and classroom observations. As a mixed methods study, it combines both quantitative and qualitative research methods. A major part of the study is its focus on the use of different reading approaches for EFL reading instruction. For the purposes of this research, I have defined a reading approach as the core materials used by teachers, their practices related to the development of reading ability, and the practice of reading-related activities.

1.1 Background

A number of educational reforms have taken place in Norway in recent decades. In 1997 the introduction of EFL was lowered from grade 4 (age 9) to grade 1 (age 6) as part of the 1997 national curriculum (*L97*) reform. At the same time the focus on reading and writing in English was emphasized to a greater extent at the primary level than in previous curricula, which had predominantly focused on the development of oral skills at this level. In the current national curriculum, known as *The Knowledge Promotion* curriculum (*LK06*), which was implemented in 2006, reading is specified as one of the five basic skills in all subjects, thus enhancing its status even more¹. Moreover, the *LK06* English subject curriculum specifies reading-related competence aims to be achieved by the completion of grades 2, 4, 7, 10, and 11. These same priorities can be found in the current revised English subject curriculum, implemented in 2013².

¹ The five basic skills to be developed through all subject areas are being able to express oneself in writing and orally, being able to read, numeracy, and being able to use digital tools. All of these skills are to be integrated into English teaching.

² At the time of the data collection, it was the 2006 version of the *LK06* curriculum which was in effect. Although the English translation of the English subject

Introduction

In spite of a greater emphasis on EFL reading skills in *L97* and *LK06*, as well as writing skills, a large proportion of English teachers at the primary level have no subject-specific training in English (Drew, Oostdam, & van Toorenburg, 2007; Lagerström, 2007). The need for increased competence and pre-service education of language teachers has been widely acknowledged (Drew et al., 2007; Hasselgreen, 2005; Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007). Additionally, an increase in in-service training courses for foreign language teachers is one of the aims of the *Språk Åpner Dører (Languages Open Doors)* (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a) report produced by the Ministry of Education. Questions can be raised about the effectiveness of the curricular changes in aims, starting age, and instructional hours in EFL primary education in *L97* and *LK06* if so many primary teachers, especially in the lower grades, are not qualified to teach the subject. In order to maximize the benefits from these curricular changes, it is important that teachers are well prepared and qualified to teach the subject and differentiate teaching and learning based on the students' ability levels.

The need for teachers to be prepared and qualified is even greater since *LK06* refrains from mentioning teaching methods or approaches, thus placing the responsibility on teachers to use appropriate methods and approaches to help students attain the specified competence aims (Hasselgreen, 2005; Mellegård & Pettersen, 2012; see section 2.2). As few studies have explored the actual practice of EFL in Norwegian primary schools, especially the development of English reading skills, it is important to study how the basic skill of reading is taught in Norwegian EFL primary classrooms. The *Languages Open Doors* (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a) report emphasizes the need for increased research and development work within foreign languages, as relatively little research has been conducted in Norway within the field. The current research aims to contribute to the research on foreign language education in Norway, and presents data that can increase knowledge about teacher competence and foreign language instruction, in this case about EFL reading at the primary level.

curriculum was published in 2010, the Norwegian version was available and in effect from 2006.

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Due to the increasing internationalization within the work force, higher education, and net-based communication, the demands on the level of English competence for the whole population have increased. A whole segment of the population who did not previously use English is now expected to do so in order to continue their education or work in international companies. English, besides being a world language of communication, has a very high status in Norway. The *Languages Open Doors* report states that English has developed from being a tool for conveying certain cultures and values held by an elite, to being a language that everyone should know (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a, p. 8). This is especially important in Norway, given the small number of people in the world who know Norwegian.

English, though taught as a foreign language (FL) in schools in Norway, has been listed as shifting towards second language (L2) status within Norway due to its increasing use in intra-national communication, such as in professional discourse and higher education (Graddol, 1997, p. 11). Graddol argues that in EFL areas, English is primarily used for communication with speakers from other countries, while in an L2 area English is used for internal (intra-national) communication. This intra-national communication includes professional discourse and higher education contexts, both of which are highly relevant in Norway. Graddol also comments that in EFL contexts there are no local models of English. However, given the high number of native and non-native English speakers in the larger cities of Norway, it is questionable whether one can speak of an absence of local models of English in Norway. Additionally, given the extensive exposure to native English speakers through different forms of media, it could be argued that these media sources provide types of language models for learners in Norway. This is not to argue against there being differences between L2 contexts and the Norwegian context, since English is not yet part of most speakers' language identity in Norway. Additionally, there would be great variation depending on in which area of the country the speakers lived, with greater exposure to English and use of the language by Norwegian speakers, and foreigners in general, in the larger cities than in rural areas.

Moreover, the importance of English within society and education is emphasized in the *LK06* curriculum:

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The English language is used everywhere. When we meet people from other countries, in Norway or abroad, we need English for communication. English is used in films, literature, songs, sports, business, products, trades and entertainment, and through these channels many English words and expressions have found their way into our own language. When we want information on something of private or professional interest, we often search for it in English. Moreover, English is increasingly used in education and working life, in Norway and abroad. To succeed in a world where English is used for international interpersonal communication, it is necessary to master the English language. (Kunnskapsløftet, 2006, p. 65)

However, several reports have questioned whether Norwegian students have the necessary skills in English to succeed in higher education given the current English demands (Hellekjær, 2005; Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a). Hellekjær (2005, 2007) refers especially to inadequate English reading skills among students entering higher education and suggests that their school education in English has not prepared them sufficiently for the demands of reading English texts in higher education. Thus, there is a need for research on how beginning EFL reading skills can be enhanced and developed in order to lay the foundations for how students can meet these new expectations.

1.2 The Norwegian EFL reading context

1.2.1 Reading abilities

The reading context of the current study is the classroom reading instruction in fourth- and fifth-grade English classes in Norwegian primary schools. The primary texts in most of the classes are English textbooks produced in Norway (Bachmann, 2004; Drew, 2004; Drew et al., 2007), specifically for the Norwegian school context (Schröder, 2012). Some schools use graded readers or other children's literature either to supplement, or in a few cases, instead of, the textbooks (see also Chapter 5 for further detail on the reading materials). Much of the content of the textbooks is focused on promoting the culture of English-speaking countries, children's interests, and drawing comparisons between English-speaking and Norwegian countries. The

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students' purposes for reading are basic comprehension of the texts, often to promote question and answer sessions in the classes and, to a certain extent, to acquire knowledge about the content. Classroom reading instruction is often practiced in a combination of English and Norwegian, the balance depending on the teachers, the age of the students and the students' ability levels (Drew, 2004; Hoff, 2013; Rye, 2014).

In their first language (L1), namely Norwegian (for most of the students)³, students begin reading in first grade. By fourth grade, students should be able to:

- Read different types of texts in *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*⁴ (Standard Norwegian and New Norwegian) with fluency and comprehension
- Find information by combining words and illustrations in texts on screen and paper
- Recognize and use linguistic devices such as repetition, contrast and simple figurative language
- Read, reflect on and discuss own texts and those created by others (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2013, p. 7)

Furthermore, the national test in Norwegian L1 reading in fifth grade describes reading comprehension as being comprised of (a) finding information in the text; (b) interpreting and understanding the text; and (c) reflecting on and evaluating the form and content of the text

³ According to SSB (Sentralbyrå, 2015), in January 2015, 35% of children under 18 had a non-Norwegian background: 18% come from countries in Europe, including Turkey, 4% from countries in Africa, 9% from countries in Asia, and 1-2% from America. Children under 18 years old who were immigrants and Norwegian born children of immigrant parents comprised 15% of the population of under 18 children in Norway. In 2013, 10% of students in Norway received first language instruction, two-language instruction or extra Norwegian support for those with Norwegian L2 (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2013). For most of those students, English is then a third or more language. For a smaller group, English is their first language or they are English-Norwegian bilingual.

⁴ Norwegian has two written languages, *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk* (Standard Norwegian and New Norwegian). Both are used and required in Norwegian schools. However, students generally have one primary written language. Normally, the other language is used only in a school context.

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(Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2010). Therefore, these are the areas assessed on the national test in fifth grade. These areas reflect the overall reading construct presented in the national curriculum (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012; see section 2.3 for further presentation of the reading construct). Additionally, by the end of fifth grade, students should be working towards being able “to cite, summarize and reflect on the key points in a text,” and “understand and interpret information from different forms of expression in a composite text” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2013, p. 8). Thus, Norwegian fourth- and fifth-grade students should have developed lower-level comprehension skills and be developing higher-level comprehension skills. Lower-level reading comprehension skills generally consist of literal text comprehension. In contrast, higher-level comprehension skills are defined as comprehension that is at a high-level of text interpretation or goes beyond the text, such as with generalization, application, evaluation, and aesthetic response (B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, & Pearson, 2002; see sections 4.3 and 4.4 for an explanation of reading skills). The evidence of this comprehension is often provided when children speak about the text, applying the above-mentioned skills.

1.2.2 Cognitive abilities

The students in this study were transitioning from what in Norway is called “small school” (grades 1–4, ages 6–9) to “intermediate grades” (grades 5–7, ages 10–12)⁵, and also developing in their cognitive abilities. Generally, younger children learn primarily by listening and teenagers are expected to acquire a good deal of knowledge through reading (Munden, 2014). The students in this study were transitioning from young children to what has been referred to as “tweens” in newer research (Munden, 2014), a time in their development where both listening is still important, but reading also becomes an important medium of learning (Daniel, Gilligan, & Wassell, 2011).

⁵ Although both of these age groups generally are in the same primary school building, there are differences between the number of teaching hours, school subjects taught, and expectations for school and homework. Additionally, a class teacher will often follow one class from grades 1-4 or grades 5-7, but will not often continue with a class past the transition.

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Generally, the ability to think logically and abstractly becomes further developed, and their concentration improves (Munden, 2014). However, according to Munden (2014) from age nine, there is decreased interest in reading books, especially for boys. This time is often replaced with time spent on digital resources, such as the Internet and video games. This is a potential challenge area for Norwegian teachers of English. At a time when interest in L1 reading may be starting to diminish, teachers need to help motivate students to also read in English, a foreign language for the majority. However, other skills are developing as well, such as the social competence to accomplish group work (Donato, 2004). When students are able to manage group work it can be an asset to English teachers during the teaching of reading. Group work allows teachers to work with smaller groups of students while other students work together discussing texts or working on other activities.

There are also changes in mental processing specifically related to reading that occur as a result of cognitive development. According to Alexander and Fox (2011), these may not only be the result of maturation, but also of prior experience. Alexander and Fox describe these changes as follows: “These cognitive transformations include qualitative shifts in reasoning ability and an increasing comfort with abstraction, bringing adolescents into the realm of what Piaget termed formal operations or hypothetico-deductive thought (1964/1967)” (p. 162). Alexander and Fox argue that these changes allow adolescents to benefit from exposure to prior literacy experiences, which is not common among young learners. These benefits include being more able to consider multiple viewpoints, to think hypothetically, abstractly, and logically. Adolescents are also likely to have acquired a number of different strategies for problem solving, and to have learned how to use them with greater control and flexibility.

Further aspects of cognitive development related to reading include students experiencing an increased capacity for self-regulation and the ability to monitor; increased working memory capacity and efficiency; increased ability to understand the perspective of others, and the ability to respond empathetically (P. A. Alexander & Fox, 2011). Additionally, general reading achievement improves; inferential and elaborative comprehension develops (e.g., relating pronoun references to their source, and interpreting idiomatic or

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metaphoric language); recognition and use of text structure to build comprehension increases; and the ability to build and understand across multiple texts is enhanced (P. A. Alexander & Fox, 2011). However, since the students in this study were just approaching adolescence, these aspects would be more applicable to some of the students than others, depending on their cognitive development and maturity.

Specifically related to reading comprehension, certain skills, such as creating a deep understanding of a text, require inferential and elaborative processing (such as building ties in the text and articulating and sustaining multiple processing goals) (Graesser, Singer, & Trabasso, 1994; see also section 4.3.3). These skills seem to improve during the adolescent period (P. A. Alexander & Fox, 2011). During this period, adolescents also improve their recognition of text structures and features. This knowledge is applied, for instance, when readers comprehend the main ideas of texts. Students as early as third grade are capable of identifying the main idea in a text, but often focus more on details (P. A. Alexander & Fox, 2011). This may be especially true for factual texts, or texts used in science and history classes, which often include graphic aids, such as tables and diagrams.

1.2.3 Vocabulary

Another important component to reading instruction is students' vocabularies in L1 and L2/FL. Since L1 vocabulary is important in both L1 reading development and FL development, it was considered relevant to try to estimate students' Norwegian vocabulary size. However, the researcher has been unable to find any published research on Norwegian students' L1 vocabulary size. In contrast, research has been conducted to estimate English L1 students' vocabulary size. English L1 students will learn approximately 1,000 word families⁶ for every year of life⁷. Thus, native English speaking students will have an approximate vocabulary size of 8000 word families

⁶ Word families are considered a base form and its related forms (Milton & Alexiou, 2009). There is evidence that words are learned this way in L1 (Aitchison, 1987) also in FL learning (Schmitt & Meara, 1997).

⁷ See discussion of differences between vocabulary size in languages in Appendix 1, especially with reference to Milton (2010).

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when they are in fourth grade (Nation, 2006). Reading, both related to school assignments and for pleasure, has been found to be an important factor in vocabulary growth, especially in the early school years (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

As far as EFL vocabulary growth is concerned, some information about expectations for vocabulary can be drawn from the *LK06* curriculum aims and the guidelines for the national test in English in fifth grade. Based on the aims of the national curriculum in English for the completion of fourth grade (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010; see also section 2.2.1) and the national test in English in fifth grade (see also section 2.2.4), students at the end of fourth grade and beginning of fifth grade should be able to:

- understand and use common English words and phrases connected to day-to-day life, recreation and interests, both orally and in writing;
- use some common grammatical structures, words, simple sentence structures and spelling patterns;
- use some stock expressions that are common in familiar situations, both orally and in writing;
- read and understand the main points in texts about familiar topics (see also section 2.2.1).

In Norway, students begin English instruction in first grade. Thus, the students in the current study will have had three to four previous years of English instruction. Although they are usually exposed to texts before fourth grade (according to the curriculum aims for second grade), they are not generally expected to start reading English texts until the third and fourth grades. The guidelines for the fifth-grade national test in English suggest that although fifth-grade students are somewhat restricted in topics they can read about, because of their limited vocabulary in English, they should nevertheless be able to “hear” and recognize words when they read them. They should also generally be able to read short texts on subjects they are familiar with, for example about their own interests, or subjects they have studied at school. They should also be able to read texts in different genres, for example letters, e-mails, messages, simple factual texts, simple stories, poems, songs, instructions, lists, and tables (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011).

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The national test in English for fifth grade is designed to be at the A1/A2–A2/B1 level on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011; see also sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4). This means that students at the lowest level would be at an A1 level, whereas students who are at the highest end of the scale may be approaching B1. During the period of data collection, 2010–2012, the national average on the test was 2 on a scale of 1 to 3, with approximately 50% of students at the middle level (i.e., average students may be at a A1+/A2- level) (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2012; further explained in section 2.2.4). In relation to vocabulary knowledge, Milton (2010) found that students at an A2 level would have a vocabulary knowledge of approximately 2000 words, and approximately 3000 words at the B1 level (the A1 level would be up to approximately 1500 words). For further discussion of EFL vocabulary levels and its relation to the CEFR, see Appendix 1.

1.3 Aims

The current study investigates the teaching and learning of EFL reading in fourth- and fifth grades, and different approaches to it, especially the materials used, and teachers' practices and perceptions of their reading instruction and best practice. It also investigates how different reading approaches may best enhance students' reading development through the use of differentiated practices and how the approaches address the *LK06* curriculum aims. For this research, reading approaches are categorized, based on the reading materials most frequently used, as those that use one of the following:

- a textbook
- a combination of textbook-based and graded readers (leveled texts, often short books in a series)
- primarily extensive reading through the use of graded readers
- an approach adapted from an Australian/New Zealand literacy program, for example the Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP)(see section 5.5)
- other approaches

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The overarching research question for this study is:

How is reading taught in Norwegian fourth- and fifth-grade EFL classes?

This overarching question is subdivided into four sub-research questions:

1. What materials, activities, and instructional practices do grade 4 and 5 teachers use to teach English reading?
2. To what extent do the reading approaches enable differentiation in reading instruction?
3. What differences are there in the reading interaction between teachers and students in the different reading approaches?
4. What are teachers' perceptions of their English reading instruction and best practice?

The four different approaches to reading instruction explored in the research implement intensive and extensive reading to varying degrees, using different practices and materials and for different purposes. Intensive reading is reading with a focus on the details of language in a text, often short texts used to exemplify specific aspects of the language or for targeted reading strategy use (Nation, 2009b). Extensive reading, in contrast, is reading for comprehension with few or no specific language tasks to perform (Hafiz & Tudor, 1989), and reading for pleasure (Day & Bamford, 1998).

In order to answer the research questions, certain concepts need to be defined. First, reading is a complex construct that includes multiple sub-skills, levels of cognitive processing, and levels of comprehension. The construct components of reading include an interaction between processes of decoding and processes of comprehension (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012). Decoding is “translating the graphemes (letters or letter groups) into phonemes and assembling the pronunciation of a word from this sequence of phonemes” (Snowling & Hulme, 2005, p. 3). Reading, according to Coltheart (2005), is “information-processing: transforming print to speech, or print to meaning” (p. 6). Reading comprehension, as defined by the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) is “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Comprehension has these elements: the reader, the text, and the activity, or purpose for reading” (p. xi). Reading, in the context of this

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research, is understood as engaging with and creating meaning from texts, in order to understand, find, interpret, reflect on, assess, and acquire insight and knowledge from texts. This is related to how reading as a skill is presented in the *LK06* curriculum and the Framework for Basic Skills. The reading construct as defined in the present study and the way in which it is presented in the context of the Norwegian curriculum will be addressed and discussed in section 2.3.

Second, differentiation in an educational setting is defined as “the practice of adjusting the curriculum, teaching strategies, assessment strategies, and the classroom environment to meet the needs of all students” (Arends & Kilcher, 2010, p. 106). In this research, differentiation is defined as adaptations or changes made to reading instruction (including practices and materials) for groups or individual students. Differentiation is a key term within Norwegian education, with references to it in the Education Act (Ministry of Education and Research, 2007), the *LK06* curriculum, including the Core Curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2005a), the Quality Framework (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2005b), and the Framework for Basic Skills (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012). The term is also specifically mentioned in relation to EFL in both *LK06* and in *Languages Open Doors*, where it is listed as a secondary aim of the strategy for strengthening language education. One aspect of the second research question is how much of the differentiation in the observed EFL reading instruction is a result of the reading approach used at the school and how much is related to the teacher’s implementation of the approach.

Third, interaction, for the purposes of this research, is defined as the communicative exchanges in the classroom. Generally, this will be applied to interactions between teacher and students while working with texts or talking about reading. Sometimes this will also relate to student interactions, especially in small group work.

Finally, teachers’ perceptions are addressed in this research. Research on teacher’s beliefs has shown a relationship between classroom practice and language teacher cognition, defined as “what teachers believe, know, and think” (Borg, 2006, p. 81). Within the current research the following aspects of teachers’ perceptions of reading instruction are explored: teachers’

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priorities related to their own teaching, their perception of policy statements regarding teacher qualifications, their opinions of EFL reading instructional practices, and their perception of factors that influence their teaching.

Based on previous research on EFL teaching practices at the primary level in Norway (Drew et al., 2007), the expectation was to find a predominance of schools primarily using a textbook, and of “traditional” teaching practices. Although in the Norwegian EFL context, aspects from different EFL teaching methods are used (e.g., communicative and grammar translation methods), “traditional” teaching methods would be considered teaching practices based on grammar translation and direct methods (Howatt, 1984). These include reading in unison, teachers reading aloud, use of translation and assessments based on texts, especially vocabulary and comprehension testing based on recall questions. This is further discussed in section 5.1.

Moreover, based on previous research (Drew et al., 2007; Hellekjær, 2007), it was expected that when teaching reading and working with texts, the teachers in the current research would primarily adhere to intensive reading and that few schools would use extensive reading on a regular basis. Another expectation, based on research within differentiated reading instruction (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006; Grøterud & Moen, 2001; Kverndokken, 2013; Littleton & Mercer, 2013; McNamara, Graesser, McCarthy, & Cai, 2014), was that methods and materials that emphasize differentiation to a greater extent would capitalize on the differences between students and allow them to work to their potential.

1.4 Research method

The design of the study uses a mixed methods approach (Dörnyei, 2007) comprised of both quantitative and qualitative data (presented in greater detail in Chapter 6). First, the quantitative approach consisted of a survey. The data collected was from a national teacher questionnaire sent to fourth- and fifth-grade teachers in Norway in the autumn of 2010. The questionnaire focused on the teachers’ practices in EFL reading instruction, backgrounds, educational qualifications, and their perceptions of EFL reading instruction and language learning.

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Second, the qualitative approach consisted of a case study of four schools using three different reading approaches: a textbook-based approach, a combination of textbook-based and graded reader approach⁸, and the EYLP approach. These three approaches in addition to an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers were the categories used for the teacher questionnaire. The intention had been to use these four categories for the case study as well. However, the questionnaire findings revealed that there were few schools using an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers. Additionally, several of these schools were in remote areas, often with few students and with classes consisting of students from different grade levels. These and other characteristics made these schools less representative of the majority of Norwegian primary schools. Because of these factors, and the lack of an appropriate school to follow up in a case study, it was decided to focus on the other three approaches for the case study in schools, namely schools using a textbook-based, combination, and the EYLP approach. However, since the questionnaire revealed great variation among schools using a combination approach, it was decided to include two schools from this category in the case study. As a result, there were four schools representing three reading approaches in the case study (see also section 6.4.1). During a six-month period in 2011, observations of reading instruction were conducted in both fourth- and fifth-grade classes at each school. Additionally, teachers and a selection of students were interviewed.

As a mixed methods study, the research questions are addressed using a combination of different research methods and data sources. The overarching research question, how the teaching of reading is taught in fourth- and fifth-grade EFL classes, is an exploratory one consisting of four sub-questions, to which all of the data sources and research methods contribute. The first sub-research question is exploratory in nature and was explored by the questionnaire data, as well as observations and interviews with teachers in the four case study schools. The second and third sub-research questions were addressed through a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (namely the questionnaire data, observations of lessons, and

⁸ The third approach, namely a combination of a textbook-based and graded readers approach, will be referred to as a combination approach.

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interviews with teachers and students) to address the issue of differentiation in English reading instruction and interaction in the classroom. The fourth sub-research question about teachers' perceptions of EFL reading teaching and best practice was addressed by a combination of the questionnaire respondents' answers to statements and by interviews with teachers at the case study schools.

1.5 Contribution

The current research aims to make a contribution to EFL research in the Norwegian context. Few studies in Norway have focused on primary school EFL reading instruction, especially as in-depth case studies of classrooms, teachers, and learners. One of the strengths of this research is its use of a mixed methods approach, therefore providing a rich set of both quantitative and qualitative data about the teaching of EFL reading in Norwegian primary schools. This research includes the study of both the materials used for teaching reading and how they are used, specifically how they are able to provide differentiated language input for the learners. Moreover, although other questionnaires in Norway have addressed EFL teachers' backgrounds and qualifications (Lagerström, 2000, 2007), and EFL teaching in primary schools (Drew et al., 2007), these were far more limited in the scope of reading-related items than the questionnaire developed for this research.

This research may provide valuable insight into how best to introduce and enhance reading among young EFL learners in Norway. This research will hopefully also be of international interest; for example, the fact that some Norwegian schools have experimented by using adapted Australian and New Zealand early literacy models in EFL teaching (Drew, 2009b), i.e., models promoting reading and writing, especially the EYLP, has not been a trend outside of Norway.

1.6 Structure of thesis

Chapters 2 through 5 contribute to an overall understanding of EFL reading instruction in Norway. Chapter 2 provides background on teaching EFL, and places this within the context of English in Norwegian schools. Additionally, this chapter introduces the reading skill and relates it to important documents

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in Norwegian education. Chapter 3 continues the focus on education and language learning, addressing issues of second language acquisition (SLA), differentiation, and interaction in the classroom. This chapter elaborates on the concept of differentiation and how it relates to Norwegian primary school education. Additionally, it draws connections between learning theories and interaction, focusing on the construction of knowledge during EFL reading instruction.

Chapter 4 first introduces reading as a basic skill and the component skills necessary for reading. Reading research, especially foreign language reading research, has been an area of increasing focus in the past decades (Koda, 2004). An important aspect of the current research is the link between first and second language literacy development, as the primary school students of the relevant age group are already developing literacy in their first language prior to beginning in English. Additionally, important principles of teaching reading are introduced, emerging from research on reading development.

The current research examines the concept of different reading approaches for EFL, which are introduced in Chapter 5. These are presented through the categories of materials, the concepts of intensive and extensive reading, and shared and guided reading. The different materials used as a basis of the reading approach categories are addressed, as well as the debate on authentic and simplified texts. Finally, as the only approach in an established program, the Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP) is explained, and a history of the program is provided.

As a mixed methods study, the research methods and the two primary data sources (the questionnaire and the case study of four schools) are presented in Chapter 6. The chapter addresses the design of the study, the research instruments, the development process of the questionnaire, and questions of validity and reliability. Chapters 7 and 8 present the results from the two main data sources. Chapter 7 focuses on the questionnaire results, which cover teachers' experience and qualifications, practices, and perceptions of teaching EFL reading. The case study schools are presented individually in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 consists of a discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions, followed by implications and limitations of the study, before the thesis is concluded in Chapter 10.

2 Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Norway

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on EFL as a school subject in Norway and research on its teaching in primary schools. Section 2.2 addresses English in Norwegian education by means of an historical overview of the subject through previous curricula up to the current *LK06* curriculum and its implementation. One of the main aims of this overview is to show how the role of reading has developed throughout the curricular reforms. This is followed by a description of two documents relating to language education in Europe: the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* and the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*. The role of the national tests in English and teacher education for EFL teachers are also briefly addressed. Section 2.3 presents reading as a skill as defined in the *LK06* curriculum and the Framework for Basic Skills (a subsidiary document of the curriculum defining and describing the basic skills in relation to all school subjects). Finally, section 2.4 briefly summarizes the chapter.

2.2 English within Norwegian school education

English has a relatively high status within the Norwegian education system; it is currently compulsory from grades 1 to 11 and the only compulsory foreign language in Norwegian schools. Additionally, the subject is one of only three so-called “written subjects,” namely subjects that students can be given a written exam in at the end of tenth grade in lower secondary school, which marks the end of compulsory education; the other two subjects with this status are Norwegian and mathematics.

English became compulsory in the new nine-year compulsory schooling in 1959 (Drew & Sørheim, 2009). It was introduced in fifth grade following the education act of 1969. At the time, the use of English in some classrooms may have been limited due to many teachers having little oral language competence or confidence in using English (Drew & Sørheim, 2009). In 1974,

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the starting age for English was lowered to fourth grade. Following international trends, it was lowered even more in 1997, although not all schools implemented this change at first. When the *L97* curriculum was first implemented in 1997, schools had a certain degree of flexibility to choose when to start teaching English between grades 1 and 4, as well as the number of lessons allocated per year, as long as the total number of hours of instruction within those four grades added up to 96. However, in 2008, when additional instructional time was added to grades 1–7, the consequence was a reduction in the English teaching time in grades 8–10 from three to two lessons a week (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2008). Currently in primary school, students receive 138 hours of English instruction in grades 1–4 and 228 hours in grades 5–7 (366 hours in total in grades 1–7⁹). This constitutes more hours than science (328 in grades 1–7), and only slightly fewer than social studies (385). However, Norwegian is still the first language within primary education (1372 hours) and is the primary language used for instruction (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010)¹⁰.

Since 1974 there have been four national curricula, each producing changes to the language learning approach, suggested teaching methods, and/or materials. The 1974 (*M74*) curriculum introduced English in fourth grade, suggesting new teaching methods based on the audio-lingual approach (Kyrkje og Undervisningsdepartementet, 1974). This was an approach influenced by behaviorism, i.e., an approach in which learning was considered a process of habit formation and in which “behavior is a response to a stimulus” (Simensen, 2007, p. 47). In the audiolingual approach, the learning of specific structures and drills was emphasized. Oral activities became the focus, especially in grades 4 to 6, but often through the use of constructed texts used to present grammatical structures. In fact the curriculum contained pages of grammatical items to be introduced at the different grades (Kyrkje og Undervisningsdepartementet, 1974, pp. 151-160). According to Drew and

⁹ Previously, the total number of hours of instruction for grades 1–7 was 328 (Kunnskapsløftet, 2006).

¹⁰ Vedlegg 1 til rundskriv Udir-08-2010 fag- og timefordeling i grunnsopplæringen – Kunnskapsløftet
<http://www.udir.no/Upload/Rundskriv/2010/5/Udir-08-2010-fag-og-timefordeling.pdf?epslanguage=no>

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Sørheim (2009), the likely outcome was that the curriculum provided little opportunity for creativity for the learners and led to monotonous tasks.

In lower secondary school the predominant tasks were still usually based on grammar-translation methods: vocabulary lists and tests, and translation of texts read aloud (Howatt, 1984). The grammar-translation method focused on understanding and learning the rules of the target language, reading texts in that language, and translating them into the learners' native language. This method had its origins in the study of Latin and Greek, and was later applied to foreign language teaching, giving the study of these languages the same status as the classical languages (Howatt, 1984).

The following curriculum, *M87*, was introduced in 1987. The curriculum acknowledged the growing importance of English in work, education, and spare time (Kyrkje og Undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, p. 204). The curriculum was divided into sections on themes, familiarity with the English-speaking world, language functions, grammar, and texts relevant for grades 4–6 and 7–9. It was implemented at a time when communicative language teaching had come into focus, thereby underscoring the need for real communication and introducing activities such as drama, role-play, and games to create real conversations and communicative interaction. As in *M74*, oral language was considered the most important at all levels (Kyrkje og Undervisningsdepartementet, 1987, p. 206). The shift in focus from accurate communication based on the repetition of programmed scripts and language out of context, to an acceptance of mistakes as a part of language learning through real communication, improved the creative use of language within theme and topic-based teaching (Drew & Sørheim, 2009).

Its successor, the *L97* curriculum, implemented in 1997, introduced a broader perspective on general language competence to which both mother tongue and foreign language instruction contribute. It emphasized that language is a tool used to communicate and understand the world. Thus, both oral and written English were given focus in this curriculum from the primary level onwards. Moreover, learner autonomy was introduced as a concept, which directed more focus towards the language learners' learning, their own role in this learning, and an awareness of strategies for learning languages.

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The curriculum stated that communication in the classroom should primarily be in English during EFL lessons. The use of a variety of materials and methods was encouraged in *L97*. For example, in fifth grade students will:

gain experience and form an impression of English and English usage in encounters with a wide selection of texts from different periods. They must have access to stories, fairy tales, extracts from children's books, e.g., Rudyard Kipling's "Just so stories", short extracts from books they have worked with in Norwegian, e.g. *Robinson Crusoe* and *Huckleberry Finn* [...] Christmas carols, ballads and singing games, proverbs, jokes and riddles, simple/easy texts and multimedia texts. (*The Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in Norway, 1999*, p. 242)¹¹

A wide variety of genres was specified within the curriculum, such as songs, jokes, riddles, fairytales, simple/easy factual texts, and multimedia texts. Additionally, there was a strong emphasis on the use of project-based work throughout the curriculum in all subjects, which led to a greater degree of cross-curricular projects.

Generally, the *L97* curriculum was characterized by a playful attitude to language learning in grades 1–4. For example, in fourth grade students should have the opportunity to "experiment with the language: listen, speak, read, write, compose texts and bring them to life in presentations/dramatizations; learn some proverbs, songs, poems, rhymes and jingles" (*The Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in Norway, 1999*, pp. 241-242). The curriculum also used phrases such as "gain experience with" and "explore" when talking about language learning in the primary grades.

However, even though *L97* had more of an exploratory attitude to English language instruction than its predecessors, reading was emphasized to a great extent, including using authentic texts for reading and reading regularly for comprehension. It is noteworthy that despite this focus, Drew (2009a) found in a 2003 questionnaire during the *L97* period that many English primary

¹¹ Although the Norwegian curriculum was published and implemented in 1997, the English translation of the curriculum was not published until 1999.

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school teachers at the time prioritized oral skill development. This may have been because they were unable to or unwilling to make the transition from the previous curriculum, whose focus was on oral skills at the primary school level.

The *LK06* national curriculum, implemented in 2006, focuses on developing five basic skills throughout all subject areas: being able to express oneself in writing and orally, being able to read, numeracy, and being able to use digital tools. All of these skills are to be integrated into English teaching, although the way they are implemented would vary depending on the level of the students and the teacher's ability to integrate them. For example, the ability to read English:

is part of the practical language competence and means being able to read and understand, to explore and reflect upon increasingly more demanding texts and thus gain insight across cultures and disciplines. Developing reading skills in English also improves general reading skills. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010, p. 3)

Thus, the benefits gained from the English subject, such as general reading skills and text comprehension, carry over into other subjects.

2.2.1 The LK06 English subject curriculum

The *LK06* English subject curriculum, in its original form, was divided into three main subject areas: Language learning; Communication; and Culture, society and literature. Language learning focuses on metacognition about learning languages, including assessing one's own language use and seeing relationships between English, one's native language¹², and other languages. However, the 2013 revision of the subject curriculum divided Communication into two separate categories: Oral communication and Written communication

¹² For many students in Norway, Norwegian is not their first language. There are 44,265 students with a minority language background in Norway who receive extra instruction in Norwegian language or teaching in the school subject Norwegian; this amounts to 7.2% of students in Norwegian primary and lower secondary schools (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2012).

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(Ministry of Education and Research, 2013). In both *LK06* and the 2013 revision, the communication sections focus on receptive and productive skills in both written and oral contexts, as well as how to use various genres and adapt language to the interlocutor and situation. The importance of reading a large quantity of texts is emphasized in the new Written communication section, which the curriculum designers state will promote language understanding and competence in the use of texts (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 3). The area Culture, society and literature addresses the status of English as a world language and refers to broad cultural topics and understanding of the English-speaking world. It also emphasizes working with various text types to develop greater linguistic and cultural understanding. The way reading in English can benefit general reading development is also mentioned: “Reading literature may also help to instill the joy of reading in students and provide the basis for personal growth, maturity and creativity” (Kunnskapsløftet, 2006, p. 3). Further, the connection between reading skills in a first and second language is recognized in the curriculum, as it was in *L97*.

In addition to the general outline of the subject content, the English subject curriculum contains competence aims that specify what students should be able to do after completing grades 2, 4, 7, and 10, and the first year of upper secondary education (grade 11). Within each of these stages, aims relate to the three afore-mentioned categories in the original *LK06* curriculum, namely, language, communication, and culture, society, and literature. These stages clearly indicate a progression within the subject, placing responsibility on the teachers to create continuity (Mellegård & Pettersen, 2012). The aims after grade 2 primarily focus on oral language development, experimenting with language use, comprehension of basic instructions, and the ability to hold basic conversations. The introduction of written English, although not given a primary focus, includes being able to “recognize some words, expressions and simple sentences in spoken and written texts” and “use letters and experiment with writing English words and expressions” (Kunnskapsløftet, 2006, p. 4). Written English is given greater attention in grades 3 and 4.

As the present research was conducted during the original *LK06* curriculum period, the learning aims from that curriculum were those that pertained to the participants in the research. However, because of the curriculum revision in

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2013 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013), it is also important to bear in mind the current revised aims, since they should be considered in connection with any future potential implementation of reading approaches and instruction. The following table shows relevant aims for students completing grade 4 from both the *LK06* curriculum and the corresponding aims from the 2013 revision, followed by some particular points of comparison.

Table 1: Reading-related *LK06* and 2013 revision curriculum aims for students completing grade 4

<i>LK06</i>	2013 revision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand and use common English words and phrases connected to day-to-day life, recreation and interests, both orally and in writing • use some common grammatical structures, words, simple sentence structures and spelling patterns • use some stock expressions that are common in familiar situations, both orally and in writing • read and understand the main points in texts about familiar topics • write short messages and simple sentences that describe, narrate and ask • use digital tools to find information and create texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use simple reading and writing strategies • understand the meaning of words and expressions based on the context they are used in • use some common short words and simple spelling and sentence patterns • read, understand and write English words and expressions related to one's needs and feelings, daily life, leisure time and own interests • understand the main content of simple texts about familiar topics • write short texts that express opinions and interests, and that describe, narrate and enquire • use digital tools to retrieve information and experiment in creating texts

One of the challenges of the *LK06* curriculum is that the competence aims can be interpreted in different ways by different teachers. For example, in connection with the first *LK06* aim above, “understand and use common English words [...]” a teacher may choose to emphasize oral communicative activities rather than reading and writing at any given time. However, some aims have become more specific in the new revision, such as the aim stating that students should “read, understand and write English words and expressions [...]” whereas the original *LK06* curriculum only listed “use some stock expressions [...] orally and in writing.” Shifting the language

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skills to the beginning of the sentence in the 2013 version gives them more prominence, including the additional focus on reading. Moreover, using reading and writing strategies is specifically mentioned as a learning aim in the 2013 revision, whereas it was only listed in the introduction to the subject in the original *LK06* curriculum.

Table 2 shows some of the relevant reading and writing-related competence aims for students completing grade 7.

Table 2: Reading-related *LK06* and 2013 revision curriculum aims for students completing grade 7

<i>LK06</i>	2013 revision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use basic rules and patterns for pronunciation, intonation, spelling, grammar and various sentence structures • express himself/herself in writing and orally to obtain help in understanding and being understood • use listening, speaking, reading and writing strategies that are suitable for the purpose • give brief spoken and written presentations on a topic • read and understand texts of varying lengths and in various genres • write texts that narrate, describe or give messages • use digital tools to find information and to prepare texts • read and talk about English-language literature for children and young people from various media and genres, including prose and poetry • compare characters and content in a selection of children's books written in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use basic patterns for orthography, word inflection, sentence and text construction to produce texts (written) • express oneself to obtain help in understanding and being understood in different situations (oral) • use listening and speaking strategies (oral) • use reading and writing strategies (written) • understand the main content of texts one has chosen • read and understand texts of varying lengths and in various sources • write coherent texts that narrate, retell and describe experiences and express own opinions • use digital tools and other aids to find relevant information and to create different types of text • read children's and youth literature in English and converse about persons and content • express own reactions to literary texts, films, internet culture, pictures and music • express oneself creatively inspired by different types of English literature from various sources

Both of these sets of aims address the development of different reading-related abilities and skills. For example, reading texts of various lengths and genres implies a need to develop different reading skills for various text types and for diverse reading purposes. This is one aspect that may be lacking in Norwegian reading instruction (Hellekjær, 2005, 2007, 2008), and is one area which is explored in the current research.

One of the main differences between the original *LK06* curriculum and the 2013 revision of the reading and writing-related aims to be achieved by the end of seventh grade seems to be a widening of the notion of text genre. The word “genre” is no longer used, but rather “various sources.” This allows for the use of different types of texts, including multi-modal, digital, and blogs, among others, which may not have been considered as traditional text genres. The point of using different reading skills for different purposes becomes even more evident when applying this expanded concept of text sources.

2.2.2 LK06 curriculum implementation

One of the major changes in the *LK06* curriculum was a shift from a centralized to decentralized responsibility for planning and implementing the curriculum; the main responsibility now lay at the local level, specifically with individual schools and teachers (Mellegård & Pettersen, 2012). Second, in contrast to *L97*, the *LK06* curriculum did not provide long lists of suggested activities, but rather a bulleted list of competence objectives learners should achieve, as exemplified in the previous section. These two changes may lead to great variation in teaching and achievement between schools. Hasselgreen (2005) describes this situation as a double-edged sword: “While confident and well-equipped teachers will probably welcome this autonomy, increased resources will be needed to ensure that all students are given equal opportunity to thrive under the new plan” (p. 10). This view emphasizes the need for in-service training and support for teachers without the background knowledge to thrive under such open and flexible conditions.

There are different ways of conceptualizing the role of curricula and their implementations. Goodlad’s (1979) conceptual framework for understanding curriculum processes distinguishes between five levels; three of these are the formal, the perceived, and the operational. The first relates to the actual

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curriculum document, and the latter two relate to the teacher's understanding of the document and how it is implemented in actual classroom practice. Since the operational curriculum is the manifestation of the formal curriculum, one must review reported classroom instruction and observe actual classroom instruction in order to understand the role of the curriculum in actual instruction.

The current research will first address both the curriculum as a formal document, specifically how it addresses reading. Second, through the gathering of teachers' perspectives and observations of actual practices, the researcher will address the perceived and the operational, or the implemented, curriculum in EFL reading instruction in fourth- and fifth grades.

Research on curriculum development and implementation has shown that teachers need support for turning precise aims into aim-focused teaching and assessment (Baker, 1969; Engelsen, 2009). Engelsen (2009) argues that there is an underlying belief among the curriculum authors that teachers are able to choose content, methods, and assessment appropriate for the competence aims, despite having no guidance¹³. The intention is for these aspects to be developed locally at the school or district level. However, to what extent this has happened with the case of *LK06* seems to vary greatly. Generally, it appears that English teachers have turned to the textbook and teacher's guide for this support (Mellegård & Pettersen, 2012).

Mellegård and Pettersen (2012, p. 214) interviewed primary and lower secondary school teachers regarding their experiences of implementing the *LK06* curriculum. They found that teachers had great trust in the publishers' claims that the textbook met the aims of the curriculum and, rather than interpreting the curriculum, they became "textbook interpreters," with the textbook becoming the perceived curriculum. They also found that teachers

¹³ Following the implementation of the curriculum, other supportive documents have later been published, such as the "Guide to the curriculum in English", revised most recently following the 2013 curriculum revisions, <http://www.udir.no/globalassets/upload/larerplaner/veiledning/veiledning-lareplanen-engelsk-udir-2013.pdf> However, it is unknown how well publicized these documents have been and to what extent they have been used by teachers.

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experienced anxiety related to the extensiveness of the texts and tasks in the textbook compared to the instructional hours available. There also appeared to be a general reluctance among teachers to accept externally imposed changes. Engelsen (2009), referring to research on teachers and reforms, summarizes that teachers do not seem to adapt their teaching to new reforms, but rather adapt the reforms to their teaching.

This type of compromise in implementation is similarly seen when reviewing the use of methods in foreign language instruction. Swan (2009) describes the use of different methods as often including a good deal of eclecticism, as is evidenced in many course books:

Our familiar view of the succession of approaches that has seemed to characterize the last hundred years or so is perhaps therefore in part a convenient myth. Possibly a more realistic view would be that some parts of some methods have dictated, through syllabus, materials and test design, what some teachers have done, and continue to do, in some parts of their teaching. The successive rejection of one method by another may thus amount, in practice, to the replacement of what does not quite happen by something else that does not quite happen either. (Swan, 2009, p. 120)

If what Engelsen and Swan suggest is true, it may not be possible to make clear distinctions between trends in different curricula and the historical trail of different teaching methods as implemented in teachers' practices. In practice, this may mean that there are remnants of many of the previous curricula and different language teaching methods in use to varying degrees or in different combinations in EFL reading instruction.

2.2.3 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the European Language Portfolio

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* (Council of Europe, 2001) was developed as a project by the European Council and published in 2001. The *CEFR* contains descriptive scales for different language ability levels (below A1, A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2, with

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below A1 as the lowest and C2 as the highest), which allow for comparisons across countries, age groups, and educational levels.

The *European Language Portfolio (ELP)* is a didactic tool with common criteria to aid in language learning, self-evaluation, and documentation of foreign language development. The portfolio was developed to implement the *CEFR* for the evaluation of foreign language competence. Within educational settings the *CEFR* has had greatest impact through assessment and lesson plan/curriculum development. The *Languages Open Doors* strategy document reports that there is a need to make clearer the connection between assessment and teaching (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a, p. 33).

In 2008, a Norwegian version of the *ELP* for ages 6–12 was developed by Telemarksforskning-Notodden, commissioned by the Norwegian Directorate for Teaching and Training (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2009). It contains three parts: a language passport, a language biography, and a language portfolio. The portfolio is organized on principles such as self-evaluation, multilingualism, and intercultural competence (Mikalsen, 2008). One of the important aims of the portfolio is to make students aware of their own language learning (learner autonomy) and development of metalinguistic awareness i.e., awareness of language as a system. This awareness is especially important considering that most students develop language skills from many different sources, formal teaching being just one aspect of the language learning experience. For example, a survey of lower secondary students in Norway found that the use of media in the home and English use in society influences language abilities (Ibsen, 2004). Accordingly, it was found that the higher their English abilities, the better the students were able to make use of the media and other language resources around them (Ibsen, 2004, pp. 75-76). This is similar to the Matthew effect, used by Stanovich (1986) to describe the often found fan-spread reading development: namely, those who are most able are also most capable of improving, leading to increasing differences between good and poor readers. Thus, all students need to receive support in developing language learning strategies and learner autonomy in order to make use of the opportunities and resources available to them inside as well as outside of a classroom setting.

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In a survey among foreign language teachers in lower and upper secondary school in Norway, half of the teachers responded that they were at least somewhat familiar with the *ELP* (Bugge & Dessingué, 2009). However, only one in four of the teachers reported that they used the portfolio somewhat or to a great extent (see Table 56 in Appendix 3C). A similar survey has not been conducted with primary school English teachers. Given the importance of the *ELP* as a didactics tool for teachers, and its applications to reading development, it was considered important to include this topic in the questionnaire in the current research.

Despite being introduced into schools through various government reports, namely, the *ELP* and national tests of English, the *CEFR* is not explicitly mentioned anywhere in the *LK06* English subject curriculum or in its revised 2013 version. The references to the *CEFR*, though implied through the wording of the competence aims, were removed from the original drafts of the curriculum (Hasselgreen, 2005). According to Hasselgreen (2005), the *LK06* competence aims roughly correspond to the *CEFR* in the following way in Norway:

- Grade 2: A1
- Grade 4: A1–A2
- Grade 7: A2–B1
- Grade 10: B1–B2

The *ELP* contains language learning aims, called “can do” statements, written according to the *CEFR* scales. Compared to the competence aims in the *LK06* curriculum, which are written for teachers, the *ELP* “can do” statements are simple, concrete learning aims, written so that they can be a cooperative document for use by both teachers and students. For example, for the *LK06* competence aim for seventh grade, “read and understand texts of varying lengths and in various genres,” there are eight corresponding *ELP* “can do” statements at the B1 level. These include “I can understand the main points in most simple and factual texts” and “I can find the information I am looking for in familiar text types, such as weather forecasts, factual web pages and quizzes.” Besides being more concrete, the “can do” statements also provide another important component of reading instruction, namely, the purpose of reading. In the above-mentioned *LK06* aim, there is no indication of the

purpose of reading; in contrast, in the above *ELP* statements, the different purposes of reading, understanding the main points in the first “can do” statement and finding information in the second, are more clearly expressed for the students. The lack of differentiation in the purpose of reading has been identified as a problem in Norwegian EFL reading (Hellekjær, 2007). Moreover, the “can do” statements help the learner and the teacher focus on both product and process, allowing for different types of assessment, including a strong focus on self-assessment.

2.2.4 National tests in English

The national tests in English were first developed in Norway in 2004 and the format was revised in 2007. They are intended to give an indication of students’ reading comprehension levels to be used for the planning of teaching and policy, both locally and nationally. Students take the tests in fifth- and eighth grades, and they are based on the curriculum competence aims to be achieved by completion of fourth- and seventh grades. The tests are electronic and contain questions about vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension, which measure the students’ ability to find information and comprehend the main content of a text (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011). This also implies the ability to understand common words and expressions connected to daily life, leisure activities, and interests; to understand the meaning of words and expressions from the contexts in which they are used; and to use some common grammatical structures, small words, and simple sentence structures. Additionally, the 2014 guidelines for the national tests in English specify that students should also be able to use simple reading strategies, such as finding information, understanding the main points, and connecting simple information in a text (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2014, p. 14). Thus, the guidelines specify that students should be able to make inferences; it is not considered enough simply to recognize individual words.

The national tests have lower, middle and higher level questions. The latter are intended to be relatively difficult, possibly even for the most capable students. This is designed to avoid a ceiling effect, namely, students achieving a perfect score while being capable of higher achievement. The students are placed at a *mestringsnivå* (“mastery level”) based on their score. These levels are intended to be used for planning differentiated instruction and setting goals

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for individual students. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has also related the national test mastery levels to the *CEFR* levels¹⁴ (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011), thus emphasizing that teachers need to be familiar with the *CEFR* and how to help their students reach its language aims.

2.2.5 Teacher education

Historically, teacher education (a Bachelor of Education) in Norway provided a general teaching degree to teach all subjects in the 10-year compulsory school, that is it produced so-called “generalist” teachers. In earlier guidelines for teacher education many of the subjects were obligatory and there was little room for specialization in certain subjects, such as English. In 2003, the guidelines changed, allowing more optional subjects in the third and fourth years, after which the number of teacher students taking English increased (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a).

In 2010, the Ministry of Education and Research implemented a significant reform, the *National Curriculum Regulations for Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education*, in which differentiated programs were created for years 1–7 and years 5–10 (*National curriculum regulations for differentiated primary and lower secondary teacher education programmes for years 1 – 7 and years 5 – 10*, 2010). In addition, the program for future teachers of grades 5–10 is based on specialization within certain subjects, with no compulsory school subjects involved in the program¹⁵.

Since 2009, it has been a requirement for teachers to have 60 study points of English to teach grades 8–10 (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2009). However, until August 2015 there was no formal requirement for the minimum number

¹⁴ National test levels as they relate to the *CEFR*: level 1–A1 or approaching A1, level 2–A1 or A1/A2, level 3–A2. However, students who are at the highest part of the scale for level 3 (who answered almost all questions correctly), may be at a higher level, such as A2/B1 or higher.

¹⁵ Educational studies are required of all students, during which students must choose two subjects in which to specialize. However, no subjects taught in primary and lower secondary schools are compulsory.

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of study points necessary to teach English in grades 1–7. In 2011 a committee established by the National Council for Teacher Education (*Nasjonalt råd for lærerutdanning*) recommended that all teachers have formal qualifications in the subjects they teach and complete teaching practice in these subjects (i.e., they become subject specialists) (UHR, 2011). However, it was not until 2015 that the requirement for a minimum of 30 study points of English for primary school teachers was passed. When this was passed, it also made the requirements retroactively apply for both primary and lower secondary school teachers educated before 2014 (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015).

In the wake of all of these reforms and changes to teacher education, little detailed knowledge is available about how English is implemented in the early grades (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a). However, it is known that most English teaching in the early grades is carried out by the classroom teacher (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a, p. 14). Furthermore, results of a 2003 questionnaire sent to primary EFL teachers in Norway showed that almost six out of ten teachers either had no formal education in English or less than six months of full-time study (Drew, 2009a). Drew (2009a) suggests that so many teachers lack qualifications in English because it is not a compulsory subject in Norwegian teacher training. He adds that, “Paradoxically at the same time English is considered a core subject in Norwegian schools” (p. 103). Similar results were stated in a report by Statistics Norway (Lagerström, 2007, p. 18)¹⁶. Yet, more than one in four English teachers in grades 1–10 have taken 60 study points or more, most of these being lower secondary teachers (grades 8–10). Thus, many teachers either have no formal qualifications or have a relatively high-level of formal education in the subject (Lagerström, 2007, pp. 3,18). As pointed out by McGarrighan (2009), it is counterintuitive that English instruction hours have been moved from lower secondary school to lower primary school (see section 2.2), from a level where most of the teachers have formal education to a level where over half of them lack teaching qualifications in English¹⁷.

¹⁶ Percentages of English teachers without higher education qualifications in English: 69% in 1–4 grades, 52% in grades 5–7, and 25% in grades 8–10, based on a report from Statistics Norway in 2007.

¹⁷ In lower and upper secondary school a survey of foreign language teachers in Norway found that 83.7% of EFL teachers had at least 60 study points of English

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Recommendations for changes to teacher education have been made in various reports. In the *Language Education Policy Profile for Norway* (2003), it was recommended that the number of language hours in teacher education be increased, that part of language teacher education takes place abroad in a country in which the foreign language is spoken as a native language, and/or that in-service opportunities are increased. However, since in-service courses are non-mandatory for professional promotion, many teachers do not prioritize them.

The figures from the previously cited studies have shown the trend of a high number of unqualified English teachers after initial teacher education, which has raised awareness of the need for additional in-service training of teachers. A 2002 survey, *Engelsk i Europa*, found that Norway had the lowest percentage of English teachers among European countries (12%) who had taken a week or longer in-service course (Ibsen, 2004, p. 62). In 2002, universities and colleges in Norway began offering an online in-service course in English for teachers (i.e., one providing them with a formal qualification in English) based on the expressed desire by many teachers to increase their language competence and gain insight into new methods of English language instruction. In 2002–2003, 230 teachers took this online course (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a, p. 23). Additionally, in 2009 the Department of Education developed a long-term strategy for in-service training of teachers, *Kompetanse for kvalitet* (Competence for quality). Since its implementation, several hundred teachers have participated in English in-service training (Horrigmo & Andresen, 2011).

2.2.6 Transition from lower to upper primary school

In Norwegian schools, where primary school is subdivided into two levels, the transition from lower to upper primary school (*barnetrinnet* and *mellomtrinnet*; grades 4–5) is important during these years. This transition varies from school to school. At some schools students continue with the same teacher, while other students change teachers. In grades 1–4, students generally receive little English teaching in the first grades, but increase the

from higher education (Bugge & Dessingué, 2009, p. 23). At lower secondary level, 62.6% have at least 60 study points.

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teaching time to two 45-minute lessons per week in fourth grade. In grades 5–7, they have an average of 2.5 45-minute lessons per week. Moreover, the difficulty and complexity of texts in the textbooks changes quite dramatically from grade 4 to 5. In grade 4, many textbooks contain texts at one or two different difficulty levels, most often short texts, poems, letters, and songs, while in grade 5 there are longer texts and stories. In addition, teachers' expectations for their students are generally much higher in fifth grade, including more homework and higher expectations related to reading and writing at home, both in Norwegian and English. The increase in expectations and workload may be related to the competence aims for the end of fourth grade and the anticipation of the national test in the fall of fifth grade. These are the first formal assessments in English, and, therefore, there is an understanding that the expectations and the “stakes” will be higher at this transitional period.

Students entering fifth grade or upper primary school may have had very different experiences and exposure to English. Some of these may constitute individual differences in the amount of English they would have experienced in previous years or their English teacher's interest in and ability to teach English. Teachers who were especially interested in English may have included English in other subjects in order to increase language exposure, such as singing an English song in music, counting in English in math lessons, and using English for classroom routines. The teacher's choice of themes and content of English lessons would also have influenced the passive and active vocabulary of the students. The teacher's ability and confidence in using English would have greatly influenced students' motivation to learn, their exposure to the language, and the basis for future learning. Due to of the importance of the transition between grades 4 and 5, this transitional period was chosen as the focus of the current research to investigate how teachers support students during these two years, and to investigate teachers' perceptions of this transition.

2.2.7 Summary

Despite many transitions through the four national curricula since 1974, the last two (*L97* and *LK06*) have shown great similarity in their increased focus on reading and writing skills at the primary level. This has also led to

extensive and ambitious learning aims in the *LK06* curriculum and its revised version (2013) to be achieved after grades 4, 7, and 10. Students' learning and mastery of the curriculum aims in grades 1–4 is measured in the national test of English in the beginning of fifth grade. The additional hours dedicated to teaching English, especially in the middle primary grades, reflect this increased attention to English learning in primary school. The influence of all of these factors places a greater demand on English teachers to help their students meet the aims of the curriculum, and to meet the ever increasing demands for differentiation. Overall, the past decades have seen a greater focus on English within primary school education, which is yet to be reflected in requirements for teacher certification at the primary school level.

2.3 The reading skill as defined in the *LK06* curriculum, 2013 revisions, and the Framework for Basic Skills

Reading as defined in the *LK06* curriculum and 2013 revision

The *LK06* curriculum defines five basic skills that are integrated into the competence aims for each subject: oral skills, reading, writing, digital skills, and numeracy. In the *LK06* English subject curriculum, the reading skill is described as follows:

Being able to read English is part of the practical language competence and means being able to read and understand, to explore and reflect upon increasingly more demanding texts and thus gain insight across cultures and disciplines. Developing reading skills in English also improves general reading skills. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010, p. 3)

This definition does not relate to specific skills or processes of reading. It also does not mention reading for different purposes, the reading of different text genres or using reading strategies. In contrast, although the definition of reading skills in the Norwegian subject curriculum in *LK06* was somewhat more detailed than the corresponding English one (including, for instance,

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being able to interpret texts), the definition in the 2013 curriculum revision is even more elaborate.

Reading skills involve deriving meaning from contemporary and historical texts from a wide range of genres. This means immersing oneself in texts and gaining an insight into other people's thoughts, experiences and creativity. It also involves being able to find information and understand logical reasoning and presentation in different types of text on screen and paper and taking a critical and independent perspective on the texts being read. In order to develop their Norwegian reading skills pupils must read much and often, and they must work systematically on reading strategies appropriate to the objective of the reading, and on different types of texts in the subject. They should progress from basic decoding and comprehension of simple texts to understanding, interpreting, reflecting on and evaluating increasingly complex texts in different genres" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2013, p. 5).

However, a more comprehensive definition is also provided in the 2013 revision of the English subject curriculum, where the reading skill is described as follows:

Being able to read in English means the ability to create meaning by reading different types of text. It means reading English language texts to understand, reflect on and acquire insight and knowledge across cultural borders and within specific fields of study. This further involves preparing and working with reading English texts for different reasons and of varying lengths and complexities. The development of reading proficiency in English implies using reading strategies that are suited to the objective by reading texts that are advancingly more demanding. Furthermore, it involves reading English texts fluently and to understand, explore, discuss, learn from and to reflect upon different types of information. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 5)

This definition can be understood as having four main components: text comprehension, reading purposes and strategies, fluent reading, and

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interaction with texts. The first component emphasizes how reading is the ability to “create meaning.” This is consistent with definitions of reading in which the reader is an active participant in the reading process and thus constructs meaning, rather than being a passive recipient of knowledge from a text (Graesser & McNamara, 2011; McNamara & Magliano, 2009). Additionally, the abilities to reflect on and acquire insight and knowledge are important components of higher-level reading skills. Higher-level reading skills are defined as text interpretation that goes beyond literal comprehension (lower-level), such as generalization (for example, drawing conclusions from a text, and being able to identify the main ideas and understand how they relate to other situations), application (e.g., using information in another or similar situation), evaluation (e.g., being able to argue, conclude, and criticize, using information in the text and background knowledge), and aesthetic response (a reader’s affective response or reaction to a text) (B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002; see also section 4.6). The second component relates to reading for different purposes and adapting reading strategies and aims to fit the text type and reading purpose. This has been found to be an important factor that distinguishes more skilled from less skilled readers (Grabe, 2009; Hellekjær, 2008). The third component is fluent reading, which is a prerequisite of being able to read extensively. The fourth component describes how readers can interact with texts on different levels: lower and higher levels, individually and with others.

Generally, the definition of reading in the 2013 English subject curriculum revision is similar to that of reading in the 2013 Norwegian subject curriculum revision. However, there are distinguishing points. First, the Norwegian definition specifies progressing from pre-reading to lower-level and higher-level comprehension skills. Second, it mentions that students should be able to take a critical and independent perspective on the texts they read. Third, the importance of extensive reading is referred to, as students should “read much and often” and “immerse oneself in reading.” Finally, in the definition of reading in the 2013 English subject curriculum revision, students are expected to discuss texts and content, whereas the Norwegian subject definition does not imply any interaction between students or students and teachers.

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Moving from the general concept of “the reading skill,” the English subject curriculum lists some of the specific component skills of reading, referring to these as “learning aims.” The specific learning aims state that students should recognize the relationship between phonemes and spelling patterns (i.e., phonological awareness, knowing how to distinguish and separate phonemes in the pronunciation of words (Ehri, 2005), be able to encode sounds to create words, and be able to use strategies such as guessing the meaning of a word from the context. These are all listed as competences that the students should have in English by the end of fourth grade, while in Norwegian students should have achieved these skills two years earlier. In Norwegian after second grade and in English after fourth grade, the aims are directed towards reading different types of texts and applying different reading strategies. The *LK06* and 2013 revision of the English subject curriculum also include the aim of developing vocabulary, for example, “understand and use common English words and phrases connected to day-to-day life, recreation and interests, both orally and in writing” (*LK06*). Additionally, some of the writing aims require students to acquire many other skills that can be supported through reading. These include knowing basic patterns for orthography, word inflection, and sentence and text construction. Another implication is that through greater exposure to print, in addition to explicit instruction, students will build a greater feeling for the language.

Framework for Basic Skills

The Framework for Basic Skills, a supplementary document produced by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training in 2012, defines and describes the basic skills and relates them to all subjects.

An important new addition to the interpretation of the curriculum, present in both the Framework for Basic Skills and in the 2013 curriculum revision, is a clarification and expansion of the concept of “text genre.” The Framework emphasizes that texts include “everything that can be read in different media, including illustrations, graphs, symbols or other modes of expression” (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012, p. 8). It further states that knowledge of different text genres and their functions is a component of basic reading skills.

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The Framework further defines four sub-skills of reading: “understand,” “find,” “interpret,” and “reflect and assess” (see Table 3). In order to develop these skills, the learner must first have basic decoding skills and strategies. Learners must also have a basic understanding of how texts are constructed: building from letters and sounds to words, words into sentences, and sentences to whole texts. The first category, “understand,” is defined as processing and comprehending texts by applying prior knowledge and expectations about texts and using strategies. Second, “finding information” includes both implicit and explicit information in texts. Third, students are expected to “interpret information,” which, according to the Framework, is defined as drawing conclusions based on more than one text. One could argue that this definition is somewhat limited and could have been expanded to include more than one information source. The fourth category, “reflect and assess,” requires students to relate independently to texts. This may include commenting on texts, critically relating to different texts, and substantiating one’s own opinions, analyses or evaluations. The sub-skills related to “reflect and assess” require a higher-level of text comprehension and ability to work with texts. These four sub-skills are further divided into specific abilities at each of the five levels specified in Table 3.

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Table 3: Skills related to the sub-categories of reading as a basic skill presented by level (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012, p. 9)

		Reading as a basic skill				
Sub-categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
Understand	Can use previous knowledge to get an overview of the text prior to reading. Can read simple texts on paper and screen and process the text with some help.	Can read simple texts with fluency and perseverance. Can find and read texts on the Internet. Can ask questions and talk about the content.	Can vary the reading approach according to text type and purpose. Can read and navigate effectively on the Internet. Can use different methods to structure content.	Can apply subject-related and general knowledge actively. Can read screen and paper texts critically. Can interpret texts in an independent manner.	Can choose and use reading strategies relevant to a wide variety of text types and purposes. Can assess one's own reading and reflect on the strategies applied.	
Find	Can recognize explicitly expressed information centrally placed in simple texts.	Can identify central subject-related texts. Can identify explicitly expressed information in texts with competing information. Can refer to sources.	Can obtain and combine information in texts with competing information. Can assess source credibility.	Can identify implicit information in complex texts. Can use sources critically and refer to them in a systematic manner.	Can obtain detailed and implicit information in texts without prior knowledge of text type and content.	

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Reading as a basic skill					
Sub-categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Interpret	Can draw simple conclusions based on information in texts and can use one's own words to express them.	Can identify the main topic and understand clear connections explicitly expressed.	Can infer and understand information implicitly expressed.	Can deal with ambiguity. Can identify contradictory information and deal with information that does not correspond to expectations.	Can show holistic as well as detailed comprehension of complex texts. Can systematize and draw conclusions based on implicit information.
Reflect and assess	Can comment on content and meaning in simple texts.	Can assess the content of subject-related texts.	Can give substantiated assessment of form and content in subject-related texts.	Can critically analyze and assess form and content. Can compare and systematize information in different subject-related texts.	Can assess complex texts about unfamiliar topics in a critical manner and incorporate subject-related as well as general perspectives.

The relationship between the *LK06* curriculum, 2013 revision and the Framework for Basic Skills

There is some overlap between the competence aims for English (*LK06* and 2013 revision) and the aims listed in the description of reading as a basic skill (Framework for Basic Skills). However, there are unique elements in each. For example, the competence aims state that students should be able to understand the main content of texts, while the basic skills framework specifies that students should be able to draw simple conclusions at level 1, and be able to infer and understand information implicitly expressed at level 3 (see Table 3). Additionally, the curriculum aims do not specify that students should ask questions related to texts, only that they should discuss texts. Although discussions are often initiated by questions in a primary school context, such questions are most often asked by the teachers rather than the students. The National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) refers to the ability to ask questions about a text as an important component of comprehension processes. Students asking questions is one component that could be argued to be lacking in the English curriculum aims. Thus, it would be interesting to see to what extent student questions are incorporated into EFL reading instruction and whether there are differences among the reading approaches in this respect.

According to the competence aims for English, the students should have mostly reached levels 1 and 2 on the “reading basic skills” progression by the end of seventh grade (completion of primary school). For the more complex skills of reflecting and assessing, the students are only expected to have reached level 1 by the end of seventh grade. Relating the Framework to the Norwegian subject-specific aims, the correspondence seems to indicate that students should be expected to reach level 3 for the categories of “understand,” “find,” and “interpret,” and level 2 for “reflect and assess” (see Table 3). This could then give an indication of the expected reading skills of Norwegian students at the end of primary school.

Reading as defined in the CIERA reading observation framework

Within the present study, the CIERA school reading observation framework has been used to interpret text events within the classrooms (B. Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2005; B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002). The CIERA framework distinguishes between lower-level and higher-level text comprehension and thinking skills. Higher-level comprehension and thinking skills are defined as higher-level text interpretation, or going beyond the text. This would require students to use, for example, the aforementioned higher-level reading skills of generalization, application, evaluation and aesthetic response. In the reading as a basic skill framework, most of the level 1 and some of the level 2 aims would be categorized as lower-level comprehension, and most of the level 3–5 aims would be categorized as higher-level comprehension.

In contrast, the application of the comprehension skill and comprehension strategy categories is not as clear. This is because the distinction between a skill and a strategy is related to the application and purpose of the activity rather than its content. For example, if a teacher asks students to identify the main idea, applying a lower-level of thinking about the text, and yet only relates the use of this skill to the specific text, it is categorized as a comprehension skill. However, when the teacher introduces a routine the students should follow in order to improve their overall comprehension and which is transferable to other texts and contexts, this is defined as a comprehension strategy. When working with comprehension strategies, the teacher often signals to the students that these strategies are transferable through comments aimed at making this explicit; for example, “Good readers summarize as they read to keep them remembering the important ideas.” Thus, when reading strategies are mentioned in the basic skills framework or the competence aims, they could be categorized as either comprehension skills or strategies. Within this research, the distinction of reading skills and strategies is made, allowing the researcher to distinguish between when a teacher is teaching a strategy and when students are applying comprehension skills.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has presented themes related to teaching EFL in Norwegian schools. Section 2.2 provided an historical overview of the different curricula and how reading as a skill has developed. This was followed by a focus on the current curriculum, *LK06*, and its revision in 2013. Subsections 2.2.3–2.2.6 presented other issues related to EFL in Norway and the context of the current research: the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*, the Norwegian national tests in English, Norwegian teacher education, and the transition from lower to upper primary school. Finally, section 2.3 provided definitions for reading as a skill from *LK06* and related them to the Framework for Basic Skills, a subsidiary document supplementing the curriculum.

3 Language teaching and learning

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on topics related to language teaching and learning considered relevant for the current research. Section 3.2 covers research on second language acquisition (SLA) factors. Section 3.3 is about differentiation as it is approached in Norwegian schools and briefly addresses research related to the differentiation of language learning and reading. Interaction in the classroom is the subject of section 3.4, specifically related to teacher-student interaction in whole-class instruction and types of feedback given to students in relation to their language use. Section 3.5 briefly addresses teacher cognition as it relates to teachers' perceptions and perspectives on EFL and reading instruction. Finally, the theoretical framework for the research is presented in section 3.6.

3.2 Research on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) factors

This section addresses four factors related to L2 acquisition that are considered relevant to the current study: age and L2 literacy (i.e. the ability to read and write in an L2), comprehensible input and output, language exposure outside of school, and classroom language use. Although there are many other factors that contribute to L2 acquisition, including memory, motivation, individual learner characteristics, contextual factors, and social factors, the above-mentioned factors are considered the most relevant for the current research.

These four factors are considered the most relevant in the present context since, first, EFL in Norway begins at age six in first grade. There has been a gradual global decrease in the starting (onset) age for English language teaching generally (S. Rixon, 2000), which also applies to Norway (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a). Thus, age of language acquisition, and how it relates to reading development, is considered important for this research. Second, language input and output are factors influencing language acquisition. In the current context this input and output occurs through texts,

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teachers' use of the target language, and students' opportunities to respond to and construct meaning from texts. Third, language input outside of school is a major source of language input in the Norwegian context (Ibsen, 2004). Since some students receive or seek extensive exposure to English, while others receive or seek less, there is a need for greater differentiated teaching and learning due to the large differences in English language abilities of students in classes. Finally, classroom language use is important because teachers provide a good deal of the language input in the classroom through their use of the target language. Additionally, the expectations teachers set for students' language use also influence the overall classroom language use and thus the students' language input and output.

Although the contexts for second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) learning are different, there are nevertheless many similarities in the language learning processes in the two contexts. Some of the differences between L2 and FL learning which influence many of the language learning factors include quantity and type of language input, context for learning, motivation for learning, expectations for fluency and language use, and language identity. In general, most FL learning occurs in classroom settings. In contrast, L2 learners may have both classroom language input and output from the greater community in which the L2 may be the majority language. Thus, both the context and the quantity of language input will vary between L2 and FL learning. Additionally, the fact that the L2 is often the majority language in the community provides further motivation for students to learn the language, since it would frequently be used as a means of communication. In contrast, with FL learning, the learners would often need to travel to another country to converse with L1 speakers of that language, or use other methods of communication, such as through the Internet. Furthermore, when learning an FL, the expectations for learners to develop native speaker-like fluency may be lower, whereas when learning an L2, there is often pressure to develop a higher level of fluency, both to function in different settings and also not to stand out among the target language group.

In the Norwegian context, the English language has an important role in society. English has its own curriculum separate from that of other foreign languages in schools. Historically, Norway has had strong connections with the US through emigration, and Great Britain, e.g., in connection with the

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Second World War. Outside of schools, students can receive exposure to English through different media, such as TV and movies that are not dubbed, music, and the Internet. Due to internationalization and immigration into Norway, it is not uncommon for students in Norway to communicate with others in their community in English, and for students to travel internationally. Furthermore, there are many businesses that use English as their primary working language. For these reasons, English has a special status in Norway, which one could argue extends beyond that of a traditional foreign language context.

Despite the differences between L2 and FL learning mentioned above, there is a long tradition of L2 research in language acquisition and reading development. L1 language acquisition research has formed a basis for understanding L2 language acquisition and, as such, has served as a basis for L2 research. Additionally, L2 research has formed a basis for FL research. The same is true of reading research (see Chapter 4). Thus, although the contexts are different, which needs to be taken into consideration, the research in L2 language acquisition provides valuable insight into FL learning processes. From now on L2 will refer to both second and foreign language learning unless otherwise specified.

3.2.1 Age and second language literacy

Young Language Learners (YLLs) have received growing attention in recent years due to the international trend of introducing foreign languages at an earlier stage in their education (Drew & Hasselgreen, 2008; Nikolov, 2009). The age group classified as YLLs has varied depending on the research; for example, they have been defined as learners from 5 to 12/13 years (Drew & Hasselgreen, 2008), while in some recent publications the definition has widened to include those from age 5 to 16 (Hasselgreen, Drew, & Sørheim, 2012). YLLs have received special focus in recent research due to specific features related to their young age. Among these, Hasselgreen (2000) mentions their enthusiasm for and openness to the learning of new languages, as well as their need for different teaching methods.

Traditionally, research on age as a factor in language learning has centered on the “critical age hypothesis,” (see seminal works, e.g., Lenneberg, 1967, and

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more recent research, (e.g., Singleton, 2003). This hypothesis states that the human capacity to learn languages is constrained by a critical period beginning around age two and ending at puberty, after which learning languages would become more difficult and native-like levels of proficiency would not be obtained. According to Singleton (2003), changes in language learning associated with age cannot be explained by a typical understanding of the term “critical age,” as there is no sharp cut-off in language learning, but rather a more continuous and linear decline. Additionally, although some studies have shown that those learning a second language early can achieve higher levels of proficiency than those beginning later (DeKeyser, 2000; Krashen, 1982; Singleton, 1995; Singleton & Ryan, 2004), Muñoz (2006) argues that these results cannot necessarily be applied to foreign language learning in a classroom setting:

An inferential leap is made in the assumption that learning age will have the same effect on students of a foreign language, when they are exposed to only one speaker of that language (the teacher, who is not usually a native speaker) in only one setting (the classroom) and only during very limited amounts of time. (p. vii)

Marinova-Todd (2003) argues that it is not age as a factor in language learning, but rather the availability of and access to good L2 input and instruction that are key factors in producing the best L2 outcomes. Similarly, Rixon (2000) emphasizes that the two most important factors for successful early language learning are time and well-qualified teachers. Curtain’s (2000) study of time as a factor in early start foreign language programs concludes that there may be a minimum level of required time and intensity below which language instruction may not be beneficial, regardless of how early the language is introduced. This raises questions about the effectiveness of starting EFL in first grade if students receive such a limited number of instructional hours with such low frequency. Research on early start versus later start in EFL in Spanish and Basque schools also found that an early start does not necessarily mean a better result in written development, especially when instruction is low-intensity with a low quantity of input over a relatively extended period of time (Torrás, Navés, Celaya, & Pérez-Vidal, 2006, p. 179).

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In fact, some studies have shown that older children and adults may have an initial L2 learning advantage (Cenoz, 2003; Cummins, 1980, 1981; Cummins & Swain, 1986; Turnbull, Lapkin, Hart, & Swain, 1998), one which early learners may not be able to catch up with for up to five years in an L2 context, and even longer in a foreign language learning setting (Muñoz, 2006). Other studies in foreign language settings have similar results (Cenoz, 2003; Curtain, 2000), indicating that it is not just age, but an interaction between age, quantity and quality of instructional hours, and language focus (namely, which skills are being acquired) that influences language development (Curtain, 2000).

There are advantages and disadvantages to both beginning foreign language learning earlier and later. Certain skills are learned faster at later ages (e.g., complexity in writing), whereas other skills can be acquired early, benefiting from practice over a longer period of time, e.g., pronunciation (Lightbown & Spada, 2006), implicit learning of vocabulary, and oral language skills (Muñoz, 2003; Torras et al., 2006). In addition, Singleton (2003) has suggested that motivational, cross-linguistic, educational, and general cognitive factors may be more influential than onset age.

Since the starting age for foreign language instruction seems to have become a political issue because of the trend to lower the starting age in schools, in addition to being a pedagogical and language learning one, it is thus an important consideration in the current research. The issue of starting age for learning a foreign language, specifically L1 and L2 reading skills, is addressed specifically through questions in the questionnaire, but is also a topic discussed in the interviews with the case study teachers.

3.2.2 Comprehensible input and output

The present section addresses research on the influence of input and output for language development. Krashen (1982), in his monitor model, used two concepts to describe language development: acquisition and learning. *Acquisition* is a subconscious process that results from natural, informal communication focused on meaningful interaction. *Learning*, on the other hand, is a conscious process that results in “knowing about” the language. According to this theory, L1 learning is acquisition, and Krashen

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subsequently recommends that L2 learning should mirror L1 acquisition as closely as possible by creating authentic communicative situations. Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis posits that the learner must be exposed to and understand input at the $i+1$ level, namely, at a level slightly higher than their current language level (i), in order to acquire new language. According to Krashen, when comprehending language, in addition to the learner's current linguistic competence (i), the learner uses context, knowledge of the world, and extra-linguistic information to help understand new language ($i+1$).

This hypothesis thus relates to meaning-focused acquisition, including communicative activities and reading for comprehension, as opposed to form-focused learning typical of traditional language instruction (e.g., grammar-translation). Krashen believes that when learners are presented with large quantities of comprehensible input, production ability will emerge over time without being taught directly. Many of Krashen's arguments are built on L1 acquisition theory and modified caretaker speech (i.e., the simplified speech of adults when talking to young children), which he reflects is similar to foreigner-talk (i.e., the modified speech of native speakers when they speak to language learners) and teacher-talk (i.e., the modified speech of teachers when talking to language learners). Modified caretaker speech focuses on communication, not the teaching of specific forms. The focus on real communication as a teaching approach is, according to Krashen, an alternative to grammar and form-focused teaching.

However, Krashen's claim that comprehensible input is both necessary and sufficient for L2 learning has been challenged by scholars. For example, Sharwood Smith (1986) claimed that comprehension and acquisition are two distinct processes. Thus, input alone may not lead to comprehension. In extension of Krashen's research on comprehensible input, Long (1996) proposed the Interaction Hypothesis, suggesting that the best type of comprehensible input learners can receive is input that has been interactionally modified. This is language that has been modified in response to an interlocutor expressing that they do not understand what the language learner is saying.

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Interactional modification aims to make meaning more comprehensible for the speakers, also referred to as “negotiation for meaning” (Long, 1985, 1996). This negotiation is carried out in various ways, such as through clarification requests, confirmation checks, and comprehension checks. This type of interaction creates learner-modified comprehensible input, which Ortega (2009) calls *learner contingent i+1*¹⁸. Ortega argues that this input may be better than:

unmodified or authentic input (as in the listening or reading of authentic texts) but also better than pre-modified input (as in graded readers), which often means simplifying the language, thus risking the elimination of the +1 in the $i+1$ equation. (Ortega, 2009, p. 61)

In other words, challenging learners and the teacher’s ability to guide them into a learning zone during this process, or their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978), is essential. Smith and Elley (1997) suggest that during reading interactions the teacher helps students clarify meaning through utilizing problem-solving strategies. In this way, the teacher plays an important role in guiding students’ reading and understanding. This concept of providing comprehensible input through both textual support and scaffolded oral interaction also emphasizes the role of the teacher and the teacher’s interaction with the students as being more important than the use of any particular type of text (for a discussion of different reading materials and text types, see section 5.2).

When comprehending language, learners do not need to focus on all of the language equally, as it is possible to understand the content of a message by relying on key content words. Thus, in order for students to pay attention to language forms, Swain (1985) proposed that “producing the target language may be the trigger that forces the learner to pay attention to the means of expression needed in order to successfully convey his or her own intended meaning” (p.249), i.e., the “pushed output” hypothesis. Therefore, in addition to comprehension and negotiating meaning, learners must also “make

¹⁸ This builds on Krashen’s (1982) idea of comprehensible input ($i+1$) and extends it to relate to the type of individual comprehensible input created through negotiation for meaning.

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meaning” and produce messages, in other words, language output. Not all researchers agree that output is necessary, rather seeing it as a part of building language fluency, turning declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge (e.g., De Bot, 1996; VanPatten, 2004). However, there is considerable support for Swain’s “pushed output” hypothesis (Izumi, 2003; Pica, 1992; Swain & Lapkin, 1995; Van den Branden, 1997). With regard to reading and foreign language development, this perspective emphasizes the role of interaction while working with texts.

Another issue related to learning in general, and especially relevant for language learning, is whether it is with or without intention. One example of learning without intention, or incidental learning, is learning L2 vocabulary during extensive reading (see also sections 4.4.2 and 5.3). Several studies have confirmed that this happens (e.g. Hulstijn, 2003; Krashen, 2004; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006). Due to limited time in class where attention is focused, incidental learning through, for example, extensive reading can help increase opportunities for language acquisition. However, since one learns faster with intention, i.e., when attention is focused on the process of learning (Ortega, 2009; Schmidt, 2001), intentional learning is still considered essential to L2 development (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001).

In the current research, both the types and quantities of comprehensible input and the opportunities students have to produce output are key factors in reading instruction. The language input is considered important both in terms of written input, namely, reading texts and materials, and spoken input often provided by the teacher or other media. Additionally, when students interact with each other or with a teacher while working with texts, they have opportunities to produce language, receive feedback, and modify their language use. The extent to which this happens will be a focus in this research. Finally, to what extent students have learning experiences that either require them to pay attention or learn incidentally is an important factor in both vocabulary and reading development. Within this research it will be interesting to find out if there is a difference in learning experiences between the different reading approaches being studied.

3.2.3 Language input outside school

In recent years there has been increased attention on incidental foreign language learning outside of the classroom (Ibsen, 2004; Lefever, 2012; Lefever, Ragnarsdóttir, & Torfadóttir, 2006). As the starting age of foreign language teaching in schools has decreased, there has been increasing awareness of young learners' language knowledge gained before starting school. For example, Lefever, Ragnarsdóttir, and Torfadóttir (2006) found that primary school children already knew a considerable amount of English when they began in primary school. Lefever (2012) argues that this has important implications for the teaching of young learners, the need for differentiation and for teachers to “bridge the gap between children’s incidental learning of English and their school-based learning” (p. 98).

In another study, Verspoor, de Bot and van Rein (2011) found that the results of pre-secondary English instruction varied greatly, resulting in some students having a much higher language proficiency level than others. Cenoz (2011) and Verspoor et al. (2011) emphasize the amount of language input as an important factor in this variation. Arenas of English exposure, such as media, television programs, movies, Internet, and music, will influence the quality and type of English language youths are exposed to, as well as their perceived sociolinguistic function (Hasebrink et al., 2007, p. 114). This is especially true in the Norwegian context, where even young children have a perception that English is useful for them while traveling, talking to non-Norwegian speaking people in Norway, and in many jobs that require English. Therefore, this gives English a different status than other foreign languages in Norway and can provide more motivation for students to learn the language (Ibsen, 2004, p. 49).

Though language input outside school is an important aspect of the language learning context, it is not something that is directly measured or plays a large role in this research. However, it does reflect the increasing need for differentiation in teaching and learning aims in order to address the growing differences in language exposure and ability levels among young learners.

3.2.4 Language use within the classroom

Language use and classroom discourse are two factors in language teaching. Several studies have reviewed L1 and L2 use in classroom teaching (e.g. Ibsen, 2004; Levine, 2011; Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). For example, in a study of tenth-grade English students and teachers, a significant correlation was found between the use of English as the language of communication within the classroom and results on language tests (Ibsen, 2004). Thus, to what extent the teacher chooses to use English or Norwegian during EFL instruction may have a strong influence on the students' language learning outcomes.

Levine (2011) discusses providing students with affordances for learning through multiple code use in the classroom, with the aim of helping learners become bilingual users of the L1 and L2. Levine argues that it is important for language teachers to recognize that there are at least two languages involved in the language learning process. According to Levine (2011), "Learners and the teacher co-construct bilingual norms appropriate and integral to the learning environment" (p. 26). Thus, the norms are created by the teacher and the students through their interaction, and expectations for that interaction are created. For example, when teachers respond to a student's answer given in the L1, instead of requiring the student to answer in the target language, they may be accepting such a response as a valued contribution to interaction, thus limiting the students' need to use the target language.

Classroom language use and choice are relevant factors in the case study observation data in the current research, and are additionally the subject of one of the questions in the questionnaire. Although classroom language use and choice are not the specific focus of the research, they nevertheless contribute to the students' overall language input in the classroom. They are, therefore, factors to consider when comparing the implementation of the reading approaches studied in this research.

3.2.5 Summary

A number of factors contribute to second language acquisition and learning. This section has addressed four factors considered relevant for the current

research. First, age as a learning factor has been politically influenced as there has been a general trend towards earlier starting ages for EFL and foreign language learning in general. Research has shown advantages and disadvantages of this new trend, but has also emphasized the role of other factors, including the quantity and quality of language input. Both comprehensible input and output have been shown to be influential in language learning, including the opportunity to negotiate for meaning through language interaction. Additionally, recent studies have found that language input outside of school plays an important role in language development. Finally, the issue of classroom language use was raised, as there has been growing recognition of the role of both the L1 and the target language within language instruction in the pursuit of creating a bilingual learning environment.

3.3 Differentiation

Adapted education is an educational principle in Norway that aims to teach individual students at their ability levels (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007b). Differentiation, in an educational context, is a broad term that refers to adaptations or changes made to instruction or teaching experiences for groups or individual students, and can thus be considered the implementation of the adapted education principle. However, Arends and Kilcher (2010) argue that differentiation is not something that comes in addition to teaching, but is rather “a perspective and philosophy that shapes curriculum, planning, instruction, assessment and classroom management” (p. 105).

There are also various methods of differentiation. Two categories widely addressed in the Norwegian context are “organizational” and “pedagogical” differentiation. Organizational differentiation entails students being separated individually or in groups over a longer period of time (Skaalvik & Fossen, 1995, p. 48). In contrast, pedagogical differentiation refers to different teaching within the same class involving different materials, amount of work, feedback, attention, demands, and assessment (Skaalvik & Fossen, 1995, p. 49). Pedagogical differentiation can also include factors such as tempo, breadth, and level-differentiation. However, these terms are imprecise and often overlapping. For example, tempo differentiation over an extended

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period of time will lead to different amounts of materials covered, which means that students will be working at different levels.

As a general educational policy, Norway abandoned organizational differentiation in 1979, following various attempts to implement it through different class constellations and class progression, especially in lower secondary school (Meld. St. 22, 2010 – 2011, p. §4.1.1). However, it is still practiced to varying degrees in many schools. According to the Norwegian Education Act §8-2 (1998), students may be divided into groups as necessary, but their needs for social belonging should be maintained. Students may be divided into groups for short periods of time, although not normally on the basis of academic level, gender, or ethnic identity. Jenssen and Lillejord (2010) suggest that the most recent perspective on differentiation and adapted education, as reflected in Norwegian political and educational documents, focuses on high-quality and varied teaching, from which the majority of students will receive adequate benefits. This current perspective distinguishes it from the previously ambiguous distinction between the expectations of education adapted and differentiated to the needs of the individual student, and special education designed for individual needs (Jenssen & Lillejord, 2010).

The most important aspects of differentiation for the current research are grouping, teacher-student and student-student interaction while reading, materials used, types of activities, quantity and quality of expected student work, and learning aims and assessments. Of these, grouping, interaction, and materials will be addressed in this section (see also Chapter 5 for further discussion of materials and section 4.6 for reading activities and interaction). The final three types of differentiation are featured to a minor extent in the current research. As they are not the specific focus of the research questions, they will not be addressed separately.

Materials differentiation

Differentiation through the use of materials and learning tools has been featured in government reports and recent research. The government White Paper number 16 (2006–2007), *...og ingen sto igjen. Tidlig innsats for livslang læring (... and none were left standing. Early efforts for lifelong*

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learning) (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007b), points out that adapted education and its implementation as differentiated teaching consists of selecting tools and materials with the intention of promoting the individual's and the groups' learning. Kverndokken (2013) argues that this places large demands upon textbook authors and their ability to create opportunities for differentiation within the textbook. Both in the government White Paper and throughout socio-cultural learning theories (see section 3.6), it is proposed that learning through a community and in active participation with others promotes the quality of an individual's learning outcome. One could argue that having one textbook or one common reading text for students helps promote the concept of the learning community and learning through common experiences and dialogue.

In contrast, several educational researchers who have focused on adapted education and inclusion have laid doubt to the claim that one common textbook can create a common learning arena (Briseid, 2006; Grøterud & Moen, 2001; Harwood, 2010; Kverndokken, 2013). It has been argued that in order to develop good adapted education within an inclusive class-culture, a greater selection of texts and materials is necessary. This includes a differentiated selection of teaching content, resources, and teaching and working methods in order to create an optimal learning environment for the students (Grøterud & Moen, 2001). Similar arguments for the need for differentiated learning materials have been made by Briseid (2006) and Kverndokken (2013).

Johnsen (1999) posed the question of whether a teacher can choose to use a textbook or not, to which he posits, "In practice the answer is no. Teaching in Norwegian schools is textbook-based" (my translation) (Johnsen, 1999, p. 15). Kverndokken (2013) and Skjelbred and Aamotsbakken (2010) argue that this textbook dependence is still the case, which is not unique to the Norwegian context; others have also claimed that, "In no other school subject do course books exert a similar influence as in language teaching. The book in fact is often treated as the syllabus" (Appel, 2012, p. 50). Though it has been suggested that the new additional resources available to accompany textbooks, such as websites, online resources, and workbooks, may contribute to differentiation, Kverndokken (2013) argues that they are not used to a great

extent, and possibly less than anticipated by their producers (see also section 5.2.2).

Organizational differentiation

In addition to materials, different organizational grouping of children is a common method of addressing differentiation in school contexts. Much of the research on classroom organizational grouping comes from the US context. However, it would seem to be relevant for FL classrooms since the use of organizational differentiation addresses issues prevalent in both contexts. The most important of these is the wide variation in ability levels within classes. Historically there have been fluctuations in classroom organization, from a focus on whole-class instruction, to within class ability level grouping, and then returning to a more balanced approach of the two. From the 1950s to the 1980s there was a focus on within-class ability level grouping (Ankrum & Bean, 2007). However, it was found that the differentiation in these ability groups was more often related to instructional pacing than types of materials or interaction. Thus, the students in these groups read less, sometimes leading to even greater gaps between the groups (Allington, 1983; Ankrum & Bean, 2007). The effectiveness of this form of grouping was questioned in the 1980s and 1990s. To avoid differential treatment of students, whole-class teaching was used, often leading to simplification of classroom management challenges, but which also led to instruction less suited to the needs of individual students (Schumm, Moody, & Vaughn, 2000).

Whole-class reading instruction can be used to provide explicit teaching through modeling of specific reading skills or strategies for all of the students in the class (Ankrum & Bean, 2007). However, this can also be accomplished in small groups, especially for follow-ups of introductions, since students may grasp the new concepts and skills at different paces. Schumm, Moody, and Vaughn's (2000) study found that many primary school teachers used primarily whole-class reading instruction, undifferentiated for reading level, often citing reasons such as classroom management and the ease of planning one lesson for all students. However, there is recognition that whole-class reading instruction cannot meet the needs of all students and thereby an acknowledgement of the benefits of small group instruction (Ankrum & Bean, 2007).

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In early reading instruction in the United States, ability grouping is commonly practiced in addition to whole-class instruction (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006). Teachers cited reasons for using ability-level grouping, such as helping them meet students' needs, primarily instructional, but some teachers also cited social needs (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006). These arguments have led to recommendations for teachers to employ a variety of grouping arrangements during reading instruction, including whole-class, small group, and individualized instruction (Ankrum & Bean, 2007; Pressley, 2006; B. Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, & Rodriguez, 2002).

There is a large body of research on ability grouping that often focuses on the potentially negative social consequences of maintaining homogenous ability level groups (Allington, 1983; Collins, 2006; Diaz, Moll, & Mehan, 1986; Eder, 2006; Goodlad, 1984; Hiebert, 1983; Oakes, 1985). These negative effects include a wider achievement gap between students in higher- and lower-level groups (Goodlad, 1984; Hiebert, 1983; Oakes, 1985). Some studies found that lower-ability groups receive inferior instruction, consisting of less focus on meaning and critical thinking (less on higher order thinking skills and more on skills-based and decoding activities) (Allington, 1983; Collins, 2006; Diaz, Moll, & Mehan, 1986). There is also possible stigmatization of students in lower-level groups, especially given that movement between groups is often rare (Collins, 2006; Eder, 2006; Oakes, 1985). However, a relatively recent study on interaction and social differentiation in mixed-ability level reading groups found similar social consequences in these groups as in homogeneous groups (Poole, 2008). Thus, some of the negative effects previously thought to be associated with ability-level grouping may be relevant regardless of grouping method. This may call into question whether social structure is a valid reason to prioritize one type of grouping over another.

Additionally, in the bilingual context of Diaz, Moll, and Mehan's (1986) study, the students receiving lower-level reading instruction focused more on decoding and word sounds in English, their L1, than in Spanish, their L2. In the latter, they focused on key skills to promote reading comprehension and practice communicating their understanding, irrespective of reading group ability level. The researchers suggested that the differences in instruction were related to lack of coordination between the L1 and L2 teachers regarding

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reading ability and skills. Moreover, students were often grouped based on oral language proficiency, which was not always reflective of their reading abilities. Finally, teachers also often failed to distinguish between students' decoding skills and difficulty with pronunciation. The students in the study were often capable of higher levels of reading comprehension, despite challenges in pronunciation when reading aloud (i.e., evidence of decoding ability). These issues are all relevant within L2 and FL reading contexts, in which teachers are trying to balance reading and language development.

Some studies have expressed concern about differences in materials, interaction, and instruction in different homogenous ability-level groups (Allington, 1983; Chorzempa & Graham, 2006). One survey of the use of groups in primary level reading instruction in the United States found that students in lower-level groups read less, read less appropriate material, and spent more time reading orally and answering literal questions (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006). This corroborated similar findings in a previous study by Allington (1983), indicating the negative consequences of different pacing in level-differentiated groups. However, it was also found that although the specific content varied somewhat between groups of different ability levels (i.e., different reading skills), the teachers provided balanced, yet differentiated reading instruction to all groups (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006).

Many studies on the practices of exemplary reading teachers found that they employed a variety of grouping formats (Pressley et al., 2001; B. Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000; B. Taylor et al., 2005; B. Taylor, Pressley, & Pearson, 2002), that small groups were used more often than whole class reading instruction (B. Taylor et al., 2005), and that group membership was reorganized as needed to meet the needs and reading abilities of the students (Pressley et al., 2001; B. Taylor et al., 2005). The findings related to differentiated reading practices and teacher interaction styles are further addressed in section 4.6.

These trends may direct more attention in the future towards the way in which groups are formed, managed, and updated. Some possible considerations include whether groups are permanent, whether they are offered similar types of content instruction, whether there are similar opportunities for learning and practicing reading strategies, and for developing reading fluency and

comprehension. In the present study, the third sub-research question aims to find out to what extent differentiated practices, materials, and interaction occur in grade 4 and 5 EFL reading instruction, and whether they are more common in some reading approaches than in others.

3.4 *Interaction in the classroom*

This section presents research on interaction in the classroom, beginning with an overview of different types of negative feedback used in language classrooms. Negative feedback incorporates different methods of making learners aware of ways in which they can improve their language. This is followed by research on negative feedback and its use and effectiveness for language repair and correction. Finally, research on teacher-student interaction in classroom instruction, especially related to reading and dialogue related to texts, is addressed.

In the current research, teachers provide negative feedback when students read aloud, while interacting and talking about texts that have been read, and during follow-up activities related to texts. Since oral interaction occurs in the language classroom even when the focus is on reading, reviewing the ways in which teachers provide students with feedback while they read aloud and talk about texts is important in this context.

The following addresses different ways teachers provide negative feedback, an element of second language acquisition (SLA) that is highly prevalent during interaction in classroom instruction settings. Negative feedback from the teacher or another interlocutor signals to the learner the occurrence of, for example, a non-native-like form or unclear meaning in their utterance. There are different ways of signaling the need for output modification through negative feedback, including repair (self- or other-initiated), explicit correction, recast, clarification request, metalinguistic clues, elicitation, and repetition. The following definitions of these terms are based on Ortega (2009) and Tedick and de Gortari (1998).

First, a repair of utterance occurs when the learner “responds by modifying her utterance and revising it into a more target-like version” (Ortega, 2009, p. 68). Second, negotiation for meaning can be accomplished by confirmation of

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comprehension using a yes/no question or clarification request (e.g., *Pardon me? What?*), used when intelligibility is low. It may also indicate some language or grammatical error, although this method is very implicit and indirect compared to other types of feedback. Third, explicit corrections focus on the incorrect form and are a direct message from teacher to student regarding the incorrect non-target-like language. Another type, recasts, occurs when the speaker repeats the learner's utterance, using a more conventional or more correct form; for example, *S: He took a apple for lunch. T: He took an apple for lunch*. Further, elicitation involves cuing a learner, using phrases such as, "How do we say x?" or by asking them to try again. In recasts the teacher provides the solution, whereas with elicitation, the student comes up with the correction with support. Next, repetition can also be used to draw students' attention to an error, often by the teacher adjusting their intonation to focus on the error, such as in the following example: *S: A apple. T: **An** apple*. Finally, metalinguistic clues may be considered as a type of scaffolding. The teacher helps guide the student to the correct answer by posing a question or providing comments or information related to the student's utterance, but without providing the correct form. The teacher can accomplish this in many ways, such as in the following examples:

S: I taked an apple.

T: (1) Do we say 'taked'? (2) Is that how we say it in English? (3) Is it regular or irregular?

When students are required to actively think in order to respond to teacher feedback, they are more likely to generate a student-repair. This was found in a study by Lyster and Ranta (1997) of corrective feedback in immersion classrooms. Thus, elicitation, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, and repetition all resulted in student-generated feedback, whereas recasts and explicit correction from the teacher did not. When the teacher provides the answer to the student, such as in recast and explicit correction, the only possible student uptake is to repeat the teacher-generated correction. In Lyster and Ranta's study, even though the teachers provided corrective feedback using recasts over half of the time, it only resulted in repair 18% of the time. In contrast, metalinguistic feedback and elicitation moves resulted in repair 45% of the time. Although recasts may still produce student uptake, they do

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not encourage active engagement through negotiation of form when the students have to respond to the teacher's feedback.

Although the usefulness of negative feedback may be questioned (Schwartz, 1993), most cognitive-interactionist researchers argue that negative feedback is beneficial for learning (Long, 1996; Lyster, Lightbown, & Spada, 1999; Russell & Spada, 2006). Although less common in out-of-classroom situations, in classroom learning settings a high proportion of errors are reportedly responded to; reports range from 48% (Panova & Lyster, 2002) to 90% (Lochtman, 2002). Negative feedback has been found to result in better post-test performance results than ignoring errors (Russell & Spada, 2006). However, many studies have aimed to discover how, when, and why negative feedback works (R. Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Oliver & Mackey, 2003).

A particular focus has been comparing the effectiveness of various types of negative feedback, for example whether recasts have more learning potential than prompts (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; see also Ortega 2009 for a review). In a meta-analysis of 49 instructional studies, Norris and Ortega (2000) found that explicit types of L2 instruction consistently resulted in more sizable gains than implicit ones. Additionally, various types of negative feedback, such as recast, could vary in explicitness (Nicholas et al., 2001). This has led to recommendations for a new classification that reflects attributes of feedback rather than specific types (Ellis & Sheen, 2006), such as degrees of explicitness, demand, and informativeness (Ortega, 2009). The instructional context has also been found to influence the explicitness of the negative feedback. Although there appears to be less variation in the type of negative feedback provided to students (teachers tend to primarily use recasts) (Lyster & Ranta, 1997), the explicitness of the recast tends to depend on the function of that part of the lesson, namely, whether it is focused on language or meaning/content; more explicit recasts are provided in parts of the lesson devoted to language and form (Oliver & Mackey, 2003).

Ortega (2009) summarizes current research on feedback in two points. First, feedback varies in explicitness. Second, findings on the effectiveness of negative feedback may vary depending on the explicitness of the feedback and the wider classroom and social context in which it occurs.

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When describing patterns in classroom interaction, educational studies have often found a typical teacher-led pattern: the interaction is often teacher-initiated, followed by student response, and responded to by the teacher's feedback (R. Alexander, 2004, 2008; Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Olsen, 1997; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; B. Taylor et al., 2005). This is often referred to as the IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback) cycle (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Although this cycle may vary in the type of initiation or feedback the teacher provides, it is a teacher-directed type of interaction, which may limit the opportunities for students to initiate dialogue and ask questions (Littleton & Mercer, 2013). Thus, Van der Meij (1993) argued for the need to teach children how to ask questions. This need is also supported by the National Reading Panel (2000), which identified key strategies to improve comprehension, many of which are specifically related to questioning. Fisher (2005) summarizes as follows: "Learning to read requires active engagement on the part of the learner and [...] how the teacher interacts with the learner affects how active the engagement can be" (p. 24). Thus, the teacher appears to play a central role in creating interaction in the classroom.

Although the IRF type interaction model can have a number of functions, IRF exchanges frequently result in limited dialogue, often due to the use of closed questions, (i.e., questions to which there is only one answer), which stop the development of a true discussion (Alexander, 2004; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Closed questions can be used to assess what factual or explicit knowledge the student may have gained while reading. However, Littleton and Howe (2010) argue that: "Closed questions do not usually permit a range of contributions from students nor do they typically support cumulative knowledge building" (p. 4). In other words, closed questions are often more focused on developing the topic than on the individual child's understanding, emphasizing the need for true dialogue to develop understanding (Wells, 2009). Hardman (2008) refers to a "recitation script" used by the teachers: "Recitation script' of closed teacher questions, brief student answers and minimal feedback which requires students to report someone else's thinking rather than think for themselves, and to be evaluated on their compliance for doing so" (p.133). Fisher (2005) suggests another factor that may limit discussion, namely time: "The requirement for pre-determined outcomes and

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a fast pace seems to militate against reflection and exploration of ideas” (p. 22).

Additionally, the prominence of IRF in classroom interaction may be influenced by a particular focus on evaluation. Barnes (2008) argues that much of the teacher talk based on the IRF style focuses on knowledge display and teacher evaluation rather than creating opportunities for knowledge building, engagement, and progressive dialogue. However, IRF can be effective when it is “spiraling” rather than linear. Spiraling, by building understanding through a series of IRFs (Littleton & Mercer, 2013), can help lead students through a complex series of ideas (Barnes, 2008; Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003), and can thus be an effective method of scaffolding. This series of exchanges could occur between the teacher and one student or between the teacher and various students. In this way it could also build a communal understanding of the concepts.

In connection with research on classroom interaction, there has also been a trend towards greater use of dialogic teaching (Littleton & Mercer, 2013). In dialogic teaching both the teacher and students make “significant and sustained contributions” to the classroom talk (Littleton & Mercer, 2013, p. 294). These contributions should lead children to progress in their thinking on certain ideas through articulating and reflecting upon them. Alexander (2004) explains key characteristics of dialogic teaching as follows:

- Questions are structured so as to provoke thoughtful answers
- Answers provoke further questions and are seen as the building blocks of dialogue rather than its terminal point; and
- Individual teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil exchanges are chained into coherent lines of enquiry rather than left stranded and disconnected (Alexander, 2004, p. 42).

Littleton and Mercer (2013) suggest that the body of research on teacher-led, whole-class instruction recommends using varied approaches for interaction to create a balance of authoritative and dialogic discourse. This, in turn, places a high demand on the professional teacher to be able to adapt and scaffold teaching for students, guided by a toolkit of teaching principles.

3.5 Teacher cognition

Teacher beliefs about practices and language learning are an important aspect of the contextual factors of language learning. The way in which the characteristics of a classroom approach are interpreted and implemented by teachers often interacts with their own beliefs. Borg's (2006) review of the literature on teacher beliefs confirms a relationship between classroom practice and language teacher cognition, defined as "what teachers believe, know, and think" (p. 81). Breen et al. (2001) suggest that "identifying the guiding principles that teachers articulate in relation to classroom work can complement observational studies by enabling research to go beyond description toward the understanding and explanation of teacher action" (p. 471).

In one research study on teacher cognition and reading, Collie Graden (1996) addressed how language teachers' beliefs about reading instruction are mediated by their beliefs about students. Her study involved six secondary French and Spanish teachers from three public school settings. The data was collected through teacher interviews and classroom observations. Interviews were conducted after the observations and, if not done the same day, a transcript was used as a stimulated-recall aid. The data indicated that teachers' reading instructional goals were often not the most influential factors due to the need to accommodate students' reading levels and motivational needs. The teachers expressed "a frustrated awareness of the inconsistencies between their stated beliefs and what they actually did in the classroom" (p. 393). Collie Graden suggests that the issue of multiple possible conflicting belief systems should be addressed to a greater extent in pre-service and in-service courses, as well as reflected on to a greater extent by teachers to help in developing new practices that would better align conflicting beliefs.

According to teacher cognition theory, a teacher's education, personal experiences as a language learner, and their classroom experiences form the basis for a teacher's cognition (knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs). According to Borg (2003), these constructs become evident in teachers' decisions about classroom practices and their choice of materials. Gilje (2014) claims that: "Teacher cognition is assumed to be resistant to change...and regarded as being particularly difficult to change if teachers have not had the opportunity

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to develop the cognitive tools required to be able to reflect around and articulate their knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs” (p. 5). Richards (1998, p. 21) explains that teachers’ practices and decisions may become subject to “impulse, intuition, or routine.” This could arguably limit teachers’ growth and professional development (Gilje, 2014).

Both Borg (2003, 2006) and Richards (1998) have argued for the role of teacher education in providing teacher trainees with the cognitive tools (e.g., knowledge of concepts), to understand and process their cognition. As previously mentioned (section 2.2.5), a large percentage of primary school EFL teachers in Norway do not have formal qualifications to teach English. Following these arguments on the role of teacher cognition in the conscious and reflective processing of teachers’ practices, it could be argued that many teachers base their reading instruction on intuition, impulse, or routine. Furthermore, given the strong position of the textbook in EFL instruction, a focus on intensive reading of texts, and a lack of focus on reading skills, it is possible that many teachers may have established practices that could be resistant to change.

It has also been suggested that teachers’ classroom decisions about teaching reading are most influenced by pressures in the instructional context and to a lesser extent their theoretical orientations (Borg, 2006). Borg (2003) suggests that teachers faced with contextual challenges may be reluctant to experiment with new teaching methods. The instructional context, such as time and resources, could be relevant factors in EFL teachers’ decisions regarding reading approaches, and in the current study these were addressed in the questionnaire and in the interviews. The questionnaire also addressed teachers’ perceptions of certain principles of EFL reading instruction, such as language choice, intensive and extensive reading, and starting age. However, the questionnaire was not constructed to measure teachers’ beliefs regarding these issues, and in this sense only superficially addresses the issue of teacher cognition.

Teachers’ perceptions of the reading approach they use were addressed in the interviews with case study teachers. The interviews also addressed teachers’ perspectives on reading development and how their practices helped promote their students’ reading development. Teachers’ responses about their beliefs

may more accurately reflect what they think should happen in reading instruction rather than their actual practice (Borg, 2006). Although this can be a concern in both the questionnaire and interview data collection, it was nevertheless considered important to gain insight into teachers' perspectives in order to understand their thinking and actions in the classroom.

3.6 Theoretical framework

The current research is directed by sociocultural theory and a social constructivist view of learning, in which reality is constructed through culturally created realities based on dialogue (Vygotsky, 1962). Littleton and Mercer (2013) argue that: "Language should still be accorded prime place as a cognitive and cultural tool for the pursuit of education" (p. 291). In other words, Vygotsky characterized cognition as fundamentally social (Ortega, 2009). Co-construction of knowledge with a "more knowledgeable one" (e.g., a teacher) (Vygotsky, 1978), who supports learning, can occur either directly through interaction or indirectly by observation of teacher modeling and then the learner copying that model. Thus, children's learning is perceived as developing through interaction and collaboration with their teacher and peers. This creates the expectations of an active classroom where knowledge is jointly constructed through dialogue and classroom discourse (Mercer, 2000).

Within a reading context, this jointly constructed knowledge through classroom discourse means the teacher will have a strong influence on how the learners interact with and construct texts (John, 2009). Vygotsky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981) suggest that learning occurs through a construction of knowledge, which happens in interaction with others. Accordingly, social constructivism describes learning and teaching as both exploratory and collaborative (Wells, 2000). From an L2 and FL learning perspective, this is also the basis for Swain's (1985, 2000) focus on output and interaction for language development (see also section 3.2.2).

Vygotsky (1978) referred to this concept of shifting assistance from adult to child as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), describing the distance between what a child can do independently, their actual developmental level, and the level of potential development, which can be reached through adult guidance or with peer support. The ZPD helps to establish differentiation and

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to create “individual levels of challenge” as a guiding principle within education. It also affirms the teacher’s role in determining the appropriate type and level of differentiation.

The concept of the ZPD allows researchers to focus attention on the prospective development that can be seen in the near future, in contrast to a traditional view of learning which measures learning through a retrospective account of what has been achieved (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). Wells (1999) points out that the ZPD is not a fixed attribute owned by the learner, but instead “constitutes a potential for learning that is created in the interaction between participants in particular settings” (p. 249). It must be seen as “emergent” due to the interactive nature of the activity, and new unforeseen potential for learning may develop. This perspective also draws attention away from the many dichotomies in SLA and reading research, such as intensive versus extensive reading, and implicit versus explicit instruction, and rather focuses on learning as a developmental progression that occurs through interactional activity and over multiple activities over time (Ortega, 2009).

Central to the idea of supporting learning is Bruner’s (1978) theory of “scaffolding,” as it relates to both classroom practice and discursive interaction through construction of shared meanings. A teacher can scaffold learning by connecting what the child already knows to what the teacher is teaching. Scaffolding may also support learning beyond the initial task for which it was provided, whereby the learner may internalize the concept, strategy or way of thinking, which can then be applied to similar situations or tasks (Beed, Hawkins, & Roller, 1991). Thus, the initial teacher-supported scaffolding is intended to be temporary as it should lead to independent learning in what Edwards and Mercer (1987) refer to as “the handover of control of knowledge and learning” (p. 161). However, they argue that this rarely occurs. This means rather that the teacher maintains control of learning, which can be related to the nature of interaction in the classroom, and is especially typical of initiation-response-feedback (IRF) type interaction with feedback that “closes down” further discussion (Littleton & Mercer, 2013; see also section 3.4).

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According to the National Research Council's report on *How People Learn* (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000), one of the key findings states:

Adults help children make connections between new situations and familiar ones. Children's curiosity and persistence are supported by adults who direct children's attention, structure experiences, support learning attempts, and regulate the complexity and difficulty levels of information for children. (p. 112)

Scaffolding is one way of creating this support. Scaffolds vary in scope: sequences between teacher and one child, sequences of scaffolds constructed by a teacher for small groups, and finally, consideration of the curriculum as a sequence of increasingly difficult tasks (Cazden, 2001, p. 61). Palinscar (1998) suggests considering the ways in which "contexts and activities and not just individuals – scaffold learning" (p. 370). This can be seen in connection with section 3.3 on differentiation, in which differentiation relates to many aspects of learning, including materials, grouping, and interaction. The ways in which differentiation is practiced in the classroom, especially related to scaffolding and the role of interaction to build understanding, is explored in the current study.

Within constructionist approaches, reading is considered a contextualized activity (Graesser et al., 1994; McNaughton, 1995; Rosenblatt, 1983). Thus, it is not the autonomous reader, but rather, especially in the case of classroom reading, it is the reader in relation to a literacy event that is in focus. Heath (1982, 1983) proposed the idea of a "literacy event," in which interaction is related to or conducted around some form of text. These literacy events could be used as a unit of analysis to create more situated investigations of reading practices aimed at understanding what actually happens in classrooms.

In the current research, a literacy event is understood as groups or individuals working with texts. The focus in this context is to explore the types of interaction between teachers and students, and among students, as they relate to texts and instructional activities. As is the case with the present study, classroom interaction analysis and observation may focus on a small number of subjects or situations in order to analyze the social, linguistic, or pedagogical details, which would not be as clearly presented in a larger-scale

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study. The activities engaged in during reading observed in this study involve spoken interaction that is dependent on or linked to a text, and for this reason the activities and spoken interactions closely reflect Heath's (1982) definition of a literacy event as one in which a text is "integral to participants' interactions and their interpretive processes" (p. 50).

3.7 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of issues on language teaching and learning considered relevant for the current research. First, an overview was provided of key second language acquisition factors considered relevant in the present context. These factors were related to the concept of differentiation, which is central in Norwegian education. The flexibility inherent in the *LK06* curriculum enables teachers to differentiate the use of materials, organizational methods, expectations related to aims, and interaction between teachers and students, and between peers. Additionally, the role of teacher cognition (teachers' knowledge of, attitudes to, and beliefs about teaching), including a teacher's education, personal experiences as a language learner, and their classroom experiences, was briefly addressed.

By viewing the current research through a social-cultural lens that focuses on the role of language and social interaction as central tenets to learning, the role of dialogue and building understanding through collaboration become key aspects of L2 reading development. The joint focus on the building of reading skills through interaction in literacy events, acquiring language skills through experiences with texts, and interaction, and how they contribute to L2 reading development, are a focus of this research.

4 Reading theory and research

4.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses reading theory and research from L1 and L2 perspectives. Section 4.2 introduces definitions of reading. Section 4.3 provides an overview of the reading process and its different levels of processing. Section 4.4 elaborates on reading skills and addresses the links between L1 and L2 reading ability. Five key factors in the reading process (contextual knowledge, background knowledge, knowledge of text type, L2 language proficiency, and reading strategies) are the subject of section 4.5. Finally, section 4.6 presents an overview of research on L1 and L2 reading instruction.

4.2 Reading definitions and skills

The field of reading research is vast, and there are countless definitions of reading. For example, reading is often referred to as acquiring and interpreting information through print (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). Other definitions emphasize the readers' active role in creating comprehension and multidimensional levels of text understanding that emerge during the comprehension process (Graesser & McNamara, 2011; McNamara & Magliano, 2009). There has been a strong case within the constructivist theory of discourse comprehension to view reading in this way.

Whether the focus is on receiving information or actively constructing comprehension, some researchers have emphasized the role of the reading purpose and describing the processes of reading among fluent readers (Alderson, 2000; Grabe, 2009; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). Grabe (2009) presents ten processes that he suggests define reading: rapid, efficient, comprehending, interactive, strategic, flexible, purposeful, evaluative, learning, and linguistic processes (p. 14). The interaction of reading processes is central to reading and functions in two ways: first, successful reading requires combining many cognitive processes, and second, the reader interacts with the writer or text in order to create meaning. According to Grabe (2009),

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reading becomes a unified process adjusted for reading purpose, reader proficiency level, and possible contextual constraints.

There are both similarities and differences between L1 and L2 learners related to reading development. In general, it is more challenging to learn to read and write in an L2 than in one's L1. However, L2 learners can bring with them linguistic resources from their L1, in addition to cultural knowledge and experiences. Foreign language (FL) learners also encounter additional differences compared to second language (L2) learners, especially contextual ones, since the FL learner learns the language in a context in which it is not the main language in the society, while for the L2 learner it is. It is thus important to understand whether and in what ways the additional linguistic resources of both L2 and FL learners influence their reading development in English and whether their reading development is different from that of L1 English speaking children as a result of these resources.

4.3 Reading process: levels of processing

Reading can be described as involving lower- and higher-level processing. These two levels of processing and their component skills provide a framework for understanding how reading occurs. Both lower- and higher-level processes operate simultaneously and interact with each other at certain points (Grabe, 2009). However, Grabe emphasizes that not all processes interact, and not all at the same time. These processes together “generate” reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009, p. 22).

4.3.1 Lower-level processing

This subsection introduces lower-level processes, including word recognition, syntactic parsing, and meaning encoding as propositions (semantic-proposition encoding).

Word recognition

Word recognition has been found to significantly contribute to reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009). During word recognition there are a number of subskills that occur: a reader must recognize forms quickly, activate links

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between graphic forms and phonological information; activate semantic and syntactic resources; recognize morphological affixation; and access his or her mental lexicon (Grabe, 2009). Word recognition thus involves several subskills: the interaction of activated orthographic, phonological, and semantic and syntactic processes (Perfetti & Hart, 2001). When readers encounter unknown words, context is also important in word recognition (Perfetti, 1999; Perfetti & Hart, 2001; Stanovich, 2000). Word recognition skills must be developed to be fast and efficient, in order to promote fluent reading (Perfetti & Hart, 2001; Grabe, 2009).

The first subskill of word processing, orthographic processes, involves recognition of the visual form of the word (letters, letter groups, visual word shapes, and key shapes), which are all processed simultaneously in word groups (Ehri, 2005).

The second subskill is phonological processing. During phonological recoding, the reader transforms graphemes into phonemes and blends phonemes into pronunciations (Ehri, 1999, p. 80). According to Ehri (2005), when readers come upon a word known by sight, the word's identify is rapidly triggered in memory. Once readers have adequate knowledge of the sight words, they can recognize the word's pronunciation and meanings automatically without attention or decoding effort (Ehri, 2005). These skills can be a distinguishing factor between successful and struggling readers, especially for younger learners or those with reading disabilities (Grabe, 2009).

The third subskill, semantic and syntactic processing, generally plays a role after word recognition, where it is used for word integration and comprehension processes. Semantic activation is slower than phonological and orthographic processes. According to Ehri (2005), semantic information plays a smaller role in word recognition for fluent readers than phonological or orthographic processes. If semantic information played a larger role, Ehri claims readers would make more semantic errors while reading, for example, misreading the word *pupil* as *student* (Ehri, 2005, p. 170).

Ehri (1999; 2005) describes four ways to read words: from memory or sight, decoding, analogy, or prediction. The first way, from memory or sight words,

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is automatic recognition of words by the reader. According to Ehri (2005) “readers learn sight words by forming connections between letters in spellings and sounds in pronunciations of the words” (p. 170), based on their understanding of the alphabetic system (i.e., knowledge of grapheme-phoneme relations and phonemic awareness¹⁹). When words are not automatically recognized, the reader can first approach the word using decoding, or phonological recoding. Readers can also approach word recognition through analogy, i.e., using known words to read unknown words that share letters, for example, *fable* and *table*. This is easier when words share rhyme stems, such as the previous example, compared to, for example, *beak-bean*. Using analogy can be prompted by a visible known word, if the word is in proximity in the text, or in more advanced uses when the reader recalls a known word from memory for use in building an analogous word recognition. Finally, readers can predict unknown words based on pictures, preceding text, or partial letters appearing in the words. Context supports reading and prediction of unknown words (Ehri, 1999), and this, in combination with background knowledge, can be very important for L2 and FL reading (Koda, 2004; Nation, 2013).

Although all of these methods can be used, any other than sight reading will result in a slower reading process and speed. Thus, vocabulary knowledge is crucial to fluent reading, as it limits the need to guess or infer the meaning of unknown words (Ehri, 1999). Additionally, automatic word recognition and fluent reading leave the reader with more mental processing capacity for other purposes, such as syntactic parsing and meaning proposition encoding (Grabe, 2009; see also below).

Overall, the goal of word recognition processing is “rapid, accurate, and automatic recognition so that cognitive attention can be directed to building textual meaning rather than to recognizing words” (Grabe, 2009, p. 29). Perfetti, Landi, and Oakhill (2005) claim that, “Comprehension cannot be successful without the identification of words and retrieval of their meanings” (p. 229). Automatizing develops through practice, which, in the case of

¹⁹ Phonemic awareness is “knowing how to distinguish the separate phonemes in pronunciations of words” (Ehri, 2005, p. 170).

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reading, happens after thousands of hours of meaningful input (for example, extensive reading). This is important for reading fluency because automatized processes place fewer demands on working memory.

Syntactic parsing

Syntactic parsing and word recognition occur simultaneously. Syntactic parsing involves accessing meaning information from words and sentence structure, such as word order, and subordinate and super-ordinate relations among clauses. The understanding of the grammatical information and the readers' mental reconstruction of the grammatical structure of the sentence are essential to reading and comprehension (Grabe, 2005, 2009; Perfetti et al., 2005). However, Perfetti et al. (2005), citing research, suggest that syntactic parsing difficulties may arise from processing limitations rather than lack of syntactic knowledge. They suggest these difficulties may be related to verbal working memory or difficulty with processing phonological material.

Readers benefit from gaining experience with syntactic structures that are more common in written language than spoken language (e.g., the use of nominal clausal phrases and more complex structures). Through this additional expertise in the use of different syntax structures, the demand on working memory should decrease (Perfetti et al., 2005, p. 238).

Meaning proposition encoding

Another part of lower-level processing is assembling words in messages, namely, meaning proposition encoding. This process involves combining word meanings and syntactic information into basic phrase- or clause-level meaning units (i.e., proposition units) (Kintsch, 1998). Perfetti et al. (2005) suggest that comprehension problems for some students may be related to reduced semantic knowledge or semantic processing when there are no obvious phonological processing deficiencies. Further, some students with weak decoding skills may use more semantically based processing than phonologically based (Perfetti et al., 2005, p. 241). Thus, Perfetti et al. suggest that word meaning may play a role in the identification of words in less orthographically transparent languages (e.g., English), and in comprehension. Semantic proposition units are formed together with word

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recognition and syntactic parsing (Perfetti et al., 2005). These are together considered the building blocks of comprehension (Grabe, 2009). Additionally, propositions more closely linked to other information are consistently recalled more frequently (Grabe, 2009). According to Perfetti et al. “the reader’s mental model can be considered an extended set of propositions that includes inferences as well as propositions extracted from actual sentences” (p. 230).

Overall, the aim of reading development is for lower-level processes to become automatized, which is considered a requirement for fluent reading (Grabe, 2009; Koda, 2004; Stanovich, 2000). Automatized lower-level processes are important for both L1 and L2/FL reading development. When these processes become automatized, working memory is freed to focus on higher-level processes (addressed in the following subsections), which are important for reading fluency and comprehension (see also sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.4.).

4.3.2 Working memory

Working memory is central to reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009). According to Grabe (2009) “Working memory includes information that is active for processing operations as well as the processing directions themselves” (p. 32). In other words, there are two components in working memory: active storage and processing functions (Baddeley, 2006, 2007; N. Ellis, 2001).

The first limitation related to working memory is time. Whereas the long-term memory is more or less unlimited in capacity, working memory is considered a limited-capacity system, and generally holds information actively for one to two seconds (Ortega, 2009). However, information can remain active longer through mental rehearsal and reactivation (Grabe, 2009; Ortega, 2009).

When reading, working memory comprises “the full set of information that has been activated and is available for comprehension processing” (Grabe, 2009, p. 33). This includes information open to mental examination, automatic processes, and various processing routines. Information from the long-term memory that is active, or any information that is active because of recent input, creates a network that becomes the working memory (N. Ellis,

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2001). This relates to the second limitation on working memory, namely, the amount of information that can be handled at any one time. Working memory can handle approximately five to six chunks of information at a time, where a chunk could be phrases or related words (Ortega, 2009). These could, for example, be first and last names, which would be more easily remembered than individual unrelated words.

These two issues, namely, limited time and space of working memory, mean that the degree to which lower-level reading processes are automatized will determine reading effectiveness. When the lower-level reading processes are completed quickly and efficiently, the mental processing capacity can be focused on comprehension (Grabe, 2009). Automatic processing is important, because if the processing is slowed down due to the reader having to decode a word, guess a meaning from context, or work out a grammatical form, reading efficiency and speed decrease. If this decrease becomes too extreme, the reader may begin to forget what has been read. Related to reading development, this emphasizes the need for a strong sight vocabulary (i.e., fast and efficient word recognition), and a receptive understanding of grammar in order for automaticity of processes and reading fluency to be achieved.

Working memory is directly involved in lower-level processing, where it first supports phonological, orthographic, and morphological processing for word recognition. Second, it stores and combines words that have been activated. Third, it carries out syntactic and semantic processing at the clause level. Fourth, it stores the relevant information for building text comprehension. It has also been suggested that it suppresses unwanted and unnecessary information quickly and efficiently, without drawing the reader's conscious attention to it (Baddeley, 2006; Grabe, 2009). Further, it develops a network of text-level information by assembling information at the word and clause level, attempting to draw a representation of the main idea information in the text (Grabe, 2009). Finally, it supports higher-level processing for comprehension.

4.3.3 Higher-level processing

In contrast to lower-level processes, where there is a general consensus on the role of these processes in reading comprehension, this is less true of higher-

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level processes (Grabe, 2009). However, over the past two decades, research on reading has developed “a more coherent synthesis of how higher-level processes contribute to comprehension” (Grabe, 2009, p. 39). It is generally assumed that higher-level processes require the reader to direct attentional resources to its component skills. However, some aspects of the higher-level component skills can be completed automatically, without attentional focus, except when reading difficulties arise or specific reading purposes or goals require attentional resources (Grabe, 2009).

Higher-order comprehension processing abilities can be categorized as follows: a text model of reader comprehension, a situation model of reader interpretation, and a set of reading skills and resources under the command of the executive control mechanism of the working memory (Grabe, 2009, p. 39). The executive control mechanism is the term developed by Baddeley and Hitch (1974) as part of their explanation of working memory. They describe working memory as being composed of a limited-capacity attentional control system, namely, the executive control. According to Grabe (2009), “The executive control mechanism is “the source of attentional control, conscious processing, monitoring and intervention, the creation of new solutions to problems, and the intentional learning of new information” (p.34).

This categorization, namely, a text model of reader comprehension and a situation model of reader interpretation, is based on the fact that a two-level model of comprehension is accepted by most discourse comprehension researchers (Graesser et al., 1994; Kintsch, 1998; McNamara, 2007). These two levels represent the author’s meaning and the reader’s construction of the text meaning. The text model explains what the text itself is saying. The situation model is created when the reader combines background knowledge with text information, and it assists in interpretation of the text according to the reader’s goals (Perfetti et al., 2005). In other words, the reader draws meaning and constructs meaning from the text while reading. This model helps explain how we read different texts in different ways. For example, one or the other of these two, either the inherent meaning in the text or the constructed meaning, may be emphasized more depending on a number of contextual factors (e.g., text genre) (see also section 4.5.3).

Text-model

In order to support comprehension, the reader creates a text model. The lower-level process and text propositions are combined with the previously integrated elements from an associated network activated by the current text input. This requires making “bridging” inferences, by connecting propositions to a previous network of ideas (Kintsch, 1998; Pressley, 2006). This developing text model also helps filter central ideas from less important ones. Overall, the reader assembles a network from the ongoing processing of words, sentences, and propositions (Grabe, 2009, p. 41).

The reader performs a number of operations while building a text model of comprehension:

- Linkages into a network (including activating background information and making simple inferences)
- Overlap of elements
- Suppression of less important information
- Simple inferencing
- Summary restructuring (Grabe, 2009, p. 42)

Grabe (2009) summarizes this process as follows: “The primary function of the text model is to represent as well as possible the information intended by the writer” (p. 43). Readers need to create this understanding of a text in order to develop a higher-level of understanding of the text, beyond word level comprehension.

Situation model

When reading, the reader normally possesses information that is used in the processing of text comprehension. This is used in creation of a situation model, namely, a representation of what the text is about (Perfetti et al., 2005). Text processing at multiple levels contributes to the situation model: word level (lexical processes), sentence level (syntactic processes), and text level. Many of the lower-level and some higher-level processes contribute to the development of the situation model: word identification, parsing, referential mapping, and inferencing processes. These processes interact with the reader’s conceptual knowledge to produce the mental model of the text.

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This creation of a mental model to support comprehension is supported by research in cognitive psychology (Kintsch, 1998). Other factors that influence the construction of the situation model are:

- The reader's purpose
- Task expectation
- Genre activation
- Similar story instances
- General background knowledge resources
- Evaluation of the importance of information, its enjoyment value, its interest value
- Attitudes (and inferences) toward writer, story, genre, episode
- Inferences needed for interpretation (of genre, episode, hierarchical organization, purpose) (Grabe, 2009, p. 44)

Grabe (2009) suggests that different reading purposes and reading different text types or genres will most influence the construction of the situation model. This means, for example, that the fact that a person is reading an informational text or a novel may have more influence on the generation of the model than other factors, such as the reader's prior knowledge. This suggests that teachers should be aware of genre choice and reading purpose when making text selections.

In an L2 or FL reading context, L2 language proficiency influences the readers' comprehension and the formation of these two models (text and situation models). Vocabulary level is especially important as, according to Grabe (2009), "Limited vocabulary knowledge may lead to a minimally developed and minimally coherent text model of comprehension" (p. 49). This may lead to the students depending too much on the situation model, namely, drawing on background knowledge or knowledge of other similar texts. This greater focus on the situation model may support students in creating text coherence to improve comprehension, but not necessarily in indicating adequate evidence of comprehension of the specific text content.

Inferencing

Inferencing is a cognitive process that helps people interpret their environment from different types of sources, for example, written, oral and visual. Inferencing abilities that support comprehension begin from childhood. For example, inferencing helps readers make sense of otherwise unconnected events in a story (Perfetti et al., 2005). Perfetti et al. (2005) cite research suggesting that although young children are able to make the same inferences as older ones, they are unlikely to do so spontaneously without being prompted. Thus, inferencing skills for academic purposes may need to be taught (Grabe, 2009).

Although there are many taxonomies for inference types (Perfetti et al., 2005), a basic distinction can be made between “bridging” inferences and “elaborative” inferences. Bridging inferences are used to help maintain coherent text models during comprehension, while elaborative inferences are used when adding information that elaborates on the situation model, such as causal, predictive and instrumental types of inferences (Graesser, Bertus, & Magliano, 1995; McNamara et al., 2014). Readers are more likely to make inferences that support coherence rather than those that are just elaborative (Perfetti et al., 2005). Applying inferencing for academic purposes requires “the evaluation of many different linguistic cues, the recognition of sometimes very subtle textual cues, the prioritization of potentially conflicting cues, or the synthesis of evidence from multiple texts to build critical reading comprehension abilities” (Grabe, 2009, p. 70). Thus, inferencing can be promoted through practice to support reading comprehension (Oakhill & Cain, 2007).

4.4 Reading skills/linking L1 and L2 reading ability

The National Reading Panel²⁰ (2000) has recommended five key skills for successful reading: phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Although the National Reading Panel was

²⁰ The National Reading Panel in the US was established to evaluate existing research and evidence to create a recommendation of best practices for teaching children to read.

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working within an L1 reading context, as shown in section 4.3, similar processes and skills also apply to L2 and FL reading. However, there are some differences. First, L1 readers have a basic linguistic foundation in the oral language, whereas L2²¹ reading instruction often begins before the learners have built this oral foundation. This is evident in the focus of reading instruction; L1 instruction focuses on decoding, allowing the learners to connect the printed word to their oral vocabulary, whereas L2 instruction focuses on building the linguistic skills of the reader (Koda, 2004, p. 7). Additionally, when reading in an L2, two languages are involved; one can access and make use of both the L1 and L2. Thus, there are cross-linguistic influences.

Koda (2000, 2004, 2007) and August and Shanahan (2008) have identified three particular cross-linguistic influences on L2 reading, namely L1 reading ability, L1 word reading and decoding ability, and L2 oral language ability (see also sections 4.4.1 and 4.5.4). L2 language proficiency will be discussed together with other factors for the L2 reading process in section 4.5. Phonemic awareness and understanding of the alphabetic principle are prerequisites for word reading and decoding abilities. When these skills have been learned in an L1, they can facilitate L2 word reading and decoding. Additionally, overall L1 reading ability influences L2 reading ability. For L2 learners with an L1 that is not based on the same alphabet as the L2 (e.g., Chinese learners of English), phonemic awareness and the alphabetic principle would also need to be taught.

In section 4.4.1, the basic skills of phonemic awareness and the alphabetic principle are elaborated on. These are then related to research on how L1 word reading and decoding abilities influence L2 reading ability. The influence of L1 reading ability on L2 reading ability is thereafter briefly addressed. In the Norwegian EFL context, where fourth- and fifth grade learners have normally already acquired basic reading skills in their L1, including phonological knowledge, understanding of the alphabetic principle, word reading, and decoding skills, it is the final three skills (vocabulary,

²¹ As previously mentioned, unless further specified, L2 refers to both second and foreign languages.

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fluency, and comprehension), in addition to word recognition, that are the primary focus of reading instruction. Thus, these skills will be given greater focus in the following subsections.

There are many reasons for looking to L1 and L2 research to support our understanding of FL reading development. Although L2 and FL readers have many additional challenges, according to Eskey (2005), “Research on L1 reading provides a foundation for exploring both the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 reading. [...] similarities between these two kinds of reading far outweigh the differences. The differences are important and must be addressed, but reading is reading in any context” (p. 564). The current research will make use of the extensive research in L1 reading to supplement the knowledge of L2 and FL reading. One reason is that there is limited empirical foreign language research on reading skills and processes related to young learners. Many studies of foreign language reading skills and processes have been conducted with high school or university students (e.g., Tsang, 1996; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007; Chiang, 2007; Hulstijn, 2003). Thus the cognitive abilities, first language reading abilities, and foreign language abilities of the subjects of these studies are far from the current context. In contrast, a number of second language studies have been conducted with young language learners (e.g., Bean, 1982; Carlo et al., 2004; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007). Thus, second language research on young learners helps to fill a gap in the corresponding limited young learner foreign language research.

4.4.1 L1 and L2 word reading, decoding, and reading skills

Research on reading component skills has identified crosslinguistic influences of word reading skills, decoding skills, and reading ability (Dressler & Kamil, 2006; Koda, 2000, 2004; Lesaux, Koda, Siegel, & Shanahan, 2006; Nassaji & Geva, 1999).

Word reading

First, research on word reading skills with L1 children has identified various processes and skills important for this development. These include cognitive

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skills (e.g., working memory); phonological processing skills (e.g., rapid naming and phonological awareness); language skills (vocabulary); and children's experience with skills and knowledge related to print and literacy (e.g., letter identification) (Lesaux, Koda, Siegel, & Shanahan, 2006). Phonemic awareness is the ability to focus on, identify, manipulate, and substitute phonemes (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). This awareness contributes to English reading skills because the English language is alphabetic, which also applies to Norwegian. Phonemic awareness also provides a basis for learning to associate individual sounds (phonemes) with written letters (graphemes), i.e., phonics. Phonics instruction focuses on teaching students how to use phoneme and grapheme correspondences to decode or spell words (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Phonics strategies help students develop basic skills for decoding the words they read and for spelling the words.

Related to L2 reading development, a review of studies on L2 word reading ability found that the skills necessary for L2 word reading are “essentially identical” to the skills necessary for monolingual reading acquisition (Lesaux et al., 2006, p. 91). These skills are L2 phonological awareness, knowledge of L2 sound-symbol correspondence rules, L2 letter knowledge, and working memory measured in the L2. Studies reviewed by Dressler and Kamil (2006) suggest that word reading skills acquired in one language will transfer to another language, with a certain amount of variation depending on orthographic complexity between the languages. Within the current context, the L1 of most Norwegian students is Norwegian, which belongs to the same North Germanic language family as English. This means that many of the students in the current research are likely to have been able to apply L1 word reading skills when reading in English.

The subjects of most of these above-mentioned studies were primary school children receiving their school instruction in their L2, primarily studies of English L2 learners in an English school context, for example a school in the US or UK. A few international studies of language-minority students in majority-language schools settings were also included in Lesaux et al.'s

(2006) review. However, these studies represent a different context than the current study²².

L2 decoding efficiency

L2 decoding efficiency is a strong predictor of L2 reading ability (Koda, 1993, 2004; Nassaji & Geva, 1999). Since L2 decoding skills and oral language abilities develop simultaneously for most learners, unlike during L1 reading development, when oral language skills come first, both decoding and oral language skills are related to reading ability through L2 language proficiency during early L2 language development. However, the extent to which these skills relate may vary depending on the L2 learning context, such as in Norwegian schools where the learners often have a limited basis in English oral skills before learning to read in English. Lesaux et al. (2006) conclude that given the body of evidence from their review of studies, one can reasonably infer that L2 decoding skills depend on L2 language skills, which is also the case in L1 decoding development.

The findings from some studies suggest that L2 decoding ability is partially determined by L1–L2 orthographic distance (Koda, 2000; Muljani, Koda, & Moates, 1998). For example, English is an opaque language; namely, there is a less direct relationship between phonemes and graphemes in English. Norwegian, in contrast, is considered a more transparent language; namely, there is a more direct relationship between phonemes and graphemes. Although opaque orthographies, such as English, follow phonemic constraints, morphological information often tends to be preserved at the expense of phonological transparency (Koda, 2004). This means that Norwegian learners of English must learn to rely less on phonics skills with English than they do with Norwegian. These findings suggest that differences in L2 decoding development may be related to L2 readers having different L1 backgrounds. In the context of the current research, where the orthographic distance between Norwegian (L1) and English (L2) is relatively small, i.e., Norwegian and English are both Northern-Germanic languages, L1 decoding

²² The researcher has been unable to find research on EFL word reading skills with young learners.

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efficiency is likely to play a larger role in L2 decoding ability than if the languages were less similar. Therefore, those who struggle with reading in Norwegian would most likely as a consequence also be among those who would struggle the most with reading in English and vice versa.

In contrast, the greater orthographic distance between English and the L1 of many language-minority children in Norway (e.g., native Turkish or Vietnamese speakers) would make it more challenging for them to learn to decode English words. However, for students in Norway for whom Norwegian is not their L1, if their L1 is less closely related to English than Norwegian, their Norwegian language skills may be used as the means of language transfer to English rather than their L1 (i.e., their L2, which is closer to English than their L1, may facilitate their FL acquisition) (Koda, 2004).

L1 and L2 reading ability

Finally, L1 reading ability has been found to influence L2 reading ability. Cummins (1979, 1991) maintains that L2 reading success is highly dependent on previously acquired L1 reading competence. Cummins proposes two continua of language factors for communication: cognitive complexity and contextual support. According to this theory, developing decontextualized communicative competence is more difficult than understanding context embedded communication. The former requires both basic linguistic knowledge and a sufficient cognitive foundation for manipulating information without supportive contextual information. However, Cummins claims that once acquired, these skills for managing decontextualized, cognitively complex communication, can be transferred to a second language.

In a review of studies, Dressler and Kamil (2006) found support for a developmental interdependence between L1 and L2 reading development. Thus, L1 reading ability is predictive of L2 reading ability (Verhoeven, 1994), and specifically reading comprehension in L1 and L2 under most conditions. Moreover, research comparing age differences and academic achievement has found a connection between the learners' age and their L2 reading ability (Koda, 2004). Generally, these findings suggest that older learners develop L2 reading competence more quickly than younger ones. This difference is

attributed to the greater L1 reading experience and competence of the older learners.

4.4.2 Vocabulary

Vocabulary and reading

L2 vocabulary development has been the subject of growing attention in recent years (Stæhr, 2008; Milton, 2009; Schmitt, 2008). During parts of the twentieth century there was a lack of focus on vocabulary instruction in L2 instructional approaches, such as the audio-lingual, communicative, and “natural” approaches (Coady, 1993). However, a long tradition of L1, L2, and FL research recognizes that vocabulary knowledge influences reading comprehension (R. C. Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Hunt & Beglar, 2005; W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000; RAND Reading Study Group, 2002; Stæhr, 2008). There is also a reverse relationship, in that vocabulary learning is dependent on comprehension (Koda, 2004). For example, the exact meaning of a word is often determined to a large extent by the context in which the word appears. Thus, Koda argues that vocabulary processing during reading requires a set of interrelated processing skills, including constructing a context, accessing stored information through visual word displays, selecting a relevant meaning based on contextual information, and evaluating the appropriateness of the chosen meaning in subsequent sentences (p.48). This has led some researchers to argue that the relationship between reading and vocabulary is reciprocal (e.g., Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986; Stanovich, 1986, 2000), namely, vocabulary growth leads to increased comprehension and reading leads to vocabulary growth.

Vocabulary knowledge is also central to foreign language learning. Many of the studies of FL vocabulary learning take an instrumentalist view of vocabulary in which words are the primary carrier of meaning (Laufer & Nation, 1999; Milton, 2010; Milton, Wade, & Hopkins, 2010; Stæhr, 2008; Vermeer, 2001). Thus, words provide the “enabling knowledge” (Laufer & Nation, 1999) for learners to be successful in other areas of language communication and proficiency (Milton, 2009). In other words, vocabulary is the means that allows communication, whether speaking or in writing.

Vocabulary learning in L1, L2, and FL

Although there are many similarities between L1, L2, and FL vocabulary learning, there are also differences related to learning process and input levels. Vocabulary learning continues throughout life, so in some respects L1 vocabulary learning is never completed (W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000; Nation, 2013). However, in early language learning, most L1 vocabulary learning entails learning concepts and words simultaneously. In contrast, L2 and FL learners will generally have acquired the concepts already. According to some theories of language acquisition, the L1 will act as a mediator. Thus, when the L1 and L2 represent similar conceptual and cultural backgrounds, L2 vocabulary acquisition can largely be seen as learning new labels for familiar concepts (e.g., (MacWhinney, 2005; Singleton, 1999).

There are further differences between L1, L2, and FL related to the vocabulary learning processes. In L1 vocabulary learning, the mind becomes attuned to the features and regularities of the L1 input, such as the particular set of phonemes and graphemes in the L1 and the ways in which they combine (Schmitt, 2008). Schmitt argues that this specialization makes L1 processing efficient, but it can become problematic when a learner attempts to process an L2 in the same way. For example, it may be problematic if the learner attempts to use the correspondence between phonemes and graphemes in their L1 to decode in their L2, in which the phonemes may correspond to other graphemes. For example, /ʃ/ in Norwegian is represented by *skj*, *sj*, and *sk*, whereas in English it is *sh*. Schmitt explains that in addition to learning new oral and written forms in the L2, learners also need to develop a new way of processing the forms (2008, p. 336). Thus, it is recommended that attention be given to learning word forms in the L2 (i.e., spelling and grammar related aspects) (Schmitt, 2008). Schmitt points out that if there are many other words that have a similar form in the L2, confusion is more likely to occur (e.g., *poll* – *pool*, *polo*, *pollen*, *pole*, *pall*, *pill*).

Another difference is related to input and the speed of learning. When learning an L1, speakers have constant opportunities to learn from input and to produce output. In contrast, FL and some L2 learners do not have the same opportunities. Thus, FL learners learning through language courses, in particular, only receive a fraction of the language input of L1 speakers.

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Additionally, when children learn an L1, speakers often adapt the language level to the age of the child, so-called “caretaker” speech (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Language teachers may also modify their speech, but outside of the FL classroom it may be challenging for learners to gain access to adapted input at their proficiency level (Nation, 2013).

Finally, L2 and FL learners normally begin the language learning process later than in the L1. They are essentially trying to minimize the gap between L1 speakers and themselves. In Norway, learners begin EFL at age six; L1 English speaking peers would already have a well-developed vocabulary by this age. When learning an L1, children quickly learn the high-frequency words of the language, i.e. the most commonly used words. According to Nation (2013), most L1 English speakers have a vocabulary of 3,000 to 4,000 word families by the age of five. This vocabulary gap constitutes a challenge for L2 and FL learners if they try to read authentic texts (Nation, 2013).

The L1 influences the learning and use of L2 vocabulary in many ways (Swan, 1997). One way is that learners often employ the use of bilingual dictionaries, thus using the L1 to support L2 learning (Schmitt, 1997). Schmitt (2008) refers to psycholinguistic studies that have also shown that the L1 is active during L2 lexical processing in both beginning and more-advanced learners (e.g., Hall, 2002; Jiang, 2002; Sunderman & Kroll, 2006). The L1 can also support establishing the initial form-meaning link, i.e., connecting the written word form with the word meaning. It can also support recall. For example, in one study learners were able to recall more newly learned words using L1 translations than L2 context as support (Prince, 1996). Thus, Schmitt (2008) states that L1 use to support vocabulary learning can be appropriate at some stages during the vocabulary learning process, but not others, such as after initial word meaning is established. After initial word learning it may be more beneficial to meet words in the L2 context to further promote contextual knowledge support. For these reasons, Schmitt recommends using different teaching methods at different stages of vocabulary learning.

There are many factors that facilitate vocabulary learning, which Schmitt (2008) posits can be summarized as “virtually anything that leads to more exposure, attention, manipulation or time spent on lexical items adds to their learning” (p. 339). Schmitt suggests that these factors can be encompassed by

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one key term, namely, “engagement,” and argues for its prominence in vocabulary learning. Schmitt claims that “Anything that leads to more and better engagement should improve vocabulary learning, and thus promoting engagement is the most fundamental task for teachers and materials writers, and indeed, learners themselves” (pp. 339-340). This is an important principle for reading instruction, where students who are more actively engaged in working with texts, whether through discussion about texts, learning word meanings and forms through intensive reading, or newly learned vocabulary in new contexts such as their own writing, may experience improved vocabulary learning. In this research, the researcher is interested in whether students are actively engaged while working with texts, which may, in turn, improve vocabulary learning.

Vocabulary knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge is defined in many ways. In connection with vocabulary assessment, vocabulary size is often defined as “the number of words a learner knows regardless of how well he or she knows them” (Daller, Milton, & Treffers-Daller, 2007, p. 7). Thus, word recognition, or the number of words a learner can recognize as words in the foreign language, may be used as a means of calculation (Milton, 2010; Nation, 2006; Stæhr, 2008), and it may not matter whether the learner can attach a meaning or translation to the word (Milton, 2009). Vocabulary size can therefore be seen as contrasting with other dimensions of vocabulary knowledge, such as how these words may be used, their nuances of meaning, and their collocations (i.e., how they are often used with other words), all of which contribute to vocabulary depth. Vocabulary depth is often measured by estimating the degree to which learners can appropriately combine words in collocations (e.g., Gyllstad, 2007), but it can also include partial word knowledge and knowledge of polysemy, namely the ambiguity of an individual word or phrase that may be used to express two or more different meanings (Read, 2000). However, Vermeer (2001) suggests that vocabulary size and vocabulary depth are interrelated qualities, and that a test of one dimension inevitably tests the other. In fact, Vermeer argues that vocabulary depth is a function of size, which means that the two effectively are the same dimension.

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Several researchers also believe that the number of words known by L2 learners, i.e., vocabulary size, especially at the early stages of L2 development, is one of the most important factors in predicting lexical competence in the L2 (e.g., Laufer, 1997; Meara, 1997; Nation, 1990). However, there is a general consensus that 2,000–3,000 word families appears to be a threshold marker for FL learning, one which is important for learners to cross in order to be successful readers and language users (Nation, 2013; Nation & Waring, 1997; Schmitt, 2008).

There are few studies measuring the vocabulary size of young EFL learners. Those that are available are not always comparable due to differences concerning students, the contexts of learning, and the tests administered for calculating vocabulary size. Some studies of primary school EFL learners have placed vocabulary knowledge at 1,191 words for Dutch eighth grade students following 308 hours of instruction (Edelenbos & Vinje, 2000); 559 words for fourth grade Spanish students after completing 419 hours of instruction (Jiménez Catalan & Terrazas Gallego, 2005-2008); and 1,105 words for sixth grade Spanish students after competing 629 hours of instruction (Agustin Llach & Terrazas Gallego, 2009). Another Spanish study of EFL learners adopted a longitudinal approach, measuring the vocabulary growth of students from fourth to seventh grade. The study found consistent growth in the students' receptive vocabulary knowledge across grade levels. However, it was found that the students knew fewer than 1,000 of the most frequent 2,000 words in English.

Other studies of EFL learners have found that, after completing primary and sometimes lower secondary school, the learners had not acquired the most frequent 2,000 word families (Schmitt, 2008; Stæhr, 2008). According to Schmitt (2008), in an overview of vocabulary studies with young EFL learners in Europe, students who received 400–700 hours of instruction had a vocabulary size of fewer than 2,000 word families. This is worrying considering that researchers have also estimated the number of words necessary to read and comprehend authentic texts to be much higher. Laufer (1997) estimates that in order for a reader to know 95% of the words in English texts, they would need a vocabulary size of 5,000 words or 3,000 word families (see also Hazenberg & Hulstijn, 1996). Nation (2006) has recommended a somewhat larger vocabulary, 8,000 to 9,000 word families, to

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comprehend texts, citing 98% known words as the aim. Following slightly different criteria, Hirsh and Nation (1992) recommend that learners have knowledge of 5,000 word families in order to enjoy reading. This is, of course, higher than would be necessary for young FL learners who would read children's literature. However, these figures represent the vocabulary level they will eventually need to reach, depending upon the purpose of their language use.

In the Norwegian primary school context, the students completing fourth grade in the current research will have had 138 hours of English (see also Section 2.2). Thus, these studies would suggest that these learners on average would also have vocabularies of less than optimal size for reading many authentic texts. These issues will be further addressed in connection with reading materials for EFL instruction in Chapter 5. Information about FL learners' vocabulary size is also useful because this knowledge provides information about what FL tasks learners are able to perform.

Vocabulary teaching and learning with young FL learners

There are different approaches to learning vocabulary. The research on L2 and FL learning suggests there is no one answer regarding the most effective methods for L2 vocabulary learning and what features of words and types of vocabulary are best learned explicitly or implicitly (Hunt & Beglar, 2005). Explicit vocabulary teaching is teaching with a direct focus on and attention to learning word knowledge. Possible activities include using dictionaries, studying decontextualized words, and pre-teaching vocabulary before reading (Hunt & Beglar, 2005). In contrast, incidental (implicit) vocabulary learning is learning without directing attention towards learning, for example students engaged in meaning-focused reading (Hunt & Beglar, 2005).

Some researchers have suggested that due to limited exposure to L2 vocabulary in FL contexts, explicit vocabulary teaching is needed to compensate for the insufficient quantity of language input (Laufer, 2005; Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2008). Additionally, research has shown that intentional vocabulary learning most often leads to greater and faster gains, with a better chance of retention and ability to use the words productively, compared to incidental exposure to vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008). Intentional

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vocabulary learning is when the specific goal is to learn vocabulary, most often being the explicit focus of the activity (Schmitt, 2008). Additionally, a focus on teaching about words and word learning strategies, such as using contextual clues, noticing new words in context, using morphological analysis, and being aware of cognates (i.e., a word in one language that has the same origin as a word in another language), has been found to be effective in improving reading comprehension (Carlo et al., 2004).

However, there are also arguments against the effectiveness of explicit teaching. Due to practical considerations (e.g., time), there is a limit as to how many words can be explicitly taught during EFL instruction. Additionally, there is a limit to the depth of vocabulary knowledge that can be developed during initial learning sessions. Nagy and Scott (2000) explain:

Although good instruction is unquestionably more efficient than chance incidental encounters for learning a specific set of words, there is still good reason to believe that there are practical, if not theoretical, limitations to how much an individual can learn about a word on any given occasion. (p. 271)

Thus, further exposure to words, which will help consolidate and enhance vocabulary knowledge, will often come from extensive exposure to language and incidental learning. This is one area in which reading, especially extensive reading (see section 5.3), can support vocabulary learning.

The effectiveness of incidental vocabulary learning from reading has been the focus of many studies (e.g., Horst, Cobb, & Meara, 1998; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Waring & Takaki, 2003). Although all of these studies found gains in vocabulary through incidental exposures from reading, the number of words learned varied depending on the number of exposures, the aspect of word knowledge being tested, and the length of time passed between the exposures and the test. Overall, there is more evidence of gains in word recognition than productive word use, of partial rather than full mastery of words, and of stronger retention of recognition learning than recall learning (Schmitt, 2008).

Considering the research promoting both incidental and explicit vocabulary learning, many researchers suggest that a balanced approach, combining explicit teaching and incidental learning, is essential for learning the most

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frequent words in an L2 (e.g., Goldenberg, 2011; W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000; Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2008). These researchers underscore the need for multi-faceted instruction, including multiple and varied encounters with words in different and meaningful contexts (Goldenberg, 2011; Hunt & Beglar, 2005; W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986), which can promote vocabulary learning and can have a positive effect on reading comprehension (Carlo et al., 2004; Goldenberg, 2011; Shanahan & Beck, 2006). Nagy and Scott (2000) suggest that vocabulary instruction should be evaluated on quality, based not only on immediate gains in the learners' understanding of specific words, but also on whether it helps learners gain an understanding of word knowledge and about word learning.

Through the current research, one expects to find that teachers promote both incidental and explicit approaches to vocabulary learning. However, it is also expected that more focus on incidental vocabulary learning would occur at schools practicing individual silent reading or extensive reading at school or at home.

Number of exposures

In vocabulary research, many studies have also focused on the number of exposures one needs to a word to promote incidental learning from reading (Horst et al., 1998; W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Rott, 1999; Waring & Takaki, 2003; Zahar, Cobb, & Spada, 2001). Although the number and types of exposures varied in these studies, a common finding was that a single exposure from one context would have little effect on gaining vocabulary knowledge. Regarding the number of exposures recommended, the above-mentioned studies appear to suggest that 8–10 reading exposures would provide learners with a fair chance of acquiring an initial receptive knowledge of words (Schmitt, 2008).

However, although these studies indicate vocabulary knowledge growth, these gains are at a relatively low level. Hill and Laufer (2003) estimate that following the incidental learning rates mentioned above, an L2 learner would have to read over eight million words of text, which they estimate as 420 novels, in order to increase their vocabulary size by 2000 words. Since most learners do not read this much, incidental learning may be seen as most

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beneficial for enhancing knowledge of words which have already been met, rather than the learning of new words (Waring & Takaki, 2003). However, these benefits should not be minimized. Schmitt (2008) argues that: “Given that repetition is key to learning words, the benefits of repeated exposures in different contexts for consolidating fragile initial learning and moving it along the path of incremental development cannot be underestimated” (p. 348).

Extensive reading has been highlighted as one way of incorporating incidental learning into L2 and FL teaching (see also section 5.3). However, taking into account the vocabulary coverage recommendations (see Laufer, 1997; Nation, 2006, 2013; see also section 5.2.1), for younger, less experienced learners, the vocabulary load may be too high in authentic texts. Graded readers may therefore be more optimal for these learners. Graded readers provide vocabulary that is at the reader’s level and also is systematically recycled, providing greater opportunities for exposure (Day & Bamford, 1998; Nation & Wang, 1999; see also section 5.2.3).

Although there is extensive research on vocabulary learning and teaching, Hunt and Beglar (1998) propose a list of seven vocabulary learning principles that have been cited and supported by other researchers, for example, Schmitt, (2000) and Nation, (2013):

1. Provide opportunities for the incidental learning of vocabulary
2. Diagnose which of the 3000 most common words learners need to study
3. Provide opportunities for the intentional learning of vocabulary
4. Provide opportunities for elaborating word knowledge
5. Provide opportunities for developing fluency with known vocabulary
6. Experiment with guessing from context
7. Examine different types of dictionaries and teach students how to use them

Some recent research with young EFL learners has focused on using vocabulary learning strategies (Yu-Ju, 2013), comparing input-based and production-based instruction on vocabulary acquisition (Shintani, 2011), using input-based tasks for incidental vocabulary acquisition (Shintani, 2012), and the use of storytelling techniques for improved vocabulary development

and comprehension (Uchiyama, 2011). Thus, recently there have been more studies with young EFL learners that can contribute to the overall knowledge of vocabulary teaching.

Crosslinguistic vocabulary factors

As discussed in section 4.4.1, the relationship between the L1 and L2 is an important factor. There are a number of points to consider related to vocabulary, reading skills, and the language context of the current research. As Norwegian and English are both Northern-Germanic languages, there are many cognates that can be both helpful and cause confusion, incurring both positive and negative transfer from Norwegian to English. However, the developed vocabulary that is taken for granted in L1 reading becomes a focus in L2 reading. Whereas L1 readers understand most of the vocabulary they will encounter during early reading and already have a basic understanding of grammar, this knowledge of vocabulary and understanding of grammar is usually lacking in the L2 for beginning readers.

4.4.3 Reading fluency

Reading fluency is the ability to read rapidly with ease and accuracy, and to read with appropriate expression and phrasing (Grabe, 2009, p. 291). Pressley, Gaskins and Fingeret (2006) have identified component abilities that are essential for reading fluency: word-reading efficiency, vocabulary development, text-reading ease, reading with comprehension, and reading with expression. The first three skills relate to lower-level processing, wherein the reader aims to develop automaticity in word recognition, syntactic parsing, and meaning encoding. This automaticity allows the reader to attend to the meaning of the text, the textual context, and required background knowledge, without being slowed down by word-recognition demands (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000).

Most recent research has focused on three components that contribute to fluency: accuracy, automaticity, and prosody (Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, & Meisinger, 2010; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Rasinski, Reutzel, Chard, & Linan-Thomason, 2011). First, accuracy as an element of fluency is most closely related to word recognition (see also section 4.3.1). In order to support fluent

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reading, word recognition must be rapid and automatic, and complete and accurate. However, according to Grabe (2009), it cannot be expected that L2 readers will have complete and accurate word retrieval.

Second, automaticity, as it relates to fluency, should possess four properties (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000), namely, speed, effortlessness, autonomy, and lack of conscious awareness. Automaticity is assumed to improve with practice and to require training. Both repetitive and wide reading have been suggested as beneficial for improving automaticity (Kuhn et al., 2010).

Third, the appropriate use of prosodic features, such as stress, pitch, and appropriate text phrasing (i.e., placing pauses in appropriate places) are central to reading with expression, a feature of fluent reading (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Rasinski et al., 2011). Prosodic reading also involves “appropriately chunking groups of words into phrases or meaningful units in accordance with the syntactic structure of the text” (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003, p. 5). In contrast, when reading without fluency, students tend to read either in a word-by-word manner or by grouping words in ways that do not match typical phrasing found in natural oral speech (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003). Being able to parse sentences appropriately also indicates comprehension, since grouping a text in syntactically appropriate phrases would signify that the reader understands the text. Overall, reading fluency related to prosody will be most noticeable during reading aloud as opposed to silent reading. As reading aloud has been a common activity in EFL language instruction in Norway (Drew & Sørheim, 2009), prosody is an important aspect of fluency development.

To build fluency, students can practice reading familiar texts and texts containing familiar concepts and topics so as to promote the consolidation of the knowledge and skills needed to make language use more efficient. Moreover, fluency allows the learner to process a larger amount of L2 input, to expand the breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge, to read larger quantities of text, and to experience greater reading motivation (Grabe, 2009, p. 290). Fluency practice in SLA and reading development often focuses on speed-reading, aiming to increase reading speed while maintaining comprehension. However, fluency practice is often given little time in L2 and

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FL teaching because teachers feel they should focus on new material (Nation, 2009b, p. 2). During reading fluency practice, texts should include few or no unfamiliar words (Nation, 2009b). Thus, rereading of texts or reading texts on a similar topic allows for fluency training.

Nation (2009b) suggests repeated reading aloud of simple texts (individually for practice or in pairs) and extensive reading of easily comprehensible texts as good methods for increasing reading fluency for language learners. Supported reading, such as paired reading and recorded reading, and performance reading, such as Readers Theater (a group reading aloud activity), have also been shown to help improve reading fluency (Drew & Pedersen, 2012; Grabe, 2009). As rereading is important for fluency practice, Grabe suggests having students read texts multiple times, or parts of texts, but for different purposes. One can read the text carefully, skim the text as a pre-reading activity to note the main idea, read quickly to begin a post-reading discussion, and read the text while developing a different position from the author, as examples of four different reading purposes with the same text. However, it is important to emphasize the purpose of each rereading, so that students vary the manner in which they approach rereading the text.

Fluency is also an important skill to support comprehension. Snow and Sweet (2003) describe the reciprocal relationship between fluency and comprehension as follows: “Fluency is both an antecedent to and a consequence of comprehension. Some aspects of fluent, expressive reading depend on a thorough understanding of a text. However, some components of fluency [...] appear to be prerequisites for reading” (p. 5). This implies that both skills, namely fluency and comprehension, must be a continual focus in teaching reading to promote the development of good readers.

4.4.4 Reading comprehension

There have traditionally been two views on reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009). The first is that decoding is central to the process of obtaining meaning from the text. The second emphasizes the construction of meaning after the text has been decoded and recognized. Others have found a middle ground, namely, defining reading comprehension as the “process of simultaneously *extracting* and *constructing* meaning” (Snow & Sweet, 2003, p. 1). This latter

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definition of reading comprehension emphasizes that the text is not the only factor in reading comprehension. Other factors include the language, content, structure, purpose, and features in texts; the listener or reader (the reader's existing knowledge base, views, purposes, process, strategies, and skills); and the context of the communication (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002).

According to this “middle ground” understanding of reading comprehension, Snow and Sweet (2003) suggest three key elements: the reader, the text, and the activity in which comprehension is involved. *Readers* bring to the text and the reading process their capacities, abilities, knowledge, and experiences. In this context, *text* is understood to be anything that is read, either in print or electronically. The reading comprehension *activity* in this model incorporates three dimensions: reading purpose, reading processes (mental activity engaged in while reading), and consequences of reading. This model includes the outcome of the reading process, namely, what is learned or experienced, and focuses on how the different stages of pre-, during-, and post-reading must be seen in relation to each of the other elements. The reader's ability must be seen in relation to the particular text and the purpose of its reading. In other words, it is the interaction between the reader and the text (given the contextual situation), which determines the degree to which reading comprehension is successful.

Reading comprehension also develops over time as the reader matures and develops cognitively. Instruction, particularly classroom reading instruction, has been argued to be an important factor for the development of this macro-developmental aspect of reading comprehension (Snow & Sweet, 2003, p. 4). Appropriate instruction leads to both long-term and short-term comprehension goals. When reading passages with students, the teacher can help the reader to comprehend the passage, as well as guide them towards becoming self-regulated, active, and autonomous readers (Snow & Sweet, 2003).

A number of textual attributes influence the reader's ability to comprehend the text. These include plot structure, pronoun reference, text content and difficulty, organization, vocabulary density, syntactic complexity, discourse style, and genre (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002). Some elements that could detract from comprehension include: poorly structured and written texts; texts that omit crucial information or have unclear connections between

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pieces of information, namely, poor cohesion; and texts that “draw upon” background information unknown to the reader (Snow & Sweet, 2003, p. 5). Cohesion is described as “the extent to which the ideas in the text are expressed clearly and relate to one another in a systematic fashion” (Dufty, Graesser, Louwse, & McNamara, 2006, p. 1252). Thus, as many researchers have argued, understanding cohesive devices is necessary for developing information processing and reading comprehension skills in the L2 (Graesser et al., 2003).

Cohesion and its role in comprehension

Graesser, McNamara, Louwse, and Cai (2004) have argued that cohesion and coherence are central elements in comprehension, as both concepts represent how words and ideas conveyed in a text are connected to specific levels of language, discourse, and world knowledge. Cohesion is represented by connections in explicit language elements (e.g., words, features, cues) and their combinations. Due to the explicit nature of the language elements, these can be calculated objectively, for example, using measures of referential cohesion²³ (Graesser et al., 2004). In contrast, “coherence” refers to the connectedness of mental representations that readers are likely to construct from the text” (McNamara et al., 2014, p. 11). In other words, coherence is used to refer to the “consequences of cohesion in the mind of the reader” (pp. 1-2). Thus, coherence can only be indirectly measured by asking the reader questions, and assessing memory for information conveyed in the text.

Figure 1 illustrates how coherence can be conveyed in an abstract representation. According to McNamara et al. (2014), the circles represent concepts, while the connecting arrows represent the relations between them. In the left of the figure, the central concept is connected to four other concepts, whereas on the right, the outer concepts also have three connections,

²³ Referential cohesion is defined as “the overlap in words, or semantic references, between units in the text such as clauses, sentences and paragraphs” (McNamara et al., 2014, p. 22). It has been found to impact reading speed and recall of words and sentences (McNamara, Louwse, McCarthy, & Graesser, 2010). It has also been found to be a predictor of the demands on elementary students’ comprehension (McNamara, Ozuru, & Floyd, 2011).

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rather than one. McNamara et al. explain that the additional connections create a more stable representation because each of the nodes feeds the others' activation, and therefore the representation is more coherent. This relates to the reader's ability to remember the concepts. Thus, the reader on the left would be more likely to remember the central concept, but not the other concepts, whereas the reader on the right is more likely to remember the central idea as well as the four other concepts, due to the interconnected associations. The reader's comprehension is supported by a combination of the connections established in the text, and the connections the reader creates between the ideas in the text and prior knowledge, both of which lead to more coherence in the reader's understanding. McNamara et al. (2014) explain that "when the level of cohesion in the text is insufficient for the reader or when the reader does not (or cannot) generate sufficient inferences to make connections between ideas, then the reader's understanding will be less coherent" (p. 20). Thus, the level of cohesion in a text can help predict the likelihood that a given reader will be able to generate a coherent mental representation of the text.

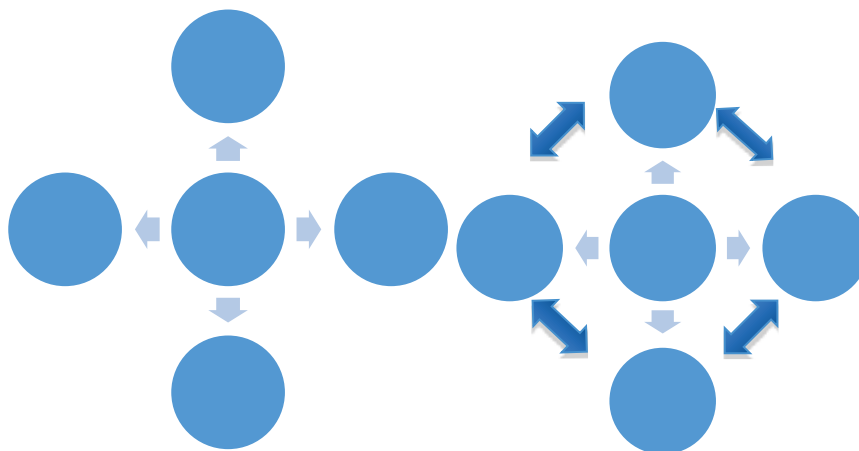


Figure 1: Connection model of coherence (McNamara et al. 2014, p. 19)

In the same way as syntax aids comprehension by creating order in the words and phrases at a sentence level, cohesion helps the reader understand the ideas of the text by tying together the clauses and sentences in a text at a semantic

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level. Syntax is bound by certain rules. When these syntactical rules are altered, the meaning of the sentence can change, and thus textual cohesion can easily be manipulated. For example, both of the following are acceptable:

Smoking was forbidden. The store had inflammables.

Smoking was forbidden because the store had inflammables.

In the first example, the reader needs to infer why smoking was forbidden in the store. In the second example, the cohesion cue *because* aids, the understanding of why smoking was forbidden (McNamara et al., 2014, p. 21).

Readers generate inferences in order to fill in the missing information when discourse lacks cohesion. Inferences are created by accessing prior text, everyday world knowledge, or subject matter knowledge associated with a particular area of specialization (referred to as domain knowledge) (McNamara et al., 2014, p. 21). This process can be automatic and carried out without conscious effort on the part of the reader, or readers can be conscious of strategic reading activities to support comprehension. Inferences can also be successful or unsuccessful, correct or incorrect. According to McNamara et al. (2014), “The degree to which these inferences occur and are successful is an important factor in influencing the coherence of the reader’s mental representation of a text” (p. 21).

There needs to be a balance between the amount of required inferencing on the part of the reader, and the reader’s knowledge and reading skills. Requiring the reader to create inferences can facilitate memory and comprehension in a strong reader (Magliano, Wiemer-Hastings, Millis, Muñoz, & McNamara, 2002), while too many cohesion gaps in a text can prevent comprehension in less-able readers because they tend to ignore gaps or fail to make the necessary inferences (McNamara & Kintsch, 1996; McNamara, Kintsch, Songer, & Kintsch, 1996). However, reading skill and prior knowledge of the subject also play an important role in reading comprehension. O’Reilly and McNamara (2007) found that skilled readers, when they also had a high knowledge level of the subject, did not need the low-cohesion text (i.e., a text with few cohesive devices) to induce them into creating inferences, as they were more likely to make inferences while reading

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as a reading strategy. Thus, there was no reverse cohesion effect with these skilled readers.

In a study of the effect of low and high cohesion texts on students' ability to self-explain²⁴ after reading, McNamara (2004) found that providing students who had low knowledge of the text subject with training and practice in using reading strategies while self-explaining, removed the students' deficits compared to high-knowledge readers. Thus, training in reading strategies can improve low-level readers' ability to comprehend texts with low-cohesion.

While many of the previous studies were conducted with older L1 students, McNamara, Ozuru, and Floyd (2011) explored the effects of cohesion on fourth-grade L1 students' comprehension, focused on four factors: decoding ability, text genre, text cohesion, and the reader's prior knowledge. The aim was to explore the so-called "fourth grade slump" (Snow & Sweet, 2003), which corresponds to a point when students are shifting from learning to read to reading to learn. Additionally, students in fourth grade in an L1 context are exposed to more expository texts, unfamiliar concepts, and information, compared to earlier years of school. McNamara, et al. (2011) found that this phenomenon can be partially explained by interaction between text genre, text cohesion, and the reader's prior knowledge. They found that of the four factors explored, the effect of text genre and cohesion depended more on prior knowledge than on students' decoding skills (reading skill). Additionally, the results suggested that adding cohesion cues without additional explanatory information may not be sufficient for improving young readers' comprehension of challenging texts. Although decoding skill was found to be an important factor, they argue that difficulties with decoding would most

²⁴ According to Roy and Chi (2005), "Self-explanation is a domain general constructive activity that engages students in active learning and insures that learners attended to the material in a meaningful way while effectively monitoring their evolving understanding. Several key cognitive mechanisms are involved in this process including generating inferences to fill in missing information, integrating information within the study materials, integrating new information with prior knowledge, and monitoring and repairing faulty knowledge" (p. 272).

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likely be found regardless of text type (genre or cohesion level), and would be discovered before fourth grade.

However, higher levels of cohesion do not necessarily produce the best comprehension results. Research has shown that the optimal level of cohesion is somewhat dependent on the knowledge and reading skills of the reader (Dufty et al., 2006; McNamara, 2001); more knowledgeable readers (i.e., those with more knowledge of the topic) had higher levels of comprehension on lower cohesion texts, whereas readers with less knowledge about the text content had higher levels of comprehension from high cohesion texts (McNamara, 2001). Dufty et al. (2006, p. 1252) argue that, “Cohesion gaps may force a high knowledge reader to process the text more deeply, resulting in improved comprehension and recall.” The term *reverse cohesion effect* (O'Reilly & McNamara, 2007) has been used to describe the phenomenon that less knowledgeable readers gain from added cohesion, whereas more knowledgeable readers often gain from lower cohesion.

However, when students did not need to be “induced” to make inferences, there was no added benefit of reading low cohesion texts. Thus, the “middle” level readers, those who may still be learning how to apply inferencing skills to the reading of challenging texts, were the ones who apparently would most benefit from low cohesion texts. McNamara et al. (2011) recommended that less knowledgeable readers would benefit from high cohesion texts, including any added cohesion, explanatory information, and scaffolding. Without some form of scaffolding (through adapted texts or other reading support), less capable readers may struggle to connect the low cohesion text with prior sentences (requiring more of working memory), or with prior knowledge of the subject, which they may lack. Thus, less capable readers may benefit most from reading adapted texts. Current research on cohesion and comprehension supports the need for differentiation in reading material that considers students’ knowledge, reading skill level, and scaffolding while reading (McNamara et al., 2014).

Thus far, no study similar to that of McNamara et al.’s has been conducted with L2 learners. It is therefore uncertain whether similar effects of cohesion would also apply to L2 learners and, most importantly, at what language and cognitive level. The *LK06* curriculum states that students should be able to

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reflect on and acquire insight and knowledge from texts. The Framework for Basic Skills states that students should be able to interpret, reflect on and assess texts, all of which are important components of higher-level reading skills. Therefore, the role of cohesion in reading comprehension is relevant to the current research (see also section 2.3).

This section has addressed research on reading as a skill and the specific component skills. Though there are many definitions of reading, the current research has adopted a constructivist view of discourse comprehension in which readers have an active role in creating comprehension and applying a multidimensional level of text understanding. The National Reading Panel (2000) has identified phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension as key skills for successful reading. The research on how the latter three skills contribute to successful reading and how it applies in an L2 reading context has been presented.

4.5 Key factors in the L2 reading process

Although there are many factors that influence the L2 reading process, certain key factors are considered relevant to discuss in the context of this research, namely, contextual knowledge, background knowledge, knowledge of text type, L2 language proficiency, and reading strategies (Eskey, 2005; Grabe, 2009; Hellekjær, 2005; Koda, 2004).

4.5.1 The role of context in L2 reading

Contextual information is an important source for different processes and subprocesses of reading (Grabe, 2009). First, context is involved in the development of the text model of comprehension and the situation model of interpretation (Grabe, 2009; see section 4.3.3). Thus, it provides information that can support comprehension, especially of difficult texts. It can also trigger inferences between prior texts and the current propositions, and between prior texts and knowledge from long-term memory. However, when context is used to support comprehension, it can be demanding on conscious processing and thus slows down reading.

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Second, context supports word recognition through semantic priming (automatic spreading activation)²⁵ (Grabe, 2009). However, contextual information is not the primary means for recognizing known words during fluent reading. This is because using context to recognize words takes longer than automatic sight recognition (Ehri, 2005; Perfetti, 1999; see also section 4.3.1). Thus, context is used when readers struggle to recognize a word, and is more often used by poor readers (Stanovich, 2000).

Third, related to vocabulary, context helps disambiguate multiple meanings of words, thereby allowing the reader to choose the most appropriate meaning. It also helps the reader notice new words and consolidate information (Grabe, 2009; W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000). Moreover, context contributes to vocabulary development as readers are exposed to words through multiple contextualized incidental exposures over time (W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000; Nation, 2013). However, “intentionally learning words through guessing from context represents a relatively poor instructional way to learn new vocabulary” (Grabe, 2009, p. 71). Intentional learning of new information should be accurate and consistent, whereas learning from guessing new words from context is not often accurate and consistent (N. C. Ellis, 2005). This is especially true for readers with weak vocabulary knowledge, who may know fewer words in the surrounding context to support their guesses (Nassaji, 2003). When one attempts to guess the meaning of a word from context, most of the surrounding words must be known (Koda, 2004).

4.5.2 The role of background knowledge in L2 reading

Background knowledge is an important factor in reading comprehension processes (Alderson, 2000; Grabe, 2009; Kintsch, 1998; Koda, 2007; McNamara et al., 1996; Stanovich, 2000). Grabe (2009) explains that the importance of background knowledge is logical considering that: “Reading comprehension is basically a combination of text input, appropriate cognitive

²⁵ Semantic priming describes “the automatic activation that associated lexical items pass along to each other,” and concepts in our background knowledge (Grabe, 2009, p. 71). This priming can be maintained as active for a short period or reactivated if something triggers it shortly after. However, as Grabe (2009) explains, only closely associated terms are activated.

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processes, and the information we already know” (p. 74). Koda (2007) similarly states: “Successful comprehension is achieved through the integrative interaction of extracted text information and a reader’s prior knowledge” (p. 4). Background knowledge has been shown to play a role in comprehension when specific domain knowledge (Kintsch, 1998) or culturally specific knowledge (Alderson, 2000) is required. Cultural background knowledge can be especially relevant for second and foreign language reading (Eskey, 2005; Grabe, 2009), which could be a consideration for teachers when selecting texts and preparing pre-reading activities.

Background knowledge can be divided into the following sub-categories: general knowledge of the world, cultural knowledge, topical knowledge, and specialist expertise knowledge (Grabe, 2009). In academic contexts especially, students read texts to enhance knowledge of somewhat familiar subjects or gain knowledge of subjects with which they are unfamiliar. In these cases the students need to call on background knowledge that may be less obvious (Nassaji, 2002). Additionally, since background knowledge interacts with other reading factors, such as motivation, attitudes, goals, and language proficiency, it is difficult to predict its impact on reading comprehension in many cases (Perfetti, Marron, & Foltz, 1996). Moreover, from a cognitive processing point of view, although research presents some alternatives for how cues trigger memory retrieval, and how this process is carried out among individuals, there is no clear consensus of how knowledge retrieval processes might generalize across learner groups (Kintsch, 1998). Overall, the way in which background knowledge influences reading comprehension varies depending on the purpose of reading, the level of background knowledge accessible to the reader, and the student’s reading comprehension skills (Grabe, 2009).

For young EFL learners, activating background knowledge can be effective to aid comprehension (Eskey, 2005; Grabe & Stoller, 2002). When students relate newly learned information to existing knowledge, their level of recall and comprehension will improve. For example, students can draw on previous knowledge of different text genres, such as fairy tales, in order to comprehend an FL text. In contrast, some studies have shown that less background knowledge can be beneficial for stronger readers, as they are thus more likely to work harder at building coherence for their text comprehension (Grabe,

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2009; McNamara et al., 1996; see also section 4.4.4). However, given the young age of the students in this study, and the fact that they are still developing reading skills, and expanding their vocabulary and cognitive understanding of concepts, it is possible that these students may lack the background information to understand many authentic texts. Thus, background knowledge, how it can be used to support reading development, and how its absence can prevent comprehension, are important elements in EFL reading.

4.5.3 Knowledge of text type

The text type or genre influences the reader in a number of ways. First, it may influence the purpose of reading (see also 4.5.5). Second, research has shown that certain types of texts lead students to emphasize either a text model or a situation model (Grabe, 2009; Kintsch, 1998; see also section 4.3.3). For example, McDaniel and colleagues (1995; 1989) found that readers tend to demonstrate text-model construction with descriptive texts and situation-model construction with narrative texts. However, informational texts, such as a manual for assembling a bike, were written to be interpreted in one way. This interpretation should match closely with what the author intended and the information presented in the text. Thus, informational texts would also emphasize a text model of comprehension (Grabe, 2009). In contrast, poems often intentionally leave out information, are less specific, and use vague language, and ambiguous symbolism. These aspects of the genre invite the reader to make a personal interpretation and to fill in interpretive gaps. Thus, more emphasis on the situation model of reader interpretation would be more apt for reading poems.

Finally, in terms of knowing how to approach a text, a reader can learn to identify key features of particular genres, for example, topic sentences and headings in scientific articles. Other sources of genre-related information given to the reader can include ways of signaling information in texts to identify main ideas. In narratives, this may be a result of following dialogue, or in poetry, being familiar with the stanza structure.

4.5.4 L2 Language knowledge/proficiency

The role of L2 oral language proficiency on L2 reading comprehension has been the focus of numerous research studies, both with language minority students in L2 school contexts and with FL learners. These studies have found a correlation between L2 language proficiency and L2 reading proficiency (Carrell, 1991; Lee & Schallert, 1997; see Geva (2006) and Goldenberg (2011) for an overview of the relevant literature). Thus, low levels of L2 language proficiency are associated with low L2 reading levels. Additionally, a number of empirical studies have found that L2 proficiency has a larger impact on L2 reading than L1 reading ability (Bernhardt & Kamil, 1995; Carrell, 1991; Lee & Schallert, 1997). Oral language proficiency (to a lesser extent) and phonological processing skills are both key factors in the development of L2 reading ability (Geva, 2006). One possible implication of these studies is that a focus on oral English language proficiency, including vocabulary development, can improve reading comprehension (Lesaux & Geva, 2006). Moreover, improved reading comprehension may contribute to increased vocabulary learning and improvements in other language skills (Lesaux & Geva, 2006; see also section 4.4.1). Thus, there appears to be a reciprocal relationship between reading development and oral and vocabulary skills.

Additionally, it has been hypothesized that a threshold for L2 oral language ability is necessary before L1 reading ability can be supportive of L2 reading. Koda (2004, p. 23) suggests that, based on the available research, “Limited L2 knowledge inhibits L2 learners from using their previously acquired L1 skills.” Fountas and Pinnell (1996) claim that readers’ ability to anticipate future actions in a text and monitor whether their reading makes sense relies on their oral language proficiency. This is one area where L2 readers have a disadvantage when reading compared to L1 readers. When reading a new text, learners may not be able to draw on known and familiar vocabulary and language structures to the same extent as in their L1. However, other cues for reading fluency, such as the ability to process visual information rapidly and general world knowledge, are skills that can be transferred from L1 to L2. Thus, Goldenberg (2011) suggests that a certain oral language proficiency threshold should not preclude L2 literacy development, but rather that instruction must be well structured, explicit, and systematic.

4.5.5 Reading strategies

The ultimate goal of reading instruction may be described as developing the “strategic reader.” According to Grabe (2009):

The strategic reader is one who automatically and routinely applies combinations of effective and appropriate strategies depending on reader goals, reading tasks, and strategic processing abilities. The strategic reader is also aware of his or her comprehension effectiveness in relation to reading goals and applies sets of strategies appropriately to enhance comprehension of difficult texts. (p. 220)

This description of the strategic reader emphasizes two important aspects of reading strategies. First, the aim is for the reader to be able to choose appropriate strategies depending on the reading aim and purpose. Second, this ability should become automatic. Some researchers use automaticity as the distinguishing factor between skills and strategies (e.g., N. J. Anderson, 2009; Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008); a skill is a strategy that has become automatic, moving from “conscious control of reading strategies to unconscious use of reading skills” (N. J. Anderson, 2009, p. 133). Additionally, strategic readers are able to monitor their comprehension while reading and apply strategies in order to enhance comprehension.

Research on reading strategies has led to a number of findings from both L1 and L2 contexts. First, readers use multiple strategies and engage in more basic and local strategies when reading frustration-level texts (i.e., texts where fewer than 90% of the words are known, placing more focus on lower-level reading skills). Additionally, newer research has shown that both good and poor readers use the same types of strategies, but may use them differently depending on text difficulty and reading task (N. J. Anderson, 2005; Grabe, 2009). Secondly, there are numerous common characteristics of strategy use among good readers. However, good readers use strategies more effectively than poor readers, and use sets of strategies in combination rather than the continual application of single strategies. Moreover, good readers are also actively engaged in reading comprehension and have learned to automatize certain combinations of strategies as a response to reading comprehension

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needs. In addition, effective reading teachers tend to encourage students to self-regulate their use of strategies (Pressley et al., 2001).

Regarding reading strategies and instruction, it has been found that reading strategies can be taught effectively, strategy instruction can improve reading comprehension, and that strategy instruction should be a central component in reading comprehension instruction (Grabe, 2009; Koda, 2004; Macaro & Erler, 2008). Goldenberg (2011) found that teaching reading strategies in the students' L1 and helping them apply them to their L2 is an effective instructional practice. However, in Taylor et al.'s (2005; 2002) extensive studies of reading instruction in U.S. primary schools, comprehension strategy instruction was seldom observed, even with teachers who used higher-level questioning. Pressley (2002) has suggested that despite research showing its importance, teachers may find comprehension strategy instruction difficult to implement; some teachers struggle with the mental modeling required of the teacher during strategies instruction and the different types of classroom interactions that result from teaching focused on comprehension strategies and their application, which should support students in becoming active readers. Pressley also suggests that comprehension instruction may be less common because some teachers do not recognize comprehension as an active reading process that includes predicting, questioning, imagining, seeking clarifications, summarizing and interpreting (Pressley, 2002, p. 306).

Research on reading strategies has identified a number of effective strategies (Goldenberg, 2011; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Pressley, 2006):

1. Activating and applying prior knowledge
2. Asking and forming questions
3. Monitoring comprehension
4. Using visual and graphic organizers
5. Summarizing
6. Making inferences

Additionally, Pressley (2006) includes making guesses about unknown words and Goldenberg (2011) includes making predictions. According to Pressley

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(2002), good readers actively engage with the text in multiple ways, using various strategies.

Although readers' comprehension improves when they read strategically, it is uncertain why this is the case. The RAND Reading Study Group (2002) hypothesized that improvement may occur "not because of the specific strategies being taught but because students have been actively interacting with the texts [... which] triggers the use of strategies that inactive learners possess but do not normally use" (p. 33). This implies the need for a shift in instructional focus from a transmission approach to a participatory one. In a participatory approach, the learner is the center of instruction and actively engages with the text, as opposed to a transmission approach in which the teacher is in the center of instruction and is the dispenser of knowledge (Alvermann & Eakle, 2003, p. 24)²⁶. The participatory approach relates to the interaction between reader and text presented in section 3.4. Additionally, Alvermann and Eakle (2003) suggest the participatory approach requires a shift in the role of the text, which no longer functions as a medium of predetermined knowledge to be memorized and forgotten, but rather as a tool for learning and constructing new knowledge.

Although there are numerous similarities between L1 and L2 reading strategies, some aspects are specific to L2 reading, such as the use of mental translation, the impact of L1 transfer, and the potential metacognitive advantage of the L2 learner (Grabe, 2009). The first strategy, mental translation, though often considered a weakness in reading comprehension, can support students' comprehension of difficult passages, particularly for poorer readers (Kern, 1994). Kern suggests that mental translation provides students with a more accurate understanding and allows them to integrate segments for better comprehension to a greater extent. However, Kern's study was conducted with university students studying intermediate-level French, so his student population was significantly older than the current research. Additionally, the students were never required to verbalize or write their translations in class or as homework, but some of them used translation as a

²⁶These approaches are also known as teacher-centered instruction and student-centered instruction.

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mental strategy, which was self-reported during a think-aloud procedure while reading. The second aspect, cross-linguistic transfer of reading strategies, does not seem to be automatic for all L2 learners and thus students should be supported in this process of strategies transfer (Goldenberg, 2011). Additionally, teachers can support students in identifying similarities and differences between languages, such as true and false cognates (Goldenberg, 2011).

In one study, Jiménez, Garcia, and Pearson (1996) found that successful L2 readers (Spanish-English English language learners students in the US) used knowledge acquired while reading in one language to make hypotheses and inferences in the other language. These readers also reported being aware that they could use similar cognitive and metacognitive strategies to monitor and correct comprehension in both languages. These strategies included asking questions, rereading, and evaluating the text. Additionally, when approaching unknown vocabulary, the more successful readers used a multi-strategic approach to discover the meanings of unknown words; in this way they also improved their text comprehension compared to the less-able readers, who did not employ multiple strategies. The strategies used by successful readers included using the context, invoking prior knowledge, restating, and making inferences. Thus, it is important for L1 and L2 teachers to collaborate in order to encourage the application of L1 reading strategies in L2 reading contexts.

Another study focused on young-beginner readers of French in England (Macaro & Erler, 2008). This longitudinal study of 11- to 12-year-olds comprised a “low input-high scaffolding” approach to strategy instruction in which small 10-minute segments were used to raise awareness and knowledge of reading strategies²⁷, which were then followed-up through regular scaffolding in lessons. Macaro and Erler found that the strategy instruction improved comprehension of both simple and more elaborate texts, influenced strategy use, and improved attitudes towards reading. Macaro and Erler promote the use of reading strategy instruction as a good use of teaching time in L2 classrooms, and they assert that the combination of low-input with high-

²⁷ In US education these have been termed “mini-lessons” (Atwell, 1998).

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levels of scaffolding and feedback from the teacher may be effective for young-beginner readers.

Awareness of reading purpose and reading aim is central to strategy use and good reading. Pressley (2002, 2006) argues that good readers are aware of the reading purpose and make a plan for their reading before beginning, reading selectively according to the goals and identified reading purpose. Within an academic or educational context, Grabe (2009) uses six categories of reading purposes: (1) reading to search for information; (2) reading for quick understanding; (3) reading to learn; (4) reading to integrate information; (5) reading to evaluate, critique, and use information; and (6), reading for general comprehension (p. 8). These reading purposes are similar to many of the ways in which Pressley (2002) describes good readers as actively engaging with texts. These different reading purposes pose various demands on the reader and the reader's ability to create an understanding suitable to the level of detail required by the reading purpose. One of the important implications of structuring an understanding of reading by reading purpose is that teachers and curriculum developers need to decide which purposes should be taught explicitly and practiced regularly to meet the aims of the curriculum. These purposes should also be reflected in the learners' texts and tasks.

There are many implications of the research on strategy instruction (Grabe, 2009; Pressley, 2006). Grabe (2009) suggests that teaching learners to become strategic readers involves consistent modeling and scaffolding by the teachers; extensive guided practice; and, eventually, independent use of the strategies by the students²⁸. Moreover, strategies can be introduced and practiced through discussions focused on text comprehension and actively monitoring comprehension. Pressley (2006) recommends incorporating these aspects into normal reading lessons as a regular feature of reading instruction, rather than as separate lessons.

²⁸ This is also referred to as the gradual-release model, in which the teacher gradually releases responsibility to the students (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983).

4.6 Reading development and instruction

Goldenberg (2011) suggests that what is known about effective L1 reading instruction, generally also applies to L2 learners. The National Reading Panel (2000) has also concluded that the literacy skills important for English L1 speakers are also important for English L2 learners, namely, phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The following section will begin by addressing L1 emergent reading and effective reading at the primary school level, followed by reading in the L2 classroom.

Emergent literacy

Early L1 and L2 literacy development, i.e., the development of reading and writing in young children, have received considerable attention in recent decades (for L1 research e.g., Barton, 2007; Y. M. Goodman, 1986; Teale & Sulzby, 1986; for L2 research e.g., Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2012; Drew, 2010; Gilje, 2011). This increased attention is partly a consequence of the research on emergent literacy carried out in the 1980s, e.g., Teale (1986). Teale and Sulzby (1986) use the term *emergent* to suggest that for young children in the pre-school years, “development is taking place, that there is something new emerging in the child that had not ‘been’ there before. Growth in writing and reading comes from within the child and as the result of environmental stimulation” (p. xx).

Research on early L1 and L2 literacy development has suggested that there are particular contextual factors that are relevant for young learners. The first factor is the role of literacy experiences within the home, such as parents reading aloud to their children and having access to books and environmental print in the home (Y. M. Goodman, 1986; Teale, 1986). The second is the concept of progression within early learning skills, for example, from concrete to abstract skills and from oral to written skills. Although emergent literacy is described as a progression of skills, Teale and Sulzby (1986) suggest that the progression can take on individual variation. They refer to one of the central tenets of emergent literacy theory: “Although children’s learning about literacy can be described in terms of generalized stages, children can pass through these stages in a variety of ways and at different ages” (p. xviii). For

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this reason, children's literacy development, though following a certain path, is individual. This is further evident in the varying reading abilities of learners in primary school, resulting in the need for differentiation at all levels of instruction (see also section 3.3).

In an L2 context, research in Australia as far back as the 1980s showed that very young children had the potential to develop L2 literacy in supportive learning environments (Cambourne, 1986; Cambourne & Turbill, 1987). Cambourne (1983) describes how in an educational context based on Vygotskian principles, very young children develop literacy through social interaction with the support and guidance of adults. The supportive environment described by Cambourne and Turbill (1987) is based on a number of learning conditions. These include immersion in print (i.e., environmental print); demonstration of how print is used (e.g., reading environmental print and choral reading); expectations given to the class by the teacher of what they are expected to achieve; sufficient time to read and write; and coping strategies (e.g., drawing and assistance from peers and the teacher). In such an environment, writing had a positive effect on motivation to read and vice versa. Thus, within an L2 classroom context, both exposure to literacy experiences and support for learners in their first attempts at literacy would be central to any literacy program.

Effective reading teaching

There has been a long tradition of research on effective teaching of reading, especially in elementary grades (Crévoila & Hill, 1998; Duffy et al., 1987; Pressley, 2006; Pressley, Morrow, & Gambrell, 2003; Pressley, Roehrig, Bogner, Raphael, & Dolezal, 2002; Pressley et al., 2001; Smith & Elley, 1997; A. Taylor, Stevens, & Asher, 2006; B. Taylor, 2004; B. Taylor et al., 2000; B. Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 1999; B. Taylor et al., 2005; B. Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, et al., 2002; B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002; B. Taylor, Pressley, et al., 2002). Research on reading in the 1960s and 1970s found that effective teachers maintained academic focus, kept children on task and provided direct instruction (e.g., Brophy, Coulter, Crawford, Evertson, & King, 1975; Stallings & Kaskowitz, 1974). Similar findings were also found in more recent research, such as the Early Language Learning in Europe study (ELLiE) (Enever, 2011). In the 1980s, research on teaching

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reading found that more effective teachers also engaged in modeling and providing explanations when teaching students decoding and comprehension strategies (Duffy et al., 1987).

According to Smith and Elley (1997), the key to good reading instruction is the interactions between the teachers, the students, and the materials. The results of the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) project on effective reading instruction in elementary schools indicated a clear difference between teachers with a strong teacher-directed stance and those with a student-support stance (B. Taylor et al., 2005; B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002). According to the authors of the study, “Telling is indicative of a strong teacher-directed stance, as opposed to a student-support stance toward teaching (e.g., coaching, modeling, and other forms of scaffolding)” (p. 278). Overall, teaching practices that have been found to be effective include teachers who engaged students in on-task behaviors, engaged in modeling for students, and interacted using a student-support stance. When focusing especially on teacher interaction during reading instruction, it is important to focus on the specific interaction styles of teachers.

Taylor et al. (2005; 2002) found that when teachers relied on telling and recitation as teaching techniques, these were negatively related to children’s reading growth. Taylor et al. (2000) found that effective reading teachers preferred a teaching style that was based on coaching as opposed to telling. Coaching was defined as the teacher prompting or providing support that would transfer to other situations as students attempted to perform a strategy or activity to answer a question. In this way, teachers can help coach students towards autonomous thinking and use of strategies. Coaching as a teaching style can help lead students into discussion and inquiry, supporting a collectively constructed understanding of and response to the text (Allington & Johnston, 2002). Furthermore, the effective teachers in Taylor et al.’s (2005; 2002) studies also maintained high student engagement.

Another area of difference between effective and less effective teaching is related to the amount of active versus passive responding by children during reading lessons. Pressley et al. (2001) found that teachers who used a “balanced literacy” approach included more time actively engaged in reading

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and writing. A discovery by Taylor et al. (2002) was that students' reading fluency improved more if they were observed actually reading or writing, as opposed to listening to the teacher or taking turns reading aloud and speaking. Moreover, effective teachers also used more small-group rather than whole-class teaching (B. Taylor et al., 2000), especially focusing on guided literacy instruction to meet individual needs (Morrow & Asbury, 2003).

Similar findings regarding the effectiveness of active students and small group instruction were found with L2 students (Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007; A. Taylor et al., 2006). Instructional conversations, where teachers have interactive discussions with students in small groups, have been found to be effective with middle and higher achieving English language learners (Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007). However, both the Saunders and Goldenberg study and other research have suggested that learners must have a base level in the target language in order for reading strategy training to be effective (A. Taylor et al., 2006). Thus, low-level L2 readers may not gain much from discussion that requires them to apply strategies and may first require more vocabulary support and direct teaching of strategies.

Furthermore, effective reading teachers place more focus on higher-level thinking skills than on lower-level skills (Knapp, 1995; B. Taylor et al., 2000). Lower-level thinking skills related to reading generally consist of literal text comprehension. In contrast, higher-level thinking skills are defined as talk that is challenging to children and is at a high-level of text interpretation or goes beyond the text, such as with generalization, application, evaluation, and aesthetic response (B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002; see also sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.3).

Teachers who offer effective reading instruction, compared to those whose instruction is less effective, ask a greater number of higher-level questions that extend beyond the literal understanding of a text (B. Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, & Rodriguez, 2002). B. Taylor et al. (2002) found the frequency of higher-level questioning matters; greater frequency of these types of questions led to greater improvement in students' reading achievement. There are different types of comprehension questions, which require different levels of processing and text understanding. These questions can be defined as being literal, interpretative, critical, or creative (McKay, 2006, p. 230). Literal

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questions ask for meanings of words, sentences, or ideas in context, such as main ideas, sequence, and recognition of character traits. Interpretive questions, requiring the respondent to give meanings not directly stated in text, often ask for the reader to make generalizations, state cause and effect, give predictions, and sense the motives of characters or the author. Critical reading questions require the reader to make evaluations and give personal judgments. Finally, creative reading questions ask the reader to go beyond the text to express new ideas, such as putting themselves in the place of a character or applying knowledge from the text to other situations. Another type of question, which McKay (2006) calls text-based questions, is specifically about grammatical and vocabulary knowledge in the text.

Since different types of questions require different leveled reading skills, teachers should thus use a variety of questions. When creating comprehension questions, Nation (2009b) emphasizes that it is important to be aware of the focus of the learning outcome related to the reading task. Comprehension questions often focus on the learner's understanding of a particular text. Nation recommends that a good intensive reading exercise should help the learner and teacher to reflect on whether the learner can handle the language features which are in the specific passage and other texts (see also section 5.3 on intensive reading). Examples would be items that occur with high frequency in the language (e.g., high frequency vocabulary and grammatical features), features of a particular text genre, and focusing on strategies that can be used with most texts (e.g., predicting and guessing vocabulary). With this in mind, teachers should vary questions according to reading purpose, including questions that stretch a student's understanding of particular texts and topics, and other questions which address specific language features in the text.

In summary, there are many reading-related practices that have been found to be effective for reading development. These are primarily small group instruction, using higher-level thinking skills, asking different types of questions and higher-level questions, and interaction between the teacher and students that focuses on modeling and coaching. Though the studies that produced these findings were mainly conducted in L1 classrooms, these teaching practices could also be applied to FL teaching. The current research will explore to what extent these research-supported practices are used in

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Norwegian EFL reading instruction and whether they are more prevalent in some of the reading approaches than others.

Specific reading practices

The following sub-section addresses specific types of reading practices.

There are different ways of structuring reading practices. In writing about best reading practice, Mazzoni and Gambrell (2003) describe that learning is meaning making. They suggest structuring reading lessons according to a “whole-part-whole” process. Through these three stages, students are first introduced to new concepts addressing the “whole” picture and placing these concepts in context. Second, during the “part” stage, the students also learn that the new concepts are to be practiced and learned through application in a personally meaningful context. Third, during the second “whole” stage, the students are given the opportunity to reapply the concepts and gain an understanding of the “whole” by creating new meaning. This three-stage structure to reading lessons is used in the EYLP program, in which teachers first introduce a concept to the whole class, followed by individual and group work at stations, and finish with a whole class summary and shared learning stage (see also section 5.5).

Related to teaching practices while reading and ways of structuring reading activities, a common practice in reading instruction is to use a three-phase structuring of reading: pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading activities (Grabe, 2009). Several researchers emphasize the role of the pre-reading phase in supporting students’ comprehension (e.g., Koda, 2004; Verhoeven, 2011). This may include making connections to background knowledge, discussing the content of the story, building common ground, and explaining difficult vocabulary. Koda also advocates direct explanation, teacher modeling, and cooperative learning as comprehension instruction techniques. Additional supports for working with texts are important, including identifying and highlighting, clarifying difficult words and passages, summarizing and paraphrasing, conducting highly engaging and extended interactions with teachers and peers, using familiar content, and linking content to background knowledge (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008; Goldenberg, 2011). Visual representation of concepts can provide additional

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support, especially in early language learning (Goldenberg, 2011; Roberts & Neal, 2004).

Most often, this three-phase method of structuring reading is teacher-led. Teacher-led reading is an important activity within the language classroom (Harris & Duibhir, 2011). Wells (1981, 1982) concluded that participation in storybook reading, led by the teacher, is most likely the best way to promote the emergence of literacy in young children because it exposes them to decontextualized language and presents some of the essential characteristics of written language. Moreover, when teachers read stories to children and discuss the stories, children read more (Morrow & Weinstein, 1982).

In contrast, reading aloud in turn-taking or round-robin style is often discouraged in EFL teaching literature, citing reasons such as inactive students, pressure on students, and students as poor reading models (Cameron, 2001; Drew & Sørheim, 2009; Munden, 2014). When students take turns reading aloud in a whole-class setting, it is a time-consuming process during which few students are active. Students who are not reading are often anxiously waiting for their turn and distracted or unmotivated to listen to others following their turn. Additionally, poor or struggling readers provide poor reading models for other students and when corrections to pronunciation are made, they are often done at too high a frequency for the student to make sense of and remember (Redpath, 2011).

However, arguments for reading aloud often include the teacher being able to use the activity for assessing reading, checking homework, assisting in classroom management, or letting students be heard by their peers and the teacher (Munden, 2014). Paired reading incorporates many of the positive aspects of reading aloud and minimizes the drawbacks (Cameron, 2001). Nation (2009b) recommends reading aloud to gain fluency, but also encourages this activity in pairs or small groups rather than with the whole class.

Additionally, research has shown that effective reading teachers provide a literacy-rich environment with accessible materials and use quality children's literature, in addition to multiple materials for teaching reading and writing (Morrow & Asbury, 2003). Chew (1985) suggests that reading and writing

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instruction should focus on whole pieces of text (i.e., reading complete stories), as opposed to short texts or excerpts from textbooks. However, EFL textbooks, when they include authentic texts, are often limited to excerpts rather than whole texts. In contrast, graded readers present students with whole texts written for language learners (see also section 5.2.3). Chew argues that an approach that focuses on whole pieces of texts promotes focus on comprehension and bringing meaning to the text.

Finally, regarding the use of translation in language classes, there is limited research available on young learners translating texts as a reading practice. Most studies focus on translation as a strategy for university level and adult learners (e.g., Bagheri & Fazel, 2011; Yau, 2011). Other research focuses on the teacher's use of translation to support comprehension (e.g., Macaro, 2009). This may be due to translation being a remnant of the grammar-translation approach to teaching (see also section 2.2), and thus it has not been the focus of recent research on young language learners. Nation (2009b) points out that translation is a “special skill” and cautions its use as an assessment of reading comprehension as it involves more than just reading. However, Nation states that it can indicate where a learner is struggling and what is easy for them. Thus, because of the lack of research on young learners translating texts, and lack of attention to translation being acknowledged as an activity which requires skills beyond pure reading, one needs to question the usefulness of translation as a reading comprehension activity.

Reading assessment

Methods for assessing reading ability are numerous, including both informal and formal assessment measures and techniques. A common method of assessing reading comprehension is to ask the students questions during or following a reading session. Reading and retelling the story is a common method of assessing reading comprehension and reading memory. Key aspects of this method can include the number of pieces of information that have been recalled, the order of events, and certain key expressions or phrases (McKay, 2006). Reading comprehension can also be assessed by having the reader perform an activity following reading, such as writing short or long answers to questions or responses to the text. One disadvantage of this type of assessment is the dependence on the student's writing ability to assess reading

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comprehension. Other types of more formal assessment tasks include true or false questions, multiple-choice questions, picture-matching tasks, and cloze (i.e., filling in every “nth” word that has been removed from a text) and other gap-filling tasks.

Another type of assessment, miscue analysis, which is found in tools such as Running Records (Clay, 1985), involves recording any deviations from the original text as read by the student. These deviations include omitting a word, replacing a word with an incorrect one, misreading, and self-correcting. However, a Running Record is a test of reading accuracy, not of reading comprehension, which must be measured either in a different way or inferred from reading behavior and accuracy. The aim is to quantify how many words a student reads accurately from a reading segment, usually approximately 100 words. This helps the teacher determine if the text is at, above, or below the student’s instructional or independent reading level. Clay suggests that this can aid teachers in decisions regarding evaluating text difficulty, grouping of children, pacing of a child’s progression through different levels, monitoring the progress of a child, allowing different children to move through different books at different speeds while still keeping track of individual progress, and observing specific difficulties in different children (1985, p. 17). Running Records are commonly used in EYLP schools as a way to monitor students’ progress and to determine when students are ready to move to the next graded reader level.

Although there are many different types of reading assessment, they best serve different purposes. It is important for teachers to be aware of the purpose of the assessment and the potential information provided by the chosen assessment.

The role of the teacher

A number of researchers and studies have emphasized the key role of the teacher in developing best practice (Mazzoni & Gambrell, 2003; B. Taylor et al., 2000; B. Taylor et al., 2005). Regarding teacher professional development and school reading reform, the CIERA study found that “when teachers collaborate, engage in ongoing, reflective professional development, and use data to improve teaching practice, they can achieve significant growth in their

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students' reading achievement" (B. Taylor et al., 2005, p. 66). Additionally, Mazzoni and Gambrell (2003) have stated the importance of the teacher's role as a professional and thus their particular responsibility in creating successful educational practices:

Optimal assessment and instruction can only be achieved when skillful, knowledgeable, and dedicated teachers are given the freedom and latitude to use their professional judgment to make instructional decisions that enable children to achieve their literacy potential. [...] Teachers are ultimately the instructional designers who develop practice in relevant, meaningful ways for their particular community of learners. In other words, best practices can be *described* – but not *prescribed*. (Mazzoni & Gambrell, 2003, p. 13)

The importance of the teacher's role applies to all aspects of teaching practices, such as methods of reading instruction, materials and their use, interaction and activity types, and assessment methods. The teacher is in the best position to adapt known practices to their classroom and community of learners. However, this implies that teachers have the knowledge, confidence, and training to make informed and reflective choices.

Within this study, the teacher's role, their decisions related to EFL reading practices, differentiation, and interaction in the classroom, are all issues of importance. Whether there are differences related to reading approaches or related to individual teachers is also an area that will be explored in the current research.

Effective L2 and FL reading instruction

A number of reports have identified key characteristics of effective foreign language instruction, many of which are common across the reports (Driscoll et al., 2004; Harris & Duibhir, 2011; National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Language, 1999). First, there is more student activity than teacher activity in most lessons. Second, the student activity includes interaction with the teacher and other students in different combinations: independently, in pairs, and in groups. Third, students ask and answer questions, receive language input, and produce language output. Moreover,

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students are given appropriate feedback, and are given opportunities to self-correct, including appropriate wait time (i.e., the time teachers pause waiting for student response after asking a question; Garton, 2002). Furthermore, students use language-specific learning strategies and use all levels of thinking skills (higher- and lower-level), e.g., repeat, recall, apply, create, and predict. Finally, the text is used as a tool for language learning, and a variety of texts and materials are used.

However, other reports have described reading instruction as being teacher or context dependent (Eskey, 2005; Harris & Duibhir, 2011). A report by Harris and Duibhir on effective language instruction concluded that the link between course design and student language proficiency was weak and that it was dependent on context (Harris & Duibhir, 2011). Thus, Harris and Duibhir argue that it is not possible to create one ideal course or curriculum for every context, but that the aim should be for a balance between communicative and analytical approaches. Along the same lines, Eskey (2005) suggests that successful L2 and FL reading teachers motivate their students to read and facilitate their reading, but the specifics of how this is accomplished will vary depending on the context and the particular group of students.

4.7 Summary

Reading is a complex process, involving the integration of many skills and strategies and interaction between text and reader. Thus, in order for reading to be a smooth process, a reader must have developed a number of basic reading skills. These include phonological awareness, an understanding of the alphabetic principle, decoding skills, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Comprehension is influenced by many factors, including background knowledge, text cohesion, text complexity as related to vocabulary, and grammatical structures.

Although most of what is known about L1 reading comprehension and best practice in L1 reading instruction also applies to the L2 and FL reading contexts, some specific considerations apply to L2 and FL reading. First, the reader has access to two languages and can thus make use of the knowledge of cognates, L1 reading skills, and reading experiences, depending on the relationship between the two languages. Additionally, relating the two

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languages (possibly supported by mental translation of individual words), can support reading. However, L2 and FL readers can also be limited by their lack of oral language skills and vocabulary in the L2 or FL.

Effective reading instruction for L1 (but also applicable to FL contexts) includes focusing on actively engaging students, spending more time reading and interacting with texts, and working in small groups. Effective teachers more often model good reading practices and coach students, engaging them in higher-order questioning and thinking related to texts. Finally, research on effective L2 and FL instruction finds that having a balanced approach, using both communicative and analytical approaches, supports learning. However, there will never be a perfect curriculum or materials for all learners in all contexts (see section 2.2). It is therefore up to the teacher (supported by research and principles of effective instruction), to differentiate according to the learning context.

5 Reading approaches

5.1 Introduction

An important aspect concerning the teaching of reading development is the underlying reading approach within a school. Four broad categories of reading approaches have been applied in the present context, based on first-hand knowledge or assumptions about what core reading materials are used for reading instruction in Norwegian primary schools. The four categories applied in the present context are: 1) a textbook-based approach; 2) an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers; 3) a combination of textbook-based and graded readers approach; 4) the use/adaptation of an established reading approach (e.g., from Australia or New Zealand, such as the Early Years Literacy Program, EYLP).

The aim of this chapter is to provide some background for the categories of approaches referred to above. The original categorization for the reading approaches was based primarily on the use of materials, but the reading activities generally associated with those materials were also considered. For example, methods such as reading aloud chorally or individually are generally associated with a textbook-based approach, while reading in small ability-level groups is associated with the EYLP approach.

Day and Bamford (1998) and Koda (2004) argue that there are four primary techniques for L2 reading teaching: grammar-translation, post-reading comprehension questioning, skills and strategy training, and extensive reading. They claim that both grammar-translation and post-reading questioning are traditional approaches, often used for preparing students for exams. In connection with these approaches, Koda states:

Despite their heavy utilization, their effectiveness has rarely been tested directly. In most instances they serve as a control, in treatment studies to be compared with the target instructional outcome. In contrast, skills/strategy training and extensive reading derive from L1 reading instruction and focus primarily on reading-ability improvement. (p. 270)

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Although these categories have a different focus than the reading approaches as defined in this research, and although the specific categories are not exactly the same, Day and Bamford's and Koda's categorizations can support the distinctions between the categories used in the current research. Within the current research, the researcher will refer to certain types of practices as *traditional*, such as translating texts, and other types of practices as *less traditional*, such as extensive reading and a focus on reading strategies. Although not specifically mentioned in Day and Bamford and Koda's aforementioned argument, the researcher will suggest that other types of similar activities could be considered to be either traditional or less traditional based on previous trends in EFL teaching.

This chapter contains an initial presentation of reading materials used in L2 reading instruction, for example, the textbook and its role in EFL reading instruction, followed by an overview of graded readers. There are subsequent sections on intensive and extensive reading, shared and guided reading, and finally, the EYLP.

5.2 Materials

As previously discussed in section 2.1, there are many challenges to teaching foreign languages in school. For example, time for language learning in schools is normally limited, learning languages is a time-consuming process, and the content of language curricula are often comprehensive. These challenges emphasize the need for principled selection of input material, including reading texts. The shifting foci in language teaching theory in past decades have placed the emphasis for language input selection on different areas of language learning (Swan, 2009). These include word frequency, grammatical structures, pronunciation, situational language, strategies, and discourse structure. Attention to one area often means less time and focus on the other areas. For example, texts based on the communicative approach often focus on language functions, placing less focus on language forms.

Teaching materials influence what is supposed to happen in the classroom, which Littlejohn (2012, p. 283) refers to as “propositions” for action in the classroom. However, these propositions or intended plans should be viewed as distinct from how they are implemented and reinterpreted in the classroom.

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In other words, when researching reading instruction, it is both the materials and their intended use, as well as their actual use, that is of interest, since these can be quite different.

5.2.1 Authentic versus simplified reading materials

The type of text used in the language classroom can play a significant role in the students' motivation, reading process, and learning outcomes of the reading experience. The "cult of authenticity," which originated during the communicative language teaching (CLT) movement in the late 1970s, asserted that authentic texts were superior to texts specifically written or simplified for language learners, as they were considered more interesting, engaging, and displayed genuine discourse (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 54). Nunan (1989) defines authentic materials as "any material that has not been specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching" (p.54).

Supporters of authentic texts refer to both pedagogical and linguistic reasons for using such texts for language learning. First, addressing pedagogical reasons, communicative language teaching emphasizes the use of authentic language so that students can be introduced to natural language in context (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Additionally, drawing support from Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis (namely, that we acquire language when we understand language that is slightly beyond our current stage), promoters of authentic texts argue that they are more comprehensible and have a greater communicative value than simplified texts (Tomlinson, 1998).

Second, there are many linguistic reasons supporting the use of authentic texts. Authentic texts provide learners with rich language input (Y. M. Goodman, 1986). Research has suggested that good readers take advantage of natural redundancy (i.e., information expressed more than once) in authentic texts, helping them to reconstruct the entire text, even if they have not read it all (K. S. Goodman, 1976). The redundancy in these texts also helps L2 learners develop an understanding of unfamiliar words without excessive disruption to their reading and overall comprehension (P. Johnson, 1982). Authentic texts provide more natural language and more naturally occurring cohesion than simplified texts, making them more comprehensible (Crossley, McCarthy, Louwse, & McNamara, 2007; Kennedy & Bolitho, 1984).

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In further support of authentic texts, others have pointed to specific weaknesses of simplified texts. First, the use of elaboration modifications (i.e., clarifications of meaning to help the reader decode the message) can result in extended utterances and grammar that can be more complex than the original (Crossley et al., 2007). Second, lexical simplification uses simpler, more frequent words, which often display high degrees of polysemy (i.e., the ambiguity of an individual word or phrase that can be used to express two or more different meanings (W. E. Nagy & Scott, 2000) to replace more difficult and precise words, which can increase text difficulty (Crossley et al., 2007). Additionally, modifications to authentic texts can affect cohesion and the learners' ability to build coherence, resulting in simplified texts that are more difficult to understand than the original authentic ones (Honeyfield, 1977; Lautamatti, 1978). When using readability formulas (i.e., ways of measuring the difficulty level of texts) to guide simplification, the result is often fewer words, shorter sentences, and omitted connectives between sentences, which in turn leave the text with less cohesion than authentic texts (Long & Ross, 1993). Recognizing and understanding cohesive devices, such as conjunctions and other intersentential linguistic devices, is important for the development of reading comprehension skills in L2 learners (Chung, 1999). Such items are often removed in simplified texts. Finally, reading simplified texts and not being exposed to authentic language may limit learners' ability to move onto more advanced texts that contain sentences of more natural lengths, more complex structural patterns, and more deeply embedded linguistic cues (Honeyfield, 1977).

In contrast, the supporters of simplified or adapted texts posit that authentic texts may be too lexically and syntactically complex, as well as being conceptually and culturally dense for successful comprehension by L2 readers (Shook, 1997; Young, 1999). Authentic texts, therefore, will force the reader to focus too much on decoding and word recognition than on reading comprehension (Day & Bamford, 1998).

Simplified texts can be either texts simplified from L1 originals or texts written specifically for L2 learners. Supporters of simplified texts point out that they exclude an unnecessary and distracting idiosyncratic style without losing important communicative features (J. Allen & Widdowson, 1979). Additionally, the concept of simplified texts supports the need for

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comprehensible input for language learners (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985), by reflecting what readers already know about language and by helping them to extend their knowledge (Day & Bamford, 1998). However, it is important to acknowledge that the purpose of using simplified materials is to support learners to develop skills and vocabulary that will eventually enable them to read unsimplified materials (Kuo, 1993).

In further support of simplified texts, such texts can be used to provide the reader with a greater variety of texts at the reader's optimal level to promote the development of reading and other language skills (Day & Bamford, 1998; Krashen, 1993; Nation, 2009b). They are optimal both in the sense that the language level was a conscious factor in the writing of the text, and that the language level will fit the age, maturity, and interests of the intended audience. Overall, Day and Bamford (1998) consider so-called "language learner texts," namely, texts written for L2 learners, as the most important for L2 learners.

Among research studies comparing authentic and simplified texts, two different approaches have been used to address reading comprehension and text difficulty of texts for language learners. The first is a linguistic or computational analysis of text features which contribute to text cohesion and readability. In a study of features of cohesion in authentic and simplified texts, Crossley et al. (2007) found that simplified texts provided English language learners with more co-referential cohesion²⁹ and more common connectives (e.g., *also, however, but, before, because, until*). The texts also relied on more frequent and familiar words than did authentic texts used in textbooks. Additionally, the simplified texts from the study exhibited less diversity in the parts of speech used and demonstrated more syntactic complexity than the authentic texts. However, they found no significant difference between the simplified and authentic texts in text abstractness or ambiguity. Thus, within

²⁹ In Crossley et al. (2007) three measures of lexical coreference between sentences were used: noun overlap, namely, how often a common noun appears in two sentences; argument overlap, namely, how often two sentences share common arguments (nouns, pronouns, and noun phrases); and stem overlap, namely, how often a noun in one sentence shares a common stem with other word types in another sentence.

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this set of texts, although the simplified texts used less varied language, they were nevertheless not more abstract or ambiguous, thereby undermining many of the arguments against simplified texts. Therefore, simplified texts can be ideal for language learners.

The second approach is a measure of readers' comprehension as they read authentic and simplified texts. Bean (1982) studied the effects of story structure on the English reading comprehension of fourth- and fifth-grade native Spanish speakers in an English-speaking school. The children were assigned to one of three story text versions: the original unaltered story, the story altered to make more explicit pronoun references, and the story altered to remove unnecessary detail in order to create a more predictable problem-solving scenario. The study found that students reading the more predictable problem-solving scenario story were able to comprehend the text significantly better than those reading the other versions. These findings suggest that simplified texts, especially predictable stories that emphasize greater text cohesion, may be superior to authentic texts for young language learners.

As far as ways of simplifying texts are concerned, these can be grouped into three categories: linguistic, cognitive processing modifications, and elaborative modifications. In terms of linguistic simplification, one common method is to "control" vocabulary used in learner texts, for example consulting word frequency lists and eliminating words below a certain frequency (Coady, 1993). Other types of linguistic simplification include removing or rephrasing idiomatic expressions, shortening sentences, and syntactic simplification. However, there is evidence that the use of syntactic simplification alone does not increase comprehension of technical texts (Ulijn & Strother, 1990). Additional methods of linguistic adaptation of texts include shortening their length, glossing (providing an L1 translation or simple L2 definition in the margin), and using computer-assisted reading programs. The second category of text simplification, cognitive processing modifications, includes "clarifying, elaborating, explaining and providing motivation for important information and making connections explicit" (Beck, McKeown, Sinatra, & Loxterman, 1991). Thus, these modifications create more cohesion within the text, which can contribute to reading comprehension (see also section 4.4.4). Finally, elaborative modifications create explicitness and

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redundancy in the text to clarify difficult and unfamiliar vocabulary (Nation, 2009b).

The difficulty of a text is an important factor when choosing materials for reading instruction or independent reading. There are many components involved in assessing text difficulty, including familiarity of the vocabulary; the length and complexity of the sentences; the presence or absence of illustrations, including how well they correspond to and represent the text; and physical characteristics, such as the spaces between the lines and the size of the letters (McKay, 2006, p. 229).

Using appropriate-leveled texts has been the focus of many research studies in recent decades (e.g., Hutchinson, 1987; Littlejohn, 1998; Nation & Wang, 1999). Many researchers recommend making a distinction between independent and instructional reading levels, especially related to the vocabulary demands of the text (Day, 2011; Day & Bamford, 1998; Nation & Wang, 1999; Schmitt, 2008). Many recommend a 90–95% known vocabulary level for texts when reading with support or in an instructional setting, and a 95–98% known vocabulary level for fluent and independent reading (Hirsch & Nation, 1992; J. H. Hulstijn, 2003; Laufer, 1997; Nation, 2009b, 2013), such as for extensive reading (see section 5.3 on intensive and extensive reading), thus requiring few words to be guessed through context (Grabe, 2009; Nation, 2009b; see also section 1.2.3 and section 4.4.2 regarding the vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners).

Conventionally, graded and simplified readers have been used as primary ways to differentiate for reading ability (see also section 5.2.3). In addition to controlling vocabulary and other linguistic features, there are numerous ways to manage text difficulty, including adapting for the students' prior experience; personal reaction to the text; learner autonomy (i.e., personal choice of material or pace); purposefulness of content; aesthetic aspects, such as presentation of the material; and pedagogical choices, such as teacher introduction or discussion of the text (Holdaway, 1979). These methods can be used to help scaffold a student's interaction with the text and can contribute to providing differentiated teaching and learning.

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Since texts that are too difficult for the reader can also decrease interest in reading by destroying the reader's confidence, there is concern about second language learners using texts written for native speakers (Day & Bamford, 1998). One challenge with authentic texts is the likely lack of scaffolding they provide for the language learners. Authentic texts are written for an audience of native speakers who can draw on numerous linguistic resources for comprehension. Moreover, the content of authentic texts written for an intended L1 age group may not be appropriate for L2 learners of the same age group (e.g., a fourth-grade L2 learner reading a kindergarten-level book with content intended for five-year-old readers).

Moreover, when using authentic materials with language learners, some materials are more suitable for language learning than others, especially for less advanced learners. Picture books can support language learning by providing linguistic scaffolding, predictable plots, and repetitive themes (Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2012). Additionally, predictable storybooks, which make use of repetitive elements (for example, phrases that are repeated “_____, what do you see? I see _____ look at me.” from *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, what do you see?*), can be a supportive source of authentic texts for language learners (Linse, 2007), and can also provide an excellent basis for writing exercises.

Lugossy (2007) explored the use of authentic picture books in four EFL Hungarian primary classrooms. The study showed the benefits of using such authentic picture books, including increased interest, engagement, and motivation for reading, especially on the part of the boys. Another focus of the study was the effects on the learners' literacy development of reading children's books at home. The results indicated positive attitudinal and motivational benefits for learners and teachers, positive linguistic gains, and enhanced attitudes toward literacy among students and parents.

For studies using simplified texts during reading instruction, see sections 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5.

5.2.2 *The textbook*

Current EFL textbooks in Norway provide a variety of text types, such as stories, factual texts, and poems. The majority of Norwegian primary schools use one of two Norwegian-published textbook series: *Junior Scoop/A New Scoop* (Bruskeland & Ranke, 2007; Flemmen & Sørheim, 2006c) and *Stairs* (Håkenstad & Vestgård, 2007a, 2007b). Some textbooks do not provide any differentiation of text levels, simply providing the same texts for all learners to read. When differentiation does occur in textbooks, it is usually addressed in one of two ways. One approach is to provide a number of texts on a specific theme, individual texts being written for different levels (e.g., *Stairs*), whereas other textbooks address the issue of differentiation by providing the same text rewritten in different levels of difficulty (e.g., *A New Scoop*).

Despite the fact that no particular textbooks are mentioned in the *LK06* curriculum, textbooks have an especially strong position in EFL classes in Norway (Drew & Sørheim, 2009). A survey conducted in 2003 found that the majority of primary school teachers based their teaching frequently or exclusively on a textbook (Drew, 2004; Drew et al., 2007). According to Bachmann (2004), Norwegian lower secondary school teachers of English generally appear to adhere to the textbooks and accompanying materials offered by publishers³⁰. The textbook publishers write introductions to teachers in which they indicate how their textbook meets the learning objectives and main areas of teaching to be covered in the curriculum, providing the rationale for their use.

Textbooks seem to have legitimacy and credibility for language learning among teachers and administrators. Littlejohn (1998, p. 190) refers to textbooks as “the most powerful device” for transmission of ideas through the English language teaching (ELT) profession. Additionally, Nunan (1991), referring to EFL teaching materials (primarily textbooks), suggests that “what gets included in materials largely defines what may count as ‘legitimate’ knowledge” (p. 210)(see also section 3.3). Thus, the content of textbooks

³⁰ Other reviews of English textbooks in Norway include a Master’s thesis focusing on *Stairs* and differentiation (Schrøder, 2012) and a recent review of writing tasks in two Norwegian textbooks, *Stairs* and *Steps* in grades 5–7 (Lund, 2013).

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often becomes the content covered in class, whereas other equally relevant content may not be covered because it is not included in the materials.

Textbooks are not simply a collection of texts for students, but rather a complete package of materials and “precise indications” of what teachers and students should do with these materials (Littlejohn, 1998, p. 190). This package includes a structured program of texts, illustrations, teaching ideas, materials for activities, exercises in the workbook, tasks for discussion and other communicative activities, and material for homework. Littlejohn (1998) argues that these materials structure classroom time to a much greater extent than previously.

There are advantages with the sense of security that the textbook and its structure provide for the teacher and the students. However, it is also important to consider the role of the teacher and reflect on what the teacher can do better than the textbook (Drew & Sørheim, 2009). It is the teacher who knows the students, assesses their learning, and interacts with them to create optimal learning situations. Teachers who use the textbook in a supportive function, recognizing it as one of many media that can be used in the classroom, will find a balance in both structure and instruction (Harwood, 2010).

It is important that teachers do not feel put in a “straightjacket” (Drew & Sørheim, 2009, p. 116), limited to following a textbook from beginning to end. Some teachers may feel pressure from the administration to use the textbooks the school has invested in or to coordinate closely with other classes, following a set plan within the textbook. It is important for teachers, as the professionals in the classroom, to reflect on and make decisions that are appropriate for their classes. Loewenberg-Ball and Feimen-Nemser (1988) emphasize the need for reflection over the connection between what is being taught and the learning aims as a way to ensure critical use of the textbook package:

Teachers’ guides may provide a helpful scaffold for learning to think pedagogically about particular content, considering the relationship between what the teachers and students are doing and what students are supposed to be learning. This kind of thinking about ends and

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means is not the same as following the teacher's guide like a script.
(p. 421)

Harwood (2010) argues that materials developers are faced with competing demands, including making materials suitable for a wide-variety of teachers, for example, those with more or less experiences, more or less qualified, and with different teaching styles and beliefs. Thus, the materials need to balance the provision of extensive support and structure for some teachers, while at the same time being flexible enough for those who want to adapt them. This suggests that there will never be one textbook or set of materials that will satisfy the needs and wants of all teachers and student groups.

5.2.3 *Graded reader series*

This section addresses graded readers, reviews of graded readers, leveling of graded readers, and the different graded reader series available.

Graded readers are texts written at different levels of difficulty, usually indicated on a scale provided by the publisher. There are different types of graded readers: original texts written to certain language specifications, factual texts, and simplified texts (often classics, such as Dickens' *Great Expectations*). The purpose of using graded readers is "for readers to read enough material at one level to develop sufficient fluency and other forms of linguistic knowledge to enable them to move to a higher level" (Waring, 1997, p. 1). Waring suggests that readers who read texts at an appropriate reading level, such as graded readers, will be able to focus on comprehension rather than decoding and intensive reading of texts. Through the use of graded readers, learners read new texts, but they are repeatedly exposed to the same vocabulary and similar grammatical structures, allowing them to develop a diverse range of associations with the words and constructions (Nation, 2009b, p. 65).

Hill conducted several extensive reviews of graded readers series, most recently in 2001, 2008, and 2013. Hill (2008, 2013) used the terms "rewrite" and "simple original" to describe the types of graded readers, replacing the term "simplified reader." Hill (2013) suggests that "grading is essential but does not by itself render a text comprehensible or conducive to establishing

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patterns of language” (p. 89). He mentions specifically the risk of only using simple sentences and lack of subordination, which can obscure the language (see also Crossley, Allen, & McNamara, 2011, 2012). Hill (2008) has also criticized what he felt was the lack of support for learners to understand the text. Similar concerns have also been raised by Gillis-Furutaka (2015).

Other aspects that can be challenging in graded readers are information control (i.e., limiting the amount of unnecessary details and description), time shifts, and interweaving of different plots (Gillis-Furutaka, 2015). Claridge (2012) has also pointed to the need for inbuilt scaffolding provided by the lexical, syntactical, and information controls to provide comprehensible input. These can include the use of repetition, redundancy (for example, by repeated use of a character’s name rather than excessive use of pronouns), and explanation of motives and actions (D. R. Hill, 2013, p. 89). Several suggestions were put forward by Hill (2008, 2013) for improvements to graded readers, including additional support for reading, such as providing background information; a list of characters; vocabulary, chapter headings, and outlines where applicable; and “aids to appreciation”, such as questions and answers that present plot development, theme, and character delineation (2008, p. 193).

There are also many benefits of using graded readers. First, there are a plethora of texts to choose from to meet individual students’ interests and ability level. Second, students have the satisfaction of reading whole texts, rather than simply reading short texts or excerpts from longer texts. Finally, graded readers can contribute to increased motivation and confidence in the language. Numerous studies have found positive results for using graded readers for FL reading development (e.g., Elley, 1991; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Robb & Susser, 1989; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007; Tsang, 1996). The majority of these studies incorporate the use of graded readers in an extensive reading program. Thus, these studies are reviewed in section 5.3.

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In one study of graded readers, Nation and Wang (1999) analyzed the vocabulary in 42 graded readers from the Oxford *Bookworms* series³¹. Comparing vocabulary coverage from texts at progressively more difficult levels, Nation and Wang found that vocabulary from lower-level texts did not cover the recommended rate of at least 95% known words (see also section 4.4.2). For example, if in a level 3 text, the vocabulary from levels 1 and 2 did not cover 95% of the vocabulary in level 3 texts, then students would need to know the words from level 3 before being able to read that level with appropriate ease. Nation (2013) explains that: “ideally the steps between the levels would allow a learner who has learned all the vocabulary at one level to read the next level within the desired proportion of known words” (p. 250). Due to the percentage of unknown words, this suggests that the focus was more on vocabulary repetition than providing effective opportunities for incidental vocabulary learning (Nation, 2009a, 2009b).

Although the *Bookworms* texts are written for older learners, as far as this researcher knows, other studies of vocabulary coverage at various levels have not yet been conducted using *Dominoes*, *Dolphin Readers*, nor other appropriately leveled materials for fourth- and fifth-grade EFL learners.³² Nation and Wang’s study (1999) illustrates that graded readers are not intended to teach vocabulary when it first appears, but rather focus on progressive vocabulary learning over repeated exposure throughout the series. However, due to the need to have repeated exposures to words before they are forgotten, Nation and Wang recommend that learners read at least one graded reader a week to promote vocabulary growth. Additionally, Nation (2009b) recommends reading at least five books at a given level before moving to the next level to allow sufficient exposure to all new vocabulary at each level. He also recommends more emphasis on vocabulary learning in the higher levels. For other studies comparing authentic and graded reading materials, see section 5.2.1.

³¹ The *Bookworms* series is written for older teenagers and adults. *Dominoes* and *Dolphin* readers are Oxford’s series written for children and young teenagers learning English.

³² Additionally, Nation & Wang (1999) chose this series because it was considered to be a well-produced series (D. R. Hill, 2008).

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There are numerous graded readers and graded reader series available, including those from the leading publishers of ELT materials. These include Oxford's *Bookworms*, *Dominoes*, and *Dolphin Readers*; ELI's *Young ELI readers*, *Teen ELI readers*, *Young adult ELI readers*; Pearson's *Penguin Readers* and *Penguin Young Readers*; Macmillan's *Children's readers*, *English explorers*, and *Macmillan readers*. They also include the aforementioned Cambridge's *English readers*, *Discover readers*, *Experience readers*, *Young readers*, and *Storybooks*. However, trying to compare graded reader series is difficult, as there is generally no standard grading scale for text difficulty (Claridge, 2012; Extensive Reading Foundation, 2011, 2015; Gillis-Furutaka, 2015). One method of level categorization for grading reading materials used by publishers is the use of word and structure lists, often listed as the number of headwords³³ at a particular level. However, it is not common for publishers to make the lists of headwords available online for easy comparability between publishers and graded reader series. Several sources have commented on the large differences in the number of headwords assigned to each level and the inconsistency between how the publishers divided the levels (Claridge, 2012; Extensive Reading Foundation, 2015; Gillis-Furutaka, 2015). Additionally, Wan-a-rom (2008) found that even when word lists were available to writers and intended for use, they were not always adhered to, as an intuitive approach to simplification or grading is often used (Bamford, 1984; Crossley et al., 2011, 2012).

Another more recent approach to level categorization is to attempt to apply the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* scales as a way of relating a graded reader series to a given standard. However, as reflected in a database of graded readers produced by the Extensive Reading Foundation (2015)³⁴, there is little consistency in the application of the *CEFR* scales to the levels for graded readers across publishers (see Table 4). For example, one publisher lists books containing 200 headwords at the A1 level, while another publisher has 400 headwords at

³³ A headword is a word that begins a separate entry in a dictionary. The headword can represent a group of words that share the same basic meaning (e.g., *helps*, *helping*, *helpful*, and *helpless*).

³⁴ The Extensive Reading Foundation list has been in existence since 2011, but was last updated in 2015, at which time Tables 4 and 5 and their contents were updated.

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this level. This could be related to the fact that the *CEFR* levels are too broad to indicate a progress of levels, especially at the beginner stages (D. R. Hill, 2013). The number of headwords listed by the prominent publishers as corresponding to specific levels of the *CEFR* varies from publisher to publisher (see Table 5). It is uncertain whether this variation is due to a lack of common interpretation of the *CEFR*, differing application of headword lists, or other inconsistencies. Consequently, the lack of standard criteria for evaluating text difficulty could make it challenging for teachers and learners to relate to different graded reader series. Since assigning stages of series to levels is a matter of judgment, it is difficult to equate particular stages of one series with those of others (D. R. Hill, 2008). It would, therefore, be an advantage for teachers and students if there were a more systematic way of grading readers.

Table 4: Variation in word count and headwords related to *CEFR* level as reported by various publishers of graded readers

<i>CEFR</i> level	Word count	Headwords
A1	25–9178	100–997
A1.1		200–400
A1.2		400–600
A1/A2	1489–9722	300–700
A2	502–25977	300–1200

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Table 5: Headwords related to *CEFR* levels as reported by prominent graded reader publishers.³⁵

<i>CEFR</i> level	Dominoes (Oxford)	ELI readers	Penguin Readers ³⁶
A1	250 headwords	200 headwords	200–300 headwords
A1/A2	400 headwords	300 headwords	
A2		400 headwords	600–1200 headwords
A2/B1	700 headwords		
B1	1000 headwords	1000 headwords	1700 headwords

In spite of the inconsistency in the grading of readers, graded readers nevertheless provide books written for language learners that include frequent vocabulary and often simplified syntax presented in stages (Day & Bamford, 1998; D. R. Hill, 2008). These stages represent increasingly more difficult texts in both length and format. Graded readers provide opportunities for learners to practice reading fluency and provide them with multiple exposures to vocabulary and texts presented at a specific reading level (Nation, 2013; Nation & Wang, 1999). This also potentially allows readers to read books appropriate in both language and content (Day & Bamford, 1998). However, this implies that a series has been chosen for the intended audience type, for example, young learners, teens, or adults.

Gillis-Furutaka (2015) has highlighted the need for a wider range of content in graded readers, especially for more advanced texts for younger readers. She mentions that, as the linguistic difficulty increases, the content often takes on a more adult focus. She also calls for clearer indications from publishers

³⁵ Series from four publishers commonly used in Norwegian primary EFL are not included in Table 4: Cappelen Damm's *Damm's Galaxy*, series from Gullhoj, Era Publications *Wings*, and Oxford's *Reading Tree*. *Damm's Galaxy* books are also related to the *CEFR* levels. However, they do not list the number of headwords at each level, and thus are not included in this comparison. *Wings* do not include headwords or *CEFR* rating, but instead uses high frequency word lists. For the Gullhoj series, although graded for word frequency, the publishers do not provide word lists or headword counts and thus are not included in the table.

³⁶ The Penguin Readers series is not published purely for schoolchildren, but many of the books are appropriate for children. The Readers are published for language learners in school at various levels and for adult learners.

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regarding the intended audience for the different series, especially the targeted age group of the readers (p.11). However, during this researcher's review, some publishers have been forthcoming with this information on their websites, whereas others have not.

The intended audience of graded readers is important to consider, since it is not always the case that teachers choose the books intended for their students' reading level and context. Oxford publishing representatives, and some of this researcher's colleagues, have confirmed that, for example, Oxford *Reading Tree* books are popular in Norwegian primary schools despite being intended for young L1 English readers. These books are recommended for L1 learners aged four to seven. Although they are simple texts based on phonics methods for beginning readers (i.e., methods that develop the learners' phonemic awareness through teaching the correspondence between phonemes and graphemes), they are not graded for grammar and vocabulary and are thus not specifically written for language learners. However, this is one of the reasons why some teachers prefer them, as they can be classified as "authentic texts." As a representative from Oxford publishers has indicated³⁷, there are other series more appropriate in terms of language and age appropriate content for FL learners, such as Oxford *Dolphins* (young learners), *Dominoes* (young learners to preteens), and *Bookworms* (teens and adults). These series are leveled based on headwords.

Additionally, the *Wings* series by Era Publications has also become popular in Norwegian primary schools³⁸. This is partially due to the influence of the EYLP and Nylund school, the first school to use the EYLP program in Norway (see also section 5.5). The *Wings* books were used in the EYLP program in Australia and were brought over by Nylund school when they implemented the program. The school used these books in EFL teaching despite being written for L1 readers. Although Era Publications does not produce books specifically for FL learners, many of the texts have also been used with L2 English learners in Australia.

³⁷ E-mail communications with Oxford representative, 6.12.2011.

³⁸ E-mail communications with Rodney Martin, executive of Era Publications 18.7.2014, and interview with owner of AH2 International, a book distributor in Norway 1.10.2013.

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The *Wings* books are aimed at L1 readers in kindergarten to grade 3 (ages 4 to 9). The series contains 26 levels, beginning from picture books with one simple sentence per page and continuing to books with full pages of text and some pictures. The levels used by *Wings* are the guided reading levels commonly used in Australian schools, which were originally developed by the University of Auckland, New Zealand. The texts are leveled based on multiple criteria, including running word count, sentence complexity, patterns of repetition, frequency of new vocabulary, text density, and conceptual complexity (Andrews & Martin, 2006). In levels 1–11, 206 high-frequency words are introduced and reinforced³⁹. There are up to 30 titles in each of the 12 color band levels⁴⁰.

Penguin Young Readers are a series of graded readers intended for English language learners aged 5 to 11. There are three size books (large, medium, and small) decreasing in size as the intended readers' age increases. The idea is that younger children can read larger sized books with fewer words per page, while older children can read smaller books with more words per page. There are also four levels for each size, each level indicated by an upper limit of headwords contained in the texts (e.g., level 1 is up to 300 headwords, whereas level 4 is up to 1400 headwords). The recommendations for choosing a reading level are based on number of hours of English instruction (e.g., 8 year-old students who have studied English for 200 hours should use medium size books at level 2). The series contains adaptations of popular modern stories and films, adaptations of classic stories, and original stories of both fiction and nonfiction. According to Hughes and Williams (2000), all of the books are written using lexical and structural frameworks for each of the four levels.

In Norway, two publishers have produced graded reader series for EFL. Cappelen Damm, the publishers of the EFL textbook series *Stairs*, which is

³⁹ This list, "High-frequency words," is available on the Era Publications website, <http://erapublications.com/new/articles/educational-papers-articles>, accessed 01.10.13.

⁴⁰ The color bands include 2–3 book levels. This emphasizes that there are small differences between some book levels and that the levels are guidelines subject to teacher interpretation rather than definitive benchmarks (Andrews & Martin, 2006).

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the most used EFL textbook in Norway (Schröder, 2012)⁴¹, has published the graded reader series *Damm's Galaxy* with eight levels. Levels 1 to 6 contain literary texts (fiction) and levels 7 to 8 factual texts (non-fiction) intended for use in primary schools.

A second Norwegian publisher, Det Norske Samlaget, publishers of the EFL textbook series *Junior Scoop* and *A New Scoop*, has also produced *Read Me!* The series contains eight easy readers at three levels of difficulty; it is primarily intended for grades 5 to 7. There are narratives and factual texts at each of the three levels. The *Read Me!* Series also contains supplementary materials: a Teacher's Guide (including a number of tasks for each book and common tasks for all the books), a sound recording of each book, and a website with additional tasks⁴².

A Danish publisher, Gullhøj, has also produced several series of EFL graded readers suitable for primary school EFL students, including *Mary and Steven*, *Bookworms*, and *Easy Reader* series. These readers are graded for word count and word frequency. Gullhøj does not provide a teacher's guide for their book series. According to their website, the books are intended for individual reading, and were described by a Gullhøj representative as being "self-instructive" (Jens, personal communication, October 7, 2013). The *Mary and Steven* books are designed for beginning English instruction and as such are short (16 pages), containing pictures on each opposite page to aid comprehension. The level 2 and 3 books from this series have an average text length of 174 words and 180 words respectively. The books are also available on CD and as e-books. The *Bookworm* level 1 books have an average length of 600 words and level 5 books have on average 3,000 words⁴³.

5.2.4 Children's literature – authentic texts

The previous sections have looked at texts written for language learners and developing readers. Another source of books for young learners is authentic

⁴¹ Also confirmed by a representative from Cappelen Damm, e-mail communication 15.9.2013.

⁴² <http://www.samlaget.no/reform06>

⁴³ According to a representative from Gullhøj, e-mail communication 30.9.2013.

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children's books. As discussed in section 5.2.1, there are both advantages and disadvantages of using authentic texts. Hughes (2006) suggests that "real" picture books and stories are important because of the quality of stories, describing them as being crafted by story creators (p. 151). She also suggests that because these stories often follow storytelling traditions, including repetition, children can apply the cognitive skills they use to comprehend L1 stories when listening to English stories. These stories can also support vocabulary acquisition through repetition of "chunks" of language and through providing context for language. Students can also learn to recognize story markers, such as "once upon a time," "and then," "so...," and "finally," which help the learners understand the sequence of the story (Hughes, 2006, p. 153). Thus, through a predictable story structure, learners can make use of repetitive phrases and predictable language (Linse, 2007). Children's books also often contain illustrations that can provide clarification or support for the word, sentence, or pattern that is repeated in the text (Linse, 2007).

Although useful for comprehension, the repetition can at times be somewhat manipulated and unnatural to adhere to the pattern; for example, "This ___ is too ___," from the Goldilocks story. Linse (2007) suggests these structures can resemble the patterns of EFL audiolingual substitution drills. However, because the patterns are presented in the context of a story, which allows the children to join in the experience, the repetition could be less tiresome (Linse, 2007).

Potential sources of authentic children's literature include picture books, fairytales, children's books, and graphic novels. Picture books provide verbal text and image interaction on every page or double-page spread, which support and engage the reader (Birketveit, 2013). Fairy tales utilize patterns and repetition, mentioned above, which can support readers (Birketveit, 2013). Graphic novels utilize new literacy skills in which readers decode both text and images, creating an interweaving structure of text comprehension (Rimmereide, 2013). Rimmereide (2013) also promotes graphic novels as a way to engage both competent and reluctant readers in the reading process; she suggests that for stronger readers, their comprehension of text may be enhanced by visual expressions, whereas for others the visual expressions may provide the needed support to comprehend the text.

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There are many important aspects to consider when selecting children's literature. These aspects include the linguistic and cognitive levels of the texts, the topic of the story, whether the text in the book is a good language model, whether it uses good storytelling techniques and signposts, and whether the illustrations support the text (Hughes, 2006).

5.2.5 Summary

Explaining the importance of materials for a language teacher, Hutchinson (1987) claims that they are not only tools, but “the embodiment of the aims, values and methods of the particular teaching/learning situation” (p. 37). Hutchinson thus argues that materials selection is the most important decision a language teacher makes. There are many types of reading materials available to teachers, including authentic texts, simplified texts, graded readers, and textbooks and accompanying resources (digital and other resources). The previous sections have addressed some issues related to the various materials, as well as some research related to their use.

Previous research suggests that the use of differentiated texts (not differentiated levels in a textbook) in primary EFL teaching in Norway appears to be limited, and that textbooks have a predominant place (Drew, 2004; Drew et al., 2007). Graded readers offer an alternative source of adapted and L2 reading materials. Additionally, through the use of leveled reading texts, students of all proficiency levels can be provided with appropriate-level language input (Day & Bamford, 1998). However, lack of a consistent grading system and unclear criteria for graded reader levels may make their use more challenging for teachers and students (Claridge, 2012; Gillis-Furutaka, 2015; D. R. Hill, 2013). Finally, authentic children's literature can also provide a useful source of EFL reading materials. Such literature can be well suited to language learning due to its use of predictable story structure, repetitive and predictable language, well-crafted stories, and illustrations, which support comprehension (Hughes, 2006; Linse, 2007).

5.3 Intensive reading and extensive reading

Reading is often described by its process or purpose. Two such terms are *intensive reading* and *extensive reading*. Extensive reading is reading many

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books quickly with a focus on content, whereas intensive reading focuses on intensive work with the language of the text (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 5).

Intensive reading in the second language classroom has been used to focus on the language of a text through, for example, translation, reading line by line, and attempting to learn the vocabulary, expressions, and grammar of the text (Nation, 2009b). Intensive reading can be used for language-focused learning, concentrating on forms that can be applied to multiple texts and future language learning. Other types of intensive reading activities include looking at particular sound-spelling relationships, genre features, or reading strategies, such as teaching the students how to look up an unknown word in a dictionary. One potential negative consequence of intensive reading is that more frequent and less frequent words often receive equal focus. Another is that the focus on the particular text being read and the specific topic detracts from the overall focus on learning the language form and how it can be applied in other contexts (Nation, 2009b).

As for extensive reading, at its most basic level it involves reading many texts with the purpose of their enjoyment and comprehension. Day and Bamford have further described extensive reading according to 10 features (1998, pp. 7-8):

1. students read as much as possible
2. a variety of material on a wide range of topics is available
3. students select what they want to read
4. the purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information, and reading for understanding
5. reading is its own reward
6. reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students
7. reading is individual and silent
8. reading speed is usually faster rather than slower
9. teachers orient students to the goals of the program
10. the teacher is a role model of a reader for students

Additionally, a gradual increase in fluency and vocabulary should be among the aims of an extensive reading program. This aim can be accomplished

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through the use of graded readers, which is one of the advantages of using a leveled series of books. However, this aim can also be achieved using other reading materials, such as children's literature and picture books. In an extensive reading program, explicit skills or activities can be added to the program, but they are not required and should not overshadow the main focus of increasing the quantity of reading and exposure to texts. For example, students could choose five or six unknown words from the text to learn, keep a reading log, write book reviews, and work on reading strategies and skills, such as guessing unknown words from context.

A large body of research has shown benefits of extensive reading for developing language skills, including listening comprehension (Elley, 1991; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983), reading comprehension (R. C. Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1986; Cunningham & Stanovich, 2001; Elley, 1991; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox, 1999; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007), vocabulary (Cunningham & Stanovich, 2001; Elley, 1991; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Horst, 2009; Nation, 2001; Stanovich, 2000), reading fluency (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Robb & Susser, 1989), writing (Elley, 1991; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Tsang, 1996), and reading motivation (Day & Bamford, 1998; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Guthrie et al., 1999). Other studies have found that the amount of time students read is related to general reading achievement (Elley, 1992; Guthrie, Schafer, & Huang, 2001; Stanovich, 2000). Krashen (1988) strongly promotes extensive reading by highlighting the fact that research on free reading shows a relationship between the amount of free reading and comprehension, leading him to argue that we learn to read by reading (p. 291).

In a seminal study of extensive reading, Elley and Mangubhai (1983) explored the use of a "book flood" program in EFL primary education in Fiji. The researchers compared three reading instruction approaches: a book flood group, a shared reading group, and a control group using an audiolingual method. Greater language gains were found in listening and reading comprehension, vocabulary learning, and motivation for reading among the shared reading and book flood groups compared to the control group. However, despite a large body of research on extensive reading, few recent studies have focused on its use with primary school students.

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Many of the studies on extensive reading in EFL indicate that extensive reading influences writing ability (Day & Bamford, 1998; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Hafiz & Tudor, 1989). For example, a study on the use of extensive reading of picture books and illustrated books in Norwegian primary schools also found evidence of improved writing skills (Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2012). Students in the study wrote texts prior to beginning the program and following five weeks of reading. Improvements were found, especially in story building skills and developing language skills.

In spite of the apparent benefits of extensive reading, there have also been some criticisms of the approach. One concern is the delayed impact on learners' reading ability and the need for multiple exposures before learning vocabulary. Based on research on explicit and incidental vocabulary learning, researchers advocate for a balance between intensive and extensive reading approaches in order to best promote L2 vocabulary learning (Laufer, 1997; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Meara, 1997). A second concern is the unfamiliar roles for teachers and students, where students take a more active role in language learning. Finally, teachers often claim a lack of time as the reason they choose not to use extensive reading (Day, 2011).

Another possible challenge is that extensive reading primarily promotes incidental learning. For this to be successful, the learners must read large amounts of text over an extended period of time, giving them substantial opportunities for vocabulary repetition (Nation, 2009b). However, there is no consensus as to how many books or how many words students need to read in order to benefit in terms of reading comprehension and vocabulary development (see also sections 4.4.1 on vocabulary and 5.2.3 for research using graded readers, which have been recommended as appropriate materials for extensive reading).

Furthermore, there is disagreement among extensive reading supporters as to whether extensive reading should be followed by post-reading activities. Renandya and Jacobs (2002) promote the use of such activities, stating that they can reinforce what students have learned from their reading, give them a sense of progress, and help them share information and suggestions about reading materials. They also claim support for this argument through Swain's (1985) output hypothesis, which posits that, in addition to comprehensible

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input, language learners must produce comprehensible output in order to reach a high proficiency level in the language. Swain argues that by producing language, learners notice features of the target language and actively form and test hypotheses about their internal interlanguage representations. Others argue that extensive reading should be left untouched by other activities that take time away from the reading itself and may dampen learners' motivation for reading (Krashen, 1993)⁴⁴.

According to a 2003 survey among primary EFL teachers (Drew, 2009a), extensive reading of English language texts was not implemented in most EFL classrooms in Norway. Additionally, it was found that reading and writing at the primary level in general were practiced to a far lesser extent than indicated in the national curriculum of the time (*L97*). Hellekjær's research on reading in Norwegian schools has yielded similar results. Hellekjær (2007) has pointed to deficiencies in current Norwegian EFL instruction, including a strong reliance on textbook reading, emphasis on reading for detail and intensive work with a text to explain all unknown words and expressions, and the subsequent lack of focus on extensive reading. This one-sided focus on intensive reading has led to students failing to adapt their reading according to the purpose of reading, thus making it less efficient. Hellekjær (2007) suggests that the competency aims in the *LK06* English syllabus would help to address the deficiencies, implying that more extensive reading would be required to meet these aims.

Most extensive reading programs have been based on the use of graded readers. However, Brown (2009) suggests that adding extensive reading to textbooks will add credibility to the practice of extensive reading as legitimate use of learners' time. This, he suggests, can be done directly by encouraging students to read extensively on an independent basis and incorporating parts of graded readers or chapters of books into the textbooks. Indirect methods include taking an extensive reading approach to activities included in the textbook, such as allowing students to choose between various texts and

⁴⁴ The focus on the importance of developing recreational reading in young learners, and how schools often ignore this aim of reading instruction has also been more recently addressed, for example, in *Readicide* by Kelly Gallagher (2009).

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reading for pleasure and understanding rather than reading all texts intensively.

5.4 Shared reading and guided reading

Shared and guided reading are part of a model of reading progression developed by researchers in New Zealand (Clay, 1991a; Holdaway, 1979; Smith & Elley, 1997). The model, comprising four stages, aims to move learners from shared reading experiences (i.e., the teacher reading aloud) to independent reading. The following descriptions are based on the works of Smith and Elley (1997), Holdaway (1979), and Clay (1991b). The first stage, the teacher reading aloud, provides a shared literature experience for the students, but without expectations of involvement on their part. Stage two is shared reading when a common text is read aloud, often with students reading parts of the text in unison with the teacher. During stage three, guided reading, students read aloud or silently on an individual basis followed by a discussion of the text in a group or with the teacher. Pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading activities are used with both shared and guided reading approaches. In guided reading, the students are grouped according to reading ability level so that they can all read the same text or a similar level text. However, these groups would ideally change throughout the year based on observation and assessment of how each student's reading is developing. The book being read at any given time is often at a level that would be challenging for the students to read independently, in other words at their "instructional" reading level. Finally, stage four is independent reading, during which students can engage in reading texts that are below their instructional reading level and which they can read with a certain degree of fluency.

Through shared reading, teachers introduce reading strategies, teach vocabulary, identify text features, teach students to make predictions about texts, and discuss the meaning of texts by applying students' background knowledge and experiences. The teacher presents a reading strategy to increase understanding of that particular text, such as making predictions about the story. Throughout this process, it is the teacher who reads and asks the learners to join at particular points.

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During guided reading, the learner and the teacher engage in a pre-reading discussion about the book, called a “book introduction.” This introduction may include discussing the title, looking at pictures, introducing key words, making predictions about the story, and relating to any prior knowledge the reader has on the topic. The book introduction, led by the teacher, should guide students into the text, awakening an interest in the content and the context. Clay (1991b) describes the book introduction as follows:

[It is] not a case of telling the children what to expect. It is a process of drawing the children into the activity before passing control to the children and pushing them gently towards problem solving the whole first reading of the story for themselves. (p. 265)

There are two key elements in this description. The first is the teacher’s ability to entice the students, creating anticipation around the story. The second is the teacher transitioning control to the students as they read the text individually. During this transition of control the teacher introduces aspects of autonomy: independent reading, problem solving, and creating their own understanding of the text. These aspects of guided reading correspond to the reading skills listed in the English subject curriculum and the Framework for Basic Skills: read and understand main content; can draw simple conclusions based on information in the text (Framework); the ability to create meaning by reading different types of texts (*LK06* aims). Generalizing from the text, i.e. drawing conclusions from the texts and drawing inferences, are higher-level comprehension skills involved during the guided reading sessions (Taylor et al., 2002). Thus one could argue that one of the aims of guided reading is to promote the use of higher-level comprehension skills use during reading.

Clay (1998) presents the notion of prompting the learners into constructive activities by linking the topic or content to personal knowledge as a key stage in a book introduction, pausing for the children to generate the ending, and reflecting on their knowledge and problem-solving processes (in other words, students apply reading strategies). These aspects have been shown to be important in supporting reading comprehension (Echevarria et al., 2008; Goldenberg, 2011). Further evidence for the importance of teacher interaction is found in research focused on the effects of different types of adaptations to text in supporting comprehension. McNamara et al.’s (2011) study found that

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texts that have been simply adapted in terms of language were often insufficient to support comprehension, and that these adaptations needed to be supplemented by explanatory information, such as that which could be developed through teacher-student interaction with a text (see also section 4.4.4).

The during-reading phase of guided reading varies depending on whose model or interpretation is used⁴⁵. Common to all models is that the teacher supports the reader while he/she is reading. This support may be through feedback on reading aloud or by follow-up discussions after the students read silently. An important aspect of the program is that when learners read aloud, they are given time to self-correct or given prompts based on the context of the story or structure of the word (Smith & Elley, 1997). A study with second grade L1 readers compared shared book reading to round-robin reading, where students took turns reading aloud (Eldredge, Reutzel, & Hollingsworth, 1996). The results indicated that shared reading reduced oral reader errors, and it improved reading fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension to a greater extent than round-robin reading.

Guided reading, although first designed for use in L1, has been adapted for use in L2 (Elley, 1991). These adaptations include giving more time to a book introduction, which covers more cultural and linguistic components of the text than would be necessary for L1 readers. Second, prior knowledge of the topic cannot be taken for granted and should be thoroughly included when introducing the book to the student in a pre-reading discussion. Finally, review of vocabulary and the introduction of unknown words is an important focus of introducing the book.

⁴⁵ See Clay (1991b, 1998), Holdaway (1979), Smith and Elley (1997), Fountas and Pinnell (1996), and Steen-Paulsen and Wegge (2008) for descriptions of implementations in different countries and contexts.

5.5 The Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP)

5.5.1 Introduction

The Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP), described in section 5.5.2, is a literacy program developed for L1 reading and writing development in Australia (P. W. Hill & Crévola, 1999). The program received attention for its improvement in student reading results, especially with students who were English language learners in Australia⁴⁶ (P. W. Hill & Crévola, 1999). Although originally designed for L1 reading and writing development, the program has been adapted for EFL teaching by a number of Norwegian schools and is therefore given attention in this thesis. It is also the program used by one of the case study schools researched in the current study (see Chapter 8).

The first school to use the program in both Norwegian and English in Norway was Nylund school in Stavanger. The school had been struggling with its results on the national tests in Norwegian reading and English. In addition, the school had a high percentage of Norwegian language learners, namely, children with a minority background. Due to the success of the program with both L1 and L2 learners in Australia, the school decided to implement the program. The program's focus on literacy was considered to be in line with the increased focus on reading and writing in the *LK06* English curriculum in Norway. The way the program has been developed for EFL teaching is described in section 5.5.3.

5.5.2 The EYLP in Australia

The Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP) was developed by the University of Melbourne and the Victorian Department of Education in Australia as a result of the three-year Early Literacy Research Project (ELRP) (1996–1998) “to develop a system-wide approach to maximizing the literacy achievements of ‘at risk’ students in the early years of schooling (ages 5–8)” (P. W. Hill & Crévola, 1999, p. 5). The program has four essential elements: teacher

⁴⁶ Students of a non-English-speaking background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, attending English-medium classes.

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professional development, teaching readers/writers/speakers and listeners, additional assistance, and parent participation.

The program was developed on the basis of research on effective teaching. Hill and Crévola (1999, p. 2) name three factors of effectiveness: high expectations of student achievement, engaged learning time, and focused teaching that maximizes learning within each student's Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978; see also section 3.5). These factors form the basis of the early literacy design developed by Hill and Crévola. This design is centered on beliefs and understandings, which they define as a set of shared beliefs and understandings of both staff and students based on students, teachers, and administrators believing that students and teachers can be successful and achieve high standards. Additionally, Hill and Crévola mention the need for teachers to believe in their self-efficacy.

In order for teachers to be effective and to achieve high standards, support from the administration is needed, as well as the development of expert knowledge on the part of the teachers. Hill and Crévola (1999, p. 3) define effective teachers as "professionals who are able to articulate what they do and why they teach the way they do," promoting a theory-based approach to teaching. The outer ring contains eight elements: home, school, and community partnerships; leadership and coordination; standards and targets; monitoring and assessment; classroom teaching strategies; professional learning teams; school and class organization; and intervention and special assistance. The principles of the structured classroom environment, namely, the use of literacy strategies and teaching practices such as shared, guided, and independent reading, are based on research and well-documented practices in New Zealand (Clay, 1991a; Holdaway, 1979; Smith & Elley, 1997).

Research on the use of the EYLP program has shown the program to be effective in promoting student activity during lessons since they are working at stations (P. W. Hill & Crévola, 1999; P. W. Hill & Crévola, 1999; Drew 2004). However, other research on EYLP use in the Norwegian (not FL) context has raised questions about how suited the program is for lower-skilled students and students with a minority language background, since it requires them to work independently (Palm & Stokke, 2013). Although the other

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stations were not a focus in the research, they are an important component of the program and should be considered in future research.

5.5.3 *The EYLP in Norway*

Nylund model

Since Nylund primary school in Stavanger was the first in Norway to adapt the Early Years Literacy Program in Norwegian and English, the program in the school has subsequently become known as the *Nylund model*, a model that other schools can copy. After a study visit to Australia and New Zealand in 2003, the principal of Nylund invested in instructional materials to train the Nylund teachers in the EYLP method and guided reading in small groups⁴⁷. In response to the Reading Recovery method developed in New Zealand to diagnose and help struggling readers (Clay, 1985), the Reading Centre at the University of Stavanger created a model for the Norwegian context called “New Start” (*Ny Start*). Nylund also adopted this model. The Running Records reading level assessment method, measuring students’ reading proficiency level at a given time, has also been used at Nylund.

In 2006, after more cooperation between Nylund and the source schools in Australia, Nylund began using “station teaching”⁴⁸ and the EYLP approach in English lessons was implemented in third grade. To support this method of instruction, Nylund bought the *Wings* series of graded readers from Era Publications in Australia. Additional instructional materials, including large books and puzzles, were purchased in England. These graded readers are an important part of classroom instruction within the model. In addition, children are also expected to take books home to read; starting from third grade, daily reading in English becomes a part of their weekly homework. Moreover, parent involvement is an important part of the Nylund model. Parents are expected to listen to and read with their children the English books they bring

⁴⁷Nylund modellen
<http://www.linksidene.no/Minskole/nylund/pilot.nsf/VReadArt/94AEF52B6610FA95C125738B00309259?OpenDocument&u=Nylund-modellen> accessed 16.09.2010

⁴⁸ Station teaching is structured around a number of learning stations where students work in small groups on specific activities. They rotate stations at regular intervals set by the teacher.

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home. The parents confirm students' reading by signing their "Books I have read" card.

The EYLP lessons are often structured as a literacy block in which the teaching begins as a whole class, progresses to small groups, and returns to whole-class instruction. The concept of "whole-part-whole" context for reading instruction is applied in the EYLP approach, where new information is presented as a whole class; students then practice this in a personally meaningful context, and are encouraged to create new meaning through products that are shared to the whole group and summarized into common learning (Mazzoni & Gambrell, 2003; see also section 4.6). This can also be related to the three phases of reading, namely, pre-, during-, and post-reading focus.

During the small group work, six stations are normally used in English instruction: teacher-led station, ABC station (e.g., activity sheets and writing tasks), reading station, computer station, art station, and communication and cooperation station. At the ABC station students work on copying words or sentences, completing different types of worksheets focused on grammar or the current theme of the lesson, completing the sentence tasks using picture stimulation, and eventually, writing different text types (such as letters, stories, and fairy tales). In the upper primary grades (grades 5–7), the students additionally work on word bank, grammar, reading comprehension skills, and they learn about text genres. Students at the computer station use Cambridge Young Learners English computer programs, picture dictionaries, Microsoft Word, and Kidspiration. At the art/forming station, they cut and paste pictures and words related to the current teaching theme, match words to pictures, and illustrate in their writing books. The communication and cooperation station is focused on oral language development, using flash cards, role-play activities, pedagogical/educational games, and English vocabulary cards. Starting in grade 5, the art station is replaced by an additional ABC station.

More focus is placed on writing texts from fifth grade, which supplements the station instruction. It begins with the teacher reading a text or book to the whole class. The students and teacher together write a model text on the board, including a brainstorming session. The students then work on

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individual writing tasks based on the theme and genre presented by the teacher.

Nylund's results on the 2007 fifth grade national test in English showed more students at levels 2 and 3 than the national, county, and local averages (Nylund level 2 – 49.1%, national 47.5%; Nylund level 3 – 41.8%, national 25%)⁴⁹. However, Nylund had a slightly higher than normal percentage of students not participating in the test that year, although the reasons for this are unknown.

Drew (2009b) compared students using the EYLP at Nylund school with those in two control schools using different teaching approaches. The study explored how effective the EYLP program was in promoting students' language skills. Students were tested in listening and reading comprehension and oral language production at the end of third grade and the end of the autumn term in fourth grade. The findings indicated that students at Nylund school had a greater rate of progress from the first to second test on all three language measures than the two control schools. The substantial amount of time the students at the school spent reading books in English, and the large degree of differentiation in materials, groups, and tasks, were suggested as possible explanations for the language gains.

Nylund school was named a national demonstration school for adapted instruction (*tilpasset opplæring*) in reading and writing and school leadership from 2004 to 2006. As a part of this role, the school held a seminar in 2006 with guest speakers from Australia to present the EYLP model⁵⁰.

Following the attention Nylund received about their improved reading scores, other schools in Norway have also begun similar programs for English reading instruction. Maridal, a small primary school in Oslo, inspired by Nylund's success, first began with a guided reading program in Norwegian (Steen-Paulsen, 2008). Following a study trip to New Zealand in autumn 2005, the school began a two-year project implementing guided reading and

⁴⁹ Engelskstasj. Del 2.

<http://www.linksidene.no/minskole/Nylund/pilot.nsf/vArt?Opennavigator&u=Nylund-modellen>. Accessed 23.11.10.

⁵⁰ Early Years and Middle Years Literacy, Nylund Skole, Stavanger, autumn 2006.

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the use of stations in English lessons. The writing and speaking progress of students in grades 3–7 was tracked using a “picture task,” which was evaluated using an adapted version of the *CEFR*. The students’ results improved over time, and the results also showed an improvement among the students who had had a year’s experience with the guided reading program compared to those who had not. Improvements were also noted from the previous to current year students in the results from communicative practice tasks from the National Learning Material Center (*Nasjonalt læremiddelsenter*). Though these test results showed progress, the testing group was small, so it was difficult to show that the results were from the new reading method and not from individual differences.

Grorudalen project in Oslo

Following the success of the EYLP program at Nylund school, a group of 16 schools in the Grorudalen area of Oslo decided to base their reading approach on the EYLP. These schools sent representatives on a study trip to Australia in 2008, after which the schools have used the EYLP in both Norwegian and English lessons. These schools were motivated to improve their results on the national test and grade-level achievement at the schools to reach the average level for Oslo schools. Many of these schools have a high proportion of children with a minority language background (25–96%)⁵¹. The project was originally started in grades 1–2, and gradually expanded to include grades 3–4. Some schools have begun using the Middle Years program, the EYLP equivalent for grades 5–7.

Other reports on the EYLP model

The EYLP was the focus of a Master’s thesis on how Norwegian teachers perceive the use of the program (Paust-Andersen, 2010). It presented the EYLP both in an Australian and Norwegian context and discussed its implementation in Norway. However, the study focused on the program in general, not specifically on its use in an EFL setting. Paust-Andersen found that half of the informants in the survey considered the EYLP program at their

⁵¹ The average for Groruddalen schools is 66.4% (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2009).

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school to be well organized in terms of coordination, resources, teacher training, and special education focus. In addition, 69% of the teachers experienced an improvement in the students' reading results following the implementation of the EYLP. However, Paust-Andersen found that not all of the EYLP schools in Norway have implemented all of the aspects of the program. She suggests this could be partly due to the lack of resources and coordination, the need for further training for the teachers, and the need to focus on special education. The thesis concluded that gains as a result of this program could increase greatly given more teacher training and guidance in use of the program, and increased resources and focus on special education (here specified as use of "Reading Recovery").

In another research publication, Wie (2008) compared first-grade classes at three different schools, one of which used station instruction based on the EYLP model, which they called *Lesefokus* (Reading focus). This study also focused on the EYLP in an L1 context. Among the studies of EYLP in Norway, Wie's is unique in its reporting of students' views of the program, in addition to the teachers' perspectives. Wie found that teachers managed to provide differentiated teaching to the students. While the content of the teacher's reading instruction was still similar to what they had done previously, it was organized differently. Generally, the teachers and students were positive to the program, but the students felt that moving from one station to another was sometimes slow because of disruptive students, and that some stations were more boring than others, namely, the independent and teacher stations. Wie suggested that these stations were singled out because students felt less active at these stations. Overall, the fact that the students felt less active at the independent and teacher stations may be related to the students' age and that they were just learning to read in first grade, and may therefore have found it challenging.

Another Master's thesis, Aukland (2009), focused on using action research to improve the implementation of the EYLP in grades 1-4. Through the action research conducted, it was found that teacher professional development contributed to the teacher's competence and awareness of the need for students' language development. The findings also supported the use of level-differentiated groups for guided reading as a way to promote differentiation in reading instruction.

5.6 Summary

Reading approaches as defined within this research include aspects of teachers' practices related to the development of reading ability, the practice of reading-related activities, and the core materials used for teaching reading. The field of materials research has become vast, exploring questions related to authentic versus simplified texts (including graded readers), whether materials are written for language learners or L1 readers, and the role of the textbook in foreign language reading instruction. Issues related to how simplified texts and textbooks are created, their language focus and criteria for simplification, and description of difficulty level are all relevant in this context. Previous research has suggested that there is a predominance of textbook use in Norwegian EFL classes. Additionally, the focus on short texts from textbooks suggests that intensive reading, rather than extensive reading, appears to be the standard practice in Norwegian primary EFL. However, the use of differentiated texts, such as graded readers, is one of the principles of the Early Years Literacy Program, which has been adopted in some Norwegian schools. Therefore, it is beneficial to closely follow the use of this program in EFL teaching in Norway. It is also important to gain more insight into the use of texts in primary EFL teaching in Norway, following the curriculum changes and early starting age of English instruction from 1996 to the present.

Additionally, equally important to the materials themselves is how they are used. Of particular concern within this research are the contrasts between intensive and extensive reading, whole-class and small-group reading, and whole-class reading of one text and the reading of ability-level texts. Two methods of organizing reading include shared and guided reading, both of which are teacher-led reading with a focus on using reading strategies and improving comprehension. The EYLP makes use of such a guided reading approach. Although all approaches have a place and contribute to language learning, research has shown that there is a predominance of whole-class intensive reading of texts. Many researchers have encouraged a better balance between whole-class instruction and small groups (Ankrum & Bean, 2007; Pressley, 2006; B. Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, & Rodriguez, 2002) and intensive and extensive reading techniques (Laufer, 1997; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Meara, 1997; Nation, 2009b).

6 Method

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the mixed methods approach chosen in the current study. First, an overview of the research design is presented in Section 6.2, beginning with a description of mixed methods design and an outline of the main data collection methods employed: a teacher questionnaire and a case study of four schools (including classroom observations and semi-structured interviews). Each method is described and its use in this study justified. Section 6.3 presents the questionnaire: the aims, the sample, the questionnaire's construction and its piloting, implementation, procedures, and an overview of its analysis. Section 6.4 provides an overview of the case study: the aims, the sample, the observation coding instrument and its piloting, procedures, and an overview of its analysis. Additionally, it presents the interview instruments and describes how the interview data was analyzed. Section 6.5 addresses validity and reliability, followed by ethical issues concerning the research process in section 6.6.

6.2 Design of the study

The overarching research question for this study is:

How is reading taught in Norwegian fourth- and fifth-grade EFL classes?

This overarching question is subdivided into the following four sub-research questions:

1. What materials, activities, and instructional practices do grade 4 and 5 teachers use to teach English reading?
2. To what extent do the reading approaches enable differentiation in reading instruction?
3. What differences are there in the reading interaction between teachers and students among the different reading approaches?
4. What are teachers' perceptions of their English reading instruction and best practice?

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Due to the complexity of teaching, the classroom context, and classroom research, as well as the limitations associated with every research method, a mixed methods approach to data collection was adopted to strengthen the validity of the study (Dörnyei, 2007). As a mixed methods study, it combined both quantitative and qualitative data (Dörnyei, 2007). Mixed methods research has “a unique potential to provide evidence for the validity of research outcomes through the convergence and corroboration of findings” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45).

The data collection proceeded in two stages. First, a national questionnaire was created and disseminated among fourth- and fifth-grade teachers in Norway (the quantitative data, autumn 2010). Second, based on the findings of the questionnaire, four case study schools were selected for observations of lessons, and interviews with fourth- and fifth-grade teachers and some students were conducted during a six-month period in 2011 (the qualitative data).

Mixed methods methodology

In the past three decades, the “mixed methods” or “multiple methods” approach has developed “as a major methodological movement across the social sciences, and many are starting to view it as a third approach to research, alongside quantitative and qualitative research” (Plano Clark, Creswell, Green, & Shope, 2008, p. 363). Similar claims have been made by other researchers (R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Although there is a wide range of terms and definitions for mixed methods, this research paradigm is often also referred to as “integrative research” (R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), “multimethod research” (e.g., Hunter & Brewer, 2003), and “triangulated studies” (cf. Sandelowski, 2003). However, mixed methods research has become a commonly accepted term. According to Johnson et al. (2007), the definitions of mixed methods research, although varied, refer to five aspects: what is mixed, the mixing stage, the breadth of mixed research, why mixing is carried out in research, and the orientation of the mixed methods research. Mixed methods research has been defined by Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) as “research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a

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single study or program of inquiry” (p. 4). Many researchers believe that the qualitative and quantitative research approaches “should not be viewed as opposing poles in a dichotomy, but rather as complementary means of investigating the complex phenomena at work in second language acquisition” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 164). Mixed methods methodology is considered a strength for educational research in its use of multiple perspectives, theories, and research methods (Dörnyei, 2007). This methodology can be used to achieve a fuller understanding of the target phenomenon.

Achieving a fuller understanding of the target phenomenon was one of the main purposes of the mixed methods used in the current research. The breadth of data gathered from teachers across Norway in the questionnaire on variation in their practices and perceptions about EFL reading instruction was supplemented by the in-depth study of “typical” examples of three of the reading approaches, as represented in the case study schools. In this sense, the two research methods serve a complementary function (Dörnyei, 2007), where the case study observations and interviews provided an enriched understanding of how the reading approaches were implemented. Additionally, the case study allowed the researcher to clarify and elaborate upon the original understanding of the reading approaches as manifested in the questionnaire, with the exception of an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers school.

In this study, a sequential collection of data was used; the quantitative data was collected prior to the qualitative data. It was considered beneficial initially to get a broad picture of the Norwegian primary school EFL context and current EFL teaching, (i.e., by examining the results of the questionnaire used in this research), and then to follow up this broad picture by performing an in-depth study, (i.e., examining the four case study schools, where observations and interviews were conducted).

Survey

The purpose of conducting a survey in educational research is to gather large-scale data from a wide population (Cohen, Morrison, & Manion, 2000) and to elicit comparable information from a large group of respondents (Mackey &

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Gass, 2005). Thus, a questionnaire can allow the researcher to assess the state of the current context in an exploratory way.

The quantitative data, gathered through the questionnaire, helped to fill a gap in the research field. Although there is some previous data on English teaching, the surveys in Norway are either old or outdated (Drew, 2004; Lagerström, 2007), addressed different grade levels (Bugge & Dessingué, 2009; Hellekjær, 2005), or had a different focus (Lagerström, 2007; Sandvik, 2008). Other surveys on EFL teaching were conducted in different contexts or countries (Borg, 2009; S. Rixon, 2011). The overarching research question and one of the sub-research questions for the current study are exploratory in nature, intending to provide an overview of current reading practices and materials used in Norwegian EFL classes, variation within these, whether the variation is associated with certain EFL reading approaches, and with teachers' perceptions regarding EFL reading instruction. Thus, the most useful data collection method to gain this overview was deemed to be a survey using a national teacher questionnaire.

Case study

Case study research allows the researcher to combine a variety of methods of collecting and organizing data in order to provide a greater understanding of the case being studied (Dörnyei, 2007). The case study schools provided insight into the implementation of the different reading approaches. Four case schools were selected for this study, representing three of the reading approaches defined in this research⁵². The cases allowed the researcher to present in-depth descriptions of the teaching and interaction taking place within the Norwegian primary classrooms, which is a complex phenomenon. By looking at specific cases of reading approaches in great detail, the researcher was able to examine the complex classroom situations and the interactions within these contexts. The case study allowed for the follow-up of

⁵² The four reading approaches were used as categories for the questionnaire. Based on the findings of the questionnaire and problems locating an appropriate school using an extensive reading approach through graded readers, this was reduced to three approaches, namely, textbook-based, combination, and EYLP approaches, which were used for the case study in schools. This is further explained in section 6.4.2.

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findings in the questionnaire, but also allowed the research to be supplemented and new areas further explored, (e.g., the greater focus on teacher-student interaction while reading).

Although the topic could have been researched in different ways, the in-depth case study of four schools enabled the researcher to ascertain a level of detail in reading instruction and interaction which would not have been possible through a survey alone or through fewer observations at a greater number of schools. The case study data supplemented and supported that from the questionnaire sent nationally to teachers.

6.3 Teacher questionnaire

6.3.1 Questionnaire: aims and research components

To shed light on the first research question, “What materials, activities and instructional practices do grade 4 and 5 teachers use to teach English reading?”, five questionnaire components that specifically address the reading approaches and how the reading approaches relate to other factors, were selected for statistical analysis. The first component aimed to discover which reading approach was used by the teachers in the teaching of EFL reading. The second component addressed whether teachers used the same reading approach in English as they did in Norwegian. The third component focused on whether teachers’ higher education qualifications were associated with the reading approach they used. The fourth component addressed whether a particular reading approach was associated with the number of books in the classroom or school library. Finally, the fifth component aimed to find out whether the use of particular practices was associated with the different reading approaches.

Related to the analysis of these components, it was first hypothesized that the majority of English teachers would use a textbook-based reading approach, as this has been standard practice within EFL instruction in Norway (Drew et al., 2007). Second, it was thought that the reading approach in English classes would be determined by the reading approach used in Norwegian classes, based on the assumption that new practices and materials that have been beneficial in L1 reading instruction would be applied to L2 reading

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instruction. Third, it was hypothesized that there would be relatively more teachers with higher education qualifications and in-service training using a combination, extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers, or EYLP approach because, through training and higher education, teachers would be exposed to different reading approaches and practices. Fourth, it was assumed that there would be more books in classrooms and school libraries in schools with combination, extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers, and EYLP approaches because these approaches capitalize on the use of a wider variety of text types. Finally, it was hypothesized that teachers using these three approaches would use a greater variety of practices and materials than teachers using a textbook-based approach; these three approaches often incorporate a greater variety of practices and materials to provide more differentiated instruction.

Additionally, there were a number of exploratory research areas, including: “What are teachers’ perceptions of EFL reading instruction and language learning?” and “Are teaching practices similar in fourth- and fifth grades?” Teachers’ perceptions were measured as responses to statements related to EFL reading instruction and language learning. Responses from the teachers who taught the fourth- and fifth grades, or both grades, were compared for certain variables where appropriate⁵³.

6.3.2 Questionnaire sample

The target population was defined as all teachers who teach English in grades 4 and/or 5 in Norwegian primary schools. A list of all of the primary and lower secondary schools in Norway was obtained from *Oppl ring og Utdanning i Norge* (Training and Education in Norway)⁵⁴. This list contained information about the geographic location, type of schools (e.g., public, private, special), number of classes, number of students, and which grades were at the school. Schools meeting certain criteria were removed from the list (special schools, medical institutes, and schools with no students in the relevant grades); 583 schools in total were excluded. After the aforementioned

⁵³ For some categories the numbers within each cell became too small to warrant this type of analysis.

⁵⁴ http://ped.lex.no/4DACTION/WA_Adresse

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schools had been removed, a population of 2572 schools remained. The questionnaire was sent electronically to 1000 schools, of which 716 were primary and 284 were combined schools (i.e., grades 1–10). There were 370 responses from fourth- and fifth-grade teachers at 310 different schools⁵⁵ (see also section 6.3.4, Questionnaire procedure). Thirty-two teachers taught both fourth- and fifth grades.

Questionnaire stratification variables

Prior to the sample selection, three stratification variables were chosen to aid in selecting a nationally representative sample. The three strata, namely, geographic location, school type, and number of students, are relevant in Norway (Ina V. S. Mullis, 2003), since the same stratification variables have been used in PIRLS and TIMSS⁵⁶, two international educational research surveys, to obtain a representative sample of respondents in Norway. In other countries, other stratification variables were used to obtain a representative sample. The distribution of schools within these categories is shown in Tables 6 and 7. The first variable, geographic location, contained four categories:

- Oslo and Akershus
- the rest of eastern Norway
- southern and western Norway
- Trøndelag and northern Norway

The second variable, school type, contained two categories:

- primary school (1–7, 1–4, 1–6, 5–7)
- combined school (1–10, 0–12, 0–13, 3–10, 4–10, 5–10, 1–11, 1–10+vgs)

The third variable, number of students, contained four categories:

- 0–50
- 51–150
- 151–300
- over 300

⁵⁵ Since there was a possibility of multiple responses from each school, an exact response rate cannot be calculated.

⁵⁶ PIRLS – Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (I.V.S. Mullis, 2003), and TIMMS – Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (I.V.S. Mullis, Martin, & Foy, 2008)

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The schools were first stratified, and then the number of schools needed from each of the strata was randomly selected. In relation to the population of teachers, there were relatively more responses from teachers in eastern Norway than in the other parts of Norway, $\chi^2 (3, N=2892)=160.8005, p<.001$ (see Table 6). Additionally, there were relatively more teachers from larger schools (over 300 students) who responded than teachers from smaller schools, $\chi^2 (3, N=2892)=26.2206, p<.001$ (see Table 7). However, there is no reason to believe that having more large schools and schools from eastern Norway would affect the results, nor that this sample is not representative.

Although the response percentage was low and certain strata were slightly overrepresented, the number of respondents produced extensive data that provides information about fourth- and fifth grade EFL reading practices, materials use, and teachers' perspectives. Within educational research, low response rates are a challenge when teachers are not required to respond. There are great demands on their time generally, and when asked to volunteer to participate in a questionnaire, not everyone will be equally positive. However, every attempt was made to make the questionnaire easy to answer (e.g., it was an online survey, the teachers received the link in an e-mail, it was written in Norwegian), and to make it relevant for the teachers. Additionally, several reminders were sent and sufficient time to answer was provided to attempt to maximize the response rate.

Table 6: Geographical representation in the sample and the population (actual and expected frequencies)

Sources	Geographical categories				
	Oslo & Akershus	Eastern	Southern & Western	Trøndelag & Northern	Total
Sample	42	112	131	88	373
	43.34	60.88	136.59	97.38	
Population	294	630	928	677	2519
	292.66	411.12	922.41	657.62	
Total	336	472	1059	755	2892

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Table 7: School size representation in the sample and the population (actual and expected frequencies)

Sources	School size				Total
	0–50	51–150	151–300	Over 300	
Sample	41	106	125	101	373
	67.07	111.95	103.31	90.67	
Population	479	762	676	602	2519
	417.22	756.05	697.69	612.33	
Total	520	868	801	703	2892

6.3.3 Questionnaire instrument

Before designing the questionnaire, other questionnaires and surveys that had been sent to teachers were reviewed to establish if an instrument existed that would meet the needs of the current research. The questionnaires that were reviewed included some for language teachers (L. Q. Allen, 2002; Bugge & Dessingué, 2009; Collie Graden, 1996; K. E. Johnson, 1992), as well as a literacy survey for Norwegian teachers (Sandvik, 2008) and a survey comparing Norwegian and Dutch EFL teachers (Drew et al., 2007). Few surveys had been sent to EFL teachers, especially primary school teachers. Many of the surveys of language teachers focused on teachers' beliefs about reading instruction, but they did not address (or only briefly addressed) the broader topics of what materials, activities, and instructional practices were used during language instruction (L. Q. Allen, 2002; Westwood, Knight, & Redden, 1997). An appropriate instrument for the present study was not found, namely, one which addressed teachers' background and qualifications, reading materials, teaching practices, and perspectives on primary school EFL reading instruction. However, the aforementioned studies were useful in introducing concepts and themes that were important to address in the questionnaire used in the current research, as well as providing insight into survey question design.

In particular, Drew (2004) provided a basis for the structure for questions related to practices. Bugge and Dessingue (2009) provided insight into other topics, such as knowledge of and use of the *European Language Portfolio*. Sandvik (2008) addressed issues of teacher beliefs about reading instruction, which provided some insight relevant for the current research. Further insight into relevant questions and topics was attained through a thorough research

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review of EFL teaching practices, reading research, reading teaching practices, and reading materials. Additionally, a review of current policy issues in Norwegian EFL teaching and primary school education provided the content for some of the questions on teachers' perspectives.

Phase 2: Construction

The questionnaire, disseminated to teachers in Norwegian, contained 48 questions; 46 of them were closed and 2 were open (see Appendix 3A). The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: teachers' background and general school information, teaching practices, and teachers' perceptions about EFL reading.

The response options for the testlets⁵⁷ regarding practices were often given on a four-item frequency scale based on the number of hours per month the practices were used (0, 1–2, 3–5, and more than 5 hours). Other scales and testlet questions were also used to obtain background and demographic information regarding the school and classes and the reading approach used. The responses to belief statements were given on a six-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

Section one: demographics

Section one contained questions regarding the teachers' demographic information: teaching experience and qualifications; information about the school, such as size, location, and size of classes; hours of English instruction per week; and cooperation with other English and Norwegian teachers. The questions regarding the classes were divided for fourth- and fifth grades, where teachers answered for the level they taught, answering both if they taught both grades. In this case, branching was used to direct teachers to the correct questions.

⁵⁷ A testlet is a related group of items which are all given based on a similar question formulation and answer options.

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Section two: reading approach and classroom practices

Section two focused on the reading approach (see Chapter 5) used for reading instruction and classroom practices, including the reading materials used, how they were used, types of interaction in the classroom, and assessment methods. Many of these testlet questions asked for the frequency with which certain activities occurred. For example, a frequency response was given for each item of the testlet:

How many times in the last month in your English reading instruction have you used:

- a) Texts in the textbook or workbook
- b) Books written for English-speaking children
- c) Books written for second or foreign language learners
- d) Newspapers
- e) Magazines
- f) Comics
- g) Internet texts
- h) Other reading materials

To obtain detailed information from teachers without asking all of them irrelevant questions, some follow-up questions were included. This type of conditional questioning was constructed using the web-based questionnaire design in a type of branching system, in which teachers giving answers that did not meet the criteria were not given the follow-up question. In addition to the above-mentioned use of branching, the questionnaire used branching four additional times:

1. Teachers using a combination reading approach were asked a follow-up closed question regarding the percentage of time graded readers were used (less than 30%, approximately 30%, approximately 50%, approximately 70%, or more than 70%).
2. Teachers were asked if students had read English books at home or taken books home to read. If they answered “yes,” they were asked two additional closed questions: were the parents involved (yes or no) and what were their expectations for reading? Teachers were given four options (read the text, read the text aloud to their parents, translate it, and read and answer questions about the text) and asked to mark whichever expectations applied.

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3. Teachers were asked if they were familiar with the *European Language Portfolio*. If they answered “yes,” they were asked how often they had used it in the previous month (0 times, 1–2 times, 3–5 times, more than 5 times), and if they felt it was useful (not useful, somewhat useful, very useful, unsure).
4. For three questions regarding teacher qualifications, reading approach, and the types of reading materials used, an “other” category was provided as a possible answer. If they answered “other,” they were asked to elaborate on their answer in an open follow-up question.

In some cases, questions were followed up with an open question, while at other times with subsequent closed questions. For some of the questions, if teachers marked a particular answer, they were asked a follow-up question. For example, if teachers marked the “other reading materials” category (see example question above), they were asked to specify which other materials they used in an open question. An example of a question followed by a series of closed questions was one about reading at home. The teachers were first asked: “Have the students read English books at home or taken books home to read?” A “yes” response to the question triggered the following question: “If yes, are the parents involved?” and the question: “What are the expectations for the students’ reading at home? (check all that apply)

- a. Read the text
- b. Read the text aloud to their parents
- c. Translate it
- d. Read and answer questions about the text”

Two open questions were included to obtain information regarding teaching practices. The first question asked teachers to give an example of a reading activity they had carried out in their class in the previous month and which they felt had been effective. The second open question asked teachers to provide examples of the types of questions they asked students when working with a text.

Section three: teachers’ perceptions

In section three, teachers were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with various belief statements. These statements were presented on a Likert scale with six scale points (completely disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree,

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somewhat agree, agree, completely agree). The statements were grouped by topic. They covered a variety of topics, including the importance of teacher qualifications, the influence of the national test, whether they felt teacher education had prepared them adequately to teach, the starting age for English reading instruction, the method of reading, the materials and texts used, the language of instruction, and perceived challenges of teaching English.

Phase 3: Review

The questionnaire draft was reviewed by two elementary school teachers and two other readers. The two elementary school teachers used a think-aloud process, where they shared what they were thinking as they read questions to confirm a common understanding of them. By analyzing the think-aloud protocol, it was checked whether the teachers understood the questions, that is, whether they understood what was asked in the questions. Any misunderstandings were clarified by the researcher. Changes were made to questions that were not understood by the teachers. It was decided at this point that certain terms, such as “extensive reading,” may be unfamiliar to Norwegian EFL teachers. Thus, the researcher decided to use the term *bruk av letlestbøker* (use of easy readers), a term more familiar to the teachers and which would be understood to mean graded readers.

After designing the questionnaire, it was reviewed by several researchers within the field for content validity. The questionnaire was reviewed in English by two researchers at an American university. The translation was done in cooperation with an English teacher in a Norwegian primary school who is a native Norwegian speaker. The researcher collaborated with the translator to clarify intended meaning, terminology, and content.

The translated questionnaire was subsequently edited by another Norwegian lecturer in the English department at the University of Stavanger to validate the meaning of the questions since Norwegian is not the researcher’s L1. It was edited for grammar and syntax, and vocabulary was compared between the English and Norwegian to confirm clarity of meaning and accuracy within the context. After translation, the questionnaire was reviewed in English and in Norwegian by researchers at the University of Stavanger.

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The approved and revised questionnaire was piloted to refine the research instrument and to further address potential translation issues. The same stratification variables were used to select the pilot sample as for the main sample (see full description above in 6.3.2). The pilot was sent to a sample of 70 schools from the target population that were not included in the main study. From these, there were 20 responses. The pilot data was analyzed by calculating frequency statistics and standard error to check for discriminative power, and distribution characteristics such as skewness. The researcher also reviewed comments and questions from the respondents regarding the questionnaire format and the questions. The resulting revisions are discussed in the following section.

Phase 4: Revision

Following the pilot, some minor changes were made. Additional clarifying instructions were added to one question. Teachers were instructed to select both fourth- and fifth grade if they taught both grades. Another question regarding the length of a lesson was removed because the answers received from the pilot indicated that all of the teachers taught either 45- or 60-minute lessons, which was not a significant difference for the research. For the question about the reading approach used in Norwegian instruction, a new option was added (“I don’t know”), following a comment from a teacher stating she did not teach Norwegian and therefore did not know what the practice was in the Norwegian lessons. An additional question was placed as a follow-up to the question regarding reading approach. The teachers who had answered that they used a “combination textbook-based and graded/easy readers” were asked to specify what percentage of the time they used with graded/easy readers. They were asked to do so because it was considered possible that some teachers had misinterpreted the previous question by including any use of easy/graded readers in reading instruction, as opposed to a significant proportion of their reading approach. For the purposes of the research, it was important to clarify to what extent the easy/graded readers were the basis of instruction. The final modification added the phrase, “Do the students have English books at home?” to the question about reading English books at home. This opened up the possibility of including all English reading at home, even if the books were not sent home from the school.

6.3.4 Questionnaire procedure

The revised questionnaire was sent electronically by e-mail (with an invitation that contained information about the questionnaire and a link to the questionnaire in Questback) to the principals of the 1,000 schools in the sample. There was no information available about how many fourth- and fifth-grade classes were in the school and whether they were taught by the same teachers. Thus, it was only possible to calculate a response rate based on the total number of schools initially contacted. The principals were encouraged to send the invitation to participate in the questionnaire to the appropriate teachers at their school. In the invitation e-mail, the principals and teachers were informed of the aims of the questionnaire, the name and contact information of the researcher in case of questions, and the web address for the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was disseminated using a web-based service, Questback. The questions were entered by the researcher. The invitations were sent via Questback with an automatically programmed reminder to respond 6 and 12 days after the questionnaire was originally sent.

6.3.5 Questionnaire data analysis techniques

The questionnaire data was analyzed using a statistical program, PASW Statistics 18.0. Statistical procedures were performed to compute descriptive (e.g., means, percentages) and inductive statistics (Chi-square) for data regarding the teachers' qualifications, the reading approach, materials, and practices used in English instruction. A Chi-square analysis of independence was chosen as the statistical analysis to relate the use of the reading approaches to different factors, for example, different practices and access to reading materials. A Chi-square analysis of independence is used when testing two categorical variables from a single population. It is used to determine whether there is a significant association between the two variables.

Graded reader and EYLP categories were pooled in the analyses due to very low frequencies. Although these two categories differ in some classroom practices, they use similar reading materials as the basis of their reading

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instruction (i.e., both use graded readers rather than textbooks; see also section 5.5).

Since the questionnaire was sent to both fourth- and fifth-grade teachers, additional questions regarding the grades the teachers taught (such as class size and number of hours of instruction per week) were divided for the fourth- and fifth grades; teachers answered for the level they taught and answered both sets of questions if they taught both grades. This information allowed for a comparison of answers between fourth- and fifth-grade teachers, and those who taught both grades. This was done to find out whether teachers who taught both grades used different practices or had different perceptions about EFL reading instruction than teachers who taught only one grade.

After gathering the responses, frequency statistics were calculated to provide the actual number and percentage of respondents in each category. The percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number.

When conducting a Chi-square analysis of independence, one value calculated is the standardized residuals. The standardized residuals indicate the importance of the individual cells to the ultimate Chi-square value. These indicate how many standard deviations above or below the expected count a particular observed count is. Additionally, the adjusted standardized residual gives a z-value of the cell residual (expected – observed frequency), indicating in which cell to look for high and low frequencies relative to the marginal frequencies (Adèr & Mellenbergh, 2008, p. 349). An adjusted residual takes into account the overall size of the sample and gives a fairer indication of how far the observed count is from the expected count than a standard residual. Thus, this allows for a comparison to help understand the associations in the table. Under the null hypothesis, the two variables compared in the Chi-square analysis are independent; the adjusted residuals will have a standard distribution, i.e., have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Thus, an adjusted residual that is more than 1.96 indicates that the number of cases in that cell is significantly larger than would be expected if the null hypothesis were true, with a significance level of .05.

Crosstables contain the absolute frequency of responses (observed frequency), the expected frequency, adjusted standardized residual, and total. Adjusted

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standardized residuals are also reported as they indicate the importance of a particular cell to the ultimate Chi-square value. Values in the tables that are significant are marked with an asterisk. A value of 1.96 is significant at 5%(*), a value of 2.58 is significant at 1%(**), and a value of 3.29 is significant at 0.1%(***).

For some of the Chi-square analyses, the tables are provided in the appendix. When tables are provided in the appendix, an explanation of how to interpret the table is provided in a note under the table.

The Likert scale used in the questionnaire contained 6-points. For the purposes of the Chi-square analyses, which require a minimum of 5 respondents in categories in order to avoid issues of reliability, two of the categories were collapsed: “strongly disagree” was merged with “disagree” and “strongly agree” was merged with “agree.”

6.4 The case study schools

6.4.1 The case study schools: aims and data sources

The aim of the case study was to gain in-depth data on the implementation of the reading approaches in schools. The case study was conducted at four schools over a period of six months. Data was collected from the following sources at the case study schools (see Table 8):

1. Observations of lessons
2. Interviews with teachers
3. Interviews with students
4. Texts used during reading activities and instruction in the lessons
5. Students reading aloud individually

6.4.2 Case study sample

Four schools were selected for the case study to represent a particular reading approach and sampling based on the following criteria:

1. Follow-up from the questionnaire
2. Invitation letter to local schools
3. Reading approach used by one or more teachers at the school
4. Geographic location and size of school

All primary and combined primary and lower secondary schools in the municipalities of Sandnes, Sola, and Stavanger were sent written invitations to participate in the observational case study⁵⁸. In addition, teachers who answered the questionnaire were asked if they would be willing to be contacted for follow-up research. The schools were invited to participate in the research and were asked questions regarding which models of Norwegian and English reading instruction best fitted their school. Schools that were either very small or difficult to travel to were not included. The schools that were contacted represented four broad categories of reading approaches: 1) schools using a textbook-based approach; 2) schools using an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers; 3) schools using a combination of textbook-based and graded readers approach; 4) schools using/adapting an established reading approach (e.g., from Australia or New Zealand, such as the Early Years Literacy Program; see Chapter 5).

Schools that fitted the four categories were chosen. For the categories of textbook-based approach, combination of textbook-based and graded readers, and EYLP approach, four schools were found. Two of these schools used a combination approach. Two of the schools were located in Oslo and two in the Rogaland region.

⁵⁸ The school list was obtained from Opplæring og Utdanning i Norge, PEDLEX Norsk Skoleinformasjon, at http://ped.lex.no/4DACTION/WA_Adresse, September, 2010. Invitations were sent to 72 schools. Three schools did not receive invitations: two special schools and the International School of Stavanger.

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Table 8: Summary of research participants' data

Case study schools and teachers		Visits	Observations fourth grade	Observations fifth grade	Formal interviews	Informal interviews	Additional data sources
School 1	Teacher 1	5	5	5	2	2	E-mails
School 2	Teacher 2	5	5		2	3	E-mails
	Teacher 3	5		5	2	1	E-mails
School 3	Teacher 4	5	5	5	2	4	E-mails Teaching materials
School 4	Teacher 5	1		1 (2 class hours)	1		E-mails
	Teacher 6	1	1 (2 class hours)			1	
	Teacher 7	2	2 (4 class hours)		1		
	Teacher 8	3		3 (5.5 hrs, 7.3 class hrs)	2	2	E-mails Student work

Originally, a fifth school had been selected to represent the extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers (described in Norwegian as using easy/graded readers as the basis of reading instruction). This school was later deemed unrepresentative of what had been expected of a school using an extensive reading approach because the school combined some of the EYLP practices with some aspects of extensive reading. Thus, this school has not been included in the analysis. Given the paucity of schools using an extensive reading approach, and the delay in finding an appropriate school, it was decided not to replace the school. Consequently, there are four schools in the case study research representing three reading approaches.

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The materials, activities, and instructional practices used in these approaches are presented in Chapter 8, based on a series of lesson observations and interviews with teachers and students.

The schools, as previously mentioned, were chosen on the basis of the reading approach used by one or more of the teachers at the school. At each school, one teacher was originally contacted, either based on their questionnaire response or in response to an e-mail sent to the principals in the local area. Subsequently, the contacted teacher was asked to inquire if another teacher teaching the other grade in question (either fourth or fifth grade) would be willing to participate, which applied to two schools (one of the combination approach schools and the EYLP approach school). Two of the schools, one of the combination approach schools and the textbook-based approach school, had one English teacher for both fourth- and fifth grades.

The backgrounds and experience of the teachers varied. The teachers ranged in age from 23 to those in their fifties. They had between 1 and more than 20 years of teaching experience. Their English teaching qualifications ranged from none to 60 study points (i.e., a year of full time study). Two of the teachers taught both fourth- and fifth grade English, two only fourth grade, and two only fifth grade.

Textbook-based approach school - School 1

The textbook-based approach school, School 1, was a primary school (grades 1–7) in a semi-rural area (in a neighborhood outside of a city) in the Rogaland region. There were between 180 and 200 students at the school. The school contained fewer regular size classrooms than the number of classes, and for this reason some of the small classes had been moved to very small rooms. However, the school had both *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk* (Standard Norwegian and New Norwegian) classes in most grades, resulting in small class sizes in some cases. The school was in an area with few minority-language speaking children. Of those who spoke a language other than Norwegian as their first or second language at home, for many of them that language was English. However, this number was still a small percentage of the total school population.

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The teacher, Emilie, who was observed at this school taught both fourth- and fifth-grade English. She was not assigned to a particular class and did not teach Norwegian, and thus could be classified as an English subject specialist. She had English teaching qualifications from a university (60 study points) and six years of experience teaching English.

The majority of the observations occurred in one fourth-grade and one fifth-grade class. The fourth-grade class was very small, comprising only 12 students. This was a *Nynorsk* (New Norwegian) class, and in that grade the majority of the parents had chosen to have their children in the *Bokmål* (Standard Norwegian) class that year. Additionally, three of the students were often taken out of English lessons to receive extra teaching in certain subjects in which they were struggling. This meant that on some days there were only eight students in the class. The classroom was also correspondingly small. All of the desks faced towards the front of the room in rows, with a middle aisle. The classroom had an interactive whiteboard, one computer in the front, and a few bookshelves in the back of the room. The physical restrictions of the classroom made seating arrangements very limited, and it also could have potentially limited group work. All of the children were of Norwegian background.

The fifth-grade class was a standard size class, comprising 27 students. The classroom was large and open. The desks were primarily facing forwards in groups of three and four, but could easily be rearranged for group work. This classroom was also equipped with an interactive whiteboard and a computer at the front of the room. There were two children of non-Norwegian ethnicity in the class.

Combination approach schools – Schools 2 and 3

School 2

The first combination approach school, School 2, was a large urban school in Oslo with a fairly low percentage of minority-language speaking students. The school building was large, and it had a correspondingly large school population. The classrooms in both the fourth- and fifth-grade classes that were observed were of an average size, allowing for space for all of the

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students (26 and 28, respectively). In the fifth-grade class there were four children who either had English as their L1 or had lived in an English-speaking country, and there were two children with a minority background. The fourth-grade class had two children with a minority background. The desk arrangements in both grades were traditional, organized in three columns facing towards the board, in groupings of two or three. The students were occasionally given new assigned seats. When working in class, it was normal for them to talk in pairs with the person seated next to them.

At this school, both of the teachers whom the researcher observed were the main teachers for their class, teaching their students both Norwegian and English. Anne was the fifth-grade class teacher for 5B. She was a middle-aged woman with nine years of teaching experience. She also had formal English qualifications (a year study, i.e., 60 study points of English). Silje, the fourth-grade teacher, was in her twenties and had taught for five years. She was taking an in-service English course at the time of the data collection (i.e., one that would give her a qualification in English), a part-time study allowing her both to teach and attend the course at the same time.

School 3

The second combination approach school, School 3, was an urban school in Rogaland with over 300 students. The school was very modern both in terms of the building facilities and its equipment. The school had a low percentage of minority-language students, especially in the classes observed for the case study.

Kari was both the fourth- and fifth-grade English teacher at the school. She had been teaching English for 25 years, and was the most experienced of the teachers observed and interviewed. She had 60 study points of English, and had also taken in-service courses following the implementation of *LK06*. As the English specialist in the school, she collaborated with other English teachers in the city and county on a monthly basis.

The fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms were traditional in their organization. All of the students sat in desks in rows facing the blackboard. The physical organization of the room remained constant throughout all of the

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observations. The classes comprised 21–25 students and had on average three hours a week of English in fourth grade, and two hours a week in fifth grade.

EYLP approach school - School 4

The EYLP approach school, School 4, was an urban school in Oslo, and the majority of the school population (almost 90%) were minority-language speaking students. It was a large school with students in grades 1–10. Prior to the EYLP program's implementation, a member of the administration and a faculty member had traveled to Australia to learn about the program. The program was adapted to fit the Norwegian context and was thus also referred to as *Tidlig Innsats* (TIEY – Tidlig Innsats-Early Years). Other teachers at the school had subsequently been trained to teach the program. The EYLP approach was first implemented at the school in 2007, initially in grades 1–4, and subsequently in grade 5 in 2010. Thus, the fourth-grade students had experienced the EYLP in both English and Norwegian since beginning in first grade, whereas the fifth-grade students were using this approach for the first time that year.

At this school two fifth-grade teachers and two fourth-grade teachers were observed⁵⁹. Lisa, one of the fifth-grade teachers, was in her twenties and was educated as a German teacher. This was her first year of teaching and she had no higher education qualifications in English. Cecilie, the second fifth-grade teacher, was in her late twenties and had five years of teaching experience. Before implementing the EYLP, Cecilie and other teachers had observed the program at Nylund school in Stavanger, had visited another school in Oslo, and had traveled with another teacher to Australia to gain more insight into the approach. Thus, Cecilie had more experience and training with the program than the other teachers in her school.

Lisa's fifth-grade class comprised 27 students, 23 of whom were of minority language background. In Cecilie's fifth-grade class of 25 students, there were only 4 ethnic Norwegians. Cecilie had been teaching this class since they were in second grade, but in previous years she had been using what she

⁵⁹ All of the fourth-grade observations were conducted in one class. The second fourth-grade teacher was a long-term substitute for the first teacher.

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referred to as “traditional” teaching methods (not EYLP) and the *Stairs* textbook.

Both of the fifth-grade classrooms were set up similarly. The desks were organized in groups of four, with the students facing each other. This desk formation was also used for the different learning stations (see section 5.5.3). Additionally, there were tables in the back of the room against the wall where laptop computers were set up for the computer station. This was on the opposite side of the classroom from the blackboard. The teacher also used one of the sets of desks as the teacher station. There was no designated reading corner in the room, but reading was rather set up at one of the stations where books were put out for the students from which to choose.

The fourth-grade teacher, Kari, was in her thirties and had general teaching qualifications, but did not have specific qualifications in English. The fourth-grade class observed for this study comprised 25 students, 5 of whom were ethnic Norwegians. The students sat at desks in groups of six, arranged so that they were facing one another. The front of the classroom had a blackboard. The teacher used one of the groups of desks for the teacher reading station. There was an established reading corner that used a bookshelf as a divider between it and the rest of the classroom. There was a carpet and pillows in the reading area where students could sit on the floor. There was also a separate area for the computer station at the back of the room, where there were laptop computers on tables. The other stations were located at various desk groups. When the students were not working at stations, they were sitting at their desks. It was a large classroom that was well suited for working at stations.

Overall, these teachers do not present a representative sample of primary school teachers in Norway, as four of the seven teachers had formal English qualifications, and one was taking an in-service course (that would give her a formal qualification in English) during the data collection period.

6.4.3 Observation coding instrument

The researcher decided to use an observation coding instrument to support collecting consistent data from the case study schools during the classroom

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observations. It provided focus for the observations as well as defined categories to aid reliability in coding.

After a review of multiple observation coding instruments, it was decided to employ the CIERA observational system in this research study. Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez (2005), in a study carried out by the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA), studied the school-level and classroom-level factors that impacted students' reading growth. For the study, they developed an observational system to aid the collection of observational data during elementary literacy instruction. The system had the following areas of focus for data collection: grouping strategies, literacy events or activities, materials, interaction styles, expected student responses to literacy events, and student engagement rate (see Table 9). This tool has been validated through extensive previous research (B. Taylor, 2004; B. Taylor et al., 2005; B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002). When the observational system was used in the CIERA study, the researchers achieved a high level of interrater reliability (from 86–100% at the different levels).

During the observations in the current research, two types of data were collected: qualitative note-taking (a narrative of what was said and done in five-minute increments), and quantitatively-oriented coding based on the previously mentioned categories (see Table 9 and Appendix 4A). The coding was conducted in five-minute increments following the note taking. As it was possible for more than one code to be observed in a five-minute segment, some increments were coded more than once at the same level within the same segment. The following are two examples of five-minute coding segments from the current research, including observation notes and the accompanying coding.

The teacher asks students for the title of the excerpt in English and the meaning of the title. Students listen to the text on CD and follow along in their textbooks. Some of the students read aloud along with the texts. It seems that all of the students are following along with the text.

c/w/r l/wi/n/o t/r/l r/or-tt/l

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The teacher tells students to discuss with their partner what the text was about. Most students translate. Students focus more on individual words than just retelling the story (direct translation), even though the teacher said it was not necessary and had reminded them of this, mentioning they did not have to explain word by word.

c/w/p/r ml/c/n t/l or

After the observation, the codings were tabulated and entered into a coding tally sheet. The possibility of multiple coding within a segment level consequently meant that the coding tabulations could also equal more than 100% within each level.

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Table 9: Codes for classroom observation

Level and description	codes	Level and description	codes
Level 1 – Who		P4=multisyllabic	p4
Classroom teacher	c	Word recognition strategies	wr
Reading specialist	r	Phonemic awareness	pa
Special education	se	Letter ID	li
Other specialist	sp	Spelling	s
No one	n	Other	0
Other	0	Not applicable	9
Not applicable	9	Level 5 – Material	Code
Level 2 – Grouping	Code	Narrative	n
Whole class/large group	w	Informational	i
Small group	s	Student writing	w
Pairs	p	Board/Chart	b
Individual	i	Worksheet	w
Other	0	Other	0
Not applicable	9	Not applicable	9
Level 3 – General focus	Code	Level 6 – Teacher interaction	Code
Reading	r	Telling	t
Composition/writing	w	Modeling	m
Other language	l	Recitation	r
Other	0	Coaching/scaffolding	c
Not applicable	9	Listening/watching	l
Level 4 – Specific focus	Code	Reading aloud	ra
Reading connected text	r	Assessment	a
Listening to connected text	l	Discussion	d
Vocabulary	v	Other	0
Meaning of text, lower		Not applicable	9
m1 for talk	m1	Level 7 – Expected student response	code
m2 for writing	m2		
Meaning of text, higher		Reading	r
m1 for talk	m3	Reading turn-taking	r-tt
m2 for writing	m4	Orally responding	or
Comprehension skill	c	Oral turn-taking	or-tt
Comprehension strategy	cs	Listening	l
Writing	w	Writing	w
Word ID	wi	Manipulating	m
Sight words	sw	Other	0
Phonics		Not applicable	9
P1= letter sound	p1	Reading	r
P2=letter by letter	p2	Reading turn-taking	r-tt
P3=onset/rime	p3		

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Phase 1: Pilot of the instrument in a Norwegian primary school

The instrument was piloted to increase validity in a Norwegian school as it had not previously been used in an L2 context. This school used a textbook-based reading approach. The instrument covered the categories necessary to record the content, activity, and interaction during the lesson. It was decided not to make alterations to the instrument.

Phase 2: Using the instrument in the classes at the case study schools

The observation coding framework was used at all the schools, increasing the reliability of the data. At three of the case study schools, use of the instrument generally functioned as expected. During the observations, certain ad-hoc decisions were made. At the EYLP school, students were working at five different stations. The researcher therefore decided it would be most prudent to focus on the teacher station in this school (see section 5.5.2), using the instrument to record the activity and interaction at this station. The researcher went around to each of the stations once briefly to observe what the students were working on at each station and what type of interaction, if any, occurred between the students. However, the primary focus of the observation during these lessons was at the teacher station.

6.4.4 Observation procedure

There were five observations scheduled at each of the schools. The first visit at the schools took place in December 2010, while the four other visits took place between January and June 2011. An attempt was made to schedule observations every four weeks. However, because of school breaks, teacher illness, and other school schedule conflicts (e.g., movies and activities), the time between observations varied from three to seven weeks (see Appendix 4B).

During each visit, observations were conducted during English lessons in one fourth- and one fifth-grade class; selected students read to the researcher

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either before or after the observed lesson; and the teacher was interviewed or the researcher and teacher had an unstructured conversation to review specific points during the lesson, all of which were audio recorded. The observations focused on grouping, main activity focus, specific reading-related activities, reading and other materials used, teacher interaction with the students, and expected student response, as specified in the coding instrument. In addition, other qualitative observations were noted relating to the extent to which students used texts that suited their interests and ability level, whether reading was encouraged at home or given as homework, and how reading was integrated with other language skills being taught in the classroom. Finally, the observations provided general impressions of the teachers' and students' enthusiasm, engagement, and the nature and quality of interaction during reading activities.

In order to develop a complete picture of the reading experiences of the students and reading instruction provided by the teachers, documents were collected as artifacts of this input. These included copies of activities done in class, weekly plans for homework and learning aims, some student work related to reading activities, and the reading texts used in class and as homework. Additionally, when applicable, information provided on the schools' website or other official channels of communication were reviewed. These sources helped confirm and fill in gaps in information, especially regarding the types of activities that occurred between the observations.

6.4.5 Observation data analysis

Transcription

The observations were transcribed by the researcher in the program NVIVO. Having transcriptions of the observations allowed the researcher to more easily review initial observation notes in relation to the audio recordings, and create a greater depth of insight into the classroom interactions. The observation notes, recordings, and transcriptions were checked for inconsistencies, addressing reliability.

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Interrater reliability coding

Interrater reliability was tested with an external coder who was trained in the coding system. The external coder, a teacher familiar with the observational context of EFL in Norwegian schools, listened to the audio recording of one lesson from each school. Interrater reliability was calculated using percentage of agreement and Cohen's Kappa⁶⁰ (Posner, Sampson, Caplan, Ward, & Cheney, 1990). There was an overall initial interrater reliability of 88% and a Kappa score of .66. The lowest level of agreement was in the category level 4 (literacy activity), which was 84%, and level 6 (teacher interaction), which was 75%. For example, there was specific discussion regarding whether a teacher's actions constituted coaching or whether their support of the students' iterations was an aspect of recitation, such as elicitation. The other categories had an average agreement of 94.2%. After discussion of the coding of the first school, a common understanding of the definitions was agreed upon. The coding of the other three schools produced an interrater reliability of 92.5%, with a Kappa score of .86.

Following the interrater reliability, the researcher reviewed the initial coding completed during the observations. During this process the researcher consulted the definitions of the codes, the notes from the interrater reliability discussions, and the transcriptions, audio recordings, and notes of the lessons. This was completed to check for consistency, especially related to the points that had been discussed at level 4. The coding was tallied and summarized and examples were identified in the transcripts. Finally, the coding, observation notes, and transcriptions were all used while writing the data results.

6.4.6 Interview instrument and procedure

During the case study period, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both teachers and a small selection of students. Two formal interviews with each of the fourth- and fifth-grade English teachers were based on the classroom observations (12 in total); teachers were asked to comment on and elaborate on aspects of their teaching. Semi-structured interviews were

⁶⁰ Both coders coded the transcribed observations in NVIVO. The NVIVO program was used to perform the calculations for percentage of agreement and Cohen's Kappa.

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selected in order to allow the researcher to adapt the questions based on the input provided by the teachers, and for further exploration of their answers (Dörnyei, 2007). An interview guide was used (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 246; see Appendix 4C). These interviews were conducted in Norwegian so that they would be in the teacher's native language and therefore easier or more natural for them to talk about. The interviews took place individually in person with the teachers at the schools and were recorded to allow later review.

The teachers were asked questions about the reading approach they used, materials used, how they were used, types of assessment, and their opinion regarding certain language policies, such as the national test. For example, the teachers were asked about the advantages and disadvantages of the reading approach they used, and if they had enough reading materials to meet the different learning needs and levels of the students. There was great variation in some of the specific questions asked in the interviews due to the differences in reading approach, teaching practices, and lesson content that had been observed. Additionally, the fact that the interviews were semi-structured allowed the researcher to adapt the questions based on the unique aspects of the different reading approaches and the backgrounds of the teachers. For the student interviews, the students were a convenience sample (Dörnyei, 2007).

Many of the questions about the teachers' background and general information about practices and perceptions about EFL reading instruction had already been covered in the questionnaire. For standardization, teachers whose schools had not been selected in the sample for the questionnaire were asked to fill out the questionnaire. This data was not included in the questionnaire analysis, but was only used as background information for the observational study and as a basis for the teacher interviews.

Occasionally, teachers were sent follow-up questions by e-mail if it was discovered that clarification was needed after reviewing either the interview or observation data. Additionally, several spontaneous unstructured interviews with teachers took place to review lessons and clarify aspects of classroom management, lesson structure, and materials usage. The length and number of these interviews varied from teacher to teacher according to what additional

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clarification was needed following the observations and the semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews with students (also conducted in Norwegian) addressed their exposure to various texts and teaching methods and how these affected their motivation and the learning outcomes of the lessons. Several students were interviewed from each class. Most often the interviewed students were the ones whom the teacher had selected to read aloud individually for the researcher. At some of the schools these interviews were supplemented by additional interviews with students who had volunteered, as other students sought the opportunity to share their opinions and perspectives. Thus, the number of students interviewed varied from class to class. The interviews occurred at the time of the final observations at each school.

The interview data was processed using qualitative content analysis. This method is defined as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researcher transcribed and reviewed the interviews. During this process, content categories were created related to the topics covered in the interviews (e.g., materials and differentiation). The interviews were coded and summarized within the categories. The researcher reviewed the interviews for any inconsistencies in the teachers' statements, addressing reliability. Finally, the summaries were reviewed against the transcripts and original categories for consistency.

6.5 Reliability and validity

6.5.1 Reliability

Reliability is concerned with consistency and replicability over time, over instruments, and over groups of respondents (Cohen et al., 2000). Regarding the questionnaire data, the questionnaire was piloted, and went through a multi-stage process of development. Content validity was assessed by consulting experts and by having teachers think aloud while answering the questionnaire during the pilot stage. Translation and back translation were

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used to validate the meaning of the questions since Norwegian is not the researcher's L1. Additionally, reliability was addressed through consultation with another researcher regarding analysis, methods and procedure, and conclusions. Finally, a reliability analysis was performed on the questionnaire data where certain techniques were used to analyze the distribution characteristics (the mean, SD, and skewness) to see whether they discriminate between participants.

In relation to the case study data, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data increased the reliability and validity of the data. The tool used for the observation coding was validated in previous research (B. Taylor, 2004; B. Taylor et al., 2005; B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002). Since the present research represented a different context, the observation tool and coding was piloted by the researcher in EFL classes in Norwegian primary schools to ensure that the observational categories were appropriate, exhaustive, unambiguous, and effectively operationalized the purposes of the research (Cohen et al., 2000). Additionally, the same observation coding framework was used at all schools, increasing reliability of the data. Furthermore, a test of interrater reliability was carried out, showing a high level of reliability between the coding of the researcher and a teacher trained in the coding procedure. Initial interrater reliability was 88% and a Kappa score of .66; in the analysis of the final three schools the interrater reliability was 92.5%, with a Kappa score of .86. Moreover, the observation notes and recordings, which were transcribed, were checked for inconsistencies and for inconsistencies within interviews.

A semi-structured interview guide was used for the teacher and student interviews. Although using a structured interview can be one way of addressing reliability in data and interpretation, others have argued that social interaction between the interviewer and interviewee is complex and controlling the wording will not necessarily control the interview (Cohen et al., 2000). Thus, in order to address the differences between the various reading approaches, the contexts of the schools and students, and perspectives of the teachers, it was decided to use a semi-structured interview guide. To increase reliability of the interview data, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. When coding the interviews, the researcher checked the

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transcripts for inconsistencies in the teachers' views from one interview to another.

6.5.2 Validity

Validity traditionally refers to the ability of an instrument or research to measure what it intends to measure (Gall et al., 2007). Validity in quantitative research refers to careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation, and statistical treatments of the data. This can be increased by increasing the methodological quality of all aspects of the research, such as unbiased sampling, sound design, and using appropriate techniques. Within qualitative research, validity addresses the degree of validity in the research rather than absolute validity. Thus, the aim is to minimize invalidity and maximize validity (Cohen et al., 2000). When working within qualitative educational research, especially a case study, there is always subjectivity related to the respondents, their opinions, attitudes, and perspectives. However, this can be addressed through different types of validity.

Different types of validity include measurement validity (Dörnyei, 2007), construct validity (Cohen et al., 2000), and internal and external validity (Cohen et al., 2000; Dörnyei, 2007). Measurement validity refers to “the meaningfulness or appropriateness of the interpretation of the various test scores or other assessment procedure outcomes (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 50). As Dörnyei explains, although a test was previously considered to contain construct validity if it measured what it was supposed to measure, current interpretations of validity focus on whether the interpretation of the score in relation to a specific population is valid. In more recent research, construct validity is often used as an umbrella term to describe a process of theory validation (Dörnyei, 2007). It also refers to the operationalization of the constructs used in the research and their agreement with the understanding of these constructs within the field of research (Cohen et al., 2000).

Within this research, construct validity was first addressed by operationalizing reading ability based on reading theory, the *LK06* curriculum, and the Framework for Basic Skills (see also sections 1.3 and 2.3). Second, it was addressed by using a reference group of researchers, both specialists within reading and educational research, to reflect upon the content of the

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questionnaire. These same researchers were also the developers of the observational framework. Thus, the questionnaire and its operationalization of reading instruction were seen in relation to the observational framework. Finally, the constructs were also based on research in the field of second language acquisition, foreign language instruction, and reading instruction.

An additional aspect of construct validity is that the constructs and categories used by the researcher are meaningful to the participants and reflect the way in which they experience the situation. In order to address this aspect of construct validity, the questionnaire and its use of constructs was reviewed by two Norwegian EFL teachers as they thought aloud regarding their understanding of the questions. The questionnaire was also piloted with a random sample of fourth- and fifth-grade Norwegian EFL teachers.

Internal validity relates to whether the findings accurately describe the phenomena being researched (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 107). Internal validity for qualitative data requires attention to plausibility and credibility, the type and quantity of evidence required, and clarity on the types of claims made from the research.

To address internal validity, this research used three primary types of data (questionnaire, observations and interviews) that were in-depth (over time and across schools), extensive, and included various quality checks. To further improve validity, clarifying follow-up questions with teachers/interviewees and interrater reliability of the observation coding were performed. Moreover, this research claims to be only descriptive and exploratory in nature. The case study findings do not claim to generalize to the population at large. Internal validity is also strengthened by extensive engagement in the field and triangulation of methods (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 108).

External validity, in contrast, refers “to the degree to which results can be generalized to the wider population, cases or situations” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 109). Generalizability in naturalistic research can be interpreted as comparability and transferability. This can relate to how typical participants in the settings are. Within the quantitative part of the research, external validity was addressed through the use of stratification variables and randomized sampling procedures. The case study schools and teachers were both typical

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and atypical. First, schools from two different regions were chosen, as well as more and less urban schools. Moreover, the EYLP school had a very diverse student population with few ethnic Norwegian children, as was typical of that area, whereas the other schools were primarily ethnic Norwegian. Regarding the teachers, more of the teachers had higher education qualifications in English than the general population of Norwegian English teachers. In this way they were atypical, and would reflect the newer trend of teachers having qualifications gained by receiving in-service training. However, they were diverse in age and teaching experience.

Overall, mixed-methods research has “a unique potential to provide evidence for the validity of research outcomes through the convergence and corroboration of findings” (Dornyei, 2007, p.45). Through a combination of data sources and research methods, issues of design validity are addressed by increasing the likelihood of measuring what the researcher intended to measure and minimizing bias by enabling the research to address the research focus from multiple perspectives and a more holistic point of view.

6.6 Ethics

In accordance with the Personal Data Act, an application was submitted to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) to collect the research data (see Appendix 2A). During this process it was shown that the necessary steps had been taken to ensure that all the participants had been informed about the study and their rights regarding handling and presentation of the data. Letters were written to the questionnaire participants and to the participants of the observational research (see Appendix 2B). Separate versions of the letters were written for the principal, teachers, and parents/guardians of the students.

During the observational study, the researcher was presented to the students, as was the topic of the research. The students were asked if they were willing to participate, specifically if they were willing to be recorded while reading aloud individually or in groups. The students were asked to read aloud to give the researcher an impression of their reading ability. Students who did not want to be recorded read in another location (in the classroom or in the hallway), and they were not observed during the research.

6.7 Summary

This chapter has described the mixed methods used in the current research. The data collection was conducted in two stages: a questionnaire, followed by a case study of four primary schools. Before each data type was collected, existing instruments were reviewed. When applicable, an existing research instrument was adapted, such as with the observation coding scheme or a new instrument was developed, such as with the questionnaire. The data sources included both qualitative and quantitative data. The data from the sources has contributed to answering the overarching research question and the four sub-research questions. In addition, there were analyses related to specific components in the questionnaire data. The two data sources will be presented in the following two chapters: Chapter 7 analyzes the questionnaire data and Chapter 8, the data from the case study schools.

7 Questionnaire results

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the questionnaire sent to EFL teachers in fourth- and fifth grades. The questionnaire explored how the teaching of reading was approached in Norwegian fourth- and fifth grade EFL classes. It provides an overview of materials and practices used in these classes, as well as teachers' perceptions of their own teaching. Section 7.2 provides a description of the representativeness of the data. Section 7.3 reports teachers' experience and qualifications. Section 7.4 presents the findings on teachers' reading-related practices generally, and concerning the analysis of the specific components of the questionnaire. These were analyses regarding the reading approach used for English and Norwegian reading instruction and whether the use of a particular English reading approach was associated with a specific Norwegian reading approach. Additional analyses related to whether the English reading approach was associated with qualified or unqualified teachers, whether it was associated with the number of different books used, and whether it was associated with different teaching practices. Section 7.5 addresses the teachers' perspectives on the teaching of EFL reading and EFL in Norwegian primary schools. Finally, section 7.6 provides a brief summary of the chapter.

7.2 Demographic variables

This subsection reviews the sample representativeness related to two demographic variables: gender and age (see also section 6.3.2 for information on the questionnaire sample). As for gender, the vast majority of teachers responding to the questionnaire were female (84%⁶¹). This is slightly higher than the percentage of female teachers nationally in Norwegian compulsory schools, 74% in grades 1-10⁶², $\chi^2(1, 67570) = 18.744, p < .001$ (see Table

⁶¹ Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

⁶² Skoleporten, Utdanningsdirektoratet.no, tall fra 2009-2010, hentet 18.10.10.
<http://skoleporten.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/rapportvisning> - www.wis.no/gsi
Grunnskolen Informasjonssystem (GSI)

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10). However, nationally there has been a relatively higher percentage of female teachers in the younger grades (1-4 and 5-7) than in the older grades (8-10) (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2003, p. 16). This means that they should in fact be overrepresented in the sample of this population. However, data regarding the gender of teachers in the two specific grade levels (i.e., grades 4 and 5) is not available. Despite the possible overrepresentation of female teachers within the sample, there is no significant difference between the percentage of female teachers in fourth- and fifth grades, $\chi^2(2, 370) = .935, p = .627$, compared to expected values based on the population.

Table 10: Gender distribution of the teachers in the sample (observed) and expected based on population

Sources		Gender	
		Male (n = 17407)	Female (n = 50163)
Sample (n = 370)	Actual	59	311
	Expected	95	275
	%	16%	84%
Population (n = 67200)	Actual	17348	49852
	Expected	17312	49888
	%	26%	74%

The second demographic category was age. The largest percentage of teachers were in the age category 30-39 (34%), followed by 40-49 (23%), and 50-59 (25%). The smallest categories were teachers aged 20-29 (11%) and 60 and older (6%). Compared to the population of teachers, the age band 30-39 is slightly overrepresented, while the 20-29 and 60 and older age bands are slightly underrepresented, $\chi^2(4, 71153) = 14.61, p < .001$ (see Table 11). There are no population statistics about the teachers' ages and gender for fourth- and fifth grades⁶³. Therefore, representativeness with respect to age and gender cannot be assessed. Comparing the three categories of teachers, those teaching fourth, fifth or both grades, there were no significant differences between the number of teachers in each age band, $\chi^2(8, 370) = 9.144, p = .330$.

⁶³ According to e-mail communications with a representative from SSB, 19.10.10.

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Table 11: Age observed and expected in sample and population data, $\chi^2(4, 71153) = 14.61$, $p < .001$

Sources		Age bands				
		20-29 (n = 6870)	30-39 (n = 20761)	40-49 (n = 16866)	50-59 (n = 18224)	60+ (n = 8432)
Sample (n = 343)	Actual	42	127	84	94	23
	Expected	35.72	107.96	87.7	94.77	43.85
	%	(11%)	(34%)	(23%)	(25%)	(6%)
Population (n = 70783)	Actual	6828	20634	16782	18130	8409
	Expected	6834.28	20653.04	16778.3	18129.23	8388.15
	%	(12%)	(31%)	(25%)	(27%)	(13%)

Although there were 370 respondents to the questionnaire, in the following tables there may be fewer than 370 answers due to teachers not answering the question or certain parts of a question. Where there is suspicion of systematic missing responses, this will be discussed.

7.3 Experience and qualifications

Overall, there were more teachers with fewer years of experience answering the questionnaire than teachers with over 13 years of experience; roughly one third had 1–3 years of experience, whereas only one of six had more than 20 years (see Table 12). However, the years of experience is significantly related to grade level taught by the responding teachers, $\chi^2(8, 370) = 24.713$, $p = .002$ (see Table 12). If a Chi-square is significant, it is because one or more cells deviate from what would be expected under the null hypothesis (no-association). The deviations were found in two cells, namely, the correspondence between fourth-grade teachers and 4–6 years of teaching experience and between fifth-grade teachers and 13–20 years of teaching experience. There were relatively more teachers in fourth grade with 4–6 years of teaching experience than in fifth grade, as indicated by the adjusted residual⁶⁴ 3.4. There were also more fifth-grade teachers with 13–20 years of

⁶⁴ An adjusted residual that is more than 1.96 indicates that the number of cases in that cell is significantly larger than would be expected if the null hypothesis were true, with a significance level of .05 (see also section 6.3.5). Values that are significant are

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experience than those in fourth grade, as indicated by the adjusted residual 3.4. Generally, the fifth-grade teachers had more teaching experience than the fourth-grade teachers.

Table 12: Crosstables of years of English teaching experience and grade level taught (4 and 5) (n = 370) (actual numbers, expected numbers, adjusted residual)

			Grade level taught (four and five)		
			Grade 4 (n = 165)	Grade 5 (n = 173)	Both grades (n = 32)
Years of English teaching experience	1-3 (n = 105)	Actual	42	54	9
		Expected	46.8	49.1	9.1
		Adjusted residual	-1.1	1.1	0
	4-6 (n = 74)	Actual	46	23	5
		Expected	33	34.6	6.4
		Adjusted residual	3.4***	-3	-.6
	7-12 (n = 75)	Actual	31	37	7
		Expected	33.4	35.1	6.5
		Adjusted residual	-.6	.5	.2
	13-20 (n = 58)	Actual	16	39	3
		Expected	25.9	27.1	5
		Adjusted residual	-2.8	3.4***	-1
	20+ (n = 58)	Actual	30	20	8
		Expected	25.9	27.1	5
		Adjusted residual	1.2	-2	1.5

When asked about their educational background, nearly half of the teachers answered that they had fewer than 30 study points (SP)/ECTS of English. Thirty study points is considered the minimum level at which a teacher is qualified to teach subjects at the primary school level (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2009a). Thus, teachers who reported having fewer than 30 SP are not considered qualified. Of those with higher education in English (minimum of 30 SP), one in five had 30 SP and 31% had 60 SP or more.

A Chi-square analysis was conducted to compare teachers' qualifications and the grade levels they taught. This analysis was significant $\chi^2(4, 360) = 11.257, p = .024$ (see Table 13), and cell deviations were found in two cells: the correspondence between fourth-grade teachers and teachers with fewer

marked with an asterix. *= significance level 5%, **=significance level 1%, ***=significance level 0.1%.

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than 30 study points and the correspondence between teachers who taught both grades and those who had more than 60 study points. There were relatively more unqualified fourth-grade teachers compared with fifth-grade teachers and those who taught both grades, as indicated by the adjusted residual, 2.7. More of the teachers who taught both grades had higher education qualifications in English than those who taught only the fourth or fifth grades, as indicated by the adjusted residual 2.4. It is possible that the teachers who taught both grades were primarily English teachers or English specialists at their schools. This is in contrast to the tradition of having one teacher teach all subjects at the primary school level (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2009b). However, as only 9% of the teachers taught both grades, it is still common for teachers to teach English either in fourth or fifth grade.

Table 13: Crosstabulation English teaching qualifications and grade levels taught (n = 360) (actual numbers, expected numbers, adjusted residual)

			Grade level taught		
			Fourth (n = 160)	Fifth (n = 168)	Both (n = 32)
English teaching qualifications	Fewer than 30 SP (n = 174)	Actual	90	73	11
		Expected	77.3	81.2	15.5
		Adjusted residual	2.7**	-1.7	-1.7
	30 SP (n = 74)	Actual	29	40	5
		Expected	32.9	34.5	6.6
		Adjusted residual	-1	1.4	-.7
	60 SP or more (n = 112)	Actual	41	55	16
		Expected	49.8	52.3	10
		Adjusted residual	-2	.6	2.4*

7.4 Teachers' practices

This section presents findings on classroom practices, which included the reading materials used, the methods with which they were used, types of interaction in the classroom, and assessment methods. There are also findings on an additional area that influences practices and the teacher's ability to monitor students' language development, namely, collaboration between teachers. Finally, findings about classroom language use and the use of the *European Language Portfolio* are presented.

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7.4.1 Reading approach

The first questionnaire component aimed to find out what reading approaches were used by teachers in the teaching of EFL reading. Table 14 shows the different reading approaches used by the teachers.

Table 14: Frequency of reading approaches used in the Norwegian and English languages (actual numbers and percentages)

Language	Reading approach			
	Textbook	Combination	Graded readers	EYLP
Norwegian (n = 345)	102 30%	201 58%	11 3%	31 9%
English (n = 366)	224 61%	114 31%	19 5%	9 3%

Roughly six in ten teachers used a textbook as the basis of English reading instruction. This was approximately twice as many as teachers who used a textbook for Norwegian reading instruction. In Norwegian reading instruction over half of the teachers reported using a combination of textbook-based and graded readers, yet most of them used the graded readers infrequently; nearly half of the classes used Norwegian graded readers less than 30% of the time. This was similar for the 31% of English teachers using a combination approach; over half used English graded readers less than 30% of the time, and only 5% used them 50% of the time (see Appendix 3B, Table 40). The EYLP approach was used more often for Norwegian reading instruction than English instruction. Moreover, the use of the EYLP approach in English compared to other approaches was still very limited (3%). The use of graded readers solely as the basis of instruction was also very low: 5% used them for English and 3% for Norwegian reading instruction. Thus, in the analyses in subsequent sections, the extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers⁶⁵ and EYLP categories have been combined as they are fundamentally similar in their use of materials and many teaching practices.

⁶⁵ As explained in section 6.3.3 regarding the translation of the questionnaire and the term “extensive reading”, the extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers will be referred to in the questionnaire analysis as “graded reader approach.”

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The second questionnaire component aimed to find out if teachers used similar or different reading approaches for English and Norwegian. Table 14 shows the correspondence between the teachers' reading approach in English and Norwegian. It was considered important to compare the reading approach in English and Norwegian because it was hypothesized that the use of a particular reading approach in Norwegian would be associated with the use of the same reading approach in English.

The analysis of whether the reading approach in English was the same as the reading approach in Norwegian was tested with a Chi-square of independence. The result was significant $\chi^2(4, 343) = 83.599, p < .001$ (see Table 15, see also extended table in Appendix 3B Table 41). The deviations were found in three cells, namely the correspondence between English and Norwegian in all three reading approaches, as shown by the significant adjusted residuals: textbook-based in Norwegian and English (adjusted residual 8.3), combination in Norwegian and English, (adjusted residual 6), and graded readers and EYLP (adjusted residual 4.6). This analysis shows that there is a very strong dependence between the two variables, meaning that when the teacher used one approach in Norwegian they were likely to use the same approach in English.

Table 15: Crosstable showing reading approaches of teachers in Norwegian and English classes (actual numbers, expected numbers, adjusted residual)

Norwegian reading approach	English reading approach			
		Textbook (n = 212)	Combination (n = 103)	Graded readers/ EYLP (n = 28)
Textbook (n = 102)	Actual	97	4	1
	Expected	63	30.6	8.3
	Adj. res.	8.3***	-6.9	-3.2
Combination (n = 199)	Actual	98	85	16
	Expected	123	59.8	16.2
	Adj. res.	-5.6	6***	-1
Graded reader/EYLP (n = 42)	Actual	17	14	11
	Expected	26	12.6	3.4
	Adj. res.	-3	.5	4.6***

Of the teachers who used a textbook-based approach in Norwegian, 95% also used a textbook-based approach in English. When teachers used a combination in Norwegian, approximately four in ten used a combination and

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five in ten used a textbook-based approach in English. Among the teachers who used the EYLP/graded readers approach in Norwegian instruction, there was no predominant corresponding approach in English (26% used EYLP/graded readers for English, 33% used a combination, and 40% used a textbook-based approach). The EYLP/graded readers approach as the basis of instruction were not widely used in Norwegian or English. However, for all approaches, more teachers used the same approach in Norwegian and English than those who did not. Overall, textbook-based approach was used far more than the graded readers-based and EYLP approaches in English.

The third component for analysis in the questionnaire aimed to find out if there were relatively more teachers with higher education qualifications using EYLP /graded readers approaches. Contrary to the hypothesis, there were not relatively more teachers with higher education qualifications using EYLP /graded readers approaches than combination or textbook-based approaches $\chi^2(4, 357) = 8.498, p = 0.75$ (see Table 16). The Chi-square analysis produced cell deviations in two cells, namely the correspondence between the textbook-based approach and teachers with no qualifications, and the correspondence between the combination approach and teachers with no qualifications⁶⁶. This means that the teachers' English teaching qualifications did not appear to be reflected in their choice of reading approach. Additionally, the vast majority of the teachers (82%) were not offered an English in-service training course following the implementation of *LK06*. However, of those who were offered in-service training, 73% said the course included the teaching of English reading and writing.

⁶⁶ The cell indicating the correspondence between the combination approach and the teachers with no qualifications is a negative adjusted residual. This means that there were fewer respondents in this cell correspondence than would be expected under the null hypothesis.

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Table 16: Reading approach used by the teachers and the teachers' English qualifications (actual numbers, expected, and adjusted residual)

		English qualifications			
			No qualifications (n = 172)	30 SP (n = 74)	60 or more (n = 111)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 220)	Actual	118	40	62
		Expected	106	45.6	68.4
		Adj. res.	2.6**	-1.5	-1.5
	Combination (n = 110)	Actual	41	27	42
		Expected	53	22.8	34.2
		Adj. res.	-2.8**	1.2	1.9
	EYLP/ graded readers (n = 27)	Actual	13	7	7
		Expected	13	5.6	8.4
		Adj. res.	0	.7	-.6

7.4.2 Texts and materials

This section presents findings related to texts and materials used for EFL teaching: the quantity of books available, whether this quantity was related to a specific reading approach, whether students took books home to read, the type of reading material used, and the teachers' criteria for selecting texts. First, frequency data will be presented, followed by statistical analyses of the component in question.

The following tables present data on the availability of English books in the classrooms and schools. The teachers were asked how many different English books they had in their classrooms and in their school libraries. Nearly half of the respondents did not have English books (other than textbooks) in their classroom (see Table 17). However, nearly 80% of the schools had English books in their school libraries; half had over 20 different books.

Table 17: Number of different English reading books (excluding textbooks) (actual numbers and percentages)

Source	Number of reading books				
	None	Less than 10	11–20	21–50	More than 50
Classroom library (N=370)	174 47%	85 23%	74 20%	30 8%	7 2%
School library (N=368)	78 21%	40 11%	67 18%	108 29%	75 20%

The fourth questionnaire component aimed to find out if a particular reading approach was associated with the number of books in the classroom or school library. The result of the Chi-square analysis was not significant. It was found

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that there was no significant difference between the number of books in the classrooms and school libraries and the English reading approach used by the teachers, $\chi^2(4, 364) = 8.43, p < .077$ (see Appendix 3B, Table 42).

Related to books available in the schools, the teachers were also asked whether students took English books home to read. Only roughly a third of the teachers reported that students did so. A Chi-square analysis was used to find out whether there was an association between the teachers who sent books home with students to read and their chosen reading approach. The result of the analysis was significant, $\chi^2(2, 362) = 25.684, p < .001$ (Appendix 3B, Table 43⁶⁷). There were relatively more teachers using a combination and EYLP/graded reader approaches who sent books home with students than teachers using a textbook-based approach (52% and 46% compared to 25%). When students took books home to read, nearly eight out of ten teachers reported that parents were involved in the reading of the books. Expectations for reading at home varied somewhat, with the most common activities being students reading the text aloud for the parents (90%) and translating the text (approximately 70%). The least common activity was reading and answering questions about the text (approximately 45%)(see Table 44 and Table 45 in Appendix 3B)⁶⁸.

As there are a wide variety of materials available for language teachers, teachers were asked to report how often they used various materials for English reading instruction (see Table 18). There was also an open category, "other reading materials." The answers to the open question will be presented following the frequency data. The teachers used the textbook more frequently than any other text source; 59% used the textbook more than five times per month. The vast majority of the teachers did not use books written for English-speaking children or books written for second or foreign language learners (77% and 78% respectively). Even fewer used newspapers,

⁶⁷ For an explanation of the cells which deviated from the expected values under the null hypothesis, see the note under the table in the appendix.

⁶⁸ Teachers were also asked about "other" expectations. The most common answers provided by the teachers were to retell the text in Norwegian (n=4), learn vocabulary (n=4), and comprehend the text (n=3). Although the actual number of teachers who provided these answers are small, it is possible that more teachers would also have given these answers if these options been listed.

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magazines, and comics. However, Internet text use was reported by over half of the teachers, although these texts were still used infrequently by many of those who used them (only roughly 3 in 20 used Internet texts at least three times a month).

Table 18: Frequency of reading materials used in the previous month (actual numbers and percentages)⁶⁹

Reading materials	Frequency of use			
	0 times	1–2 times	3–5 times	More than 5 times
Texts in the textbook and workbook (n = 365)	5 1%	42 12%	102 28%	216 59%
Books written for English-speaking children (n = 328)	254 77%	59 18%	9 3%	6 2%
Books written for second or foreign language learners (n = 323)	254 78%	50 16%	12 4%	7 2%
Newspapers (n = 320)	313 99%	6 2%	1 0.3%	0 0%
Magazines (n = 322)	315 98%	4 1%	3 1%	0 0%
Comics (n = 323)	268 83%	46 14%	9 3%	0 0%
Internet texts (n = 335)	150 45%	133 40%	45 13%	7 2%
Other reading materials (n = 358)	133 33%	153 45%	59 17%	13 4%

Other reading materials reported by the teachers included songs, texts from other textbooks (other than their primary textbook), Internet sites, self-made materials, fairytales, plays, and role-plays. Additionally, 11 respondents specifically mentioned the use of graded readers. These should have been included in either the categories “books written for English-speaking children” or “books written for second or foreign language learners.” The fact that they were not, may have been because of lack of clarity in the definition of the categories, since the respondents may have been uncertain as to whether the graded readers were intended for L1 or L2 learners, or it could be

⁶⁹ There is suspicion that teachers who did not use the practice at all did not answer the question, rather than answering 0 times per month. This was possible since the teachers were not required to answer each alternative before moving forward. This had not been an issue in the piloting, and since there is debate about whether requiring respondents to answer all questions can lead to more respondents not to complete, the current decision was made.

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that the teachers chose to mention these sources specifically. As the questionnaire was not designed to contact respondents for clarification on certain points, this point remains unclarified. However, one may speculate that the teachers did not immediately associate their graded readers as specifically written for L1 English reading or for language learners. If this is the case, it is possible that the teachers may also not have reflected on the different challenges associated with these two types of texts and their use in the EFL classroom.

The teachers were further asked to respond to what extent they agreed or disagreed with statements regarding criteria and influences when selecting the reading materials and texts they used (“When selecting reading materials, I chose based on:”) (see Table 19). Eighty-five percent of teachers selected texts based on “the learners’ reading level.”

Table 19: Criteria for selecting reading materials and texts (actual numbers and percentages)⁷⁰

Statements	Disagree ⁷¹	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
The text given in the textbook (n = 355)	12 3%	9 3%	47 13%	287 81%
The English curriculum (n = 344)	9 3%	16 5%	67 20%	252 73%
The theme or topic (n = 333)	18 5%	18 5%	86 26%	211 63%
The text’s literary merit (n = 332)	14 4%	19 6%	86 26%	213 64%
The learners’ interests (n = 339)	18 5%	35 10%	127 38%	159 47%
The learners’ reading level (n = 344)	5 2%	6 2%	40 12%	293 85%
Suitability for integrating grammar and vocabulary (n = 339)	11 3%	21 6%	103 30%	204 60%
Appropriateness as a point of departure for oral communication (n = 346)	11 3%	15 4%	76 22%	244 71%
Other (n = 233)	36 16%	37 16%	99 43%	61 26%

⁷⁰ It is suspected that some teachers only listed the criteria for which they had an opinion, while they did not answer other criteria they felt did not apply or about which they did not have a strong opinion.

⁷¹ The categories of “disagree and strongly disagree” and “strongly agree and agree” were merged for the purposes of the analysis (see also section 6.3.5).

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The vast majority of the teachers also agreed with the criteria choices “texts given in the textbook” (81%) and “the English curriculum” (73%). This finding is not surprising given the prominent role of textbooks and the curriculum in schools, the two factors to which the teachers may feel they are held accountable. “Appropriateness as a point of departure for oral communication” was also a priority for the majority of the teachers (71% agreed). Considering the focus on communication in the *LK06* curriculum, and generally within language teaching methodology, it is not surprising that this becomes a priority when choosing texts. Though fewer of the teachers felt strongly about the statement, “suitability for integrating grammar and vocabulary” (60% agreed), these findings still support the idea that reading is often used as a point of departure for focusing on other language skills, such as grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, it would have been interesting to follow up this question to discover if teachers have a focus on form when intending to do intensive reading or if they make a distinction between intensive and extensive reading (see section 5.3).

These answers show that teachers use different criteria and have many considerations when choosing texts and other reading materials. The majority of teachers seem to think that all of these criteria are important except “learner’s interest,” as agreement with this criterion was relatively lower than all others.

7.4.3 Methods for using texts

After identifying which text sources the teachers used most frequently, they were asked which methods they used for working with texts and how frequently they used them in the previous month (see Table 20). The most common methods of working with texts were the teacher reading aloud, students reading aloud individually and chorally, and students reading at home. The frequency with which these methods were used varied, yet over half of the teachers reported using them at least three times a month. Reading in groups, whether led by teachers or by students, was less frequently used than whole-class reading. In fact, roughly four out of ten of the teachers reported not using small groups led by the teacher at all, and roughly six out of ten of the teachers reported the same for student-led groups. The most frequent type of group reading, i.e., guided reading, was used by 29% of the

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teachers at least three times a month. Less than one third of the teachers frequently had students read independently, individually in class, (i.e., at least three times a month). Roughly one out of four teachers reported that individual class reading was not practiced.

Table 20: Frequency of methods of using texts (actual numbers and percentages)⁷²

Question	Frequency of use			
	0 times	1–2 times	3–5 times	More than 5
Read aloud by the teacher (n = 361)	11 3%	119 33%	111 31%	120 33%
Read aloud by the students chorally (n = 359)	45 13%	127 35%	95 27%	92 26%
Read aloud by the students individually (n = 352)	20 6%	138 39%	111 32%	83 24%
Used in guided reading (n = 333)	124 37%	115 34%	68 21%	26 8%
Used for individual reading in the classroom (n = 336)	82 24%	160 48%	57 17%	37 11%
Used in small groups led by teacher (n = 333)	137 41%	122 36%	50 15%	24 8%
Used in small discussion groups of only students (n = 331)	193 59%	94 28%	34 10%	10 3%
Read at home by the students (n = 355)	23 7%	130 37%	94 27%	108 30%

In addition to different methods of working with texts, the teachers were asked a number of questions that related to how they differentiated and incorporated learner autonomy into text choice (see Table 21). Nearly two-thirds of the teachers did not allow students to choose which text to read at all. Additionally, three in five teachers used differentiated texts fewer than three times per month. Just over half of the teachers never organized students in groups based on ability level. Moreover, roughly half of the teachers did not enable students to use English reading computer programs and 86% did not enable students to use online books.

⁷² There is suspicion that teachers who did not use the practice at all did not answer the question, rather than answering 0 times per month.

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Table 21: Methods of differentiation and learner autonomy in text choice and use (actual numbers and percentages)

Statement	Frequency in number of class hours per month			
	0 times	1–2 times	3–5 times	More than 5 times
The students chose what to read (n = 364)	233 63%	99 27%	20 5%	12 3%
The students read differentiated texts (n = 364)	82 22%	138 37%	77 21%	67 18%
The students used English reading computer programs (n = 358)	179 48%	131 35%	42 11%	6 2%
The students used online books (n = 352)	319 86%	23 6%	7 2%	3 1%
The students were organized in groups based on ability level (n = 357)	193 52%	106 28%	38 10%	20 5%

When the teachers read texts aloud, many used a variety of methods for supporting student comprehension of the text (see Table 22). Translation was the method used most frequently by the teachers (37% in 3–5 lessons a month and 39% in more than 5 lessons). Approximately two-thirds of the teachers also frequently presented vocabulary before reading and explained vocabulary while reading. Body language and pictures to support students' comprehension were used less frequently than the above mentioned methods, although roughly one in two teachers used these methods at least three times a month.

Interesting trends can be noted regarding the teachers' language use when working with and discussing texts. A higher percentage of the teachers reported frequently asking comprehension questions in English compared to questions in Norwegian (74% versus 66%, respectively, at least three times per month). However, only 47% of the teachers used English to discuss the content or meaning of the story with students at least three times per month, and 15% reported not using this practice at all.

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Table 22: Methods used when teachers read aloud (actual numbers and percentages)

Statement	Frequency in number of class hours per month			
	0 lessons	1–2 lessons	3–5 lessons	More than 5 lessons
Translated parts or all of the text (n = 367)	7 2%	80 22%	136 37%	144 39%
Presented new vocabulary before reading (n = 362)	33 9%	109 30%	110 30%	110 30%
Explained new vocabulary while reading (n = 358)	9 3%	102 29%	121 34%	126 35%
Used body language or miming to help students understand (n = 361)	53 15%	134 37%	98 27%	76 21%
Used pictures to help students understand the meaning (n = 363)	42 12%	142 39%	107 30%	72 20%
Discussed the pictures in the texts in English (n = 358)	49 14%	135 38%	109 30%	65 18%
Asked comprehension questions in English (n = 369)	9 2%	90 24%	146 40%	124 34%
Asked comprehension questions in Norwegian (n = 367)	12 3%	112 31%	144 39%	99 27%
Discussed the content or meaning of the story in English with the students (n = 363)	55 15%	138 38%	103 28%	67 19%

There are many methods that can be used to monitor students' reading progress. The teachers were asked about their use of eight different methods (see Table 23). Additionally, they were given the option of "other methods of feedback for students and parents." Three methods were most frequently used for monitoring reading progress by the fourth- and fifth-grade teachers: students reading aloud (77% at least 3 times per month), students answering questions about the text (74%), and vocabulary tests (63%). Four in ten teachers reported occasionally giving students a writing task following reading a passage, while an additional four in ten did this three or more times a month. Individual discussions with students about their reading were also used infrequently (approximately 40% one to two times a month, 20% three or more times a month).

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Table 23: Methods for monitoring students' reading progress in frequency per month (actual numbers and percentages)⁷³

Method	Frequency per month			
	0 times	1–2 times	3–5 times	More than 5 times
Students reading aloud (n = 366)	11 3%	74 20%	134 37%	147 40%
Individual discussions with students about their reading (n = 357)	135 38%	150 42%	48 13%	24 7%
The <i>ELP</i> or other portfolios (n = 348)	310 89%	31 9%	5 1%	2 1%
Running records (n = 345)	310 90%	24 7%	5 1%	6 2%
Multiple choice reading comprehension questions (n = 355)	188 53%	102 29%	48 14%	17 5%
Vocabulary tests (n = 365)	24 7%	110 30%	143 39%	88 24%
Answering questions about the text (n = 365)	9 3%	89 24%	144 40%	123 34%
Giving a writing task following reading a passage (n = 355)	68 19%	141 40%	98 28%	48 14%
Other methods of feedback for students and parents (n = 355)	125 38%	136 42%	45 14%	22 7%

Other more recent methods of monitoring students' reading progress, such as the use of the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)* or other portfolios and running records, were very uncommon (nearly 90% of the teachers had not used any of them). Running records, a method of monitoring student reading progress developed by Marie Clay in New Zealand, is used at many schools using the Early Years Literacy Program (see also section 4.6). As few teachers reported being familiar with or using the *ELP*, it is not surprising that so few used it or the associated "can do" statements built on the *CEFR* for monitoring students' reading progress (see also section 2.2.3).

The fifth questionnaire component aimed to find out if the use of particular practices was associated with different reading approaches. It was hypothesized that there would be more use of groups and different types of texts with the combination and EYLP/graded reader approaches. Specifically, it was anticipated that differentiation in text level and grouping would be associated with the EYLP/graded reader approaches. It was also hypothesized

⁷³ There is suspicion that teachers who did not use the practice at all did not answer the question, rather than answering 0 times per month.

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that more teacher and whole-class activities would be used among the teachers using the textbook-based approach. For the following Chi-square analyses comparing the reading approaches to the use of particular practices, only the analyses that were most relevant for answering the component analyses were reported. The results of the Chi-square analyses are reported in the text and the tables are included in Appendix 3C⁷⁴.

The first set of analyses compared practices related to classroom organization and reading activities. These analyses used the frequency data presented in Tables 20 to 23 and compared it to the reading approaches used by the teachers. Teacher-led whole class reading, such as the teacher reading aloud and students reading aloud in unison, were used relatively more among teachers using a textbook-based approach than the other approaches, $\chi^2(4, 357) = 11.482, p = .022$, and $\chi^2(4, 355) = 9.726, p = .045$ (see Appendix 3C, Tables 46 and 47). In contrast, students reading aloud individually was not associated with any particular reading approach, $\chi^2(4, 348) = 6.455, p = .168$ (see Appendix 3C, Table 48). Additionally, teachers using a textbook-based approach had students reading individually (not aloud) less often than other approaches, $\chi^2(4, 332) = 9.964, p = .041$ (see Appendix 3C, Table 49). This was likely because of the higher frequency of choral reading (students reading aloud in unison) associated with this approach (see above). Group-related practices were used less commonly than whole-class practices and their use was not associated with any particular reading approach. The Chi-square analyses were not significant either for small groups led by teachers, $\chi^2(4, 329) = 2.328, p = .676$ or for small groups led by students, $\chi^2(4, 327) = 1.376, p = .848$.

Some aspects of differentiation in reading instruction appeared to be associated with particular reading approaches, while others were not. First, allowing students to choose what to read was not associated with the textbook-based approach, whereas it was associated with occasional use among teachers using a combination approach, $\chi^2(4, 357) = 13.079, p = .011$

⁷⁴ Explanations of the tables are included in the appendix text and in notes under the tables.

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(see Appendix 3C, Table 50). Second, there were no significant differences among the reading approaches in their use of level-differentiated texts, $\chi^2(4, 357) = 6.735, p = .151$ (see Appendix 3C, Table 51). However, there were significant differences in the use of level-differentiated groups, $\chi^2(4, 351) = 12.780, p = .012$ (see Appendix 3C, Table 52)⁷⁵. Teachers using EYLP/graded reader approaches used level-differentiated groups more often than those using the other approaches. This was as hypothesized, most likely since reading in the EYLP program at the teacher station is usually conducted in level-differentiated groups. However, this also confirms that the use of level-differentiated groups is not a common practice across all the reading approaches.

Generally, the practices teachers used while reading aloud were not associated with any particular reading approach, with the exception of translating while reading, which was used by relatively fewer teachers using the EYLP/graded reader approaches than the other approaches, $\chi^2(2, 363) = 8.702, p = .13$ (see Appendix 3C, Table 53)⁷⁶. Methods of monitoring reading progress did not vary significantly with the use of different reading approaches and cannot be associated with any particular reading approach.

7.4.4 Reading instruction collaboration between teachers

Teachers were asked about their collaboration on reading instruction with other English teachers. Teachers who did not teach both English and Norwegian in the same class were also asked how often they collaborated with the Norwegian teacher for the classes they taught. Regarding collaboration between fourth-grade English teachers and fourth-grade Norwegian teachers, most teachers either collaborated frequently (weekly=44%) or they almost never collaborated (35%) (see Table 24).

⁷⁵ In the Chi-square analysis, deviations were found in one cell, namely the correspondence between EYLP/graded reader approaches and 3–5 hours per month, indicated by the adjusted residual 3.4.

⁷⁶ In the Chi-square analysis, deviations were found in one cell, namely the correspondence between EYLP/graded reader approaches and fewer than 3 hours per month, indicated by the adjusted residual 2.9.

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Collaboration between English teachers and Norwegian teachers about reading instruction in fifth grade was even less frequent than for fourth grade. Contrastingly, nearly half of the fourth-grade English teachers and just over half of the fifth-grade English teachers did not collaborate with other English teachers on English reading instruction (see Table 25). However, when the teachers did collaborate, one in four collaborated weekly.

Table 24: The frequency of teachers' collaboration with the class Norwegian teacher regarding reading instruction (actual numbers and percentages)

Grade level	Frequency			
	Never/almost never	Twice a year	Monthly	Weekly
Grade 4 (n = 72)	25 35%	7 10%	8 11%	32 44%
Grade 5 (n = 88)	45 51%	10 11%	9 10%	21 24%

Table 25: The frequency of teachers' collaboration with the other English teachers regarding reading instruction (actual numbers and percentages)

Grade level	Frequency			
	Never/almost never	Twice a year	Monthly	Weekly
Grade 4 (n = 197)	98 50%	19 10%	26 13%	49 25%
Grade 5 (n = 205)	109 53%	24 12%	18 9%	52 25%

7.4.5 Language use in classroom

It was hypothesized that teachers with English higher education qualifications would use more English in the classroom than teachers with no English qualifications. This was because it was believed that these teachers would have more experience and possibly more confidence in using English, as well as potentially better English language skills, than their unqualified peers. Confidence in one's own language skills was considered to be an important factor in teachers' language use.

First, related to the frequency data, most of the teachers reported using either mostly English or both Norwegian and English equally (see Table 26). Using a Chi-square analysis, it was found that, as hypothesized, there were relatively more teachers with English higher education qualifications using more English than teachers without these qualifications, $\chi^2(4, 360) = 14.097, p = .007$ (see Table 27). Specifically, there were more teachers without

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qualifications using mostly Norwegian, as indicated by the adjusted residual 2.9. Given these results, Chi-square analyses were also used to explore if there was a similar interdependence between language use and reading approach and grade level taught. When comparing language use between fourth, fifth, and both grade teachers, the differences were not significant, $\chi^2(4, 370) = 1.799, p = .773$, nor were differences between language use and reading approach, $\chi^2(4, 366) = 8.886, p = .064$. Thus, related to classroom language use, only English qualifications was found to be a significant factor.

Table 26: Language of English instruction (actual numbers and percentages)

	Only English	Mostly English	Both equally	Mostly Norwegian	Only Norwegian
What language do you mostly use for English instruction? (n=370)	6 2%	170 46%	166 45%	28 8%	0 0%

Table 27: Language use in the classroom in relation to English higher education qualifications

English qualifications		Language used for teaching English		
		Mostly English (n = 168)	Equal English and Norwegian (n =164)	Mostly Norwegian (n = 28)
No qualifications (n = 174)	Actual	67	86	21
	Expected	81.2	79.3	13.5
	Adj. res.	-3	1.4	2.9**
30 SP (n = 74)	Actual	41	31	2
	Expected	34.5	33.7	5.8
	Adj. res.	1.7	-.7	-1.8
60 SP (n = 112)	Actual	60	47	5
	Expected	52.3	51	8.7
	Adj. res.	1.8	-.9	-1.6

7.4.6 The European Language Portfolio (ELP)

The teachers were asked about their knowledge and use of the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*. Only one in five teachers were familiar with the *ELP*. However, of those teachers, less than 20% reported having used it one to two times in the previous month (see Table 54 and Table 55 in Appendix 3C). A Chi-square analysis was used to test if there was an association between teachers' English qualifications and whether they were familiar with the *ELP*. The results were significant, $\chi^2(2, 360) = 10.975, p = .004$ (see Table 28). The

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cell deviations were found in two cells, namely, the correspondence between teachers with no qualifications and those who were not familiar with the *ELP* (as shown by adjusted residual 3.3) and those with more than 60 study points and who were familiar with the *ELP* (as shown by adjusted residual 2.5). There were relatively more teachers with higher education qualifications in English who were familiar with the *ELP* than teachers who had no qualifications or fewer than 30 SP. Additionally, the teachers who used the *ELP* were asked if they felt it was useful for having an overview of their students' reading development; 45% of them felt that it was somewhat useful, while almost an equal number were unsure (see Table 29).

Table 28: Familiarity with the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)* in relation to English higher education qualifications

Familiarity with the ELP		Qualifications		
		No qualifications (n = 174)	30 SP (n = 74)	60 SP or more (n = 112)
Yes (n = 71)	Count	22	18	31
	Expected	34.3	14.6	22.1
	Adj. res.	-3.3	1.1	2.5*
No (n = 289)	Count	152	56	81
	Expected	139.7	59.4	89.9
	Adj. Res.	3.3**	-1.1	-2.5

Table 29: Perceived usefulness of the *ELP* (actual responses and percentage of those for whom question applied)

Perceived usefulness	Frequency	Percent
Not useful	1	1%
Somewhat useful	31	45%
Very useful	7	10%
Uncertain	30	44%
Total	69	100%

7.5 Teachers' perceptions of teaching EFL reading

This section presents the teachers' responses to statements related to their perceptions of teaching EFL reading, such as intensive and extensive reading, text usage and choice, working with texts, and practical issues. Additionally, statements cover topics related to teachers' qualifications, and EFL education policy-related statements, which are presented first. The teachers were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on the Likert scale:

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strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree.

7.5.1 Qualifications

The teachers' perspectives on qualifications for English teachers, subject-specialist versus generalist teachers and their own competence to teach English were measured through six statements (see Table 30). First, regarding teacher qualifications, three-quarters of the teachers agreed that an English teacher should have higher education in English. Second, there was less agreement among the teachers as to whether an English teacher should also be the Norwegian teacher (approximately one third agreed). This statement was related to the concept of whether all language skills should be taught by one teacher. Additionally, there was also a greater variety of opinions on whether the English teacher should also be the teacher in other subjects (54% agreed, 30% somewhat agreed). For both of these questions, few of the teachers disagreed, suggesting there was still a good deal of support for the concept of a "generalist teacher," as opposed to a "subject specialist." There can be many reasons for this support, such as practical concerns related to the need for teachers to teach multiple subjects, historical perspectives, such as *allmennlærer utdanning*⁷⁷ (general teacher training programme) in Norway, relational concerns, such as the belief that students should have fewer teachers to relate to and that fewer teachers should have the responsibility for monitoring students' development.

⁷⁷ Until 2010, the general teacher training program in Norway qualified teachers as generalist teachers for grades 1–10 (see also section 2.2.5).

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Table 30: Statements related to teacher qualifications (actual numbers and percentages)

Statements	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
An English teacher should have higher education in English. (n = 366)	4 1%	10 3%	70 19%	282 77%
It is best if the English teacher is also the Norwegian teacher. (n = 364)	59 16%	54 15%	134 37%	117 32%
I am able to provide differentiated reading instruction for all my students. (n = 366)	55 15%	69 19%	157 43%	85 23%
Mixed-ability classes are the biggest challenge for an English teacher. (n = 365)	24 7%	28 8%	108 30%	205 56%
My teacher education has prepared me well to teach reading in English in 4 th and 5 th grades. (n = 357)	56 18%	50 14%	84 24%	167 47%
An English teacher should also be the class teacher in other subjects. (n = 365)	31 9%	26 7%	110 30%	198 54%

Third, there was variation as to whether the teachers felt their teacher education prepared them to teach reading in English. A Chi-square analysis was used to test whether the variation in teachers' perception of preparedness was related to their English teaching qualifications. The results were significant $\chi^2(10, 347) = 89.551, p < .001$ (see Appendix 3D, Table 58). The majority of those who were unqualified to teach English did not feel that their general teacher education had prepared them to teach English reading (27% strongly disagreed or disagreed and 20% somewhat disagreed). In contrast, the majority of those who had 30 SP agreed and those with 60 SP or more agreed or strongly agreed that their education had prepared them to teach English reading. Thus, qualifications seem to be an influence in whether teachers feel prepared to teach English reading.

The final two statements relating to qualifications addressed differentiation. Just over half of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed that mixed-ability classes were the greatest challenge for an English teacher. A further three in ten somewhat agreed. However, only roughly a quarter strongly agreed or agreed that they were able to provide differentiated reading instruction for all of their students. A larger percentage (43%) somewhat agreed. These findings indicate a gap in what teachers perceive as challenging, namely, differentiation, and the wide range of ability levels among primary school students, and what they feel they can manage in their teaching. Therefore, it is

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important that this gap is addressed, for example through in-service training and additional supportive materials and teaching methods that support teachers in differentiating English lessons, especially when teaching reading.

7.5.2 Policy-related perspectives

This section relates to the teachers' perspectives on policy in EFL teaching, such as the starting age for English, and the national test. The teachers were asked to respond to two statements about the national test in English; the first related to policy, the second to how it may influence their own teaching. The majority of the teachers reported that the national English test was a useful tool for assessing students' English reading comprehension (34% somewhat agreed and 38% agreed) (see Table 31). However, less than half of the teachers felt that the test influenced their English teaching to a great extent. This suggests that other factors may be more influential in their teaching. Additionally, it suggests that although the teachers recognized the usefulness of the test for assessing students, few of them used it actively to inform their teaching.

Table 31: Teachers' perceptions of the national English test (actual numbers and percentages)

Statements	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
The national English test is a useful tool for assessing students' English reading comprehension. (n = 366)	52 14%	52 14%	124 34%	138 38%
The national English test influences to a great degree my English instruction. (n = 366)	129 35%	67 18%	120 33%	50 14%

The second section contained five statements about the starting age of English and the development of reading skills in English and Norwegian (see Table 32). The teachers' perceptions of whether English reading instruction should be taught from first grade varied greatly. However, nearly half of the teachers agreed with the statement "students should have good reading strategies and reading abilities in Norwegian before learning to read in English." Eight of ten teachers believed that a low reading level in Norwegian would make it difficult for students to read English. Thus, it appears that the teachers recognized a link between L1 and L2 reading skills and strategies. This recognition possibly suggests that they believed these skills were transferable,

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although the teachers were not asked specifically about this. Additionally, the majority of the teachers agreed that students should have a basis in spoken English before learning to read and write in English (roughly half agreed, nearly a third somewhat agreed). However, many of the teachers also agreed that it was important to begin with English reading instruction in first grade (38% agreed; 24% somewhat agreed). These differing opinions warrant further research and investigation. It would be interesting to map patterns of teachers to discover whether there are patterns within teachers' perceptions regarding beginning English reading and their actual practices.

Table 32: Teachers' perceptions of starting age for English and reading (actual numbers and percentages)

Statements	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
It is important to begin with English reading instruction in first grade. (n = 364)	80 22%	60 17%	87 24%	137 38%
Students should have a basis in spoken English before learning to read and write in English. (n = 365)	27 7%	37 10%	115 32%	186 51%
Low reading ability in Norwegian makes it difficult for students to read in English. (n = 365)	4 1%	11 3%	52 14%	298 82%
Students should have good reading strategies and reading abilities in Norwegian before learning to read in English. (n = 365)	22 6%	51 14%	116 32%	176 48%
The transition in English from <i>barnetrinnet</i> (grades 1–4) to <i>mellomtrinnet</i> (grades 5–7) is very difficult for students. (n = 362)	24 7%	35 10%	92 25%	211 58%

In order to compare beginning age for English and the need for reading strategies in English, a Chi-square analysis was conducted. A relatively larger than expected number of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that it was important to begin English reading instruction in first grade and disagreed or strongly disagreed that students needed good reading strategies in Norwegian before learning to read in English, as indicated by the adjusted residual 4, and $\chi^2(9, 362) = 25.368, p = .003$ (see Appendix 3D, Table 60). However, the teachers responding in this way were only 5% of the total teacher responses.

Within the analysis above, in contrast to the group of teachers mentioned above (the 5%), 17% of the teachers answered that they agreed with both statements (see also Appendix 3D, Table 60). These are not necessarily

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directly opposing statements (contra-indicative), yet in a practical sense few Norwegian first-grade students have developed good reading strategies in Norwegian. Thus, by agreeing with both statements, the teachers were expressing their perspectives on language learning, namely, that good reading strategies in Norwegian are important before starting to learn to read in a second language and that starting to read English from first grade is important, independent of the teachers' ability to implement both of the priorities. Another possible interpretation is that the teachers were choosing answers they felt were "positive" or "correct," rather than considering how these statements related as a whole.

Finally, roughly six in ten teachers agreed that the transition from the early primary school grades (1–4) to the later primary school grades (5–7) was very difficult for students, while a further quarter somewhat agreed. This possibly suggests that there is still a perception that English, and expectations related to the subject, are different in grades 1–4 compared with grades 5–7. A relatively higher than expected number of the fourth-grade than fifth-grade teachers felt that the transition from fourth to fifth grade was a problem (67% of the fourth-grade teachers agreed, whereas 51% of the fifth-grade teachers agreed), $\chi^2(3, 362) = 10.100, p = .018$ (see Appendix 3D, Table 59). These findings are not surprising as fourth-grade teachers are expected to prepare the students for the national test given at the beginning of fifth grade. They may also feel more strongly the changes and transitions following the reforms related to the starting age of English and the curriculum aims, as more is now required of the teachers and students in earlier grades than previously.

However, the fact that the majority of the teachers considered the transition from grades 4 to 5 as difficult warrants attention. First, there seems to be a need for greater collaboration between English teachers across grade levels. The results presented in section 7.4.4 indicated that teachers collaborated more among grade level than within subject groups. Having English subject groups may help create an overall plan for how students' English development will progress throughout primary school. Second, it may indicate that more fourth-grade teachers do not feel prepared to meet the new curriculum aims by the completion of fifth grade. Whether this is related to practical issues (such as lack of time or lack of resources), variation in

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students' ability levels, or the teachers' competence, should be further researched.

7.5.3 Teachers' perspectives on reading practices

The present subsection relates to teachers' perspectives on reading methods, text usage and choice, and principles for working with texts.

The relevant section of the questionnaire contained three statements related to teacher perspectives on the importance of intensive and extensive reading. The teachers' answers indicated that the vast majority considered it important for students to read intensively and extensively (or read many texts) to ensure and improve comprehension (84% and 83% agreed respectively) (see Table 33). However, it is unclear whether these views transferred into classroom practices. As the vast majority of the teachers (85%) felt it was difficult to find enough time for free-reading in English lessons, it is unlikely that the children could actually have done much extensive reading.

Table 33: Teachers' perceptions of intensive and extensive reading (actual numbers and percentages)

Statements	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
It is important for students to work intensively with a text to ensure comprehension. (n = 364)	2 1%	11 3%	47 13%	304 84%
It is important for students to read many texts to improve reading comprehension. (n= 366)	2 1%	5 1%	55 15%	304 83%
It is difficult to find enough time for free-reading in English lessons. (n = 365)	2 1%	8 2%	46 13%	309 85%

As the concept of extensive reading was unfamiliar to many teachers (as discovered during pre-pilot stages of the questionnaire), other terms such as "reading many books" and "free-reading" were used instead. These terms incorporate some aspects of extensive reading, but not all; thus, choosing to use familiar terms rather than providing definitions of terms may possibly have been a weakness in the questionnaire design. It is not possible to ascertain the influence a definition may have had on the respondents' answers. However, this point may be taken into account in possible future versions of the questionnaire.

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The teachers responded to six statements related to text usage and choice. Three-quarters of the teachers felt that they should be involved in helping the students to choose texts to read, whereas one-fifth agreed that it was important for students to choose their own texts to read (see Table 34). Since one of the principles of extensive reading is reading for pleasure, it is notable that so few of the teachers felt it was a priority for their students to choose their own texts. More interesting perhaps are the two statements related to differentiation of reading texts. Whereas only one in five teachers agreed that all students benefit from reading the same text, nearly all of the teachers agreed that the students would benefit from reading different texts based on ability level. Although these numbers indicate that the teachers were strongly in favor of differentiating reading materials for their students, few of them actually enabled their students to read level-differentiated texts on a regular basis (see section 7.4.3, Table 21).

Table 34: Teachers' text choice and usage (actual numbers and percentages)

Statements	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
The texts in our textbook are interesting for the students. (n = 362)	21 6%	28 8%	108 30%	205 57%
It is important that the students can choose which texts they would like to read. (n = 365)	29 8%	77 21%	182 50%	77 21%
Students would benefit from reading different texts based on their ability level. (n = 363)	0	0	16 4%	347 96%
All students benefit from reading the same text. (n = 365)	83 23%	81 22%	125 34%	76 21%
The teacher should help the students choose texts to read. (n = 365)	6 2%	13 4%	69 19%	277 76%
Internet texts are an important source of reading material for students. (n = 360)	33 9%	56 16%	152 42%	119 33%

There was less agreement among the teachers regarding principles for working with texts (see Table 35). Half of the teachers considered it important to allow for the use of Norwegian at times when explaining texts, especially the use of translation to support comprehension, which nearly two-thirds supported. Additionally, nearly two-thirds of the teachers felt it was unnecessary for every word of the text to be understood by the students. The implication is that not all texts may need to be studied equally intensively, and

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that teachers may even be open for the possibility of reading some texts extensively. However, as they were not asked specifically about this, whether it occurs is unknown.

Table 35: Methods of working with texts (actual numbers and percentages)

Statements	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
Only English should be used to explain texts during reading instruction. (n = 365)	80 22%	107 29%	116 32%	62 17%
It is important to use translation during reading instruction to ensure that the students understand. (n = 366)	6 2%	19 5%	104 28%	237 65%
It is important for students to understand every word in a text. (n = 365)	144 40%	124 34%	70 19%	27 7%

7.5.4 Practical issues – materials and time

Finally, the teachers were asked to respond to four statements regarding practical issues, such as whether they considered they had too few materials. A paucity of instruction hours per week appeared to be a more important factor in how teachers planned their teaching than lack of materials; nearly 45% agreed that few teaching hours was the most important factor for lesson planning, whereas only 20% felt it was determined by lack of materials (see Table 36).

Table 36: Instruction hours and materials available (actual numbers and percentages)

	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
Few instruction hours each week is the most important factor for how I plan reading instruction. (n = 364)	35 10%	47 13%	118 32%	164 45%
Lack of materials is the most important factor for how I plan reading instruction. (n = 362)	110 30%	88 24%	90 25%	74 20%
My school is willing to invest in different reading materials. (n = 354) ⁷⁸	49 14%	83 23%	86 24%	136 38%
The materials I have available are sufficient to cater to students at different reading levels. (n = 360)	65 18%	91 25%	89 25%	115 32%

⁷⁸ It is suspected that some teachers only listed the criteria for which they had an opinion, while they did not answer other criteria they felt did not apply or about which they did not have a strong opinion.

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In order to further explore these issues, Chi-square analyses were performed related to teachers' actual materials available compared to their perception of their students' different needs and reading levels. Just under a third of the teachers agreed that they had sufficient materials to meet students' reading levels. Unsurprisingly, those with fewer books in their class and school libraries felt they did not have sufficient materials to meet the diversity of their students' needs, whereas those who had more books felt they did; classrooms $\chi^2(6, 360) = 26.426, p < .001$, school libraries $\chi^2(6, 360) = 25.172, p < .001$ (see Appendix 3D, Tables 61 and 62). Some of the teachers felt that their schools were unwilling to invest in reading materials (14% and 23%, see item 3, Table 36). Since differentiated reading instruction depends on teachers having materials appropriate to the different needs of their students, this is an important issue.

Materials and time are only two of many possible factors that can influence how and why teachers plan as they do. However, these two aspects were asked about specifically since, due to their practical nature, they can be more easily addressed than many other factors.

7.6 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has presented the results of the Norwegian national questionnaire on fourth- and fifth-grade EFL reading. Sections 7.3–7.5 presented the questionnaire findings. The main findings were, first, that nearly half of the teachers did not have English teaching qualifications⁷⁹. However, higher education in English did not appear to be significantly associated with a particular reading approach. Second, the teachers primarily used a textbook-based reading approach, both in Norwegian and English. Third, the majority of the teachers most often used a whole-class teacher-led reading session where all the students read the same text. The most common reading practices were having texts read aloud by the teacher, chorally by the whole class, or by

⁷⁹ 30 study points is considered the minimum levels at which a teacher is qualified to teach subjects at the primary school level (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2009a).

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individual students. Reading in small groups or individual reading were not commonly applied practices.

Related to teachers' perceptions of teaching EFL reading, it was found that feeling prepared to teach English reading was related to whether teachers had English teaching qualifications. Also, the majority of teachers felt that mixed-ability classes were the greatest challenge to an English teacher, but only a quarter of them felt they were able to provide differentiated instruction to all their students. The majority of teachers also felt that the transition from fourth to fifth grade was difficult for students. Related to teachers' perspectives on reading materials and their use, nearly all of the teachers reported being strongly in favor of differentiating reading materials, yet few actually had their students read level-differentiated texts on a regular basis. More teachers reported a paucity of teaching hours as influencing their reading teaching compared to a paucity of materials. However, satisfaction with reading materials was related to the actual quantity available. Thus, those with fewer materials felt this was a greater factor on their teaching than other factors.

8 Case study schools

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data from the four case study schools. The case study schools represent three reading approaches: a textbook-based approach, a combination of textbook-based and graded reader approach, and the EYLP approach (see also Chapter 5). Two schools were selected to represent the combination approach, which is a very broad category. Thus, two schools which each approached the use of the combination of materials differently were selected for the case study. The two schools are presented separately, allowing the reader to fully understand the presentation of the approach at each school. For ease of reading, all the schools are presented using the same heading structure.

The observation and interview data, as presented, is organized by school. Within each school section there are subsections related to the different data sources and specific areas of focus in the observations. The sections are: characteristics of the reading approach and how it was used, materials, lesson observations, teacher interviews, and student interviews. Within the lesson observation sections, the following categories were taken from the adapted Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) framework, which was used as the observation framework: instructional grouping, major activity focus, activity focus, teacher interaction style, and student response (see also sections 6.4.3 to 6.4.5 and Appendix 4A for an explanation of the coding instrument, definitions, and calculations). In addition, two categories were added which were relevant to the current context, namely, language use and lesson aims. Specific categories of topics related to the individual schools and/or reading approach are addressed. Summaries of coding frequencies are provided in Appendix 4D.

The criterion for selecting the transcribed interactions was that it was an actual interaction between students and the teacher in connection with a text, rather than just reading aloud or listening to the text on CD, the latter occurring frequently in Schools 1, 2, and 3.

8.2 Textbook-based approach – School 1

8.2.1 How the reading approach was used

The first approach is a textbook-based approach. The use of textbooks as the predominant reading material has been a tradition in Norwegian schools (Drew, 2004) and particularly in EFL (Littlejohn, 1998). Although the Ministry of Education does not require the use of a textbook, or advocate the use of a particular textbook, a number of textbooks written for the Norwegian EFL market are widely used (see also section 5.2.2).

The textbook *Stairs* (*Stairs 4* and *Stairs 5*) was the primary reading and instructional material at this school. The *Stairs* textbooks are written with the concept of differentiation in mind; there are two levels, called “Steps,” in grade 4 and three levels in grades 5–7. The authors of *Stairs* intend that the teachers work through the book from beginning to end (Håkenstad & Vestgård, 2007c). They advise against “hopping around,” as the students may meet words and texts they are not prepared to work with. The texts are not different levels of the same content, but rather each text is based on new content. Thus, the publishers intend that all of the students are introduced to and have at least listened to, if not read, all of the texts. Following the common introduction to the texts, the students are expected to work more intensively with one of the texts at their level.

The same concept is used with the workbook activities; all students are expected to start with Step 1 activities, while those who can manage more can continue to work on Step 2 and Step 3 activities (Step 3 is only available in grade 5). The intention is for all the fourth-grade students to manage Step 1 texts, while high achievers can manage Step 2 texts. In fifth grade, the Step 2 texts are intended for the average student, whereas Step 3 texts are for high achieving students who possibly have English-speaking parents, who have more exposure to English, or who are especially interested in learning languages (Thorsen & Unnerud, 2006). Given these expectations that all students should experience the texts from all of the levels, one may question to what extent the teaching is differentiated for students’ learning. Additionally, when choosing the text to read for homework, given that there is

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only one text at each level, one may also question to what extent the students are offered a real choice in texts.

The teacher at this school attempted to cover most of the textbook, using the activities and audio recordings suggested in the teachers' guide. This generally led to time pressure to complete the book, as described by the teacher in an interview. As a result the teacher did not use additional reading materials for the students. Moreover, when the students took the initiative for other activities related to the texts, such as acting out a play, the teacher on many occasions decided there was no time for such activities.

8.2.2 Grade 4 materials

As previously mentioned, the teacher used *Stairs 4* as the primary text source for this class, which was used in four of the five observed lessons. Narratives from the textbook were used during two lessons. Additionally, a list of animal names was the basis of a third lesson. In three of the five observed lessons the students sang, for which the CD included in the textbook support materials was used three times and a YouTube video once. The teacher used the interactive whiteboard to show song texts and to show pictures used for activities, such as telling time. The teacher also gave the students paper clocks to manipulate when practicing telling time. The final observed lesson was focused on preparation for the national test the following fall, during which the teacher used the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate and practice a previous version of the test.

8.2.3 Grade 4 lesson observations

The lessons were coded in five-minute segments (see sections 6.4.3 and 6.4.4 for an explanation of the observation procedure). There were 38 five-minute segments in total within the five observed lessons.

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Teacher and instructional grouping

The English teacher was the only teacher present during teaching. Whole-class teaching was the dominant form of grouping, used in all lessons and occurring in 92% of lesson segments (see Appendix 4D for the summary of coding frequencies). Pairs were used in four of the five lessons, but only for 5–15 minutes in each lesson. Students worked individually on one occasion while taking a vocabulary test, which lasted four minutes.

Major activity focus

The lessons were fairly evenly divided between reading and other language skills (50% and 63% of the segments, respectively). Reading was the major focus for the majority of two lessons and for one-third of another lesson. “Other language,” which featured in over half of the time in four of five lessons, included talking about a topic not related to the texts or reading, such as the weather, talking about grammar, telling time, vocabulary learning not connected to texts, and singing⁸⁰. Writing was not observed during any of the lessons. The previously mentioned vocabulary test was not coded as “writing” as it was not writing of extended text, but rather a translation and spelling exercise.

Activity focus

During the reading-focused segments of the lessons (three lessons), over three-quarters of the segments included reading connected texts, and half included listening to texts. During the two lessons where the primary focus was working with texts, the teacher followed the same procedure each time, guiding the students through the text. These lessons were often comprised of many repetitions of the text, which constituted in total 10–15 minutes per text: first, students often listened to the CD and following along in the textbook; subsequently, students often read chorally or in pairs. Finally, the teacher asked lower-level comprehension questions (63% of the segments), primarily

⁸⁰ The overlap in one lesson with a focus on both reading and “other language” was when students were reading the text of the song while singing. The students began by listening to the song without textbooks, the text being added the second and third time when they listened and sang along.

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literal comprehension questions, such as “Where is he?” and “When is he coming back?” These questions required the students to pick out information from the text, but did not require higher-level thinking skills, such as drawing inferences from the text or relating to prior knowledge of the topic of the text. Higher-level talk about texts did not occur in any of the lessons.

Comprehension skills and strategies were talked about and used throughout the lesson on the national test preparation, comprehension skills occurring in six of the nine and strategies in seven of the nine segments in that lesson. For example, on one occasion the teacher explained to the students that they were successfully able to answer the question because they found the word in the text. For more examples, see below in “teacher interaction style.”

Word knowledge featured in two out of five lesson segments (40%). When introducing a text, the teacher explained key vocabulary, sometimes providing the word (word identification)⁸¹, while at other times actively talking about word meanings. In the following exchange, the teacher was introducing a Step 1 text, a poem titled “Five senses.”

- 1 T: I’m going to ask you some questions first. You know what
- 2 the world is, the world?
- 3 S: *Verden* (The world).
- 4 T: Yes, can you touch the world? Can you touch the world?
- 5 S: Yes. [says hesitantly]
- 6 T: Touch, you know touch. [mimes touching]. Touch. Can you
- 7 touch the world, K?
- 8 K: No.
- 9 T: I don’t know. Some say yes, some say no. Ok, can you look
- 10 around? First one was to touch, touch, then look around, look
- 11 around. Can you use your eyes and look around, E? Look
- 12 around?
- 13 E: *Ser rundt*. (Look around.)
- 14 T: Yes, can you?

⁸¹ Word identification is the term used when the teacher asked students to explain words or give Norwegian equivalents, usually as a part of pre- or post-reading activities.

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15 S: Yes.

Later in the lesson:

16 T: Nose, yes of course. You can smell what is sweet. You
17 know what is sweet? Mm. A cake is sweet. Mm..mm..lovely
18 smell, something sweet.

(Excerpt 1 from transcription 8.12.10, School 1, grade 4)

In line 2 the teacher asked the student to identify a word, *the world*. In lines 11–12, the teacher asked the student a lower-level comprehension question. The student answered by translating the main component of the question, *look around*, into Norwegian (line 13). Although, this was not what the teacher asked the student to do, it nevertheless confirmed that the student had understood the question, and could answer when the question was repeated (line 14). In line 6 the teacher mimed touching to aid the students' comprehension, rather than giving the equivalent Norwegian word. In lines 16–18 the teacher created a context for the meaning of the word *sweet* to aid its comprehension. Thus, the teacher used a combination of translation and explanation of meaning when working with word knowledge.

In two of the lessons, vocabulary learning and practice was the main activity. The two topics were animal names and telling time. In a third lesson prepositions were reviewed. Grammar was mentioned in one lesson related to identifying verbs in sentences. Since the vocabulary test was a traditional translation test of non-context specific individual words, it was coded as spelling and vocabulary. Finally, the alphabet was reviewed in one lesson, focusing on sound-symbol correspondences. However, the focus on phonics only lasted five minutes. Following this, the students practiced spelling words aloud in pairs from a vocabulary list in their textbook.

Teacher interaction style/approach

The teacher generally interacted with students through telling and recitation, each used equally in the five observation lessons (in approximately 70% of the lesson segments). These two often occurred in the same five-minute

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segment, as the teacher would first give instructions, followed by asking the students questions about the text or the activity. This meant that most of the lesson time was teacher-directed, rather than students interacting with each other or working independently. The teacher also listened to students during parts of three of the lessons while the students were singing and reading or talking in pairs (occurring in six of the eight or six of the nine segments in the three respective lessons).

In the national test preparation lesson, the teacher modeled many comprehension strategies and her thought process as she attempted to answer reading comprehension questions. This was done throughout the lesson (present in eight of the nine lesson segments). The teacher first explained to the students that although they may not always understand every word when they read in English, it may still be possible to understand the general gist of the text. She also mentioned searching for key words in the text to aid comprehension. In the following excerpt, the teacher modeled her thought process for what readers should do when encountering a word whose meaning they were uncertain about.

1 T: [...] *og hvis du kommer på et ord du ikke skjønner, hva er*
2 *leaves, tenker du, prøver å tenke på alle ordene du vet. Hva*
3 *det betyr. Ok, this is a tree, a box, a box, a bird, man,*
4 *jumper, trousers, cat. Hvis du kan alle de ordene kan det ikke*
5 *være noen av de ordene. Da må det være noe her. Oh, this is*
6 *her*⁸². *Og så står det color the leaves on the tree yellow. Då*
7 *må eg først velge fargen yellow, og så må jeg ta pennen bort*
8 *sånn. Da tror jeg har funnet den.*

(and if you come upon a word that you do not understand, what are leaves, you think, try to think of all of the words you know. What they mean. Ok, this is a tree, a box, a box, a bird, man, jumper, trousers, cat. If you know all of the words, it can't be any of those words. Then it must be something here. Oh this is her⁴. And it says, color the leaves on the tree yellow. Then I first need to choose the color

⁸² The teacher used the Norwegian word for *here* (i.e., *her*).

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yellow, and then I need to take my pen over here like this.
Then I think I have found it.)

(Excerpt 2 from transcript 30.5.11, School 1, grade 4)

The other strategies she mentioned were reading the questions and all of the answer options before reading the text so that one knows what to look for, looking at the pictures, looking for “clues” in the text, and reading the whole text before answering the question. The students asked if it was important that they read the whole text, even if they knew the answer to a specific question, to which the teacher replied that it was important because they would be asked multiple questions about the same text. The teacher showed the students how there can be “trick” answers, or answers that are very similar, which they needed to be aware about and read carefully, such as knowing that *city center* and *town center* were referring to the same place.

There were also three other occurrences of modeling, two in one lesson and one in another. These were related to the pronunciation of particular sounds and telling time.

When the teacher provided support to the students while reading, it was often to help them to answer a particular question, rather than to foster independence and skills that could transfer to other situations (i.e., coaching). Although the teacher used a number of different types of corrective feedback, the general feedback to students was primarily recasting of incorrect or incomplete statements and answers.

- 1 T: Where is the, this is a book of course. Where is the pencil
- 2 now? M?
- 3 M: Between the book and the box.
- 4 T: The pencil is
- 5 M: The pencil is between the book
- 6 T: and the...
- 7 M: The box.

(Excerpt 3 from transcription 26.1.11, School 1, grade 4)

- 8 T: What is Sophie’s address? What is Sophie’s address? E?
- 9 E: 90 Poland street.

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- 10 T: Sorry, say that again.
11 E: 90 Porland street.
12 T: Port.
13 E: Portland street.

(Excerpt 4 from transcription 26.1.11, School 1, grade 4)

- 14 S3: I love the big snakes, but mom hat
15 T: hates
16 S3: hates them.

(Excerpt 5 from transcription 26.1.11, School 1, grade 4)

In line 4 the teacher used elicitation, allowing the student to complete the teacher's utterance, a complete sentence being the desired response. The student produced the sentence with uptake and repair, but did not complete the whole answer (line 5). The teacher once again used elicitation to aid the student in beginning the rest of the phrase (line 6). In line 10 the teacher used a clarification request, followed by a partial recast, focusing on the problem sound in line 12. The student exhibited uptake with repair in line 13. Finally, in line 15 the teacher recasted the student's pronunciation error, resulting in uptake with repair in line 16. This final example was typical of both reading and speaking interactions between the teacher and students.

Since the teacher often used the CD recordings of the textbook text, the teacher did not normally read aloud to the students, which only occurred during one five-minute segment. The one exception was during the national test preparation lesson, where the teacher read aloud the texts and the test questions in the test. However, she often asked the students to read chorally with her. Thus, she was not functioning as a reading model for the students because they were not specifically listening to her read.

Emilie expressed to the students that the national test was challenging with difficult texts to read. She placed the responsibility on *Kunnskapdepartementet* (The Department of Education) and *Utdanningsdirektoratet* (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training) for creating texts that the students may feel were too difficult, rather than at the level they should be working towards. There was nothing

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particularly encouraging in the way that she worked with the texts with the students, but she focused more on trying to teach them strategies to get through the test.

Student response

Overall, the balance between active and passive responding was fairly even (47% versus 52%, respectively). However, when it came to passive responding, students spent most time speaking and answering questions in turn, occurring in nearly a quarter of the segments. In contrast, when the students were actively listening to the teacher or the CD, only one student was involved in speaking at a time, and overall few students participated in those lesson segments. As previously mentioned, students did not write during any of the lessons.

The teacher had students take turns reading aloud to the whole class only during one lesson, and only for one minute, before returning to choral reading of the text. Students read in pairs during two lessons, each time for approximately five minutes. Most often the students read chorally, reading or singing a text. In three of the lessons, this occurred in three or four of the lesson segments during each lesson. When this took place, most of the students were engaged the first time reading through the text, but when the text was read repetitively, which it often was, fewer and fewer students read along or actively paid attention to the text they were reading.

There was large variation in the reading and listening comprehension abilities of students in the class. Since this was a very small class, the teacher was able to call on most students to participate. However, at times this difference in ability level was problematic, such as in the lesson on the national test. Generally, one or two students answered most of the questions. A few of the students said that the teacher read too fast, a few said they did not understand at various points during the lesson, and one student stopped paying attention already at the beginning of the lesson.

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During the first observation, the students were asked to read a text in pairs and then translate it into Norwegian. Prior to the activity, the teacher spent relatively little time preparing the students for the task of translating, which required them not only to understand the content of the text, but also to have sufficient vocabulary in English and Norwegian to retell what it was about. Another aspect that made this task complicated was the students' lack of experience in translating the texts they were reading. Many attempted to translate one word at a time, rather than retelling the poem line by line. This was not surprising as the students did not receive explicit instructions on how to translate the text, nor did the teacher model this activity for them. Overall, this incidence supports the need for more modeling and scaffolding of activities. It could also indicate a need for better clarification of the difference between translating and retelling. In addition, the teacher could have been more explicit regarding the aim of the translation activities.

In summary, in the fourth-grade textbook-based approach classes in this school, there was a predominance of whole-class instruction led by the teacher. As a result, some students were not involved in the discussion and many were also not engaged in the class reading activities.

8.2.4 Grade 5 materials

For the fifth-grade class, the *Stairs 5* textbook and/or the accompanying workbook were used during each of the five observed lessons. Narratives were read in three of the five lessons, while informational texts were read in one. Additionally, the CD recordings of these texts were played, although sometimes only part of a particular text. This school used technology to supplement the textbook materials, such as YouTube videos and music, which featured in three lessons, each video lasting 30 seconds to two minutes. These videos and songs provided additional language input and engaged the students, who sang along and sometimes discussed the content of the videos. The video topics included aspects of Scottish culture and a School House Rock video about adjectives. Worksheets and student writing were each used as the focus for half of one lesson (20–25 minutes).

8.2.5 Grade 5 lesson observations

For the fifth-grade observations, there were 45 five-minute segments in total within the five observed lessons (see sections 6.4.3 and 6.4.4 for an explanation of the observation procedure; see Appendix 4D for the summary of coding frequencies).

Teacher and instructional grouping

The English teacher was the only teacher present for four of the five lessons. The fifth lesson was a rehearsal of a joint performance with the other fifth-grade class. During that lesson the other fifth-grade teacher was also present. Whole-class teaching was used four times more often than students working in pairs or individually (73% versus 17% and 5%, respectively). However, pair work was used in three of the five lessons, but lasted for only 5–15 minutes in those lessons. Students worked individually during two lessons for 15–20 minutes each lesson. Small groups were used in one lesson for five minutes when students read in groups of three in which two read and one listened. The Step 1 group was also coded as a small group since it was a subset of the class working with a teacher (see section 8.2.1 for information about the Steps in *Stairs*).

Major activity focus

Reading was the major focus during at least part of four of the five lessons. However, overall this still only comprised 40% of the total lesson segments. Two lessons were primarily reading-focused (at least two-thirds of the lesson), and two lessons included reading-focused activities (a quarter and a third, respectively). Writing was not often the focus in the observed lessons, featuring only in one-third of a lesson. Other language skills were the primary focus in three lessons (approximately three-quarters of the lesson), and part of a fourth lesson (approximately a quarter). During these segments the students were singing songs, listening to YouTube videos, practicing the pronunciation of words, working with adjectives, talking about vocabulary associated with various topics (not related to the reading texts), and rehearsing for the performance of their play about a class trip to the British Isles. Thus, there

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was a combination of grammar, vocabulary, listening comprehension, and speaking skills.

Activity focus

During the reading-focused segments of the lessons, students were reading connected texts more than twice as often as they were listening to texts (in 16 compared to 7 of the 17 reading segments). Neither lower-level nor higher-level thinking about texts was prominent during the reading lessons. Lower-level responses to texts occurred in two of the five lessons, and were included in a total of 5 of the 17 reading segments. In three of the five lessons, the students were retelling or translating the English story they had read in Norwegian, rather than directly talking about its meaning or answering questions. However, retelling is arguably similar to lower-level literal comprehension questions. The following excerpt shows a series of recitation interactions led by the teacher.

- 1 T: What does Mr. Fox steal? P, what does Mr. Fox steal?
- 2 P: He is...
- 3 T: He steals.
- 4 P: He steals meat, and...
- 5 T: What animal?
- 6 P: A chicken.
- 7 T: Chicken. And why can't the three farmers, Bunch and
- 8 Bean and Bunce catch Mr. Fox? Why can't they catch him?
- 9 Yes, E.
- 10 E: Because he is too clever for them.
- 11 T: Yes, and what is the fox? He is cunning.
- 12 Ss join in: Cunning, cool, and clever.
- 13 T: Yes, he is.

(Excerpt 6 from transcription 8.12.10, School 1, grade 5)

In lines 1, 5, and 7–8, the teacher asked the students a literal comprehension question. Line 5 was a follow-up question, supporting the student in providing a more complete answer. However, although it resulted in a more specific answer from the student, namely *a chicken* (line 6), it was nevertheless not a more complete answer. The follow-up question helped the student answer the

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question and thus provided scaffolding, although the teacher was not specifically coaching (defined as helping the student create a more complete answer or assisting the student in developing a skill that could be applied in other situations; see definitions, section 6.4.3 and Appendix 4A). In line 3, the teacher recasted the student's statement to refocus him on answering the question, which would require the use of the verb *to steal* rather than the student's original formulation beginning with *to be*, which would have led to a description of the fox. Recasts of students' statements, such as the example above, were the most common use of corrective feedback.

Additionally, comprehension skills were only used or mentioned in one lesson. First, the teacher told the students to look at a picture for comprehension support, while in the second instance the teacher told a student that he could look up the spelling of a word in the dictionary.

Word knowledge was exhibited as both active vocabulary learning of word meanings (present in 41% of the reading segments), and word identification when working with texts (also 41%). Active vocabulary learning was a primary focus of the lesson about Scotland and Scottish traditions. In addition to typical Scottish words, the teacher asked students to compare many of the words to Norwegian words, for example, *kirk/kirke*, *hus/hus*, *brun/brun*, and *bairn/barn*. Word identification when reading texts was both teacher- and student-initiated; students asked the meaning of words, such as *society* and *Earl*, while the teacher explained some words while listening to the CD of the text, such as *revealed*, and sometimes asked students the meaning of words. The Norwegian equivalent was provided each time, rather than actually discussing the meaning of the word or the context in which it could be used.

Generally, writing was not a focus in the observed lessons. Students wrote extended texts in one lesson for approximately 15 minutes (7% of all lessons; 18% of the reading segments). The students wrote a text using adjectives to describe a class trip, beginning with a model text with gaps for the adjectives. The students were expected to add appropriate adjectives to the introduction of the story and to write what happened on the trip.

At this school the lower-level students read the Step 1 texts, whereas Step 2 and 3 students read all of the texts in class, only differing in which texts were

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read as homework. The school chose to divide the learners into two groups: one group of Step 1 students and the rest of the class at Step 2 and 3. The students were allowed to choose either Step 2 or Step 3 texts as homework, but were not given choices among other types of texts or books to read.

When working with texts, the texts were read or listened to on CD and the content was reviewed with the whole class and in pairs. However, there was no real discussion of the meaning of the text, besides a review of vocabulary and the literal comprehension of the story. Repetition was also a key component of the reading instruction. The texts were read and/or listened to two to three times at school and some of the texts were read at home as homework. When read at school, the teacher would sometimes read and explain the text line by line. Thus, she generally took an intensive approach to reading. In the following example, the teacher and the students were reading aloud chorally, often interrupted by the teacher to explain a word or ask the students if they knew what a word or phrase meant.

- 1 T and S: “Dang and blast that lousy beast,” cried Boggis.
- 2 “I’d like to rip his guts out!” cried Boggis. “He must be
- 3 killed!” cried Bean. “But how?” said Boggis. “How on earth
- 4 can we catch the blighter?”
- 5 T: Do you know what how on earth means?
- 6 S: *I all verden*. (In all the world – how the world)
- 7 T: *Hvor i all verden*. (How on earth.) Yes. Come on “How
- 8 on earth can we catch the blighter?” blighter, *det betyr den*
- 9 *kjøter? Eller et eller annet*. (That means that bastard? Or
- 10 something or other.)
- 11 T and S read aloud: Bean picked his nose delicately with a
- 12 long finger.
- 13 T: What does that mean? Picked his nose delicately with a
- 14 long finger?
- 15 P: *Han...I naså fint med en lang finger*. (He...in his nose
- 16 nicely with a long finger)
- 17 T: Yes, long finger.

(Excerpt 7 from transcription 8.12.10, School 1, grade 5)

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In lines 1–4 and 11–12, the teacher and students read together chorally. In lines 5 and 13–14, the teacher asked the students to identify words that were in the text. The teacher did not expect an explanation of meaning, but instead a translation of the word into Norwegian, as was the common practice in all five lessons. When the students gave a partially correct answer, the teacher recasted the answer (line 7), expanding the phrase. In the second answer, the teacher repeated the English phrase rather than its Norwegian equivalent (line 17).

When the students read in pairs, the teacher listened to some of the pairs reading, but did not have time to listen to all of them. After reading the text aloud in pairs, the students subsequently retold the story in Norwegian. The focus was on translating the content to demonstrate literal comprehension of the text, rather than direct translation.

Teacher interaction style/approach

The teacher interaction style was primarily exhibited as the teacher telling and listening/watching and giving feedback (78% and 80% of lesson segments respectively). Recitation was a component of approximately one-third of the teaching segments, but varied in its prominence in individual lessons, present in one to seven segments. Modeling was not featured in any of the observed lessons, and scaffolding was observed twice related to helping students write a story using adjectives. When the students read in pairs, Emilie listened to the groups and assisted them. Generally, this support consisted of saying a word the students were having trouble reading or correcting pronunciation by modeling the word and having the students repeat it.

When introducing a text to the students, the teacher often did most of the talking, rather than having them make predictions based on pictures and their prior knowledge.

- 1 T: *Og så når faren får vite det, the Earl, (...) då sier han at*
- 2 *han har fått vite at dette her er sant, at hun har vært å treffe*
- 3 *den mannen. Og han sier, you have you to stay in the castle*

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- 4 the tower. Look at the page, in the tower here, until you
5 marry the man I decide. (and so when the father finds out,
6 the Earl, (...)) then he says that he found out that it was true,
7 that she had been to meet a man. And he says)
8 S: *Om det er hun?*
9 T: I don't know. It's just a princess. *Så han bestemmer at*
10 *hun må stå i tårnet helt til han har funnet ut hvem hun skal*
11 *gifte seg med. Og han har allerede bestemt seg.* (So he
12 decided that she had to stay in the tower until he had found
13 out who she was going to marry. And he had already
14 decided.)
15 S: *Og hun ville det.* (And she wanted that.)
16 T: And he wants her, Anne, to marry somebody that is
17 twenty years older to her. So if Anne is like, 20, the man her
18 father wants her to marry is 40 years old!
19 S: Yuck!
20 S: Ooh!
21 T: Yes, so she doesn't want to. She doesn't love him. She
22 dislikes him, you know?
23 S: *Misliker.* (Dislikes.)

(Excerpt 8 from transcription 21.2.11, School 1, grade 5)

In this interaction excerpt, the teacher provided all of the information about the text (lines 1–7, 9–14, 16–18, and 21–22). The students were sometimes involved in providing the translation of a word, thereby indicating to the teacher that they had understood her summary (literal comprehension; line 23). The teacher did ask the students to make a prediction about the story based on the pictures or their prior knowledge of other fairy tales and stories. This interaction was also typical of the teacher's approach with Step 3 texts, where she felt it was necessary to go through the text before the students could listen to or read it.

Student response

There was a predominance of whole-class instruction led by the teacher. As a result, students were observed passively responding twice as often as actively

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responding (68% versus 30%, respectively). Overall, speaking and answering questions in turn and listening was observed during 51% and 41% of the segments. During this time some of the students were not involved in talking about the texts or topics and many were also not engaged in the class activity.

When working with the texts, some students volunteered to read aloud, while others did not. There was also insufficient time for all of the students who had volunteered to read each time; reading aloud was not a prominent activity, observed in two lessons for three and ten minutes. For example, when students took turns reading aloud in the observed lessons, three to seven of the fourteen students read. Although they read in pairs or small groups in four of the five lessons, this comprised a small portion of the lessons (only 5–15 minutes in those lessons).

Writing or working on grammar workbook activities was observed in two lessons, each time for approximately 15 minutes. Overall, written activities were featured in approximately 15% of the lesson segments. It is possible that students were assigned more writing as homework, given that they had completed most of the workbook exercises. However, based on the observed lessons, writing and student written work were not a strong focus in this class.

Step 1 group

At this school, the Step 1 students from both fifth-grade classes (five students in total), those with the lowest abilities in English, were placed in a separate group with a teacher who worked separately with them. She was not a qualified English teacher. These students almost always took turns reading aloud, rarely reading in pairs or individually.

The students clearly struggled with some of the vocabulary, even with the Step 1 texts. Because the students had been asked to translate rather than just retell the story, it is uncertain whether they understood the text, despite not being able to translate it into Norwegian. In other words, the students may have been confused by translating word-by-word rather than focusing on literal comprehension and retelling.

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- 1 S1: Hello, Alice. Who are you?
2 T: How are you?
3 S2: I am fine, tank [thank] you. Who are you, Molly?
4 T: How are you, Molly?
5 S2: *Jeg sa det.* (I said that.)
6 S1: I am ok. Have you hear-ed that *ny* [new] people are
7 moving in?
8 S2: My goodness! No. What are they?
9 T: Who are they?
10 S1: I think it is a family with the shree [three] children.
(Excerpt 9 from transcription 21.2.11, School 1, grade 5 Step 1)

Further in the excerpt, the teacher asked the students to translate the same dialogue.

- 11 S1: *Hei Alice, hvordan har du det?* (Hi Alice, how are
12 you?)
13 S2: *Fint. Takk. Hvordan har du det, Molly?* (Fine, thanks.
14 How are you, Molly?)
15 S1: *Jeg er ok. Har du hørt at noen folk som skal flytte inn?*
16 (Have you heard that some people are moving in?)
17 S2: Oh, goodness.
18 S1: Oh my god.
19 S2: Yeah, oh my god.
20 T: *Herlighet.* (My goodness.)
21 S2: *Nei, det visste jeg ikke.* (No, I didn't know that.)[2 sec.]
22 T: Who are they? *Hva det betyr?* (What does that mean?)
23 S2: *Hvor er de?* (Where are they?)
24 T: *Nei, hvem.*
25 S2: *Hvem er de?*

(Excerpt 10 from transcription 21.2.11, School 1, grade 5, Step 1)

In the first interaction (excerpt 9), the teacher recasted the students' errors (lines 2, 4, and 9), but there was no evidence of uptake from the students. In fact, in line 5 the student insisted that she had said it correctly the first time; she moved on rather than the teacher's feedback resulting in uptake or uptake with repair. There is evidence that the students did not register the correction,

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as the same misunderstanding persisted in their translation in excerpt 10. In the second excerpt, when the teacher drew the student's attention to the previous error using elicitation, asking for the student to give the Norwegian translation (line 22), the student used the incorrect interrogative pronoun, *hvor* (where) (line 23). However, after the teacher used explicit correction (line 24), the student produced the sentence, exhibiting uptake with repair in line 25. Overall, with this group of learners, less explicit negative feedback appeared to be less successful than explicit correction. This may be especially important for struggling readers who may be already cognitively challenged by other aspects of reading.

When talking about the content of pictures in the textbook, the students produced one-word answers in English or longer answers in Norwegian. When the teacher recasted the sentence in English, only once did the student exhibit uptake with repair. In the other eight instances, the student continued speaking without uptake, produced uptake without repair, or repeated the answer in Norwegian.

8.2.6 School 1 teacher interview

The teacher, Emilie, had not taken or been offered any additional in-service training, but reported that her teacher education, with 60 study points of English, had prepared her well for teaching English. Generally, she worked independently when planning her English teaching, and did not regularly collaborate with colleagues teaching other subjects or grades.

Teaching

For Emilie, teaching reading focused primarily on textbook texts, which she reported working with in multiple ways. She often supported students' pre-reading by explaining what the text was about briefly in English or Norwegian, depending on the text difficulty. Following her explanation, the students read the text, listened to it read aloud on a CD and then read it again as homework. They often read the text in pairs, sometimes translating or retelling it in Norwegian.

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Emilie related her reading expectations for the students to the levels in the textbook. She expected all of the students to understand everything in the Step 1 texts. At the Step 2 and 3 text levels, she did not expect them to understand every word, but to comprehend the main content of the text, whether they used reading support, such as the word list at the back of the textbook, or were able to guess the meaning from context. Additionally, she expected the students to explain the content of the text in Norwegian. She explained:

I wanted them to explain what the text was about, even if they do not manage everything. They shouldn't be required to translate every word, because then you lose the natural way to say it. It is important that they understand. That is what I think is the most important to get across.

She emphasized that literal comprehension of the text was the most important aspect of EFL reading instruction.

When working with texts, especially in fifth grade, Emilie felt that they worked quickly without going in depth because "they have so much to work with, so they are challenged by texts" (namely, referring to the quantity and length of the texts). Towards the end of the year she allowed those students she considered capable enough, to work in small groups in the hallway. There they read and translated texts, and wrote down unfamiliar words, later trying to find their meaning.

Towards the end of the year, she began giving the fourth-grade students Step 2 texts. When they worked at that level, they worked in pairs or groups of three, where one student was a stronger reader than the others. She felt it was important that there was one in the group who could help the others if they did not understand something. The students seemed to find it exciting to work with unfamiliar texts. However, they needed more experience in this respect. Typically, she would go through the texts with the students before they read them, which was also typical of the teaching in fifth grade. She explained that the Step 3 students in fifth grade were generally able to work with unfamiliar texts, possibly after listening to the text read aloud once on a CD. In contrast,

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the Step 1 students needed more support, such as having the text explained by the teacher, asking the teacher questions about it and discussing it, before reading and working with it individually.

Time as a limiting factor was apparent in both the interviews and observations. In the interview, Emilie expressed a lack of time to work outside of the textbook. During the observations, when working with a text that the teacher's guide suggested could be acted as a play, Emilie remarked that they would not prioritize that activity there and then. Instead, when they had finished the book, they could use one of the pieces for role-playing. Three months following this comment, they were able to do this.

At the time of the final observation, the fifth-grade students had been working on a series of role-play scenarios of a class trip to the British Isles, which would be performed for their families. The project had to be adapted to meet the abilities of the students, some reading their script aloud rather than memorizing it. Emilie described the process and how different students managed it:

For some of them it is a big step to speak English, while for those who feel confidence and who are clever, it is much easier for them. Yet, at the same time, there were some Step 1 students [...] who were very motivated, even though their English was only so-so. But it was so play-like that you get caught up in it [...]. When language is placed in a context, not just speaking to speak, but play and action, go together.

Emilie experienced the transition from fourth to fifth grade as difficult for many of the students, and she thought that the difference in expectations was too great. She believed this transition could have been handled better in the *Stairs* textbook. In fifth grade, the students were expected to read much more (more text in the textbook) and there was more written work. Although the students reacted in the beginning of the year, after a few months they did not complain anymore and appeared to be used to it. However, she commented that they could have done more written work in fourth grade to prepare them

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for fifth grade, rather than simply working with individual vocabulary words and easy sentences.

Materials

Based on the information provided by the publishers and her experience working with the textbook, Emilie felt that the textbook incorporated the *LK06* learning aims. Even though she had not been involved in making the decision to use *Stairs*, she felt that it worked well for her class and her teaching. It was easy to see what the aims were for each chapter and what one should do throughout the year. Therefore it was an easy system to follow. She felt that there was insufficient time to work on additional topics using other materials not included in the textbook. However, she felt this was not necessary due to the quality and the content of the textbook. Additionally, the level-differentiation of the texts in *Stairs* was an asset, as there was large variation in the class, from more proficient to less proficient learners.

According to Emilie, the extra reading materials available at the school were primarily class sets of books, mostly used in sixth and seventh grades. However, she wanted to create an English corner in the library the following year where children could see the books on display and choose to check them out for reading at home. If the books were not easily available for the students and presented in attractive ways, they would not use them:

I am very for that “availability” [making books more available], that they see the English books, because they do not see any English books. It is too bad that, when you think about how important it is, that they are only used in classes as class sets, especially in the highest grades. There are a few who have used them in second and third grade also, but they are very easy, simple books. But now I hope to bring them out [of the locked cupboards] and see what they will be used for.

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However, Emilie did not have a full overview of all of the books available at the school. She had intended to spend more time with the books and materials at the end of the year, but there had been insufficient time to do so.

Emilie was concerned about the time required to find different activities, grammar exercises, and texts outside of the *Stairs* materials. She would have preferred the resources to be easily available and preferably in a set. Generally, what she considered most lacking in *Stairs* was more grammar exercises to follow up each grammar section. She expressed a need for a “grammar bank” where one could find additional exercises instead of continually looking for such exercises in different books.

Differentiation and reading levels

Emilie felt that there were large differences in reading level between the students in her class. She distinguished between those who had good skills in English and those who did not have “an ear for language.” As an example, she referred to students who maybe stuttered when saying a word, even though they had repeated it before, compared to students who were able to learn the words faster, at a “normal speed,” namely, those considered as capable English readers. There were always some who fell behind, which was part of the reason for the division in groups in the fifth grade. However, she commented that all of the children needed multiple repetitions of the difficult words.

Emilie explained that the students who were currently in the separate Step 1 group in fifth grade would continue in that group the following year. However, there were insufficient resources to have a similar group for the current fourth-grade students when they began in fifth grade. The school had instead decided to create an “English reading course” for those who needed extra help, available for students in grades 5 to 7. They had previously had success with a similar course for Norwegian reading. The intention was not to have permanent separate groups, but rather that children could join the group for a period of time in order to “give them a push to help them move forward.” However, she felt that some of the lowest-level students could use that type of support on a regular basis all the way to upper secondary school. Additionally, she expressed concern for the students who were in the middle.

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Those who needed the most help received it, whereas those who were in the middle did not receive the same type of help. The details of how the new “reading course” would function were still unclear as the concept was new and would not be implemented until the following year.

Classroom language use

Emilie believed it was important for her students to hear large amounts of English, either through playing, songs, or listening. Many of the students complained in the beginning that they did not understand her. However, she felt that it was not necessary to stop all the time to explain in Norwegian. She summarized: “The more you hear, the more you ‘save it’ there (remember it), which can then be pulled forward.” By using English the majority of the time, she wanted to avoid the students becoming “lazy” by not listening to the English and simply waiting for the teacher to provide the Norwegian translation. The exception was when she was explaining grammar and giving instructions. However, despite this general policy, when working with specific texts, especially at Step 3, she sometimes explained the general context of the text in Norwegian if she considered the text to be too difficult.

Emilie felt the text difficulty had increased since she herself had been a student in school. The Step 3 texts were comparable to those that she herself had read in lower secondary school. However, she felt that the students generally thought it was fun to be at Step 3, to be “among the best.” By the middle of that school year, only four students wanted to remain at Step 2, which they felt was the level at which they wanted to work.

Reading assessment

Emilie used multiple sources to decide at which level in *Stairs* the students would be reading: students reading aloud, comprehension questions, translation, and chapter tests. When the students read aloud, Emilie listened to them, asked them questions and had them translate the text in order to check comprehension. The tests included reading comprehension and grammar. However, she pointed out that some students read at a higher level than what

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they were capable of in grammar and writing, and at a higher level than they were able to express their comprehension of the texts in writing (namely, higher-level receptive skills than productive skills). Thus, the levels were only approximate and needed to be adjusted throughout the year.

Curriculum aims and national test

When asked about the students' reading development and the curriculum aims, Emilie responded: "I think the *LK06* curriculum has very high aims, so I feel it is a little difficult to reach these aims [...] they place a lot of emphasis on being able to understand the main content of a text [...]." She continued that she felt the national test in English was especially demanding, requiring the students to read and understand a good deal of text. The best readers would manage, while those who were in the middle would not understand everything. Later she added:

So I would not say that the students in fourth grade have worked too much with text comprehension in a way that they can go in and just pick out [pieces of information]. I feel they are difficult tests [the national tests].

Emilie had introduced the national test the week prior to the final interview. She reported that in the beginning the students thought the test was "easy, not so difficult," but when they saw more and more, they began to "shut down," and they felt it was unmanageable. She thought it had a very demotivating effect on them. However, a Step 1 student did better than Emilie had expected on the practice test; she had probably understood more than she was able to express generally in class. Emilie planned to work on reading strategy skills, such as what to do if they did not understand the entire text and how to find "clues" in the text, during the first few weeks of the autumn semester when the students began in fifth grade. However, she emphasized that in comparison to some schools that worked systematically with test preparation, she had only given her students an introduction.

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For School 1, the average score for that year's fifth-grade national test had been slightly lower than the national average. She mentioned that there were a number of students who struggled with English, which may have pulled down the school's average. In previous years the school's average had been the same as the national and regional averages.

Emilie's overall view about starting English reading in first grade was: "I think that it is self-evident, that the earlier you begin, the better they become. I think that it is rather logical."

8.2.7 School 1 student interviews

Three fourth-grade and four fifth-grade students were asked about their impressions of English, the textbook, and what they liked best and least about English class. In fifth grade, the students had mixed impressions of English. Two mentioned that it was fun to hear a new language and one added that you could use it in other countries. The other two students said it was either "boring" or "difficult, depending on the difficulty of the words." The fourth-grade students' responses were similar. This widespread variation in interest and opinions may reflect the different ability levels of the students (lower-, mid-, and higher-level students were selected by the teacher to be interviewed).

The students also had mixed impressions of the textbook texts. A fifth-grade Step 3 student mentioned that, "Sometimes they are a little boring, when they are Step [level] 1 texts and such." She reported reading almost all of the texts, irrespective of level. Of the four students, two felt some texts were easy, others that they were difficult (both the Step 2 students), and two that they were at an appropriate level (a Step 1 and Step 3 student). Despite different perspectives on the difficulty of the texts (one easy; one appropriate; one sometimes easy, sometimes hard), all of the fourth-grade students were accustomed to working at the same level. One student was diplomatic in her response: "It is . . . I think it is a little easy. But there are others who think it is difficult. But if they need a bit more time to answer, then they should get it."

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Overall, two of the four fifth-grade students and two of the three fourth-grade students were positive to the textbook, whereas the others said it was “okay.” When a student was asked if she read other English books in addition to the textbook, she answered: “I have not found any appropriate for my age. But I have looked for them when I am at the library.”

When asked what they liked and disliked about English classes, two students mentioned enjoying working on written tasks in the workbook; the fourth-grade student said it was because it was easy to find the answers and the fifth-grade student because it was difficult, so she would rather spend time on that than speaking activities. A fifth-grade Step 1 student responded: “[I like] that we go through the text and get to work a bit with homework. [...] [I don’t like] when we have dialogues. Then we don’t always get to do something. Waiting is boring.” Other favorite activities included learning new words, reading texts at their level, and drama, which the students would like to experience more often.

8.3 Combination approach school – School 2

8.3.1 How the reading approach was used

The combination approach is defined as using a textbook and graded readers (see also sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 addressing the two types of reading materials). This is a broad categorization, which although different in materials use from the textbook-based approach, can be implemented in schools quite differently depending on the types of practices used. Additionally, how often the two types of reading materials are used can also vary within this approach. Both of these two issues, related to materials and practices, were found to be somewhat different between the two combination schools in the case study.

The combination reading approach used at this school was implemented in different ways in the two grades. Although both of the grades used a combination of the *Scoop* textbook and other reading texts, different text sources were used and in different ways. The fourth-grade class used the

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textbook for whole-class intensive reading, whereas graded readers and children's literature were primarily used for independent extensive reading. The fifth-grade class also used the textbook as the primary reading source, mostly for intensive reading, but varied in the grouping and interaction styles used. Although the fifth-grade teacher mentioned independent extensive reading as a priority, it was not observed during any of the five lessons.

Related to the school's chosen textbook, the *Scoop* textbook series used a different approach to differentiation in grades 5–7 than the *Stairs* textbook series. In *A New Scoop 5, 6, and 7*, the principle is to have simplified versions of some of the texts in the textbook. For example, in *A New Scoop 5* there are 21 texts that have basic versions/adaptations available. Of the middle/high and high-level texts, 13 of 16 texts have basic versions available (available on the website or in the *A New Scoop 5 Basic Workbook*).

The following excerpts from *A New Scoop 5* texts are examples of original versions and their corresponding adaptations (original text – OT; basic version - BV):

While the world is watching on television, Neil Armstrong takes mankind's first Step onto another world. (OT) (Flemmen & Sørheim, 2006c, pp. 84-85)

The world is watching on TV when Neil Armstrong takes the first Step ever on the moon. (BV) (Flemmen & Sørheim, 2006a, pp. 100-101)

We are in the north of Canada in the middle of November. Brian is a trapper and a hunter. He has about forty Eskimo dogs, and Hudson is one of them. (OT) (Flemmen & Sørheim, 2006c, pp. 30-31)

Hudson is an Eskimo dog. He and 40 other Eskimo dogs are in Canada with Brian. (BV) (Flemmen & Sørheim, 2006a, p. 43)

In the observation data, there were 53 five-minute segments in total within the five observed lessons (see Appendix 4D for coding frequency summaries).

8.3.2 Grade 4 materials

The teacher primarily used the textbook *Junior Scoop 4*, especially as a source of whole-class texts. During the observations, narratives were used in three of five segments (and in three of four reading segments), whereas informational texts were used in one in five segments (one in four reading segments). The *Junior Scoop 4* audio CD was used in all of the observations when working with the textbook texts.

In two lessons the teacher supplemented the textbook with authentic children's literature texts. These were read aloud to the entire class, and one was used for the class reading project (described below). Additionally, in three of the five lessons, the students were given 5–10 minutes for extensive reading of graded readers and children's books, mainly picture books and some short stories. Some examples include the graded readers *Yummy Scrummy* and *Nibbles*, and the picture books *Room on the Broom* and *Monkey and Me*. The children chose their own books from a basket and were allowed to change books if they finished or found the book inappropriate. Some of the books were obtained from the library and thus were replaced with new books every few weeks, whereas other books had been purchased by the teacher and were a permanent part of the classroom collection.

Student writing was practiced in only one observation and lasted for ten minutes. It entailed students writing sentences and a review of homework exercises. The teacher did not often write on the board, but used the interactive whiteboard to show the illustrations and texts from books she had scanned as she read them aloud.

8.3.3 Grade 4 lesson observations

Teacher and instructional grouping

There was one teacher in the classroom at all times. The teaching primarily occurred in whole-class grouping (85% of time segments). Generally for 5–10 minutes of each lesson the students talked in pairs, usually with their neighbor (overall accounting for just over a quarter of all time segments). Small groups were not used in any of the observed lessons. Most individual work time was

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devoted to extensive reading (see above). However, individual work accounted for only one to three segments in each lesson.

Major activity focus

Over 70% of the lesson segments focused on reading, whereas 34% focused on other language skills. Writing received little focus in the observed lessons, being the major focus for only five minutes in one lesson. “Other language” usually focused on speaking and listening skills, such as talking in pairs (not related to a text), or grammar (also not related to a specific text).

Activity focus

During the reading-focused segments of the lessons, half of the time was spent reading connected texts, and just over 40% on listening to texts. When working on reading, almost half of the time segments were spent using lower-level thinking skills to talk about the literal meaning of texts. There were no instances of applying higher-level thinking skills to talk about texts.

In four out of the five lessons either comprehension skills or strategies were used. However, in each of these lessons, they were only used or talked about once or twice. These occurrences comprised a small portion of the students’ reading instruction. During the observations, Silje used the same comprehension strategy on more than one occasion. In two of the lessons she emphasized that it was most important that the students understood the literal meaning of the text, and that they did not have to understand all of the words in a text to understand the meaning.

- 1 T: [...] og nå skal vi høre på denne historien. Og er det viktig å
- 2 forstå alle ordene i teksten når vi hører på? Hva er det viktigst
- 3 når vi leser en engelsk tekst eller høre på en engelsk tekst? Er
- 4 det viktig å forstå alle ordene i teksten? Eller noe annet som er
- 5 viktigere? B.
- 6 B: Man behøver ikke å forstå alle ordene selv om man kan forstå
- 7 historien, hva det handler om, liksom.
- 8 T: Ja, det er helt rett. Du trenger ikke å forstå alle ordene for å
- 9 forstå hva det handler om. K.

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- 10 K: *Så lenge man forstår meningen, gjør det ingenting.*
11 T: *Da trenger man ikke å forstå absolutt alle ordene. Da skal vi*
12 *først høre på denne.*
1- T: [...] and now we will hear about this story. And is it
5⁸³ important to understand all of the words in the text when we
listen to it? What is the most important when we read an English
text or listen to an English text? Is it important to understand all
of the words in the text? Or [is there] something else that is
more important? B.
6-7 B: One doesn't need to understand all of the words even if one
understands the story, what it is about.
8-9 T: Yes, that is exactly right. You don't need to understand all of
the words to understand what it is about. K.
10 K: As long as one understands what it means, it doesn't matter.
11- T: Then one doesn't need to understand absolutely all of the
12 words..Then we will first listen to this one.
(Excerpt 11 from transcript, 2.5.11, School 2, grade 4)

When comprehension skills were practiced, they were generally modeled by the teachers, rather than used by the students. The teacher used comprehension skills to demonstrate their use to the students, such as modeling finding information in a picture or asking students to use pictures to comprehend text; in both instances, the teacher did this without specifically mentioning that it was a comprehension skill.

Most of the questions asked by the teacher were lower-level comprehension questions. These were primarily recall questions used to test literal comprehension, rather than to guide students to a higher level of text comprehension.

- 1 T: How many letters had Henry got this week? How many
2 letters had Henry got this week? C?
3 C: *Tre.* (Three.)
4 T: Three, in English.
5 C: Three.

⁸³ The line numbers in the English translation indicate the corresponding lines in the Norwegian translation.

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- 6 T: This was his third letter, so who was yelling at him? Who
7 was yelling at Henry? Who was yelling at Henry? P?
8 P: Dad was yelling at him.
9 T: Dad was yelling at him. So what did his mother say, said
10 that he would do? She ordered him to...what did his mother
11 order him to do? What did his mother order him to do, C?
12 C: Tidy his room.
13 T: To tidy his room. *Hva betyr det*, (What does that mean,)
14 'to tidy his room'? P?
15 P: *Rydde rommet sitt*. (To clean his room.)
16 T: *Rydde rommet sitt*. (Clean his room.) And who grabbed
17 the hammock first? Who grabbed the hammock first? S?
18 S: Peter.
19 T: Peter grabbed the hammock first. Here you can see a
20 picture of them. Here is Peter in the hammock, and Robin,
21 or Henry is trying to get him out. So the hammock, what is a
22 hammock? If you can see in this picture. What is a
23 hammock? H?
24 H: *En hengekøya*. (A hammock.)
25 T: *En hengekøya*. (A hammock.) That is correct. So what
26 did Henry do to William? What did Henry do to William?
27 B.
28 B: Poked him.
29 T: He poked William. Poked, *det er, det er å pirke på*. (That
30 is, that is to poke at.)
(Excerpt 12 from transcript, 2.5.11, School 2, grade 4)

There are three reading-related activities exhibited in this excerpt: vocabulary, word identification, and talking about the text using lower-level comprehension skills. In lines 1–2, 6–7, 9–11, 16–17, 21–23, and 25–26, the teacher asked lower-level literal comprehension questions, where the answers can be found directly in the text. The teacher asked students to explain the meaning of phrases, as in lines 13–14 and 21–23, which the students did in Norwegian in lines 15 and 24. The teacher also sometimes provided the meanings of words without asking the students (lines 29–30).

During one of the lessons the teacher asked students to use prior knowledge of the text from their reading of the Norwegian version. However, the questions were still generally literal comprehension ones, such as “What is the name of Rampete Robin’s mother?” The few instances of higher-level comprehension

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were when interpretive questions were asked for predicting what would happen in the text and comparing the two versions of *The Three Little Pigs*, one version they had just heard in English on a YouTube video and one they had read previously in Norwegian.

When the class worked with the literal comprehension of the text, it was always intended to lead to oral responses rather than written responses. Writing was observed during a single lesson and only for five minutes. When student writing was done or discussed, it was related to activities in the workbooks. Student writing in workbook activities completed as homework was sometimes reviewed in class⁸⁴.

Word knowledge was reviewed in all lessons, and overall in just over half of the segments, sometimes only in a small portion of the lesson (1–2 five-minute segments), while in other lessons throughout. However, vocabulary was more often worked with as word identification while reading and working with texts, rather than as vocabulary-focused discussion for the purposes of learning and using new words (37% versus 17% of segments). Some examples include the teacher asking for the word in Norwegian, asking for the meaning of the word in English or words the students knew about a particular theme (e.g., Christmas and Easter) and interrogative pronouns (e.g., *what*, *which*, and *who*). When the teacher asked about question words, she additionally asked the students to form a question using the question words they had just identified.

Other types of reading activities included students discussing in pairs based on a picture stimulus as a pre-reading activity.

Teacher interaction style/approach

In the observed lessons, Silje generally used three interaction styles: “telling” (64%), “recitation” (60%), and “listening/watching” (47%). The first two are typical of teacher-led class teaching.

⁸⁴ Review of student writing completed as homework was not coded as “writing activity” since the writing was done outside of class. However, it did contribute to the time coded as “working with student texts.”

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An example of Silje's typical interaction style can be seen in excerpt 12, where the teacher is the one leading the interaction throughout the excerpt. This is a typical example of recitation, where the teacher asks a question, receives an answer from a student, and then asks another question. There was no discussion in any of the observed lessons; in discussions the interaction is largely a balance between teacher and students (see definitions Appendix 4A) and the students sometimes initiate topics, ask questions, and respond to other student statements. However, in fourth-grade foreign language instruction, actual discussion may be uncommon, as students may require more teacher scaffolding in how to ask questions and respond to other students' comments (Fisher, 2005; Van der Meij, 1993).

Silje used coaching infrequently in most lessons, generally one or two occurrences. However, in one lesson, scaffolding was used in half of the lesson segments, during which she asked follow-up questions for the purpose of having the children elaborate their answers. For example, she asked the students to explain the sentence from their text, "Once a year Norway is in the news all over the world."

- 1 C: *Hvert år er Norge inn i nyhetene over verden.* (Each year
 - 2 Norway is in the news over the world.)
 - 3 T: Once a year. *Det er hvert år, men du kan også si det på en*
 - 4 *annen måte,* (That is each year, but you can also say it
 - 5 another way,) once a year? P? Once a year? E?
 - 6 E: *En gang i året.* (Once a year.)
 - 7 T: *En gang i året er Norge i nyhetene over hele verden.*
 - 8 (Once a year Norway is in the news all over the world.)
 - 9 Every December Norwegians award the Nobel Peace Prize.
- (Excerpt 13 from transcription, 28.2.11, School 2, grade 4)

In lines 3–5, the teacher repeated the student's answer, and then used elicitation (line 5) to explain that there was another way of formulating the specific phrase in Norwegian. As was typical with scaffolded interactions in this class, the teacher did not actively attempt to have the same student reformulate the answer or make a correction, but rather called on another student who may know the answer. These interactions meant that generally

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there was no evidence of student uptake or learner responses to teacher feedback.

In another interaction, the teacher used both clarification and elicitation to guide the student. However, once again the same learner did not respond to the feedback, but instead another student was called on to answer. Generally the teacher recasted the student's answer, reformulating the student's error or providing the correction without explicitly indicating that there was an error. Many times the recast was an elaboration of the student's original answer. For example, when a student said "Glacier," the teacher recasted, "That is a glacier."

Silje read aloud from the textbook or read children's literature to the students during two of the lessons; overall, this was done during nearly one in five time segments. She approached unknown vocabulary most often in two ways. First, she would ask students the meaning of a word when she believed one or more of the students may know what it meant (word identification), often reinforcing comprehension of vocabulary they had previously learned in this way. Second, she would translate words into Norwegian while reading the text (word identification).

When reading aloud children's books, she adopted a more extensive reading approach, with the aim of students comprehending the text content, rather than word knowledge or specific language focus. When working with the textbook texts, in contrast, she had a more intensive reading focus, where the aim was for the students to learn or review the vocabulary in the text, as well as comprehend it. She first read the text or played the audio recording of the text, then went through the text again and translated all of it. Finally, the students read it again chorally, either with the CD or reading line-by-line after the CD. However, there was still no explicit vocabulary focus where students would work on word meanings and use vocabulary actively. Silje spent a good deal of time listening to the children read along or after the CD. However, as they read chorally, it was uncertain how well she was able to gauge the pronunciation and intonation of individual students.

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Student response

In seven of ten segments, students listened to texts and read chorally, following along in their textbooks. Generally they were actively responding (reading, speaking, or writing) in just over a third of the time segments. Passive responding, which included speaking and answering questions in turn (not in pairs), taking turns reading aloud, and listening, occurred in nearly two of three segments. The students giving oral responses one at a time was generally teacher-initiated recitation, wherein Silje asked lower-level literal comprehension questions. Most texts were read multiple times; during the observations the students exhibited less than enthusiastic behavior when reading the texts the second or third time. A few students were heard reading along with the CD, but not the entire class, and those that read, did so very monotonously. Only on one occasion for nine minutes did students take turns reading aloud, which occurred when the project book script was recorded (see below). During the five observed lessons, students never read aloud individually for the whole class, but on one occasion students were invited to come to the front of the class to explain the overall content and meaning of a text excerpt they had read in the textbook. Overall, this focus on choral reading increased the time the students were active, but may have been practiced too frequently or for too long to be engaging and beneficial.

Overall, individual reading aloud for the class was not a regular activity. Instead, Silje used repeated reading in class to prepare students for reading the text as homework. There was only one instance of writing during the observations, and generally any student writing was related to review of workbook homework.

Students were often asked to read after the CD, reading a phrase or sentence at a time. Even though the teacher had specified that they should read after the CD, she stopped the CD after short chunks or phrases, allowing the students to rely on short-term memory and listening comprehension, just repeating the CD rather than reading the text. This is illustrated in the following excerpt.

CD: You know perfectly well what letter.
All students: You know perfectly well what letter.
CD: said Mum.
All students: said Mum.

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CD: The letter from Miss Battle-Axe.
All students: The letter from Miss Battle-Axe.
CD: The third this week.
All students: The third this week.
CD: Oh, that letter.
All students: Oh, that letter.
CD: Dear Henry's parents.
All students: Dear Henry's parents.
CD: I am sorry to tell you
All students: I am sorry to tell you
CD: that today Henry
All students: that today Henry
CD: poked William,
All students: poked William,
CD: tripped Linda,
All students: tripped Linda,
CD: shoved Dave,
All students: shoved Dave,
CD: pinched Andrew,
All students: pinched Andrew,
CD: made rude noises,
All students: made rude noises,
CD: chewed gum,
All students: chewed gum,
CD: and would not stop talking
All students: and would not stop talking
CD: in class.
All students: in class.
(Excerpt 14, from transcript 2.5.11, School 2, grade 4)

As this activity was most likely intended as pronunciation and intonation practice, it provided the students with an opportunity to copy a model speaker. However, one could argue that there should be a balance between having segments so short that the students are mainly using listening comprehension and segments so long that they are only reading and are not able to hold the model reader's voice in their mind.

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Language use

The students were always allowed to answer in Norwegian. Sometimes they were expected to use English when speaking in pairs, but this was never a requirement when they spoke in front of the whole class.

Aims

Before beginning a specific reading project, Silje asked the students why they thought it was important to be able to read texts in English. One student answered that it was important because almost everyone in the world knows English. Since this was not the answer Silje had intended, she drew a connection to why it was important to be able to read well in general. By doing this she raised English reading to the level of general reading competence, reading ability, and its importance for a successful education and future job opportunities. This was an important step in raising the students' awareness of the importance of English as a subject in school.

Fourth-grade reading project

Silje designed a reading project for the students as part of her in-service course. The concept was similar to a developed model of Reader's Theater (see section 4.4.3). Silje used a text, *The True Story of the Big Bad Wolf*, and divided it into individual reading lines for the students. Some of them were given parts, the three pigs and the wolf, whereas the rest of the students shared the lines of the narrator. Each student was given at least a sentence to read. Silje read the story aloud for the students once, explaining unfamiliar vocabulary as she read. She also asked the students the meaning of phrases, such as, "What does it mean 'he was framed'?" However, few students raised their hands to answer her questions, resulting in Silje providing most of the answers. In contrast, when Silje asked interpretive questions related to prediction, several students raised their hands to answer. For example, she asked, "*Hva tror du han spiste?*" (What do you think he ate?). When Silje had finished reading the story, she asked how many had understood what it was about. Five of the 24 students answered that they had understood most of it, whereas the rest had understood some of it.

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Silje created a script from the text of the book. Four children received character parts, while the others each had one or two lines of the narration. The parts of the script were handed out. The class practiced by having everyone read through all of the parts the first time, repeating line-by-line after the teacher. The students were observed using different behavior during the reading aloud; some read the text as they repeated after the teacher, while others repeated what they heard without reading the text on the script. Many of the students lost concentration partway through the script of the book. When asked about it after the lesson, the teacher suggested that she should have split up the text into smaller sections, focusing on one section during this lesson. The students would work on their parts individually at home and in other lessons. The final result of the reading project was to create a digital storytelling recording. The children drew illustrations for the text and read their piece of text aloud into a digital recorder. The audio was aligned with the illustrations in a computer program, creating the class version of the story.

8.3.4 Grade 5 materials

The teacher primarily used the textbook *A New Scoop 5*, both for reading texts in class and as homework. The relevant textbook texts used in the observation sessions were two informational texts, one narrative, and various tongue twisters. During one of the five observation lessons, the teacher supplemented with a narrative from outside of the textbook and grammar worksheets (not from the *Scoop* series). However, the narrative was not read during the observed lesson, so it is unknown to the researcher how the text was presented to the students and what type of pre-reading activities, if any, they did. The teacher reviewed the narrative, which the students had read as homework, but primarily as review of their written homework, which was to write lower-level literal comprehension questions based on the text.

The teacher sometimes used a sixth-grade textbook for the students who knew more English, especially those who had one English-speaking parent. However, this did not occur on any of the observation days.

Other materials used included audio recordings of the textbook texts, worksheets, student writing, and the blackboard. During a grammar-focused lesson, the worksheet was the most used material. Student writing was only

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used in one lesson when the students read texts to each other that they had written as homework.

8.3.5 Grade 5 lesson observations

In fifth grade at School 2, there were 32 five-minute segments within the five observed lessons (see Appendix 4D for a summary of the coding frequencies).

Teacher and instructional grouping

There was one teacher in the classroom at all times. The teaching primarily occurred in whole-class grouping; this was in 72% of the five-minute segments. The students also worked in pairs for generally ten minutes in each observed lesson (in nearly one-third of the segments). The students worked individually in two lessons for 10–15 minutes each lesson (overall accounting for nearly 20% of lesson time). However, small groups were not used in any of the observation lessons.

Major activity focus

Reading was the major focus in over 50% of the lesson segments, featuring prominently in three of the observed lessons, in which five to six of seven segments were reading-focused. In contrast, writing was the major focus in only one segment in the five lessons. The two lessons that were not primarily reading-focused had other language foci, namely grammar and pronunciation.

Activity focus

Reading connected texts was a common activity during the observation lessons, occurring in two in five lesson segments. Reading texts occurred most frequently in two lessons, where it was the activity in four of seven segments in each lesson. Listening to texts was less common, occurring in only three lessons, and for only 5–10 minutes in each lesson. The order of activities when working with texts varied slightly between the lessons that were observed, either first listening to the audio recording of the text, followed by recall of listening comprehension and discussion of pictures, or a reversal of the first two elements, during which the teacher first led the

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students through talking about the pictures, followed by the students listening to the text. This was always followed by pair reading of the text. Sometimes the teacher would read the text aloud while going through unfamiliar words (see excerpt 15 below), prior to the students reading in pairs.

Speaking about the text using lower-level literal comprehension was more common than higher-level comprehension. Talking about the text using lower-level comprehension skills occurred in all five lessons, but for various lengths of time; it featured in four five-minute segments in one lesson, but only in one or two segments in other lessons. It primarily comprised literal comprehension questions related to the texts. This was also primarily conducted as a whole-class activity led by the teacher in typical recitation style interaction.

- 1 T: [...] a man, his son, and a donkey. What's a donkey? P?
- 2 P: *Esel*.
- 3 T: Yes, that's correct. Can you tell me something about his
- 4 family? The man, he had a wife and they had a son. Can you
- 5 tell me something else about them, M?
- 6 M: Um, they don't have a lot of money.
- 7 T: That's correct. They didn't have a lot of money. But did
- 8 they have a good life? MK?
- 9 MK: Yes.
- 10 T: Yes, the fable says that they were happy, but they didn't
- 11 have a lot of money. So what did they decide to do? Or the
- 12 wife decided what to do. Do you remember? It was
- 13 something about the animal, wasn't it?
- 14 P: *Selge*. (Sell.)
- 15 T: Do you know what *â selge* (to sell) means in English?
- 16 S3: (whispers) Sell.
- 17 S4 (whispers): Sell.
- 18 T: Everyone is whispering.
- 19 S3: Sell.
- 20 T: Yes, you remember it. So they were going to sell the
- 21 donkey.
- 22 S3: The donkey.
- 23 T: The wife told the man you must sell the donkey and the

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- 24 man promised to do that. So the man and the son and the
25 donkey, they started to walk to the market in the nearest
26 town. They probably lived on a farm. And soon they met a
27 friend. Do you remember what that friend told them? Do you
28 remember, J?
29 J: Why don't you ride the donkey?
30 T: Yes, why don't you ride the donkey? You know, both of
31 you can sit on the animal, but then they met an old man. And
32 what did the old man say? Do you remember that? Was he
33 happy about both of them riding the donkey? E?
(Excerpt 15 from transcript, 31.1.11, School 2, grade 5)

In this excerpt, the teacher has used literal comprehension questions to review the text (lines 3–4, 5, 7–8, 11, 12–13, 27, 32, and 33). These questions require students to remember events and information from the text, but do not require a higher level of text comprehension. This excerpt also shows examples of the teacher narrowing or recasting a question in order to make her questions to the students more specific (lines 11–13). The teacher began by asking a less specific question, “What did they decide to do?” (line 11). She then added more detail to the question: “Or the wife decided what to do. Do you remember?” (lines 11–12). Finally, the teacher narrowed the question and provided scaffolding for the students by giving relevant vocabulary and context: “It was something about the animal, wasn't it?” (lines 12–13). This entire progression took 13 seconds, with less than 1 second wait time between questions. This suggests that the teacher was not expecting the students to be able to answer the first questions she asked (despite them being literal comprehension questions), hence, the reformulations and narrowing of the question until she had provided a level of support adequate for the students to answer. However, it is not known whether the students could have answered the first question, given that there was inadequate wait time for the students to process and speak (cf. Garton, 2002). A similar progression is seen in lines 32–33.

Higher-level comprehension questions and responses to texts occurred four times in total during three lessons. Unlike the other schools, two of these events were initiated by student questions. In excerpt 16, the student asked the teacher why one of the astronauts was more familiar to him than the others

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(lines 2–3). The student had connected his prior knowledge of the moon landing and the new information provided in the text to make an interpretation of the gap between these two sources of information; two types of higher-level thinking were used, namely inference and evaluation.

- 1 T: Yes, E?
2 E: Why have I only heard about the, the Armstrong before
3 this time?
4 T: You have only heard about Armstrong? Maybe because
5 he was the first one to step out of the landing ships. And said
6 the famous words. This is...one small step for man, one
7 giant leap for mankind. Have you heard that in Norwegian?
8 E: *Nei.* (No.)
9 P: *Jo.* (Yes.)
10 T: *Et lite skritt for menneske, men et stort skritt for*
11 *menneske, jeg husker ikke helt hvordan de har oversatt det*
12 *på en god måte. Men han tok et lite, (A small step for*
13 *mankind, but a large step for mankind, I can't remember*
14 *how they have translated it in a good way) he took a small*
15 *step out on the moon and it was a very important step, it was*
16 *a leap to mankind. It was the first time that a human being*
17 *had set foot on the moon. That is why it was important. But,*
18 *but E maybe you have just heard about Armstrong because*
19 *he was the first one and the one to say the famous words. But*
20 *he couldn't be there alone, so there had to be some others*
21 *with him. So I think all three of them are rather famous.*
22 *Mhm. But maybe after some long time you only hear about*
23 *Armstrong if you don't look into it or read about it. But if*
24 *you had looked it up somewhere and read about Apollo 11*
25 *you would have found the names of all the three men, I*
26 *think.*

(Excerpt 16 from transcription 28.2.11, School 2, grade 5)

At another point the student asks the teacher:

- 1 S: *Hvordan kan de gå fra den ene stykke til den andre?* (How
2 could they go from the one part to the other?)

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- 3 T: Can you say it in English?
4 S: Umm..
5 T: How are they able to walk on the moon? They were able
6 to walk on the moon, because the scientists knew it was
7 difficult because of the gravity, but, how exactly they did it,
8 I'm not sure. [...]

(Excerpt 17 from transcription 28.2.11, School 2, grade 5)

Excerpt 17 shows the student asking an interpretive question, going beyond the information provided in the text and asking the teacher to explain how they were able to move from the shuttle to the landing ship (lines 1–2). In this exchange the teacher is focused on the student's language use, namely, encouraging the student to use English to ask questions (line 3). When the student was not able to say or reformulate their question in English, the teacher recasted the student's question (line 5). However, it was not exactly the question the student had asked. The student did not follow up by clarifying his intended question, but rather accepted the teacher's question and answer.

Comprehension skill and comprehension strategy use each occurred once, both in the same lesson: using pictures to understand a text, and the teacher reminding students that while working with a text it is acceptable to guess the meaning of words based on pictures and other contextual support. Overall, despite the focus on reading and working with connected texts in three of the five lessons, the use of comprehension skills or strategies was not common.

Working with vocabulary was not a common activity in this class, occurring in only one segment. However, word identification, where the teacher asked students to explain words or give Norwegian equivalents as a part of pre- or post-reading, was used in most lessons. An example of this is seen in excerpt 15, in lines 1–2 and 15–20. Both of these examples were preempted by students speaking in Norwegian. However, the teacher at times would ask for the students to give the Norwegian word when reviewing the text. In the following excerpt the purpose was to check comprehension of certain key vocabulary before the students read the text aloud in pairs.

- 1 T: At first step. What is a step? What is a step? MK?

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- 2 MK: *Et skritt.* (A step.)
3 T: Yeah, and mankind. What is mankind, Julie?
4 J: *Menneskeheten.* (Mankind.)
5 T: Yeah. And then they collected samples of rock and dust.
6 Samples of rock and dust, J? What is that?
7 J: *Steiner og krater.* (Rocks and crater)
8 T: *Nei, jeg tror ikke de tok meg seg noe krater, men steiner*
9 *og...*(No, I don't think they took any crater with them, but
10 rocks and ...)
11 P: *Støv.* (Dust.)
12 T: *Støv.* (Dust.) Rock and dust. *Steiner og støv.* (Rocks and
13 dust.)
(Excerpt 18 from transcript, 28.2.11, School 2, grade 5)

It was always the teacher who initiated this type of exchange. Students did not ask for the meaning of particular words. Based on the observations, it was not clear whether this was because the texts were too easy or whether the students were not comfortable taking the initiative to ask questions. This activity comprised five to ten minutes in four of five lessons.

Teacher interaction style/approach

There were three predominant teacher interaction styles, namely “telling,” “recitation,” and “listening/watching,” which occurred in 65%, 50%, and 56% of segments, respectively. Recitation was the most common style of active interaction with the students. Occurrences of coaching, scaffolding, and modeling were only found in one of the five observed lessons, and only occurred a few times within that lesson.

The teacher read aloud during two of the lessons, but they were not prominent activities during the lesson, lasting only 5–10 minutes. During one read-aloud segment, the teacher scaffolded the text for the students through repetition of key words and content⁸⁵.

⁸⁵ Italicized text is from the textbook, whereas non-italicized text is where the teacher expanded.

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1 T: *It's July 1969. The rocket takes off from Cape Kennedy in*
2 *Florida. Aboard are the astronauts Armstrong, Aldrin and*
3 *Collins. First they fly around the Earth, then they head for*
4 *the moon. After three days, they are there. It took them three*
5 *days just to get to the moon. Collins stays in the rocket ship*
6 *while Armstrong and Aldrin enter the landing ship, the*
7 *Eagle. So Collins stays in Apollo 11, and the others go into*
8 *the landing ship. So they walk on the moon.*
(Excerpt 19 from transcription, 28.2.11, School 2, grade 5)

In lines 4–5 the teacher repeats the key piece of information: the journey took three days. Additionally, this reminds the students of the context presented in the previous sentence, “to get to the moon.” As this piece of information was presented in the same sentence as the time aspect, some students may have struggled to create the coherence between the adverb *there* and the adverbial in the previous sentence *for the moon*. In lines 7–8, the teacher’s addition serves primarily as repetition in the first sentence. The second sentence is a clarification of where the two in the landing ship would go. Once again, both the repetition, more clearly developing coherence between sentences, and additional information scaffold students’ understanding of the text as the teacher reads it aloud.

The students did not often read aloud for the whole class. In one lesson students had been reading interviews in pairs, which was followed by three pairs reading aloud for the whole class. Following the three pairs, the teacher gave general feedback to the class on their pronunciation while reading.

1 T: Ok, you were very clever. This was very good. Just one
2 word I would like to draw your attention to. That’s [writes a
3 word on the board], what does it say here? What does it say
4 here?
5 S: Called.
6 T: It is called, yes. I called on you, or I called something.
7 *Husk på. (Remember.) Say that in Norwegian. Ikke uttal*
8 *‘e’en. Det heter ikke called. Vi skal lære senere at det er*
9 *preteritum av verb. (Don’t pronounce the <e>. It is not*
10 *called. Later we will learn that it is the past tense of the*

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- 11 verb.)
10 S: *Sier jeg det?* (Do I say that?)
11 T: *Ja, nå snakker jeg for alle. Jeg hørte det litt inn i mellom.*
12 *Og det er veldig lett å si det. Jeg har lett for å glemme det.*
13 *Men, den 'e'en der, det blir borte. Det heter bare called.*
14 (Yes, now I am talking about everyone. I heard it a bit now
15 and again. And it is –very easy to say it. It is easy for me to
16 forget. But, the <e> there, it goes away. It is only said
17 called.)

(Excerpt 20 from transcription, 6.12.10, School 2, grade 5)

The switch from English to Norwegian in this excerpt was typical of when the teacher spoke about grammar or metalinguistic aspects. Since the students did not often read aloud for the class, there were not many opportunities for her to make comments about pronunciation and reading fluency. However, this may have occurred to a lesser extent while students read in pairs, although this was not noticed during the lessons observed.

Student response

The most common student-expected response was speaking and answering questions in turn, which occurred in one in five segments, and in four of five lessons. Since recitation was a frequently used form of teacher interaction, a dominance of student speaking and answering questions in turn was to be expected. The next most common response was listening, found in nearly one-third of the segments. The frequency of student listening also corresponded to the teacher interaction style, which included both telling and reading aloud. Students reading and orally responding, generally in pairs, were also common activities. The length of these types of responses also varied, from 5 to 20 minutes in the relevant lessons.

Students wrote in only two lessons, each time for less than ten minutes. In one lesson the students were writing dialogues in a comic strip of pictures from a text they had read. In the second lesson they were writing answers to questions on a worksheet which included text and picture support.

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Overall, passive responding was more prevalent than active responding, 55% and 38%, respectively.

Language use

The students were expected to answer in English whenever possible. The teacher often asked them to reformulate their answers in English and she generally used English during the lessons. The one consistent exception was when explaining grammar, for which she would use Norwegian. At other times she would switch to Norwegian to give a translation of a word, then continue in Norwegian, as though she had forgotten which language she was using. However, she would quickly realize what had happened, and would often switch back to English, sometimes even mid-sentence.

Aims

Lesson aims were presented more often at the beginning of the week when the teacher handed out the weekly plans, which was during the beginning of the English lessons. However, the lesson aims were not specifically repeated at the beginning or end of lessons during the observations.

8.3.6 School 2 teacher interviews

Silje Interview

Teaching

Silje described her students' progress in reading in relation to how many times they needed to repeat a text in order for them to be able to read it at home. In third grade they read the text in class more often than they did in fourth grade, which she felt was a sign of progress. She commented, "Even if they do not read it very well, they are at least able to understand because they hear it and see it." She also noticed more progress after they began reading the "small books," which were both authentic children's books and graded readers. After beginning with the small books, she mentioned specifically the students' ability to read many irregularly spelled words, for example *which*.

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Silje felt it was important for her students to discuss in pairs, whether they were speaking in Norwegian or English, before discussing with the whole class. She prioritized everyone having a chance to speak before the whole-class discussion. As their seating arrangements were randomly selected and rotated every few weeks, she felt that some pairs worked more efficiently than others. She said that when two of the less-able students were paired, they often said very little to each other, as they did not understand the text or what they were supposed to discuss. However, one member of the mixed-ability pairs could often help the other. In this class there were three Norwegian girls who struggled, in addition to two students with Norwegian L2. According to Silje, three or four of the readers who struggled the most were still having difficulties reading the small books. These students also struggled with reading in Norwegian.

Silje was very pleased with her current reading approach, namely a combination of the textbook and other reading materials. However, as this was her first experience working with *Junior Scoop 4*, she was somewhat uncertain about using the material. As her confidence grew, she hoped to use the textbook less and supplement it more with other reading materials.

Generally, she felt that there was insufficient time to do everything. She planned to have the students write more during the spring of fourth grade. She had not previously prioritized writing as she felt it was important to work on oral communication.

Materials

Silje purchased many of the additional reading materials herself because she felt the school did not have enough and that it was important for her students to read books. She wished they had more books, but reported being generally satisfied with *Junior Scoop 4*. She felt the *Scoop* texts were at an appropriate level of difficulty, specifically mentioning the richness of vocabulary and the number of difficult words. In the part-time in-service course she had attended, she had had the opportunity to compare the *Stairs* and *Scoop* textbooks. She felt that the texts in *Stairs* were inferior to those in *Scoop*, despite the differentiated levels. She felt that the *Scoop* texts were challenging even if they were shorter or different than the *Stairs* texts. Additionally, the pictures

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in *Scoop* provided much to talk about and she was able to expand upon the texts and pictures. However, as grammar was lacking in the *Scoop* book, she had copied sections from *Stairs* to compensate. Silje found the teacher's guide to be useful irrespective of whether she chose to create a larger project based on a text or just "go through" the text in order to move on.

When asked about whether she felt her materials were effective, she related these to the curriculum. She had compared the *Scoop* materials to the *LK06* curriculum aims and felt that everything was covered, with the exception of digital competences.

She felt that reading the small books was also effective. However, there were some students who changed books multiple times, with the result that they did little actual reading. The majority of the students read at least one book a week. They were familiar with many of the books because she had read some of them aloud for the class. She had observed that many of the struggling readers chose the books she had read aloud. She felt this aided their comprehension, as they were then familiar with the book and the topic. She had begun with the easiest books but intended to progress through all of the books.

Silje's overall aims were to help the students develop a joy of reading. She saw a growing interest among her students for the new "small books."

I noticed that they [the students] think it is more fun to read the small books than to read their textbook, so this is something I feel I just need to get through [the textbook], because they are also disappointed if I skip a chapter. Even though they are not as motivated to read the textbook, if I had skipped a chapter they would complain about that, too. I have tried to do a little of each to promote their reading enjoyment.

Curriculum aims

At the end of the year, Silje felt that her students were able to meet most of the curriculum aims, such as being able to read simple texts and read and talk about children's literature.

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Additionally, she felt her students were prepared for the national test. She had gone through the test with them and they had taken practice tests, on which most of them had performed very well. She mentioned specifically the final questions on the test, which she felt were very difficult, surprisingly long, and many in number.

In-service course

Silje had found the in-service course very useful and had enjoyed teaching more after beginning the course. It had focused primarily on teaching methods and didactics rather than on grammar. The participants had received reading texts, materials (speaking, reading, and writing activities), and tips on how they could use these activities in class. She wished she had had more time to devote to the course and felt that when she continued to English 2 (the follow-up course) the following year, she would become an English specialist rather than a generalist primary school teacher (teaching all subject areas to the students), thus allowing her more time to focus on her English teaching.

Astrid interview

Teaching

Astrid generally introduced texts to her students either by reading them aloud or letting them listen to the CD, followed by her asking if there were words they did not understand. She said she varied the listening input so that they could hear other voices. The students were expected to read the homework text three times and read it aloud once for an adult at home.

Astrid considered it important to provide time to read in class and she prioritized individual reading time during most lessons. She also felt it was important for the students to read aloud more, whether in pairs or occasionally as an individual reading for the whole class or the whole class reading chorally. This was to give them more confidence while speaking in pairs. Role-play was also an activity she felt worked well because then the students almost forgot that they were reading or speaking.

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Materials

In contrast to Silje, Astrid was not very satisfied with the *Scoop* series and found little variation in the texts. Moreover, she chose not to use graded readers for whole-class reading or in small groups because she felt she could not use a guided reading approach (where students read in small groups), due to a lack of reading materials. They only had one copy of each book, and thus they could not work with specific expressions and vocabulary in the books, which she felt was the intention with guided reading. However, she did allow the students to read graded readers and other books as individual silent reading texts, mostly from the library, but she felt there were too few to choose from. Generally she felt that she had little choice in which texts they would use because little money was set aside for buying new books and materials for the school. If she were given the opportunity to buy more books, she would buy individual copies of books so the students would have a better selection of books at different levels, as well as on different topics and genres, since students have a variety of interests, as opposed to class sets of a few books. She expressed a need to have books that interested the students.

Similarly to Silje, the fourth-grade teacher, Astrid felt that a focus on grammar was lacking in the *Scoop* series. She said the occasional grammar references were insufficient for her students' needs.

Differentiation

When asked how she adapted her teaching for students at different ability levels, Astrid responded that most of the students were able to read the textbook text as homework. However, she felt that these texts did not provide adequate differentiation for her students; generally, they were not challenging enough for some students as opposed to being too difficult. The most advanced students (four to five students) worked individually one day a week in a separate room with texts and writing activities from the sixth- and seventh-grade books. She mentioned easier versions of texts available online, but reported not using them.

Regarding differentiation in the graded readers, Astrid mentioned that she felt these texts were now too easy for most of her students to be used as

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independent reading, as she felt they were aimed at intensive reading, such as looking at specific expressions. As such, they were not at the appropriate level for extensive reading for most of her students, which had been her focus for the independent reading time.

National test and progress

Astrid felt that most of the students had made good progress in reading that year; they could read better, read more, they enjoyed reading to each other, and they dared to read aloud more often. However, many of the students still did not feel comfortable reading aloud or participating in class discussions. She felt that if they had retaken the national test at the end of the year they would have improved, partially because they had become more confident. At the time they had taken the test, the amount of text they were required to read in the test was difficult for many. They had now become used to reading more and their vocabulary had also improved through more reading.

8.3.7 School 2 student interviews

Nine students were interviewed at School 2, eight in fourth grade and one in fifth grade. The paucity of students interviewed in fifth grade was due to scheduling conflicts and student illness.

Students at this school mentioned various reasons for liking English, including that it was fun to learn new things and that they could speak English in foreign countries. They mentioned many different activities they enjoyed, including performing/reading plays, reading for each other, reading individually, singing, asking each other questions, giving their opinions about statements, activities in the textbook and workbook, and doing English activities on the computer. Two students also mentioned the reading project and performance of *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* as their favorite activity of the year.

One student commented on the extensiveness of the English subject: “[What I like best about English lessons is that it’s] not just a little bit, but we do a lot. And that is nice, because then we will learn as much as we should learn.” This student also had a preference for reading English as opposed to Norwegian.

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Additionally, he thought that reading stories was more engaging than learning vocabulary, for example, “what a chair is.”

One student expressed her enthusiasm about reading, but also struggled with learning English:

I like to read in English. If I can't do something very well, for example, when I read in English, when there are difficult words, I haven't learned all of English, but I have learned some. And I like, if I, what irritates me is if I read an English book that is really difficult. That really irritates me. So I, but I like those, those books [graded readers and children's books] when I know the words. I don't like all of them, but then I understand the story. (Student 8, School 2, 2.5.11)

This student explained that it was important for her to know enough of the words to be able to understand the text. According to research on text difficulty, the text should be in the *i+1* range to encourage reading improvement (Krashen, 1982, pp. 20-21), but for independent extensive reading, reading at an easier level can help develop fluency (Day & Bamford, 1998, pp. 16-17).

Regarding whether the students liked the textbook, two did, five thought it was “okay,” and one did not like it. Five of the eight thought the level was appropriate, three that it was too easy, while none considered it to be too difficult. A few of the students mentioned that individual texts could be difficult if there were many unknown words in them, but this was not often the case. Five of the eight students said that there was variation in the degree the texts suited their interests; some texts were described as fun, funny or interesting, while others were boring. Some said long texts were boring because they took so long to go through, whereas others liked longer stories as opposed to working intensively with vocabulary, as they sometimes did with the shorter texts. Another student mentioned that translating was difficult, especially when she did not know many of the words and they were not in the vocabulary list in the textbook.

Generally, the students were very positive about the children's books and graded readers. Six responded that they were “funny,” one that they were “good,” and one that they were “fun.” Only one student described these texts

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as boring. In terms of whether they were at an appropriate level, there was more variation in the responses: three found them too easy, two at an appropriate level, two found them too difficult, and one felt they varied in difficulty, depending on the book. One student commented that he thought the graded readers were too short and that he could read them “in half a minute.” Others felt the children’s books were harder than the textbook.

It was not surprising there was so much variation in the answers when the students reflected on their opinions about reading generally. One student preferred to read in English rather than Norwegian, while another preferred reading in Norwegian and felt that reading in English was difficult. A third did not like to read at all, whereas other students commented that reading was their favorite activity in English class. Three mentioned a preference for reading in pairs or individually as opposed to reading aloud in class.

The one fifth-grade student interviewed thought the textbook was good and that she learned a good deal from the texts. She mentioned that many words were explained in the texts. She felt that reading in English was difficult and she did not like reading aloud in class. However, “Reading in pairs was okay.” She especially liked listening to the texts on CD, commenting that some of the voices were very funny.

8.4 Combination approach school – School 3

8.4.1 How the reading approach was used

The way in which the approach was implemented in School 3 was different in materials, their use, and reading practices, than in the other combination approach school, School 2. The combination reading approach used at this school was based primarily on the *Stairs* textbook series and supplementary materials, such as graded readers and simplified children’s literature texts created by the teacher. When working with the textbook the interaction was teacher-led, whole-class teaching, which was observed in the majority of the lessons. Graded readers were used for independent reading by the students during class, usually as part of a lesson. However, the reading was a

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combination of intensive and extensive reading, as the students were required to answer questions and write summaries based on the texts they read.

There were 42 five-minute segments within the five observed lessons (see Appendix 4D for a summary of the coding frequencies).

8.4.2 Grade 4 materials

The teacher used the textbook *Stairs 4*, but often supplemented it with other materials. These materials included adapted versions of children's literature, graded readers and worksheets taken from other English language materials. During the observations, narratives were used in just under a quarter of the segments (and in nine of ten reading segments). Informational texts were not used during any of the observed lessons. Student writing and worksheets were each used in nearly a third of the segments. However, these were rarely used for reading either silently or aloud; rather, they were briefly reviewed in class by each student sharing one answer or one sentence they had written.

8.4.3 Grade 4 lesson observations

Teacher and instructional grouping

The English teacher was the head English teacher for the school and generally taught her English lessons alone. During one lesson, the regular classroom teacher assisted the English teacher as students worked individually on writing tasks. During the lessons, half of the time was spent on teacher-led, whole-class instruction. In two of the five observed lessons, this comprised nearly three-quarters of the lesson. Students worked individually during half of the time segments, the individual work typically lasting 20 minutes. Of this individual work time, 5–7 minutes was devoted to a weekly vocabulary test and sentence writing. On only one occasion did the students work in pairs, which lasted for seven minutes, and they never worked in small groups. This was indicative of a teacher-led and directed teaching style where the whole class was led from the front of the classroom for most of the lesson, followed by individual work.

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Major activity focus

The lessons were fairly evenly divided between reading-focused, writing-focused, and other language-focused activities. However, reading was the least frequent of these activities, occurring in only three of the five lessons; overall, reading was featured in a quarter of the lesson time segments. The “other language” category, the most frequently used category in two in five segments, was coded for speaking activities, singing, and interactive games (e.g., Simon says), and grammar and vocabulary-focused activities not related to working with texts.

Activity focus

During the reading-focused segments of the lessons, nearly half of the time was spent reading connected texts. However, this was only five to ten minutes of each lesson. Students did not listen to connected texts during the five observed lessons. The teacher retold a story using flash cards and pictures for ten minutes of one lesson. However, as she was telling the story, rather than reading a text, it was not coded as “listening to connected text.” While the teacher was telling the story, she and the students were also engaged in lower-level thinking about the text, which will be presented in greater detail below. Overall, half of the “reading” coded time was spent on lower-level responses to the texts. There were two instances of higher-level responses to the texts, both during the same lesson. One of these is included in the excerpt below.

- 1 T: Do you remember what her mum tells Little Red Riding
- 2 Hood? Do you remember what she tells her to do or not to
- 3 do? M?
- 4 M: To not stop on the way.
- 5 T: Mhm. Ok. Because, where does she have to go to go to
- 6 grandmother’s house? L?
- 7 L: Wood.
- 8 T: Yes, she has to go through the woods. Yes. Ok. Do you
- 9 do as you are told? Do you always do as your mum or dad
- 10 tells you?
- 11 S: *Jeg prøver det.* (I try to.)
- 12 T: But if she tells you to do something that you don’t want to

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- 13 do?
14 S: *Jeg sier at jeg ikke skal gå der.* (I say that I won't go
15 there.)
16 T: But you do?
17 S: *Jeg gjør det.* (I do it.)

(Excerpt 21 from transcription 30.11.10, School 3, grade 4)

In lines 1–3 and 5–6, the teacher asked the students lower-level literal comprehension questions. In lines 8–10, the teacher asked the students a creative comprehension question, whether they always listened to their parents or not. This required the students to take the notion of not listening to their parents, as Little Red Riding Hood does in the story, and compare it to their own lives and experiences (i.e., making a text-to-self connection; Keene & Zimmerman, 1997). One student answered in Norwegian. The teacher did not attempt to ask the student to repeat her answer in English. In contrast to when she asked lower-level comprehension questions, where she often encouraged the student to try to provide the answer in English, the teacher may have decided that, due to the higher-level of thinking required to answer the question, the student should not be required to respond in English.

The second instance of higher-level comprehension talk was when the teacher asked the students whether they thought Little Red Riding Hood would go directly to her grandmother's house the next time. This question required the students to predict potential future events in the story, based on the information about the character and their experiences.

In two lessons, comprehension skills were mentioned and used, and comprehension strategies were mentioned twice in one of those lessons. In the first lesson, the same comprehension strategy was referred to twice, namely, to look in the text to find the correct answers to questions about the text. This was a comprehension strategy which the teacher reminded the students of before beginning a task, and again during the task, and which could be applied on future occasions. The teacher explained that looking in the text could be a good strategy because, "English can be a bit difficult to write and remember well. So it can be a good idea to look at the answers there [in the text]." (My translation; Excerpt 21 from transcription, 30.11.10, School 3, grade 4).

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Writing was a prominent activity in this class. The students were engaged in writing activities during a third of the reading segments and a quarter of all lesson segments. The students wrote in order to complete worksheets and do workbook tasks, answered weekly test questions, and occasionally wrote continuous texts. For example, the students each wrote a short informational text about an animal of their choice.

Word knowledge was exhibited as both word identification and vocabulary learning in four of the five lessons and overall in one in five lesson segments. However, with the exception of a single vocabulary-focused lesson (see below), most lessons had fewer than 15 minutes in which word knowledge was a focus. The reading-focused lessons tended to have more word identification than vocabulary learning. For example, the teacher provided the translation of words as she was telling a story or she asked students the meaning of the word. During two lessons, the students actively worked with learning word meanings, coded as “vocabulary.” During one lesson, the students were learning and reviewing words for parts of the body. Rather than the teacher asking for the word in Norwegian, the students were labeling a chart and discussing both the meaning and pronunciation of the words.

Additionally, when the students were writing, they often asked Kari how to spell words. Spelling was also a component of the weekly vocabulary tests, in which the students were given five to seven Norwegian words to which they needed to write and correctly spell the English equivalent. Grammar also featured prominently in one lesson, where Kari reviewed adjectives and indefinite articles.

Teacher interaction style/approach

For this class, the teacher most frequently used telling and listening/watching as her chosen interaction styles (each occurring in two thirds of all segments). Often these two occurred within the same five-minute segment as the teacher would give instructions, or as the class transitioned between activities, followed by the students completing independent work. Recitation was also common, occurring in nearly one of five segments. However, only in two lessons was this featured for most of the lesson. In the first lesson, the teacher asked students questions as they retold the story of *Little Red Riding Hood*.

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The second lesson, featuring recitation throughout, was not a reading-focused lesson. Examples of recitation can be seen in the transcription excerpt 20 above.

In two lessons, the teacher modeled the process of how to do an activity. However, neither of these examples of modeling were during reading-focused segments. In one lesson the teacher modeled how to create a sentence using an adjective to describe someone. Despite the fact that modeling was infrequent (only 5% of total class time), when used, it guided the students into the activity. The following is an excerpt from the lesson where the students began working on the animal project, and in which the teacher also modeled how to work with a strategy to aid writing.

- 1 T: Key words. *Det var altså at du skulle skrive, nå bruke jeg*
2 *fox. Og så skulle du skrive de tingene du tenker på, B, de*
3 *ordene du tenker på når du ser for deg reven. Hva er det*
4 *med reven? For eksempel, kan jeg si red fur, han har rød*
5 *pels, sant? You can say sharp teeth, [writes this one on the*
6 *board]. Hva spiser han? Hvor lever han? Hvor bor han? Og*
7 *så skal jeg finne ord som har med reven å gjøre. Det var det*
8 *viktigste. Og så skal vi finne litt fakta om å skrive litt*
9 *setninger om det.*

(Key words. So you are supposed to write, now I will use fox. And then you are supposed to write the things you are thinking about, B, the words you think about when you think of the fox. What is it about the fox? For example, I can say red fur, he has red fur, right? You can say sharp teeth, [writes this one on the board]. What does he eat? Where does he live?⁸⁶ Where does he live? And then I will find words that have something to do with fox. That was the most important. And then we are going to find facts about writing some sentences about it.)

⁸⁶ The teacher here uses an unusual word for “to live.” She rephrases using the more typical verb “å bo,” meaning “to live.” It is possible that in the first sentence she was thinking in English.

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(Excerpt 22 from transcription 4.5.11, School 3, grade 4)

In this excerpt, the teacher first reminded the students of a comprehension strategy they had used before, namely, key words (lines 1–4). Second, she modeled finding key words to describe an animal and other topics that the students could write about, such as where the animal lived (lines 4–9).

Coaching and scaffolding were only used occasionally during lessons, usually occurring during 5 to 10 minutes of each lesson. Kari used scaffolding to support students in answering literal comprehension questions while retelling *The Little Red Riding Hood* story. The following example shows Kari providing the beginning of a sentence to help a student structure an answer (line 4).

- 1 T: He has big eyes. Big eyes. Anything else? A? What has he
- 2 got? What has he got?
- 3 S: Umm.
- 4 T: It's a wolf with...
- 5 S: Big teeth.

(Excerpt 23 from transcription 30.11.10, School 3, grade 4)

- 6 T: Yes, and why does it have such big eyes? M?
- 7 M: *Så vi kan se.* (So we can see.)
- 8 T: So we can...
- 9 M: See.
- 10 T: See sharply, that is correct.

(Excerpt 24 from transcription 30.11.10, School 3, grade 4)

In this excerpt the student was able to initially answer the literal comprehension question, although in Norwegian (line 7). The teacher recasted the answer using English, but did not complete it (line 8), allowing the student to contribute (line 9). Providing the beginning of the sentence allowed the student to focus on the most important element in the sentence, which was to describe which sense the wolf would use.

In another example, the teacher differentiated teaching for students by providing more scaffolding for a student who had not been able to answer a literal comprehension question.

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- 1 T: What does the grey wolf do? What does he do? What
2 does he do, J? Does he go back into the forest or...[another
3 student making squeaking noises to be called on]
4 S: Oh, she, *nei*. (no.)
5 T: He...
6 S: ...have, he eat grandmother.

(Excerpt 25 from transcription 30.11.10, School 3, grade 4)

In line 2, after the teacher had decided who to call on to answer the question, she narrowed the question down by creating a “yes/no” question for the student to answer, as opposed to the previous question which would have required the student to say more than simply “yes” or “no.” The teacher waited two seconds before providing this new question (line 2), and three seconds before calling on another student who wanted to answer (lines 2–3). Although longer than the common one second wait time among language teachers, the two seconds provided may not have been enough to encourage the student to take initiative (cf. Garton, 2002; Thornbury, 1996). Additionally, the teacher never insisted on J answering the question and did not provide any great degree of follow-up after the initial attempt at elicitation.

Generally, the teacher supported the students, not by trying to get them to elaborate their answers or work more independently, but rather by focusing on helping them arrive at the correct answer. This was often exhibited as recasting or elaboration of students’ answers during recitation, or as the teacher providing an answer for the student. For example, when the student said *wolf*, the teacher repeated and elaborated the answer *He is a wolf*. In the following exchange, the teacher recasted the student’s answer.

- 1 S: He have got the big ears.
2 T: He’s got big ears.

(Excerpt 26 from transcription 30.11.10, School 3, grade 4)

During the presentation of their animal project, the teacher asked each student to say one sentence about their animal. Sometimes the teacher asked a follow-up question about the animal, which allowed the student to say one more thing. However, sometimes the teacher answered the question herself (see

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excerpt 23 above), which instead could have been an opportunity for the teacher to coach students to generate an answer by providing prompts or rephrasing the question.

Reading activities generally included the teacher talking the students through the text (retelling the text), or the students taking turns reading aloud. Very little reading was done in pairs and none in small groups. Using this approach, the students were provided with few opportunities to read and speak.

Student response

The most common expected student response in this class was writing, which occurred during each observed lesson and on average in four segments of each lesson. As previously mentioned, five to ten minutes of this activity constituted the weekly test. The second most common response was students speaking and answering questions in turn. The teacher generally called on students during the lesson, attempting to involve as many as possible. However, many of the students were often unwilling to answer and she did not push them to answer if they showed anxiety. In general, the students did little reading during the observed lessons; when it did occur, it was generally taking turns in a whole-class setting (5–10 minutes during three lessons). This meant that not all of the students had a turn, and that the activity took a good deal of time considering the amount of reading that was done.

Overall, the balance between active responding and passive responding was almost even (approximately 70% versus 64%, respectively). However, this was due to the high frequency of writing, not to oral or reading activity. The balance of students taking turns reading to students all reading simultaneously was six to one.

Language use

The students were expected to answer in English whenever possible. However, instead of asking them to say answers in English, the teacher would often recast the statement in English for them. There were a few instances of uptake by students following the teacher's recast of the answer. However, generally the teacher would recast the statement and then proceed to move on

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to the next literal comprehension question. The teacher used a mixture of Norwegian and English during lessons. When giving instructions or explaining grammar, Norwegian would be used.

Aims

Lesson aims were not explicitly stated during any of the lessons.

8.4.4 Grade 5 materials

There were 41 five-minute segments within the five observed lessons (see Appendix 4D for a summary of the coding frequencies).

The teacher used a combination of the *Stairs 5* textbook, adapted children's literature narratives, and graded readers. The teacher adapted the text of *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, which comprised segments from the original and summaries of each chapter. She also wrote a short informational text about Roald Dahl. Narratives were used in nearly half of all the teaching segments and nearly seven of ten reading segments. To supplement the adapted texts, the teacher created a number of worksheets for the students to complete, which were used in one in five segments in the observed lessons.

The teacher also created weekly vocabulary tests. In one lesson, student writing was used as the primary material, comprising three-quarters of that lesson. However, as student writing was not used during any other observed lessons, it was only present in 15% of the total lesson segments. The students were writing during other activities. However, since the writing was not continuous writing of sentences and text, but rather single words or sentences (often as part of workbook activities), it was not coded as "student writing material."

Graded readers and other children's literature were used for the majority of one lesson (eight of nine segments—approximately 40 minutes) and for ten minutes in another lesson. The graded readers were from multiple publishers and series. One series, Gullhoj *Elementary Readers*, had question booklets that contained reading comprehension questions to accompany each book. These were used during one lesson. A few children read short chapter books during the individual reading time.

8.4.5 Grade 5 lesson observations

Teacher and instructional grouping

There was one teacher in the classroom at all times. The teaching was organized either as whole-class or individual grouping, 66% and 56% of the segments, respectively. The students were never placed into small groups nor asked to talk in pairs in the observed lessons. Three of the five lessons were more than two-thirds teacher-led, whole-class teaching. One lesson was primarily individual reading, which occurred in eight of the nine lesson segments. When the students worked individually, the activities were the weekly tests, workbook activities, worksheets containing grammar and multiple-choice reading comprehension questions, and individual reading.

Major activity focus

Reading was the major activity focus in two-thirds of the lesson segments, whereas the other segments were primarily “other language” (nearly one-third). Only two segments were coded as “writing-focused.” “Other language” was usually focused on vocabulary, spelling, and grammar, all as isolated skills rather than being linked to writing texts. During one lesson, speaking about a topic not connected to a text or a pre-reading activity for a text, occurred for approximately ten minutes. Generally, speaking was connected to pre-reading or post-reading talk about a text or vocabulary connected to a theme presented in a text, such as the weather and activities associated with the seasons.

Activity focus

During the reading-focused segments of the lessons, approximately 85% of the segments included reading connected texts, whereas only 3% of the segments were spent listening to connected texts. During approximately one-third of the reading segments, the students were taking turns reading (this will be addressed in greater detail in student expected response). This means that students were listening to each other, but not to model speakers, and were given few opportunities to read.

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Nearly two-thirds of the reading-focused segments included either speaking or writing about lower-level comprehension of texts. In contrast, there was only one instance of higher-level text comprehension within the recorded interactions. In the following excerpt, the teacher began by using lower-level literal comprehension questions (lines 1, 5–6, 8, and 12–13), consequently drawing on the students' experiences (lines 17–18), and asking an interpretive question (line 20).

- 1 T: So tell me, what is this story about? What is it about?
2 S: Story is about the girl.
3 T: Yes.
4 S: Who...
5 T: It is about a girl. Let's stop there. Where is this girl? Ø?
6 Where is this girl? Where is this girl?
7 Ø: Jenny.
8 T: Yes, her name is Jenny. Where is she?
9 Ø: In, umm... [another student attempts to help, but it
inaudible]
10 T: Yes, once more.
11 Ø: Jenny is on the church.
12 T: Yes, that's where she is. What's she doing there? What's
13 she doing there?
14 S: He uh, undecided...
15 T: Visit or...
16 S: She wisit her grandmother's grave.
17 T: Yes, that's correct. Do you visit graveyards or
18 churchyards sometimes? Do you? Do you?
19 S: Yes.
20 T: Why do we do that? Why do we do that?
21 S: Yes, put flowers on the dead people. On the families.
22 T: Yes, sort of to pay to respect to them who are dead. Yes.
23 P: *Ka er det?* (What is that?)
24 T: Graveyard. *Kirkegård*. Graveyard, *kirkegård*.
25 P: *Ja, men det stod jo noe annet.* (Yes, but something else
26 was written.)
27 T: Churchyard. *Ja, det er liksom at du kan bruke begge*

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28 *deler*. (Yes, you can use both of them.)
(Excerpt 27 from transcription 4.5.11, School 3, grade 5)

In line 23, a student asked the teacher what a *churchyard* was. Rather than explain the difference in connotation between the two words *churchyard* and *graveyard*, the teacher gave a quick explanation that they could both be used for the same Norwegian word, *kirkegård*. This was fairly typical of the word knowledge focus in this class. The teacher provided words or asked the students to give a Norwegian equivalent of an English word. Teaching and reviewing of word knowledge occurred in more than a third of the lesson segments. However, with the exception of one lesson, it was usually focused on small events where the teacher either explained the meaning of a word or asked a student to identify the meaning of a word, usually met with the Norwegian equivalent.

The use of comprehension skills was mentioned by the teacher once. When students worked individually on a worksheet, the teacher reminded the class to read the text closely in order to find answers to the lower-level comprehension questions. The teacher did not mention why it was important to use this strategy or model how to use it. In another lesson, when supporting the students during individual work time, the teacher also guided them, asking if they had read the text and what they had found in it. However, the skill was not explicitly mentioned again and was not used directly by the students in any of the observed lessons.

The students wrote sentences or texts in two of the lessons, each time for 5–10 minutes. Overall, writing was not a common activity. The students were more often engaged in answering multiple-choice questions, checking off “true” or “false” questions, or other selection-type writing tasks.

Teacher interaction

The teacher was most often listening or watching students, occasionally giving individual feedback to them, which occurred in nearly three of four segments. Often the teacher was both “telling” and “listening” in the same five-minute segments, first giving instructions, followed by listening to students either reading aloud or watching them work individually. Overall, the

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teacher was giving students information in over half of the lesson segments. Most often this was instruction for activities, or additional information about a topic that the teacher had provided. The teacher engaged students in recitation during three of the lessons, during which it generally occurred for half of the lesson (approximately 20 minutes). During the five observed lessons, the teacher never read aloud to the students.

When leading students in activities, the teacher never modeled an activity or way of thinking. She also rarely engaged in coaching intended to help students provide more complete answers or foster independence. When the teacher gave feedback to students while reading, she often provided words that they were struggling with or had mispronounced by recasting the word or phrase. She did not often use elicitation or other coaching techniques to help students attempt the correct pronunciation or decode the word themselves. Sometimes the recast resulted in uptake by the students, while at other times they read on without repeating the teacher's recast (see Table 37). The table below shows the occurrence of students' reading errors, teacher recasts, and student uptake with repair⁸⁷. During one five-minute reading segment, eight students read and the teacher provided 13 recasts, 11 of which led to student uptake with repair. Most of the students read two to six sentences. The students who read most fluently and with the fewest mistakes read the most.

⁸⁷ The frequency of teacher recasts and student uptake was not calculated for Schools 1 and 2 because there were few episodes of students taking turns reading. In School 4 taking-turns reading was a frequent activity, but it was deemed more important to focus on the predominant feature of the reading at that school, which was the frequency of translation while reading (see section 8.5.4).

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Table 37: Student reading, teacher recasts and student uptake from School 3, grade 5

Student	Recast	Uptake
water	watering	watering
clo	couldn't	couldn't
anything	anyone	anyone
A five	a few	a few
g-	girl	- (she)
- (didn't say word)	pale	pale
b-	bushes	bushes
sheer	cheer	cheer
-	tears	tears
-	through	through
grave	graveyard	-
wa, wa	wait	wait
quickly (partial self-repair) quiet	quietly	quietly

The text read during this example was a Step 3 text, and thus would be considered difficult for some students. Although this was homework for the students the evening before, the teacher had been ill that day, which meant that it was possible the students had not received any pre-reading support or introduction to the text. The variation seen during this reading segment was typical of the range of the students' reading abilities. Some of the students read fluently without error, while others made errors or were unable to decode words throughout their reading.

After nine students had read from the narrative, the teacher addressed a pronunciation error that many students had made while taking turns reading aloud, namely, pronunciation of the past tense *-ed* ending. Although She reviewed both that *-ed* is a regular ending for verbs and that the *-ed* is not pronounced as it is spelled in words such as *jumped* and *danced*, she did not explicitly explain the pronunciation of the ending in the example words, namely /t/. However, her explanation was not particularly clear, did not review all three pronunciations of *-ed* endings, and was not systematic, mainly repeating that the *-ed* ending is not pronounced.

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When talking about the text after reading it aloud, the teacher limited students to short statements, rather than allowing one student to retell the whole story. This allowed for more participation, but limited how much a student was able to speak and contribute to the lesson. Additionally, in this way the teacher was able to control and direct the conversation by asking many lower-level comprehension questions, such as “What is this story about? “Where is this girl?” and “What is she doing there?” Also, when asking questions, the teacher at times asked a question, but answered it herself without giving the students the opportunity to answer, for example, “What different sorts of papers? Some very soft, some stronger. And you can make it out of plastic as well.”

The teacher sometimes used a narrowing pattern when asking questions, first asking a more open question (e.g., “What sort of shoes can you wear?”), then narrowing down to a “yes/no” question (e.g., “Do you need boots?”). At other times the teacher first asked a question in English (e.g., “What sort of clothes do you wear in the summer time?”), and then translated it into Norwegian: “*Hva slags klær har du på deg i sommeren?*”

Student expected response

During the reading-focused segments, the students were engaged in individual reading half of the time, taking turns reading during a third, while the remainder was spent on pre-reading or post-reading talk about texts. Overall, the students were actively responding during just over half of the time (55%), which was comprised of reading individually, writing, and manipulating. The students were taking turns reading during one quarter of all the segments, and taking turns speaking during a third. During these activities, few of the students were involved. For example, during one session where students were taking turns reading aloud, five students had a chance to read their text. Students were coded as “listening” during only one in five segments. This did not include listening to other students reading aloud, but most commonly listening to instructions from the teacher. Since the teacher did not read aloud and the students did not listen to connected texts on the recordings, they were not actively engaged in listening comprehension of texts which they would be required to talk or write about. Thus, listening to texts may be an area which

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was lacking from the way in which this teacher implemented the combination approach.

During the longer whole-class segments, a number of students did not pay attention and even fewer actively participated. In the lessons where students worked individually for at least ten minutes, they were often confused as to what they needed to do. The teacher had to repeat the same information to many of the students as she checked on their progress. It is possible that with clearer instructions or modeling of the activities before they began, the students would have been more capable of managing the tasks without the teacher's support. Supporting students in developing autonomy and cooperative learning skills would enable the teacher to include more independent and small group work, and allow more time for the teacher to provide differentiated instruction.

Differentiation

The students appeared to be at a diverse range of reading levels. Some were capable of reading and understanding all of the textbook texts, whereas others struggled, particularly with the Step 3 texts. For the students who needed the most support, the teacher scaffolded their reading experience by reading the text aloud, whether it was the graded readers or the adapted *Mr. Fox* text, and translating when necessary.

Two of the lessons included individual reading of graded readers. On the first occasion, the teacher limited the choice of text, allowing the students to choose between books in the *Mary and Steven* series, levels 7–9. The second time the students were allowed to choose among approximately 55 different books, primarily graded readers. When students read individually, some read easy graded readers (Gullhoj *Elementary Readers* level 1, *Easy Reader* level 1, and other adapted fairy tales), while others read higher-level *Elementary Reader* (levels 3–4) and simple chapter books, such as *The Sheep-Pig*. The level of the work associated with the independent reading also varied. The lower-level readers read shorter books and accomplished less when answering questions and writing summaries of the books. One student copied from the back of the book instead of creating her own sentences for the summary. Overall, when students worked individually, they often worked at very

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different paces, both when reading and working on workbook or worksheet exercises.

Reading purpose – intensive versus extensive

The independent reading was a mix of intensive and extensive reading. The students using graded readers with activity books (the ones the teacher encouraged them to use), answered reading comprehension questions every two to three pages, generally 9 to 17 sentences. Additionally, when the teacher worked with a text with the whole class, the focus was generally a mixture of intensive and extensive reading. Overall, the talk was about lower-level comprehension questions, but word identification and vocabulary occasionally became a focus within the text. Also, repeated reading of the text was expected, even though it was not always done in class, but rather as homework.

Language use

The teacher generally used English when speaking to the students. When asking questions (recitation), she often first asked in English, followed by repeating the question in English or in Norwegian. On two separate occasions, students said they did not understand and asked the teacher to repeat in Norwegian. However, based on the lack of student participation in voluntarily answering questions, and those who were not able to respond when called on, it is likely that more of them did not understand the English, although they did not disclose this fact.

Aims

In the observed lessons, the teacher did not specifically communicate learning aims or state a clear purpose for the lessons to the students. It is not possible to evaluate whether lesson expectations were achieved, since the aims were not explicit. When the students read independently, it is unclear how much the teacher expected them to read and write. However, all of the students were reading during independent reading time, at various levels and at varying levels of comprehension.

8.4.6 School 3 teacher interview

Teaching

In her interview, Kari described the way in which she approached reading texts as a progression, from using simple texts and a predominantly teacher-directed method, to more independent reading with teacher support. This began with the class reading very simple texts, where students would be asked literal comprehension questions to which they could find answers in the text, and then progressing to reading challenging graded readers individually. When working with a new text from the textbook, Kari always read aloud first, preferably twice, followed by choral repetition in order to practice pronunciation. The students read the text several more times as homework, sometimes two days in a row. However, in a follow-up e-mail, Kari reflected that, “Letting each student in a class of say 25 read their homework aloud takes up a lot of time, and is in the end boring for the rest.” Whereas Kari most likely thought of this in the context of reviewing homework, it is possible the students experienced the teacher-led introduction of the text in the same way, namely, that it was long and unengaging.

Kari had students respond to reading in different ways: answering questions orally, writing short answers to questions or summaries, answering recall-based comprehension questions, and/or making a drawing based on what they had read. When supporting students’ reading of more difficult graded readers, Kari sometimes had to ask questions two or three times with different formulations and had to use synonyms for unfamiliar words to scaffold their understanding.

Regarding language learning and teaching, Kari said that her views about teaching Norwegian and English were similar. She explained:

You need to feel a language. And it gets to be that way because they hear so much English, both with videos, TV, cassettes, and DVDs, that they feel a lot of language.

Kari preferred to work intensively with certain topics, letting the students get to the point where they could talk freely about them.

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Kari felt that it was important to work with something for a while, so that the students could get into both the routine of working with the books and working independently. She expressed this as follows: “*Da får vi trent litt på innholdet.*” (Then we can train ourselves on the content.) As an example, she mentioned the texts that had comprehension questions on every second page. At first the students read straight through the book without answering the comprehension questions as they read it. After further guidance from Kari, she said they had become more familiar with the routine and answered the questions where appropriate. In fourth grade they worked with “active reading,” which was fun because “it is being able to empty a text, work so intensively with it that when they are finished with it, they know so much about it. Not just hopping from one place to another.” She emphasized spending time on texts and not working with every text, but rather choosing to work intensively with some of them. Additionally, she said she chose not to use specific textbook texts, but instead use other texts she liked or thought were interesting for the students.

Occasionally the students read books for comprehension, allowing them to delve deeper into the content of the books instead of just reading one page from a textbook. Yet, even when reading for comprehension, Kari expected the students to write a summary or answer comprehension questions related to the text. Kari said the students liked to check if they had understood the text by answering the questions. She remarked that they read the graded readers quickly, and then recorded each book they had read on their reading list, thereby giving them a sense of accomplishment.

Kari explained that some of her choices regarding reading approach were related to the students’ behavior. She mentioned that for a period she had “to keep tighter reins” on the students so that lessons did not become chaotic. One way in which she did this was to give them weekly tests. She explained that this enabled her to check who had understood the week’s text and who had memorized the vocabulary. Additionally, she mentioned that, despite her best efforts to create a safe environment for language learning, some learners still felt anxious about being called on in class and having to speak English in front of others.

In a follow-up e-mail, Kari also mentioned her role as the teacher:

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I as the teacher, is important in the way I perform, "glow" and show them how interested I am in their work and the texts I have given them. I want them to know that I will and can help them to learn English!

I am quite active in front of my classes. I use body language, my voice, I draw/illustrate on blackboard/electronic board (I am an arts and crafts teacher as well), I make questions, new texts and other exercises as a help for them to "digest" the texts.

Materials

Kari felt that the *Stairs* textbooks were good, mentioning especially the fourth-grade book. However, since they had three hours per week in fourth grade, she also chose to use other texts, such as fairytales, fables, poetry, songs, and easy readers. She used these texts both in class and as homework. She created follow-up activities for the texts, such as puzzles and crosswords, had the students draw and color, and retell the story in their own words orally or in writing. Additionally, she created some simple plays, which students performed using paper cut-out characters they had drawn or puppets they had made.

Kari expressed that her criteria for choosing reading texts, whether from the textbook, graded readers, children's books, or texts she had created, were the same. These were namely the need to find texts at an appropriate language level and of interest to the students. Kari said that as a teacher one needs to "dare to leave the textbook." She thought this was easier to do as one gains more experience. She explained that throughout her career, she had developed more materials herself and had figured out what to focus on, such as different types of reading and discussion about texts. Thus, she was able to make conscious decisions about what to include and not to include in her teaching.

Kari said she chose texts that could be used in multiple ways and over the course of many days or possibly weeks. She felt this enabled the students to gain more new knowledge and to communicate about the theme orally and sometimes in writing. She explained why she chose to work intensively with texts:

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When a child can retell a story in his or her own words, or even has learnt some sentences or sometimes the whole text by heart, and I see their pride and smiles when they talk in front of class, I feel happiness and that I have succeeded in my work as a teacher!!!

Progress and teacher's aims

At the end of the year, when reflecting on the students' reading progress, Kari said that she saw progress in their reading, and gave examples related to the transition from having individual words as "vocabulary words" to writing full sentences when answering questions about a text. She also specifically mentioned the "animal project" in fourth grade, where students read about an animal they had chosen and created a poster, writing multiple sentences about their animal. The students presented the posters to the class, reading aloud what they had written. She felt this showed a clear progression from their previous reading and writing abilities.

Kari explained that her reading goals for the students were for them to think about English and reading as fun, for them to succeed, to accomplish something, to understand English, and to be able to express themselves. Multiple times throughout the interview she mentioned how important it was to her that her students "managed" and that they were "able to do things." Creating a positive experience built upon small accomplishments appeared to be a central tenet in her teaching. She said that creating a positive environment for English was important:

They are still at a level where we can do a lot of fun things and that we don't need to sit and practice strong verbs, right. When they get to seventh grade, they [the students] get the feeling that [...] I have accomplished this so far.

Overall, she was very pleased with what they had accomplished both in fourth- and fifth grade.

Differentiation

According to Kari, she used various forms of differentiation. She provided simplified texts when working with children's books and more difficult

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fairytale. She reviewed the text, reading it aloud to the students, and repeated the themes of the text through discussion of its main content when talking about it. Additionally, she translated certain parts of the text when she felt it was necessary for the struggling learners to comprehend it. In other words, she worked with the texts in different ways, incorporating many language skills, including listening, reading, speaking, answering questions, creating a spoken and written summary, and retelling the story. However, most of this was presented as variation in activities during whole-group, teacher-led instruction, rather than adaptations made for one student or groups of students.

Kari felt there was great variation in ability levels within her classes. Within one class, she said she had students for whom English was a third language, Norwegian students who had learning difficulties, Norwegian students who could understand and speak English fairly well, and British and American students. Kari also mentioned how she felt that this “gap” in ability levels was increasing:

The "problem" is that weak students have a tendency to have parents who either can't help, or don't see the importance in helping their children with homework. The clever ones tend to have parents who give their children a lot of support. The gap in classroom therefore seems to be wider when it comes to learning, whatever I do to minimize the gap⁸⁸.

Curriculum aims and national test

Kari felt that the curriculum aims had “high demands.” She spoke about the national test, which she felt was very difficult, to exemplify what she felt was an increased focus on reading comprehension, reading more and reading at different difficulty levels. She commented that:

⁸⁸ This was taken from a follow-up e-mail with the teacher and printed as written in the e-mail.

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Since it is the comprehension, the understanding of texts that is the main thing here, the students need a huge vocabulary and to have read a lot of different kinds of texts to "succeed" on such tests.

Since the implementation of the national test and the new curriculum, Kari had bought many graded readers and short texts with accompanying question booklets. These covered a variety of topics and genres, including fairytales, narratives, and factual texts about animals.

Book project

During one of the interviews, Kari described a reading project they had had in fifth grade earlier that year. She began by telling the students about Roald Dahl and his works, and she talked to the students about books of his with which they were familiar. They first read two pages from the reading project materials about Roald Dahl's writing, which they read as homework and had vocabulary homework associated with the text. In class they talked about questions related to the text, followed by written questions whose answers they could find in the text. Kari decided to continue working with the rest of the text. She read a number of the chapters aloud to the students, while some excerpts were played to them from an audiobook recording available on YouTube. For homework, Kari created summaries and simplified texts of each chapter of *Fantastic Mr. Fox* for the students, of which they read one chapter a week. They answered comprehension questions related to the text, which were predominantly literal ones, both orally in class discussions and by writing in sentences and underlining basic true/false questions. Additionally, 30–40 words were listed in Norwegian and English in two jumbled columns; the students had to match the Norwegian words to the corresponding English words.

After reading the simplified text, the students watched the movie based on the book and discussed differences between the two. Finally, they wrote a summary of the story, which they practiced reading and then memorized in order to "present it" to the class. Kari was happy with the end result and that most of the students could speak freely about the topic. The project was assessed through the students' written summaries, which she assessed for use of key words, but she only corrected language mistakes according to what she

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felt the individual student could manage based on their linguistic level. In other words, she wanted to consolidate and review previous language knowledge that may have been forgotten, but not focus on new language corrections.

8.4.7 School 3 student interviews

The five students interviewed at School 3 expressed differing opinions about English. The students who struggled the most in reading also expressed the least interest in the subject. The stronger readers said they enjoyed the subject. Most of the students liked the *Stairs* textbook, many commenting that it was fun and that the stories were funny. However, two of the five students also commented that the texts were easy, especially in the beginning of the year, while two said they were at an appropriate level. The students each had their favorite activities, mentioning games, writing about topics and making posters, and answering questions about the texts, especially in writing. Three of the five students expressed an interest in reading more, whether in the textbook (the preference of two students) or other books. One mentioned that she preferred reading the textbook because she could take it home, but would also enjoy taking other books home if she were given the opportunity. Another girl also mentioned that she enjoyed the textbook stories so much that she had copied them so that they would be available at home to read again. One boy preferred the textbook because there was more to read and because it was bigger than the graded readers and contained more stories. This comment was interesting given that one of the frequent arguments in support of using graded readers is that the texts are longer and that there is more variation in stories (Day & Bamford, 1998; Krashen, 1993). However, from a child's perspective, the textbook may be viewed as a whole, which (compared to graded readers and children's literature stories) would appear longer, as opposed to viewing the textbook texts as a compilation of shorter individual ones. This student did not appear to make a distinction between story excerpts found in textbooks and complete stories as found in graded readers and children's literature.

At this school, students were also aware of the importance of learning English. One student commented: "Nearly every land can talk some kind of

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English if it is better, poor or good. You always have a way to talk when you are on holiday.”

8.5 Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP) approach – School 4

8.5.1 How the reading approach was used

The Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP) is a program developed in Australia to create a greater focus on reading and writing in schools. This program was studied as the third reading approach in the case study research. It was chosen due to its increased use in Norwegian primary schools, and especially in EFL classes in recent years (see also section 5.5).

In the 2010/2011 school year, the school was working on trying to develop the Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP) for the “middle years” level (fifth to seventh grades). This was the first year it was used with this age group and it was therefore in a trial stage. This was also the first year the fifth-grade classes were using the EYLP. It had previously been implemented from first grade with the current fourth-grade students. Although some of the fifth-grade students had worked in pairs before, they had not worked in small groups and had not done as much individual work as required when using the EYLP approach.

In the EYLP approach, the students worked at five different stations: teacher station (usually guided reading), writing station, reading station, computer station, and art station. In fifth grade the teacher station varied between guided reading and guided writing, depending on the stage the students had reached in their projects (described in further detail below).

There were differences in the way the EYLP was implemented in the school at the lower and upper primary school levels related to the time spent at and the focus of the stations. At the lower primary level, 12- to 15-minute stations were used, whereas at the upper primary level the time frame was 30-minute stations. As the students became older, and could concentrate for longer periods of time, Cecilie, the second fifth-grade teacher, explained that the

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students were capable of and had requested more time at each station in order to complete the more complex tasks. The focus of the other stations at the lower primary level was more on practical work, including practice in fine motor skills, such as drawing and copying. The upper primary level focused more on subject-related knowledge and skills, and the students were expected to work more independently. There were also differences between the two levels specifically related to English teaching, such as a stronger focus on writing in the upper grades. In the earlier grades, Cecilie said she focused on oral communication to build the students' vocabulary and to help them develop fluent communication skills, such as being able to maintain a conversation and avoiding broken speech or "speaking staccato."

In fourth grade, the teachers implemented the EYLP program similarly to Nylund school, namely, with a number of two-hour blocks focused on one subject, during which stations were used. For English, there was one two-hour block each week. The sessions began with a plenary session in which the teacher introduced new materials, lasting up to 20 minutes, followed by station work for 50 minutes, and ended with a short review of the work done at the stations and of the plenary session (5–10 minutes). This follows the whole-part-whole lesson structure (see also sections 4.6 and 5.5.2). Examples of activities at the stations were puzzles, crosswords with themed words (such as *at home*), computer programs to practice vocabulary, and reading at the reading station and teacher station.

In fifth grade, English was taught in focused intensive teaching units, during which there were more than two hours of English a week, often occurring every day for at least one hour. However, after a teaching unit was completed, the students may not have had English again for a month or longer. Since the children worked with a project over longer periods of time, there was often no plenary session before they started working at the stations. Instead, the teacher reminded the students at which station they should begin and the aims of the project.

When the school first began working with the Tidlig Innsats/Early Years (TIEY) station model, they had two station sessions with Norwegian, one with English and two with other themes/subjects per week. This meant that they might only have the one English block (two class hours) a week. Cecilie

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commented that the students experienced this as being very fragmented, with little continuity throughout the week. She experienced that there was insufficient time to create differentiated activities for each station, to work with the students, to review their work, and to give them feedback and evaluate their work.

At the end of the first semester, the “middle years” teachers chose to work with cross-curricular subjects in periods, usually lasting three to six weeks, combining multiple subjects. For example, in one unit, Norwegian, social studies, and English were the primary subjects, with mathematics and art also involved. Additionally, they lengthened the time at each station and the station blocks: 30 minutes at each station for a total of two to two and a half hours in the afternoon working with the TIEY model. Norwegian and mathematics were taught throughout the week outside of the TIEY station work. At the beginning of each unit, they spent more time going through the content from each subject, and they had homework related to this content. However, they had fewer hours of “pure subjects” than previously, namely, where one subject was taught exclusively. For this reason, English was taught in focused intensive teaching units, one of the many subjects focused on for hours each day.

During each period, the students created a written product. Accordingly, they had both guided reading and guided writing. Some educational environments in the United States have a similar tradition of including both reading and writing workshops (e.g., Atwell, 1998). By using a guided writing approach, Cecilie felt better able to talk to the students about their writing, such as its grammar and sentence structure, which she felt she had been unable to do before when the students wrote independently at stations without any teacher follow-up.

The school primarily used graded readers at the teacher station and graded readers and other children’s literature at the individual reading station. When the students read at the individual reading station, they chose their own books and read extensively, focusing on text comprehension. At the teacher station, the students read intensively with a focus on the language, vocabulary and grammar of the text, and translation of the text into Norwegian. There was

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also a focus on comprehension and discussion of the text, but this supplemented the intensive reading and did not constitute extensive reading.

8.5.2 Materials

The materials used were generally specific to each station. Books were used for guided reading at the teacher station and for individual reading at the reading station. At the teacher station, there were books primarily from three graded reader series by two publishers: Era Publishing's *Wings* series and Gullhoj's *Mary and Steven* and *Bookworm* books. Both of these series offer many levels, although only a few of them were available in the fifth-grade classes. Even though each class had limited numbers of different books, they had a set of five or six copies of each book that could be used in the guided reading groups. The books were organized in small plastic boxes by level, so that students avoided having to share books. There were four different bins of books, with many different titles at each level in the fifth-grade class, and eight corresponding bins in the fourth-grade class.

Practices connected to taking the books home differed from fourth to fifth grade. In fourth grade the students took the books home to read as homework, whereas the fifth-grade students had yet to start using these books as homework at the time of the observations. Since the program had just been implemented in fifth grade in the actual school year, the school had not yet set up a check-out system for the new books.

The current reading homework for the fifth-grade students was from the textbook *Stairs 5* and the corresponding activities in the workbook. As part of their transition from textbook-based teaching to EYLP, the textbook was still occasionally used.

In fourth grade, the books at the individual reading station varied in length, text genre, intended audience (written for L1 or L2 learners), adaptation (whether graded or not), and topic. There were children's books, chapter books and picture books written for L1 readers, graded readers for L1 and L2 learners, factual books, and dictionaries.

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In fifth grade, the students read Norwegian books and comics at the individual reading station. Cecilie explained that this was because the other books were being used for guided reading. However, she pointed out that they sometimes read short fairytales in English that they had previously read in Norwegian. The researcher noted during observations that not all of the books at the teacher station were used at the same time, and therefore some of them could have been used for individual reading. However, it is possible that, due to the teacher's need to have different levels of books available for the various groups, it may have been too disruptive for the teacher to retrieve books from the reading station during and between each station rotation.

Each classroom had a set of five laptop computers that were used at the computer station. The students in both grades were quite adept at using these laptops and were generally able to find the information they were interested in or to operate the computer programs intended for practicing English, such as the *Stairs* website activities.

8.5.3 Grade 4 lesson observations

Due to unforeseen circumstances, there were fewer observations in the fourth-grade class than the fifth-grade class. Additionally, due to a mid-year change in teacher, there was less consistency in the teaching in the fourth-grade class. Thus, the observations from the first fourth-grade lesson will be used. Since this was a double lesson and was typical of the structure, length, and content of other EYLP sessions, it is regarded as representative of the teaching in the class in question. There were 16 five-minute segments in the lesson (see Appendix 4D for observation coding frequencies).

The researcher chose to focus on the teacher station, which gave the most representative source of teacher interaction. However, it means that the percentages related to student activity and responses are averages, and are not representative of what one student would have done throughout one lesson, but rather what they did at the teacher-guided reading station. At the other stations, the students interacted in other ways and completed other activities, including: a puzzle in which they matched pictures and words, a crossword puzzle with vocabulary from "at home," furniture vocabulary practice at the computer station, and reading at the individual reading station. In other words,

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with the exception of the reading station, most of the other activities were focused on vocabulary learning.

Teacher and instructional grouping

There was one teacher present during the entire class, which consisted of 21 students. The lesson began with a whole-class session led by the teacher and in this lesson lasted for 22 minutes. The teacher also made whole-class announcements while transitioning between stations and at the end of the lesson. These comprised a total of 25 minutes of the 68-minute lesson. The rest of the time was spent at the stations, approximately eight minutes at each station, with one- to three-minute transitions between stations. The groups at each station varied, with the smallest group comprising two students, and the other groups four or five students.

Major activity focus

Two-thirds of the lesson was reading-focused, while one-third was focused on other language. The “other language” focused time was a review of furniture vocabulary and a memory game played as a whole class.

Activity focus

At the teacher station, each student had been assigned a book during the previous English class. In most of the groups the students had different books, meaning that there was not a common book that the group was reading. When working with the books, each student initially stated the title of their book and then translated it into Norwegian. This was followed by each student reading one page of their assigned book. The teacher sometimes followed up the reading by asking literal comprehension questions and for word identification requests, or asking the students about their own experiences related to the theme of the story⁸⁹. This type of lower-level talk about the text occurred in

⁸⁹ These were coded as lower-level because they did not require the students to apply their knowledge to the understanding of the text. Rather the teacher asked students to recall their own experiences and interests. The purpose could have been to recall vocabulary connected to the theme. However, the students most often answered in

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all of the reading segments, while applying higher-level thinking skills to talk about the meaning of the text occurred only once. In the interaction shown below, a student questioned an aspect of the text using evaluative comprehension skills by applying personal experience, which contradicted the contents of the picture (excerpt 28, lines 7–18).

- 1 N: Grandmother and I went to they beach. I font lot of thing.
2 T: I found a lot of things. What does that mean?
3 N: *Jeg fant ting.* (I found things)
4 T: *Jeg fant masse ting.* (I found a lot of things.)
5 N: *Så jeg ikke sånn forrige gang* [pointing to the picture].
6 (Didn't I see those last time?)
7 T: *Jo, når du var på sjøskolen. Fant du noen kråkeboller?*
8 (Yes, when you were at the sea school. Did you find some sea
9 urchins?)
10 N: *Men er de ikke ned i vannet?* (But weren't they down in
11 the water?)
12 T: *Men noen ganger kommer dem opp på land fordi at måse*
13 *eller måke har vært ned å spise dem. Da har de med seg på*
14 *land. For dem måtte fiske dem opp.* (But sometimes they
15 come up on land because seagulls [dialect form] or seagulls
16 have been down eating them. Then they take them with up on
17 land. Because they need to fish them up.)
18 N: Oh ja.

(Excerpt 28 from transcription 1.2.11, School 4, grade 4)

Following the students' reading of the text, the teacher only asked some students if there were difficult words, but otherwise moved on to the next student. Since not all of the students had read the same book, there was less talk about the texts. The purpose of the teacher station in this class seemed to be to check homework and reading level and to assign new books, rather than guided reading of the texts (see section 5.4). The teacher did not correct all of the students' mistakes, but rather focused on ensuring that they had a basic

Norwegian, requiring the teacher to recast their answers in English in order for the vocabulary to be activated.

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understanding of what they had read, as manifested in the following two transcriptions:

- 1 D: I found lots of tings [things]. I found a shell, and a [...]
2 *dette var vanskelig.* (This was difficult.)
3 T: Ok. Once an animal
4 D: Leave in it.
5 T: What does that mean? Once an animal lived in it.
6 D: *Det er shellen.* (It is the shell.)
7 T: *Hva som har levd i den sjellen?* (What has lived in the
8 shell?)
9 D: *Snegle.* (Snail.)
10 T: *For eksempel. Eller kan det også være en kreps som bodde*
11 *inn i der? En liten kreps.* (For example. Or it can also be a
12 crab that lived in there? A little crab.)
13 D: And seaweed.
14 T: What's seaweed?
15 D: Seaweed.
16 T: *Det er tang.* (It is seaweed.)
17 D: *Tang?* (Seaweed?)
18 T: *Som er ekkelt å få på beina si når vi svømmer.* (What's
19 nasty to get on your legs when you swim.)

Further in the interaction, a second student continues reading.

- 20 A: We fund some wed and it was sigh bed [We found some
21 seaweed and it was on the seabed.]
22 T: You can just turn the page. Read two more. *Du kan blad*
23 *og lese to til.* (You can turn and read two more.)
24 A: *Der cro.* [dead crab]
25 T: What's that? A dead crab? *Hva er det for noe, A?* (What
26 is that, A?)
27 A: *Det er en krabbe som har død.* (It is a crab that has died.)
28 And it li..lived in a rock hole.
29 T: *Det betyr at den bodde blant masse steiner. Ser du*
30 *egentlig på bildet også.* Once it lived in a rock pool. (It
31 means that it lived among many rocks. You can see actually
32 see that in the picture as well.)

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(Excerpt 29 from transcription 1.2.11, School 4, grade 4)

The two excerpts exemplify the teacher's approach to reading interaction and language feedback to students while reading. In the first section of the excerpt the teacher used a combination of recasting of the student's incorrect pronunciation and a word identification question (lines 5 and 14). The teacher did not correct the pronunciation in line 1 and also chose not to correct the student's explanation in line 6, rather asking a follow-up question containing the correct information. In the second section, although the second student struggled more with pronouncing the words in the text (lines 20 and 24), the teacher chose not to comment on it or explicitly correct the pronunciation. The teacher recasted the words in line 25, directing the student's attention to the crab in the picture, and reminding him that pictures can support comprehension (lines 29–32).

Word knowledge was prominent throughout the lesson, featuring in 90% of the reading segments. The teacher asked the students what certain words from their reading texts meant, for example *desk*, *pen*, and *to draw*. The teacher expected the students to give the Norwegian equivalent of the word, rather than talk about the meanings of the words in English. Generally, any level of vocabulary work that is at a higher level than a one-to-one equivalent, whether it is talking about a set of words, how words relate, talking about context, similar words, or learning vocabulary rather than just identifying words, is considered vocabulary work. Vocabulary was the focus of the whole-class session at the beginning of the lesson, during which the teacher reviewed furniture words and the students played a memory game using flashcards on the board to review. Sometimes during reading, word meanings were talked about, rather than word identification, using a one-to-one English-Norwegian translation, as in the transcript below.

- 1 T: Very good. Once it was on the seabed. Seabed. Seabed.
- 2 *Vet du hva det betyr? Nei, det er ikke så lett å forstå. Så sea,*
- 3 *det betyr jo* (Very good. Once it was on the seabed. Seabed.
- 4 Seabed. Do you know what that means? No, that is not so
- 5 easy to understand. So sea, that means...)
- 6 N: *Å se.* (To see.)
- 7 T: *Nei, sea betyr sjø.* And bed. Bed, *det vet du.* (No, sea

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- 8 means 'sea'. And bed. Bed, you know.)
9 S2: *Seng. Sjøsens.* (Bed. Seabed.)
10 T: *Ja, sjøsens. Hva i all verden er en sjøsens?* (Yes, seabed.
11 What in the world is a seabed?)
12 S2: *Jeg vet ikke.* (I don't know.)
13 T: *Nei, det er nede på bunn. Sea bed. Det er ganske myk*
14 *nede på bunn, ikke sant?* Very good. (No, it is down on the
15 bottom. Sea bed. It is very soft down at the bottom, right?
16 Very good.)

(Excerpt 30 from transcription 1.2.11, School 4, grade 4)

In the transcription above, the teacher, together with the students, tried to use the two parts of the compound noun, *seabed*, both parts known to the students, to hypothesize the meaning of the whole word.

Explicit talk about comprehension strategies did not occur during this lesson. On two occasions, the teacher reminded the students to use the comprehension skills they had learned, namely, looking in the text for answers to questions and using the pictures for comprehension support.

Teacher interaction style/approach

The teacher's primary types of interaction with the students were telling, recitation, and listening to the students (in 14, 16, and 10 of the 16 segments, respectively). There was only one instance of scaffolding, where the teacher started humming the song *Jeg gikk en tur på stien* to support the students' comprehension of the word *cuckoo*. In this way the teacher used the students' prior knowledge to scaffold the connection to the new word. Otherwise the teacher supported the students' reading by recasting, elicitation, and occasionally through metalinguistic clues (see the above transcripts for examples).

Student response

The students at the teacher station were either taking turns reading or speaking and answering questions in turn. While the one student interacted with the teacher, the others listened. Because the students were not all reading the

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same book, they were not actively encouraged to talk about the other texts. In addition, none of the books were read in their entirety during the teacher station, and thus the students did not engage in many of the types of talk that the fifth-grade students did, such as prediction of future events and evaluation of the books (see section 8.5.4). At the reading and computer stations, students were generally focused on and engaged in the appropriate activities individually. There was more interaction between students at the other two stations, where it was more natural for them to discuss the puzzle and crossword vocabulary. The students may have been speaking in either language, but the activities were in English, meaning the language input they received, be it written or audio, was in English. The teacher had to ask the students to work more quietly a number of times at these stations.

Aims

The aim of the lesson was to use whole sentences while answering. This was communicated clearly by the teacher before work at the stations began and was also written on the board. It was thus visible throughout the lesson.

8.5.4 Grade 5 lesson observations

The fifth-grade observations were conducted in two classes (three in one class, one in the other). During three of the lessons, the focus was a project to be completed in groups over a few weeks, determined by the teacher and based on the students' reading level (homogenous groups). The focus of the teacher station was reading skills, including pronunciation, comprehension, and translation. The other stations focused on skills such as finding information through reading in books, encyclopedias, or the Internet, and through writing. Cross-curricular topics were used at the stations. During the observations in the second class, the cross-curricular topics used in the current project were: geography, social studies, English, drawing, and reading.

There were 75 five-minute segments during the four observed lessons (see Appendix 4D for a summary of the observation code frequencies).

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Teacher and instructional grouping

During the fifth-grade classes there was generally one teacher present. However, for one hour in the second class there was an assistant present who helped at the different stations and took over at the teacher station for the teacher when she had to talk to a student for a few minutes. The students were primarily organized into small groups (95% of the segments). Additionally, the teacher generally had the whole class together for an introduction and summary of the lesson, as well as for a few moments during transitions when she addressed the whole class (20% of the segments). Thus, the lesson followed a whole-part-whole structure (see also sections 4.6 and 5.5.2). The students sometimes worked individually or together in small groups at the different stations. However, they were always organized in groups of four or five at each station. The groups were determined by the teacher on the basis of relatively homogeneous reading levels. This meant that there were also differences in the quality of work produced by the different groups at the stations, with the exception of the teacher station, since the lower-ability groups were either less able to complete the independent work at the stations or could not work at the same level as the other students.

Major activity focus

Three-quarters of the segments were reading-focused, just under one-fifth writing-focused, while “other language” comprised 4%. The “other language” segments were concentrated in the beginning of the first lesson, when the focus was on learning how to use a dictionary.

Activity focus

This sub-section describes the contents of the teacher station and, in brief, the contents of the other stations.

Teacher station – teaching and interaction

At the teacher station, just over three-quarters of the reading-focused segments of the lesson were spent on reading connected texts. As this was carried out in small groups, the students would listen to one student at a time

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reading aloud. The teacher and students talked about the meaning of the text using both lower- and higher-level thinking skills (90% lower-level and 46% higher-level). Lower-level talk was generally recall of what the students had read and what could be seen in the pictures, namely, literal comprehension of the text.

During the guided reading sessions, the students generally read one to two and a half books. The students used different book levels and series based on the ability level of the groups. Three different series from two different publishers were used. The following presents the reading progression of the groups from one class. From the *Wings* series (see also section 5.2.3), the students read books at levels 9–11. The lowest-level group began at *Wings* level 9 and had progressed through level 10 to reach level 11. The middle-level groups read *Mary and Steven* books, while the most advanced group additionally read the level 1 Gullhoj *Bookworm* books. Most of the groups had also progressed through two levels, each group having begun at a progressively higher level (see Table 38). The *Wings* books (levels 9, 10, and 11) have considerably more pictures and larger letters/typeset than the *Mary and Steven* books, which have levels 1, 2, and 3. The groups in the other fifth-grade class used books at similar levels.

Table 38: Progression of reading levels among the reading groups

Groups	Progression of levels		
Group 1	<i>Wings</i> 9	<i>Wings</i> 10	<i>Wings</i> 11
Group 2	<i>Wings</i> 10	<i>Wings</i> 11	<i>Mary and Steven</i> 1
Group 3	<i>Mary and Steven</i> 1	<i>Mary and Steven</i> 2	
Group 4	<i>Mary and Steven</i> 2	<i>Mary and Steven</i> 3	
Group 5	<i>Mary and Steven</i> 2	<i>Mary and Steven</i> 3	Elementary 1.1 (<i>Bookworm</i>)

During the guided reading at the teacher station, reading awareness and the concept of print were developed through introducing the concepts of authors, main characters, and genres, and how to make predictions about the book based on the title and the cover. The teacher generally began by asking the students what the title of the book was, what a title was, who the author was, what an author was, who the main characters were, and how they knew this. This routine was repeated for each new book. For example, in one segment, the teacher asked:

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- 1 T: How come we know that Mary and Steven are the main
2 characters?
3 S: [points at the names in the title] *Der og der*. (There and
4 there.)
5 T: Yes. Because their names are in the title and it is a *Mary*
6 *and Steven* book.

(Excerpt 31 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

The teacher expected the students to explain their thinking related to the concepts of print and their answers related to the pictures and book content. Thus, the teacher verbalized in lines 5–6 what the learner had pointed to. In the following excerpt, she had asked the students what they saw in the picture on the cover of a book.

- 1 S: They're in the wood.
2 T: Yes, they might be in the woods. What makes you think
3 they are in the woods?
4 S: It's water, flowers, trees. Mary is picking some flowers
5 and Steven is jumping at the water.

(Excerpt 32 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

It is the teacher's follow-up question (lines 2–3), asking the students to explain their answer based on evidence in the text, or in this case the picture, which is unique among the teacher interactions at the four schools. The students took turns reading aloud one page at a time. The pages usually contained three to four sentences. The other students followed along in their books. One student first read in English followed immediately by the same student translating the text into Norwegian. The teacher gave different types of positive and corrective feedback to the students, both during the English reading and when translating into Norwegian (see excerpts 32, 36 and, 37). After the student had read and translated, the teacher often asked questions about the content, the picture, or encouraged the student to interpret, predict or state a preference or opinion related to the content.

The following excerpt exemplifies the teacher-student interaction while reading, but prior to translation or talk about the text, which will be shown in subsequent transcription excerpts.

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- 1 S: *Steven says: - The sheep are also in the field. There are*
2 *five sheeps.*
3 T: Mhm. Back up. There are
4 S: *Five sheeps.*
5 T: Mm.
6 S: *Sheep, 3 lambs, and a ram. Mary says: - Mum*
7 T: Mum or? Does it say mum?
8 S: *Mummy is spinning wool. Then she will knight.*
9 T: Knit.
10 S: *Knit some sweater*
11 T: Sweaters.
12 S: *Sweaters for us.*

(Excerpt 33 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

This excerpt was typical of the type of teacher corrective feedback that was given during the reading sessions. The teacher first highlighted the student's error made in line 2, repeating the student's utterance up to the point of the error (line 3), thus directing the student's attention to the error. In line 7, the teacher used metalinguistic clues, asking a question to guide the student to correct the error, which the student corrected in line 8. The teacher corrected the student's pronunciation from line 8, recasting with the correct pronunciation in line 9. The student demonstrated uptake with repair in line 10, but proceeded to make a final error, forgetting the plural *-s* ending on the word *sweater* (line 10).

Using higher-level comprehension skills when talking about the books was exhibited most commonly as prediction, evaluation and applying prior knowledge to situations in the book. The students were often asked to predict what they thought the book was about or make predictions about specific events in the book. For example, the teacher asked, "What do you think Mary has bought for her? What do you think is inside the gift? If you just have to guess." After the students had made their predictions, including *a wolf*, the teacher laughed and replied, "We can guess whatever we want." Thus, in this instance, the teacher did not require the students to justify their predictions based on information from the text or prior knowledge, but rather focused on student engagement with the text.

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The teacher also used creative comprehension questions, asking the students to place themselves in the character's position, such as, "How would you have felt?" or asked them critical reading questions in which they needed to evaluate a situation, for example, "What do you think about what she did? That she just jumped out of bed and just ran as fast as she could home? Do you think that was a smart solution?"

Comprehension skills were used during 40% of the reading segments, whereas comprehension strategies were presented to the students during nearly 15% of the segments. The teacher actively used pictures, both as a comprehension tool to support reading and to review words and content. During one reading session, she reminded the students of this comprehension strategy as follows: "Look at the pictures if you don't know what it is. Perhaps you might find it there." The following transcript shows how the teacher provided scaffolding as the students implemented this comprehension skill.

- 1 T: Since you see them, if you didn't read the text, what
- 2 would give it away that they are on their way to school?
- 3 What makes you think they are on their way to school if you
- 4 haven't read the text? [4 of the 5 students raise their hands]
- 5 S: They have bag.
- 6 T: Yes, backpacks.

(Excerpt 34 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

Once again, the phrasing of these questions required the students to use higher-level thinking skills by explaining their thinking. In another segment, when a student asked the meaning of the word *mud*, the teacher reminded the student to look at the picture to support comprehension.

Sometimes the teacher mentioned items in the pictures or asked students to explain what was in pictures, even if they understood the content without this additional support. However, she felt it was important to train them to use all the contextual clues, which sometimes led to interesting interactions.

- 1 T: What country do you think they are in?
- 2 S1: Country in the Australia.
- 3 T: You think they are in Australia. What about you?

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- 4 S2: Britain.
5 T: Britain. What makes you think they're in Britain?
6 S2: Hmm?
7 T: What makes you think they are in Britain and not
8 Australia?
9 S2: The flag.
10 T: Yes.
11 S1: It same the Australian one.
12 T: Not quite, honey. The Australian flag is a bit different. We
13 will have a look at that afterwards and look at the
14 difference.
(Excerpt 35 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

Although the intention was to identify in which country the setting of the book took place (i.e., in line 4), it also uncovered a misconception by one of the students, namely, that Australia and Britain had the same flag (line 11). By spending time encouraging the students to explain their thinking, the teacher gained greater insight into their knowledge and understanding.

Reading strategies, such as looking at pictures for contextual clues and guessing unknown words based on the context, were taught and practiced throughout the reading sessions. Other reading strategies, including looking in a dictionary, using an illustrated mind-map, and knowing where to look to find information about a book, were taught during one of the four lessons.

Word knowledge was exhibited as word identification and active vocabulary learning in 47% and 44% of the reading segments, respectively, and were thus central components in the teaching of reading. After the pre-reading questions, the teacher asked the students to look at the picture on the cover. They were to think of as many things as they could in English and then share them with the group. In one of the observed sessions, one student claimed to see some sheep.

- 1 T: Are they all big sheep?
2 S: Yes.
3 T: This is a big one. Is this a big one as well? What do we
4 call these small ones?
5 S: Cow.

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- 6 T: What?
7 S: Cow. *Vet ikke.* (I don't know.)
8 T: A cow?
9 S: *Nei.* (No.)
10 T: That's a big animal that goes moo.
11 S: Small.
12 T: Yes it's small, but what do we call them?
13 S: *På norsk er det i allefall lam.* (In Norwegian it is lamb,
14 anyway.)
15 T: Yes, and in English we add a 'b' to the word.
16 S: A lamby.
17 T: Not a 'y' at the end [students are waving their hands
18 wildly to have a chance to figure out what "lam" is in
19 English] – not a lamby but a, cut the 'y' sound.
20 S: Lam.
21 S2: Bamb.
22 T: Are you just guessing wildy? Not bambi.
23 S: Lamb.
24 T: Yes, a lamb. In Norwegian, I have to admit, I don't know
25 the English word for this one. In Norwegian that is a *vær og*
26 *en saue*, and *en lam*. *En vær, det er en gutte sau.* (In
27 Norwegian that is a ram and a cow, and a lamb. A ram, that
28 is a boy sheep.)
(Excerpt 36 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

When the students were talking about the book on farm animals, as in the above transcript, there were numerous animal names that were unknown to them, for example *fowl*, *mare*, and *stallion*. This made the book unnecessarily complicated for them, as these are low frequency words that would not be particularly useful or relevant for most students.

Generally, the teacher was precise in her vocabulary and wanted the students to focus both on correct vocabulary and on syntax when translating, as exemplified in the following transcribed interaction:

- S1 reads: *They are sitting at the table. Grandmother and grandfather have baked buns and made hot cocoa. –It tastes delicious, Mary says.*
(Excerpt 37 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

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The student struggled with the correct pronunciation of the word *cocoa*, saying “caco.” The teacher recasted the word, providing the correct pronunciation. The student then proceeded to translate the segment he had just read.

- 1 S: *De sitter i bordet.* (They sit in the table.)
- 2 T: *De sitter...*(They sit...)
- 3 S: *På bordet.* (On the table.)
- 4 T: Nah.
- 5 S: *Ved bordet.* (At the table.)
- 6 T: *Ja, ved bordet.* (Yes, at the table.)
- 7 S: *Bestefar* (Grandfather)
- 8 T: Mm..
- 9 S: *Bestemor og bestefar har baket boller.* (Grandmother and grandfather have baked* buns.)
- 10
- 11 T: *Bakt.* (Baked.)
- 12 S: *Bakt boller og det smaker deserlig.* (Baked buns and it tastes desertlig*.)
- 13
- 14 T: Remember we talked about delicious. Say it’s really good.
- 15 Mm...it’s delicious. Mm...it tastes really good.
- 16 S: *Smaker godt.* (Tastes good.)
- 17 T: *Mhm, eller smaker deilig.* (Mhm, or tastes delicious/lovely.)
- 18
- 19 S: *Det smaker deilig, sier Mary.* (It tastes delicious, says Mary.)
- 20
- 21 T: Very good, honey.

(Excerpt 38 from transcription 14.4.11, School 4, grade 5)

Overall, translation, and the required accuracy of the translation, comprised a large portion of the reading segments in Class 2. When comparing reading and translation times during one lesson, the students were observed always spending more time translating than reading (see Table 39 below). However, there was variation between the reading groups. Although the time spent talking about the text was longer than the translation time, it was primarily part of the pre- and post-reading discussions of the book, rather than after each individual page. The time spent talking between students’ reading ranged

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between four seconds at the one extreme and two minutes and twenty seconds at the other (average time 34 seconds).

Table 39: Average reading, translation, and talking times in reading groups at the teacher station

Group	Average reading time (in seconds)	Average translation time (in seconds)	Average time talking between readings (in seconds)
Group 1	15.1	37.1	66.2
Group 2	35.4	106.4	113.3
Group 3	30.7	40.9	85.7
Group 4	22.3	30.9	75.7

Teacher interaction style/approach

The two fifth-grade teachers both frequently used recitation and listening/watching during the four lessons. The first fifth-grade teacher, Lisa, gave students information, often related to classroom management, more frequently than the second fifth-grade teacher (100% versus 63%, respectively). Modeling was infrequently used, occurring in only two segments in each of the two lessons. The teachers modeled how they would approach the use of a particular comprehension strategy. Coaching occurred in 28% of the teaching segments, which was more frequent than at the other schools. For example, the teacher coached the students in the use of a comprehension skill and reminded them about appropriate reading behavior, including taking pauses and using intonation. Other types of scaffolding included giving students metalinguistic clues and using elicitation to support student reading.

The teacher primarily used recitation at the teacher station to initiate conversation about the texts. Although the teachers asked most of the questions, they provided scaffolding to the students, engaging them in active dialogue about the texts and guiding them in applying higher-level thinking skills. Additionally, the teachers kept the students highly engaged at the teacher station while they were not reading (i.e., they were expected to follow in their books as they listened to other students reading and to participate in subsequent talk about the text). During the reading there was very little true

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discussion of the text; students sometimes asked questions, but rarely initiated talk.

Self-regulation was encouraged and was a necessary prerequisite for the stations to be successful. The instructional density varied depending on the station. It was kept at a fairly high level at the teacher station where the teacher kept the group progressing through a book, while at the same time involving all of them. At the other stations, the amount of work accomplished varied.

The second fifth-grade teacher, Cecilie, was a very obvious classroom leader. Although the students expressed their opinions, it was ultimately Cecilie who was in charge and made the decisions about what happened, such as choosing the books the groups would read at the teacher station. Not all of the students were thrilled about the teacher's policy that repetition of books was a positive practice. When the assistant took over the teacher station, there was a clear difference in the interaction; there was limited discussion of the text or pictures, with the focus simply on reading and translation.

Cecilie's expectations were clear, especially for behavior and for routines at the teacher station. Students moved smoothly from one station to another, possibly because they were working on the same project at each station, just on different aspects of it. At other stations, the students appeared to know what they were supposed to do because the activities had been reviewed at the beginning of the class; the aims had been written on the board and the work to be done at each station had been specified. However, when the noise level was too excessive at other stations, the teacher immediately stopped all work and told the students there was too much noise, which was discourteous to her and those with whom she was working. On the one occasion she had to stop a second time, the disruptive group was given a five-minute timeout, during which they were not allowed to work and had to sit silently. Lisa's class took slightly longer on the transition between stations, the noise level in the classroom was a bit higher, and she had to stop more often to remind the students to be quiet. Since this was the first of the observed lessons, it is possible that the routines and expectations were not yet as well rehearsed with this class. However, there were also differences in classroom management

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style and the teacher's familiarity with the class, which may have affected the overall work dynamic in the classroom, especially at the other stations.

Student response

The students were generally very active; usually four of five students in a group actively participated. However, this entailed students taking turns to read aloud with the others listening, followed by group talk about the text. This combination of taking turns reading aloud and speaking and answering questions in turn occurred in 59% and 97% of reading segments, respectively. However, this comprised 72% of the guided reading lesson. In contrast, during the guided writing lesson the students did not read aloud. When they talked about the reading text or their written texts, the teacher always ensured that all of them were engaged and included. At this station during guided reading, all the students took turns reading and translating.

The students always read individually, never chorally, at the reading station. Neither did they listen to recordings or to the teacher reading aloud.

At the other stations the students generally worked well. Although they sometimes tried to distract each other, work was nevertheless being accomplished. The more proficient students wrote more, while others focused more on drawing than writing. Most of the discussion between the students was in Norwegian. In the final three lessons, when working on the writing project, the students seemed fairly adept at helping each other with finding information, and helping with vocabulary and spelling. They seemed familiar with using dictionaries to look up words. Many used them frequently when writing. Others wrote quickly, writing words phonetically, often resulting in numerous spelling mistakes.

The students seemed to like the books at the teacher station. They loved the teacher station and the attention and recognition they received there. Cecilie excelled at acknowledging all of the students for their efforts and successes, even though she had to make a number of corrections to their reading and translating. However, these corrections sometimes seemed pedantic or excessive, as Cecilie was extremely precise and worked towards promoting this same precision in her students.

Aims

The observed lessons began with an introduction of the lesson, including a review of the aims of the project. The purpose of the lesson was made explicitly clear at the beginning, both orally and in writing on the board. What was less clear was how much progress was expected during the one- and-a-half to two-hour sessions.

8.5.5 Topics and projects

In fifth grade, English was taught in intensive periods, focused on specific projects, such as English literature and planning a vacation. These periods of English usually lasted for four to five weeks, 10–15 hours per week.

The teaching unit immediately before the fifth-grade observations was about English literature. Its aim was for the students to become familiar with English literature and authors. An additional aim was for them to learn how to express their opinions about the different texts they heard or read, as well as to support their answers. The unit lasted five weeks, during which the students read fairytales in Norwegian and English. When they worked with the fairytales, Cecilie first read them to the students in Norwegian, and then discussed the text with them in Norwegian. After she had read the text aloud to them in English, the students read the English text silently. Cecilie pointed out that this progression, from Norwegian to English in plenary, then to English individually, helped the students to build on their prior knowledge of the content and vocabulary. Consequently, when they read the text in English, the students understood it to a much greater extent than they would have done without the Norwegian reading. Sometimes they created comic strips based on the story. They also visited the *Fortellerhuset* (Storytelling House)⁹⁰, where they heard fairytales in English.

⁹⁰ The *Fortellerhuset* is an organization in Norway that promotes listening and storytelling experiences for children. The aim is to promote the multicultural aspects of storytelling in Norway. For this reason they use multiple languages when telling stories (www.fortellerhuset.no, accessed 12.10.2013).

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Before they started a new unit, Cecilie always held an introduction with the entire class. In preparation for the unit on creating and planning a family trip to an English-speaking country, the class had worked on looking up information in an atlas and dictionary. They had also learned about making a budget in mathematics. Additionally, the whole class brainstormed about English-speaking countries. The aims of the project were to:

1. Use digital tools to find information and as a resource for creating texts. Tell about some people, places and significant events from English-speaking countries.
2. Plan and present trips to Europe and other travel destinations by using digital tools.

The students worked in groups of five and were required to decide which country they would travel to, create the characters in their family, write about the family's background, and create a budget for the trip. The group planned the rest of the trip and divided the individual tasks among themselves. The final product was a book: 10–15 pages of text written in English related to the country to which they were traveling and to their trip. In addition, they included maps, flags, pictures and drawings, as well as a budget for the trip.

The books the students made were evaluated progressively during guided writing in the groups at the teacher station. The focus of these sessions included syntax, sentence structure, grammar, and spelling. Additionally, after completion the books were presented to the class. They were evaluated by their classmates based on content and illustrations, and the articulation and eye contact made with the audience during the presentation in the form of “two stars and one wish” (two things that they did well and one thing they could have improved). The classmates were also allowed to ask questions about the books. Finally, the teacher evaluated the books and the oral presentations based on the criteria listed above.

8.5.6 Comparing the fourth- and fifth-grade approaches

The teacher station functioned in one of two ways: either the students in the group all read a common book aloud (fifth-grade approach) or the students each read a different graded reader aloud for the group (fourth-grade

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approach). When a common book was used, more time was spent focusing on reading awareness and strategies.

Furthermore, there were differences between the teachers in the use and focus of translation during reading at the teacher station. The fourth-grade teacher used translation as a support for word identification, generally asking students the meaning of individual words or phrases. This was interpreted by the students as the teacher asking them to translate or give the Norwegian equivalent. Similarly, the first fifth-grade teacher, Lisa, generally had students translate words or explain the meaning of certain parts of the text. The teacher only corrected the translation when it was incorrect, rather than improve syntactic or grammatical accuracy of the Norwegian or choice of vocabulary. For the second fifth-grade teacher, each student was required to translate what he or she read. Accuracy of translation was emphasized in Cecilie's class, whereas for the other two teachers, not all students translated, nor was the whole text translated.

8.5.7 School 4 teacher interviews

Lise interview

Lise was a new teacher to the school and had few years of teaching experience. She had not studied how to teach English, but had qualifications in teaching other foreign languages. The fact that Lise was an inexperienced teacher and lacked English teaching experience was mentioned at various points of the interview. For example, she said, "I notice that since I have not studied English, the terms one uses to talk about English grammar, those I have in German, I do not have in English."

Reading approach

Lise began at the school in August 2010. In the fall of 2010, she went on a study trip to Melbourne, Australia, in Victoria State, where the schools are mandated to use the Early Years Literacy Program (see section 5.5). During her visit, she was impressed with how aware the students were of what they were doing and why they were doing it, as well as the activities, learning

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strategies, and working methods employed. She felt that all of the elements were well integrated into the EYLP approach.

In the lower grades using the original EYLP model organization, the opportunity for the teacher “to see” each of the students, and interact directly with each one during a teaching session, was one of the strengths of the program. She felt the program was very systematic, but could be somewhat childish for the older students, such as the use of clapping to signal the time to rotate between stations every 15 minutes. She felt the 15-minute stations were too short to get anything done. Thus, she felt there was a need to develop a new approach that could work for grades 5 to 7, which they have called “middle years.” However, in this new approach created by her school, in which they used 30 instead of 15-minute stations, the teacher was no longer able to interact with each student during each *Tidlig Innsats/* Early Years (TIEY) session (usually lasting 1.5 hours). In other words, the students would not visit each station during each session. However, when she had the students at the teacher’s station, she felt the close interaction was very positive.

Another positive aspect of the EYLP approach was that it gave the students more responsibility. However, she also mentioned that she had little control over what they did at the other stations. The students were not used to working in groups from previous years (at least not to the extent they were expected to work with the stations), which could be challenging for them.

Teaching

Lise felt the students enjoyed the guided reading station. They had a chance to practice pronunciation, to speak with engagement, and to pause at appropriate places. They also focused on learning strategies, such as when they were working on guided writing. She noticed that the students at the individual reading station often tried to follow what was happening at the teacher station. The stations were supplemented with whole-class time, working on topics such as grammar.

Generally, the two fifth-grade teachers collaborated on designing and organizing the EYLP projects. However, their cooperation did not always

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extend to the planning of the details of the lesson, such as the activities at the individual stations, but to the overall themes, such as planning a trip to an English-speaking country.

Lise wished she had more time to develop a wider range of materials and create more explicit instructions for the different stations. For example, during one of the observation days, she had wanted to create a sheet with instructions on how to look up a word in the dictionary. She felt it was difficult to create good tasks and activities that were differentiated and appropriate for all of the students at the other stations.

Lise found it difficult to find appropriate homework that fitted with the EYLP approach, given their current system. Their current homework included workbook exercises, vocabulary, and reading from the *Stairs* textbook. If the students could have taken the graded readers home to read, she thought it would have worked better. She thought they would attempt it in the future after they had put in place a book-borrowing accountability system.

Materials

Lise used the Internet to find texts, typically lists (e.g., typical American and British names that the students could use when writing stories), and other lists (e.g., maps marked with English-speaking countries). Additionally, they used computers to find information on other countries, such as what sports they played in a particular country.

Lise felt it was difficult to find the right level of books that suited both the students' ability levels and their interests. She considered many of the graded readers to be childish. Although there were many books, she generally felt they were not sufficiently challenging. For example, some of the students knew all of the words in the book they were reading. However, she was not yet familiar with all of the books.

Lise used self-assessment with the students to review how well they had worked at the different stations. Generally, this involved circling a smiling face appropriate to their work effort for the day. They also needed to explain their choice. She felt this had helped keep the students' behavior in line when working at the other stations.

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Differentiation

Lise believed that level differentiation was an advantage of the EYLP program, especially for the high achievers in the class.

The program works well for differentiation if the teacher has the opportunity. If there are available resources that make it easy to do, then it is good. It is not necessary to do it all the time, but as it is in the Australia, they have the program “under their skin.” They train all the [language] skills and work with learning strategies. (Lise, interview, 7.12.10)

When asked if she felt she had the resources she needed, Lise responded: “They are probably there, but as a new teacher, I do not know them as well.”

Reading assessment

Lise had used the national test score results to create the groups used at the time of the observations. However, compared to Norwegian class, she felt they did not have the same consistent assessment of reading ability. She primarily used observation while the students were reading to identify where they were struggling, for example, with pronunciation. Additionally, she asked the students if they felt the book was difficult. However, she felt that there was still great variation within the groups, thus making it difficult to find a book that suited all of the students in each group. As they had not yet had many sessions of guided reading in English, she felt they were just beginning to focus on reading strategies, such as looking at pictures to understand the context and talking about the characters. However, she thought they had made progress and reported using less time reading each book currently than in the beginning of the year.

National test

Lise felt that the students did very well on the national test, averaging 2.2⁹¹, and that they were a strong group overall; 12 of the 26 students scored at level

⁹¹ The average for the Oslo municipality was 2.2 in 2010, while the national average was 2.0 (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2012).

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3. She felt that it would have been more useful to have both the student scores and which types of questions they struggled with.

She thought it could be useful to use some of the introductory lessons with the whole class to review some of the areas with which the students struggled. These were lessons at the beginning of a new project unit in which stations were not used. She reflected that she was unsure if it was best to work on projects as they had done, or to have individual class hours where they focused on grammar, reading, and writing separately.

European Language Portfolio

Lise was familiar with the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*, and had used it occasionally. However, she was uncertain as to how useful it was for monitoring students' reading development. She was most familiar with it from her university German studies. She had especially used the first section of the portfolio, the language biography, since many of her students were multilingual. She wanted to focus on valuing all languages, that "all languages are good," and the positive aspects of multilingualism. She felt it was difficult to follow up this focus in her teaching. She was less motivated to include the portfolio in lessons, partially due to practical limitations. She felt the portfolio had lost much of its aesthetic quality as the pages were black and white copies. She did not have "proper binders" in which the students could place the copies or the colorful section dividers created for the *ELP*, and the pages were not made so that they could color them. She commented, "It all became grey. It was not attractive."

Cecilie interview

Cecilie, the second fifth-grade teacher, had more teaching experience and also more experience with the EYLP program than Lise.

Teaching

Cecilie enjoyed working with small groups using the EYLP method and felt that the students were also very pleased with it. The majority of the students reported that their favorite station was the teacher station, which she believed

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was due to the increased teacher-student contact possible when the students did not have to share the teacher's attention with the whole class, but only with four other students.

Cecilie also mentioned the increased enthusiasm and engagement displayed by the students at the teacher station, as they were not able to "disconnect" because the teacher would notice it and draw them back in. Since everyone had to read, and the teacher was able to draw everyone into the conversation, there was a greater degree of participation during the lesson, and much more active learning. The students seemed much happier now, which she attributed to them feeling that they had a greater learning outcome now than before beginning using the EYLP approach.

With specific reference to foreign language reading instruction, Cecilie mentioned that she had more focus on the pre-, during-, and post-reading phases after implementing the EYLP, and its use of guided reading, than previously. Additionally, she could explain terms progressively during the reading session. She usually had a laptop computer at the teacher station so that she could show pictures when necessary in order to provide visual cues for reading and vocabulary comprehension.

During her prior English reading instruction, Cecilie did not have textbooks available for the first to third grades. Neither did the school have the graded readers at that point. Instead they used numerous handouts copied from various sources, for example, fairytales and other stories. There were also numerous practical activities. They had more "pure" English hours than they had at the time of the observations, but they also tried to include English in other subjects. For example, when they were working with Norwegian grammar, they would draw parallels to English grammar. Even though there were a set number of hours, she said she would not follow them exactly, but would rather combine the hours from multiple weeks so that they could focus more on English for a specific period. Consequently, she had not noticed much difference in the way she planned her English lessons following the policy change in 2008 of increasing the number of hours of English per week.

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Differentiation and reading levels

Cecilie, like the other case study teachers, described her class as one with many different ability levels, including some very able students and some less able. Some students read English books in their spare time at home, others read comics at home, and some were sufficiently challenged by simply reading books in class. She differentiated the quantity and level of reading they were expected to do at home, as well as how many words they were expected to learn. She suggested that the high demand for differentiation required the teacher to become creative. Moreover, she emphasized how “ingenious” the EYLP program was for differentiation; one was able to work intensively with the specific needs of each group at any given time. These needs varied over time, and she indicated that the groups were not static. The groups also varied across subjects, with some students stronger in some subjects than others. For example, if a student were more capable in Norwegian, that student would be placed in a different group for a Norwegian-focused project than for an English-focused one. Since she had taught this class for three years, she felt that she knew whom she could “push” and when she could challenge them more.

Cecilie felt that one advantage of the EYLP program was an increased ability to differentiate for students’ reading level. One of the ways she could differentiate was by having complete focus on the small group at the teacher station and working with the specific needs of the students in that group. She explained:

The advantage is that one has better contact with the students. It is easier to follow up with them. One is more secure in one’s ability to differentiate instruction to a greater degree. I feel that the students have a better outcome of the sessions than when they have instruction in full classes because then you have full focus on the group and you can work with exactly what that specific group needs to work on.

For these reasons, she felt confident in her ability to differentiate teaching to a greater degree.

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Materials

As for reading materials, although there was a fair supply of graded readers in her classroom, it was nevertheless insufficient to meet the needs of the lowest and highest performing students. However, she was able to borrow books from other grades. Prior to purchasing the materials, she and the other teachers had met with the administration to discuss the needs of the students in grades 5 to 7. When evaluating the materials, criteria included the type size, the length of the text, and illustrations and pictures. She mentioned specifically the need for more picture support for lower-level readers. The lowest-level books had two to three sentences and a picture per page and rather large print, whereas the books for the highest-level readers in her class had text on each page and few pictures.

Cecilie claimed to be very conscious of how she used the various levels with the different learner groups. She continually evaluated whether the students would read all of the books at a particular level before moving to the next level. If she noticed that the students were progressing, she did not feel it was necessary to hold them back. Likewise, if she noticed a “regression”, or considered that they needed more support, they returned to a lower level. She explained:

It is possible to try [the next level]. One must press them and challenge them. They think it is very fun to try new books. They are very happy about it, and then they give a lot more as well. It is easier to motivate the students in a TIEY session when you discuss a text, and I think they feel safer reading aloud in this setting. But this is something I have worked a lot with them on since second grade, [that is] performing, reading aloud and such for each other.

Thus, the teacher makes a general evaluation of the students’ reading level based on reading ability, when reading the text aloud, and comprehension, as represented in the students’ ability to translate the text and discuss the content at the teacher station.

When asked about combining the textbook and EYLP, Cecilie said it worked well because *Stairs* was level-differentiated, so the texts could be used as guided reading texts. However, this was not done during any of the observed

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lessons. Additionally, the workbook activities, which they used for homework occasionally, were level-differentiated. However, she quickly added that she was very glad that they had the graded readers because, through them, she was able to differentiate to a much greater extent. She specifically mentioned the greater number of pictures and the comprehension support provided by the illustrations in the graded readers.

Guided reading

Although the guided reading sessions sometimes had different foci, they always began in the same way by reviewing the book's title, the author, what an author was, and talking about the picture on the cover before opening the book and predicting its content. Additionally, the focus was sometimes more on searching within the text, for example, "Can you find the word *mommy*?" or "Can you find the word *help*?" At other times Cecilie focused on different sentence structures and composition, but only for the higher-level groups.

Translation was also a regular feature of the guided reading at the teacher station. As she explained, "If you read it, you're going to translate it." The students seemed to enjoy translating, recounting that when she once skipped over the activity, a student interrupted saying "but I haven't translated." Translation was part of their reading routine; it was used to increase reading comprehension, increase vocabulary, and help develop fluency. She felt that if they translated, she could hear to a greater degree whether the students had understood the differences in sentence structure between Norwegian and English. She explained that it was important for them to learn that direct one-to-one translation from Norwegian to English was not possible. Moreover, as translation was something she believed they would be doing more of as they got older, they should build a routine that "reading in English and translating go hand in hand." She believed she could help them to establish this skill in a safe setting while they were young.

Reading assessment

In the interview, Cecilie explained how she assessed students' reading development. She listened to each of her students read every week. She tried to challenge them by having them translate and talk about the text. How much

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English was used depended on the group and how much English they used in response. Based on the students' pronunciation, it was possible to determine how many of the word forms (*ordbildene*) they recognized. When they were reading and translating, she was also able to assess their reading ability. She further mentioned evaluating the students' ability to self-correct by noticing if they were sounding out the words.

Cecilie felt the students had become better readers, with better comprehension and recognition of word forms. They were also more confident when reading. Additionally, the students demonstrated improved pronunciation and reading fluency.

National test

The national test went very well for the students at the school, with a class average higher than that of the Oslo average. There were many students scoring at level 3. She felt the national test results were a useful assessment measure because she used them to help create groups for TIEY. She also used the test results to choose homework and appropriate adaptations for class instruction in order to meet the different students' needs. However, she had a significant advantage in that she knew her students well, as she had been their main teacher for all subjects for four years. She used the results as an indication of ability, although she knew that some of the students were capable of more than they were able to show in the test. She suggested this could be due to stress or uncertainty surrounding the test or its circumstances. Thus, she thought she had a great advantage in that she did not have to blindly trust the results of the test in the way a teacher with a new group of students may need to do.

8.5.8 School 4 student interviews

In School 4, eight fourth-grade and eight fifth-grade students were interviewed about their perceptions of English, the graded readers, the EYLP, and the stations which were an integral feature of it. Generally, all of the fourth- and fifth-grade students had positive impressions of English. Most said it was "fun" or "cool" to learn. One fifth-grade student said, "I learn a bit of English, to read. I understand words when I read. I can speak to others who

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do not know Norwegian in English.” Other comments by students included: “Fun. I understand everything. I manage,” and “Cool language.” Another student commented about the status of English as a world language, “It is best because you can use it all over the world.” In contrast, some students expressed more mixed impressions, the first commenting that he did not enjoy speaking, but that it was fun to read. Another commented that “English pronunciation can be difficult.”

A few of the students mentioned being able to speak in English to non-Norwegian speakers, thus using English in oral communication. However, more students emphasized reading and writing when reflecting on what they enjoyed the most in English.

When asked about working in stations, none of the students had negative comments, generally describing it as “cool,” “fun” or “okay.” The students provided more insightful answers about working at the different stations. One boy said that it was fun to work in stations, but that it was also demanding. He said: “You had to learn new words, which meant looking up many words in the dictionary when writing.” Another boy responded, “if one was smart, one used the computer to avoid having to look up so many words,” to which the first boy responded that that strategy was unfair. However, he added that one could learn additional new words by looking up a word in the dictionary. Another fourth-grade student remarked that the stations which were “good” depended on which of the group members worked well. This was the only student who commented on the group aspect of the stations.

There was disagreement about which were their favorite stations. In fifth grade, one student liked all of the stations, two the individual reading station, and two the teacher station, whereas a number of boys preferred the art station because they could draw there. The fourth-grade students were also split in their preferences: two liked writing, two drawing, two computers, and one the teacher station. However, the real disagreement among the fifth-grade students was about which stations were disliked. Some said the computer station was their least favorite, while for others it was the most popular. One girl mentioned that the writing station could be difficult at times without support from the teacher. Two students singled out the individual reading station as their least favorite because at that station they read mostly in

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Norwegian⁹². The five boys in the group interview agreed that they enjoyed the teacher station. In contrast, the fourth-grade students primarily disliked the writing station, some commenting that it was too difficult. One student said they disliked the reading station, whereas the others did not dislike any particular station.

The fifth-grade students generally felt that the graded readers were good, five of the seven using positive adjectives such as “cool,” “interesting,” and “exciting” about them. One referred to the books as “okay,” whereas one called them “boring.” There were also similar responses among the fourth-grade students (six positive, two boring). One mentioned that you could learn many words from the books. Another boy remarked that he thought they were of an appropriate length in relation to the duration of time they would be working on the text. Another mentioned that they “learned more English that way” [by reading the graded readers]. One boy said he thought it was fun to read *Goldilocks* in English because they had previously read it in Norwegian, which made it easier to follow as the content was already familiar. However, another boy wanted to read books “where one understands something and learns something, not childish books,” with which a second boy agreed. Another boy responded that “you do learn something” [from the books], giving the example that prior to reading the story he did not know what “Goldilocks” meant. When asked if they felt the books were at an appropriate level, three of the fifth-grade students said they were “okay,” one that they were “difficult,” one “easy,” and two that they were “childish.” Similarly, the fourth-grade student responses were: four “appropriate,” three “easy,” and one “hard.” Additionally, those who found the books easy expressed a desire for longer books.

⁹² This was also noted during the observations. It would have been interesting to ask the students if they would have preferred to read in English at the individual reading station. Students read in Norwegian at the individual reading station because the English graded readers were being used at the teacher station for guided reading. There were no additional books available for students in the fifth-grade classes. However, there were in fourth-grade class. It was the intention to have English books in the fifth-grade class in the future.

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The fourth-grade students had various favorite activities, including writing, reading, “playing with English,” and talking in English. Furthermore, there was variation in the students’ perceptions of tasks and worksheets, one mentioning that more time was needed to work on them because they were difficult, while another would like more difficult tasks. One student expressed a preference for less reading, and would rather do more “English things,” yet did not specify what those were. It may have been a reference to the lack of communicative-focused activities at the stations.

Both the fourth- and fifth-grade students seemed aware of the usefulness of English for traveling and speaking to people in other countries. One fifth-grade boy said, “I like English because most likely I will travel to, for example, Spain and I can’t speak Spanish, so I need to use English.” A fourth-grade boy commented, “You can use it where you want. Not many people know Norwegian, but many know English.” In a group interview with the fifth-grade students, another boy pointed out, “One can use English over almost the whole world.” He was contradicted by another boy, “One can use it in all countries.” An argument occurred over whose statements were accurate. Finally, a third boy summarized, “If you can speak two languages, Norwegian and English, then it is good to speak English instead of French or such since there are most people who use English.” The first boy added, “This is followed by French.” This exchange indicated that the students were aware of the role of English as a world language and its importance for them both in Norway and abroad. They were also aware of the fact that there were other world languages, such as French.⁹³

8.6 Summary

In the case study reported in this chapter, three reading approaches were used to categorize EFL reading instruction in Norwegian primary schools. These were broad categories, related primarily to the types of materials used for reading instruction: a textbook-based approach, a combination of textbook-based and graded readers approach (two schools), and the EYLP approach. As

⁹³ It was interesting to notice the change from previous generations in Norway, where the most common third language would have been German.

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cases, these schools provide insight into how these approaches can be implemented.

Classroom observations and teacher and student interviews were conducted in fourth- and fifth grades at each school. The case study observations focused on reading materials, their use, reading practices, instructional grouping, reading activities, teacher interaction style, student response, and learning aims. The teacher interviews addressed the teachers' perspectives on their chosen reading approach, teaching, materials, differentiation, aims, and reading assessment. Additionally, teachers were asked about topics specific to their particular reading approach, such as the use of guided reading. Finally, some students at each school were interviewed about their impressions of the reading approach used at their school. These findings will be discussed in Chapter 9. Additionally, the reading approaches will be compared in Section 9.7.

9 Discussion

9.1 Introduction

The overarching research question addresses how reading is taught in Norwegian fourth- and fifth grade EFL classes. The teaching of reading has been addressed through the following four sub-research questions.

5. What materials, activities, and instructional practices do grade 4 and 5 teachers use to teach English reading?
6. To what extent do the reading approaches enable differentiation in reading instruction?
7. What differences are there in the reading interaction between teachers and students in the different reading approaches?
8. What are teachers' perceptions of their English reading instruction and best practice?

Where appropriate, the overall and sub-research questions will be answered for the four different reading approaches addressed in this study: a textbook-based approach, a combination of textbook-based and graded readers approach, an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers, and the EYLP approach. These four reading approaches were used as the basis for the categorization in the questionnaire (see Chapter 7). In the questionnaire analysis, due to small numbers of EYLP approach and extensive reading based on the use of graded reader approach schools, these two approaches were merged.

Despite the small numbers of schools using the two previously mentioned approaches, it was assumed that schools from all four approaches would be represented in the case study. However, when identifying case study schools, it was not possible to find an appropriate representative school for the extensive reading based on the use of graded reader approach. Therefore, the researcher chose to include only schools from the other three approaches in the case study. During the questionnaire analysis, the researcher discovered that there was large variation in the practices of the teachers who reported using a combination approach. The researcher was aware of this possibility, since this was the broadest of the categories. Thus, the researcher opted to select two schools from the combination approach category, each

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implementing the approach in different ways. Thus, four schools representing three approaches were selected for the case study.

Although the term “reading approach” has been used in this research, the researcher understands that a textbook-based approach and the EYLP approach especially are not just approaches to reading, but rather are more comprehensive programs that include materials and practices aimed at other language skills (i.e., they are programs that address EFL teaching generally, not limited to reading). However, the focus of this research is reading instruction. This meant that when studying these approaches, the researcher focused on teacher and students’ interaction related to a text or reading materials in the case study schools. For example, although the EYLP program includes multiple stations where the focus is on other language skills (e.g., writing, speaking, and listening skills⁹⁴), the researcher focused on the teacher station, where guided reading was used, and the independent reading station.

Studying the teaching of reading through different reading approaches has provided a certain structure to categorize different material use, practices, grouping arrangements, and types of interaction and differentiation. Each approach incorporates to a greater or lesser extent the elements addressed in each sub-research question. The overarching research question (How is reading taught in Norwegian fourth- and fifth-grade EFL classes?) is returned to in the comparison and discussion of the three approaches to teaching reading used in the case study research (section 9.7).

This chapter first discusses the main findings from the questionnaire and case study related to the sub-research questions (sections 9.2–9.5). There will be inevitable overlapping in the discussion of the four sub-research questions as they are interrelated to a certain degree. For example, sub-research question 4 addresses teachers’ perceptions and perspectives on the topics discussed in sub-research questions 1–3. Section 9.6 addresses student perspectives on the reading approaches used at the case study schools. Section 9.7 discusses the different reading approaches and recommendations for their uses. This is followed in section 9.8 by implications of the research for the teaching of EFL

⁹⁴ The speaking and listening skills are not always at stations specific to those skills, but incorporated into the activities that require group interaction.

reading and research. Finally, section 9.9 discusses the limitations of the current research.

9.2 Sub-research question 1: What materials, activities, and instructional practices do grade 4 and 5 teachers use to teach English reading?

9.2.1 Materials

In this research, a reading approach has been defined as the core materials used by teachers, their practices related to the development of reading ability, and the practice of reading-related activities. Thus, one of the focuses of the research is the reading materials used in EFL primary school classrooms in Norway. The questionnaire revealed that the textbook was the most commonly used text source, confirming the researcher's expectations, and supporting previous research that has shown that textbooks have a very strong position in Norwegian schools in general (Kverndokken, 2013; Skjelbred & Aamotsbakken, 2010), in EFL in Norwegian schools (Drew, 2004; Drew et al., 2007), and within language teaching generally (Appel, 2012; Kverndokken, 2013). The findings also showed a general tendency for teachers to use the same reading approach in English as they did in Norwegian.

Despite the fact that there were (and are) many types of texts available from a variety of sources, these were infrequently used. Children's books were used by 20% of the teachers at least once or twice per month. Their use was infrequent, and they were only used by a minority of teachers. Internet texts were used at least occasionally by almost half of the teachers. This suggests that schools in general may have easier access to Internet texts than other kinds of materials. In fact, almost half of the teachers reported that lack of materials influenced their teaching choices. This is not surprising considering the finding of the textbook's predominance. This could be the result of a cyclical problem; one possibility is that teachers primarily use the textbook, and therefore do not purchase other reading materials. However, another possibility is that teachers do not use other materials because they are not readily available. Regrettably, the teachers in the questionnaire were not asked

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to evaluate their chosen materials or explain how the lack of materials influenced their choices, including what other materials they would have liked to use or how they would have used them differently.

Since textbook-based teaching has been the tradition in Norway for many decades, it is also likely that this is the style of teaching that many of the teachers experienced themselves as young learners in school. Research has shown that the way teachers were taught themselves has a strong influence on their teaching⁹⁵ (Borg, 2006). Finally, the actual materials available in Norwegian and English most likely influence the reading approach used⁹⁶. Teachers may not be willing to spend the time or money to seek out new materials or they simply may not be aware of the opportunities to adapt their current materials to better fit the reading levels and interests of their students.

Availability of materials

The quantity of reading texts available in the classrooms and at the schools was addressed in both the questionnaire and the case study schools. The questionnaire found that a large number of schools and classrooms did not have English texts other than the textbook available: almost half had none in the classroom and one-fifth had none in the school library. However, the questionnaire showed that the number of books in the schools was not significantly related to the reading approach. This result was unexpected because it was thought that the schools using a combination, EYLP, or graded reader approach would have more books due to the focus on using reading materials other than the textbook. Using materials other than the textbook is inherent in these approaches.

In contrast, in the case study there were considerable differences between the approaches in the number of books available in the schools. The textbook-based approach school and one of the combination approach schools (S2) had limited English books available at the schools. In contrast, the EYLP approach school (S4) and one of the combination approach schools (S3) had

⁹⁵ However, the teachers were not asked about their language learning backgrounds.

⁹⁶ Since data was not collected on Norwegian reading materials available, it was not possible to compare to English reading materials.

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an extensive collection of graded readers and some children's literature. The combination approach school (S3) and the EYLP approach school had invested in a large supply of graded readers and some other children's literature. Although the other combination approach school (S2) had limited books, the teachers at this school supplemented their materials with their own books and books from the city library. This suggests that when teachers feel that it is important to include reading materials other than the textbook in their teaching, it is possible for them to choose an approach incorporating the use of supplementary materials, even when the school administration has not made them available. Although the researcher feels this is admirable, it is regrettable that teachers should be put in this position.

Another interesting finding from the case study was that, although there were some English books available at the textbook-based approach school, the teacher chose to focus on the textbook rather than using the other books. This suggests that the fact that books are available does not necessarily mean that teachers are aware of them, will use them, or have knowledge of how to incorporate them into their teaching. Moreover, for teachers who have too few appropriate-leveled books available, it may be the easiest option simply to base their teaching on the textbook, especially if the teacher believes that the textbook materials are of good quality, which was the case for the teacher at the textbook-based approach school.

However, graded readers also provide an extensive supply of texts geared towards developing readers and language learners (Day & Bamford, 1998). Due to the great variety of graded readers available, students can, if given the chance, not only read at their appropriate level, but also read books matching their interests. Additionally, by reading graded readers students can read whole texts, whereas textbooks often only include excerpts from texts. Reading whole texts can support comprehension and bring meaning to the text (Chew, 1985; Morrow & Asbury, 2003), which can also increase motivation for reading (Krashen, 2004).

Selection criteria for reading materials

When explaining the criteria used for selecting texts, the teachers reported in the questionnaire that students' reading level, the fact that the texts came from

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the textbook, and that the texts related to the curriculum were the most common criteria for selection. Students' interests was a less common criterion for the selection of texts. Given the importance of motivation in reading development (Grabe, 2009; Guthrie, Wigfield, & Perencevich, 2004), this finding was somewhat surprising. If teachers incorporate texts that meet students' interests into teaching more often, or allow them to select texts, reluctant readers especially may show more interest in reading. Giving students choice in their reading texts has been shown to increase reading motivation and increase the overall amount of student reading (Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Krashen, 1988, 1993).

Even though the majority of teachers responding to the questionnaire at least somewhat agreed that it was important for students to choose which texts they would like to read, few actually gave students this opportunity. This point will be further addressed in the discussion of differentiation (section 9.3.1).

Many of the teachers' answers in the questionnaire aligned with the reasons for basing teaching on a textbook given by the teacher in the textbook-based approach school. This teacher mentioned that lack of time to work outside of the textbook was a factor in her decision to use primarily the textbook, and consequently the lack of independent reading time given for her students. Lack of time was also a consideration mentioned in Mellegård and Pettersen's (2012) focus group interviews and Olsen's (1997) survey with Norwegian EFL teachers. Borg (2003) suggests that teachers faced with contextual challenges (e.g., time, resources, and curriculum mandates) may be reluctant to experiment with new teaching methods.

In addition to lack of time, the textbook-based approach teacher also mentioned positive reasons for her choice of reading materials. This teacher's positive view of the textbook series, including that it was systematic and of good quality and level, influenced her decision to use it as her primary source of reading materials. This suggests that teachers may be partly influenced by practical considerations and partly by a belief in the efficiency and quality of the textbook.

The textbook series used in the case study schools (i.e., the textbook-based approach school and the two combination approach schools) contained a large

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quantity of texts⁹⁷. This would constitute a positive trait, assuming there is variation in both text genre, interest, and difficulty level. However, since many teachers had expressed a concern about lack of time, and that there are only two lessons of EFL teaching per week during most of primary school, too many texts could pose a problem for teachers focused on completing all texts in the textbook.

However, an important point for consideration is that the curriculum does not specify texts to be used, but rather skills to be learned. This is an important distinction because it has been argued that what is included in traditional teacher materials is often what is considered “legitimate” knowledge (Nunan, 1991), and that these materials structure classroom time to a greater extent than previously (Littlejohn, 1998). In other words, texts that are included in the textbook may be viewed as inherently good simply because of their inclusion in the textbook. Thus, it may be challenging for some teachers to think more critically about the connection between textbook texts and the learning aims in the curriculum (cf. Drew, 2009a; Loewenberg-Ball & Feimen-Nemser, 1988). In other words, they might accept the authority of the textbook, and not question whether the textbook texts are appropriate or the best option for achieving particular learning aims. One could argue that teachers should be more aware of the need to be selective about the texts they could use in their teaching and that they should be aware that they do not have to work with every text simply because, for example, it is in a textbook. Teachers are responsible for selecting the texts they feel will best support their students’ development of skills, whether they come from the textbook or another source.

In contrast to a pure textbook-based approach, the teachers in the combination and EYLP approach case study schools mentioned that they felt that choosing

⁹⁷ These same textbooks were presumably also used at the schools of most of questionnaire respondents since these two textbooks represented the vast majority of textbook sales for EFL in Norwegian primary schools at the time of the data collection. As new textbook series and newer versions of *Stairs 4* and *Stairs 5* have since been published, current use in schools is unknown. Also, in the questionnaire teachers were not asked to identify which textbook they were using, as that was not a focus of the research.

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texts outside of the textbook and using the textbook to a lesser extent required self-confidence and courage. This implies that encouraging more teachers to use a combination of different types of materials may require giving more support and training to teachers. Additionally, the combination approach and EYLP approach teachers mentioned criteria such as picture support, interesting topics, students' interests, and appropriate reading levels as important criteria for their text selection. Overall, these criteria incorporate many factors that can support reading comprehension (Clay, 1985; Ehri, 1999; Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2013). The fact that the case study teachers mentioned picture support as important appears to be logical since 50% of teachers responding to the questionnaire used pictures to help students understand the meaning of texts while the teacher read aloud.

The access to and use of level-differentiated materials will be addressed in the discussion of the third sub-research question about differentiation (see section 9.3.1).

9.2.2 Practices

How the texts are used

Although a defining feature of the reading approaches as categorized in the current research was the reading materials used in fourth- and fifth-grade EFL classes, the reading and reading-related practices used by the schools were equally if not more important. Additionally, it was hypothesized that two of the reading approaches, i.e., the EYLP and the extensive reading approaches (the latter changed to “graded reader approach” based on the Norwegian version of the questionnaire; see also section 6.3.3), would be characterized by the use of specific reading practices. These included guided reading at schools using the EYLP approach and extensive reading at schools using an extensive reading-based approach. Thus, one part of the first sub-research question was to identify common reading practices in EFL reading instruction and to find out whether the approaches differed in this respect.

The questionnaire findings indicate that more “traditional” methods of working with texts, which tend to be teacher-led, whole-class activities (such as texts being read aloud by the teacher, read aloud chorally by the students,

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read aloud individually by students, and read at home by the students), were used by the majority of the teachers at least three times per month. Specifically, teacher-led, whole-class reading was associated with the textbook-based approach in the questionnaire results. This was also a common practice for the textbook-based approach teacher in the case study school. However, whole-class reading was also common at the two combination approach schools, especially when working with the textbook texts. This suggests that teachers may perceive that the textbook texts are intended to be read with the whole class, at least initially.

Having students read aloud individually was a common practice among all approaches, as reported in the questionnaire. This was also a common practice among all the approaches in the case study schools. However, this varied somewhat depending on grade level, being slightly more common in fourth grade than fifth grade. Additionally, when the students read aloud individually at the EYLP school, it was done in small groups using guided reading. In contrast to the expectations of the researcher, among the questionnaire respondents, the use of guided reading was not significantly associated with any particular approach. Thus, the students in the EYLP school read aloud more often than those in the combination or textbook-based approach schools. The teacher using the textbook-based approach also often had the students read aloud in pairs, but then all of the pairs read at the same time so that she was unable to listen to more than one pair at a time and also was not able to listen to all of the groups due to the length of the activity. Additionally, she did not interact with all of the pairs when they were talking about the text.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to these practices. When students read aloud individually in front of the whole class, the teacher is able to evaluate a student's reading fluency and pronunciation (Drew & Sørheim, 2009; Cameron, 2001). However, compared to reading individually or in small groups, when students take turns reading aloud for the whole class, fewer students are active at the same time. Additionally, when students read aloud individually, there is little opportunity for differentiation in language input and materials as they often read the same text that all students have in front of them (Charboneau, 2013; Chorzempa & Graham, 2006).

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The questionnaire found that less traditional methods of working with texts, such as guided reading, individual reading in the classroom, and small groups led either by the teacher or by students, were used by less than a third of the teachers three or more times per month. Additionally, students performed individual silent reading less frequently with teachers using a textbook-based approach than with those using the other approaches. This was found to be the case despite the fact that individual silent reading allows for greater differentiation for students, in terms of reading level, speed, and text choice, which has been associated with increased reading motivation (Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Krashen, 1988). Other practices, such as small-group reading, which allow for more student activity than whole-class reading and a greater potential for differentiation, were infrequently used in all of the reading approaches, as reported by the teachers in the questionnaire.

Among the case study schools, the EYLP school was the most consistent in the use of guided reading, individual silent reading, and small groups led by the teacher. The EYLP approach uses guided reading at the teacher station in which small groups of students read with the teacher. Silent reading was conducted at another station (see also sections 8.5 and 5.5). The students at each of the combination approach schools read silently on their own occasionally. As previously mentioned, they read either graded readers or other children's books, not the textbook texts.

These findings suggest a difference in both the reading focus and the intention of the materials, and exemplifies how materials influence practices. Despite the fact that the textbook texts could have been used either for individual silent reading or for guided reading, it was the graded readers that were primarily used for these purposes. Whether this was due to the lack of variation of appropriate leveled texts in the textbooks is unknown, since one of the aims of graded readers is to have appropriately leveled texts. If teachers are not as concerned with this issue when they are working with texts in a whole class, it could be because teachers feel they can adequately scaffold the text for whole-class instruction, thus allowing the students to use texts adapted to be at their instructional levels. Another reason could be because they want the whole class to have the same experience, thus placing less focus on reading level when working with those texts.

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Neither of the combination approach schools used guided reading nor any type of organized small group reading. In contrast, the fifth-grade students at the textbook-based approach school occasionally read aloud to each other in pairs. However, the characteristics of their reading, which was most often focused on reading and sometimes retelling or translating the text, were quite different from the guided reading interaction at the EYLP school. This will be further addressed in the discussion of the third sub-research question on interaction.

Studies have shown that effective reading teachers more often engage students actively in reading activities, such as time spent reading individually and in small groups, instead of the students responding more passively to shared reading (such as listening to individual students read aloud) (Pressley et al., 2001; B. Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 1999; B. Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, et al., 2002). The latter may involve, for example, students listening to the teacher reading aloud or students taking turns reading aloud. Individual and small-group practices generally include using varied student grouping methods, allowing for different learning styles and more active students, as opposed to whole-class instruction (cf. Littleton & Mercer, 2013). Thus, the practices at the EYLP school, and to a certain extent the combination approach schools, best incorporated this focus on active student engagement in reading (further addressed in the discussion of the third sub-research question).

The way in which reading practices were structured was an interesting difference among the reading approaches in the case study. The EYLP students often read aloud from texts they had never seen or heard before at the teacher station during guided reading. The teacher guided the students through a pre-reading introduction to the book but did not read the text to them before the students took turns reading from it. Research shows that connecting background knowledge to current reading can support comprehension (e.g., Grabe, 2009; Koda 2007, Eskey, 2005; Grabe & Stoller, 2002). This was done most consistently at the EYLP approach school during guided reading, but could be further incorporated into the other approaches.

In contrast, the students at the schools using the other approaches often only read aloud from the texts after first having heard them read aloud by the

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teacher or played on a CD, and possibly after reading them as homework. Additionally, a reading model, such as the teacher, can provide support for reading aloud, including modeling appropriate pronunciation and prosody, aspects of reading fluency (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Drew & Sørheim, 2009). Thus, it may be beneficial for teachers to function sometimes as a reading model for their students in EFL reading instruction, such as was done at the schools using combination and textbook-based approaches.

Due to the differences in how reading was structured, namely, at what stages the teacher was most actively involved in supporting the students' reading, and the purpose of the teacher's interaction (i.e., functioning as a model for students to copy or primarily providing support for students' own reading) and students' reading (i.e., preparing for independent reading or fluency practice), it is difficult to directly compare the impact of the different practices and reading purposes.

Although the questionnaire respondents were asked about certain methods associated with teachers' reading aloud, the teachers were not specifically asked about the structure of reading activities. Therefore, the researcher is drawing conclusions based on the case study rather than the questionnaire.

As for classroom organization, group work and various ways of organizing groups featured prominently in both the questionnaire and the case study schools data. Although most of the teachers allowed students to read independently at least once per month, independent reading was a regular activity for only a few (i.e., three or more times per month). The same was true of students reading in small groups either led by teachers or students. These results were not unexpected, but they were disappointing given the prominence of research on the benefits of collaborative learning (e.g., Rojas-Drummond, Mazon, Littleton, & Velez, 2014; Vaughn & Klingner, 1999), small group interaction with teachers (e.g., Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007; B. Taylor, Pressley, et al., 2002), and individual extensive reading (e.g., Day & Bamford, 1998; Elley, 1991; Krashen, 2004).

The questionnaire found that more teachers used ability-level groups than anticipated. However, few teachers used them frequently. The questionnaire results showed that level-differentiated groups were associated with the EYLP

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and graded reader approaches. This is a practice at the teacher's reading station in the EYLP that allows teachers to work closely with a small group of students, increasing teacher-student interaction for individual students and students' actual reading time. Additionally, using level-differentiated groups allows the teacher to select more appropriate reading texts for the individual students in terms of level, interests, and particular reading skills on which those students need to focus. Using level-differentiated groups, a practice supported by research on adapted learning and best practice for reading instruction (Chorzempa & Graham, 2006; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007), could arguably be used more frequently in Norwegian schools to improve the use of more appropriate reading materials, student reading time, and differentiated teacher-student interaction.

In the case study schools, the textbook-based approach school used a relatively permanent small group for the lowest-level students, while the rest of the class worked together. In contrast, the teachers at the EYLP school regularly evaluated and adapted the small groups of four to five students to accommodate changes in reading progression (i.e., flexible grouping). Groups were rarely used at either of the combination approach schools; rather, these schools employed individual reading for parts of lessons and sometimes had students read to each other in pairs during whole-class instruction. Given that the textbook was still the primary text source at these schools, these results were expected.

Research on reading instruction has found that small groups are effective for teaching reading (Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007; B. Taylor et al., 2000), especially when they are focused on differentiating for individual needs (e.g., providing scaffolding) (Morrow & Asbury, 2003). A focus on working in small groups is also related to students' needs to learn in collaboration with others and through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978), and to be active language users in the classroom. Both of these factors become limited when there is a predominance of whole-class instruction. Moreover, students' reading improves more when they are actively engaged in reading or writing (Pressley, 2006; B. Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, et al., 2002), which may happen less during whole-class instruction. Thus, teachers should be more aware of the importance of grouping in reading instruction and evaluating the balance of grouping and level of student activity in their reading instruction.

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Both the use of small groups and the increased level of student activity are aspects of the EYLP approach that could be incorporated into other reading approaches.

The reason why many teachers did not use these small group practices was not addressed in the questionnaire. However, one could argue that one reason may be that the teachers using traditional practices followed practices they had experienced themselves in their own school careers (Borg, 2003, 2006). A second reason could be that teachers would experience more control using teacher-led, whole-class activities, such as controlling the speed of working with texts, which was expressed by the teaching using the textbook-based approach. In the interviews about their teaching practices, the textbook-based approach teacher and one of the combination approach teachers mentioned classroom management and learner autonomy issues related to their choices of practices, namely, that they felt that the students could not manage working in small groups without teacher direction. The implication is that teachers may need to work with students on learner autonomy skills and collaborative skills in order to enable them to make greater use of these practices.

Assessment practices

Regarding assessment practices, teachers responding to the questionnaire generally used what may be characterized as traditional methods for monitoring students' reading progress (Howatt, 1984). One of these, students reading aloud one at a time, is time-consuming and few students are able to actively participate, which is also true when one student at a time answers questions aloud about the text (Drew & Sørheim, 2009). Another method, vocabulary tests, which are often translated lists of decontextualized words, are more likely a measure of spelling and rote memorization, rather than a measure of reading skill or comprehension (Munden, 2014). Other methods, including follow-up writing tasks (Drew & Sørheim, 2009; Munden, 2014), which were used by some teachers, encourage an important link between the two literacy skills of reading and writing. This link is also natural given that both reading and writing are basic skills in the curriculum.

Although each of the previously mentioned assessment activities is important for language skills development, they are often used to the exclusion of other

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practices. For example, individual discussions between teachers and students could help improve students' motivation, especially among those less interested in reading, and may also promote reading and improve reading strategy use (Morrow & Asbury, 2003; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007). On only one occasion was a teacher observed having individual discussions with students (fourth-grade teacher at S2). Although, the small group discussions at the EYLP approach school may give the teacher an indication about students' reading interests, individual conferences as a follow-up to students' individual reading at the independent reading station may be useful. This may also address some of the concerns raised by Palm and Stokke (2013) regarding the paucity of time on task reading of some students observed at the individual reading station during Norwegian (L1) EYLP sessions.

9.2.3 Reading skills

Reading is one of the five basic skills presented in the *LK06* curriculum. The component skills of reading are elaborated on in both the Norwegian and English subject curricula and the Framework for Basic Skills (see sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.3). There are many similarities in the way in which these reading skills are presented in the different documents, wherein reading proficiency requires that learners use reading strategies, understand, explore, discuss, learn from, reflect upon, interpret, and access different types of information from increasingly demanding texts and texts of different genres (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010, 2013; Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012). These documents also define being able to read as creating meaning by reading different types of texts and acquiring insight and knowledge. Thus, comprehension of texts can be summarized as one of the main aims of reading. However, lower-level comprehension of texts is not sufficient to meet the aims of the English-subject curriculum. Despite this fact, the teacher using the textbook-based approach emphasized that the most important part of working with texts was literal (or lower-level) comprehension of texts. It is suspected that lower-level comprehension skills are the focus of reading instruction for many EFL primary school teachers in Norway. This could be because the added information that became available more recently, such as the Framework for Basic Skills and guidelines for the

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national test, may be less familiar to teachers. This may imply a need for better promotion of these documents and their purpose.

Even though the fourth- and fifth-grade students are not expected to have developed a working command of all of the higher-level skills, they should nevertheless be working on developing them, for example, drawing simple conclusions and inferences and identifying the main topic in texts. Students are also expected to be able to comment on texts, which is a basic level of reflecting and assessing, i.e., two higher-level skills. This did not occur often in the case study schools, but when it did, it was generally more in fifth grade than fourth grade, as would be expected.

Another reading skill mentioned in the Framework for Basic Skills is the ability to ask questions about the text. This skill is not specifically mentioned anywhere in the English subject curriculum, but it is important both for reading (Littleton & Mercer, 2013; Van der Meij, 1993; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) and language development (Cameron, 2001; Munden, 2014). Prior to developing the questionnaire, it was considered that students asking questions about texts would be a common activity in EFL instruction. Thus, it was not included in the questionnaire. Rather, teachers were asked about their practices when asking questions, including if they did so while reading aloud, if they did so as an assessment practice, and in which language the questions were asked. However, based on the case study observations, it was found that there were few incidences of students asking questions while working with texts. The lack of focus on this skill could be due to traditional teacher-centered instruction, in which questions are primarily asked by teachers (cf. Littleton & Howe, 2010; Hardman, 2008), or because it is not specifically included in the English curriculum. Moreover, most textbook teacher's guides focus on teachers asking questions about the text rather than students doing so. In contrast, during guided reading, although still a teacher-led process, the teacher encourages students to ask questions of the text. This is an area in which the *LK06* curriculum aims could be further developed to provide greater coherence with the Framework for Basic Skills. It is also an area that could receive greater focus in English reading instruction.

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As mentioned above, both comprehension skills and strategies are referred to in the English subject curriculum and the Framework for Basic Skills. Additionally, the guidelines for the national test in English specify that students should be able to use simple reading strategies. Research has also shown that comprehension skills and strategies are an important component of reading instruction (e.g., Pressley, 2006; Goldenberg, 2011). However, this an area in which there were differences among the reading approaches in the case study schools. Among the fifth-grade classes, the teachers in the EYLP school used and talked about comprehension strategies and skills more than the teachers using the other approaches. When occurring at the EYLP school, the comprehension strategies included using pictures, applying background knowledge, using contextual clues to guess unknown words, and using a dictionary; some of these strategies were also used at the other case study schools (see Chapter 8). There is greater focus on comprehension strategies and applying higher-level comprehension skills in guided reading, which is used in the EYLP approach, and it was particularly the second fifth-grade teacher who effectively implemented them within her guided reading sessions. Thus, similar results may have been found at other EYLP schools. However, the actual implementation of the EYLP approach will always be teacher-dependent and influenced by the skills and focus of the individual teachers.

The frequent focus on comprehension skills and strategies in the EYLP approach school is likely to have benefited the students' reading development (cf. B. Taylor et al., 2000). Although it was not specifically observed that teachers reminded students to apply L1 reading strategies to L2 reading, some of the strategies used, particularly at the EYLP school, may have been previously introduced in Norwegian lessons. However, a more explicit approach, in which teachers help students apply the L1 strategies they have learned to L2 reading, has been shown to be beneficial for students' reading development (Goldenberg, 2011). This is an area that can be given more attention, irrespective of approach.

Although students in fourth- and fifth grades are still developing higher-level thinking skills, exploring whether both higher- and lower-level thinking skills are used (and if so, how), can be a beneficial source for comparing reading approaches. In fourth grade, using higher-level thinking skills to talk about texts occurred at only one of the combination schools (S3) and at the EYLP

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approach school. Moreover, there were few incidences of higher-level questioning and thinking about texts overall (cf. B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002). In fifth grade, although using higher-level thinking skills while talking about texts occurred in three of the schools (S2, S3, and S4), it was much more frequent at School 4 than in the other two schools (17%, 4%, and 46%, respectively). Thus, the structure and focus of the guided reading at the teacher station in the EYLP approach appears to support a greater use of higher-level thinking skills and responses to texts. However, these aspects of guided reading and the focus on higher-level text comprehension could also be incorporated into other approaches, especially if teachers were given more guidance on how to implement these elements into their reading and discussions of texts with students.

Overall, reading instruction could be improved by spending more time engaging students in higher-level thinking skills. These skills are important for reading development (B. Taylor, Pressley, et al., 2002), can be supported by linking L1 reading strategies to L2 reading (Goldenberg, 2011), and may contribute to increased student motivation for reading, as students would be involved in meaningful discussion and application of knowledge (Alexander, 2004), and language use in general (Hughes, 2011).

9.2.4 Translation, language use, and choice

Translation was a prominent feature in EFL in Norwegian primary schools both in the questionnaire and case study findings. The results of the questionnaire were that 75% of the teachers translated all of or parts of the text they were reading three or more times per month. In the phrasing of the question, “In how many English lessons per month in the previous month have you done the following while reading aloud?” it was implied that the options given for this question (e.g., using pictures and miming, pre-teaching vocabulary) were what teachers did while reading aloud to their students. They were not asked if students were required to translate while reading either in class or at home. However, students translating texts featured prominently during EFL reading in the case study schools. This finding was unexpected and thus no question about student translation was included in the questionnaire, since it was assumed that student translation of texts is a traditional method of teaching closely associated with the grammar-translation

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method. Therefore, it is uncertain whether EFL teachers in Norway generally ask their students to translate from English to Norwegian, or whether this was an exception among the case study teachers. In fact, both the teachers and students translated texts frequently at all of the case study schools. Sometimes the translation focused more on retelling in the L1, whereas at other times, such as at the EYLP approach school, accurate translation was a focus. However, many students at the other schools also did word-by-word translation of texts, possibly because they did not know how to or were not able to retell the text in Norwegian.

Although mental translation of difficult words or phrases can be an effective reading strategy (Kern, 1994), it is questionable whether this should be used as a class activity for whole sections of text. Given that translation is a difficult task, and that one-to-one translations are not always possible, teachers could possibly focus more on teaching students how to retell a story in their L1 using their own words rather than translating specific vocabulary. If vocabulary learning is the aim, other activities may be more appropriate, such as retelling the story in the L2, organizing words into lexical sets, and playing games using new vocabulary (Munden, 2014). Having a stronger focus on retelling and, thus, reading comprehension as opposed to vocabulary training, could be accomplished by teachers being more explicit with students regarding the aim of the activity.

Related to translation is the issue of language use. In this respect, the findings from the questionnaire and the case study schools were similar in that the teachers in both sets of data reported or were observed using both the L1 and L2 frequently for comprehension questions about texts. Additionally, in the questionnaire findings, half of the teachers felt that it was important to use Norwegian to support the understanding of texts and nearly two-thirds felt it was important to use translation. Translation can be useful, but as a tool for comprehension, it can be overused so that students learn that they can wait for a translation rather than trying to find the meaning themselves (Cameron, 2009; Munden, 2014). It seems that teachers often resorted to translation as an easier alternative to scaffolding and adapting the target language to promote comprehension. However, this is another point that appeared to depend on the teacher more than on the reading approach.

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However, the inclusion of L1 in language teaching (as opposed exclusively using the target language) is supported by relatively recent research on language use in foreign language instruction (Levine, 2011; Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). The opportunity to use the L1 to support language learning also opens up other possibilities. For example, by using the L1, one can make a distinction between students' reading comprehension level and their speaking abilities. Receptive language skills develop faster and are most often stronger than productive language skills. Thus, students are often able to read and comprehend more difficult texts than they can discuss in the L2.

In language teaching, both receptive and productive skills need to be learned and developed. Drew and Sørheim (2009) refer to the potential to integrate the receptive and productive skills in connection with the same text (e.g., reading and then talking about a text, or reading a text and writing about it). However, in order to meet the increasing demands of comprehending texts for various purposes (cf. Grabe, 2009; Hellekjær, 2007), it may be beneficial to sometimes work with these skills separately, allowing students to read at their receptive comprehension level while discussing texts in their L1. Given that the teachers in this research are fourth- and fifth-grade teachers, one would expect both the L1 and L2 to be used, which fits with recent research on foreign language instruction promoting the use of both languages (Macaro & Erlar, 2008; K. Nagy & Robertson, 2009). This is especially the case if the aim is to discuss the text using higher-level thinking skills, such as evaluating, drawing inferences, and relating to prior knowledge. This is also an area in which a teacher could differentiate for students, depending on the students' speaking abilities.

9.3 Sub-research question 2: To what extent do the reading approaches enable differentiation in reading instruction?

The second sub-research question explores to what extent the different literacy approaches enabled differentiation in reading instruction. Differentiation as it related to materials, reading activities and practices, grouping, reading purposes, and teachers' expectations of students at the

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different schools and among the reading approaches, is compared and discussed in what follows.

Overall, the questionnaire findings suggest that differentiation of reading texts, materials, and grouping was infrequently used. Additionally, most students had little, if any, choice in the text they read, which may have influenced their motivation for reading (see section 9.2). Thus, given the variation in reading abilities among students in primary school (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2003, 2010), it was surprising how infrequently teachers reported using differentiation.

Though there were similarities among the reading approaches at the case study schools in some aspects of differentiation (including that all teachers attempted some form of materials differentiation), there were many differences in others, especially related to grouping, materials use, and teachers' expectations of students. These points will be addressed in the following sections.

9.3.1 Differentiation in reading materials

The use of level-differentiated texts was addressed in the questionnaire but more fully in the case study schools. It was hypothesized that the use of level-differentiated texts would be associated with the EYLP and graded reader approaches. The questionnaire found that roughly four out of ten teachers had students read level-differentiated texts occasionally, and that this practice was not associated with any particular approach. The fact that level-differentiated texts were not used frequently by the majority of teachers was as expected, although their more frequent use would have been an asset considering the spread in ability levels among upper primary school students in Norway (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2003, 2010). Both the teachers who responded to the questionnaire and those in the case study schools recognized the range in students' reading abilities as a challenge. The finding from the questionnaire, namely, that using level-differentiated texts was not associated with any particular approach, was unexpected since the greater use of graded readers at the EYLP and graded reader-based schools in the case study would have suggested the opposite.

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In contrast to the questionnaire findings, the teachers in the case study schools all used level-differentiated texts, but to different extents and in different ways. The textbook-based approach school (S1) used level-differentiation primarily through the *Stairs* textbook texts. Although the *Stairs* series (used in S1 and S3) includes multiple levels of texts within the same textbook, the same text is not adapted for different levels, but the series rather provides texts with different levels related to a similar theme. A small group of students only used the Step 1 texts, while the rest of the class worked with texts at all levels by using Step 2 and 3 texts for homework. Thus, the teacher depended on the differentiation provided in the textbook to meet the needs of the students. This implementation was not aligned with the intentions of the textbook authors who state that all students should read or listen to all texts, only afterwards focusing on one text at their level. In contrast to the *Stairs* series, the *Scoop* series (used in S2), starting from fifth grade, creates two different levels of the same text: an original and a basic. By having two levels of the same text, it is possible for the teacher to use one text for the whole class, but still have all of the students read a text at their ability level.

If teachers continue to use textbooks in a whole-class setting, the *Scoop* approach seems to be the most tenable solution based on principles of differentiated reading materials. In this sense, the two levels of textbook texts function similarly to graded readers, which are often an adaptation of original texts. Since this approach to differentiation appears to be beneficial, it would be useful to have basic-level texts in even earlier grades and more higher-levels texts for older students (for example, an “advanced” level text in addition to the “original” and “basic” versions). Although the *Stairs* textbook has its merits, the actual approach to differentiation seems to be less practical and less effective when working in whole-class contexts⁹⁸. Thus, the approach to differentiation in the two textbook series is quite different.

⁹⁸ Other issues related to the *Stairs* levels and including the distribution of text genres across levels, the way in which texts on similar topics (e.g., the Step 1 and Step 2 texts about the same chapter theme), do not cover similar content or vocabulary are outside the scope of the current research. However, they are important issues in materials differentiation.

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The combination approach schools primarily used differentiated texts during individual reading, using the textbook texts instead for whole-class instruction and homework. The EYLP program used level-differentiated texts for all of their reading, both through graded readers for guided reading and through a large range of children's literature and graded readers for independent reading. The graded reader series used at the EYLP and combination approach schools offered numerous texts at each level and many levels within each series that could accommodate students at different reading levels.

The contrast in findings between the questionnaire and case study could be attributed to the teachers' understanding of the term level-differentiated texts. Whether the teachers interpreted reading level-differentiated texts as referring exclusively to graded readers is unknown. Many teachers answering the questionnaire may not have considered the *Stairs* texts to be level-differentiated because they did not use the texts in level-differentiated ways, for example having students read a text at their ability level. This would indeed be an interesting point to further research considering that the *Stairs* publishers, Cappelen Damm, promote the different leveled texts as a strength of the series.

Giving students choice in the texts they read is another method of differentiation (see also section 9.2.1). The questionnaire found that allowing students to choose a text to read was uncommon (63% of teachers never did this). Since student text choice has been found to be associated with increased reading motivation (Krashen, 2004; Guthrie et al., 1999; Day & Bamford, 1998), the questionnaire findings suggest that many students could have less reading motivation, and may even be reading less than they might if they were given more choices. The questionnaire also indicated that, among the different reading approaches, this practice was associated with the combination approach, and not with the textbook-based approach. This finding was similar among the case study schools, with the addition of student choice of reading texts being frequently used at the EYLP approach school. These case study schools allowed students to choose English books to read during independent reading⁹⁹, whereas independent reading was not a part of the practices at the

⁹⁹ Although it was the intention that the fifth-grade students at the EYLP would read English books, this had not started yet. In contrast, in the fourth-grade class, the

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textbook-based approach school. Independent reading, especially when students read at their reading level, has been found to be an effective reading instruction practice (Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1986; Clay, 1985, 1991, 1998; Day & Bamford, 1998; Holdaway, 1979; Krashen, 2004; Smith & Elley, 1997). Independent reading time is a simple way to incorporate student choice; to differentiate by text difficulty, genre, and reading pace; and possibly to promote increased reading motivation among the students.

Therefore, although all the teachers in the case study schools attempted to differentiate reading materials for the students, the way in which materials differentiation was approached and how often it occurred varied. Given the research on the benefits of appropriate-leveled language, reading, and vocabulary input (e.g., Hafiz & Tudor, 1989; Krashen, 2004; Nation, 2009b), reading approaches that incorporate differentiation in language input more often or to a greater extent are likely to be more supportive of reading development. In the present context this applies to the EYLP and, to some extent, the combination approaches.

9.3.2 Differentiated practices using reading materials

One method of differentiated practices is the use of level-differentiated groups (see also section 9.2.2). It was hypothesized that the use of level-differentiated groups would be associated with the EYLP and graded reader approaches. The findings from the questionnaire were as expected, and were also confirmed by the case study data. Both of the data sources also confirmed that level-differentiated groups were infrequently used in the textbook-based or combination approaches. Overall, more than half of the teachers responding to the questionnaire never used level-differentiated groups.

The EYLP program, in contrast, regularly used both level-differentiated groups and texts. At the EYLP approach school in this study, there were also different expectations as to what students would be capable of achieving during group discussions, depending on their reading and language levels.

students had a large selection of books to choose from. The fifth-grade use of English books should have been similar to the fourth-grade and would likely have been so at other schools using the EYLP.

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This meant that there was adaptation by the teacher and within teacher-student interactions, depending on which group was reading. The fifth-grade teacher differentiated the way in which she approached different texts (for example, how much time was spent discussing a text and drawing on prior knowledge before beginning reading, if they would read to apply higher-level thinking skills or with a language focus), depending on the reading level of the group, the challenges of the particular text (for example, specific vocabulary, complex grammar, or the need for more background knowledge), and her expectations for how they should work with the text. For example, although both groups 1 and 2 (the mid-level groups) were reading *Mary and Steven* level 2 and 3 books, the teacher provided more scaffolding and coaching with group 2, whereas there was more focus on comprehension skills in group 1. Although the teacher used less modeling and scaffolding with group 3 (the highest-level group), when she did, she focused on more nuanced features of reading, such as the use of pitch and intonation when reading aloud. Overall, the students in this group needed less support when reading in English, although they still needed some support when translating. The lowest-level reading group (group 4) received more coaching and scaffolding from the teacher, and the teacher also provided most of the translation for the students since they struggled with that task.

As for textbooks, although there were different levels in the *Stairs 4* and *5* textbooks, these levels were not applied in differentiated ways at both of the case study schools using them, with the exception of different levels assigned as homework. At the textbook-based approach school, the texts were not used in differentiated ways, possibly because the lowest-level fifth-grade students were in a separate group. If these students had been in the same class as the rest of their peers, the teacher may have used the materials differently. It was her belief that the lowest-level students were not capable of understanding the Step 2 and 3 texts in *Stairs 5*, nor capable of following the class activities related to those texts. However, during the Step 1 group sessions, the students spent more time reading aloud, translating, and answering literal comprehension questions than the main class, comprised of Step 2 and 3 students. This situation was similar to Chorzempa and Graham's (2006) findings regarding teachers focusing more on decoding and lower-level skills in low-level L2 groups. The fact that the teacher of the lower-level group was

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not a qualified English teacher may also have influenced the reading focus. However, despite the Step 1 students' need for more scaffolding and support, it should be possible to use balanced reading instruction at all levels (cf. Pressley, 2006). A balanced reading approach includes both intensive and extensive reading (cf. Pressley, Roehrig, Bogner, Raphael, & Dolezal, 2002).

The teachers' choice of reading materials, and the way in which they interpreted the best ways of using them, influenced the ways in which they either differentiated for students' reading abilities or did not. At the EYLP school, since all of the students were expected to read aloud at the teacher station, the texts were chosen for the reading level of the specific ability groups. In contrast, the other schools primarily read from the textbook, which was supplemented by other texts at the combination approach schools. Thus, at the textbook and combination approach schools the primary texts were not chosen specifically to meet the reading level of individual students, but were selected because they fitted into the teachers' English teaching plan for the year and were included in the schools' particular textbook. Since the teachers in the textbook-based approach school and the combination approach schools reported and observed differences in students' reading level, many of the students may therefore have been reading texts at inappropriate levels¹⁰⁰. As previously noted, reading texts at students' instructional and independent reading levels is important for reading development (Day & Bamford, 1998; Krashen, 2004; Nation, 2009b; Smith & Elley, 1997). However, as the students were not tested for reading level or comprehension as a part of this study, it is not possible to make accurate assessments of whether the textbook texts were at the students' instructional or independent reading levels, or whether they were too difficult. Overall, it is difficult to draw connections between the learning outcomes of individual students in each of the reading approaches based on the available research data.

¹⁰⁰ The teachers at the EYLP school also mentioned the wide difference in students' reading ability levels. However, in contrast to the other schools, the students at the EYLP approach school only read texts at their reading level, at least at the teacher station and at home. At the independent reading station, students had free choice of books, but they had also been advised about which books were appropriate for them.

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Regarding the teachers' approach to differentiating various texts, the teachers at the textbook and combination approach schools mainly made decisions based on text genre and vocabulary, and not necessarily related to text difficulty level or the students' reading levels. For example, when working with factual texts from the textbook, and to a certain extent authentic children's narrative texts, the teachers tended to spend more time on word identification and vocabulary than with narrative texts. Some teachers may consider vocabulary and text genre to be more obvious criteria for differentiation than syntax, cohesion, or other linguistic factors because of the focus on vocabulary and text genre in the curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2010, 2013) and, to a certain extent, in the textbooks. However, vocabulary and text genre do not always give an accurate representation of the actual text difficulty or specific challenges the readers may face (McNamara 2001; McNamara, Ozuru & Floyd, 2011; McNamara et al., 2014).

Sometimes different text genres were used for various reading-related purposes. For example, at the second combination school (S3), when the fourth-grade class worked with a narrative, they talked about the text at lower- and occasionally higher-levels of comprehension, conducted word identification, and applied comprehension strategies and skills. The teacher also provided scaffolding to support students in answering literal comprehension questions. In contrast, when working with a textbook text comprised of a written letter, they read the text without any related discussion and little talk of word identification. The main focus was using the text as a model for student writing. Thus, this teacher used texts for various purposes and the actual teaching focus also varied. All of these methods of differentiation were positive aspects of the combination reading approach. However, there was no additional differentiation related to students' reading levels, text difficulty, nor the type of expected student response at this combination school. All of the students read the same texts and were expected to participate in the same activities. It is possible that some students may not have been capable of participation or that others may not have been challenged. Thus, in some aspects, differentiation could be further improved at schools using a combination approach.

The teacher at the textbook-based approach school varied the reading purpose by focusing on reading skills when preparing for the national test, as opposed

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to during other lessons when she focused on general comprehension and vocabulary. In the fourth-grade class at this school, one lesson focused on strategic reading of texts from the national test. The focus of this lesson was on the use of comprehension skills and strategies related to test taking, such as identifying key words in a text, which corresponds to “finding information in the text” in the national test guidelines. This lesson was also very different from the teacher’s approach to standard textbook narratives in which she focused on word identification and using lower-level thinking skills to talk about the text content. In addition to the previously mentioned skills, the national test specifies that students should be able to interpret and understand the text, and reflect on and evaluate the form and content of the text (e.g., make inferences), which were not included in the lesson. However, this focus on reading strategies may be more meaningful for the students if these skills were taught in another context, such as using narrative or factual texts that tell a whole story or piece of information, rather than isolated paragraphs in a practice test. Variation in reading purpose can be accomplished with any approach. Additionally, this is the only lesson that seemed to be focused on the explicit teaching of reading strategies. Considering its prominence in the *LK06* curriculum and Framework for Basic Skills, one would expect to see more lessons focused on these skills.

Overall, it was easier to identify the specific acts of interactional differentiation at the EYLP school since this approach incorporated the use of level-differentiated groups. This will be further addressed in the discussion of the third sub-research question about interaction (see section 9.4).

Adaptations to reading practices and differentiation based on text difficulty were observed in the practices of the teacher at the EYLP school. For example, when working with students on a text about farm animals, which included a number of low-frequency words and abstract vocabulary (see section 8.5.4), the fifth-grade teacher spent more time on word identification, checking whether the students knew the words in Norwegian or the meaning. Although all of the groups were asked higher-level comprehension questions or to apply higher-level thinking about texts, there was variation in the way in which these skills were applied to support the individual student’s needs, the specific higher-level skills used, as well as the support provided.

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Additionally, the teachers at the EYLP school drew on students' prior knowledge about the text topics and asked them to relate to the text to a greater extent than at the other schools. Both applying background knowledge and relating to the text have been found to support reading comprehension (Echevarria et al., 2008; Goldenberg, 2011). Thus, the way in which the EYLP approach teachers incorporated these aspects may have been more beneficial for supporting students' reading comprehension than in the other schools.

However, in some aspects of the teacher station in the EYLP school there was less differentiation. First, the structure of guided reading includes an introduction to each book, including talking about literacy and book knowledge with great focus on pre-reading and the use of pictures as reading support. This was done for every book read, even if it was the second or third book read by the students at that session. Second, in fifth grade, all the students were required to translate the text they read aloud at the teacher station. Given the significant focus on differentiation otherwise in the EYLP approach, the failure to differentiate the required translation activity among readers at different levels was surprising (see also discussion of the use of translation in section 9.2).

9.3.3 Intensive and extensive reading as methods of differentiation

Within the current research, the use of intensive and extensive reading was addressed in the questionnaire and was an area of focus in the case study. It was hypothesized that teachers would primarily adhere to intensive reading practices and that few schools would use extensive reading on a regular basis. Among the questionnaire respondents, more than eight out of ten teachers agreed that it was important to read intensively to ensure comprehension, on the one hand, and to read many texts extensively to improve comprehension, on the other hand. However, it is a limitation that the teachers were not actually asked how often these types of reading were used when reading texts. Prior to the case study, it was assumed based on EFL studies on independent reading (e.g., Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007; Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2012) that most independent reading would have

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been extensive reading, which was practiced by only 28% of questionnaire respondents three or more times per month.

However, in the case study schools, the way the materials were used was at times different than anticipated. It appears that independent reading was not always extensive reading. When the fifth-grade students at the second combination school (S3) read the graded readers and answered numerous reading comprehension questions after reading short passages (usually lower-level, recall questions), the practice was more similar to intensive than extensive reading in its purpose (c.f. Nation, 2013; Grabe, 2009; see also section 4.2). Additionally, the students were sometimes asked to write a few sentences about the text or choose vocabulary from the text to learn. All of these follow-up activities contributed to a more intensive than extensive reading focus (cf. Day & Bamford, 1998).

In contrast, at the other combination school (S2), students read texts extensively from a variety of sources. When the fourth-grade students read children's books and graded readers, the reading purpose was extensive reading for pleasure and overall comprehension (cf. Day & Bamford, 1998). However, when reading the textbook in this school, the reading was primarily intensive, but it was not always used for specific language purposes.

The reading purpose at the textbook-based approach school was primarily using an intensive reading method with repeated reading of text passages, translation of the text, and teacher-led talk about the texts focused on recall of events and identification and review of vocabulary. This was as expected based on previous research on common EFL teaching practices in Norway (Drew, 2004; Drew et al., 2007). Intensive reading, if connected to skills development, could teach students to “find,” “interpret,” and “evaluate,” according to the Framework for Basic Skills. However, usually during the observed lessons, the focus was on teaching vocabulary rather than reinforcing reading skills in order to aid language learning. Because it is through having good reading skills that learners can independently acquire more knowledge, it is important that skills development is given more focus. This is important given the prominence of written language input in learning in general, and language learning specifically, and the lack of school hours of English instruction.

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Independent and extensive reading were used to different extents at the combination approach and EYLP approach schools. Since both of the combination schools (S2 and S3) used various text sources, the difference between their implementation of the approach was in their use of independent and extensive reading.

Only two of the four schools, the EYLP school and one of the combination approach schools (S2), used both intensive and extensive reading regularly, thereby allowing the students to vary reading strategies to fit different purposes (cf. Grabe, 2009). Thus, overall, the approaches using a combination of reading materials showed potential as methods for increasing differentiation, not only due to the materials, but also the way in which they were used. At the EYLP approach school, the students read extensively at the individual reading station, whereas the teacher station was characterized by intensive reading of graded readers. The students read intensively and extensively in most English EYLP blocks, whereas the combination approach schools used graded readers or children's literature for independent reading in some lessons. Additionally, at the combination schools the students did not take the texts home, while home and parent participation was an important part of the EYLP approach (Anthonsen, 2006; Crévola & Hill, 1998; P. W. Hill & Crévola, 1999). Thus, the additional exposure to appropriately leveled texts at home and parental involvement will help extend the language exposure beyond in-class reading instruction. It is most beneficial if the texts the students read at home are at an appropriate reading level, ideally at the independent reading level, in contrast to instructional reading level texts that they can read during class instruction with teacher support. However, once teachers have supported students in working with the texts, the students may be capable of reading instructional level texts independently.

As demonstrated at the EYLP school and the first combination approach school (S2), both intensive and extensive reading are important practices for reading instruction (Nation, 2009). Additionally, it is important to teach students reading strategies that allow them to adapt their reading strategies to the reading purpose (cf., Grabe, 2009; Hellekjær, 2007, 2008; Pressley, 2006). Thus, it would be beneficial for EFL teachers not only to have a greater awareness of the characteristics and benefits of both intensive and extensive reading, but also to incorporate both types of reading at different times within

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their lessons or in different lessons, which most currently do not (cf., Day, 2011; Grabe, 2009; Nation, 2009).

Although extensive reading has been the focus of many research studies in EFL reading (e.g., Elley, 1991; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Robb & Susser, 1989; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007; Tsang, 1996), it was also not a priority in EFL in Norwegian schools at the time of Drew et al.'s (2007) study (see also Chapter 7). However, silent reading time is a fairly common practice in Norwegian L1 reading (Engen & Helgevold, 2009). The fact that independent silent reading has now become more common in EFL may be considered a step forward. However, silent extensive reading constituted only a small portion of the class time and occurred infrequently at the combination schools. Allowing students to read extensively as homework, or at least take level-differentiated books home to read as practiced in the EYLP approach, would increase the overall amount of student reading and thus benefit students' reading development at schools that are following a combination or textbook-based approach.

Overall, the findings related to the second sub-research question suggest that differentiation is currently a focus for a number of EFL fourth- and fifth-grade teachers through the use of a variety of reading materials (e.g., graded readers and children's literature in addition to the textbook), and to a certain extent the use of different ways of organizing reading (e.g., reading groups, independent reading). However, there appears to be less focus on differentiation in teacher-student interaction, student reading expectations, and reading activities (addressed in the discussion of the third sub-research question). These are all areas that could be enhanced by drawing on positive aspects of all of the three reading approaches studied in the case study in order to create a more balanced reading approach that incorporates both a skills and holistic approach, intensive and extensive reading, and an integration of literacy skills (cf., Pressley, Roehrig, Bogner, Raphael, & Dolezal, 2002).

9.4 Sub-research question 3: What differences are there in the reading interaction between teachers and students in the reading approaches?

The third sub-research question explores to what extent there were differences in teacher-student interaction while reading among the reading approaches studied.

9.4.1 Teacher-student interaction during reading activities

In the questionnaire, teachers were asked about what they did when reading aloud, such as explaining vocabulary before or during reading, using body language, miming, and using pictures, which, as expected, were all commonly used. Discussing the text or asking comprehension questions were also common activities performed when teachers read aloud. Since all of these were common practices, and because the questionnaire items did not clearly elicit what teachers did to support students' comprehension and interact with students, a more detailed approach to tracking teachers' interaction with students was adopted in the case study research.

Teacher reading aloud

Reading aloud was reported as a common activity among the questionnaire respondents, and in statistical analyses was associated with the textbook-based approach. This finding was more aligned with expectations since the teacher reading aloud has a long tradition in language teaching (Harris & Duibhir, 2011) and its use has been found in previous surveys of EFL teaching in Norway (Drew, 2004; Olsen, 1997). In contrast, there was overall little reading aloud done by the case study teachers.

When reading aloud did occur in the case study schools, it was most frequently used at the textbook-based approach and the first combination approach (S2) schools in fourth grade. However, it was only the teacher at the first combination school (S2) who read aloud a text purely for the students'

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enjoyment and comprehension. She read several children's books aloud to the students during the year, which she mentioned she practiced more often than previously following encouragement from the course instructor for her in-service course. The fact that she was the only one of the case study teachers who did so was unexpected, given that this is a common EFL activity (Harris & Duibhir, 2011; Olsen, 1997; Drew, 2004). The other teachers either did not read aloud or read aloud (usually textbook texts) as a model for students to repeat after them in unison.

Among the fifth-grade classes, the teachers at the textbook-based approach school (S1) and the first combination approach school (S2) read aloud occasionally from the reading texts as models for the students, while the teacher at the EYLP school read aloud the students' writing during guided writing sessions. The EYLP teacher's reading aloud, even though she read aloud and modeled reading for the students, was different than at the other schools because of the purpose. The teacher did not read aloud from texts intended for the students' reading comprehension, but rather to review their own writing. Thus, it appears that the teacher reading aloud was predominantly a feature of the textbook-based approach and the combination approach, at least as implemented at one of the combination approach schools.

Even though it is unknown why reading aloud by teachers in the case study schools was less common than reported in the questionnaire, one explanation, at least related to the EYLP approach, could be that the students spent more time reading both aloud and independently in the EYLP program. Although the teacher was often involved in the reading practices, it was to support reading comprehension. This explanation could also apply to the second combination approach school (S3).

There is strong research support for the concept of a shared reading experience, which can be provided by the teacher reading a book aloud (Clay, 1991b, Smith & Elley, 1997; Elley & Munghubai, 1983). According to Barton (2007), shared classroom reading experiences can be powerful, carrying on the tradition of shared reading experiences in the home. The teacher reading a book aloud can also allow students to listen to texts which may be too challenging for them to read themselves, since the teacher can provide scaffolding to the students while reading. It is unknown what type of texts the

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teachers read aloud when they did so, based on the questionnaire data. However, there is good reason to believe that the practice of reading aloud children's literature, especially picture books, may be more prominent in EFL primary school classes generally than that represented in the case study schools (e.g., Drew, 2004; Olsen, 1997).

The paucity of teachers reading aloud as a shared reading experience in the case study schools was unexpected. Teachers may be reluctant to read aloud to their students if they lack confidence in their language skills. In addition, Drew and Sørheim (2009) point out that reading aloud is most effective if the reader is familiar with the text and uses strategies such as varying the speed, volume, and tone of their reading. Therefore, some teachers may be deterred from reading aloud if they feel either their language skills, their reading skills, or both, are inadequate.

The fact that some teachers do not read aloud to their students likely deprives the students of a rich reading experience. One could argue that the teacher reading aloud could have similar benefits for students as extensive reading, including extensive language input, a focus on comprehension, appropriate-level input, and reading for pleasure (cf. Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Krashen, 2004; Morrow & Weinstein, 1982). This may especially apply to struggling and younger readers who may not be able to read longer texts on their own or read for longer periods of time. Thus, this is a reading activity that could be practiced to a greater extent in middle and upper primary school.

Interaction as analyzed in the case study

In the case study schools, both the teachers' interactions with the students and the students' expected responses were coded during observations (see section 6.4.3 and Appendix 3A for coding and definitions). In the current research, it was found that most of the classroom interaction was between the teacher and the students. This was also a common finding in other classroom research both in L1 contexts (Alexander, 2004, 2008; Littleton & Mercer, 2013; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 1999; Taylor, Pressley, & Pearson, 2002) and FL contexts (Moon, 2005; Olsen, 1997; Turnbull, Lapkin, Hart, & Swain, 1998). The current research also found that teacher recitation, namely, the teacher-student, question-answer format typical of most teaching (Hardman,

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2008; Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2005; Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, & Pearson, 2002), was used frequently at all of the case study schools. Among the fourth-grade classes, this procedure was most common at the EYLP school, especially at the teacher station. However, the students at the other stations were not engaged in recitation with the teacher during most of the lesson; instead they worked in small groups independent of the teacher. At the second combination approach school (S3) in fifth grade, recitation was used during less than 40% of the time, since students often worked individually or took turns reading aloud. Although students also read aloud for much of the EYLP school lessons, the teacher also regularly interacted with them to talk about the text during reading. In contrast, the teacher at the first combination approach school (S2) had many students read aloud one after the other without talking about the text.

Although research has found teacher recitation to be a common type of teacher interaction, it is limiting for student learning because of its focus on display of knowledge and teacher evaluation rather than opportunities for knowledge building, engagement, and dialogue (Barnes, 2008). Instead, a balance of recitation and dialogic discourse, with the teacher scaffolding this participation, could help promote more active knowledge development among students (Littleton & Mercer, 2013). The interaction at the teacher station at the EYLP school, namely, reading in small groups using guided reading, came closest to this type of balance.

In contrast to recitation, coaching (i.e., the teacher prompting or providing support that would transfer to other situations as students attempted to perform a strategy or activity to answer a question), was infrequently employed at all of the schools. However, this did not mean that the teachers did not support students and employ interaction techniques such as elicitation, but rather that these occurred infrequently.

Teachers also used scaffolding less frequently than other interaction techniques. When scaffolding occurred, it was often in the form of follow-up questions posed to students to encourage them to elaborate on their answers, especially in the fourth-grade class at the first combination approach school (S2) and the fifth-grade class at the EYLP school. The fifth-grade teacher at the EYLP school also used elicitation to a great extent to provide scaffolding

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to the students as they read and answer questions. Since these types of interactions were more typical of some of the teachers representing the EYLP and combination approaches but not all the teachers from any one approach, the use of coaching and scaffolding appear, at least within the case study schools, to depend more on the teacher than on the reading approach.

Another type of teacher-student interaction is providing explicit feedback. The teachers most often used explicit feedback techniques, such as providing the word or pronunciation the students struggled with through a recast of their statement or through an explicit correction. These can be effective techniques for specific items, but will not necessarily extend to further language learning or development of the students' interlanguage. First, students may be confused about whether teacher recasts are corrections or repetitions of correct phrases using other words (in other words, they may not recognize them as a correction but rather see them as a paraphrase) (Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001). Second, explicit corrections and recasts do not require students to "work with the language," but rather copy the teacher. This is influenced by the need for students to produce language (output) (Swain, 1985), and that input alone is not sufficient for language learning. Nonetheless, when students have been drawn to notice a specific form, or in the case of reading, have a text in front of them, they may be more likely to recognize the explicit recast and repair the utterance. Thus, in reading interaction, explicit feedback may be more effective than in general dialogue (e.g., when teachers correct decoding errors and pronunciations mistakes). However, when discussing the meaning of texts, with a focus on reading comprehension, this advantage may be lost. Instead, teacher modeling of reading practices can help students learn reading skills and strategies which can be applied to further learning and can support reading development (Duffy et al., 1987; Smith & Elley, 1997; Taylor et al., 2005; B. Taylor, Pressley, et al., 2002).

Additionally, scaffolding and coaching could better support overall language learning more than teachers providing answers to students, such as in explicit correction and recasts. When students are required to think actively in order to respond to the teacher's feedback, the result is more often student-repair (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Moreover, Taylor et al. (2002) argue that overuse of teacher talk, providing information and answers (especially when it would

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have been possible for the teacher to coach the students to discover the answer), may deprive students of the opportunity to “take responsibility of their own skills and strategies” (p. 45). Therefore, more focus could have been placed on using appropriate scaffolding and coaching in reading instruction in all of the case study schools, and thus across all of the approaches.

Modeling, another form of teacher interaction, was infrequently used by the case study teachers. This was true of teacher modeling of both reading and comprehension skills. Based on the observations, teacher modeling did not appear to be associated with any particular reading approach. This particular teaching practice appeared to be very teacher dependent. For example, among the fourth-grade teachers, it was practiced mostly by the textbook-approach teacher, whereas among the fifth-grade teachers, it was one of the EYLP approach teachers who used it the most. However, it is interesting to note that modeling should be an integral part of the guided reading model. Thus, one would have expected to observe it most at the EYLP school, which was in fact the case. However, given the focus of modeling in guided reading, it could have occurred even more frequently than observed, especially in the fourth-grade class.

In fourth grade, the textbook-based approach teacher modeled reading behavior and strategies more frequently than the others. However, most of this occurred in one lesson during which the focus was national test preparation. Since test taking requires strategic reading skills, it is natural that this was a focus in this lesson. What was unfortunate was that these same skills did not feature in other lessons. The timing of this lesson was also important, as it was near the end of the school year. It is uncertain how many opportunities students had to practice and apply the skills modeled by the teacher before the summer holiday. In fifth grade, the second fifth-grade EYLP teacher performed the most modeling for her students, as compared to the other teachers. For example, when discussing a book, the teacher modeled her thinking as she determined who the main character of a book was. In another instance the teacher modeled how she used her voice to enhance intonation and expression (prosody features) while reading

It is uncertain why the teachers did not model reading practices and strategies more often, although it may possibly be that modeling is not a common

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practice for Norwegian teachers generally in any subject. It may be interesting to follow this topic up in future research. Otherwise, it could be a belief among teachers that students need more explicit instruction in FL learning. However, since modeling is one form of providing an example, this argument is less convincing. Additionally, considering the focus on providing scaffolding for students generally in Norwegian schools (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007b), and the focus on supporting students by working in their Zone of Proximal Development (see section 3.6), the researcher had expected to see more examples of the teacher modeling as a form of gradual release toward independence for the learners.

Teacher reading aloud and modeling of reading skills and strategies support students' ability to see the reading processes explicitly. Since reading is inherently an internal process (Engen & Helgevold, 2010), by modeling a strategy aloud, teachers make the internal processes visible to the students. These concepts, namely, providing teacher guidance and using language as a learning tool to express thinking, are important in socio-constructivist theories of learning (Vygotsky, 1978).

Another type of teacher-student interaction involves dialogic teaching (i.e., both the teacher and students make "significant and sustained contributions" to the classroom talk) (Littleton & Mercer, 2013, p. 294). Generally, the best balance of dialogic teaching and recitation was found at the EYLP school, which enabled the students to make contributions to the classroom discourse and to enhance their ability to articulate and reflect on ideas (cf. Alexander, 2004). Students need an opportunity to actively use language (Swain, 1985), and experience language use as a meaningful and purposeful activity (Hughes, 2010, 2011), rather than answering lower-level recall questions where there is only one right answer, which the teacher has. This is also a tenet of communicative language teaching (Howatt, 1984). The second fifth-grade teacher in the EYLP school also provided differentiated interaction during guided reading, depending on the reading level of the group. Students at the EYLP school were also more active during the lessons, which research has shown is key to a balanced reading approach (Pressley et al., 2001), and is linked to reading development (Taylor, Pressley, et al., 2002). Compared to other schools, the students at the EYLP school spent less time listening to the teacher or one student at a time taking turns speaking. Although the researcher

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spent less time focusing on the other stations than the teacher station, when the other stations were observed, students were also actively working most of the time.

9.4.2 Expected student responses

The schools used different approaches to student reading and responses (i.e., the way in which students were expected to respond during a lesson, including reading aloud, taking turns speaking, and listening). There was more paired reading at the textbook-based approach school and the first combination approach school (S2), whereas it was more common to find students taking turns to read at the second combination approach school (S3) and the EYLP school. At the textbook-based approach school the students more often read from the textbook in pairs in both grades. At the first combination approach school (S2), they read in pairs and individually from the textbook in fifth grade and children's books and graded readers in fourth grade. Both reading in pairs and reading individually have been coded as reading, as opposed to taking turns to read, due to a higher level of participation. In contrast, at the second combination approach school (S3) and the EYLP school (S4) the students took turns reading in class or small groups.

Returning to the topic of students reading aloud, the purpose of having students read aloud at schools using the combination and EYLP approaches was different. At the EYLP school, the practice of students' reading aloud was used to facilitate the focus on comprehension of the text topics and the understanding of key vocabulary, whereas at the first combination approach school (S2), this practice was used to assess reading fluency and pronunciation and whether the students had been reading the texts at home as homework. The purpose could also reflect the stage at which the teacher interacted with the students (i.e., when the students first are exposed to the text or after they had read it as homework). At the first combination approach school (S2) the students took turns reading the text aloud in class after reading it as homework the previous night, whereas the students at the EYLP school read a small segment of the text aloud in small groups prior to reading it as homework.

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Although reading assessment is important, as previously stated, having students take turns reading aloud is a time-consuming practice (Cameron, 2001; Munden, 2014; Nation, 2009). There are other ways to serve the same purpose, such as reading aloud in small groups or pairs, which allow more students to participate actively. Thus, the way in which the EYLP approach school used reading aloud as a type of scaffolding for later independent reading could be more beneficial than the way it was used in the other schools (i.e., generally for assessing). Other reasons for using alternate practices (other than students reading aloud individually) include students being nervous about reading aloud in front of the class, and it being repetitive if many students read the same text or text segment (Cameron, 2001; Drew & Sørheim, 2009; Munden, 2014). Additionally, as opposed to assessment of individual students as they read aloud texts they have practiced reading at home and maybe previously in class (which was practiced at S3, and occasionally at S1 and S2), the students at the EYLP school read aloud for each other and the teacher. The practice used at the EYLP approach school appeared to have the function of group preparation for individual reading afterwards (at home or at the independent reading station), rather than assessment of reading progress. This aspect of collaborative learning altered the aim of the teacher-student and student-student interaction, namely, scaffolding and coaching as opposed to assessment, before and after each student had read aloud.

In fifth grade, the students at the second combination approach school (S3) also read aloud chorally and individually from the textbook and read individually from graded readers. The contrast between the second combination approach school (S3) and the EYLP school in terms of students reading aloud was related to how many students were reading and how many were listening. Although the students at the EYLP approach school did not read as much as they would have done if all of them had been reading individually, they nevertheless had the opportunity for extensive reading at the individual reading station. At the EYLP approach school, there were generally four students listening at the teacher station while one read aloud, whereas at the second combination approach school (S3), one student read aloud while over 20 listened. Additionally, due to the small group sizes at the EYLP school, the teachers were able to ensure that all of the students were

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included and actively participated in the discussion of the text. Despite the fact that each of the students did not read for very long, they still received individual attention, feedback, and recognition from the teacher. This appeared to have a strong motivating effect on the students and their desire to read. Thus, the overall active participation of the students was lower at the second combination approach school (S3) than at the EYLP school. School 3 was also different from the other combination approach school (S2) in this respect, which used more pair and individual reading. As a consequence, more students read actively at School 2 than at the other case study schools, although the practice lacked the teacher interaction found in Schools 3 and 4.

At the case study schools, the amount of time spent reading in each class varied, and not always according to the reading approach. The EYLP approach school spent the most time reading, followed by the combination approach schools. However, this was not the same in both grades at both combination approach schools (see section 8.6). Thus, although the three teachers at the two combination approach schools all used the same overall reading approach, the way in which they implemented it was different, including the amount of time spent reading. The strong focus on repeated reading and listening to texts, such as that found at the textbook-based approach school and the first combination approach school (S2), may detract from the time students are actively engaged in reading.

Overall, the time students spent actively working is another area in which the EYLP approach appeared to be more effective than the other approaches (a point noted in some other studies of the EYLP program, (e.g. Crévola & Hill, 1998; Drew, 2009b; P. W. Hill & Crévola, 1999). However, it is possible that students may be more off-task at other stations in the EYLP approach than at the teacher station, where they are required to work independently or in small groups (e.g., Palm & Stokke, 2013). Thus, the overall time-on-task for learning activities may not be higher than at schools using the other approaches. However, in the current research, the students at the EYLP school, especially in fifth grade, were primarily working on-task at all stations. This was likely because they had been supported in developing cooperative learning skills, which aided them in both independent and group work. This appears to have been an essential component to the success of the EYLP implementation, and may be teacher-dependent.

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One may argue that the extent to which students working at stations or in small groups can be effective may depend somewhat on the students' group work skills (collaborative learning) and learner autonomy skills. Teaching students to work effectively in small groups, to practice cooperative learning, or even to have the autonomy to work independently, takes time. All of these are important life skills for students in their academic and work careers. Thus, it can be argued that learning them is worth the time and is part of a student's development. They are also referred to in the *LK06* curriculum as important skills (Kunnskapsløftet, 2006; Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2005a; 2005b). Once these skills are developed, teachers can incorporate many more practices into their teaching, such as a greater degree of independent and small group work, which would allow them to differentiate teaching and provide greater support to students through appropriate interactions and scaffolded learning experiences (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003). It is not the case that these interactions cannot occur in whole-class instruction, but rather that it would be much more challenging given the variation in language and reading abilities within classes (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2003, 2010).

The way in which students read also matters for the reading and language benefits gained from the practice. Small groups have previously been mentioned in connection with best practice for reading instruction in section 9.2.2 and differentiated reading practices in 9.3.2. Using small groups can also promote teacher interaction that allows more students to actively participate, such as small-group reading discussions. This may promote better language learning and reading development. This type of interaction happened more often at the EYLP approach school. L2 students reading in small groups and having instructional conversations with teachers was found to be effective for middle and high achieving students (Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007).

However, small-group reading does not have to be limited to the station-model used in the EYLP approach in which students are divided into many small groups. Another possibility could be, for example, a teacher reading with a small group of students while the rest of the class is working on a writing assignment. There are many possibilities that would increase the opportunities for small-group interactions between the teacher and the students and for increased active participation by students during lessons, one of which is the EYLP approach. Reading research has shown that the amount

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of time students spend actively engaged in reading affects reading fluency (Taylor, Peterson, et al., 2002) and overall reading development (Pressley, Gaskins, & Fingeret, 2006; Pressley et al., 2001), so it is important that EFL teachers allow students to spend more time actively reading both in class and encourage more reading outside of class.

Overall, this research has raised as many questions as answers. Although certain aspects of interaction were addressed in the questionnaire (e.g., how often the teacher read aloud and what teachers did to support students' reading comprehension while reading aloud), the importance of other aspects to the variation in reading approaches was only made clearer during the case study (e.g., the use of modeling, dialogic teaching methods, and students' collaborative working skills). It was also determined that some aspects of interaction, such as teacher modeling, were more teacher-dependent than related to reading approach. Thus, although there is a good deal of data from which to draw conclusions, there are still many aspects of the teacher-student interactions that could be further addressed in future research.

9.5 Sub-research question 4: What are teachers' perceptions of their English reading instruction and best practice?

The fourth sub-research question, namely, "What are teacher's perceptions of English reading instruction and best practice?" was addressed through teacher responses to statements in the questionnaire and in the case study data through interviews with the teachers. The opinions of the teachers are summarized and discussed below, as well as how they may relate to any differences between the reading approaches.

The vast majority of teachers responding to the questionnaire thought a teacher should have higher education qualifications. Additionally, just under half of them felt that their teacher education had prepared them to teach English reading in fourth- and fifth grades. These two factors, together with the fact that nearly half of the teachers had no qualifications in English, indicates an awareness among teachers of a need for more teacher development in EFL instruction.

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In comparison to the teachers answering the questionnaire, the teachers interviewed in the case study were both typical and atypical English teachers. Four of the six teachers had English teaching qualifications higher than the national average. Given the number of qualified teachers in the case study sample, one would have expected them to draw on a wider range of ideas from their teacher training courses in the planning of their teaching. However, prior teacher training did not seem to be an influencing factor for all of the teachers, as the one who seemed to be the most traditional in her teaching approach (with the exception of her use of technology in many lessons), was the teacher at the textbook-based approach school who had 60 study points of English. In contrast, the fourth-grade teacher at the first combination approach school (S2) had no completed qualifications in English; however, she had been taking an in-service course in English at the time of the observations, which appeared to influence both her practices and views on teaching, including using different reading materials and more extensive reading.

To what extent a course may influence the participating teachers may be related to the type and focus of the courses teachers take. Prior to the reform in teacher education in 2010, many future teachers of English would probably have studied the same undergraduate English courses as those not training to become teachers (e.g., they would have studied American and British literature, American and British history, grammar, and phonetics, although without a focus on teaching). However, the future teachers would probably have also taken a course in English teaching methodology. In contrast, the teacher at the first combination school (S2) was taking a course specifically designed for teachers, where language teaching methodology was integrated into the entire course. Programs with integrated subject content and teaching methodology, such as the new initial teacher education (*Grunnskolelærer utdanning*) system and the Competence for Quality (*Kompetanse for kvalitet*) in-service programs, may better support teachers in integrating their training into practice (see also subsection 2.2.5).

As for the fifth-grade national test, most of the case study teachers interviewed expressed concern over its difficulty, both in terms of length and reading level of the texts (see also section 2.2.4). Two of the teachers commented on what they perceived as an increased focus on reading comprehension and the use of reading strategies in the *LK06* curriculum and

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the national test, such as being able to find information in the texts to answer questions. A common view among the teachers was that the textbook curriculum was inadequate for preparing the students for the texts they would encounter on the national test, and that the textbooks therefore needed to be supplemented with other texts and activities. Although the interviewed teachers appeared to be concerned about this, only a small number of teachers in the questionnaire agreed that the test influenced their teaching to a great degree (more of them somewhat agreed).

However, the perceived difficulty of the national test and the lack of preparation provided by the textbook materials could also be a result of the way in which the teachers were working with the texts. For example, when working with texts, few of the teachers asked students to reply to anything other than literal comprehension questions, often using the exact words that were found in the text. This would not prepare students to make inferences while reading in order to answer the questions. For example, this sample from the national test, “I miss having you to play football with,” requires the student to make a connection between the question, “What does Kevin miss?” and the correct answer, “Being with his friend.” In another test question, the reader is expected to associate the statement, “I am younger than my sister,” with another statement, “He has two older sisters.” The guidelines for the national tests state that it is not enough to recognize individual words, and that students should be able to make inferences while reading.

The expectation that the national test requires more than lower-level comprehension corresponds with the content of the curriculum and the Framework for Basic Skills. This follows the *LK06* curriculum’s emphasis on making meaning from texts, reflecting on and acquiring insight and knowledge about texts. Additionally, in the definition of reading in the English subject curriculum, students are expected to be able to use reading strategies that are suited to the reading purpose (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013). Moreover, according to the Framework for Basic Skills, students are expected to be able to find and interpret information in texts, draw simple conclusions, and be able to infer and understand information implicitly expressed (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012). Thus, the lack of focus on strategic reading and being able to draw inferences observed in the lessons at the case study schools, combined with

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the teachers' perceptions of the students' lack of preparedness for these types of questions and texts, may indicate a need for better guidance in how to use reading texts generally to support strategic reading and comprehension.

Additionally, many of the questionnaire respondents felt that the national test was a useful tool for assessing students' reading comprehension. However, most of the teachers interviewed felt that, although the national test scores gave an indication of the students' reading skills, they may not accurately reflect what the students were capable of in class. One teacher stated that it would be more helpful to receive both the students' overall scores and their actual results on individual questions or sections so that she could target skills with which the students were struggling. This suggestion should be possible to implement, as well as guides to support teachers in following up with specific reading skills and strategies development with small groups and individual students.

9.5.1 Teachers' reported views on materials

Textbooks

Overall, the teachers who used textbooks had mixed impressions of them. Over half of the teachers responding to the questionnaire felt that the texts in the textbook were interesting for their students. Generally, the case study teachers who used a textbook commented that the textbook series appeared to follow the curriculum aims, and that the textbook series and their support materials were structured and easy to follow. For example, the textbooks had units that incorporated the learning aims and all the language skills, followed the same layout for the chapters, and were supplemented with further resources that were connected to each chapter.

Regarding specific textbooks, the two case study teachers at the different schools using *Stairs 4* and *5*, the textbook-based approach school (S1) and the second combination approach school (S3), seemed generally satisfied with the textbooks. However, one of them felt the need to supplement the textbook (S3), while the other felt the texts were of sufficient quality and content in themselves (S1). As for the teachers using the *Scoop* series (at the first combination approach school (S2)), the fourth-grade teacher was satisfied

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with the textbook, specifically mentioning an appropriate difficulty level and richness of vocabulary and pictures¹⁰¹. In contrast, the fifth-grade teacher (S2) was dissatisfied with it, stating in particular that the texts were not difficult and challenging enough for her students and that there was a lack of focus on grammar.

Generally, the case study teachers at all of the schools using textbooks (S1, S2, and S3) felt that grammar was not adequately covered in their respective textbooks (the *Scoop* and *Stairs* series) and thus supplemented them with additional grammar materials. The fourth-grade EYLP teacher reported using some of the grammar materials from *Stairs* (the textbook they had used prior to implementing the EYLP program). It seemed that the teachers were unaware of other ways to focus on grammar, such as through a meaningful context (e.g., a text on a given topic) or student writing, rather than through grammar exercises. Although grammar instruction was not specifically mentioned in the interview with the fifth-grade EYLP teacher, it was observed that she addressed grammar at times during both the guided reading and guided writing sessions at the teacher station.

Access to reading materials other than the textbook

Access to materials was another important issue for the teachers from both data sets. Among the questionnaire respondents, one-fifth of the teachers agreed that lack of materials was a factor in their planning (a further quarter somewhat agreed). Additionally, only just under four in ten teachers agreed that their school was willing to invest in different reading materials (a further one in four somewhat agreed). Similarly, the case study teachers' reported experiences connected to buying and having access to materials varied significantly from school to school. The teacher at the textbook-based approach school felt the school should have had more books available, but that they should be intended for students to read at home and not as an in-class supplement. She felt that they had enough reading material in the

¹⁰¹ Even though this teacher was satisfied with the textbook, she also supplemented her students' text input through extensive reading of additional reading material. However, this was for individual extensive reading rather than whole-class intensive reading.

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textbook and also claimed that she was satisfied with the quality and content of the texts.

In terms of available materials at the combination approach schools, at School 3, the teacher had large quantities of reading materials as the school had made significant investments in additional reading materials and teaching resources for English. In contrast, the teachers at the other combination school (S2) pointed out that they did not have enough books for independent reading or graded readers for guided reading in small groups. The teachers commented on there being little money available from the school to purchase more reading materials, and that one teacher had even bought books herself for her class. The need to invest in materials is one of the common arguments against the use of extensive reading (Day & Bamford, 1998; Krashen, 2004). What the teachers reported may be a reflection of actual insufficient funds at the school they worked or it may reflect the priorities of their principals. However, it is unfortunate that teachers felt the need to use their own money to purchase more reading materials for their classes. It should, in principle, be the responsibility of the school to provide adequately differentiated and varied materials for the students.

Although the teachers at the EYLP school were generally satisfied with the graded readers they used, they remarked that they needed a greater variety of materials than what was currently available in their classrooms. However, they could often find appropriate-level books in other classes at higher or lower grade levels in the school. Specifically, one teacher thought the graded reader books were somewhat childish and insufficiently challenging. Having books that meet both appropriate language and content level can be a challenge when using texts intended for L1 reading, as the content in the books at the appropriate language level is often intended for much younger students (cf. Day & Bamford, 1998; see also section 5.2.1). Thus, certain types of L2 graded readers may be more appropriate than L1 graded readers or some authentic children's literature (cf. D. R. Hill, 2013; Hunt & Beglar, 2005; Nation & Wang, 1999). This is not to discourage teachers from using authentic texts, but rather to encourage them to be selective in their choices. The teachers also commented on the challenge of deciding whether students should read all of the books at a particular level and when to move students up or down in levels (see section 5.2.3). This is a valid concern when teachers are

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required to take into consideration the need to work on reading fluency, developing new vocabulary, and increasing comprehension skills.

Access to level-differentiated materials

Although nearly all of the teachers agreed that the students would benefit from reading texts at their ability level, few of them actually used level-differentiated texts on a regular basis (see also sections 9.2.1 and 9.3.1). Providing texts at the appropriate reading level is a key to providing comprehensible input; promoting reading comprehension, vocabulary learning, and motivation; and developing reading ability (cf. Day & Bamford, 1998; Hutchinson, 1987; Nation & Wang, 1999). This point is particularly important for improving EFL reading instruction, but it is also complex. Providing appropriate-leveled texts combines the need for appropriate reading materials, teacher knowledge of how to assess students' reading ability and to select appropriate materials, and how to differentiate and scaffold the methods of working with texts to support students' reading skills development (the skills they need at a particular stage).

Only roughly a third of the teachers in the questionnaire reported that they had sufficient materials available to cater to students at different reading levels. Appropriately-leveled materials have been found to be an effective way of approaching reading instruction (e.g., Day & Bamford, 1998; Elley, 1991; Krashen, 2004; Nation, 2009). Thus, there appears to be a need for schools to invest in a wider variety of reading materials that satisfy different levels and interests (c.f. Day & Bamford, 1998; Elley, 1991; Krashen, 2004; Nation & Waring, 1997; Waring & Takaki, 2003). Additionally, since over half of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire believed that the biggest challenge in English teaching was mixed-ability levels among the students, having appropriately-leveled materials and a variety of materials is likely to be one way of meeting this challenge.

The fact that 85% of the teachers in the questionnaire selected texts based on the learners' reading level is not surprising given the strong focus on differentiation within Norwegian schools in the current and previous national curricula. However, given the lack of variation in reading materials used (see section 7.4.2), one could question to what extent the teachers were truly able

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to select materials according to students' reading levels (i.e., whether this reflects real practice), or whether it is merely a belief they have regarding the need for appropriately-leveled reading materials. Teachers' practices may rather be influenced by contextual demands (e.g., time, material resources, and school conventions). At the same time, they may maintain their attitudes and beliefs about how reading instruction should ideally be practiced (Borg, 2003, 2006). Thus, according to Borg, there may be discrepancies between teacher's practices and beliefs.

9.5.2 Teachers' reported views on teaching practices

Teachers' reported views on teaching practices should be seen in connection with the reported findings in sections 9.2.2 and 9.3.2.

Reading purpose

In terms of comprehension, the researcher considers it positive that two-thirds of the teachers responding to the questionnaire felt that not all the words in the text needed to be understood. Such a view is related to the practice of focusing on overall comprehension rather than understanding every word in a text, the latter being a reading strategy associated with poor comprehenders and less fluent readers (N. J. Anderson, 2005; Grabe, 2009). Additionally, some teachers may vary the intensity with which they focus on some texts, attaching greater language focus to some texts than others. Although this variation in focus for different reading purposes was not thoroughly explored in the questionnaire, it is something that could be addressed in future research.

When the interviewed case study teachers explained their approach to working with texts, the greatest differences appeared to be in which way and for how long they worked with texts. For example, the textbook-based approach teacher chose to spend less time with the texts, focusing instead on vocabulary, reading, and retelling in the L1 without any real discussion of the text, which she explained was due to the quantity and length of the texts in the textbook. In contrast, one of the combination approach teachers chose to prioritize working for longer periods of time with fewer texts, sometimes over the course of days or weeks.

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Independent reading

In the questionnaire, the vast majority of teachers agreed that it was difficult to find time for students to engage in free independent reading. This may imply that teachers recognize the need for independent silent reading time, but are limited by contextual factors.

Although all of the teachers in the interviews, with the exception of the textbook-based approach teacher, stressed the importance of giving students individual reading time, the way in which this was incorporated into the teaching varied. The EYLP approach teachers and one of the combination approach teachers (S2) gave students free reading time, allowing them to read books of their choice extensively.

Overall, the views of many of the teachers in the case study schools showed a promising trend, as several of them had incorporated various types of reading activities into their teaching and seemed to perceive individual reading time, especially reading at the students' reading level, as a priority to improve reading skills. Thus, even though teachers may recognize the importance of individual silent reading for reader development, it remains to be seen how this practice can be implemented more frequently, given the contextual issues.

Reading strategy instruction

It was only the teachers at the EYLP approach school who specifically reported teaching students reading strategies and focusing on different phases of reading, namely, the pre-, during-, and post-reading phases. Even though the textbook-based approach teacher had not incorporated the teaching of reading strategies into her teaching, she commented that after introducing the fourth-grade students to the national test, she saw a need to have an increased focus on reading strategies in the future. Focus on teaching reading strategies and reading purposes are areas in which guided reading, as in the EYLP approach school, appears to be more focused than what appears in the teachers' guides for the most popular textbook series.

As mentioned above related to the national test, there is at present a greater emphasis on strategic reading and comprehension, which could be a reaction to research showing that students are not adequately prepared to read higher-

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level texts in their further studies (cf. Hellekjær, 2008), or prepared for many professions that would require English skills beyond everyday conversational English. This emphasis is also reflected in the expectations for reading skills stated in the curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013) and in the Framework for Basic Skills (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2012; see also Chapter 4). Thus, if the intention is for reading strategies and higher-level comprehension skills to have a greater place in EFL primary education, teachers may need more support and instruction in how to integrate these into their teaching.

9.5.3 The teachers' perceptions of differentiation and reading levels

All of the teachers in the case study schools, irrespective of reading approach, commented on the variation in reading abilities among the students. However, they had different ways of addressing the students' different needs. The fourth-grade teacher at the first combination school (S2) and the teacher at the textbook-based approach school (S1) both pointed out that lower-ability students were unable to comprehend the texts in the textbook and thus struggled to participate in class. Many of the types of differentiation mentioned by the teachers in their interviews were primarily focused on making content easier or supporting students who were struggling (see also subsections 8.2.6 and 8.3.6).

In contrast, across the reading approaches, the fifth-grade teachers at all of the schools using textbooks often referred to the need for more difficult materials to challenge the most capable readers in their classes. More difficult reading materials could be made available if teachers went beyond the textbook (such as using graded readers and authentic texts). The issue seems to be how to create challenges for students while at the same time supporting struggling students when using the same texts and doing similar activities. Thus, there is a case for the merits of using separate texts, and differentiated activities, learning aims, and interactions with the teacher, instead of all students working with the same texts.

The EYLP approach incorporates differentiation in materials, their use, teaching practices, teacher-student interaction and expectations of students'

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interaction while discussing texts (see sections 9.3.1, 9.3.2, and 9.4), all of which the teachers reported in the interviews. These types of differentiation were also observed by the researcher during the case study observations. One teacher reported that it was difficult and time-consuming to design differentiated tasks at all of the stations. However, she felt that if teachers were more familiar and experienced with the program, it would be easier to do so. She also felt that the extent of differentiation in teaching and activities was an advantage in the EYLP program, especially for the high achievers. Thus, the EYLP approach seems to enable teachers to differentiate not only for lower-level, but also for higher-level learners, an area where the teachers using the other approaches felt their approach may have been lacking.

In all of the case study schools the teachers appeared to be concerned about differentiation and using it in their classes. Generally, they appeared to be most aware of differentiation in terms of appropriate text difficulty (despite the fact that this was not always applied in their teaching, but more often to homework assignments); they also occasionally used pairs or small groups to have supportive conversations before whole-class discussion. Overall, they reported that they focused insufficiently on differentiating the way in which they interacted with their students. They also seemed to focus more on supporting the struggling readers than on encouraging the stronger readers. It is unfortunate if the stronger readers are taken for granted or neglected at the expense of helping the struggling readers. Both should be given attention, (although it is understandable that with the demands of differentiating for many different levels within the class, it may take time for teachers to develop differentiated lessons for high-achieving students). This is an area in which especially whole-class reading instruction could be improved and where additional professional development could be focused to give teachers the additional support they need to meet the needs of all students.

9.5.4 The strengths of the reading approaches

Among the interviewed teachers, those who expressed most satisfaction with their reading approach appeared to be those practicing the combination approach and one of the EYLP approach teachers. The combination approach teachers all expressed satisfaction at being able to choose from both the textbook and from other reading materials. However, they related their

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interest in using different materials to teaching experience and confidence in their choices or, as one teacher put it, “daring” to go away from the textbook. The fact that it is considered daring to go away from the textbook suggests there is also a general impression among teachers that the textbook is safe or the norm, and one is going against tradition and expectations when using other materials or approaches (Mellegård & Pettersen, 2012). In contrast, the textbook-based approach teacher mentioned both the quality of the texts in the textbook and the fact that the publishers state they have planned the textbook according to the curriculum aims as strengths of the textbook-based approach.

A paucity of instruction hours was considered an important factor when planning reading instruction for nearly half of the teachers in the questionnaire. Likewise, four of the case study teachers considered a lack of time as influencing their decisions regarding reading approach, although this lack of time related to different issues, including both teaching- and planning-related issues (Mellegård & Pettersen, 2012; Olsen, 1997). For example, the textbook-based approach teacher remarked on the high quantity of the textbook texts and thus felt there was an insufficient amount of time to work with all of the texts. In contrast, one of the combination approach teachers mentioned that there was insufficient time to adequately address all of the language skills, with writing especially receiving less attention. One EYLP approach teacher referred to the challenge of finding time to plan differentiated materials adequately for students working at the different stations. However, as she was a new teacher, and it was her first year working with the EYLP program, she suggested it may become easier in the future.

The EYLP approach teachers mentioned how they perceived that the primary strengths of their program (namely, that they could have more teacher-student interaction with individual students at the teacher station), provided them with the opportunity to engage with the students in greater depth. This was partially accomplished through the use of stations, which allowed for greater differentiation, such as working with the specific needs of the different groups of students. Although the teachers in the EYLP approach school generally felt that their students were learning more actively than they would have done if the teaching had been primarily whole-class instruction, one remarked that the stations placed great responsibility on the students, and that the teacher could not directly monitor all of the students at the other stations at all times. Thus,

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more responsibility was placed on the students for autonomous learning and teachers needed to accept having less control (Mercer, 2000; Wells, 2000; Edwards & Mercer, 1987). Overall, although the teachers using the combination and EYLP approaches appeared to be more satisfied with their reading approach, the teachers from all three approaches in the case study saw room for improvement.

9.6 Student perspectives on the reading approaches

Although not specifically a research question in this study, the researcher feels it is beneficial to also address the students' perspectives on the reading approaches as revealed through interviews with them, especially the materials and practices used at their respective schools. Since the aim of teaching is for students to learn, it is important that students have a voice in this research. However, since it was not an overall focus of the study, it was not considered necessary to include it as a separate research question. If it had been, the researcher would have addressed the issue more thoroughly, as students' experiences and perspectives on learning are also complex. Additionally, although the researcher made an attempt to interview a range of students at each of the schools, the number of students was limited. Moreover, the data from the students' perspective is limited to the case study, as it was not a component of the teacher questionnaire. Thus, nationally representative data is not available; this data is purely qualitative and limited in scope.

At all of the schools, the students had different impressions of the reading approach used at their school, including the materials and working methods. Of the students using the *Stairs* textbooks, namely, the textbook-based approach school and the second combination approach school (S3), about half enjoyed the textbook, while the others thought it was "okay." Similarly, many felt the texts were of an appropriate level, while others thought they were too easy, especially the students at the second combination approach school (S3). Similarly, the students at the first combination approach school (S2) generally thought the *Scoop* series was "okay," some that the texts were appropriate, and others that they were too easy. Thus, there may have been a feeling among the students that the textbook does not provide enough appropriate-

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leveled texts irrespective of which of the two textbooks were used. However, the students' impression of text difficulty may be related to the fact that those who are capable of reading at a higher level are also required by their teachers to read the easier texts, simply because they are in the textbook (assuming that all students read all texts, for example at combination approach schools). The perspectives of these students relate to research that indicates that reading appropriate-leveled texts can influence reading motivation (cf. Day & Bamford, 1998; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Nation, 2009b). Thus, approaches that include greater use of appropriately leveled reading texts and student choice of texts, such as combination and EYLP approaches, may promote greater student reading motivation, and consequently, more student reading.

In contrast to the textbooks, the students at the combination approach schools and the EYLP school were generally positive to the graded readers and children's books used for independent reading, and for the guided reading at the EYLP school. However, some of the students at the EYLP school felt that some of the graded readers were childish, which may be because they used both L1 and L2 graded readers at this school; the L1 graded readers that were written for younger children may have been less appropriate in terms of content and topics (see also section 5.2.3). Although their assessment of the graded readers seemed appropriate for some of the narrative texts, the greater number of factual texts among the L1 graded reader series, compared to the textbooks or some of the L2 graded reader series, such as Gullhoj or Damm's *Galaxy*, may have compensated for the childishness in other texts. Overall, the greater variety of texts, differentiated reading materials, and student choice associated with the combination and EYLP approaches seemed to be positive factors for the students.

Regarding reading practices, many of the students commented on the practices used for reading at their school. One student at the textbook-based approach school mentioned that it was boring to wait when the students took turns reading aloud. Similarly, some students at the first combination approach school (S2), where choral reading was frequently practiced, also mentioned that long texts took a long time to read aloud. At this school, the students also reported that translation of texts could be difficult. These three practices, namely students reading aloud individually, choral reading, and

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translation, are all considered more traditional practices associated with the grammar-translation and direct teaching methods (Howatt, 1984).

In contrast, many of the students from the second combination approach school (S3) wanted more to read during class, irrespective of whether it was in the textbook or other books. This could be a positive outcome of the independent reading time used in some of the lessons at the combination schools. Overall, the students at the EYLP approach school were very positive to the approach used, and especially the interaction at the teacher station. One student specifically mentioned that he learned more English during the guided reading sessions at the teacher station. Thus, it seems that students often had positive experiences related to practices involving more active reading time and more interaction, especially in smaller groups. These student perspectives both complement and add depth to the perspectives presented by the teachers.

9.7 Comparison of the reading approaches in the case study schools

The present section compares the reading approaches as presented in the case study schools. First, the textbook-based approach at School 1 appeared to be predictable and “safe” for the teacher and students. The textbook was the primary reading material and provided a structure for the year of EFL teaching. At the same time, it also meant that it provided the topics and much of the written language input. The teacher had the support from the teacher’s guide and knew that the curriculum aims were incorporated in the textbook. However, the teacher using this approach had supplemented the textbook, most commonly with the use of YouTube videos and music, rather than other reading texts. The predominance of teacher-led instruction, broken up with short episodes of pairs of students reading aloud or translating texts, meant that the majority of the students were often passive in class with only a few of them participating by speaking or reading aloud. Additionally, the aim of the lessons often appeared to be to get through the text and learn the vocabulary, rather than any longer interaction or discussion of the text, content, or overall

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theme¹⁰². Such an approach may not only provide less support for reading comprehension development, but also less motivation for the students, as they have few meaningful interactions with texts. Discussion of texts, and meaningful interactions with texts are both included in the curriculum definition of reading (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013).

The combination approach schools (S2 and S3) used a variety of reading materials for independent reading, but primarily the textbook for whole-class interactions and activities. There were differences between the schools in the quantity of and access to books other than the textbook. The School 2 teachers had to purchase books themselves or order them from the library. Therefore, there were more authentic children's books than graded readers. In contrast, School 3 had invested in a great variety and quantity of graded readers and authentic children's books. The fourth-grade teacher at School 2, who was taking an in-service course, occasionally read aloud authentic children's literature texts to her students. The School 3 teacher also designed a book project to use with her students using *Fantastic Mr. Fox* with her students. The students at both schools appeared to benefit from these experiences, both in terms of engagement with reading and reported motivation for independent reading.

When working with the textbook texts in the combination approach schools, there was still a predominance of teacher-led instruction. This was in the form of either choral reading or students taking turns reading aloud, which generally led to lower student activity levels and incorporated fewer other activities. Although choral reading involves student activity, it is a very narrow form of participation. It is often practiced repetitively and the individual student has less at stake, which can be positive for their confidence. However, the student also has less to gain, as they will not receive feedback on their individual performance.

The description above relates to the particular implementation of the combination approach in the two case study schools. The teachers could have chosen to add more differentiated interaction or focus on reading skills and

¹⁰² “Appeared to be” because the teacher often did not explicitly state or post what the lesson aim was, which also meant it was not readily available to the students.

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strategies. However, the strength of their implementation was in greater use of individual reading, even if it was more intensive in approach at School 3 and extensive at School 2. Thus, although this approach incorporated a greater use of differentiated materials, primarily through graded readers, there was still room for improvement, especially in terms of greater differentiated interaction between the teacher and students and more focus on reading skills and strategies.

The EYLP approach (as observed at School 4) appears to have many advantages. For example, the extent of differentiated interaction between the teacher and students at the teacher station, enabled by the use of small groups, meant the teacher had fewer students to interact with at any one time. Other advantages were the differentiated materials for extensive reading, both graded readers and children's literature, and the overall focus on reading skills and development of strategies through guided reading at the teacher station.

However, although this may be considered an ideal program from the perspective of reading development, from an EFL perspective, one drawback is its lack of focus on oral communication skills. Oral communication could be featured at the other stations besides the teacher station, although there is no specific station intended for this purpose¹⁰³. This is because the EYLP program was taken from an L1 reading and writing program, which, accordingly, did not require a component focused on oral language development¹⁰⁴. Thus, this is one area in which the EYLP program, as implemented in Norwegian schools, may not have been adapted well enough for foreign language learning, and therefore, it could be further developed.

At the EYLP approach school in this study, there was additionally a strong focus on translation of the texts read at the teacher station. This was not only time-consuming, but also appeared to be very challenging for the students,

¹⁰³ Some schools using the EYLP, such as Nylund, have changed the focus of one of the stations more towards communicative skills. Additionally, Nylund has chosen to alternate between whole-class and EYLP station-based lessons, which allows for more teacher-led instruction.

¹⁰⁴ Although there were many minority-background children in the Australian context in which the program was practiced, often of a low socio-economic status, they were not necessarily non-fluent speakers of English.

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who usually spent more time translating than they did reading the original English text. Additionally, it appeared that their reading fluency and comprehension skills were stronger than their translation skills. Thus, at times, it appeared that the teacher chose texts below the students' instructional reading level due to their inability to accurately translate more difficult texts. For students to improve their reading, they should read at their instructional reading level in order to receive input slightly above their independent reading level, what could be referred to as their *i + 1* input level (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985), or their Zone of Proximal Development (Pacheco, 2010; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978).

The fifth-grade teacher explained that her focus on accurate translation was partially due to a desire to improve the students' Norwegian skills, as Norwegian was not their L1. Although the students should naturally also have opportunities to improve their Norwegian language skills, it could be challenging for students to be focused on accuracy in two languages at the same time. With a focus on language accuracy during reading, the students were engaged in intensive reading. However, they also had the opportunity to read extensively at the reading station. Although the two create a nice balance, it does not alter the demands of translation and a focus on accuracy in one language, which can be challenging enough. Additionally, one could argue this is a disservice to students' time, which is supposed to be for the development of English skills in EFL lessons.

Although the three teaching approaches studied in the current case study research appeared to be teacher-dependent, the EYLP approach may be considered even more so than the others, partially because some of the greatest benefits of the program come through the scaffolded and guided interactions with the teacher at the teacher station. This is where the teacher can best support individual students' reading development. A teacher who is less aware of differentiation, or how best to model and provide scaffolding for students in developing and using reading strategies, will be less effective in this setting. Additionally, because the development of both autonomous and collaborative working skills necessary for students to succeed at the other non-teacher led stations takes place over time, this is a program best implemented as a whole-school approach, where students will be able to develop their skills as they progress through the grades. Not all of the teachers

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may be equally prepared or equipped to work optimally with the EYLP approach. Although additional training would be beneficial, it may nevertheless be the case that not all teachers, even if they have received additional training, would master the style of teaching required in the EYLP.

Despite these challenges, there are numerous benefits of the EYLP approach (e.g., Drew, 2009b). In the opinion of this researcher, it is possible to take some of the positive aspects of the EYLP approach and combine them with other approaches, such as the combination approach. Increasing the amount of time students work in smaller, level-differentiated reading groups with the teacher, focusing on comprehension skills and strategies development, and creating opportunities for extensive reading, especially of level-differentiated texts at home, could arguably lead to improvements in students' reading motivation and development.

9.8 Implications

Based on the results and discussions of the current research, three main implications appear to emerge from this study. First, there is a need for a greater focus on reading skills, purpose, and strategies within EFL reading instruction in grades 4 and 5. This includes helping raise students' and teachers' awareness of transferring reading skills from Norwegian to English. Second, there is a need for greater use of differentiation and different types of differentiation to support reading development. Finally, there is a need for more teacher training and development.

9.8.1 Reading skills

As previously mentioned in 9.2.3, reading skills in all subjects are a focus in the *LK06* curriculum. Additionally, further clarification of the reading construct is addressed in the Framework for Basic Skills. These documents specify that students need to develop lower- and higher-level comprehension skills, reading strategies, and knowledge of how and when to apply these skills and strategies. Since Norwegian students are introduced to English reading and writing early in their school careers, it could be beneficial to view Norwegian and English reading development as complementary rather than supplementary. One cannot assume that students have fully developed their

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Norwegian reading skills before English reading is introduced through, for example, teachers reading aloud or shared reading experiences (cf. Smith & Elley, 1997). This is not to argue that English reading should be delayed, but rather that English teachers should be involved in helping promote and consolidate the reading skills and strategies used in Norwegian to support both Norwegian and English reading development (cf. Grabe, 2009; Goldenberg, 2011).

In the case study data, reading-related activities were primarily focused on learning vocabulary and talking about the main idea of the story. The teachers did not often help the students move beyond this level to more advanced reading skills, for example, learning to draw inferences or evaluation of texts and content. Although especially the second fifth-grade teacher in the EYLP approach was successful at occasionally helping students with reading comprehension strategies, this was not a common practice at the other case study schools or to the same extent with the other teachers at the EYLP approach school. Thus, the teachers did not often help the students to apply Norwegian higher-level reading comprehension skills and reading strategies to English reading. This is an area which could be given more attention and which would support overall reading development, as well as the development of English reading skills.

In the EFL context, students learn language skills at the same time as they develop high-level comprehension skills. This situation could be used as an argument against requiring students to explain their thinking in English, since they are likely to have more limited productive language skills than cognitive thinking skills (Cameron, 2009; Munden 2014). As a consequence, students could sometimes be allowed to respond in Norwegian when working with texts, which would not require both language input and output demands in the same activity. In other words, during an English reading activity, students could focus on reading comprehension and reading skills, rather than English language production, at least part of the time. Additionally, the reading aims and activities in English should reinforce skills they have acquired in Norwegian. In order for this to be successful, it is important for Norwegian and English teachers to collaborate by encouraging the application of Norwegian reading strategies to English reading contexts. However, this

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collaboration would not be necessary if the teacher taught both English and Norwegian to the same group of students.

9.8.2 Differentiation

The need for a greater use of differentiation related to materials, practices, interaction, and teacher expectations for students is a second implication of the study. Related to differentiated interaction, Vygotsky (1978) describes teachers as co-constructing knowledge with students. It is important to reflect on how teacher practices, dialogue, and materials can support this learning function. The role of the teacher, and reading interaction between teacher and learner, should be further explored. The case study data from this study shows a predominance of teacher-led, whole-class instruction, with the exception of the EYLP approach school, and teacher recitation and telling. Additionally, reading interactions were predominantly teacher-initiated and teacher-dominated, with few examples of students asking questions (cf. Van der Meij, 1993).

Research on reading instruction shows that effective teachers plan for students to be more active, and model and scaffold rather than use recitation and telling (Pressley, 2006; B. Taylor et al., 2005; B. Taylor, Peterson, Rodriguez, et al., 2002). Students were generally more active more of the time at the EYLP school than at the schools using the other approaches. Additionally, the fifth-grade EYLP teacher was also more effective at modeling and scaffolding. However, although modeling and scaffolding were foci of the guided reading in the EYLP approach, the second fifth-grade teacher appeared to do this more often than the other EYLP teachers. This could be an area where teachers need more support or training in how to effectively model and provide scaffolding for their students.

Another type of differentiation is in reading focus, namely, intensive or extensive reading. Despite numerous studies and research supporting the use of extensive reading for language learning (e.g., Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007; Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2012), there is little evidence of any integration of extensive reading as a method promoted within textbooks (Brown, 2009). This study has found that intensive reading is the most common practice in Norwegian schools, normally through the use of

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textbook texts. The implications of the research on extensive reading, and its ability to differentiate reading, is that one needs to reassess the popular approaches to EFL reading instruction that heavily rely on textbook use and traditional teacher-led methods of reading instruction and working with texts (cf. Drew, 2004; Hellekjær, 2007).

In contrast, an approach including the use of graded readers allows for a greater degree of materials-based differentiation than a pure textbook-based approach, such as at the combination and EYLP approach schools. However, a teacher could hypothetically adapt any textbook text or authentic text to a certain extent to allow for a greater or lesser focus on language, thereby adapting linguistic or cognitive challenges for students. For example, the teacher could lengthen or shorten texts or include more or less difficult vocabulary in order to create different text levels for struggling readers and those who need more challenges. Teachers may choose to do this if there were limited resources at the school or if they wanted to use a particular text with students of different ability levels.

Adapting texts in this way may be time-consuming and teachers may not be aware of how best to adapt texts to their students' reading level and developmental needs. However, such adaptation of texts lies at the very heart of the principles behind graded readers. Therefore, there is a strong argument for them being used to a greater extent in EFL reading instruction at the primary level in Norway, as in the combination and EYLP approach schools.

Additionally, the teachers in this study who primarily used whole-class instruction were not able to differentiate to the same degree for their students as those who used small groups (i.e., in the EYLP approach school) and, to a certain extent, individual reading (i.e., as in the combination and EYLP approach schools). This also applies to teachers using simplified texts/graded readers or authentic texts with a whole class. When working with one text with the whole class, not all students will read at an appropriate reading level, which is not surprising as the variation in reading ability level in any typical Norwegian grade 4 or 5 class is normally quite high. However, the teachers using a whole-class based interaction style had more control of the classroom language used, in that they directed the conversation and could direct students towards greater target language use. The current questionnaire findings

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indicate that an adequate degree of variation in grouping, reading materials at different levels, and interaction type does not currently occur in Norwegian primary EFL classes and the implications of this for students should be addressed.

This is not to argue that textbooks should be removed altogether from EFL classrooms, for their potential benefits are clear, including that they have a structured system, are linked to the curriculum, are written so that they are easy to use, and are time-saving for teachers. However, the way in which they are used should be adapted to the specific context.

There is an important distinction between a reading source in itself, on the one hand, and the way in which it is used, on the other. For example, Roser, Hoffman and Carr (2003) highlighted the practice of a teacher who “illustrated flexible decision making” regarding the use of specific texts within a basal reader series, and was not bound to the series as a whole. In the same way, textbooks arguably have a place in Norwegian EFL classrooms. However, there could certainly be more variety in the way they are used. Additionally, teachers could be more selective about which texts to work with in class and which to bypass. It is therefore through teachers’ practices and methods of interaction and differentiation, as well as taking a critical stance regarding which texts should be used and how, that teachers can create optimal learning experiences and reading development for students.

For example, approaching the textbook from a reflective stance would be helpful for teachers. Teacher’s guides and textbooks, as suggested by Crawford (2002), can be a source of professional development for teachers, both providing support and a source of input. However, this presupposes that the guides provide theoretically explicit rationales for the proposed materials and activities and that the connection between content and learning aims is clear and appropriate for the ability level of the students.

Schools that have a selection of textbooks may allow teachers to consult multiple texts for ideas and activities, creating an amalgamation of texts and activities that work best for their students. Given the length and breadth of many textbooks, it is important for teachers to decide on which texts to work with intensively and which others could be worked with extensively.

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Variation in methods may both encourage and interest students in different ways and allow for more focus on certain topics than others. Moreover, this variation allows for more flexibility to introduce into the lesson plans other texts and topics not covered in the textbooks.

9.8.3 Teacher training and development

Teacher qualifications

The need for increased qualifications and training for language teachers in Norway has been widely acknowledged (Drew & Vigrestad, 2008; Hasselgreen, 2005; Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2007a). The findings from the questionnaire confirmed that almost half of grade 4 and grade 5 EFL teachers in Norway have no formal qualifications to teach English. Thus, there is a continuing need for more support for teachers through English planning teams, professional development, and in-service and further education courses.

The importance of qualifications and training can be seen in relation to teachers' perceptions about their competence to teach English. First, the teachers generally felt prepared to teach English after their initial teacher training if they had taken English as one of their subjects. Thus, if more teachers are offered pre-service and in-service training, more of them are likely to consider themselves better prepared to teach the subject. Whether or not they actually are better prepared and more competent is another issue, which would have to be researched in other ways. It would also have been interesting to offer a follow-up question in the questionnaire to the teachers who did not feel prepared to teach English by asking them whether they believed they would be better prepared if they had taken an in-service course. It would be useful to know whether teachers feel a need for that type of in-service course and whether they would be willing to attend one if offered. Such courses have been partially addressed by the *Kompetanse for Kvalitet* (Competence for Quality; KFK) program (see also section 2.2.5). However, it would take a long time to reach all the teachers in need of and willing to attend in-service courses, especially considering the new requirements for primary school English teachers to have subject-specific qualifications.

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Second, it is highly questionable whether non-specialized teachers are well enough prepared to teach their subjects and whether there should consequently be a requirement for all teachers to have qualifications in the subjects they teach. This issue has been addressed by three reforms. The first is the reform in teacher education in 2010 in which teachers who will teach grades 5–10 must specialize in two subjects. Second, according to a new requirement for teacher qualifications, teachers teaching grades 8–10 must have 60 study points (a full year of study) in the subjects they teach (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2009). Most recently, effective from August 1, 2015, primary school teachers are required to have 30 study points (a half year) of English in order to teach the subject, which applies to all teachers, even those currently working (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015; see also section 2.2.5).

Teacher training could help support teachers in different ways. First, it would support them by increasing their confidence in teaching practices, the ability to differentiate teaching, and their own language skills. Second, it would support them by providing a greater understanding of the curriculum. Finally, it could promote a greater degree of teacher collaboration among Norwegian and English teachers and among English teachers to support the transfer of reading skills and better progression of skills.

Teacher confidence

Regarding teacher confidence in teaching practices, many teachers may not feel capable of differentiating for their students and know how best to design and promote reading activities that will be engaging, build reading skills, and support language development. In fact, from the questionnaire, only roughly a quarter of the teachers felt they were able to provide differentiated reading instruction for their students. It is important to increase teachers' confidence and skills to support their students in this area. The teacher is a key factor in L2 reading teaching and learning (Driscoll et al., 2004; Eskey, 2005; Goldenberg, 2011; Harris & Duibhir, 2011), someone who needs to be able to adapt to the specific context, the students' needs, and the learning aims in order to create a successful learning experience. Considering that many teachers in Norwegian primary schools are not qualified to teach English and that the curriculum provides little guidance for teachers as to how learning

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aims should be met, teachers need research-based input to support their decisions and to be able to critically evaluate teaching practices and materials currently used at their schools.

Furthermore, related to teacher development, it is important for teachers to have adequate language skills in order to be good role models for their students (cf. Driscoll et al., 2004). Although not a particular focus of this study, many of the teachers involved in the case study had very good language skills. However, this cannot be taken for granted, since so many EFL teachers currently teaching in Norwegian schools have not studied English since upper secondary school, and there are no specific English grade requirements for acceptance into teacher education. Equally as important would be knowledge of language and reading development. It is important for teachers to be aware of different types of reading, reading strategies, and how different language skills all contribute to reading development in order to best support students.

Knowledge of relevant language teaching documents

EFL teachers would benefit from having an increased understanding of the curriculum, the *CEFR*, and the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*. First, although the curriculum specifies language-learning aims, it does not state explicit teaching practices or materials to be used. However, more recently, accompanying guidelines for implementing the curriculum have been published, although many teachers may not be aware of them, since they came after the curriculum itself. Given the freedom provided in the curriculum to decide on teaching methods and practices, much of the responsibility is placed on the teachers to design and plan effective lessons for their students. Therefore, it becomes important for teachers to have an understanding of effective practices that will help their students meet the language aims in the curriculum. Teachers also need to have a greater understanding of the curriculum, i.e., what the students should have already learned in both English and other subjects (e.g., reading skills). Teachers can then apply this knowledge to the students' further learning and intended progression (i.e., which aims are to be reached in the coming years), so that the basic skills and language learning can be seen in a progression.

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Second, the new revision of the curriculum has an expanded concept of text genre and what should be included as reading materials. This can mean digital texts, blogs, oral texts, and graphic novels, in addition to more traditional text genres. This may place greater demands on teachers to go beyond the textbook to find text sources.

Third, time also appears to be an important factor in teachers' decisions and their focus in English lessons. The pressure that some teachers feel to get through the textbook seems to limit their possibilities for reflection and exploration of ideas during lessons (cf. Fisher, 2005). Since this perceived pressure has no basis in the curriculum, a better understanding of the *LK06* aims and how to help students reach them may help change teachers' perspectives. However, in order for this type of change to be successful, it is equally important that this knowledge is also shared with school principals and parents.

Additionally, the limited number of English lessons per week, compared to the comprehensive learning aims for English in the *LK06* curriculum, often limit teachers' opportunities to address topics in more depth and spend more time on drawing connections between L1 and L2 reading skills and strategies. However, one could argue that applying L1 skills in L2 contexts would in the end save time as the students would be able to apply already learned skills in a new area. There appears to be little evidence from the case study schools and the analysis of teacher's guides to suggest that much time has been given to strategies and explicit reading skills in EFL lessons. Thus, a focus on these areas would add another dimension to EFL teaching.

Finally, an increased awareness of how the curriculum relates to the *CEFR*, the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*, and other national and international language aims deserves greater focus. Compared to the results of the current survey, teachers in the higher grades seem to have more knowledge of the *ELP* and use it to a greater extent¹ (Bugge & Dessingué, 2009). This greater use of the *ELP* could be related to the larger percentage of teachers with English higher education qualifications within lower and upper secondary schools compared to primary school (60 study points in English: 63% and 31%, respectively; see section 7.4.6). Both of these surveys suggest that

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teachers could be made more aware of the *ELP* as a potential resource in their teaching.

The lack of explicit references to the *CEFR* and the *ELP* in the curriculum might be one of the major factors as to why so few teachers are familiar with these documents. A significant opportunity to inform teachers about these resources may have been missed when references to them were omitted in the curriculum (Hasselgreen, 2005). For example, the *ELP* can provide additional support for teachers as to how to plan teaching related to specific reading aims and how to focus on productive language use.

Teacher collaboration

A third factor is teacher collaboration. As mentioned above in the discussion on reading skills, due to the ability of students to transfer reading skills from their L1 to L2, it is important for teachers to take this ability into consideration when planning, especially when there are different teachers for English and Norwegian. Limited collaboration between teachers is common, especially during the first months and years of teaching experience (Freeman, 1998). Freeman (1998) has described teaching as “an egg-box profession” in which the teachers are all kept separate from one another, often promoting a privatist attitude to collaboration and teaching (J. Roberts, 1998). Many researchers have supported a shift towards collaborative teacher development based on the argument that teaching should be a social process in which “teachers can only learn professionally in sustained and meaningful ways when they are able to do so together” (Johnston, 2002, p. 241). Since both lack of time and difficult transitions between grades were mentioned as a problem by teachers in the questionnaire, greater focus on time to discuss English teaching content, how to improve transitions between grades, and the transfer of skills from L1 to L2, would be beneficial for both generalist and specialist teachers in planning and promoting English development.

The findings regarding collaboration between teachers could suggest that planning is most often coordinated by grade level and not by subject. This means that English subject teachers do not necessarily coordinate the content and development of reading skills throughout the years. Additionally, teachers may not have been taking advantage of possible English subject and didactic

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knowledge and experience from other colleagues. Recent studies on effective schools have shown that these schools are typically characterized as:

collaborative learning communities in which staff assume a shared responsibility for all students' learning, monitor progress as a way of planning instruction for groups and individuals, help one another learn more about the art and science of teaching, and reach out to the families they serve. (B. Taylor, Pressley, & Pearson, 2002, p. 372)

Collaboration among English and Norwegian teachers is important because, although research has shown that L1 reading strategies can be transferred to L2 reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Jiménez et al., 1996), teachers need to actively support students in practicing transference of the strategies (Goldenberg, 2011). Additionally, L1 reading ability influences L2 reading ability (Dressler & Kamil, 2006). Thus, it would be important for the English teacher to be aware of the students' Norwegian reading skills and strategy use, as well as the Norwegian teacher to be aware of new reading skills and strategies that may have been learned in English, and which could be applied to Norwegian. In the questionnaire, nearly all of the teachers acknowledged a connection between Norwegian and English reading ability, yet there was little collaboration between the Norwegian and EFL teachers. Additionally, there was little indication, based on the case study data presented in Chapter 8, that teachers tried to actively promote the use of Norwegian reading knowledge and strategies in English reading instruction, even though most also acknowledged the connection between reading abilities in the two languages. These issues could be explored in future research.

Even if EFL teachers do not collaborate with Norwegian teachers, one would have expected teachers to collaborate with other teachers within the same subject, as the curriculum and Department of Education stipulate that teachers are expected to be aware of students' progression throughout the subject from grades 1 to 10 (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2014; Kunnskapsløftet, 2006). The Quality Framework also specifies an expectation that teachers collaborate in planning and following students' progression (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2005b). Thus, it is important for teachers to collaborate with teachers at other grade levels. However, this situation may have been mitigated by the Norwegian tradition of having one teacher follow classes through multiple grade levels. Additionally, an English specialist may be responsible for most

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of the English teaching at one school. As there is a key transition from grades 4 to 5, which many teachers experience as being difficult for their students, it seems to be important to encourage more collaboration between teachers to improve this transition.

A focus on reading skills, greater understanding of the curriculum and possibilities for differentiation, and teacher training and collaboration, would greatly enhance the state of EFL primary education in Norway.

9.9 Limitations

9.9.1 Design limitations

Although the case study component of the research design attempted to draw on current trends within English reading instruction, case studies always limit the ability to generalize findings. The teachers involved in the case study were chosen to represent a specific reading approach. Thus, they represent one possible implementation of the reading approach.

Other limitations of the current research can also be identified. First, the researcher was unable to find an appropriate extensive reading approach school based on the use of graded readers. The original expectation was to find a school that used reading materials other than a textbook and which instead focused on extensive reading. If a school of this nature had been included in the case study, it could have added an additional aspect to the research, following in the tradition of numerous studies of extensive reading in EFL (Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2012; Elley, 1991; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Robb & Susser, 1989; Tanaka & Stapleton, 2007). Second, since the teachers in the case study schools volunteered to be part of a study, they may have been more confident and comfortable with their teaching than other teachers. Third, due to unexpected issues, such as teacher illness, there were changes in the classes observed in one of the schools and there was thus unequal time spent in each class. Finally, given the structure of the EYLP cross-curricular project focus, the observations in one of the fifth-grade classes in School 4 were completed over a shorter, intensive period, thus

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limiting the ability of the researcher to gain a sense of the development of the class over time.

A further limitation is that, although many different types of data were collected about EFL reading instruction in fourth- and fifth grades, the students' reading skills were not measured. Thus, it was not possible to compare the relative abilities of students at the schools using the different approaches. Neither was it possible to measure growth in student achievement. Measuring skills and development would have brought an additional dimension to the research.

For the research, audio recordings were used in addition to detailed field notes using an observation coding system (B. Taylor et al., 2000). Although the audio recordings and the subsequent transcriptions provided good support to the field notes, the results could have been improved by either using additional audio recording devices and/or using video recordings. One possible improvement would have been to have a separate microphone and recorder that the teacher could have worn. This would have enabled the researcher to better follow all of the interactions the teacher had with individual students, rather than the researcher moving with the recorder around the room to capture individual interactions. The method used in the current research offered a less invasive alternative for the teachers and was chosen for that reason.

9.9.2 Instrument limitations

As a new questionnaire instrument was developed for this study, the questionnaire could be adapted if used for future research. In the future, it may be possible, for example, to investigate whether teachers' use of the EYLP and extensive reading approaches and combination reading approaches are influenced by whether their teacher qualifications were taken as part of their initial teacher training or through further education courses. The course content and the teachers' choices for updating their knowledge may influence their perceived need for a change in reading approach, whether this is to meet students' learning aims or for further support in the implementation of these reading approaches.

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An additional limitation of the questionnaire research was the relatively low response rate and the overrepresentation of teachers from Eastern Norway and larger schools. Although the researcher used various methods to ensure validity and reliability within the sample, research constructs, and the content of the questionnaire, the researcher acknowledges that additional piloting could have further improved the questionnaire tool.

The questionnaire was designed to obtain the most detailed and accurate information possible. Unfortunately, this meant that certain types of analyses were not possible. This resulted from the researcher's lack of experience at the time the questionnaire was designed and conflicting interests as to how detailed versus how broad the data collected should be. Other analyses would have been possible, but not with the type of data that was collected. Since teachers and people in general often have trouble accurately remembering details, it was decided to ask teachers how many times in the previous month they performed various practices or used certain materials. However, this two-part question (if they used them, and how often), led to complications in the analysis.

There were some issues related to the construction of the questionnaire statements, specifically teachers' perceptions of teaching EFL reading. Certain items were written as indicative and contra-indicative statements. However, the answers given by the teachers did not always match this phenomenon. Some of the variations in the answers could be related to translation and contextual issues, such as the "grade-level" versus "subject specialist" pair of terms. Despite the fact that there is a strong tradition of generalist teachers in Norway, the idea of a subject-specialist in primary schools is more recent and it was not easy to translate "subject specialist" to a Norwegian equivalent with the same meaning. As such, the statement was rewritten as, "An English teacher should be the class teacher in other subjects," and "It is best if the English teacher is also the Norwegian teacher." Some other statements not interpreted as having competing priorities, such as, "Few instruction hours each week is the most important factor for how I plan reading instruction," and the "lack of materials is the most important factor for how I plan reading instruction," were possibly interpreted as non-conflicting because the teachers felt that both were important, but they did not see the two statements as connected to each other.

10 Conclusion

The current research has contributed to EFL research through a mixed methods study of the teaching and learning of EFL reading in Norwegian primary schools (fourth- and fifth grades). The study has investigated four approaches to the teaching of EFL reading¹⁰⁵: a textbook-based approach, an extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers, a combination of textbook-based and graded readers approach, and the Early Years Literacy Program (EYLP) approach. These approaches, with the exception of the extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers, were researched in-depth through a case study.

The overarching research question for this study was: How is reading taught in Norwegian fourth- and fifth-grade English as a foreign language classes? This overarching question was subdivided into four research questions. The first sub-question investigated the materials, activities, and instructional practices used by fourth- and fifth-grade teachers to teach English reading. The second sub-question explored to what extent the different reading approaches enabled the teachers to differentiate reading instruction. The third sub-question addressed the differences in reading interaction between teachers and students at the schools using the different reading approaches. Finally, the fourth sub-question explored teachers' perceptions of their English reading instruction and best practice.

The study used a mixed methods approach comprised of quantitative and qualitative data from two primary sources: a national questionnaire sent to

¹⁰⁵ Originally four reading approaches were used in the categorization based on previous research and available contextual knowledge. However, as the extensive reading approach was found to be uncommon in the questionnaire data, and in some schools was not implemented as originally intended in the categorization (i.e., reading based on extensive reading principles), it was not included in the case study. Additionally, during the questionnaire development phase, it was suggested that many Norwegian EFL teachers may not be familiar with the term extensive reading. Thus, it was translated as "*bruk av lettest bøker*" or "graded reader-based approach," which is the term used when presenting the questionnaire data.

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teachers and a case study of four schools. The questionnaire was designed by the researcher specifically to address teachers' reading practices, use of materials, and their perceptions of reading instruction and best practice. From a sample of 1,000 primary schools in Norway, 370 fourth- and fifth-grade teachers responded. The case study schools were selected to participate based on their use of a particular reading approach. Four schools were chosen: one using a textbook-based approach, two using a combination approach (defined as a combination of textbook-based and graded readers), and one using the EYLP approach¹⁰⁶. Five classroom observations of each grade level were conducted at each of the schools over a six-month period. Additionally, both semi-structured and informal interviews with teachers were conducted on multiple occasions. At the end of the observation period, brief student interviews were conducted with a selection of students from each class.

In relation to the first research question, the questionnaire found that the majority of Norwegian EFL teachers primarily use a textbook-based approach, whereas a combination approach was used by nearly a third of teachers. Graded reader and EYLP approaches were uncommon. Nearly half of the teachers had no other English books than the textbook in their classrooms, and a fifth had no English books in their library. Although there are multiple text sources potentially available to teachers, there appeared to be a lack of information available to many of the teachers as to how they could best work with different text genres, texts at different levels (i.e., comprehension levels and ability levels), reading for different purposes, and incorporating reading strategies into their teaching.

Regarding class practices, although the questionnaire data revealed that the teacher reading aloud was still a common practice, it was nevertheless an uncommon practice among the case study teachers. The latter was surprising considering that there has been a strong tradition of teachers reading aloud in EFL instruction. The frequent use of student translation of texts, repeated choral reading, and taking turns reading aloud, which were practices found in

¹⁰⁶ Two combination approach schools were selected due to the broadness of the category, "combination approach," and variation in implementation of the approach at different schools. Thus, two schools with different implementations were selected.

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the case study schools (and to some extent among the questionnaire respondents), were somewhat unexpected findings. Although these practices had previously been common in EFL instruction, they are generally associated with more traditional methods of instruction, compared to a more recent focus on communicative language learning. Generally when students take turns reading aloud, most of the class is passive. In contrast, when interaction takes place in small groups, students are usually more active, such as at the EYLP approach school. The students at the EYLP approach school were the most active, either interacting in small groups with the teacher at the teacher station or with other students at the other stations. Another reading practice, namely, individual silent reading, although not found to be a common practice in the questionnaire answers, was used at three of the four case study schools (occasionally by the two combination approach schools and regularly by the EYLP approach school). Individual extensive reading has a strong basis in reading and language learning research and was thus considered a strength of these two approaches.

Regarding the second sub-research question, teachers responding to the questionnaire and from the case study schools acknowledged the need for differentiation. Additionally, both sets of teachers found differentiation to be challenging given the variation in students' reading abilities. The case study schools addressed differentiation in different ways, and each accomplished this to a certain extent, either through materials for independent reading, or through homework. Overall, there was more differentiation in terms of reading materials, grouping, and teacher interaction at the EYLP approach school than at the other schools.

The third research question, regarding interaction between teachers and students, was primarily researched through the case study schools, where it was found that recitation was prominent at all of the schools. Additionally, coaching was infrequently employed in all of the schools. Although infrequently practiced, teachers provided scaffolding to their students and employed interaction techniques, such as elicitation. However, teachers more often used explicit feedback techniques, such as repairs and explicit correction. Teacher modeling of reading comprehension processes or strategy use was also infrequent. Generally, the best balance of dialogic teaching and recitation was found at the EYLP approach school. Thus, in terms of variation

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in interaction and teacher supported reading, although there were some examples of dialogic type interaction and teacher provided scaffolding, there was room for improvement in all of the approaches.

The fourth research question explored teachers' perceptions of their reading instruction and best practice. Overall, the case study teachers raised many of the same issues that were highlighted as important among the questionnaire respondents. Many teachers felt that variation in students' ability levels made it difficult to plan lessons and create appropriate interaction and activities. Nearly half of the teachers responding to the questionnaire felt that insufficient time influenced their teaching. Specifically, they found it challenging to find time for independent silent reading. Although many teachers perceived a connection between students' L1 and L2 reading ability, there was nevertheless infrequent collaboration between the L1 and L2 teachers. Moreover, in the case study schools, there was little explicit instruction on transferring reading strategies and comprehension skills from L1 to L2. Additionally, many felt they did not have appropriate-level materials, or enough variety of materials, for all of the students. The teachers in the case study schools who were most satisfied with their approach were the combination and EYLP approach teachers. The combination approach teacher emphasized being able to select different reading materials and the confidence to work outside the textbook, while the EYLP approach teacher highlighted increased interaction with students and opportunities for differentiation.

This research has been a large-scale study of EFL reading in Norwegian fourth- and fifth grades, providing insight into reading instruction at these two grade levels. Additionally, the mixed methods approach has enabled the researcher to view EFL reading instruction from multiple perspectives. The focus on comparing different approaches to EFL reading instruction has also contributed to new knowledge regarding teachers' practices and the use of various reading materials. This has helped to create a more complete understanding of current EFL reading instruction at the primary level in Norway and to highlight areas of best practice (e.g., greater use of a wide range of materials and grouping differentiation) and those where there is need for improvement (e.g., teacher modeling of reading and reading strategies for students). Furthermore, this research has included an understanding of how

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the EYLP approach is both similar to and different from other approaches being used by Norwegian EFL teachers.

As for the instruments used in the study, the questionnaire could be further developed as a research tool and used in other countries as a means of international comparison. Moreover, this research has shown that the observation coding scheme developed by Taylor et al. (2000) for L1 reading instruction can also be applied to an L2 context with minor adaptations. This can be an effective tool for evaluating and tracking changes in reading instruction.

As the questionnaire did not ask the teachers to report on the specific textbooks or texts used in their classes, a more thorough survey of texts used in primary EFL could be conducted. It would also be interesting to work more closely with textbook and graded reader developers to evaluate texts, the criteria used for their development, and the information provided to teachers about their language difficulty and the recommended uses of those texts.

In terms of future research, this research has indicated numerous other areas for follow-up. First, a survey among the Nordic countries would be a natural extension of the current questionnaire used in the Norwegian context. It would be interesting to find out if there are trends across these countries regarding English reading instruction at the primary level. This would be especially important given the current climate of educational accountability, where test scores and tracking national accomplishments receive great attention.

Second, a more thorough analysis of the interaction patterns used while reading texts in class could yield interesting data about how differentiation is implemented in classes and the extent to which students are active in English lessons. As there is evidence that much EFL instruction is still teacher-led, it would be useful to look into effective ways to increase modeling and scaffolding by the teacher, rather than primarily teacher recitation and telling types of interactions. An increase in modeling and scaffolding could also lead to a more natural focus on reading skills within English lessons.

Third, at the time of the data collection, the researcher was unable to find a suitable extensive reading approach through the use of graded readers school to study that was not one using the EYLP approach. As some potential

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weaknesses have been identified in the EYLP program, in addition to its strengths, it would be interesting to study a school using an extensive reading approach.

Moreover, collaboration between language teachers, whether L1, L2, or others, is important so that students can apply language learning skills and other language skills in multiple languages. Therefore, a study of best practice among teachers who have been actively supporting students in applying cross-linguistic reading and language strategies could support language teachers.

An additional potential area for research is how best to train and inform teachers about how they can implement best practice into their teaching. Specifically, it would be interesting to compare the guided reading instruction the students at the EYLP schools receive in their L1 and how, if at all, this is used to support their L2 reading. It would also be interesting to investigate to what extent L1 graded readers written for L2 students are more or less supportive for language learning.

Some final words about the approaches studied. First, the use of the EYLP in EFL education is innovative in its focus on reading development and differentiation. As far as this researcher is aware, Norway is the only country that uses this program for L2/FL teaching. Its use in Norwegian schools has increased in the past decade and it should thus receive more attention in future research. However, although the interest in the EYLP is growing, it is still only used in a small percentage of schools. Second, the combination approach, as described in this research, offers a middle way for teachers to incorporate aspects of various materials and practices. This has real potential given that nearly a third of the teachers describe their teaching as using a combination approach. However, even within this approach there is room for improvement in how teachers can differentiate practices and reading aims, and how they can interact with the students. This is an area that, if given priority in future teacher training or in supportive materials for teachers, could potentially have a large impact on current EFL practices. Finally, there is large untapped potential in helping the nearly two-thirds of teachers who use a textbook-based approach to move towards a more varied and differentiated way of teaching.

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12 Appendix

12.1 Appendix 1: Vocabulary and the CEFR

Although the *CEFR* does not explicitly state expectations for vocabulary knowledge at the different levels of the scale, the creators of the *CEFR* have identified vocabulary knowledge as one area that may be important for teachers and others using the framework. “Users of the Framework may wish to consider ... what size vocabulary (i.e., the number of words and fixed expressions) the learner will need” when attempting to attain a particular level of performance (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 150). The *CEFR* provides guidelines for what is considered vocabulary knowledge and the way in which it is expected to develop as learners improve their language competence. The *CEFR* indicates a connection between vocabulary knowledge and overall competence in the foreign language. This is seen as a progressive development in which learners, as their language competence increases, will grow increasingly large, and increasingly complex, lexicons in the foreign language (Milton, 2010). The relationship between vocabulary and overall language development is supported by research, which suggests that vocabulary knowledge is key to both comprehension and communicative ability (e.g., Nation, 2013; Stæhr, 2008).

Some of the early materials in the *CEFR* contained detailed information about the vocabulary expected to be associated with competence at some of the six ability levels of the framework. For example, there were word lists for the B1 level, which contained approximately 2000 words (examples of these lists include Coste, Courtillon, Ferenczi, Martins-Baltar & Papo, 1987; Van Ek & Trim, 1991). At the A2 level, the word lists contained approximately 1000 words (for example, Van Ek, 1980). In comparison to the Norwegian EFL context, the Norwegian national test for fifth grade are based on a A2-B1 level (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2011).

These word lists were derived from areas deemed appropriate for the relevant levels, for example clothing, personal identification, and daily routines. However, creating set word lists has disadvantages, as described by Milton (2010): “drawbacks [...] of prescribing the language for each level in a way

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that restricted the flexibility of the system and its ability to be applied across the huge variety of language courses and language learning that takes place in Europe” (2010, p. 213). Thus, although the language lists still exist, and have not been abandoned by the *CEFR*, they have adopted a more general approach to language description. The current levels are described in terms of skills, language activities, or communicative goals (Council of Europe, 2001). However, some references to types of vocabulary are still present in the descriptors, for example, “familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings” (A1 level, listening), and “high frequency or everyday job-related language” (B1 level, reading).

A number of studies have tested students’ vocabulary levels, indicating a strong association between a learners’ vocabulary size, and in particular the number of words a learner recognizes in written form, and the communicative level and performance that the learner attains (Nation, 2001; Stæhr, 2008). Stæhr’s (2008) findings suggest that learners must pass a threshold of vocabulary knowledge, which he argues is approximately 2000 words, in order to progress to the intermediate level and beyond, which Milton (2010) interprets as being the B and C levels of the *CEFR*. Nation (2001) has suggested that to reach the highest level of fluency and comprehension in English, learners should have a vocabulary knowledge of the most frequent 5000 words, and overall vocabulary knowledge of 8000–9000 words. However, around 3,000 to 4,000 words plus proper nouns have been found to provide 95% coverage of novels, newspapers, and films (Nation, 2006).

Two other studies have explicitly linked vocabulary size estimates to the *CEFR* levels, namely Meara and Milton (2003) and Milton and Alexiou (2009). Milton and Meara tested students taking and passing the Cambridge exams at every level of the *CEFR*. The students’ vocabulary levels were estimated using the XLex tests, which test all four language skills and vocabulary size. They found that at the A2 level, students had an approximate vocabulary size of 1500–2500 words, and 2700–3250 words at the B1 level. Milton and Alexiou (2009) used three different language versions of the XLex and collected extensive data from over 500 second and foreign language learners of English, Greek, and French. For EFL students in Greece the mean scores at the A2 level were 2156 and at the B2 level, 3263; in Hungary the

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mean score at the B1 level was 3135 (no students were ranked at the A2 level in that sample).

These two studies show a useful trend, namely, they confirm that progressively higher vocabulary scores were associated with progressively higher levels in the *CEFR* scale. Milton (2010) compared the findings in these two studies and, using linear regression modeling, found that 60–70% of the variance in the *CEFR* levels can be explained by differences in vocabulary size. However, there is individual variation and overlap between scores within the levels. Milton (2010) makes the following caveat: “It will be recalled that vocabulary size and communicative performance are separable qualities and one interpretation of this variation is that students with the same or similar vocabulary sizes may make different use of the knowledge to communicate more or less successfully” (p. 225).

An additional interesting finding from the Milton and Alexiou (2009) study is that knowledge of the same number of words in different languages does not necessarily mean one can perform identically in those languages. The findings indicated that the vocabulary level of each *CEFR* level differed depending on the language, for example, French as a foreign language or Greek as a second language, compared to EFL. Milton (2010) explains that: “Languages differ in important ways and one effect of this may be that it is possible to do more with fewer words in one language than in another” (p. 226). For example, languages can inflect and derive words differently, which may affect frequency calculations. Milton gives the example of English, where the most frequent words in the language include pronouns and prepositions, which is not true of all languages. This is one of many examples of linguistic differences which could affect vocabulary counts, further explained in Milton (2010). Following this argument, the EFL vocabulary estimates presented in section 1.2.3, should not be used to estimate the Norwegian L1 vocabulary of Norwegian primary school students. Although it was attempted to find other

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sources for this information¹⁰⁷, it does not seem to be available for Norwegian L1.

¹⁰⁷ Researchers within EFL vocabulary and Norwegian L1 literacy, at two Norwegian centers for literacy development were contacted. Additionally, extensive searches were conducted.

Appendix

12.2 Appendix 2: NSD permission

12.2.1 Appendix 2A: NSD permission letter

Figure 2: NSD permission letter

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

NSD

Hovde Marlagan gate 25
N-5007 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
Fax: +47-55 58 56 30
nsd@nsd.uib.no
www.nsd.uib.no
Org.no: 985 571 884

Rebecca Charboneau
Institutt for kultur- og språkvitenskap
Universitetet i Stavanger
Postboks 2557 Ullandhaug
4036 STAVANGER

Vår dato: 28.06.2010 Vår ref.: 24208/270 Deres dato: Deres ref.:

KVITTERING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 13.04.2010. All nødvendig informasjon om prosjektet forelå i sin helhet 25.06.2010. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

24208 *Young EFL Language Learners: A Study of the Development and Influence of Reading at the Norwegian primary Level*
Behandlingsansvarlig *Universitetet i Stavanger, ved instituttets svenske leder*
Daglig ansvarlig *Rebecca Charboneau*

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

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, vedlagte prosjektvurdering - kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/ 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/forakt_arud/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://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.12.2012, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdis Namsvold Kvalheim
Vigdis Namsvold Kvalheim

Inga Brautaset
Inga Brautaset

Kontaktperson: Inga Brautaset tlf: 55 58 26 35
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Ansvarlig personene i Databasene
OSLO: NSD - Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1075 Blindern, 016 Oslo, Tel: +47-22 85 52 71, nsd@iuh.no
STAVANGER: NSD - Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7401 Trondheim, Tel: +47-75 99 99 07, Agnes.mars@ntnu.no
TROMSØ: NSD - UiT, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9017 Tromsø, Tel: +47-77 64 82 36, nsd@uit.no

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12.2.2 Appendix 2B: Participant letters

Til foreldre og foresatte,

Forskningsprosjekt om engelsk leseundervisning og -opplæring i 4. og 5. klasse utført av Universitetet i Stavanger

Jeg inviterer din sønn/datter til å delta i et forskningsprosjekt som innebærer at jeg observerer i klasserommet til din sønn/datter. Mitt navn er Rebecca Charboneau, og jeg er stipendiat i lesevitenskap ved Universitetet i Stavanger. Min doktorgradsforskning er om lese-undervisning og opplæring i engelsk i 4. og 5. klasse. Hensikten med prosjektet er å kartlegge lese-undervisning og opplæringen i engelsk i 4. og 5. klasse. Målet er å bidra til kunnskapen om lese-undervisningen i engelsk på barne- og mellomtrinnet i lys av at engelsk undervisningen nå begynner fra 1. klasse og det er mer fokus på lesing og skriving på engelsk i Kunnskapsløftet. Siden elevene blir observert, vil jeg informere og innhente samtykke fra foreldre/foresatte om observasjonen.

Deltakelse i denne delen av prosjektet innebærer at jeg observerer noen engelsk og norsk timer i din sønn/datters klasse. Jeg vil komme på besøk til høsten og våren, ca 4-6 ganger i løpet av høsten og våren. Jeg vil bruke enten lydopptak på observasjonene for å hjelpe med å sikre pålitelighet, og for å bruke det som refleksjonsmiddel for læreren i intervjuet. Det vil ikke bli gjort lydopptak av elevene som ikke deltar i prosjektet. Hvis ønskelig kan et alternativt opplegg for disse elevene utformes i samråd med læreren.

Det er frivillig å delta i undervisnings observasjoner og du kan på hvilket som helst tidspunkt trekke din sønn/datter fra undersøkelsen. Jeg håper likevel at du vil bidra til forskningsprosjektet og føler at du også får utbytte fra det. Det er ingen andre enn min veileder og jeg som vil få tilgang til de personidentifiserbare opplysningene. Vi er underlagt taushetsplikt og opplysningene vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. I publikasjoner vil opplysningene være fullstendig anonymisert, slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes.

Det er planlagt å være ferdig med prosjektet innen utgang av 2012, og prosjektet er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskaplig datatjeneste AS. Etter prosjektslutt vil lydopptak og øvrig datamateriale lagres i ett år med tanke på en mulig oppfølgingsstudie. Dersom det blir aktuelt å foreta oppfølgingsstudien, vil du motta ny informasjon og forespørsel om å delta. Hvis du ikke hører noe, eller du ikke ønsker å delta videre, vil opptakene bli slettet og datamaterialet anonymisert innen 31.12.2012. Universitetet i Stavanger er behandlingsansvarlig institusjon. Kontakt informasjon står under.

Dersom du ønsker at din sønn/datter skal delta i prosjektet/observasjonene, er det fint om du signerer den vedlagte samtykkeerklæringen og returnerer den til læreren innen mandag 22.11.10.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg pr. e-post om dere har spørsmål (rebecca.a.charboneau@uis.no).

På forhånd takk for samarbeidet.

Med vennlig hilsen,

Rebecca Charboneau
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Appendix

Kjære lærer,

Forskningsprosjekt om engelsk leseundervisning og -opplæring i 4. og 5. klasse utført av Universitetet i Stavanger

Jeg heter Rebecca Charboneau, og er stipendiat ved Universitetet i Stavanger. Jeg inviterer deg til å delta et forskningsprosjekt om engelsk leseundervisning og -opplæring. Det er et todelt prosjekt med en nasjonal spørreundersøkelse og med undervisningsobservasjon på noen skoler. Hensikten med prosjektet er å kartlegge engelsk leseundervisning og -opplæring i 4. og 5. klasse. Målet er å bidra til kunnskapen om leseundervisningen på barne- og mellomtrinnet i lys av at engelskundervisningen nå begynner fra 1. klasse og at det er mer fokus på lesing og skriving på engelsk i Kunnskapsløftet. Du har rett til innsyn i de opplysninger som er registrert om deg i prosjektet, i tillegg til et sammendrag av det ferdige prosjektet.

Deltakelse i denne delen av prosjektet innebærer at jeg observerer noen av dine engelsk-, og eventuelt norsktimer, og intervjuer deg. Jeg vil komme på besøk i løpet av høsten og våren, 3-6 ganger per halvår. Noen ganger vil jeg også intervjuer deg for å følge opp spørsmål fra spørreundersøkelsen, og for å diskutere og reflektere rundt leseundervisningen. Det vil si at data fra spørreundersøkelsen kobles til datamaterialet fra intervju/observasjon. Jeg vil bruke lydopptak ved intervjuene og under observasjonene for å sikre pålitelighet, og for å bruke det som refleksjonsmiddel i intervjuet. Lydopptak vil ikke bli brukt som vurderingsgrunnlag. Siden elevene blir observert, vil jeg informere og innhente samtykke fra foreldrene om observasjonen. Det vil ikke bli gjort lydopptak av elevene som ikke deltar i prosjektet. Hvis ønskelig kan et alternativt opplegg for disse elevene utformes i samråd med deg.

Det er frivillig å delta i undervisningsobservasjonene og intervjuene og du kan på hvilket som helst tidspunkt trekke deg. Jeg håper likevel at du vil bidra til forskningsprosjektet og føle at du også får utbytte fra det. Det er ingen andre enn min veileder og jeg som vil få tilgang til de personidentifiserbare opplysningene. Vi er underlagt taushetsplikt og opplysningene vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. I publikasjoner vil opplysningene være fullstendig anonymisert, slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes.

Prosjektet er planlagt ferdig innen utgangen av 2012, og prosjektet er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS. Etter prosjektlutt vil lydopptak og øvrig datamateriale lagres i ett år med tanke på en mulig oppfølgingsstudie. Dersom det blir aktuelt å foreta oppfølgingsstudien, vil du motta ny informasjon og forespørsel om å delta. Hvis du ikke hører noe, eller du ikke ønsker å delta videre, vil opptakene bli slettet og datamaterialet anonymisert innen 31.12.2012. Universitetet i Stavanger er behandlingsansvarlig institusjon. Kontaktinformasjon finner du nederst i dette brevet.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg pr. e-post om dere har spørsmål (rebecca.a.charboneau@uis.no).

På forhand takk for samarbeidet.

Med vennlig hilsen,

Rebecca Charboneau
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Appendix

12.3 Appendix 3: Questionnaire

12.3.1 Appendix 3A: National questionnaire for fourth- and fifth-grade English teachers

1. Gender: male female
2. Age (check one): 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+
3. In which county do you work?
4. In which municipality do you work?
5. How many students are there in your school?
 - a. 0 - 50
 - b. 51 - 150
 - c. 151 - 300
 - d. More than 300
6. How many years have you taught English?
 - a. 1 to 3 years
 - b. 4 to 6 years
 - c. 7 to 12 years
 - d. 13 to 20 years
 - e. more than 20 years
7. What higher education qualifications do you have in English?
 - a. none
 - b. less than 30 sp/10 vekttall
 - c. 30sp credits/10 vekttall
 - d. 60 sp/20 vekttall (grunnfag/årsstudium)
 - e. 90 sp/30 vekttall (mellomfag/fordypning)
 - f. Master's/hovedfag
 - g. other? What? _____
8. Were you offered to attend an in-service English course following *Kunnskapsløftet*?
 - a. yes
 - b. no
9. If yes, did the course include the teaching of reading and writing in English?
 - a. yes
 - b. no
10. Do you currently teach English in: grade 4 grade 5

If you teach grade 4:

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11. How many students are in your 4th grade English class? (if you teach more than one 4th grade class, give the average)

- a. 1-10
- b. 11-20
- c. 21-25
- d. more than 25

12. How many lessons of English are your students taught a week?

- a. less than one lesson
- b. one lesson
- c. two lessons
- d. more than two lessons

13. Do you teach Norwegian to the same group of students? Yes No

14. If you are not the Norwegian teacher, do you cooperate with the Norwegian teacher about the teaching of reading?

- a. Never/hardly ever
- b. Every half year
- c. Every month
- d. Every week

15. Do you cooperate actively with other teachers of English about teaching reading?

- a. Never/hardly ever
- b. Every half year
- c. Every month
- d. Every week

Grade 5:

16. How many students are in your 5th grade English class? (if you teach more than one 5th grade class, give the average)

- a. 1-10
- b. 11-20
- c. 21-25
- d. more than 25

17. How many lessons of English are your students taught a week?

- a. less than one lesson
- b. one lesson

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- c. two lessons
 - d. more than two lessons
18. Do you teach Norwegian to the same group of students? Yes No
19. If you are not the Norwegian teacher, do you cooperate with the Norwegian teacher about teaching reading?
- a. Never/hardly ever
 - b. Every half year
 - c. Every month
 - d. Every week
20. Do you cooperate actively with other teachers of English about teaching reading?
- a. Never/hardly ever
 - b. Every half year
 - c. Every month
 - d. Every week

C. Reading model (lese- og skrivemodell)

21. Which model best describes what you use as the basis for reading instruction in Norwegian at your school?
- a. Based on a textbook
 - b. Use of graded readers and other reading materials as the basis for instruction
 - c. Combination of graded readers and textbook
 - d. An Australian, New Zealand reading and writing model or the Nylund model
 - e. Other (title and short description):
 - f. Don't know
22. If you use a combination of graded readers and textbook, do you use the graded readers:
- a. less than 30%
 - b. approx. 30%
 - c. approx. 50%
 - d. approx. 70%
 - e. more than 70%

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23. Which model best describes what you use as the basis for reading instruction in English at your school?

- a. Based on a textbook
- b. Use of graded readers and other reading materials as the basis for instruction
- c. Combination of graded readers and textbook
- d. An Australian, New Zealand reading and writing model or the Nylund model
- e. Other (title and short description):

24. If you use a combination of graded readers and textbook, do you use the graded readers:

- a. less than 30%
- b. approx. 30%
- c. approx. 50%
- d. approx. 70%
- e. more than 70%

Please answer the following questions about your English reading instruction. Base your answers on instruction in one class if you teach several.

D. Practice/ Organization/reading activities

25. Do you have a class library with English reading books?	No	Fewer than 10 different books	11-20 different books	21-50 different books	More than 50 different books	
26. Do you have a school library with English reading books?	No	Fewer than 10 different books	11-20 different books	21-50 different books	More than 50 different books	
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
27. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: When choosing reading materials, I choose based on:						
a. the text given in the text book						

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b. the English curriculum c. the theme or topic d. the text's literary merit e. the learners' interests f. the students' reading level g. suitability for integrating grammar and vocabulary h. appropriateness as a point of departure for oral communications i. other				
28. How many times in the <u>last month</u> in your English reading instruction have you used?	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	More than 5
a. texts in the textbook and workbook b. books written for English-speaking children c. books written for second or foreign language learners d. newspapers e. magazines f. comics g. internet texts h. other reading materials				
29. If you use other reading materials, please specify:				
30. In the last month, how often did you use these texts in the following ways? (Place one check for each under point.) The texts were:	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	More than 5
a. Read aloud by the teacher b. Read aloud by the students chorally				

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Read aloud by the students individually d. Used in guided reading e. Used for individual reading in the classroom f. Used in small groups led by teacher g. Used in small groups discussion groups of only students h. Read at home by the students 				
31. During how many English lessons (45 minutes) in the last month have:	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	More than 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the students chosen what to read? b. the students read differentiated ability level texts? c. the students used English reading computer programs? d. the students used online books? e. the students been organized groups based on ability level? 				
32. Have the students read English books at home or taken books home to read?	Yes	No		
33. If yes, are the parents involved?	Yes	No		
34. What are the expectations for the students' reading at home? (check all that apply)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read the text b. Read the text aloud to their parents c. Translate it d. Read and answer questions about the text 		

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<p>35. In how many English lessons (45 min.) in the previous month have you done the following while reading aloud?</p>	<p>0 lessons</p>	<p>1-2 lessons</p>	<p>3-5 lessons</p>	<p>More than 5 lessons</p>
<p>a. Translated parts or all of the text b. Presented new vocabulary before reading c. Explain new vocabulary while reading d. Used body language or miming to help students understand e. Used pictures to help students understand the meaning f. Discussed the pictures in the texts in English g. Asked comprehension questions in English h. Asked comprehension questions in Norwegian i. Discussed the content or meaning of the story with students in English</p>				
<p>36. Are you familiar with the European Language Portfolio?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>		
<p>37. In the previous month, how many times have you used the European Language Portfolio?</p>	<p>0 times</p>	<p>1-2 times</p>	<p>3-5 times</p>	<p>More than 5 times</p>
<p>38. How useful is the European Language</p>	<p>Not useful</p>	<p>Somewhat useful</p>	<p>Very useful</p>	<p>Unsure</p>

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Portfolio for monitoring progress in reading?					
39. How many times in the last month have you used the following methods to monitor your students' reading progress?	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	More than 5 times	
a. Students reading aloud b. Individual discussions with students about their reading c. The Language portfolio or portfolios d. Running records e. Multiple choice questions of reading comprehension f. Vocabulary tests g. Answering questions about the text h. Giving a writing task following reading a passage i. Other methods of feedback for students and parents					
40. What language do you mostly use for English instruction?	Only English	Mostly English	Both equally	Mostly Norwegian	Only Norwegian

41. Give an example of a reading activity that you have done in the last month that you feel has been effective.

42. Give an example of the types of questions you ask students when working with a text.

E. Attitudes and perceptions

43. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

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statements?						
An English teacher should have higher education in English.						
An English teacher should also be the class teacher in other subjects.						
The national English test is a useful tool for assessing students' English reading comprehension.						
The national English test influences to a great degree my English instruction.						
It is best if the English teacher is also the Norwegian teacher.						
I am able to provide differentiated reading instruction for all my students.						
Mixed-ability classes are the biggest challenge for an English teacher.						
My teacher education has prepared me well to teach reading in English in 4 th and 5 th grades.						
44. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Students should have a basis in spoken English before learning to read and write in English.						
Low reading ability in Norwegian makes it difficult for students to read in English.						
Students should have good reading strategies and reading abilities in Norwegian before learning to read in English.						
It is important to begin with English reading instruction in first grade.						
The transition in English from barnetrinnet to mellomtrinnet is very difficult for students.						
45. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
It is important for students to work intensively with a text to ensure comprehension.						

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It is important for students to read many texts to improve reading comprehension.						
It is difficult to find enough time for independent reading in English lessons.						
46. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The texts in our textbook are interesting for the students.						
It is important that the students can choose which texts they would like to read.						
Students would benefit from reading different texts based on their ability level.						
All students benefit from reading the same text.						
The teacher should help the students choose texts to read.						
Internet texts are an important source of reading material for students.						
47. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Only English should be used to explain texts during reading instruction.						
It is important to use translation during reading instruction to ensure that the students understand.						
It is important for students to understand every word in a text.						
Few instruction hours each week is the most important factor for how I plan reading instruction.						
Lack of materials is the most important factor for how I plan reading instruction.						
My school is willing to invest in different reading materials.						
The materials I have available are sufficient to cater to students at different reading levels.						

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Are you willing to be contacted for further interviews/follow-up? If yes, this will not affect your anonymity in the questionnaire. Yes/no

If yes, please write your name and e-mail address.

Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.

Appendix

12.3.2 Appendix 3B: Reading approaches

Table 40: Combination approach use of graded readers

Language	Less than 30%	Approx. 30%	Approx. 50%	Approx. 70%	More than 70%
Norwegian (n = 196)	92 47%	81 41.3%	17 8.7%	4 2%	2 1%
English (n = 112)	62 55.4%	44 11.8%	5 4.5%	1 0.9%	0

Note: Nearly half (47%) of the teachers using a combination approach in Norwegian used graded readers less than 30% of the time. Similarly, over half (55%) of the teachers using a combination approach in English used graded readers less than 30% of the time. This means that although they were using a combination approach, half of these teachers used a textbook most of the time.

Table 41: Crosstable showing reading approaches of teachers in Norwegian and English classes; Actual numbers, expected numbers, percentage within Norwegian reading approach, percentage of total, adjusted residual

Norwegian reading approach	English reading approach				
		Textbook (n = 212)	Combination (n = 103)	Graded readers (n = 19)	EYLP (n = 9)
Textbook (n = 102)	Actual	97	4	1	0
	Expected	63	30.6	5.7	2.7
	%w/in N Lit.	95.1%	3.9%	1%	0%
	% of total	28.3%	1.2%	.3%	0%
	Adjusted residual	8.3***	-6.9	-2.4	-2
Combination (n = 199)	Actual	98	85	15	1
	Expected	123	59.8	11	5.2
	%w/in N Lit.	49.2%	42.7%	7.5%	.5%
	% of total	28.6%	24.8%	4.4%	.3%
	Adjusted residual	-5.6	6***	1.9	-2.9
Graded reader (n = 11)	Actual	7	1	3	0
	Expected	6.8	3.3	.6	.3
	%w/in N Lit.	63.6%	9.1%	27.3%	0%
	% of total	2%	.3%	.9%	0%
	Adjusted residual	.1	-1.5	3.2**	-6
EYLP (n = 9)	Actual	10	13	0	8
	Expected	19.2	9.3	1.7	.8
	%w/in N Lit.	32.3%	41.9%	0%	25.8%
	% of total	2.9%	3.8%	0%	2.3%
	Adjusted residual	-3.6	1.5	-1.4	8.5***

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Note: This table is an expanded version of Table 15. This table shows a significant trend that the reading approach used in English is the same as the reading approach used in Norwegian. For example, the textbook-based approach in Norwegian and English, $n = 97$, has a highly significant adjusted residual, 8.3. This similar trend is shown for each of the three other literacy approaches: combination approach in Norwegian and English (adjusted residual 6), graded reader approach in Norwegian and English (adjusted residual 3.2), and EYLP approach in Norwegian and English (adjusted residual 8.5).

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Table 42: Comparison of books in classrooms, school libraries and English reading approach; actual, expected, and adjusted residual, $\chi^2(4, 364) = 8.43, p = .077$

English reading approach			Books in school library				Total	
				< 10	11–20	> 21		
Textbook	Books class	Less than 10	Actual	67	38	72	177	
			Expected	63	35.1	78.9		
			Adj. res.	1.4	1.2	-2.3		
		11–20	Actual	8	6	21		35
			Expected	12.5	6.9	15.6		
			Adj. res.	-1.7	-4	2*		
		21 or more	Actual	4	0	6		10
			Expected	3.6	2	4.5		
			Adj. res.	.3	-1.6	1		
		Total	79	44	99	222		
Combination	Books class	Less than 10	Actual	16	11	41	68	
			Expected	17.3	8.9	41.8		
			Adj. res.	-0.6	1.2	-0.3		
		11–20	Actual	5	1	20		26
			Expected	6.6	3.4	16		
			Adj. res.	-0.8	-1.6	1.9		
		21 or more	Actual	8	3	9		20
			Expected	5.1	2.6	12.3		
			Adj. res.	1.6	0.3	-1.7		
		Total	29	15	70	114		
EYLP/graded reader	Books class	Less than 10	Actual	4	3	4	11	
			Expected	3.5	2.4	5.1		
			Adj. res.	0.4	0.6	-0.9		
		11–20	Actual	4	2	4		10
			Expected	3.2	2.1	4.6		
			Adj. res.	0.7	-0.1	-0.5		
		21 or more	Actual	1	1	5		7
			Expected	2.3	1.5	3.3		
			Adj. res.	-1.2	-0.5	1.5		
		Total	9	6	13	28		
Total	Books class	Less than 10	Actual	87	52	117	256	
			Expected	82.3	45.7	128		
			Adj. res.	1.2	1.9	-2.5		
		11–20	Actual	17	9	45		71
			Expected	22.8	12.7	35.5		
			Adj. res.	-1.6	-1.3	2.5*		
		21 or more	Actual	13	4	20		37
			Expected	11.9	6.6	18.5		
			Adj. res.	0.4	-1.2	0.5		
		Total	117	65	182	364		

Note: This Chi-square analysis compared the number of books in classrooms and school libraries with the teachers' chosen reading approach. There were no significant differences between the number of books available and the reading approach.

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English books taken home to read

Only 34% of the teachers reported that students took English books home to read. There were relatively more teachers using a combination and EYLP/graded reader approaches who sent home books with students than teachers using a textbook-based approach (52% and 46% compared to 25%) $\chi^2(2, 362) = 25.684, p < .001$ (see Table 43). This is indicated by the combination approach teachers who answered yes ($n = 58$, adjusted residual 4.6) and the textbook-based approach teachers who answered no ($n = 167$, adjusted residual 5). The number of EYLP and graded reader approach teachers who sent books home to read was higher than expected, but not significant.

Table 43: Crosstables comparison of reading approaches and English books taken home to read (actual numbers, expected, and adjusted residual)

Reading approaches		Have the students read English books at home or taken books home to read?	
		Yes ($n = 127$)	No ($n = 235$)
Textbook ($n = 223$)	Actual	56	167
	Expected	78.2	144.8
	Adj. res.	-5	5***
Combination ($n = 111$)	Actual	58	53
	Expected	38.9	72.1
	Adj. res.	4.6***	-4.6
EYLP/graded readers ($n = 28$)	Actual	13	15
	Expected	9.8	18.2
	Adj. res.	1.3	-1.3

Table 44: The number of teachers who answered that parents were involved when students read books aloud at home (actual numbers and percentages in parentheses)

	Yes	No
Were the parents involved when students read books at home?	100 (78)	28 (22)

Note: 244 teachers did not answer this question because 238 had responded that their students did not take books home to read. (A further six did not answer the previous question.) The current question required a positive answer to the previous question in order to answer this one.

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Table 45: Teachers' expectations of what students should do with the texts at home (actual numbers and percentages in parentheses)

What were the expectations when students read at home?	Response	
	Yes	No
Read the text (n = 128)	82 (64)	46 (36)
Students read the text to parents (n = 128)	115 (90)	13 (10)
Students translate the text from English to Norwegian (n = 128)	91 (71)	37 (29)
Other (n = 128)	19 (15)	109 (85)

Note: 244 teachers did not answer this question because 238 teachers had responded that their students did not take books home to read. (A further six did not answer the previous question.) The current question required a positive answer to the previous in order to answer this one.

12.3.3 *Appendix 3C: Does the reading approach used in English influence practices?*

The following five tables present the data related to teachers' practices when working with texts (see also section 7.4.3). Teachers using a textbook-based approach more often read aloud to their students than the teachers using an alternative reading approach (see

Table 46). Students reading aloud in unison was used more frequently by teachers using a textbook-based approach than teachers using an alternative approach (see Table 47).

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Table 46: Comparison of during how many lessons per month a teacher reads aloud and the reading approach used, $\chi^2(4, 357) = 11.482, p = .022$.

			During how many hours per month teacher reads aloud to the pupils		
			0 hours (n = 11)	1–2 hours (n = 118)	3–5 hours (n = 228)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 217)	Actual	6	64	147
		Expected	66.7	71.7	138.6
		Adj. res.	-.4	-1.8	1.9
	Combination (n = 112)	Actual	4	37	71
		Expected	3.5	37	71.5
		Adj. res.	.4	0	-.1
	EYLP & graded readers (n = 28)	Actual	1	17	10
		Expected	.9	9.3	17.9
		Adj. res.	.2	3.2**	-3.2

Note: The teacher reading aloud was practiced relatively more among teachers using a textbook-based approach (textbook-based approach teachers practicing reading aloud 3–5 hours per month - n=147, adjusted residual 1.9) and relatively less by teachers using the EYLP/graded reader approaches (EYLP/graded reader approaches practicing reading aloud 1–2 hours per month - n=17, adjusted residual 3.2).

Table 47: Comparison of during how many lessons per month students read aloud in unison and reading approach used, $\chi^2(4, 355) = 9.726, p = .045$.

			During how many hours per month students read aloud in unison		
			0 hours (n = 45)	1–2 hours (n = 126)	3–5 hours (n = 184)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 215)	Actual	22	72	121
		Expected	27.3	76.3	111.4
		Adj. res.	-1.7	-1	2.1*
	Combination (n = 112)	Actual	16	41	55
		Expected	14.2	39.8	58.1
		Adj. res.	.6	.3	-.7
	EYLP & graded readers (n = 28)	Actual	7	13	8
		Expected	3.5	9.9	14.5
		Adj. res.	2*	1.3	-2.6

Note: Students reading aloud in unison was practiced more frequently with teachers using a textbook- based approach (textbook-based approach and 3–5 hours per month – n = 121, adjusted residual 2.1). In contrast, this was practiced less frequently with teachers using EYLP/graded reader approaches (EYLP/ graded readers and 0 hours per month – n= 7, adjusted residual, 2).

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Table 48: Comparison of reading approach and during how many hours per month students read aloud individually, $\chi^2(4, 348) = 6.455, p = .168$.

			During how many hours per month students read aloud individually		
			0 hours (n = 19)	1–2 hours (n = 136)	3–5 hours (n = 193)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 211)	Actual	11	82	118
		Expected	11.5	82.5	117
		Adj. res.	-.3	-.1	.2
	Combination (n = 110)	Actual	4	42	64
		Expected	6	43	61
		Adj. res.	-1	-.2	.7
	EYLP & graded readers (n = 27)	Actual	4	12	11
		Expected	1.5	10.6	15
		Adj. res.	2.2*	.6	-1.6

Note: The Chi-square analysis comparing reading approaches and during how many hours per month students read aloud individually was not significant. Although there is a significant adjusted residual for the EYLP/graded readers approaches and 0 hours per month, in order to decrease problems of reliability of results, this result is not considered significant.

Table 49: Comparison of reading approach and number of lessons in which students read individually, $\chi^2(4, 332) = 9.964, p = .041$.

			During how many hours per month students read individually		
			0 hours (n = 81)	1–2 hours (n = 157)	3–5 hours (n = 94)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 197)	Actual	60	84	53
		Expected	48.1	93.2	55.8
		Adj. res.	3.1**	-2	-.7
	Combination (n = 107)	Actual	16	58	33
		Expected	26.1	50.6	30.3
		Adj. res.	-2.8	1.7	.7
	EYLP & graded readers (n = 28)	Actual	5	15	8
		Expected	6.8	13.2	7.9
		Adj. res.	-.8	.7	0

Note: A Chi-square analysis comparing reading approaches and the number of lessons in which students read individually (not aloud) produced a significant result. Teachers using a textbook-based approach had students reading individually less often than the other approaches (textbook-based approach and 0 hours per month – n = 60, adjusted residual 3.1).

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The following four tables present analyses related to methods of differentiation and learner autonomy while working with texts. There was a significant difference in how frequently students were allowed to choose what to read, $\chi^2(4, 357) = 13.079, p = .011$ (see Table 50); teachers using a textbook-based approach allowed students to choose texts less often (indicated by $n = 153$; adjusted residual 3.4). In contrast, students reading level-differentiated texts was not significantly different among reading approaches, $\chi^2(4, 357) = 6.735, p = .151$ (see Table 51). This is an unexpected result as it was expected that the EYLP, using guided reading, and schools using a graded reader based approach would use level-differentiated texts frequently for reading instruction. Teachers using the EYLP/graded readers approaches were more likely to have students in level-differentiated groups than teachers using either textbook or combination approaches $\chi^2(4, 351) = 12.780, p = .012$ (see Table 52).

Table 50: Comparison of reading approach and hours of class per month in which students chose what to read $\chi^2(4, 357) = 13.079, p = .011$.

			During how many hours per month students chose what to read		
			0 hours (n = 228)	1–2 hours (n = 97)	3–5 hours (n = 32)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 216)	Actual	153	59	14
		Expected	137.9	58.7	19.4
		Adj. res.	3.4***	-2.4	-2
	Combination (n = 113)	Actual	61	39	13
		Expected	72.2	30.7	10.1
		Adj. res.	-2.6	2.1*	1.1
	EYLP & graded readers (n = 28)	Actual	14	9	5
		Expected	17.9	7.6	2.5
		Adj. res.	-1.6	.6	1.7

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Table 51: Comparison of reading approach and students reading level-differentiated texts
 $\chi^2(4, 357) = 6.735, p = .151$

			During how many hours per month students chose what to read		
			0 hours (n = 80)	1–2 hours (n = 135)	3–5 hours (n = 142)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 217)	Actual	58	77	82
		Expected	48.6	82.1	86.3
		Adj. res.	2.4*	-1.1	-1
	Combination (n = 112)	Actual	18	48	46
		Expected	25.1	42.4	44.5
		Adj. res.	-1.9	1.3	.3
	EYLP & graded readers (n = 28)	Actual	4	10	14
		Expected	6.3	10.6	11.1
		Adj. res.	-1.1	-2	1.2

Table 52: Comparison of reading approach and students reading in level-differentiated groups
 $\chi^2(4, 351) = 12.780, p = .012$.

			During how many hours per month students worked in level-differentiated groups		
			0 hours (n = 189)	1–2 hours (n = 105)	3–5 hours (n = 57)
English reading approach	Textbook (n = 214)	Actual	116	67	31
		Expected	115.2	64	34.8
		Adj. res.	.2	.7	-1.1
	Combination (n = 109)	Actual	60	34	15
		Expected	58.7	32.6	17.7
		Adj. res.	.3	.4	-.8
	EYLP & graded readers (n = 28)	Actual	13	4	11
		Expected	15.1	8.4	4.5
		Adj. res.	-.8	-1.9	3.4***

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Table 53: Comparison of reading approach and number of lessons per month in which teachers used translation $\chi^2(2, 363) = 8.702, p = .013$ ¹⁰⁸.

English reading approach			During how many hours per month did the teacher translated parts of or whole texts	
			Fewer than 3 hours (n = 86)	3 or more hours (n = 277)
			Textbook (n = 223)	Actual
	Expected	52.8	170.2	
	Adj. res.	-1.2	1.2	
Combination (n = 112)	Actual	25	87	
	Expected	26.5	85.5	
	Adj. res.	-.4	.4	
EYLP & graded readers (n = 28)	Actual	13	15	
	Expected	6.6	21.4	
	Adj. res.	2.9**	-2.9	

Teachers using the EYLP/graded reader approaches used translation somewhat less frequently than teachers using other approaches, $\chi^2(2, 363) = 8.702, p = .013$ (see Table 53). This is indicated by the respondents in the category EYLP/graded readers approach and fewer than 3 hours (n = 13, adjusted residual, 2.9).

Presentation of new words before reading a text was common in all the reading approaches $\chi^2(4, 358) = .294, p = .990$, as is explaining new words while reading a text $\chi^2(4, 354) = 7.627, p = .106$, using body language or miming $\chi^2(4, 357) = 2.718, p = .606$, and using pictures to increase comprehension $\chi^2(4, 359) = 1.155, p = .885$. Discussing pictures in English was also common among all the reading approaches $\chi^2(4, 354) = 1.767, p = .779$.

The language used when working with texts was also not significantly associated with a particular reading approach (using English to ask comprehension questions - $\chi^2(4, 365) = 7.136, p = .129$; using comprehension

¹⁰⁸ The categories of 0 times per month and 1–2 times per month were merged for this analysis to avoid an error of expected minimum frequencies. All three literacy approaches had fewer than five as an expected frequency in the category of 0 times per month. A total of 7 schools among all the reading approaches never used translation.

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questions in Norwegian - $\chi^2(4, 363) = 5.987, p = .200$; teachers' use of English to discuss texts - $\chi^2(4, 359) = 3.995, p = .407$.

European Language portfolio

Table 54 and Table 55 present frequency data about teachers' familiarity with and use of the European Language Portfolio (see also section 7.4.6). Table 56 presents frequency data from a survey with foreign language lower secondary school students in Norway (Bugge & Dessingué, 2009). See Table 57 and section 7.4.6. for comparison of the two surveys.

Table 54: Teachers' responses to whether they were familiar with the ELP (actual numbers and percentages in parentheses)

	Yes	No
Are you familiar with the <i>ELP</i> ?	72 (20)	298 (81)

Table 55: Teachers' reported use of the ELP in the previous month (actual numbers and percentages in parentheses)

	0 times	1-2 times
How many times in the last month have you used the <i>ELP</i> ?	59 (82)	13 (18)

Note: The total number of teachers answering this question reflects the number who answered "yes" to the previous question about familiarity with the ELP ($n = 72$), which was a prerequisite to answering this question. There were 300 who did not answer (298 who answered "no" to the previous question, and 2 missing).

Table 56: Teachers' reported familiarity with and use of the ELP, from Bugge and Dessingué (2009)

	Not at all/very little	Somewhat	To a great extent
I am familiar with the <i>ELP</i>	50%	34%	16%
I use the <i>ELP</i>	75%	23%	2%

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Table 57: Comparison of teacher qualifications from the current research and that of Bugge and Dessingué (2009)

Teacher grade level	Qualifications		
	No qualifications	30 SP	60 SP or more
The current research 4 th and 5 th	48%	21%	31%
Bugge and Dessingué 8 th to 10 th	7%	9%	84%

12.3.4 Appendix 3D: Teachers' perceptions compared to other variables

Table 58: Crosstables of teacher qualifications compared with those who felt their education prepared them to teach English reading, $\chi^2(10, 347) = 89.551, p < .001$

		Qualification		
		No qualifications (n = 166)	30 SP (n = 73)	60 SP or more (n = 108)
Completely disagreed (n = 26)	Actual	23	2	1
	Expected	12.4	5.5	8.1
	Adj. res.	4.3***	-1.7	-3.1
Disagreed (n = 27)	Actual	21	3	3
	Expected	12.9	5.7	8.4
	Adj. res.	3.2**	-1.3	-2.3
Somewhat disagreed (n = 47)	Actual	34	4	9
	Expected	22.5	9.9	14.6
	Adj. res.	3.6***	-2.3	-1.9
Somewhat agreed (n = 82)	Actual	46	11	25
	Expected	39.2	17.3	25.5
	Adj. res.	1.7	-1.9	-.1
Agreed (n = 115)	Actual	34	42	39
	Expected	55	24.2	35.8
	Adj. res.	-4.8	5***	.8
Completely agreed (n = 50)	Actual	8	11	31
	Expected	23.9	10.5	15.6
	Adj. res.	-4.9	.2	5.1***

Note: The majority of those who were unqualified to teach English did not feel that their general teacher education had prepared them to teach English reading (27% strongly disagreed or disagreed and 20% somewhat disagreed). The 27% refers to teachers with no qualifications and those who completely disagreed and disagreed (n = 23 + 21) divided by the total number of teachers without qualifications (n = 166). The 20% refers to the number of teachers with no qualifications who also somewhat

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disagreed (n = 34) divided by the total number of teachers without qualifications (n = 166). The significance of these figures to the Chi-square analysis is indicated by the adjusted residuals 4.3, 3.2 and 3.6, as marked with asterix.

Table 59: Crosstables of grades teachers taught and those who felt the transition between grades 4 and 5 was a problem, $\chi^2(3, 362) = 10.100, p = .018$

Transition between grades 4 and 5	Grade teachers taught		
		Fourth grade (n = 159)	Fifth grade (n = 203)
Disagree or strongly disagree (n = 24)	Actual	7	17
	Expected	10.5	13.5
	Adj. res	-1.5	1.5
Somewhat disagree (n = 35)	Actual	11	24
	Expected	15.4	19.6
	Adj. res	-1.6	1.6
Somewhat agree (n = 92)	Actual	34	58
	Expected	40.4	51.6
	Adj. res	-1.6	1.6
Agree or strongly agree (n = 211)	Actual	107	104
	Expected	92.7	118.3
	Adj. res	3.1**	-3.1

Note: A relatively higher number than expected number of the fourth-grade than fifth-grade teachers felt that the transition from fourth to fifth grade was a problem (67% of the fourth-grade teachers agreed, whereas 51% of the fifth-grade teachers agreed). 67% corresponds to the 107 fourth-teachers who agreed or strongly agreed divided by the total number of fourth-grade teachers (n = 159). 51% corresponds to the 104 fifth-grade teachers who agreed or strongly agreed divided by the total number of fifth-grade teachers (n = 203). The significance of these two figures is indicated by the adjusted residual 3.1, marked with asterix.

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Table 60: Crosstables English reading instruction in first grade and the need for Norwegian reading strategies, $\chi^2(9, 362) = 25.368, p = .003$.

Reading strategies in Norwegian		Beginning reading instruction in first grade			
		Disagree or strongly disagree (n = 80)	Somewhat disagree (n = 59)	Somewhat agree (n = 87)	Agree or strongly agree (n = 136)
Disagree or strongly disagree (n = 22)	Actual	3	0	2	17
	Expected	4.9	3.6	5.3	8.3
	Adj. res	-1.0	-2.1	-1.7	4***
Somewhat disagree (n = 51)	Actual	6	7	14	24
	Expected	11.3	8.3	12.3	19.2
	Adj. res	-1.9	-.5	.6	1.5
Somewhat agree (n = 115)	Actual	28	23	32	32
	Expected	25.4	18.7	27.6	43.2
	Adj. res	.7	1.3	1.2	-2.6
Agree or strongly agree (n = 174)	Actual	43	29	39	63
	Expected	38.5	28.4	41.8	65.4
	Adj. res	1.2	.2	-.7	-.5

Note: The significant figure in contributing to this Chi-square analysis are the teachers who responded that they strongly agreed or agreed that beginning reading instruction in first grade is important and strongly disagreed or disagreed that students needed good reading strategies in Norwegian before learning to read in English (n = 17, adjusted residual 4). This group comprises 5% of the total respondents (17 divided by 362). The second group of respondents to note are the teachers who responded differently than expected, namely agreed both that English reading instruction should begin in first grade and that students should have good reading strategies in Norwegian before learning to read in English (n = 63) (when divided by the total number of respondents this is 17%).

Appendix

Table 61: Comparison of number of books in the classrooms and teachers who felt they have sufficient materials to meet the diversity of needs of their students, $\chi^2(6, 360) = 25.172, p < .001$.

		Books in the classrooms		
		Less than 10 (n = 251)	11-20 (n =73)	More than 20 (n =36)
Disagree or strongly disagree (n = 65)	Actual	54	9	2
	Expected	45.3	13.2	6.5
	Adj. res.	2.6**	-1.4	-2.1
Somewhat disagree (n = 91)	Actual	70	15	6
	Expected	63.4	18.5	9.1
	Adj. res.	1.7	-1.0	-1.3
Somewhat agree (n = 89)	Actual	56	27	6
	Expected	62.1	18	8.9
	Adj. res.	-1.6	2.7**	-1.2
Agree or strongly agree (n = 115)	Actual	71	22	22
	Expected	80.2	23.3	11.5
	Adj. res.	-2.3	-0.4	4***

Note: Those with fewer books in their class libraries felt that they did not have sufficient materials to meet the diversity of their students' needs, as indicated by the categories less than 30 and disagree or strongly disagree (n = 54; adjusted residual 2.6). In contrast, those who had more books felt they did have enough materials, as indicated by the teachers who responded they had more than 40 books and agreed or strongly agreed (n = 22, adjusted residual 4).

Appendix

Table 62: Comparison of number of books in the school libraries and teachers who felt they did not have sufficient materials to meet the diversity of their students' needs, $\chi^2(6, 358) = 26.426, p < .001$.

		Books in the school libraries		
		Less than 10 (n = 114)	11-20 (n = 66)	More than 20 (n = 69)
Disagree or strongly disagree (n = 65)	Actual	33	14	18
	Expected	20.7	12	32.3
	Adj. res.	3.6***	0.7	-3.9
Somewhat disagree (n = 91)	Actual	24	24	43
	Expected	29	16.8	45.2
	Adj. res.	-1.3	2.3*	-.5
Somewhat agree (n = 87)	Actual	25	16	46
	Expected	27.7	16	43.3
	Adj. res.	-.7	0	0.7
Agree or strongly agree (n = 115)	Actual	32	12	71
	Expected	36.6	21.2	57.2
	Adj. res.	-1.1	-2.7	3.1**

Note: Those with fewer books in their school libraries felt that they did not have sufficient materials to meet the diversity of their students' needs, as indicated by the categories less than 30 and disagree or strongly disagree (n = 33; adjusted residual 3.6). In contrast, those who had more books felt they did have enough materials, as indicated by the teachers who responded that they had more than 40 books and agreed or strongly agreed (n = 71, adjusted residual 3.1).

Appendix

12.4 Appendix 4: Case study schools

12.4.1 Appendix 4A: Observation framework code definitions

1. Who

Who	Definition
Classroom teacher	
Reading specialist	
Special education	
Assistant	
Other	
Not applicable	

2. What instructional groupings are used

Grouping	Definition
Whole class/Large group	All of the children in the class (except for 1 or 2 individuals working with someone else), or a group of more than 10 children. (If fewer than 10, categorize as small group)
Small group	Children are working in 2 or more groups.
Pairs	Children are working in pairs.
Individual	Children are working independently
Other	Some other grouping practice is in place
Not applicable	None of the above seem to apply

3. Major academic area being covered

Major focus	Definition
Reading	Reading, word recognition, reading comprehension, writing in response to reading (where this is the major purpose for the writing), literature study, reading vocabulary
Composition/writing	Writing for the purpose of expressing or communicating ideas (but not writing in which major purpose is to respond to reading); learning how to write; writer's workshop, creative writing, report writing
Other language	Aspect of language arts other than the above; grammar, mechanics, oral expression, etc.
Other	Focus is academic, but not literacy
Not applicable	None of the above seem to apply, focus is not academic

4. What is the specific literacy activity or activity of the classroom teacher

Activity	Definition
Reading connected to text	Students are engaged in reading text. This includes silent reading, choral reading, oral turn-taking reading.
Listening to connected text	Students are engaged in listening to text. If teacher is reading to students, code as listening even if the students are

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	to be following along
Vocabulary	Students are engaged in discussing/working on word meaning(s)
Meaning of text/comprehension – lower level	Students are engaged in talk (m1) or writing (m2) about the meaning of the text which is at a lower level of thinking or lower level of text interpretation. The writing may be a journal entry about the text requiring a lower level of thinking or may be a fill-in-the blank worksheet that is on the text meaning (rather than on a comprehension skill or vocabulary words).
Meaning of text/comprehension – higher level	Students are involved in talk (m3) or writing (m4) about the meaning of text which is engaging them in higher level thinking. This is talk about text that is challenging to the children and is at either a high level of text interpretation or goes beyond the text: generalization, application, evaluation, aesthetic response. Needless to say, a child must go beyond a yes or no answer (e.g., in the case of an opinion or aesthetic response).
Comprehension skill	Students are engaged in a comprehension activity (other than comprehension strategy) which is at a lower level of thinking (e.g., traditional skills work such as identifying main idea, cause-effect, fact-opinion). The activity is designed to foster their capacity to understand comprehension skills. This differs from “m1” in that it is more likely to be a decontextualized lesson than tied to questions about a particular text.
Comprehension strategy	Students are engaged in use of a comprehension strategy that will transfer to other reading and in which this notion of transfer is (typically) mentioned. A strategy is a routine designed to improve children’s overall comprehension especially for new passages. Common examples include reciprocal teaching, questioning the author. The key is to distinguish between a skill and a strategy is the emphasis on a transferable routine. For example, predicting done for the sake of completing a worksheet would be a comprehension skill, but done with the explicit idea that readers can and should use it when they read would be a comprehension strategy. A teacher will specifically discuss transfer or signal transfer through a comment such as, “Good readers summarize as they read to keep them remembering the important ideas.”
Writing	Students are engaged in writing ideas (not just writing words); focus is on composition, not meaning of text (which would be m2 or m4)
Word ID	Students are focusing on identifying words. For example,

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	the teacher or someone else is telling them a word when they get stuck during reading or the teacher is reviewing words prior to reading.
Sight words	Students are drilling on sight words (Word wall would be coded as sight words).
Phonics	Students are focusing on symbol/sound correspondences (p1), letter-by-letter decoding (p2), or decoding by onset and rime or analogy (p3), but this is not tied to decoding of words while reading. If students are decoding multisyllabic words, code as “p4” (e.g., “Making words” would be coded as “p2” but also code as “p3” if word sorting by phonograms is done.)
Word recognition strategy (ies)	Students are focusing on use of 1 or more strategies to figure out words while reading, typically prompted by the teacher.
Phonemic awareness	Students are identifying the sounds in words or blending sounds together (an oral activity). The purpose is to develop phonemic awareness, not letter-sound knowledge. (Not likely to be a focus on EFL in 4 th and 5 th grades)
Letter ID	Students are focusing on letter name identification (Not likely to be a focus on EFL in 4 th and 5 th grades)
Spelling	Students are focusing on how to spell word(s)
Other	Literacy focus other than one of the above – such as translation, language transfer
Not applicable	None of the above apply

5. Materials

Material	Definition
Narrative	Narrative trade book/text (e.g., narrative picture book, novel, poem, other trade book)
Informational	Informational trade book/text, reference book (encyclopedia, etc.), newspapers, magazines, Weekly Readers
Student writing	Student writing (more than words or disconnected sentences) is being used (finished or in progress)
Board/Chart	Board, chart, or card is being used (e.g., blackboard, pocket chart, hanging chart, flashcards)
Worksheet	Worksheet, workbook page, sheet of paper, individual whiteboards for one-word or one-sentence answers
Other	Something other than the above is being used, for example, dictionary
Not applicable	None of the above seem to apply

6. Interaction style being used by the classroom teacher

Telling	Telling or giving children information, explaining how to do something
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Modeling	The teacher is coded as explicitly showing/demonstrating the steps of how to do something or how to do a process as opposed to simply explaining it. (e.g., a teacher models fluent reading after she models word-by-word readings, and she talks about the difference. A teacher reading her own book as children are reading would not be coded at modeling since she is not being explicit.
Recitation	The teacher is coded as engaging the students in answering questions, or responding, usually low-level question-answer-question-answer. The purpose primarily appears to be getting the children to answer the questions asked rather than engaging them in a formal discussion or fostering independence in terms of answering questions with more complete thinking.
Coaching/scaffolding	The teacher is coded as prompting/providing support which will transfer to other situations as students are attempting to perform a strategy or activity to answer a question. The teacher's apparent purpose is to foster independence to get a more complete action or to help students elaborate on an answer (rather than to simply get a student to answer a question)
Listening/watching	Teacher is listening or watching and giving feedback as students are engaged in activity. Do not code as listening if the listening is only a part of recitation.
Reading aloud	Teacher is reading aloud to students
Assessment	Engaging in questioning/explaining/providing of directions for the purpose of assessing student performance. Typically this would involve record keeping.
Discussion	Students engaged in a discussion, which may or may not be led by the teacher, in which formal conventions of a discussion apply; discussion is though-provoking, getting children to express their ideas. Even if led by the teacher, students start to offer their own ideas rather than simply respond to the teacher. Exchange may be t-s-s-s rather than t-s-t-s. ¹⁰⁹
Other	Interaction style other than what is listed above. Listening or watching without giving feedback would be coded as "other".
Not applicable	None of the above seem to apply

¹⁰⁹ According to the framework developers, this type of "true" discussion is rare in the primary grades, and the researcher hypothesized that this would be even less frequent in second and foreign language contexts.

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7. Expected response from the students

Reading	Students are to be reading. Code as “r” if students are reading individually or in pairs.
Reading turn-taking	Students in groups are to be reading by taking turns. <i>Also used for turn-taking in whole class settings as the traditional activity in Norwegian EFL classes.</i>
Orally responding	Students are to be orally responding. Oral responding is coded when there is choral responding, partners sharing ideas, or a majority of children in the group responding at the same time.
Oral turn-taking	Students in a group either wait to be called on or wait to take turns as they orally respond. When using this code, recitation most likely would have been coded at level 6 – teacher interaction.
Listening	Students in a group are to be listening (and no student is reading or orally responding). Typically this is coded when the teacher is telling children information (at level 6) or is reading aloud to the children (at level 4 and 6)
Writing	Students are to be writing words, sentence, or paragraphs
Manipulating	Students are to be manipulating, using their hands (other than writing) (e.g., code if children are coloring or completing a multiple choice activity)
Other	Some form of responding other than what is listed above is expected
Not applicable	None of the above seem to apply

12.4.2 Appendix 4B: Observation schedule

Table 63: Observation schedule for the case study

	School 3	School 2	School 4	School 1
Observation 1	30.11.10 (48) 4B/5B/5A	6.12.10 (49) 4B/4A/5	7.12.10 (49) 5B (2timer)	8.12.10 (49) 4A/5
Observation 2	2.2.11 (5) 5A(r)/4B/4A(r)	31.1.11 (5) 4B(r)(2timer?) /5(r)	1.2.11 (5) 4 (2timer)	26.1.11 (4) 4A/5(r)
Observation 3	23.3.11 (12)	28.2.11 (9)	14.4.11 (15) (5A-C) 2.5timer	21.2.11 (8)
Observation 4	4.5.11 (18)	12.4.11 (15)	15.4.11 (5A-C) (5A-C) 1.5timer	11.4.11 (15)
Observation 5	1.6.11 (22)	2.5.11 (18)	3.5.11 (18)	30.5.11 (22)

12.4.3 Appendix 4C: Interview guide

Reading approach

1. How do you feel the reading approach you are using is working?
Advantages and disadvantages.
2. What do you feel are the strengths of the reading approach you are using?
3. What are the weaknesses of the reading approach you are using?
4. Have you chosen this approach or is it a school-wide approach?
5. How well does your reading approach cater to the needs of pupils at various levels?
6. In what ways does your reading approach allow for differentiation in instruction for pupils at different levels?

Materials

1. What types of books of graded/easy readers are used in the classroom?

2. Do you feel you have sufficient reading materials to meet the needs of the students?
3. To what extent are you free to choose materials you will use in reading instruction?
4. Do students take home reading materials (books, texts) to read? What are your expectations for their reading at home? How often do they take texts home to read? Are these texts ones they have chosen or have you chosen them for the students?

Activities

In English lessons, what percentage of the time is used for:

- a. Listening comprehension
- b. Speaking
- c. Reading
- d. Writing
- e. Language/vocabulary

Assessment

5. What do you believe to be the most effect types of assessment of reading level?
6. How would you assess the reading level of students in your class?
7. How do you choose the level of books students read?

Policy

8. Do you feel that the additional English hours added to the early grades has been beneficial, why or why not?
9. Have the results of the national test been useful to you? In what ways?
10. Transition between 4th and 5th grade – how do you feel this transition is for students? What is easy? What is difficult? How do you perceive this transition?
11. To what extent does the national test influence your practices and in what ways?

EYLP approach

12. How do you use the internet texts in reading instruction?
13. Please describe how you use guided reading.

14. In your questionnaire answers, you mentioned that you used the European Language Portfolio. How have you used the European Language Portfolio?
15. Please describe the concept “learning” in Early Years-instruction.
16. Where in Australia did you visit?
17. Where in Australia did representatives from your school visit?
18. What type of training do teachers at your school receive in this method?
19. How did this Early Years program get started?

12.4.4 Appendix 4D: Observation coding frequencies for case study schools

Table 64: Observation code summary form for school comparison grade 4

	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4							
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%						
# segments	38		53		42		16							
Grouping divide by # seg	Whole class	35	92	45	85	27	64.3	6	37.5					
	Small groups							12	75					
	Pairs	12	31.6	15	28	2	4.8							
	Individual	1	2.6	6	11.3	23	54.8							
Major focus	Reading	19	50	41	77.4	11	26.2	11	68.8					
	Writing			1	1.9	14	33.3							
	Other language	24	63.2	18	34	17	40.5	5	31.2					
Specific activity or literacy event	Reading conn. text	16	42	(16)84.2	20	37.7	48.8	5	12	45.5	10	62.5	(10)90	
	Listening conn. text	10	26.3	(10)52.6	17	32.1	41.5	0						
	Vocabulary	9	23.7	(1)5.3	7	13.2	(2)4.9	10	23.8	(2)18.2	10	62.5	(5)45.5	
	Word ID	6	15.8	(6)31.6	15	28	(10)24.4	4		(3)27.3	10	62.5	(10)90	
	Lower-level meaning	12	31.6	(12)63	20	37.7	(19)46.3	6	14.3	(4)36.4	11	68.8	(11)100	
	Higher-level meaning							2	4.8	(2)18.2	1	6.25	(1)9.1	
	Comprehension skill	6	15.8	(6)31.6	3	5.7	(2)4.9	3	7.1	(2)18.2	2	12.5	(2)18.2	

¹¹⁰ This column shows the percentage of the specific segments that occurred during reading segments. Thus, the number of occurrences during reading segments, shown in parentheses, is divided by the total number of reading segments, shown under major focus, reading.

	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4	
Comp. strategy	7	18.4 (7)36.8	3	5.7 (3)7.3	2	4.8 (2)18.2		
Writing			1	1.9 0	10	23.8 (1)9.1		
Phonics	1	2.6 0						
Spelling	2	5.3 0			6	14.3 (1)9.1	1	6.25 0
Grammar	1	2.6 (1)5.3			5	11.9 0		
Materials	14	36.8 (14)73.7	31	58.5 (30)73.2	10	23.8 91	12	75 (12)100
Informational	4	11.5 (4)21	10	18.9 (9)22	0		0	
Student writing	0		2	3.8 (2)4.9	13	31 (7)64	0	
Board/chart	15	39.5 (8)42.1	3	5.7 (1)2.4	3	7.1 (1)9	2	12.5 0
Worksheet	1	2.6 0	3	5.7 0	14	33.3 (7)64	0	
Other	14	36.8 (3)15.8	12	22.6 (8)19.5	6	14.3 (3)27	3	18.8 0
Overall textbook use	10	52	20	49	14	33 (11)100	0	
Teacher interaction	26	68.4	34	64.2	29	69	14	97.5
Modeling	10	26.3	0		2	4.8	0	
Recitation	26	68.4	32	60.4	16	38.1	16	100
Coaching/scaffolding	(3)	7.9	9	17	6	14.3	1	6.25
Listening/watching	19	50	25	47.2	26	61.9	10	62.5
Reading aloud	8	21	10	18.9	1	2.4	0	
Reading	16	42	18	33.9	1	2.4	0	
Reading turn-taking	1	2.6	3	5.7	6	14.3	10	62.5
Orally responding	17	44.7	14	26	2	2.4	0	
Oral turn-taking	23	60.5	29	54.7	14	33.3	16	100
Listening	14	36.8	24	45.3	7	16.7	1	6.25
Writing	0		2	3.8	23	54.8	0	

	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
	1	0	4	0
Manipulating	2.6		9.5	
Total level 7 seg.	73	91	61	17
Active responding	34	34	30	0
Passive responding	38	56	27	17
	52.1	61.5	64.3	100

Table 65: Observation code summary form for school comparison grade 5

	School 1			School 2			School 3			School 4		
	#	%	%/rdg ¹¹¹	#	%	%/rdg	#	%	%/rdg	#	%	%/rdg
# segments	43			32			41			75		
Whole class	30	69.8		23	71.9		27	65.9		15	20	
Small groups	4	9.3		0						71	95	
Pairs	7	17		10	31.3							
Individual	5	5		6	18.8		23	56				
Reading	19	44.2		17	53.1		28	68.3		57	76	
Writing	3	7		1	3.12		2	4.9		14	18.7	
Other language	22	51.2		1	18.8		12	29.3		3	4	
Reading conn. text	17	39.5	(17)89.5	13	40.6	(13)76.5	24	58.5	85.7	44	58.7	(44)77.2
Listening conn. text	7	16.3	(7)36.8	5	15.6	(5)29.4	1	2.4	3.6	3	4	(3)5.3
Vocabulary	8	18.6	(4)21	1	3.12	(1)4.3	11	26.8	(4)14.3	28	37	(25)43.9
Word ID	8	18.6	(7)36.8	5	15.6	(3)13	3	7.3	(2)7.1	29	38.7	(27)47.3
Lower-level meaning	7	16.3	(7)36.8	11	34.4	(9)39.1	17	41.5	(17)60.7	47	77	(43)75.4
Higher-level meaning				4	12.5	(4)17.4	1	2.4	(1)3.6	26	42.6	(26)45.6
Comprehension skill	2	4.7	(1)5.3	1	14.3	(1)4.3	2	4.9	(2)7.1	23	37.7	(20)35.1
Comp. strategy				1	14.3	(1)4.3				8	13.1	(7)12.3
Writing	4	9.3	(1)5.3				3	7.3	(0)	13	21.3	0
Phonics												
Spelling							3	7.3	(0)	2	3.3	(2)3.5
Grammar	5	11.6	(0)							4	6.6	(4)7

¹¹¹ This column shows the percentage of the specific segments that occurred during reading segments. Thus, the number of occurrences during reading segments, shown in parentheses, is divided by the total number of reading segments, shown under major focus, reading.

	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4						
Materials	Narrative	14	32.6	(14)73.7	6	18.8	(5)21.7	19	46.3	(19)68	49	80.3	(49)86
	Informational	5	11.6	(4)21.1	11	34.4	(11)47.8				4	6.6	(4)7
	Student writing	6	14	(2)10.5	3	9.4	0	6	14.6	(6)21	14	18.7	0
	Board/chart	5	11.6	(1)5.3	4	12.5	0	1	2.4	0	2	2.7	0
	Worksheet	6	14	(1)5.3	7	21.9	0	8	19.5	(4)14.3	0		
	Other	13	30.2	(6)31.6	9	28.1	(3)13	12	29.3	(12)42.9	4	5.3	0
	Overall textbook use	28	65.1	(19)100	22	68.8	(17)100	10		36	0	0	0
Teacher interaction	Telling	34	79.1		21	65.6		24	58.5		55	73.3	
	Modeling				1	14.3					4	5.3	
	Recitation	17	39.5		16	50		14	34		68	90.7	
	Coaching/scaffolding	3	7		1	14.3		3	7.3		24	32	
	Listening/watching	30	69.8		18	56.3		30	73.2		44	58.7	
	Reading aloud	3	7		3	9.4					10	13.3	
Expected student response	Reading	11	26.6		9	28.1		14	34				
	Reading turn-taking	5	11.6		3	9.4		10	24.4		44	58.7	
	Orally responding	1	2.3		6	18.8					2	2.7	
	Oral turn-taking	23	53.5		13	40.6		14	34		73	97.3	
	Listening	18	41.9		10	31.3		8	19.5		21	28	
	Writing	4	9.3		3	9.4		15	36.6		1	1.3	
	Manipulating	3	7					11	26.8				
	Total level 7 seg.	67			47			72			144		
	Active responding	19	28.4		18	38.3		40	55.5		6	4.2	
	Passive responding	46	68.7		26	55.2		32	44.4		138	95.8	

