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Abstract

This thesis has aimed to investigate what teachers believe about the use of tasks in the English subject in vocational classrooms and how the teachers' beliefs relate to their actual practice. The research questions were the following: what are the teachers' beliefs about the use of tasks in vocational classrooms and how do their beliefs relate to their practice, what tasks do the teachers use and how do they use them, and what contextual factors can affect and influence the teachers' beliefs and practices today. The qualitative data material consists of six interviews and six observations. The pre-observation interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide. Three English subject teachers in vocational classes partook in this study and they were chosen through purposive sampling. The study has been informed by theory which emphasizes the use of tasks in the language classroom, such as Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching and Vocationally Oriented Language Learning. The tasks themselves could be grouped under these categories, such as communicative tasks, "real-world" tasks, or vocational tasks.

The use of tasks in English language teaching seemed to be a common practice. The results of the study showed that the observed teachers used different kinds of tasks. Examples of tasks were: information-transfer tasks, role-plays, write summaries, fill-in-the-gap tasks, but also reading aloud in class and plenary discussions. A reason for this could be that the teachers assessed their classes' abilities and needs and found suitable tasks that improved on their students' competences. Furthermore, the teachers put fairly similar amounts of emphasis on communication and interaction. Observations also found that the teachers wanted their students to take responsibility of their own teaching and the use of tasks encourages this.

The results viewed in light of the theory showed that there was a strong relation between the teachers' beliefs and practices. However, there were some findings of interest for both teacher educators and researchers of teacher cognition. The tensions that were found indicated that the teachers' beliefs could be influenced or affected by the contextual factors. An example of this was in one of the vocational classes where the students' competence and motivation were on a generally low level. The teacher there experienced challenges in regard to teaching the way he wanted to (his beliefs and cognitions) and how the practical reality of the classroom allowed him to teach (his practice).

Even so, the teachers were found to be generally free in how they used tasks and what activities they could use in their respective classes. All of the teachers believed that “vocationalisation” of the common core subjects had been an improvement and revitalized more of the vocational students’ interest in those subjects, which they mentioned few students were initially inclined towards. A finding of interest was that one of the teachers mentioned that her students sometimes complained that there was too much vocational English and they wanted more general content. Further research should then focus on finding a balance between vocational and non-vocational tasks and content.

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List of abbreviations

CLT – Communicative Language Teaching

EFL – English Foreign Language

FYR – Fellesfag, Yrkesretting, Relevans

GE – General Education

TBLT – Task-Based Language Teaching

TC – Teacher Cognition

VET – Vocational Education and Training

VOLL – Vocationally Oriented Language Teaching

1. Introduction

This thesis is an investigation of English teachers' beliefs and practices concerning the use of tasks in the vocational English classrooms in upper-secondary school in Norway. The research revolves around language teachers' cognition, which is what teachers believe, do, know, and think (Borg, 2015b, p. 1). Teacher beliefs are a strong influence on how teachers practice their profession (Phipps and Borg, 2009, p. 381).

A task is an activity where the learner has to use his/her language to reach a specified goal (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 177), e.g. problem-solving, listing tasks, and comparing tasks (Willis and Willis, 2007, p. 109-110). Tasks are important tools teachers can use to teach vocational English in school, and programs such as Vocationally Oriented Language Learning (VOLL) and Fellesfag, Yrkesretting, Relevans (FYR) can help teachers create meaningful tasks for the students. VOLL is a language teaching approach that aims to give learners the tools to independently continue learning English (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012), whereas FYR is a government-initiated program aiming to decrease the drop-out rates in Vocational Education and Training (VET) by making the common core subjects more relevant and vocationally oriented.

1.1. Background of the study

Drop-outs in VET have been a theme in the news regularly the last few years. For instance, The Norwegian National Broadcasting (NRK) published a chronicle that says "School drop-outs are a public health concern" (Larsen and Urke, 2018), and the Union of Education Norway writes that the drop-outs rates are most prominent among boys in vocational education and training (Union of Education Norway, n.d.). The Union of Education Norway (UEN) refers to a strong correlation between drop-outs and low grades in lower-secondary school (Union of Education Norway, n.d., The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, 2018).

Vocational students have a need for vocational English and for the use of tasks. As Hestetraet and Ørevik (2018, p. 313) maintain, language tasks can resemble the task in apprenticeships in workplaces. The students can "negotiate and create meaning" while they are focusing on solving problems, which the students can relate to from their vocational subjects (Hestetraet and Ørevik, 2014, p. 313). Tasks then seem to be important for vocational students.

With Sleveland's (2014) conclusion that the responsibility of teaching is twofold (part teacher, part material used), teacher cognition rose as a possible venue of enquiry. Teacher cognition (TC) aims to describe teachers' beliefs and practices, and what teachers think, know, and do (Borg, 2015b, p. 5). In this thesis, TC is a way of achieving insight into vocational English teachers' beliefs and practices about tasks.

Research suggests that vocational students want to study English as a foreign language (EFL) in upper-secondary school. Ulriksen (2002) observed and surveyed vocational students and their teachers. Through questionnaires enquiring about satisfaction with teaching and learning in the English subject, Ulriksen found that the students were dissatisfied with their passive role in the learning process, but that they were interested in learning. The conclusion Ulriksen drew was that the students disliked the way English was taught to them, but not the language itself. Tasks can be a way of activating and engaging the students, as the tasks allow the focus to be on solving a given problem or task (Hestetraet and Ørevik, 2018, p. 313). Similarly, Sjøveian (2012) discovered that students not only want to study vocational English, but actually perceive it as necessary.

The issue students have with English then, according to Ulriksen (2002) and Sjøveian (2012) are a lack of relevance and a too theoretical approach to English language learning. Storevik (2015) therefore points at the lack of "vocationalisation", a term that will also be used in this thesis, in the English subject. "Vocationalisation" as defined by Storevik, is "the process of adapting the learning material and methods of the common core subjects to fit the target vocation, and to show how the common core subjects are relevant not only to general studies, but also within their future vocation" (Storevik, 2015, p. 13). In her conclusion, Storevik remarks that "vocationalisation" must be the means, and not the goal. Additionally, Storevik indicates that experienced teachers are more adept at incorporating "vocationalisation" in the curriculum.

1.2. Relevance of the study

In a multicultural and multilingual society vocational students and workers need to be proficient users of English as a *lingua franca* (Hestetraet and Ørevik, 2018, p. 307). The English language is in many cases the arena in which global citizens may make themselves understood. Workers

with a vocational education face the same communicative encounters and problems in every-day life as other professionals do (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 1).

In the coming years there will be changes made to the current curricula. During the autumn of the school-year 2020/21, Vg1-students will have the first implementation of the new, and updated curriculum for the English subject. What this means in practical terms is that there may be a new way of educating and teaching students of vocational English. The exams are today created and dispensed centrally, which will most likely continue after the new reform (*Fagfornyelsen*, 2018). However, the exams will be different for vocational English students and academic English students. Vocational students, as was suggested in an official consultation process at the behest of The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, may therefore be examined on written work and an oral presentation (*Fagfornyelsen*, 2018).

This is an important shift towards vocational English for vocational students. On their website, The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training explain what they want to change in the English subject curriculum, explicitly stating that they want “30 % of the competence aims geared towards vocational studies” (‘my translation’, *Hva er nytt i fagene?*, 2019). This means that when the new English subject curriculum is implemented, there will be more specific competence aims for vocational studies.

As it stands now however, there are no individual English subject competence aims for the individual vocational subjects. Some of the written and oral competence aims only emphasize that the English subject must relate to the students’ programme. One can argue whether that is good or bad, but regardless of the outcome of that debate, the authorities are going to change the English subject curriculum. Teachers are at the moment relatively free to teach the curriculum the way they want, meaning that teachers are the ones choosing the content that they teach. This level of freedom could be reduced if the different aims have to be taught in a particular way.

1.3. Research questions

The stated research questions that are investigated in this thesis are as follows:

- What are the teachers’ beliefs about the use of tasks in vocational classrooms and how do their beliefs relate to their practice?
- What types of tasks do the teachers use and how do they use them?

- What contextual factors affect and influence the teachers' beliefs and practices?

1.4. The structure of the thesis

There are six chapters in this thesis. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the thesis, its topics, and its research questions. Chapter 2 is the theory section, which is the backbone of the argument. Here the relevant research on teacher cognition is briefly summarized, before CLT and tasks and TBLT are outlined. VOLL and FYR are also mentioned, and finally some insight to the vocational classes and the curriculum is provided. Chapter 3 is the methodology chapter, where a review of how the data was collected is given. Thereafter is Chapter 4, which presents the results that were found, which is followed by a discussion of the findings in Chapter 5. The final chapter, Chapter 6, summarizes the findings, and gives the conclusion that is reached in this thesis. Possible avenues for further research are also included here.

2. Theory

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a deeper look into the theory that supports this thesis. It includes teacher cognition (TC), its research history, and some TC research. This is followed by a brief section on the cognitions of in-service teachers, followed by an overview of communicative language teaching (CLT), task-based language teaching (TBLT), and then defining and constituting what a task is. Then follows a description of vocationally oriented language learning (VOLL) and a government-initiated program called FYR. Thereafter is a brief overview of the English subject curriculum and how it applies to vocational education and training (VET). Finally, some abstracts are included of similar studies done on EFL relating to this thesis.

2.2. Teacher cognition

Teacher cognition (TC) is a concept that needs to be examined and defined. In this thesis it is the language teachers' cognitions that are focused on, and not teachers' cognitions in general. TC is a broad term which encompasses beliefs, knowledge, and attitude. TC has taken several forms since the 1970s up until today, and the most important and influential aspects will be briefly outlined. The history of TC and its roots that are described here are from Borg (2015b). Following that is an overlook of how the cognitions of in-service teachers develop and what those cognitions may be.

2.2.1. Teacher cognition history

Borg (2015b, p. 1) defines teacher cognition in language education as “what language teachers think, know and believe”. Teacher cognition is the thinking done, decisions made, and beliefs and practices held by the teacher. Borg is a leading scholar of the research on language teacher cognition. Teacher cognition is the base of much educational language research, and has been an object of inquiry since the 1970s (Borg, 2015b, p. 6). Dunkin and Biddle (1974) proposed a model of understanding how teachers teach, but also in relation to how learners learn. The model was a series of variables which supposedly could determine what the students learnt in class. The following variables were thought to determine the learning outcome: *presage variables* (teachers' characteristics and experience), *context variables* (learners' characteristics), *process variables* (interactions between teacher and student), and *product variables* (learning outcomes) (Borg, 2015b, p. 6). The idea was that by observing and documenting these variables (the teacher's and students' behavior) there would be discovered a causal link between teaching and learning. This model was, however, too simplistic, as it was premised on a process-product approach, presuming that there are universal ways of learning. If this model were valid, one would only have to replicate the teacher's behavior and also its success (Borg, 2015b, p. 6-8).

But the 1970s set in motion the view that what the teacher thought was somehow important to the effectiveness of the teaching. This is one of the most important concepts that came from the 1970s research of early teacher cognition. Borg argues that “teachers' thinking and behaviours are guided by a set of organized beliefs and (...) often operate unconsciously.” (Borg, 2015b, p. 10). The idea is that what the teachers think and how they behave are governed by their beliefs, and operate at an unconscious level (Borg, 2015b, p. 10.)

Following in the 1980s, Shavelson and Stern (1981) found that the behavioral model of the 1970s was conceptually incomplete when not including teacher's cognitions (Borg, 2015b, p. 10). They found specific factors that impact a teachers' decisions and judgements when interacting with the students. These factors ranged from the individual student's gender, competence and ability, up to school policies and outside forces, such as parents, and that these all influenced the teachers' pedagogical decisions (Borg, 2015b, p. 12).

Teacher knowledge as it is understood by Carter (1990), consists of three categories. The first category is teachers' information-processing and decision-making and expert-novice studies. Expert-novice studies highlight the contrast between experienced and inexperienced teachers and how they perceive activities and situations differently. Carter's issue with this, however, is how this knowledge related to expertise is acquired (Borg, 2015b, p. 27). The implicit danger, Carter (1990) argues, is that the expert-novice studies could be perceived as normatively conveying a "right way of teaching" (Borg, 2015b, p. 27). Secondly, is the teachers' practical knowledge and personal and classroom knowledge; practical knowledge is the knowledge teachers gain through practice. The last category Carter (1990, p. 306) includes is the pedagogical content knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge differs from the knowledge acquired from the theoretical knowledge gained from university, or from practical knowledge gained from working, in that it is grounded in the curriculum and disciplines of lower- or upper-secondary school (Borg, 2015b, p. 27-28).

2.2.2. Teacher cognition research

Research on TC began to increase in the 1990s, such as Carter's three categories of teacher knowledge (Borg, 2015b, p. 26-28). In more recent times the research has progressed even further and new areas of enquiry have emerged. Though there was an understanding that beliefs had an impact on what teachers did in the classroom, e.g. Thompson (1992) insisting on the importance of understanding the nature of beliefs (Borg, 2015b, p. 31), there were few investigations conducted on teacher beliefs which were not in line with teacher practice.

Phipps and Borg (2009) investigated these divergences that emerged between teachers' beliefs and practices. But, where some have argued that the mismatch or incongruence between beliefs and practices is undesirable, Phipps and Borg (2009) look at the relationship as rather a "tension", flipping the argument from something negative and strained into a positive challenge

(Phipps and Borg, 2009, p. 380). So far, the research on teachers' beliefs indicates several theories and explanations on how teachers come to develop their beliefs, which Phipps and Borg (2009, p. 381) gathered into one list, whereby some of their mentions are also of interest for this study. Teachers may be strongly influenced by their own experience as learners. A good or a bad teacher in a subject can impact the way you perceive the subject itself, the same way a good teacher can motivate students to excel in a subject that was originally uninteresting. The beliefs teachers have about teaching and learning is a filter through which new information and experiences are interpreted, but at the same time new information and experiences may change the beliefs of teachers. Most notably perhaps is that a teacher's beliefs may outweigh the teacher's education, showing that beliefs can be resistant to change.

Phipps and Borg (2009) chose to examine the TC of three teachers and the subsequent tensions between beliefs and practices with their grammar teaching, as TC is hard to measure by itself. An important point here is that Phipps and Borg's study exclusively measured beliefs and practices, and not attitudes and knowledge, which TC also contains. Although the theme of grammatical teaching is not relevant here, there are still relevant ideas that can be extracted and used, such as core and peripheral beliefs, the context in which the teachers work, and tensions between beliefs and practices.

Core and peripheral beliefs are the first assertion through which Phipps and Borg (2009) reflect teachers' beliefs through. Distinguishing between the two is important insofar as beliefs are not statically either meaningful or inconsequential, but ranging between, and shifting in importance along the way. Secondly, Phipps and Borg (2009), p. 381) highlight that an incongruence between beliefs and practices is in itself not necessarily negative, even though the incongruence might not be positive either. In response to this contention, it could be argued that the relationship between a teacher's beliefs and practices would over time create problems. Analyzing potential tensions in the respondents should be considered as just that – tensions. It is not for the researcher to state whether the tensions are positive or negative in themselves, but emphasize and highlight their actuality for the teacher to then consider. That is not to say that the data is not valuable to both parties; Borg and Phipps (2009, p. 381) argue that researching these tensions and incongruences are a net positive, as it enables teachers and researchers to better understand the processes of teaching.

The third point is that contextual factors impact to what extent there can be challenges between beliefs and practices (Phipps and Borg, 2009, p. 381). Regulations, type of class, competence level of the learners, are all examples of how the context in which the teaching takes place impacts the teachers' ability to teach in accordance with their beliefs. Finally, the last assertion Phipps and Borg (2009, p. 381-2) make is that the elicitation of the data impacts the results received from the teachers who are responding. If questions are phrased in a way that is open for interpretation, the answers received will be affected as such. How teaching is conducted and how it should be conducted are questions that may potentially yield two very different answers.

Finally, Table 5 (see appendix 7) illustrates how TC is influenced and influences other aspects of teachers' beliefs. Borg (2015b, p. 333-334) argue that there are unidirectional and bidirectional influences. Professional coursework and classroom practice affect TC bidirectionally and are affected by the teachers' cognitions, whereas the teachers' personal educational background and contextual factors affect teacher's beliefs unidirectionally. All of the factors have an effect on the teacher's cognitions, which relates back to Carter's (1990) argument on practical knowledge. Table 5 suggests that the influences that affects teachers can clearly be identified and categorized.

2.2.3. The cognitions of in-service teachers

Newly educated teachers are usually faced with a reality they may not be prepared for. Richards and Pennington (1998) studied five EFL novice-teachers in Hong-Kong (Borg, 2015b, p. 89-90). The novice-teachers early in the semester expressed favorability towards communicative teaching, but were quickly going away from that method (Richards and Pennington, 1998, p. 183-184). Richards and Pennington (1998) also noted that the novice-teachers were mostly concerned with going through their planned lesson, thus they gave little or no opportunity for spontaneous communication. In time, Richards and Pennington (1998) believe this one-sided and pre-planned method of teaching will "discourage experimentation and innovation" (Richards and Pennington, 1998, p. 187-188).

Farrell (2003) reports there are several phases a teacher goes through during the first semester of teaching. These include an early idealism and identification with the students, reality shock in the classroom, self-doubt when it comes to being a teacher, and adapting to the school's

culture and norms (Borg, 2015b, p. 91). These experiences in the first year of teaching, whether they are like the ones described above or different, will form the initial cognitions of the teacher. Research also shows that teacher knowledge (Borg, 2015b, p. 94), linking back to Carter's three categories of teachers' information-processing, teachers' practical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge (Borg, 2015b, p. 26), is a skill that takes practice, and is affected by contextual factors, such as relations to other colleagues. This can counter the education of the teacher, at least in the first years of teaching (Borg, 2015b, p. 94).

2.3. Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 83). The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics defines CLT as a 'method of teaching a foreign language which aims to develop communicative competence, as opposed to simple knowledge of grammatical and similar structures' (Matthews, 2007, p. 29).

Skulstad links the communicative aspect of CLT to communicative competence, which she states is "*the* single most important concept in second/foreign language learning and teaching." (Skulstad, 2018, p. 43). Nunan argues that to understand "the communicative approach", it is necessary to understand the different approaches to language. Language, he argues, is more than a set of rules needed to be memorized, as language is the creation of meaning (Nunan, 1989, p. 12). Furthermore, the difference between "learning that" and "knowing how" is at the heart of CLT. Learning all the different word classes does not equate to mastering a language. A language is used to convey and create meaning (Nunan, 1989, p. 12). With an emphasis on conveying meaning, it is therefore important to hone this skill, which is communication. Communication is the act of individuals conveying meaning to one another, through either of the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), but it is also a negotiation of meaning, a skill in its own right (Skulstad, 2018, p. 43). If the contention of communication being a skill is true, then this skill must be trained and explored as such. Both Skulstad (2018, p. 55) and Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 90) stress the importance of three elements in CLT:

- The communication principle, which is that language acquisition does not happen in communication by itself, but through meaningful communication.
- The task principle, which is that activities using language through meaningful tasks promote learning.
- The meaningfulness principle, which is that tasks that are meaningful to the learner support the learning process.

Skulstad (2018) and Richards and Rodgers (2014) argue that these principles are guidelines for CLT, which promote language learning better than “mechanical practice of language patterns” (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 90). Richards and Rodgers also argue that these principles can guide the design of coursebooks and other material to have a communicative approach (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 90). This learning theory focuses on language interaction (and interactional theory) and negotiation of meaning (Skulstad, 2018, p. 55). The interactional theory is closely linked to Vygotskian theory (zone of proximal development), where the (here: language-) learner interacts with more competent language users, and thus improves his/her language (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 27). Competent speakers would also adjust their language in this learning theory to allow less proficient language users to partake in conversations and acts of communication (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 27). Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 97) provide a taxonomy of possible tasks supported by CLT-theory:

- Task-completion activities: Puzzles, games, and activities that focuses on the use of language to complete a given task.
- Information-gathering activities: Students conduct interviews, polls, where the focus is to collect information through the use of communication.
- Opinion-sharing activities: The students communicatively compare values, opinions, or beliefs.
- Information-transfer activities: Students take information from a source and transfer the information into a different form.
- Role plays: Students assume roles or characters and act out a scene or an event.

Skulstad (2018, p. 55) highlights the use of problem-solving tasks as an activity within the CLT-context, but any task that uses the language as the instrument for reaching a solution would suffice, though this will be revisited in the task-section (see section 3.5).

Nunan's (1989, p. 12-13) description of CLT focuses on the class' formative encounter with language acquisition, where the process of learning a language is central. The process of communication would here be the goal, instead of the content being discussed. Nunan also describes that an understanding of the grammatical systems and rules allows the user to manipulate the language. Knowledge of the linguistic structures would yield benefits, such as higher accuracy and more efficient communication.

Learning a language means to use it, explore it, and internalize it (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 91). With more English over the years through the Internet, movies, video games, telecommunication, and cable TV, the sheer amount of language that is accessible is near limitless. Having this in mind, students who have the desire to learn a language do not lack exposure. Through massive exposure, students should therefore be able to communicate in the target language, and as a result learn grammar (Harmer, 2015, p. 47). Over the years this idea that exposure alone will promote language learning has become more debated by people such as Swan (2012, p. 58), who argues that the language learning has gone from "learning" to "doing".

There are also other critics of the CLT approach, with Richards and Rodgers (2014) highlighting some of the concerns attributed to CLT. Arguably, the biggest concern is that CLT may promote *fossilization*, which is when the communicative aspect becomes the most important aspect of language production, and errors are uncorrected. Over time, as these errors are either ignored or disregarded, they will become harder to correct and eradicate. Fossilization is reported to happen in programs where fluency and communication are over-emphasized at the expense of accuracy (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 103-104).

2.4. Task-Based Language Teaching

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is characterized by its emphasis on using meaningful tasks to promote language learning, and both CLT and TBLT have aspects of interactional theory within them (Harmer, 2015, p. 61; Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 27 and 181-182). Richards and Rodgers also specify that TBLT is an approach to language teaching through the use of

communicative tasks and activities (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 174). TBLT may inform the use of tasks in vocational English classrooms, as it focuses on tasks as the basis of learning and integrates any or all skills at the same time, although the activities accentuate real communication and must be meaningful to promote language learning (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 177). The tasks can revolve around more or less anything, as long as they meet some criteria (these criteria will be discussed further in section 2.5). Some of the possible tasks that can be used are information-gap, problem-solving, decision-making, and opinion-exchange,

Tasks are also an authentic method of discovery that invites the learner to solve the specified puzzle or conundrum with the tools that are at the learner's disposal (e.g. coursebooks, the Internet, classmates, and the teacher). This, in turn, will also aid the teacher when choosing tasks for the learner. The learner will be able to choose the tasks they know they lack knowledge of, making TBLT adaptable and allowing for level adjustments (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 176). Having a conscious attention to learner-centered learning, although TBLT is teacher-led (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 194), the teacher will free up time during class, in contrast to teacher-centered learning, to give feedback and help the learners to a larger extent. TBLT also provides greater motivation for students and promotes learner autonomy (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 177).

Tasks rely on meaningfulness and must serve a specific purpose. Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 186) have summarized a taxonomy of pedagogic tasks, listing several different forms, such as sharing personal experiences, comparing, or ordering and sorting. These examples are explored more in depth by Willis and Willis (2007, p. 109-111), who add the additional categories of matching, creative projects, listing, and problem-solving. Their review concludes that tasks are advantageous for learners when they are starting on something unfamiliar, and where tasks can progressively better the students' understanding with each task that is incrementally more challenging than the last one (Willis and Willis, 2007, p. 110).

However, tasks can also be classified according to the type of interaction occurring. Here are some examples from Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 186):

- Jigsaw tasks: learners combining fragmented information into a whole information piece.
- Information gap tasks: learners have different pieces of information and need to find the complementing information pieces.

- Problem-solving tasks: learners are given a problem and relating information to solve the problem. Only one correct solution.
- Decision-making tasks: learners are given a problem with multiple solutions and must negotiate and agree on one of those solutions.
- Opinion exchange tasks: learners discuss and exchange opinions. Every learner reaches their own conclusion.

As seen above, there are a multitude of possibilities and ways of incorporating TBLT in teaching. Although the tasks themselves are carried out by the learners, the teacher still has an active role to play when the learners are working on them. First, before the session, the teacher must select tasks that are suitable. The selection of tasks must be done with the learners' competence levels in mind. Before the learners start working with the tasks, the teacher must prepare the class, either by explaining difficult instructions, reiterate the topics involved, or start the task with the class (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 188). During the session, the teacher monitors and guides the learners, may give feedback and correct errors, and stimulate the slow starters.

2.5. Tasks

TBLT is an approach to language learning that uses tasks or activities in a purposeful manner (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 174). To understand TBLT, it is therefore necessary to break it down to the smallest unit, namely the task. Long (1985, p. 89) says "a task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others", while also stating that the task can be done either voluntarily or with a reward afterwards, which is a general interpretation of the word. The definition of a task in this study is of a more academic nature, and not the practical example from Long, which means any endeavor no matter how big or small would constitute a task and, in a school context, with no attention regarding the learning outcome.

There are a multitude of available definitions, illustrated by Nunan (1989), where he gives definitions from several other applied linguists. Firstly, the type of tasks that are relevant here are language or communicative tasks. Nunan defines a communicative task as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or

interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form” (Nunan, 1989, p. 10). A task then is built up of different components. Nunan suggests six individual, communicative parts that make up a task, including a goal (wanted outcome), an input (texts, charts, timetables, etc.), activities (a: process input and b: engage with input), a teacher role (monitor and facilitate), a learner role (active receiver and partner), and a setting (classroom, group, etc.) (Nunan, 1989, p. 10-11). According to Nunan these examples constitute what makes a communicative task.

As Nunan focuses on the communicative aspect of language tasks, he distinguishes between two types of tasks: “real-world” and “pedagogic” tasks (Nunan, 1989, p. 40). “Real-world” tasks are approximating or imitating real-life situations wherein the students must solve “authentic” issues. In a vocational classroom, “real-world” tasks could be approximating tasks the students might encounter during their apprenticeships. For instance, a student studying Building and Construction could receive a communicative task where he/she has to discuss with a customer how to properly set up the foundation of a house. The goal of the task is to prepare the students for real life situations, in which they rehearse a specific situation, e.g. set up a budget for a trip abroad, or complain about a cold hamburger. An aspect of the “real-world” task is that it encourages the students to focus on the interaction as well as the language, thus integrating communication, which is the conveyance of meaning, under the guise of interaction.

“Pedagogical” tasks are not likely to occur in the real-world, and their rationale is therefore based on the acquisition of language. Examples of pedagogical tasks can be to link words with their correct definitions. However, the rationale also indicates that through the process of doing the task, the students will be mentally and cognitively prepared for real-life situations. Nunan exemplifies this through showcasing a task of listening to a radio report, and then answering true/false questions. The true/false questions teach the student attentive listening, suitable for more than just pedagogic tasks (Nunan, 1989, p. 40-41). Moreover, he also states that tasks need to have an end-state, a sense of completeness, and that it is challenging to distinguish a communicative task from a non-communicative task. The focus will thus be on communicative tasks, as these are the most relevant to elaborate on in this thesis.

Skulstad (2018, p. 61) differentiates between pre-communicative tasks and communicative tasks. The pre-communicative activity is when the learner is preparing him-/herself before actually communicating. Skulstad (2018) connects this to “practicing grammatical

aspects, structural patterns or language functions” (Skulstad, 2018, p. 61). The communicative task is then the execution of, for instance, an information-gap task. Another recent interpretation of tasks is provided by Davies (2016) in his glossary of applied linguistics. Davies (2016, p. 83) defines a task in language teaching as “any activity which is designed to help achieve a specific learning goal”.

For vocational students, learning the ability to individually solve tasks and solve tasks in cooperation with a team is important when, for instance, entering an apprenticeship.

Functionally, tasks are problems that the learner has to solve and, in the English subject, the teacher can create communicative tasks. These communicative tasks can mimic workplace tasks or tasks related to apprenticeships, where the learners have to solve problems or challenges (Hestetraet and Ørevik, 2018, p. 313).

Also relevant to the description of tasks is instruction. Instruction on tasks can be divided into three categories: introduction of the task, support while the students work with the task, and reflect on the task and the process (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 190). When the teacher introduces the task, he/she motivates the learners, prepares them for the task and activates their prior knowledge, and provides the purpose for the task and possible solutions of how to reach the wanted outcome. While the learners work, the teacher provides support and guidance, and clarifies language meaning. After the task is done, the teacher and the learners’ can reflect on the task and its outcome. It is also possible at this stage to focus on specific details and form that can be repeated or improved (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 190).

Finally, an elaboration must be made here on what kinds of tasks that are considered to be relevant for this thesis. As listed above in the task taxonomy in the section of TBLT, there are different types of tasks. They are just examples, and there are more than just those mentioned. In the CLT section only communicative tasks are highlighted, which could be interpreted as excluding tasks that are done individually, such as reading and writing. In this thesis, however, all types of tasks that the teachers use in this study are considered as valid tasks, including reading, writing, assessment tasks, and group projects. This is because the observed respondents may not use any communicative tasks at all, or use tasks that are difficult to label either communicative or non-communicative. By including all kinds of tasks as valid data material the results become richer and give better grounds for discussion.

2.6. “Vocationalisation” and vocational programs

The next section defines the term “vocationalisation”. Furthermore, insight will be provided into the approach of vocationally oriented language learning (VOLL), which aims to make it easier for vocational students to learn English. The final section is about FYR, a government program intending to keep students from dropping out of upper-secondary school.

2.6.1. “Vocationalisation” and vocational English

The term “vocationalisation” has been used frequently in this thesis and thus needs to be clearly defined. “Vocationalisation” is a translation of the word *yrkesretting* from the Master thesis of Storevik (2015). “Vocationalisation” therefore means to facilitate and accommodate the academic, general teaching material and make it more suitable for VET. This “vocationalisation” can be done either by adapting the material to become more relevant, or to change some of the material altogether (Storevik, 2015, p. 13).

Examples of vocational English could then be to learn the English names of tools in a workshop, or ingredients in a bakery. These examples are also illustrations of how the teacher can create tasks that are meaningful to vocational students and also link the competence aims to the particular vocational study.

2.6.2. VOLL

Kantelinen and Vogt (2012) argue that vocationally-oriented language learning (VOLL) needs to be re-established as an educational tool. VOLL is a language learning program started by The Council of Europe back in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The reasoning behind this program was that educators wanted a common set of guidelines in language teaching for the upcoming generations of the workforce, especially within the vocational classroom. The arguments for this were that future workers needed to adapt to a more globalized market, and that would in turn set higher demands for language skills. Also, the rapid acceleration of technological tools and equipment demanded that workers could easily adapt and keep up with the advancements. As a response, VOLL was created and aspires to be a method of language learning tailored to the vocational classroom and life-long learning.

The European markets had, and still have, demands for a language-proficient workforce. While English for specific purposes (ESP) has been an alternative, it has been criticized for being too narrow in its approach to language learning (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 3), mostly aiming at a highly specialized vocabulary. Instead of focusing solely on a single vocation or field of work, VOLL approaches language learning holistically, including more aspects of the target language than ESP. These aspects include, for instance, social and interactional skills and cultural awareness. In practice, VOLL actualizes key skills within the learner, stressing communication skills, problem solving, and cooperation.

As established above, VOLL focuses on key skills and characteristics (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 5-6). VOLL is:

- holistic
- learner centered
- content based
- action oriented
- task based
- integrating several subjects (interdisciplinary)
- fostering learner autonomy

Of most importance here is VOLL's holistic approach to language, being task based and action orientated, as well as interdisciplinary. Having a holistic approach to language means that the approach considers both the person and the language. A holistic approach also encompasses the whole language instead of splitting language learning into smaller segments. Learning a language would then need to take into account the target language (culture, history, grammatics, etc.) and the learner (cognitive abilities, competence, needs, interests, etc.). Thus, learning a language means more than just memorizing vocational vocabulary. A teacher must also give historical context and set the level of difficulty according to the level of competence. Being task based and action oriented, VOLL is problem solving and engages the learner in an activity, which promotes learner autonomy. It provides the possibility for interdisciplinary work, for instance through larger projects, but it can be as simple as reading statistics or a timetable in a foreign language. Learner autonomy is the last point that needs to be addressed here. Little

(2008, p. 247) defines learner autonomy as the point when the learner independently can perform a task without the assistance of others. Little (2008, p. 247) continues, that the goal of learner institutions is to give learners and students the tools to spontaneously deploy strategies to gain knowledge. Autonomy here is understood as when the learner can independently seek out tasks to improve his/her language and solve the given tasks without help or guidance from either the teacher or fellow students.

Vogt and Kantelinen (2012, p. 6-7) theorize why so few teachers practice and use VOLL in their education. According to them the problem is twofold. The first problem is that the lack of VOLL is due to insufficient competence and awareness of what VOLL is and how VOLL can be integrated in teaching. The second problem of VOLL, which is that VOLL is misunderstood, both among those not using VOLL and with the ones that do use VOLL (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 7). Including the word “vocational” alone is grounds for being skeptical, especially in GE. The authors hypothesize that this might stem from beliefs about how a language is *supposed* to be taught.

2.6.3. FYR

FYR is a project that needs to be discussed in addition to VOLL. Noted in the introduction of this section, in the early- to mid-2000, the Ministry of Education and Knowledge wanted to address the increasing numbers of students dropping out of upper-secondary school before getting their accreditation. To remedy this, FYR was established in 2011, a part of another government-initiative called NyGIV (*Rammeverk for FYR-prosjektet, nd., p. 3-4*). The project had five main targets it aimed to address (*Rammeverk for FYR-prosjektet, n.d., p. 10-12*):

- I. Develop competence for teachers and headmasters: Teachers and headmasters from the whole country partook in seminars that aimed to raise the level of competence in the schools. These seminars were held annually and each group had to show results from their school each year.
- II. Produce and share teaching resources online: The coordinators of FYR worked closely with different resource centers (The Writing Center, Norwegian Reading Center, etc.) to share online and develop suitable teaching material. The material was pooled together at fyr.ndla.no.

- III. Establish a culture for “vocationalisation” in upper-secondary schools: In order for the project to continue being relevant after the study was completed, the schools that were part of the project needed to establish a culture for “vocationalisation”. This meant that the administrations of the schools had to organize and assist in restructuring the school day.
- IV. Share experiences and knowledge both nationally and locally: Relating to the second point, but in addition to producing and sharing the new resources within the school, it must also be shared on a national level, so that all teachers can benefit from the research of FYR.
- V. Close monitoring and cooperation from the county: Attempting to “vocationalise” will be difficult if the school boards do not encourage FYR and pursue results and further developments.

As seen above, there are several aspects and problems related to the upper-secondary vocational education FYR tries to solve. FYR could be said to focus on three specific points: first, give teachers the tools and confidence to teach common core subjects in vocational classes; second, establish a culture for “vocationalising” common core subjects – in the classroom, but also from administrations; and third, create a platform for sharing ideas and lesson plans across schools.

In his Master thesis, Sleveland (2014) focuses on the students and the teaching material teachers have at their disposal. He argues that students who have experienced limited mastery at school would rather not try to learn than subjugate themselves to the risk of failure (Sleveland, 2014, p. 5). This contention supports the need for FYR, as the common core subjects can become too academic for vocational students.

FYR’s primary concern is to motivate students, and the way of doing this is through adapting the common core subjects. Teachers, Sleveland claims, must be willing to create lessons that are suited to the particular vocational study (Sleveland, 2014, p. 6). Sleveland asserts that the most obvious argument against “vocationalisation” is the centrally-set exam. Since the English subject exam aims to cover all possible vocational studies, and there is only one English subject curriculum, individualizing and adapting lessons towards the students is not optimal with concerns to the exam.

Sleveland concludes by remarking that there is an unfortunate divide between academic subjects and vocational subjects, which hinders language development for vocational students. This divide, he writes, does not have to be there, as vocational students should be allowed to bring inspiration and experience from their vocational subjects into the common core subjects. However, he also stresses that “vocationalisation” is a top-down issue, starting with teachers before benefitting the students in the classroom. Sleeland believes that good coursebooks and “brave” teachers are the facilitators of “vocationalisation” and meaningful education (Sleveland, 2014, p. 65).

In relation to teaching material, Sleeland maintains that teachers lack sufficient knowledge of how to “vocationalize”, which is supported by Vogt and Kantelinen (2012). Sleeland writes that coursebooks will still be the most important tool in terms of “vocationalisation” and he expresses doubts about the publishers who are largely prioritizing web-resources for VET-students (Sleveland, 2014, p. 65).

The term “motivation” has been mentioned a few times but not really explained or discussed. As Hestetraet and Ørevik (2018, p. 317-318) write, some vocational students can experience motivational difficulties. Though a lack of motivation can afflict any student, the idea behind FYR is to increase the students’ motivation and make the common core subjects relevant for VET (*Rammeverk for FYR-prosjektet (2014-2016)*, p. 4-5). Motivation itself means to “be moved to do something” (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 54). There are two types of motivation: *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* (Ryan and Deci, 2000), and the goal of teachers should be to influence the students to become intrinsically motivated. Intrinsic motivation is when the learner wants to learn for the sake of learning, not due to external pressure or promise of reward (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 56). Extrinsic motivation is when the learner wants to learn because there is a reward or real-world purpose for learning, and the learning is only a means to an end (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 60), such as getting a good job, pleasing one’s parents, or competing with other students. These two definitions are applicable to students and learners in upper-secondary school and the challenge for teachers is to motivate their students, regardless of whether it is extrinsic or intrinsic motivation.

2.7. The curriculum

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is much broader in terms of available choices and paths than General Education (GE), ranging from professions of being a mechanic to being a hairdresser. However, the English subject curriculum is the same for both GE and VET (*English subject curriculum*, 2013, p. 3). Vocational classes in Norway have English as a common core subject split over two years.

While the competence aims are the same for GE and VET, there are aims that are related to vocational studies, depending on the specific study. The following are the oral competence aims that are relevant for this thesis:

- understand and use a wide general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to his/her own education programme
- understand the main content and details of different types of oral texts about general and academic topics related to one's education programme
- introduce, maintain and terminate conversations and discussions about general and academic topics related to one's education programme

Below are the aims under the category of written communication:

- understand and use an extensive general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to one's education programme
- read to acquire knowledge in a particular subject from one's education programme
- use own notes to write texts related to one's education programme

These are all of the aims that are specific for the students' education programme. This means that, for example, the competence aim to "use own notes to write texts related to one's education programme" would be practically different in a Building and Construction-class and an Electricity and Electronics-class. However, all of the aims are taken into consideration when the teacher creates a syllabus and lesson plans.

How a curriculum is designed is of relevance here. Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 363) highlight three important facets in curricula design:

- I. What to teach (input)
- II. How to teach it (process)
- III. And assess what was learned (outcome)

The order these three facets occur in determines which design they are modelled after. Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 363-365) note three processes that are used when creating curricula. The three designs are called forward design, central design, and backward design. The final design, which is the design used in the English subject curriculum, is the backward design. The outcome is specified as competence aims (outcome), which the individual teacher then has to work from, finding appropriate content (input) and finding methods of conveying the content (process) (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 373-376).

The backward design is what the respondents in this thesis are subject to. They start with the competence aims, and work out plans so that the students can reach these aims. The plans include what subjects to cover (input) and the teacher must also reflect on how to present (process) these subjects. The students will then be assessed (outcome) and evaluated according to the extent to which they have reached the determined outcome.

Developing skills may include a good deal, but in the English subject curriculum on udir.no, the official channel of information for Norwegian education, a few different skills are mentioned. These include “Evaluate and use different situations, working methods and learning strategies to further develop one’s English-language skills”, which means that the student will be able to independently determine which methods are applicable to solve a given task. This is also indicative of the student becoming an autonomous learner. The next aim mentioned here is to “Introduce, maintain and terminate conversations and discussions about general and academic topics related to one’s education programme”. Perhaps even more important than the last aim, this aim relates to the student’s ability to seek out information on issues and being able to reflect on and debate the issues that are relevant to their work or education.

All of the abovementioned aims relate to communicative competences, which have previously been discussed (see section 2.3). Skulstad elaborates on some of the issues that accompanies the inclusion of “communicative competence” in a curriculum, as it has been confused with only including speaking and listening (Skulstad, 2018, p. 57). Furthermore, she comments on the phrasing of the aim of “listen to and understand social and geographic

variations of English from authentic situations”, with an emphasis on “authentic”. Skulstad (2018, p. 58-59) highlights “authentic”, as it has three distinct aspects relating to it in terms of communicative competences. The first aspect is to use authentic texts to show the students the relationship between language and culture and also how students can encounter the literature of the target language outside of the classroom. The second aspect is to use authentic examples of speech and discourse. The third aspect is to use authentic tasks that people actually partake in (e.g. order food or book tickets to a concert).

The English subject curriculum is very general and open to interpretation. Interpretation leads to a different problem, as one teacher may find a syllabus to be in accordance with the curriculum, whereas another teacher might deem the same syllabus unfit and breaching with the curriculum (Hiim and Hippe, 2009, p. 191-192). This opens up the debate of how local a vocational study should be. Given the premise that everyone interprets the curriculum individually, this means that two students could choose the same vocational study and end up with totally different educations (Hiim and Hippe, 2009, p. 190).

2.8. Related studies

Below are four different studies on relevant topics for this thesis are reviewed. First is Storevik’s (2015) Master thesis on “vocationalisation” of the English subject. Then follows Hjorteland’s (2017) Master thesis on teacher cognition and literature teaching. The last Master thesis is from Sleveland (2014), which is an assessment of three coursebooks degree and the quality of vocational teaching material. Finally, a study of teacher cognition and TBLT done in China by Zheng and Borg (2014) is presented.

Storevik’s (2015) Master thesis is a mixed-methods study of government-initiated programs towards “vocationalisation”. She uses the qualitative method of interviewing teachers and sends out a questionnaire to the students in order to obtain everyone’s perspective on “vocationalisation”. Her findings suggest that both teachers and students are positive towards “vocationalisation”, but that there are differences in terms of application. The experienced teachers “tend to rely more on their instincts and experience than on government papers” (Storevik, 2015, p. 107), but are more easily able to vocationalise the content in their lessons. Storevik states this is because the experienced teachers look for suitable content and then

vocationalise the content, resulting in a more holistic approach. Inexperienced teachers, she argues, have a much more distinctive separation of vocational and general content (similar to that of ESP), and perceive “vocationalisation” more as an addition to the curriculum. Nevertheless, the inexperienced teachers seem to be more eager and positive towards the governmental initiatives than the experienced teachers (Storevik, 2015, 108). As a result of the positive experiences with “vocationalisation”, all of the four teachers in her study agree that the exam needs to reflect this shift in direction for VET and its corresponding content. The students also seem to be positive towards the “vocationalisation” of the common core subjects, though there are differences in how motivated the students in the different classes became after the implementation of “vocationalisation” (Storevik, 2015, p. 108).

Hjorteland (2017) studies teacher cognition and literature teaching in the upper-secondary school in her Master thesis, and she interviews and observes five teachers in her qualitative thesis. Hjorteland (2017, p. 110-111) finds that all of her respondents believed varied methods were the best way of teaching literacy, or having the students engage with foreign language literature, and Hjorteland sees this in her observations, confirming the teachers’ stated beliefs. However, the teachers also believed that the students would benefit from reading more extensively and freely, but the teachers did not practice this, although their beliefs indicated that they wanted to do so (Hjorteland, 2017, p. 112). Hjorteland attributes this “mismatch” of beliefs and practices to contextual factors, such as reading being time-consuming (Hjorteland, 2017, p. 112). All of Hjorteland’s respondents state that they are influenced or affected by their own schooling and that their influences now vary, perhaps as a result of differing degrees of cooperation at the schools they work at (Hjorteland, 2017, p. 113). The teachers also state that they prefer to use the coursebooks as a source of reading texts, as the coursebook is easy to use and accessible (Hjorteland, 2017, p. 112).

The last Master thesis here is Sleveland (2014) on the “vocationalisation” of coursebooks in the English subject. Sleveland experienced that his students lacked motivation and competence in the common core subjects. Sleveland (2014) uses a mixed method approach when he analyses three English subject coursebooks for vocational English (Sleveland, 2014, p 4). His goal is to find out to what degree the coursebooks are vocationally oriented. To find this, he quantitatively analyses the chapters and words that are used in the coursebooks and also qualitatively analyses texts about lathing (a practice done in Building and Construction).

Sleveland finds that there are differences to what degree the vocational coursebooks vocationalise (Sleveland, 2014, p. 66-67), but he concludes that “vocationalisation” must continue to be a focus for both teachers and coursebook publishers.

The last study is from Zheng and Borg (2014), who published a study of task-based learning and teaching in China, and what secondary school teachers believed and practiced about TBLT. It was a qualitative study of three secondary school teachers, who were interviewed and observed. The researchers found that teachers need to extend their knowledge of TBLT in order to increase its effectiveness and viability. In their conclusion, Zheng and Borg (2014, p. 219) found that the three teachers interviewed and observed had a low level of understanding TBLT, beyond the students speaking in pairs or groups; as supported by earlier studies, TBLT’s function is often misunderstood as simply meaning “activity”, which is a too narrow definition of TBLT. Lastly, it seems that some of the resistance towards TBLT originates from the perception that it is not suitable as preparation for the examinations. TBLT’s holistic approach to language learning is perhaps not adequately understood amongst teachers, since it not only focuses on the linguistic aspect, but includes non-linguistic outcomes, such as problem-solving skills and learner autonomy (Samuda and Bygate, 2008, p. 69).

The study of Zheng and Borg has some relevant points in regard to this thesis. Firstly, it highlights studies showing TBLT being hard to integrate into the teaching. Programs like FYR and VOLL might push teaching towards learner-centered learning, making TBLT more than just ‘speaking in pairs’ as Zheng and Borg states in their conclusion (Zheng and Borg, 2014, p. 219). Secondly, it raises the question of how diluted the concept of TBLT is at the educational level in the system that the teacher is working in. As Zheng and Borg concluded with in their study, the principled use of TBLT “become progressively weaker at each subsequent level of the educational system” (Zheng and Borg, 2014, p. 208). However, Richards and Rodgers argue, TBLT has to be initiated from the bottom, as it is based on the teaching/learning context (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 194).

3. Methodology

This chapter starts with describing the research method chosen and gives a brief explanation of what this may mean for the data collection. This is followed by an evaluation and consideration of the individual data sampling techniques that are used, namely interviews and observations. Finally, there is a short clarification on how the different respondents were sampled, and lastly an overview of validity and reliability, what it is and in relation to the thesis.

3.1. Qualitative and quantitative research

There are two main methods to choose from when conducting language teaching research: *quantitative* and *qualitative* research methods (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 19). Jacobsen (2015, p. 64) claims that it is always the research question that should decide what method to adopt and should not be chosen arbitrarily. According to Dörnyei (2007, p. 24), quantitative research is the investigation of a phenomenon through data collection of numerical data analyzed with statistical methods. Qualitative research, in contrast, is the investigation of a phenomenon by using non-numerical, open-ended data that is interpreted through non-statistical methods. But, as Dörnyei also highlights, there is numerical information in qualitative research (age, for instance) and non-numerical information in quantitative research (place of birth, gender, etc.), though arguably it is possible to code the non-numerical information into numbers.

However depicted, there are both similarities and distinct features between the two methods. They may both be used to give a better understanding of a given social phenomenon, and they may both be used to gather information from people (e.g. one could quantitatively review how many teachers that are using VOLL in their teaching, or qualitatively review how a fraction of those teachers use VOLL in their teaching).

The reasons for choosing qualitative methods in this study are based on what the study aims to do. This project aims to uncover what a few select teachers think about tasks in vocational classes. Obtaining a reasonable level of insight into this subject from the teachers' perspectives requires a more personal approach than a questionnaire could reveal. It is also a matter of connection and building a rapport with the respondents. Thus, the qualitative methods of interview and observation were chosen. As indicated by Borg (2015a, p. 491), this is also the most regularly chosen approach when researching TC. This may be a result of its personal nature and need for deeper understanding about the respondent and his/her beliefs and practices.

3.1.1. Qualitative research

Qualitative research is hard to pin down, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), because “It has no theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 6-7). There are, however, some common denominators between the different qualitative methods. They often have few respondents and focus mainly on in-depth answers, often with open questions (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 37-38). Qualitative research is often used to describe social phenomena and can be suited to observe the phenomenon in its natural environment (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38). This is of particular importance and is a method of observing and documenting the item of interest when it is naturally occurring, such as observing the teacher in the classroom.

Dörnyei (2007) lists the advantages of using a qualitative method when approaching a given research topic, but there are also drawbacks. Firstly, the advantages of a qualitative research method include its *exploratory* nature, meaning that it is a suitable method for exploring unknown phenomena or subjects where little is known. Secondly, it makes sense of the *complex*. Multivariate phenomena are prone to simplification, due to the need for easy, quick answers. In the classroom, there are multiple factors deciding whether a class is successful or not. A bad session cannot be boiled down to a single factor as cause for the issue: it is unfair to blame only the teacher or only the students. Instead the bad result may be comprised of several issues that combined produce a negative outcome. However, qualitative methods describe what the respondents think and feel about a topic, such as the use of tasks in vocational English classes. The researcher will have the possibility to ask further about the answer, providing reasons as to “why” something is happening. The last advantage is that qualitative methods yield large amounts of data that can be interpreted and analyzed (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 39-41).

There are also pitfalls and disadvantages with qualitative methods and data collecting. When collecting such huge amounts of data, the main problem is that the researcher will have to sift through the data, separating the relevant from the irrelevant. This requires resources, such as time, money, capacity and knowledge, which are not always in abundance. Another problem, concerning the exploratory nature, is that the researcher may end up with answers and data that have nothing to do with the initial research question. Also, in the case of this project it is not desirable that the thesis strays far from the questions it seeks to answer. Perhaps the strongest

argument against the qualitative method in this project is that it gives limited grounds for generalization since the sample size is as small as three respondents (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 41).

Quantitative research is a method used to gather information of a larger quantity with a focus on numerical data. The quantitative method differs in many ways from the qualitative method. A distinct feature of the quantitative method is that it requires more structure and pre-planning than the qualitative method. In terms of teacher cognition research, the most used quantitative method is the questionnaire (Borg, 2015a, 491). However, as Dörnyei (2007, p. 35) reports, quantitative research averages out responses, making the answers very general. This is problematic when dealing with subjective experiences, such as teacher cognition.

3.2. Interviews

Interviewing is a way of extracting data and opinions from a respondent about a given subject. Jacobsen (2015, p. 146-7) points to interviews as particularly effective both when dealing with few respondents and when the researcher is interested in what these respondents have to say about the given subject. As previously mentioned, research on TC is mostly conducted through interviews as the main method of gathering data (Borg, 2015a, p. 492). Although Borg does not disclose why the interview is a preferred method of data collecting, Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood and Son (2004, p. 294) state that the interview gives “prominence (...) to the voice of teachers rather than that of researchers”. This is one reason why the interview is well suited for research on teacher cognition within the classroom.

Since the interviews are about the teachers’ practice and beliefs, the interviews themselves were conducted in Norwegian. There are three reasons for this: The first reason is that the interviews themselves can be stressful and challenging for the teachers. They may feel that they need to “perform” or live up to certain standards. The second reason is that the answers the teachers may want to give can be more challenging to put into words in a foreign language and the teachers may be more easily able to express detailed information in their first language. The third reason is that the teachers work in a Norwegian context and use Norwegian as their working language. Contextual factors could therefore be lost if the interviews are conducted in English. Dörnyei (2010, p. 12) argues that “(...) the quality of the obtained data increases if the questionnaire is presented in the respondent’s own mother tongue”. Though Dörnyei (2010) only

mentions questionnaires, the argument can easily be transferred to interviews as well. His argument is that clear and understandable questions in the first language of the respondents provide better and richer data (Dörnyei, 2010).

In this project on teachers' beliefs about tasks in a vocational setting, the researcher conducted the interviews in a closed off, calm area, where no interruptions would occur. Interviewing was conducted through multiple sessions, comprising of one pre-observation interview, followed by two observations, and then a post-observation interview, which is a combination that is commonly used in TC research (Borg, 2015b, p. 290). This is, however, not a longitudinal study, as the aim of the study "is not to document temporal changes" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 135), but to establish what the teachers believe, which would be hard to do in just a single interview session.

The pre-observation interviews follow an interview-guide, but the order of the questions was not followed to the letter, either because the questions were already answered, or because there would be a follow-up question that would be better suited. Follow-up questions usually revolved around practical examples and individual interpretations of theory and practice.

All of the respondents answered all of the questions. However, there were different follow-up questions in the pre-observation interview as well as the post-observation interview, which has led to different results. In terms of reliability, the questions were different among the respondents, but the overall themes were the same. During the interviews, there was a somewhat low level of formality and initially there was a cognizant attempt on the researcher's behalf to converse in an informal tone in order to reduce stress among the respondents. All of the respondents answered that they had not experienced neither the interviews nor the observations as particularly stressful.

3.2.1. Semi-structured interview-guides

The first type of data-collection used in this thesis is interviews. The open individual interview has the advantage that it is possible to delve beneath what is observed by asking questions, and acquiring explanations and reasoning (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 147). By design it is ideal for research with relatively few respondents, depending on how detailed the interviews are, and the length of the project (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 146-7). There are mainly three types of interviews: structured,

unstructured, and semi-structured interview. For this thesis, the semi-structured interview was chosen.

When interviewing someone with a semi-structured interview-guide, there is a high level of flexibility (Borg, 2015b, p. 236), really only constricted by the interviewer. The interviewer can guide the interview in the direction of his/her choosing. This makes interviewing a suitable data collection method for this project about teacher cognition and tasks. When the respondent gives an interesting answer, the researcher can give a follow-up question as to why they think this or that. Follow-up questions are the best tool to further examine thoughts, beliefs, or statements the respondent gives (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 158).

The semi-structured interview is a combination of structured and unstructured interviews. It has some pre-planned questions, so it is not as free-flowing as the unstructured interview, but at the same time it allows for deviation from the interview-guide, thus being able to pick up and elaborate on responses from the respondents. The semi-structured interview has, as implied in the name, some level of structure, while the answers are open-ended at the same time (Borg, 2015b, p. 236). There is a list of questions that the interviewer wants information about, but order and level of detail may vary from interviewee to interviewee. Another benefit taken from the unstructured interview is that it can be exploratory (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 136), meaning that there is a process of exploring the subject simultaneously when conducting the research. Table 1 (see appendix 3) illustrates how and in which order the interviews and observations were conducted.

3.2.2. Pre-observation interviews

Having the pre-observation interview serves many purposes that improves the quality of the research. Initially the pre-observation interview helps the researcher establish rapport with the respondents (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 135) and gives the respondent the opportunity to ask for clarifications in relation to the study. Respondents may have no experience of being observed and interviewed, and might therefore be cautious in both response to questions and in terms of behavior during observation. Therefore, it is in the interest of the study to ease the respondents to obtain the most accurate data. Additionally, the pre-observation interview sets up the framework for the observation and the corresponding interview. Questions from the interview-guide set up future questions based on the observation.

Thus, the initial interview is useful for several reasons. Building rapport with the respondent, establish a sense of the respondent's cognitions about tasks in vocational classes, and beginning to form ideas of what to look for during the observations and in the post-observation interview (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 135). By becoming aware of the teachers' stances on tasks, what they think and believe, it becomes easier to analyze and assess their practices in class.

The questions in the interview guide revolve around five main categories, which are inspired by Gilje's (2015, p. 7) format. The first category is about the respondents' backgrounds and to become comfortable with answering the researcher. Examples here are: "How old are you?" and "What subjects do you teach?".

The second category is about the materials used in the classroom, e.g. elaborating on what tasks they use and how they use them. Examples are: "What types of tasks do you usually use in your teaching?" and "What criteria do you set for the tasks that you want to use in your teaching?".

The third category involves questions regarding their own practices, and what their beliefs are on what tasks should achieve, but also whether there are tasks they abstain from using. Examples are: "What tasks do you use to improve the students' skills (vocabulary, grammar, fluency)?", "How many tasks do you usually use in your lessons? Why that number?", and "Which tasks do you tie to specific themes (Christmas carols, Halloween, indigenous people, environmental issues)?".

The fourth category is more personal and delves into the teachers' own experiences with education. The basis for this category is that TC research shows that the cognitions of the teacher are often closely linked to their background and lived experiences in school and higher education (Borg, 2015b, p. 60-1). This section, coupled with the third category, is arguably the most important section of the interview-guide, as it tries to pinpoint what teachers believe and think about tasks, and from where that set of beliefs may originate. Examples are: "What experiences do you remember from your own schooling? Have any of them impacted your own teaching?" and "How do you think tasks can promote learner autonomy?".

The fifth and final category tries to unravel from whence current beliefs are from, including seminars, teacher guides, and web-resources. Examples are: "Do you plan tasks or create tasks together in a team at your school?" and "Where do you get inspiration and ideas? ".

However, it is important that the researcher is aware of the phrasing of the questions he/she chooses. If questions are loaded with negative or positive modifiers, such as “Do you think it is good that...?”, respondents may give false information based on “social desirability bias”. This bias is, as Dörnyei (2007, p. 54) puts it, when people “exhibit performance (...) expected of them”. Respondents may try to exhibit the beliefs or act in the socially-desired manner expected in their respective professions. Another facet of this is the researcher’s own impartiality, or value neutrality in terms of questions and follow-up questions (Dörnyei, 2007, 140-141).

The final item of note here is that people may have a hard time spontaneously commenting on their own beliefs, and the questions should therefore circumvent the direct approach of explicitly asking “What are your cognitions on tasks?” (Borg, 2015a, p. 492). As Borg confirms, indirect elicitation is the more effective method of establishing what teachers believe. Thus, the questions aim to elicit the teachers’ opinions and ideas around specific topics, such as if there are certain tasks they think they cannot use, and whether they are inspired by their colleagues. The phrasing of the questions aims to be neutral.

3.2.3. Post-observation interviews

After both the pre-observation interview and the observation, the retrospective-, or post-observation interview can commence. Key events from the observations are described to the teacher in order to recall the thought processes behind them. The teacher then gives his/her reasons for the choice that they made regarding the task given. When the teacher is finished, the researcher *probes*. Probing is a technique where the researcher uses something the respondent has said and asks them to elaborate or clarify what they mean by the statements they gave (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 138).

Key episodes are written about in the field notes and recorded. These are discussed, elaborated and reflected on, which are the main points of the post-observation interview. Specifically, the teachers have usually had a clear idea of what students should produce in the tasks. Examples of follow-up questions would then be to ask whether or not the wanted results were achieved and ask the teacher to elaborate on the answers. Was there a problem with the task? Why did the task not initiate the students to ask questions? Was the task too hard? These are examples of follow-up questions, or probes as Dörnyei calls them, and they are not scripted

or prepared beforehand, as they are spontaneous and emerge during the interview (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 138).

3.3. Observations

Observation is the second method used in the data collection in this project. The idea behind having a second method included in the collection of data is that while the interviews enlighten what the respondents think about teaching English, the observations will inform what and how they actually practice, or as Borg (2015b, p. 266) puts it “direct evidence of behaviour”.

Observation is to note down how and what people do in a given situation (Jacobsen, 2015, p.165). Observation is therefore used as a method of understanding the conveyed ideal of the teacher, an investigation of the relationship between beliefs and practices. Even so, observation only accounts for the behavior of the teachers and not exclusively the internalized beliefs. Behavior may also be a result of local customs, or school rules, and teachers can perform the same actions, but have different reasoning (Borg, 2015a, p. 495). When the observed practice is interpreted caution is advisable.

There are many questions the researcher needs to raise when using observation as a data collection method. Jacobsen (2015, p.165-169) states a few relevant ones: Reflect on the context of the observation, how much should the respondent know of the study beforehand (disclosure), to what degree does the researcher participate, and how long should the duration of the observation be.

Observation, in this thesis, aims to observe the teachers’ practice and use of tasks in the classroom. Tasks are planned in advance, but they might not always work out according to the plan. Also, the outcome of the tasks can be different from what the teacher imagined or had planned, and the results of the tasks will be noted down to be asked about in the post-observation interview.

3.3.1. Context of observation and natural environment

The context around observation has an impact on its reliability, according to Jacobsen (2015, p. 243-244). Jacobsen argues that the place of conducting a project (whether qualitative or quantitative; whether interview or observation) impacts the results that are collected. Both

natural- and unnatural environments have pros and cons. The researcher may have problems getting “into” the respondent’s environment since the researcher is after all an intruder, so to speak. The research can also be interrupted in natural environments, such as colleagues or students asking questions during interviews. On the positive side, natural environments can make the respondents feel more at ease, and be less anxious.

Observing a teacher in a classroom is an observation in a natural environment. However, *context-effects* are nevertheless relevant. It is necessary to be aware of how the context might have an effect on those observed, namely the teachers. Being in a classroom means that the teacher has to act in a professional manner, and knowing they are being observed might give outcomes that would not happen otherwise.

3.3.2. The goal of observation and the *observer-effect*

It might seem trivial, but a question that needs to be raised before conducting an observation is whether or not to state what is in focus. If the teacher knows that he/she will be assessed based on certain criteria, the teacher may start to act unnaturally or try to “please” the observer. This is called the *Hawthorne-effect*, or *observer-effect* (Jacobsen, 2015, p.166). The *observer-effect* can be countered in several ways. One is to hide the observer’s intent, making it impossible for the observed (here the teacher) to know on which parameters he/she is measured. Another is to hide the observation altogether, either by hiding cameras or recorders, and not inform the subject of interest that he/she is being observed or listened to. This is, however, ethically problematic and will not be adopted in this project.

Linking this to the previous point on natural environment is the fact that the class is being recorded, which means that there are students present. They may also act unnaturally because of the awareness that they are being recorded, but also by the presence of someone unfamiliar on “their grounds”.

To minimize the *Hawthorne-effect* of the teacher, the researcher explained the stated goals of the project, namely teacher cognition in relation to tasks, referred to as *full disclosure* by Borg (2015b, p. 278-9). This means simply that the respondents are made aware of the intent of the researcher and that there are no hidden objectives that are being evaluated. By informing and stating what the research looks for, the researcher has been able to reduce stress and expectations from the teacher’s perspective. Also, through assurances of anonymity and repeated reassurances

of “no wrong answers”, a rapport has been developed, further easing any tension. In terms of the students, the researcher gives a brief summary of what the research was about and stated that the students were not the subjects of enquiry, only their teachers. Two classes declined to be audio-recorded, and only field notes were taken in these. Finally, it was pointed out that any recordings or field notes would be stored securely and erased when the project was over.

3.3.3. Participatory and non-participatory observation

The researcher also needs to take a stance on how he/she wishes to act during the observation and to consider how much the participation may impact the results. In this project, non-participatory observation was chosen. Non-participatory observation is when an observer is not part of what is going on during the observation (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 167). The observer does not intervene in any way and should ideally act like a piece of furniture or a fly on the wall (Borg, 2015b, p. 273). Non-participatory observation is the most frequently chosen type of observation in language teacher cognition research (Borg, 2015b, 270-2), which indicates a consensus that non-participatory observation is viable when researching classroom practices. The hope is that by minimizing the observer’s part and role in the classroom, the data will become less “contaminated” by the researcher, which is the main reason for choosing non-participatory observation. Impacting the teacher could compromise the whole observation, which aims to observe the classroom behavior of the teacher. Although the researcher may not participate at all in the classroom, it is inevitable that his/her mere presence affects the classroom. Both students and the observed teacher will recognize the researcher to some extent, and this needs to be accounted for during the data collection.

Trying to absolutely minimize the researcher’s presence is crucial for the gathering of authentic data from the classroom. Being a non-participant in the classroom might be difficult if one is prone to help students with questions. Previous experience has indicated that teachers leading the class may turn to the researcher for confirmation on questions or inquiries from the student, when the teacher is unsure or wants to reaffirm their own beliefs. Helping out students or asking them questions, within the context of this study, would be considered as participation or engaging in the session, and was therefore avoided. However, situations may arise where not participating can negatively impact the data as well (Borg, 2015b, p. 274), for example if the teacher is asked a question about the presence of the researcher, or a student wants to interact

with the researcher on a non-school related level. If the researcher refuses to help the teacher to answer questions relating to the researcher's presence or denies to acknowledge the student's request, the researcher may alter the atmosphere in the classroom. In agreement with Borg (2015b, p. 274), the best solution is to answer quickly, but honestly, and let the teacher continue with the session. The impact of being present is possible to evaluate by simply asking the teacher after the class how the students reacted to having someone new in the classroom, and whether that effected the lesson in any way.

3.3.4. Length of observation and recording

The final part of the observation that needs to be considered is the length of the observation. Teacher cognition in relation to tasks in the vocational classroom could, and possibly should, be studied for a long time. The longer the observation goes on, the more reliable the data will be (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 168). It is however a question of resources, and there will eventually be a saturation point, where no/limited new data is uncovered.

A Master's thesis is ill suited for a long period of observation, and there is no time to revisit and look for a change in behavior. The length of observation chosen in this project aims to acquire a representation of what the teacher does, and then establish the suitable time-frame for obtaining this. The classes only have three hours per week in Vg1 and two hours per week in Vg2, so four hours per teacher seemed to be adequate. More sessions would uncover more data, but would demand much more work.

During the observation the ideal would be to record all of the teaching sessions. However, there were ethical issues connected to this, as some of the students did not want to be audio recorded. And it was also a question of resources: time and money. The students were asked beforehand if they had any issues with being audio recorded, and those students that were uncomfortable with being recorded notified the teacher anonymously. Audio recordings were used in all of the interviews and in four of the six classroom observations. In the two cases of observation where the students were unwilling to be recorded, the only reliable tool left was field notes. Field notes are written records done by hand through the observation (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 160). Notes are also a possibility to jot down whatever comes to mind that the audio recorder may be unable to pick up, be it sounds or non-verbal communication. Additionally, field notes are a source of the researcher's thinking when he/she is observing (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 160), and

are a good source of first-impressions and relevant descriptions of the classes. But, as Borg (2015b, p. 282) claims, field notes should not be the only sole record kept, as the researcher can miss details. The notes taken are an invaluable supplementary material during the preparation for the post-observation interview. Field notes were taken during all of the observations, regardless of there being audio recordings as well.

3.4. Sampling of respondents

This study would not be possible without the respondents, who are the basis of the data material that is gathered. A respondent is a person, in this case a teacher, who has direct knowledge of the subject that is being investigated (as opposed to indirect knowledge, e.g. the principal or a researcher who is not directly involved, but nevertheless has knowledge about the phenomenon) (Jacobsen, 2015, 178.) Respondents in this study are all in-service teachers, with variation in age, sex, and experience as teachers. None of the respondents worked at the same school and they had no obvious connection to one another (except for teaching English to vocational students).

The respondents of this thesis were sampled through two different methods. Respondent #3, Kari, was reached through a mass-distributed mail with an invitation to join a research project. Respondents #1 and #2, Amalie and Thor, were convenience-sampled. Convenience-sampling, as Dörnyei puts it, is “the least desirable but most common sampling strategy ... at the postgraduate research level” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 129). More specifically convenience-sampling is when the researcher uses people he/she knows, or is connected to through, e.g. friends or colleagues. Reaching out through different connections is definitively not ideal, but in the event of little to no response on e-mail, this is the logical step to acquire the needed respondents.

The sample of this project consists of two females and one male. One of the females, Kari, has been a teacher for ten years, the longest of the three. She is writing her MA thesis in English literacy next autumn. The male, Thor, has an MA in English, and started teaching as of last autumn. The last female, Amalie, has taught for nine years, and is currently studying English didactics at a university online.

The members of the sample are of similar age and have similar levels of education. Though they differ to some degree in experience, all three have been active in the workforce for an average of 13-15 years. Two of the three were convenience-sampled, and the last one

responded to an e-mail that was sent to every English-teacher in the near vicinity. Though this is less than ideal, it was the only way to acquire the minimum of three respondents for this project to be possible.

3.5. Case-studies

When it comes to case-studies, the literature seems to be vague in pinpointing its exact use and utility. Casanave (2015, p. 119) thinks of it as more of an approach, rather than a method. The purpose of a case study is to investigate either a small group of people or institutions, with special attention to a particular question or issue, meaning that the research is interested in the particular, and not the general (Casanave, 2015, p. 119). The question or issue revolves around something that a specific group is involved with, e.g. students' views of their course, or the university wanting their staff to assess the cafeteria (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 152). A last addendum on the definition of case-studies is that they use multiple data sources in order to investigate the bounded phenomenon that is explored (Casanave, 2015, 120). "Bounded" is understood here as delimited and the context is particular and defined. Though this description of a case-study makes it even broader, it fits this thesis' research questions.

Having established what a case-study is, this is a case-study of TC of English teachers' use of tasks in vocational classes. The case revolves around the teachers, and what they believe and think (TC) about the use of tasks in vocational classes. Specifically, the type of case study used is called *intrinsic case study*, which is when the subjects themselves are of interest (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 151-2). Firstly, respondents and their answers and cognitions are of interest, not because there is a wish to fit the data into a pre-existing form or model, but to discover what the respondents think and believe about the subject of tasks and its use in vocational classrooms. This is arguably the best reason for using an intrinsic case study, as the respondents' opinions on the use of tasks is the sought-after answer.

Additionally, since the respondents were to such a large extent handpicked for their specific qualifications, and to whom they taught, this is yet another argument for this being a case study. The criteria for being selected were paramount for this project: the teachers had to teach English to a vocational class, and they had to actively use tasks to some extent. Adding these two reasons together, the focus on the respondents and their answers and how they were

sampled, are the grounds for deciding that an intrinsic case study was the most suitable method of data collection.

3.6. Validity and reliability

This final section aims to assess to which extent the reliability and validity of this project is upheld to the appropriate standards. By assessing these points, it is possible to determine whether or not the results of the project are fair and representative of the respondents and to the standards of objective, qualitative research. Should the assessment show that the project has flaws when it comes to validity and reliability, that would impact the results, and also what conclusions can be drawn from the data. First, it is necessary to define validity and reliability; following that, validity and reliability in this study will be addressed.

3.6.1. Validity

Research studies are always concerned about methodology and whether or not the results have been impacted by poor data. According to Holliday (2015, p. 51-52) transparency of the methods used is the first step when assessing validity. In this study, the qualitative interview and observation were chosen in order to ensure that the data collected would be accurate and properly reflect the respondents' cognitions. Qualitative validity then is to argue that the methods used when collecting the data are valid and assures "the legitimacy of the qualitative research" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 55). Therefore it is crucial to be critical of the work process when evaluating the data collected.

Dörnyei (2007, p. 55) writes about the dispute over whether qualitative research has, or can have, a universal checklist for validity. Due to the interpretive nature of qualitative research and reliance on the respondents' perception, each individual project becomes unique by virtue, thus having its own standards to be measured by. A study will give a description of the methodology that is used. This description gives an impression of how the data has been collected. Quality control is necessary, as there can be "methodological factors which distort the results" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 55). Thus, qualitative studies need to be assessed individually and not in accordance with a 'check-list' or other standardized methods of control. There is not

necessarily a correlation between a high-quality description of methodology and accurate and credible data.

Dörnyei (2007, p. 55-56) summarizes three important quality controls when carrying out qualitative research. The first is to focus on the relevant. All the data a respondent gives must be assessed as either interesting or not. Including non-relevant data in the project yields less validity. The second is the quality of the researcher him-/herself. The data that is gathered will be reflected by the competence of the researcher, especially in qualitative research where the data usually has to be coded manually. The third and last validity check proposed by Dörnyei is the problem of *anecdotalism*. Anecdotalism is when the researcher uses cherry-picked examples to support claims or the hypothesis. Instead, the researcher must be disciplined and give an accurate context and description of where the data originates from (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 56). Living by these three validity checks helps keep the integrity of the collected data. As previously mentioned, it is important to be aware of the “social desirability bias”, which is when a respondent gives an answer he/she thinks is expected of them. This can be countered if the researcher states and restates to the respondents that the information given is confidentially treated and that they are anonymous.

A concern this study and similar ones must be vigilant of is whether or not the respondents give an accurate description of reality. During interviews and observations, the respondents will give their interpretation of reality, which will be affected and influenced by how they perceive, e.g., classroom events (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 228-229). This is important for the researcher to be aware of, both to keep the integrity of the research by acknowledging it, but to also counteract it with critical observations and questions. Should this research only be based upon either interviews or observations, and not both, there would be a risk of getting inaccurate data descriptions. For instance, a teacher could have a clear plan of how to manage a class, but be unable to put it into practice. Thus, there would be a difference in relationship between the idea – ideal – and the actual, practical management of the class. Borg (2015a) notes that interviews and observations are the most used methods when researching teacher cognition. However, as he mentions later, “observations alone are insufficiently robust as a source of evidence of what teachers believe” (Borg, 2015a, p. 495). Only observing a class would give the impression that the teacher had a specific set of ideas, for instance believe that tasks were ill suited for vocabulary. While not intentionally misleading the researcher, there would be a

misrepresentation of the reality and actuality in the classroom (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 230). Using only observations as a source of data collection would therefore negatively impact the research's validity, as the data gathered is highly contextual.

One of the ways to counteract this is to use both interviews and observations as data collecting methods, as in this study (Borg, 2015b, p. 289-290). In the order chosen – pre-observation interview, observations, post-observation interview – it is possible to observe whether the teacher's views are reflected or in accordance with their beliefs towards teaching.

Having this combination of interviews and observations, the researcher is able to use the post-observation interview as a platform to discuss the teachers' aforementioned beliefs, and relate these beliefs to the observations. The researcher as an outsider is able to point towards specific events and occurrences that the teachers may not have reflected on previously. When the researcher asks these questions, the teachers are able to respond to the questions, and can give reasons for why they did things in a certain way, or clear up misunderstandings.

There were several instances of the teachers wanting to reinforce their statements or quotes by asking for assurance or agreement from the researcher. As it would disrupt the flow of the lesson if the researcher had refused to answer altogether, only brief comments or consenting remarks were given when the researcher was directly asked questions.

There were also two or three occasions where students approached the researcher during the observations. In these cases, as mentioned in section 3.3.3, the researcher answered the questions in a polite manner without continuing the conversation.

3.6.2. Reliability

Reliability is the overall assessment of the way the study was conducted, primarily having the aspect of consistency in mind. The idea is that someone else should be able to follow the same procedure as the researcher's, and produce the same result (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 57). Problems arise though, because the study is interpreted by a researcher, whose data are the respondents' interpretations of a set of questions. The same results may not be replicated (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 57), neither through the respondents maturing or getting different experiences, nor through the researcher asking questions differently. Therefore, a reliability check needs to be applied.

In this study, a summary of the respondents' answers, and the researcher's interpretation of them, were sent to the respondents and they were given the opportunity to correct assumptions

or discrepancies in the report. Dörnyei (2007, p. 61) calls this *respondent feedback*. Respondents were able to validate that the information and answers they had given represent their actual beliefs. A note here, though, is that the respondents may want to change their opinions to “shine in a better light”, for instance in terms of wanting to adhere to social expectations (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 54). The way to counteract this is to highlight their anonymity and that there are no wrong answers, only how they perceive reality. Additionally, as Dörnyei (2007, p. 61) argues, the new data obtained from the respondents can be included and added to the already existing data.

When interviewing or observing the respondents, the researcher or scientist will be impacted to some degree by the person or situation that is being studied. A way of counteracting this is, as Holliday (2015, p. 52) describes it, by “making the familiar strange”. What Holliday means by this is that a teacher observing a teacher will reflect on occurring events from a teacher’s perspective. Instead, the researcher needs to describe and interpret the familiar events through the perspective of a stranger.

The *interview-effect*, when the interviewer’s presence creates unusual results (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 173), the *observer-effect*, and the contextual situation are examples of how the data gathered can be affected by external factors (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 241-4). With regard to the interview-effect, attempts were made to minimize this by establishing a rapport and avoid leading the interview too much. As Jacobsen notes, the data of an interview or an observation may be the result of the interviewer or the observer, more so than the thoughts, ideas, and behavior of the respondent (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 242). The interviews flowed relatively freely, with few interruptions from external parties or the researcher. At some points the researcher asked for clarifications or specificity when statements were unclear or diffuse.

Since two of the three respondents were acquired through convenience-sampling, the data might be affected by this. How this affected the responses is hard to determine, but as Dörnyei (2007, p. 129) states, convenience sampling comes at the expense of credibility.

3.7. Ethical considerations

Whenever research interacts with people there are ethical issues and considerations that must be taken. This research studies teachers’ beliefs and thoughts in relation to how they practice their

profession. The target of teacher research is personal views on sensitive matters (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 63-64), however, the researcher wants to collect rich data, but conflicts can arise as a result of this. Dörnyei (2007, p. 65) lists some of the considerations that must be thought through when teacher research is to be conducted, such as how much information should be shared with the respondents, how is the anonymity of the respondents respected, and who handles the data and how is it handled.

This research has been approved by the *Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata* (NSD), who determines whether each individual research that applies for approval respect and uphold the points that Dörnyei (2007, p. 65) raises. The respondents were sent the transcripts of their responses and had the possibility to give feedback on the researcher's interpretation of their answers. Minor details such years of experience have been corrected. One of the teachers also had a correction in regards to his/her answer on the use of whole-class discussions. Furthermore, the anonymity of the respondents is kept through the use of pseudonyms and the redaction of information that could potentially identify them. The data (written records, audio recordings, e-mail correspondence) is kept by the researcher through the duration of the study on secured and encrypted servers. After the study is over all the data is erased or maculated.

The research has aimed to portray the teachers, their respective institutions, and their students as objectively as possible. All collected data is represented as accurately as possible, while the anonymity of the respondents is upheld.

4. Results

Described in the methodology chapter, the data was collected through interviews and observations. The pre-observation interview builds rapport and confidence with the respondent, and establishes the framework of the teacher's cognitions. After the pre-observation interview the researcher attended two 90-minute sessions, observing the teacher's behavior and practice. Lastly, the researcher interviewed the teacher about explanations for and elaborations on the observed behavior and practice. The focus was on the relationship between stated beliefs and practice, and challenges the teachers mention. The following is the data and results that have been acquired through the interviews and the observations.

4.1. Respondents

The respondents Amalie, Thor, and Kari were chosen through purposive sampling, meaning that the respondents were chosen based on the purpose of the study (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 126), and two of the respondents, Amalie and Thor, were chosen directly through convenience sampling. As the study is concerned with teachers who are teaching English to vocational students, they are the targeted respondents.

Table 2 (see appendix 4) illustrates which classes were observed and which teacher was in each class. Also, the table shows how many students there were in each class during the observation and how many tasks that were given to each class.

4.1.1. Amalie

Amalie is a 38-year-old female teacher at a mixed school of GE and VET. She is teaching English in vocational classes, which are Vg1 Service and Transport, Vg2 Sales, Service and Security, and Vg1 Media and Communication. Her teaching practice stretches back nine years, but only seven of those are in Norway with vocational classes. She is at the moment taking web-studies to gain formal qualifications English, as she initially has a BA in tourism management, a one-year study in Spanish, and Practical Pedagogic Education (PPU). In addition to English, she teaches Spanish to GE-classes. She was selected as a respondent through convenience sampling.

4.1.2. Thor

Thor is a 35-year-old male teacher at an all-vocational school. He is in his first year of full-time teaching after having finished his MA in English and gaining formal teaching qualifications. He teaches English and social sciences to three Vg2 Industrial Technology classes and has two students he teaches one-on-one, due to the students having no previous education in the English subject. He was chosen as a respondent through convenience sampling.

4.1.3. Kari

Kari is a 42-year-old female teacher at a mixed school. She has a BA in English Language and Literature and a one-year study in PPU. She is currently studying an MA in English Literacy.

She has worked as an English teacher for ten years, working with vocational classes for the whole period. As of now, she is teaching in several Vg1 Healthcare, Childhood and Youth Development classes. In addition to English, she teaches Norwegian. She is the only respondent who was not chosen through convenience sampling. Kari was sampled through mass-distributed e-mails, with an invitation to participate in the study.

4.2. Materials and types of tasks used in teaching

The first part of the interview deals with what materials the teacher uses in his/her teaching lessons, such as PowerPoints, coursebooks, web-resources, discussions, debates, movies, and songs. The teachers were asked to give reasons for why they chose these kinds of materials, and what their criteria were for what can and cannot be used in lessons. The results are both from the interviews and the observation, and are presented here.

4.2.1. Amalie

Pre-observation interview

When asked about what teaching material she uses, Amalie answers that she uses a variety of different sources, such as YouTube and Kahoot. If text-reading is planned, the coursebook is the frequently go-to option. She filters away tasks based on time pressure, but also based on the level differences of the students. According to Amalie:

Because of time constraints I may choose to skip some tasks, and instead choose the easier ones. This is also because I know some of the Vg1-students simply do not understand the harder tasks. I can then supplement with interactive tasks online, where they can move answers around, but I also include some writing tasks, since I think that is something they must train to do.

Here, Amalie indicates that she is level-differentiating the tasks she chooses to suit the vocational students in class. If she sees that individual students are struggling with specific tasks, she can redirect them to other tasks that are more suitable in terms of difficulty.

Amalie sometimes uses small clips and movies from YouTube as a method of breaking up her lessons. YouTube is a good method for shifting attention, she believes, but it all depends on which class she is teaching. Some of her classes can sit and work individually for long stretches of time, whereas others need more follow-up. The lessons are usually broken into two or three parts, she explains, but it depends on the class. She knows some of the classes work best in the classroom uninterrupted, whereas other classes benefit from moving a bit more around, for instance outside or in the hallway.

She tries to break up the session to shift attention and keep the students activated during her lessons, and to maintain and keep the class focused when they are working with tasks. Amalie also uses tasks that are connected with specific skills so that the students can improve upon them. She specifically mentions improving reading comprehension through text reading, and tasks that aim to improve the students' vocabulary so that they are able to express their opinions on specific topics and themes.

Observation

First class, Vg2 Sales, Service and Security:

The lesson starts with the teacher creating a mindmap of the possible vocations the students can start working in after they have graduated from upper-secondary school. Having filled the mindmap with eight different vocations, the students are tasked with reading aloud a text from their coursebooks about vocations. The students read aloud in a snake-like pattern, dubbed "reading-snake" by their teacher. With the "reading-snake", the students also have the "reading-ball". The "reading-ball" is held by the student who is currently reading, and passed along to the next student in the snake pattern. The students can read as much as they like while holding the "reading-ball", and may opt not to read at all, just passing the ball along to the next in line.

After the reading, the students do the tasks that are connected to the text they read. The first task is a written fill-in-the-gap task, where they have to find a missing piece of information. The missing piece can be a single word or a phrase. Following the written task is a role-playing task, where the students role-play in pairs as two workers. This is an oral, communicative task. The final task is to decipher and explain slogans and plays on words. The students are sitting together in small groups of two or three in the hallway. Twenty minutes later Amalie calls them back to go through the tasks in plenary.

After the plenary session, the class watches a YouTube-video of a student in New Zealand trying out different vocations. When the video is over, the teacher asks the students whether any of the showcased vocations seemed interesting to them. Initially the students are hesitant, so Amalie starts to ask specific students. This triggers the rest to become engaged and they discuss which of the vocations were interesting and which ones seemed less interesting.

Second class, Vg1 Media and Communication:

The lesson starts with the teacher drawing a Venn-diagram (a diagram highlighting similarities and dissimilarities) about the UK and the US on the blackboard. When the students no longer have anything to add to the diagram, they read a text about the two countries using the “reading-snake” and the “reading-ball”. After the text has been read, the teacher instructs the students to begin working on the tasks that are connected to the text. The first task is a fill-in-the-gap task, where the students work individually. The second task is to write down keywords relating to specific categories (education practice, family life and relations, cultural events, and welfare ideas) about the different countries. On the second task, the students can cooperate in English. The two last tasks are oral ones. In the first task, the students are supposed to explain in their own words how the values of the two countries are presented in the text. The last task is to choose a single value that is mentioned, and discuss with a partner whether the value is American or English.

While the students are working, the teacher has one-on-one conversations in English with individual students in an adjacent closed-off room. The one-on-one conversations are assessment situations where the student and teacher simply converse about the student’s life and future plans. It is not a prepared presentation, but the teacher can in advance tell the students what the conversation will be about. After the teacher has finished with the assessments, she returns to the classroom and lets the students know they will finish up soon. Some students seem to be stuck at the first task and she tells them to skip ahead to the oral tasks. Finally, the teacher asks the students what they have found out from the tasks they have done. When the students have answered all the questions, the teacher ends the lesson.

Post-observation interview

Amalie explains that she often uses bubble-maps and brainstorming in 2SE to see what the students remember from Vg1. This is to activate the students' prior knowledge. In 1ME she used a Venn-diagram to compare and contrast differences and similarities between two countries, using prior knowledge again as the rationale.

Amalie claims that the “reading-snake” and the “reading-ball” are great tools for getting the students to pay attention to the text that is being read. She continues by saying that the students also engage with the material to a larger extent when they are using the “reading-ball”. Amalie knows that some teachers prefer to read themselves, but she believes that reading aloud is a possibility for all students to speak and read, even those that are hesitant to do so normally. As a result, Amalie also believes that the students as a group become more comfortable, more easily tolerate mistakes, and more easily promote learning.

4.2.2. Thor

Pre-observation interview

The classes Thor is teaching in now are at a low competence level, and he thinks that giving them loads of tasks would only be counterproductive. Therefore he prefers to give lectures, as he believes it is easier to manage the class that way. Here Thor gives his reasons for this:

Few read books, but they do watch some television, although the exposure to language is minimal. I mainly give them smaller writing tasks, only one or two paragraphs, but there are still those that are stuck with that for the whole session. (...) I prefer to give lectures, because then I can more easily monitor who is paying attention, and who's not.

Thor states that the general level of his students is in the lower ends of the grade scale. This is why he often prefers to give lectures instead of giving the students tasks, as he believes giving tasks would not be productive.

Thor also likes flipped classroom, which he explains is a teaching method where the students watch instructional videos online and do corresponding tasks. Thor believes that he can easier track the students and help those that are stuck, which he states there are many of. He also states that he has asked the vocational students to write letters, make audio files instead of presentations, and have small debates, but he sees limited success. Since the level of competence

is at a generally low level, he finds it hard to create suitable tasks, which makes it even harder to be creative when the students refuse to do the tasks that he gives them.

Observation

First class, Vg2 Industrial Technology:

Thor begins the lesson with an introduction of what the students are supposed to do. He initially only tells the students to find, in their opinion, the most important news article online. After the students have found an article, they are told to gather into groups of three. When grouped, the students are told to debate and find out whose news article is the most important. Having debated and decided upon an article within the group, the individual groups then present the chosen article to the rest of the class. The class then decides which article they think is the most important one. After the discussion, the teacher finds a YouTube-video (Adam Ruins Everything) that is portraying the diamond market. When the video is over, the students and the teacher discuss their opinions of diamonds and marriage traditions.

Second class, Vg2 Industrial Technology:

Thor begins the lesson just like the first one. The students are livelier in the second class. The session transpires similarly to the first class, until the whole-class discussion. Then some of the students become so distracted that Thor decides to abandon his planned discussion. He explains that instead of discussing the articles they are instead going to watch a YouTube-video on politics. After the video is over the students are asking Thor questions that sparks into a whole-discussion. Eventually the arguments are not serious and Thor shows them the diamond-video that he also showed in the first class.

Post-observation interview

In hindsight, Thor believes the tasks of finding a news article and having an opinion exchange task went satisfactorily. The first class seemed to quicker become more involved with the tasks than the second class. Thor believes that the two classes' approach to the tasks are a good indication of the differences in the particular classrooms. He explains further:

I think the tasks could have worked better with another group of students. When the students are so unenthusiastic and unmotivated and without proper routines, it is hard. (...) Although it worked with the first class, the second class did not respond as good.

Here Thor highlights the differences between the classes and that it is also difficult for the teacher to stay motivated when the class responds negatively. However, he believes the tasks themselves were based on a good idea.

When asked about the intention of the tasks, Thor answers that he wants his students to learn how to properly debate and put forward an argument. Furthermore, he explains why he did not go through his whole lesson plan with the students in the beginning of the lesson:

I did not want to overload them with information, and also, as this was about argumentation, the students should start with blank slates, to avoid confirmation biases. (...) You saw that in the second class, unlike the first class, where the discussion that was planned did not work out. Splitting the session up into smaller bits gives me the ability to be flexible, and I can take the lesson in the direction I want. Having a predetermined plan that is rigid would not work with this group of students.

Thor believes that the students do not need to know all that they are going through during the lesson. He mentions that it gives him the opportunity to alter tasks if a lesson is not going well. Another reason for not disclosing the whole lesson plan is that it can set up a session that does not come to fruition. Some of his students are wary of alterations and change of plans, Thor explains, and he has experienced that these particular students deal poorly with sudden changes.

4.2.3. Kari

Pre-observation interview

Kari uses different kinds of tasks in her teaching, both when assessing and in the regular lessons. She often uses tasks in relation to information extraction and reading texts. This includes writing tasks, such as answering questions after reading a text, writing summaries of what they have heard or read in the lesson, but also creating bubble-maps on a topic or highlighting keywords in a text. She continues by giving reasons for using tasks in a school setting:

Tasks are beneficial and necessary (for the students) to properly process the material they are working with. Tasks also invite to cooperative work, and can make the students see different solutions be worked out together. (...) Actually, I cannot imagine teaching without tasks. (Tasks) let the students do something.

Kari gives her reasons for using tasks in her lessons. She further specifies that she tries to be creative when she creates and finds tasks for her students. Recently she has made scavenger hunts for her students to find and solve English riddles. She has tried a Jeopardy-concept, where the answers are given, and the students must create the questions.

Observation

First class, Vg1 Healthcare, Childhood and Youth Development:

In the first class, the students are writing a letter, an essay, or an article based on an old exam. This writing exercise is part of a planned test exam, so the students can practice and prepare themselves for a potential written exam in the second year. This is the only task in the first class.

Second class, Vg1 Healthcare, Childhood and Youth Development:

In the second class the students are one step behind the first class. The students are given preparatory material for the exam tasks, so they can more easily start the writing process without too much reflection on which task to choose. First, the students read the preparation material in pairs. After the students have read this, the teacher shows a YouTube-video of a sports-athlete who is part of one of the exam tasks. Following that, the pairs summarize and extract the relevant questions within the task text, through highlighting key-words and condensing the text length into one or two sentences. Finally, the pairs present to the rest of the class what they believe the task is about, and how they would go on to solve the given task. When the last group has presented, the teacher rounds off the lesson with a song from YouTube that is relevant to one of the exam tasks. Though she wants to discuss the content of the song with the class, the lesson is over before they are able to talk about it.

Post-observation interview

Kari thinks the first class' tasks went alright. However, she wishes that her students would be more critical when choosing tasks to do, especially when they are being assessed. Kari says that the students often select the tasks that are exciting and not the task they are able to say the most about. Kari believes that if the students paid more attention when selecting tasks, they would be able to acquire better grades. Nevertheless, she also understands why the students choose the way they do, as it is often easier to write on something you are excited about.

Though Kari thinks the choice of tasks in the second class went well with the students, she also emphasizes that it would have been different if all the students had been present. The second class especially lacked voices in the room. The class has several students who are in work practice, and this time the most vocal ones were absent.

4.3. Tasks used in class

This section of the interview asks the teachers how they implement tasks in their lessons and goes further into what they think the tasks are meant to accomplish. Having the teachers explain what they think the tasks should accomplish also reveals what they believe about tasks.

4.3.1. Amalie

Pre-observation interview

Amalie is careful with whole-class presentations, which is also included as a type of task in this study. Some of the students are not comfortable with that format, she says, and are instead eased into presenting through incremental progression. Alternatively to whole-class presentations, the students can have their presentation in front of smaller groups. She also uses whole-class debates and discussions sparsely. Amalie explains why:

I do not want to make (presentations) complicated. Later in the semester I might push them into presenting in front of smaller groups, a few of their friends perhaps. (...) I am a bit cautious with having whole-class discussions, especially over extended periods of time. We have spontaneous discussions, so I guess it is more debates that I shy away from.

When asked why, Amalie says that she thinks the stronger students would hog the floor during larger planned debates, which would exclude the weaker students. Therefore she prefers to use group-work, so that all of the students are included and engaged to a larger extent.

Amalie states that she focuses on a safe language learning environment in her lessons. She states on several occasions that she wants the students to feel at ease and she believes that they will perform better and progress more if they are not held back by lacking confidence.

Furthermore, Amalie differentiates grammar tasks according to the student's level and needs. After written assignments, she gives each student individual written feedback on what aspects of their English they need to work on. In the following lessons, she can then tell the students to work on the specific feedback they received (e.g. prepositions, subject-verb concord, compound sentences, syntax errors). Amalie tells how she gives differentiated tasks based on the students' mistakes and their level of competence. By assessing the students individually, she can identify what they have to work on, and give them tasks according to their needs.

Post-observation interview

In the post-observation interview the teacher told the researcher that the reading ball had proven to be a great tool to get the frightened or timid students to read aloud. Additionally, the students who simply did not want to read that particular day could just pass the ball along, without any fuss. In Amalie's experience, the reading ball had been a great tool to gently prod students into reading aloud.

During the second observation, Amalie told some of the students to skip the task they were working with in order to continue to the next task. The researcher asked why:

That was because it was a fill-in-the-gaps task, which are the easiest tasks. You do not need to think and reflect on the text, just find the missing word or phrase and fill it in. I would rather that the students actually think, for instance to compare the cultures in the US and the UK, which I think is more important. Then they also get to talk. (...) I want the students to try different types of tasks, and some will not get there if they are stuck on the initial task.

Amalie wants the students to try different types of tasks, as they constitute different strategies and solutions. She also says that her role as a teacher is to always push the students further along the competence scale.

4.3.2. Thor

Pre-observation interview

When discussing the use of tasks, Thor once again highlights the problem of having some students that will outright refuse to do the tasks he gives them. Thor speculates that the students are in a spiral of negative reinforcement from school experiences in the past. The students, he continues, believe that they cannot manage to do the tasks, and it is better for them not to try than to risk failure. But this is something Thor has come to terms with and realises that he has to find ways of motivating them:

I give them tasks in creative writing, where they have to come up with the story themselves. This is to try and give them writing tasks that are not like recipes. I want them to learn to think in abstract ways of writing. Admittedly, this has varying degrees of success, but at least it is something that is not formulaic and predictable, which is good for us (teachers) and them (students).

However, Thor also gives them thematic tasks, where he wants them to find arguments on themes or topics that are chosen in advance. He recently watched a documentary with the students about head injuries in football, and tasked the students afterwards with writing an argumentative text whether heading should be allowed or not in football. However, Thor always ties the tasks that he gives to the competency aims.

Post-observation interview

Thor taught two classes back-to-back and the researcher had the possibility to observe the same plan executed on two different classes and with different results. In relation to the observations, Thor describes his reasoning for not sticking with the same plan in both classes. As Thor mentioned in the pre-observation interview, he always has a general plan that he wants to go through, but he never sets anything in stone. He believes that the second class was evidence of

having a flexible plan as being a good mindset. Thor reports that he saw the students were not ready for having a whole-class discussion about the articles, and decided to do something else:

If you disclose everything that you aim to do in a session, it becomes hard to steer off that plan. (...) In the second class the prepared idea I had did not go according to plan, so I altered (the plan) midway through. I saw that these students were not ready to discuss what they were supposed to discuss... Suddenly they ask an OK question, and then we just spun off on that. You saw that the students got really engaged, and when they are engaged, they are paying attention and are focused.

As Thor describes above, he saw that the students were not mentally able or ready to discuss the articles and he made a decision to veer away from the initial plan. The first class went well, so there he was able to keep to the original plan. In the second class, however, a few students began to disrupt the other students and he had to make a decision. As he explains, he could easily have sent the disruptors into the hallway and the lesson would have continued on as normal. But Thor believes that would only be a temporary solution and would send the wrong message. Instead, Thor felt that the students were bored, and rather than excluding them, he chose to alter his plans and try to include them in something else.

4.3.3. Kari

Pre-observation interview

As a general rule, Kari tries to implement all of the different skills during her lessons, but she does not always manage to incorporate them all. She wants to cover all of the skills, because she knows that the students prefer different methods of working. It is Kari's wish that after every class all of her students should be able to feel as if they have managed to do something in class, regardless of the student's overall competence. The reason for not covering all the skills, she explains, is mainly due to wide differences in competence in the student body. Another issue that Kari sees is that some students find it problematic to speak in front of others. In relation to assessment, the teachers have therefore been assessing the students with group talks instead of the traditional presentations in front of the class. These group talks consist of a teacher and three to four students, and the students pick random notes with themes on them. The group then

discusses and talks about the themes and the students are individually graded on their performances. Kari has nothing but positives when talking of this way of assessment.

Group talks are a good way of assessing the students, because they do not have to stand in front of the class with a powerpoint and be nervous. We also see the students who usually are quiet talk much more freely. I think it is all about creating good environments and relations with the students.

Kari also highlights the necessity of linking the common core subjects to what the students are doing in their vocational courses and their work practice.

Earlier, though not this year, the students have presented and spoken about their experiences in their work practice. What they did, activities they partook in – just speak about something they have done and something they thought of as fun.

Kari explains that this has been a good method of getting all of the students to speak in English, as the students usually have few negative experiences. This allows the students to speak about their experiences and situations they partook in, while expressing it all in English.

Furthermore, Kari mentions the importance of communication in the tasks her vocational students partake in, which is also emphasised in the English subject curriculum.

Post-observation interview

There was little variation in the first class in terms of using different tasks to promote different skills. The aim of that lesson was to prepare the students for a potential exam. When discussing the English subject's exam form, Kari says that she has heard mixed responses with regard to “vocationalising” the exam, but also the English subject in general. She explains what her perception of the exam is now and how students have reacted to “vocationalisation” earlier:

Some students might benefit from an even more “vocationalised” exam. But I have students who say “Urgh... Does everything have to be “vocationalised”? The students get tired of only speaking about work-related subjects in English.

Kari says that she believes “vocationalising” on a whole has been positive, but that it has to be balanced so that it does not overtake and push away the general parts of the English subject for vocational classes. As the exams are now, she says, there are tasks that fit a broad spectrum of interests, and this is also beginning to seep into the classrooms during regular lessons as well.

Kari mentioned in the pre-observation interview that she had discussions about the problems surrounding indigenous people and she was asked what her opinion was on the exam preparation material. Kari praises the curriculum for stressing the importance of native people and their rights. She often creates tasks around the aboriginals in Australia and they always watch “The Rabbit Proof Fence”, a movie dealing with the separation of children from their parents. After briefly mentioning this movie, the researcher asks what Kari thinks about the YouTube-films she showed of the two activists protesting. She responds that tasks around and about indigenous people are important for the students to better understand different cultures, and what they have been subjugated to.

4.4. Teachers’ beliefs and practices

This section aims to elicit answers from the teachers about their beliefs with regard to “vocationalisation” and the use of tasks in vocational classroom. Their beliefs and practices are also interesting in relation to their prior knowledge and experiences from upper-secondary school.

4.4.1. Amalie

Pre-observation interview

Amalie told about her experiences in the lower- and upper-secondary school and what she had drawn from them. In the lower-secondary school she was abroad during the 8th grade. Upon her return, her newly-developed English communicative skills were put to use in the classroom, to the teacher’s dismay. Amalie believes she may have been a know-it-all and she was constantly correcting her teacher. The experience of being abroad and using the English language for a full year, developing her communicative competence, only to come home to teachers who did not value this skill all that much, was somewhat disappointing for her.

As she entered the upper-secondary school, she had hoped that the teachers would become better, perhaps even value her skills more. But here she encountered another problem. The teachers were unable to properly connect and build relations to their students, which caused Amalie's motivation for the English subject to plummet even further.

My teacher at upper-secondary school did not stimulate me in the English subject. (...) She seemed unmotivated and tired of being a teacher, although I cannot remember why I did not like her specifically. I do not remember that it was the tasks that she gave us, because I think it is the same tasks and texts that we use now. We (the class) did not get to develop (our skills) with her, and she did not have a good relationship with us, the students, which I think now is the most important thing for me.

Amalie used this as an example of why she focuses so much on communicative skills and building relations with her students. Her own bad experiences with teachers who did not involve themselves with the students had led Amalie to believe that relations with the students is important for the learning environment in the classroom. Even if the students failed, her own experience also encouraged her to focus on the students' abilities and praise their attempts at communicating.

In relation to whether students could become independent, Amalie believed that tasks could promote learner autonomy. She thought that to achieve true autonomy, the learner must encounter many different kinds of tasks and not repeat the same tasks over and over again. Her own students would sometimes become stuck at certain tasks, which she believed was because they were not ready or capable of the task. Her idea was therefore that the students should have as many tools at their disposal as possible and these tools were obtained from solving different kinds of tasks.

Post-observation interview

Amalie talked about the relations she had to her own teachers and how that may have impeded her progress as a learner. Consequently she believed that the best learning emerged as a result of good relations to the students and an atmosphere in the classroom that allowed for mistakes and failure without negative reinforcement. In relation to this, she believed that her relations to the

students were so good that they knew she wanted them succeed. As an example, she mentioned a student of hers, who in the very first class exclaimed that he did not speak English. Through constant work and positive reinforcement, he eventually began to partake in the English subject. During this process, he confided to her that he had been afraid of talking, but that her belief in him had prompted him to become engaged with the language.

4.4.2. Thor

Pre-observation interview

Thor remembered one of his teachers from upper-secondary school, a teacher he thought impacted his own beliefs. His teacher was extroverted and often used events and episodes from his own life to show how learning could have an impact in life. The use of humor and openness was also something Thor remembers of his old teacher, which he now himself has adopted as part of his teaching style.

Though he just came from higher education himself, few of the methods and techniques learnt at the university were applicable in his own classes. Thor laid forth some of the challenges of teaching in VET:

You know how (redacted lecturer) did things, right? Well, I tried that, and it did not work as a teaching strategy here. (...) Little of the theory we were taught at university applies to these kinds of students. Our education and knowledge are meant for students in the top brackets in general education, not in vocational studies.

The challenge, as Thor saw it, was to adapt what has been learnt at the university into something his students could understand and find useful. The next question asked in relation to teaching then was whether he believed that tasks could help students become autonomous learners. Thor believed that students were capable of becoming more engaged and involved with the subject-matter, but that it required hard work and a culture for learning.

Varied tasks could help with learner autonomy, but there has to be a culture for it beforehand. The students need to have the ability to work for longer stretches of time, and my students do not at the moment. (...) They have to change their habits and decide

independently to pick up the book rather than their cellphones. Also, we (teachers) have to give them tasks that they have the prerequisite to manage and overcome.

Thor believed that his students could become autonomous and that tasks could help them reach autonomy. But, as he said, it was a matter of habits, culture and motivation, which at the moment was lacking in some of his students. He thought the students were not realizing that failing the English subject might have consequences for their future. However, he also reminded himself and the researcher that not all of the students were unmotivated and refused to work.

Post-observation interview

Even though Thor had the same lesson plan for both of the classes that were observed, the results were not the same. Thor explained why he chose to do things differently in the second class. His interpretation of what transpired in the second class was that the lesson was about to go badly. Some of the students were becoming restless and unruly and Thor wanted his students to leave the classroom with something positive. He therefore decided to interrupt his scheduled lesson by showing an additional YouTube-video, one that he did not show the first class. His hopes were that the video would spark a discussion, which it did, redirecting the students' attention towards something else than the original task. As he sums up, changing his original plan allowed him to turn something negative, Thor going around and sanctioning students, into something positive, such as a discussion.

4.4.3. Kari

Pre-observation interview

Kari stated that a the class sizes sometimes hindered her from doing what she wanted in her lessons:

(At) times I really wish we had smaller classes where I could focus on the individual student and guide them appropriately. (...) I have a few students I suspect are half sleeping during my lessons, understandably so.

Still, Kari believed that by creating tasks that were open, she could include all of her students.

If you create tasks where both the weak and the strong can show their ability and competence, then you have a good task. However, we (teachers) do not always achieve that, I think we have to be honest about that. But we try.

Kari believed that the competence levels were much more even when she went to upper-secondary school. Then, she told, there was an expectation that the students were able to speak when they entered upper-secondary school. The English subject was much more centered around content rather than communication as such. Now, she felt that the student body was much more spread across the competence spectrum.

We get students where we still have to work on the basics – how to write sentences and verb conjugations... The curriculum does not mention working on the basic language skills at this level. Then we should be able to create smaller groups and work on the real basics and give extra teaching hours.

Though Kari remembered her time as a student, she did not want to draw inspiration from her own experiences. She argued that too much time had passed for the student bodies to be comparable, thus her experiences were not applicable to students today. However, she said that her experiences with the German language had been much more important in terms of how she viewed language teaching. With the challenges she had in terms of understanding the different syntax and structure of the German language, Kari believed that she was able to understand the feeling of hopelessness when trying to learn a different language.

Whether tasks by themselves could promote learner autonomy was something Kari was split on. She believed that learner autonomy also meant that the teacher must let the students find answers themselves, but also teach them to be critical of the answers they ultimately find.

Although Kari believed the students had to become more independent during the upper-secondary school and in the different subjects, she was also cautious of how easily the Internet could manipulate facts. Kari believed that teachers had to let the students develop and evolve on their own terms when solving tasks and challenges. The teacher should encourage curiosity and exploration, but still had to guide and highlight mistakes and poor sources of information.

Post-observation interview

Kari was unfamiliar with the terms of TBLT and VOLL. When the researcher gave brief definitions, Kari said that she agreed with the premises of both TBLT and VOLL, and that she had parts of both in her teaching. She focused on the learning being communicative, and that the students should be able to use their English at work and in social settings.

On the topic of what she believed to be effective teaching in her classes, she immediately stated that teacher-driven lessons with monologues were not suited for her or her students. But apart from that, Kari was open to every method or task. All of her classes were different, so what worked in one class might not work in another.

4.5. Teachers' resources and inspirations

This category is about what resources the teachers use to further develop as teachers, and additional sources of inspiration. The category also includes to what extent the teachers are cooperating within the school context and whether they are using any external programs in their teaching practice. Finally, the teachers can here mention any other inspirations they have or know of, such as pedagogy literature, academia, authors, or studies to name a few.

4.5.1. Amalie

Pre-observation interview

Amalie explained that at her school they made a decision of not buying new coursebooks for the vocational classes. The new books, according to Amalie, were not as good as the old ones, so she preferred to use the older coursebooks. Amalie also stated that she did not use the proposed syllabuses in the coursebooks, although she did use the teaching guides from time to time.

Amalie elaborated on how the team at her school are working together, making sure that there was a logical progression in the English subject from Vg1 up to Vg2: "Me and (redacted name) decide what I will go through the first year, and what he will do with the students the second year.". This coordination of content and which competence to focus on prevented the teachers from focusing on the same competence aims two years in a row. Since Vg1 and Vg2 VET had the same competence aims, there could be instances of teachers retreading the same

aims as the teacher the year before. This could also be problematic for students who changed schools between Vg1 and Vg2, as teachers had no control over what has been taught in Vg1 at another school.

Amalie said that she wanted to use more web-resources, but that she had not gotten that far yet. One of the web-resources that she did use was a grammar-site. The site was functional and suitable to EFL-students at upper-secondary school.

Post-observation interview

On the topic of inspirations and new impulses, Amalie mentions FYR. She was one of the many teachers who participated in the trial project and gave feedback and response to the project. Amalie believed that FYR had been a good resource for creating relevant tasks for vocational students. Though she participated in the project, she does not read many science articles or journals regarding pedagogy. Amalie preferred to read about cultures instead of paying too much attention to the news. As she stated in the pre-observation interview, she was not using the proposed syllabuses of the coursebooks and she reiterated it was due to her wanting to create the plans herself.

4.5.2. Thor

Pre-observation interview

At Thor's school, they worked in interdisciplinary teams, which he said made it easier to cooperate and plan projects across different disciplines and between the teachers. In terms of guidance and help, he felt that he could always approach his co-workers. The Internet is also providing a near-endless well of lesson plans, tasks, and general creativity he as a teacher could draw inspiration from. He listed that he frequently used TED Talks, YouTube, and Khan Academy as inspiration for his lectures. Recently, he even found a site that offered free books online.

Thor also mentioned that he read and tried to stay updated on what his students were interested in. He said that in order for him to effectively teach his students, he needed to build relations to them.

Post-observation interview

On the topic of resources and inspiration, Thor said that it could be hard to find the motivation to come up with new and innovative ways of teaching if the students were not interested in making any effort to try it out. In the pre-observation interview, he mentioned that previously the students had been given the option to pre-record a presentation and send it to him, instead of preparing a presentation to hold in front of the class. However, he did not say anything about how that task unfolded. Thor explained that some students did indeed benefit from the possibility of recording and editing their presentation before submitting the final product, while others did nothing at all and a few had word for word plagiarized off Wikipedia. Thor continued by explaining how that had an impact on him:

The teacher's work and effort is not visible to the students. (...) The motivation to innovate decreases and diminishes when the students do not take the opportunities they are given by us (teachers). Of course, some will take the shot and reap the rewards, but when so many do not bother the motivation goes downwards.

Thor elaborated here on how the students' motivation could impact the teacher's motivation to be creative and innovative when creating tasks and plans for the class. When his students did not complete, or even start, the tasks that he gave, it was challenging to continue trying to motivate the students.

4.5.3. Kari

Pre-observation interview

Since the teachers at Kari's school work in teams, they are constantly creating tasks and lessons together. Kari reports that her co-worker is the one she collaborates with the most, but they also receive input from the other teachers in the team. There is always a focus on "vocationalising" and trying to include FYR into the respective subjects. However, they find it somewhat difficult due to large classes. Kari continued by explaining what the teacher teams had done and how they worked:

We have been at FYR-seminars, where they gave us lots of tips on how to practically work interdisciplinary. (...) However, we have not been able fully to implement it (FYR)

yet. We have many ideas on what we want to do, but in a hectic work day it is hard (to implement). This is, in my opinion, the biggest challenge – finding the time and space to properly fit it (FYR) in the schedule.

Here Kari stated that she wanted to implement FYR in her lessons, but that it could be difficult to coordinate this with the other teachers due to time constraints in a hectic workday. The teachers had been at seminars to learn about FYR and she believed that it had a positive effect on the common-core subjects overall.

In her first year of teaching, Kari was the only common core subject teacher in a Vg1 Building and Construction-class. While the other vocational subject teachers were always helpful and willing to assist her, Kari rather prefers to work in larger teams where there are others who do the same as her. As she described, it always felt as if she had to reinvent the wheel. Working around common core subject teachers is healthy for Kari, her lesson plans, and her students, she believed. Surrounding oneself with likeminded people gave another set of experiences and allowed for more collegial sharing of plans and tasks.

As Kari was studying part time and she acquired inspiration from her studies and lecturers. But here she also experienced how it felt to be lectured to over several hours. Some of her lecturers, she believed, would profit from incorporating some tasks into their lectures, as tasks would make the learning process more engaging. This experience with learning, she said, inspired her to engage her students to a larger degree.

Post-observation interview

Kari strongly believed that new impulses and inspirations were important for teachers and students alike. She had a close communication with her colleagues, both across classes, but also across subjects. Kari also emphasized how much inspiration she had gotten from FYR. The teachers on Vg1 Healthcare, Childhood and Youth Development, are now trying to implement FYR, but it is a process that takes time and coordination. However, Kari has seen improvements in terms of “vocationalisation” and making the common core subjects more relevant for VET.

5. Discussion

In this section the results are discussed in relation to the theory and research. The results of the interviews and observations are considered with specific attention to teacher cognitions/beliefs, CLT, TBLT and theory around tasks, VOLL, FYR, and the current English subject curriculum. The research questions are: what are the teachers' beliefs about the use of tasks in vocational classrooms and how do their beliefs relate to their practice, what types of tasks do the teachers use and how do they use them, and what contextual factors affect and influence the teachers' beliefs and practices.

Section 5.1 sums up the findings and discusses how they are reflected in the theory. Section 5.2 is a discussion of the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practice. The final section, 5.3, is a discussion of the different contextual factors that can affect and influence the teachers' beliefs.

5.1. Materials and types of tasks

The teachers have all used different kinds of tasks in the observed teaching situations. Table 3 illustrates the teachers' tasks that were observed, how many tasks were used, and what the specific task was.

Tasks were frequently used as a tool by the respondents. All of the classes used some sort of tasks as a component in language learning, with an even distribution of communicative and non-communicative tasks. As defined in the theory, individual reading and writing are considered as communicative in this thesis, as they do inhibit some of the characteristics of communicative tasks, for instance interaction with content, interpretation and mediation, and the negotiation of meaning.

Amalie was the respondent with the largest number of different tasks. In terms of communicative tasks, she included role-play, task-completion activities, and opinion exchange tasks (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 97). The first task was a role-play task between two workers, where the students had to solve a conflict through communication. The second task highlighted here as communicative was the second class' task of discussing in pairs the differences between the UK and the US, which is an opinion exchange task (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 186). Both of the afore-mentioned tasks involve the three principles of CLT:

the communication principle, the task principle, and the meaningfulness principle (Skulstad, 2018, p. 55). However, the first task, the role-play, is a “real-world”-task, whereas the second is arguably a pedagogical task (Nunan, 1989, p. 40). Amalie stated that she wanted her students to partake in communicative tasks, so when some of her students had not finished with the preceding tasks, she told them to skip to the communicative tasks.

Amalie stated that she filters away some tasks for her students based on how much time she had at her disposal. This was evident during the observation, as she told some students in the second class to skip a fill-in-the-gap task they had not completed in order to progress to a communicative task. She also claimed that she often used text-comprehension tasks to ensure that the students actually understood the texts that they read. The fill-in-the-gap tasks and answering questions from the texts suggested that she did this.

Thor used a mix of tasks that involved reading and debating. The non-communicative tasks of reading and listening are in line with CLT and is here considered pre-communicative tasks (Skulstad, 2018, p. 61). Reading and choosing a news article and watching a YouTube-video are tasks that require the learners to read and listen. After the students had chosen an article, they were tasked with discussing and debating within groups to decide which of the articles they believed to be the most important news story, which was a communicative task. The students were engaging in discussions that presupposed communication, thus interacting in the foreign language and negotiating meaning between themselves (Skulstad, 2018, p. 43). Thor’s tasks of collecting articles and debating them were pedagogical (Nunan, 1989, p. 40-41) and served the purpose to allow the students to practice their argumentative and rhetorical competence.

Kari said in the pre-observation interview that she could not imagine teaching without the use of tasks. Clearly, she perceived tasks as a method of engaging the students in the process of learning. This line of thinking is compatible with the theory of tasks and TBLT. As Long (1985, p. 89) says, “a task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others”, with the argument here being that the tasks are work with purpose of learning. Kari picked out the tasks, thus she acted as a selector (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 187-188), and she had a learner-centered approach to her lessons (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 194). While her lessons were not structured around tasks, it seemed that she had a task-based approach to her lessons.

Observations and interviews only give a glimpse of what tasks the teachers use. There were several tasks the teachers mentioned in their interviews. Table 4 (see appendix 6) shows the different tasks the teachers mentioned during either of their interviews, but which were not observed in their classes.

During the pre-observation interview, Thor listed a task that he wanted his students to do. The task was to let the students listen to a mayor-candidate debate. After the debate he wanted his students to sit in groups and write a letter to one of the debaters and explain what he/she had understood of the content that had been presented during the debate. The task was intended as a “real-world” task and could be considered an information-transfer task, where information is extracted from one form (the debate) and be represented in a new form (the letter). Thor’s goal was to highlight for his vocational students what they were able to understand and to condense it into a letter. The task was multi-faceted: First the students had to listen to the debaters and understand what they said. Then the students had to sit in groups and negotiate and determine what they as a group had understood. After that, the students had to write a letter. The task had many of the characteristics of VOLL and CLT. With regard to VOLL (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 5), the task would be action oriented (the students are activated), foster learner autonomy (the students have to figure out how to solve the task), and be interdisciplinary (the subjects of both social sciences and English). With regard to CLT, the task would be an information-transfer task, which would include an oral element (the students have to agree and negotiate the meaning of the mayor-candidate debate) and a written element (the students were to collaboratively write a letter with their negotiated content).

Kari highlighted a task from last semester, where the students presented their work-practice to the rest of the class. The students, according to Kari, highly valued talking about their work practice and experiences. This is an example of a communicative task and an experience-sharing task, where the students shared their experiences from work practice with each other. The task reflects VOLL elements, as it focuses on the vocational experience of the students (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 5). Additionally, VOLL integrates the vocational language with the general language (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 5) and since the presentation is focused on the learners’ experience, they find enjoyment and meaning in it.

Another task Kari mentioned was that she had previously used group talks as a method of assessment. It is a communicative opinion-sharing task (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 97) that

is based on the students' interaction with each other and the teacher. Although the format, where they draw subjects to speak about from a hat, is pedagogical in the sense that it is not something encountered in the real world, the way the task naturally encourages the students to communicate means that it is a "real-world" task (Nunan, 1989, p. 40). Since the task is "real-world", the students have to focus on the interaction as well as the language, which promotes the communicative competence of the students.

However, there were no instances where it seemed that the teachers simply applied a vocational "filter" on their tasks, which Storevik (2015, p. 107) implied inexperienced teachers might do. Inexperienced teachers, according to Storevik (2015, p. 107) perceived "vocalisation" as something separate from the general content and as addition to the curriculum. In the observed classes, there were "vocalized" tasks, that seemed to be created from a vocational starting point. Amalie had tasks that were vocationally-oriented, such as the role-play with two workers and the YouTube-video about different vocations. Kari and Thor had few observable vocational tasks. Kari's exam preparation material had writing tasks that were about work experiences, but the students had to choose those tasks themselves. Thor had no explicit vocational tasks during the observation. Even so, all of the respondents mentioned several vocational tasks they had used in previous lessons and indicated strongly that they believed vocational tasks were useful and necessary in VET. Therefore it is possible that the observations were conducted at times during the semester where few vocational tasks were planned. The generally positive attitude towards "vocalisation" was also a found by Storevik (2015, p. 108).

5.2. Beliefs and practices concerning the use of tasks

Tasks were important to the respondents in this study and all three used tasks differently during the observation. All of the respondents believed that tasks themselves were important in the English subject and they believed tasks could promote learner autonomy.

Teachers' beliefs can be divided into core and peripheral beliefs (Phipps and Borg, 2009, p. 381). This study's focus is mainly on core beliefs and the relation between beliefs and practice. What seem to be the teachers' most important beliefs are summed up here:

- Amalie believes working with different tasks are important and she tries to provide her students with both communicative and non-communicative tasks.
- Thor believes his students must learn to communicate verbally and in writing and tries to implement this through the use of tasks.
- Kari believes tasks are indispensable as a tool for language teaching and she cannot imagine to teach without the use of tasks.

As illustrated in Table 3, few of the tasks observed were vocationally-oriented. Nevertheless, all of the teachers said in the interviews that they believed “vocalisation” of the common core subjects in general is important for the students. Furthermore, all of the respondents said that motivation was a contributor to how effective a lesson was. This finding indicates that the teachers’ beliefs are in line with FYR’s aims (*Rammeverk for FYR*, n.d., p. 11-12) and supports the results found during the evaluation of FYR (*FYR – Fellesfag, yrkesretting og relevans (2014-2016)*, n.d., p. 3-4).

Tasks are believed by all of the respondents to be an integral part of teaching EFL. This included communicative and non-communicative tasks, assessments, and interdisciplinary projects. Some of the more important findings of the respondents’ beliefs and practices are presented below.

Amalie and Kari believed that the use of different tasks could foster learner autonomy. Their belief is supported by TBLT-research (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 176-177) and also in VOLL-theory (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 5). According to Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 177), a task-based approach promotes learning of how to learn, which reflects one of the most important aspects of learner autonomy. Vogt and Kantelinen (2012) refer to VOLL’s characteristics, among them its focus on the use of tasks in a collaborative manner, causing the learner to take more responsibility for their own learning. This adoption of responsibility is how VOLL promotes learner autonomy. However, Amalie had seen her weaker students become frustrated when they were stuck on easier tasks and unable to progress. Amalie therefore monitored the students she knew were lagging behind and prodded them to do other tasks so they could try more than one type of task.

Kari also believed that it is important for the students to be able to explore and discover the English language by themselves. However, this was not necessarily apparent during either of the observations, as there were many students who needed help and guidance, though most were able to solve issues and tasks by themselves. It could therefore be argued that there was some degree of learner autonomy in Kari's classes.

Thor also believed tasks could promote learner autonomy, however, he has seen that some of his students struggle with independent work and work over extended periods of time. Therefore he believed he first had to help them establish a culture and habit of learning. As the situation was, some of his students were unable to adopt responsibility for their own learning. A possibility for why that was may be that the students felt the tasks were not relevant for them, or not vocationally-oriented enough. Thor's tasks that day were not vocational, and were pedagogical in nature, which could be relevant for the students' motivation that day.

Many of the characteristics of VOLL were recognized in the teachers' lessons, such as the use of tasks, a holistic approach to the language, integration of several subjects, and all of the teachers believed that tasks could promote and foster learner autonomy (Vogt and Kantelinen, 2012, p. 5). All of the teachers taught more than only the English subject and stated in their pre-observation interview that they had combined and participated in interdisciplinary projects and activities prior to the observation. In line with FYR and "vocalisation", all of the respondents had elements of VOLL in their lessons, which may have been intentional even though the term was unfamiliar. None of the respondents mentioned VOLL during the interviews and none of them seemed to know what VOLL was, which is a general finding supported by Vogt and Kantelinen (2012, p. 3).

One of Thor's most important beliefs was that he wanted to develop the students' communicative competence, which he often did through the use of tasks and dialogue. He revealed during the interviews that he focused on giving his students massive exposure to the English language (which Harmer (2015, p. 47) agrees to can improve grammar and vocabulary) and he wanted his students to engage with the language as much as possible. His tasks fulfilled Nunan's (1989, p. 10-11) criteria for what constitutes a communicative task (see section 2.5). The goal for his students was to become better debaters. Input consisted of online news articles and the processing of the input was to read the articles and jot down notes if necessary. Thor was a facilitator and monitor for the students, as they asked him questions about the articles and he

monitored their activity. The learners' roles were to listen to other students and to debate in a group setting.

Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 190) suggest that introducing tasks provide several benefits. Thor decided that he would not explain the overarching task in his lessons. He justified his decision as a way of not overloading his students with information. In his experience, it was better to break up the sessions because some of the students were unable to remember and contain all the information given. However, the students were unsure of what to do, perhaps because they did not pay attention, or were unfamiliar with how to solve the task.

Furthermore, Thor gave the impression during the post-observation interview that he was not satisfied with how some of the students had worked with the tasks in the second class. He therefore decided to alter the tasks midway through the lesson. He decided to show a YouTube-video, which initiated a spontaneous discussion about different media outlets. He highlighted this discussion as a positive outcome in the post-observation interview. The three principles Skulstad (2018, p. 55) lists (communication, task, meaningfulness), suggest that the discussion provided a language learning outcome for the students. There was communication between the students, although perhaps not about the desired topics and themes. Initially the students were working on tasks in a communicative way before becoming sidetracked. Finally, the students debated and discussed with the teacher in a meaningful way, as they tried to determine what constituted a news media.

Thor wanted to be flexible and adaptive to the various situations that he constantly found himself in. This was one of the reasons he did not describe his lesson plan in detail to his students. His flexibility may be described with reference to practical knowledge (Borg, 2015b, p. 26-28), which means that the teacher forms the curriculum and lesson to fit the students in class (see section 2.2.1). Teacher knowledge here means that Thor had been working with his students for such a long time that he knew he had to be flexible in his lessons. The students were unpredictable and if he had a stringent minute-by-minute plan, he would never get through it. Therefore Thor used tasks that were adaptable to different situations. This was exemplified when he altered his task which initially revolved around online news articles. He redirected the students' attention to a YouTube-video, which he felt sparked a more manageable and productive discussion. Thor found a solution to the challenge through his practical knowledge and experience with the class.

Thor acknowledged that the problems and challenges he had faced required him to use methods and tasks that he did not believe were generally the best way to teach and educate students. But due to the low level of competence and the low degree of motivation, he often had to resort, in his perspective, less than ideal methods. Thor's choice to use different methods than he believed to be the best or most beneficial is what Phipps and Borg (2009, p. 381-382) call a tension between belief and practice.

All three respondents believed that tasks could promote learner autonomy to some extent. During all of the observations, the teacher gave the students tasks to complete and then withdrew to assume the role as a monitor. To achieve learner autonomy, the learner, as Little (2008, p. 247) writes, must be able to independently complete tasks without assistance from others. Though the teacher did not help the students, they mostly did not work alone, but rather in pairs or groups. The exception to this was in Thor's class, when the students initially found an article, and in Kari's first class, where the students wrote a text individually.

Kari believed that it was possible to create tasks that were open and where all students could show their ability. This belief was evident in the first and the second class. The first class was engaged in a writing task, where the students themselves could choose the task to write about. Kari's belief in this case therefore seemed to be in accordance with her practice.

The classroom activities were in all of the classes carried out in the target language. Amalie was the only one who mentioned this during the pre-observation interview. She believed that all communication in a foreign language-subject should be in the target language, which seems to be in agreement with Skulstad (2018, p. 43), who says that communicative competence is the single most important aspect in language learning. This was also seen in the observation, where Amalie instructed and spoke English to her students. Her students were, at least when observed, communicating and conversing with each other in the target language during communicative tasks, such as role-play. The communication principle (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 90), summed up by Skulstad (2018, p. 55), posits that activities that use real communication promote language learning.

On a general level, the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practices had few indications of "tensions" or "mismatches". As suggested by Phipps and Borg (2009) these tensions are useful to study, as they can enable both teachers and researchers "to better understand the process of teaching" (Phipps and Borg, 2009, p. 381). The three respondents said

they were free to use the tasks that they wanted and mentioned few restrictive factors or contexts. The most notable tensions were found with Thor and Kari. Thor believed that his students' competence and motivation hindered his practice and what he thought was the best way of teaching English. Kari mentioned during her pre-observation interview that she was worried the stronger students received too little attention. She wanted all of her students to be challenged and feel mastery in her classes, but due to large classes she felt that they were sometimes forgotten. This tension Kari mentioned several times, as her belief was that all of her students had an equal need of her attention and guidance.

5.3. Contextual factors and influences on teachers' beliefs and practices

The final research question is whether there are any contextual factors or influences that impact the teachers' beliefs and practices. On a general level four key factors have been identified across all three teachers from the interviews and observations. The factors are the teachers' co-workers, the curriculum and FYR, the teachers' own schooling, and challenges in the classroom.

Teachers are impacted by the environment and context they work in, as indicated by Table 5 and Borg (2015b, p. 333-334). The first contextual factor and influence that was mentioned by the teachers was their colleagues and coworkers. All of the respondents said that they worked in a close environment with other teachers across different disciplines. Both Thor and Kari worked at large schools that had shared offices with other teachers. They both said in their interviews that they could always ask other teachers for help and advice, even across disciplines, though Kari expressed that she had limited interaction with other teachers in the beginning of her career as a teacher. She found this to be debilitating for her development. Borg (2015b, p. 91) refers to studies indicating that individualistic school cultures give few opportunities for collegial sharing. Although Amalie said that she often spoke with the other teachers at her school. Since she worked at a relatively small school, there was only one other English subject teacher. But despite the fact that she worked mostly alone, and claimed the environment among the teachers were very close and helpful she was never really bothered by being only one of two EFL-teachers.

In addition to co-workers, FYR and the curriculum were mentioned as key factors that influenced the teachers' beliefs and practices. All three respondents mentioned FYR unsolicited,

which indicates that FYR is a well-known program. One of the intentions of FYR (*Rammeverk for FYR-prosjektet (2014-2016)*, n.d., p. 10) is to create networks and resources for teachers at schools with VET. Amalie believed that FYR was great for teachers in vocational classes who wanted to create more meaningful common core subjects, but lacked the tools or methods for “vocationalisation”. Amalie’s view is part of FYR’s stated goals, i.e. to create platforms and arenas that promote sharing of experiences and “field-tested” lesson plans and tasks (*Rammeverk for FYR-prosjektet (2014-2016)*, n.d., p. 11-12).

Kari’s team had an active and engaging relationship with the concept of FYR. She often used ideas from her colleagues and strongly believed that “vocationalisation” was a good concept that provided many useful avenues and possibilities within teaching. However, due to large classes, she and the team sometimes found it challenging to incorporate “vocationalisation” into their subjects. This is what Phipps and Borg (2009, p. 380-381) call tensions. The tension was between what Kari’s team wanted to do in terms of “vocationalisation” and their inability to incorporate it into their practice. Thor believed that tight interdisciplinary work between the teachers was the key when teaching the English subject to his students. He also mentioned that all of the teachers at his school were familiar with the concepts of FYR through seminars and events.

In relation to FYR, the curriculum was also mentioned as a factor that impacted the teachers’ use of tasks. The curriculum, which has a backward design, means that they started with the competence aims (outcome) and from there selected what to teach (content) and how to teach it (process) (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 363). The curriculum affected the teachers’ choice of tasks through the competence aims that relate to the students’ own education programme (*English subject curriculum*, 2013 p. 10). This meant that the teachers could find or make lessons and tasks that were relevant for their students’ programme. However, for instance in Thor’s classes, there were no tasks that could be directly linked to the students’ programme. The distribution of vocational and general content is something the teachers themselves can adjust.

In relation to the research question of what could affect and influence teachers’ beliefs today, this study also found that the respondents had recent links to studies and they all cited studying as a clear source of inspiration. Amalie and Kari were currently studying, while Thor had graduated from the university last spring. Amalie and Kari both drew inspiration from their

studies. Amalie said in her pre-observation interview that she had tried several new tasks during her studies, such as to make blogs and vlogs. Kari was constantly inspired by her lecturers at the university to use tasks in her lessons and she experienced that new impulses from academia were important for both teachers and students alike. Thor thought of his lecturers when he designed his lessons. Although he did not presently study, he wanted to eventually study psychology.

Phipps and Borg (2009, p. 381) cite research that suggests language teachers may be powerfully influenced by their own teachers and that teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning have an effect on their pedagogical decisions. When asked whether their own schooling had an impact on their teaching today, all of the teachers answered yes to some degree.

Amalie was not directly inspired by her own language teachers in lower- and upper-secondary school. She remembered them as either not proficient or as unmotivated, particularly in terms of the relations the teachers had to their students. Amalie used these negative experiences as intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 56) when she was teaching her own students, and disregarded what she experienced did not work.

Kari did not want to draw too much inspiration from her own school experience, as her perception was that today's way of teaching is different from the teaching of the 1980s and 1990s. This is why she chose not to draw too much inspiration and ideas from her own schooling. Kari was aware of how her own schooling could have an impact, but she believed her own schooling was not relevant to the students today. As Phipps and Borg (2009) state, teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning "may be powerfully influenced (...) by teachers' own experiences as learners" (Phipps and Borg, 2009, p. 381). Kari instead used the experiences from her own studies now. At the university, she often felt as if she was not actively taking part in the process of learning. In her experience then, tasks could motivate and engage her as a student. Kari believed the same applied to her students; learners pay more attention and are more motivated to learn when they are activated by tasks (Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 177).

The final contextual factor was challenges related to the specific classes. The context of the classes varied between the three respondents, with relevant factors that had an impact varying from the students' level of ability, the students' motivation, the numerical sizes of the classes, and the relations.

In his first year of working, Thor found teaching to be a challenge. Borg (2015b, p. 90-91) summarizes some of the challenges encountered by novice teachers, including the reality

shock of the classroom, which was highly relevant for Thor. Another challenge for Thor was to motivate his students, as the students were neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated (Ryan and Deci, 2000). This lack of motivation was challenging for Thor since it was hard to teach anything to students who were not motivated, but it also took a toll on Thor as a teacher. He experienced a lack of motivation to create innovative and enjoyable tasks if the students were not willing to do the tasks that he gave them. This is supported by Richards and Pennington (1998, p. 187-188), who say challenges with unmotivated students and students with limited proficiency in English can reduce the teacher's creativity and motivation for trying something new or different (Borg, 2015b, 90).

6. Conclusion

This thesis is a TC-study that has investigated what teachers believe about the use of tasks in vocational classes. Regarding the use of tasks, the investigation has also studied the relation between the teachers' stated beliefs and their practice of tasks. Finally, the investigation has explored the factors that can affect and influence the respondents' beliefs. The study has found a strong relation between the teachers' beliefs and practices in regard to the use of tasks in vocational classrooms. In terms of tensions between beliefs and practices there were few that stood out. The tensions that were found revolved around practical issues and contextual factors.

The respondents consisted of three EFL teachers in vocational classes, who were selected through purposive and convenience sampling. The data was collected through mixed methods consisting of qualitative interviews and qualitative observations, which are the two most used methods in TC research (Borg, 2015a, p. 491). Qualitative methods seem to be the optimal approach when TC is studied (Phipps and Borg, 2009, p. 388). All of the teachers were interviewed twice and observed for four sessions of 45-minutes.

All three of the teachers believed they used tasks that were suited to VET-students. The two female teachers have more experience than the male teacher, but this did not seem to impact the overall importance given to "vocationalisation". There seemed to be a strong belief that "vocationalisation" was important for all respondents.

The tasks that were used often had an emphasis on communication and interaction between the students and the teacher, or between the students themselves. The teaching of the three teachers could therefore be related to CLT, TBLT and task principles, VOLL and FYR. They all emphasized the importance of communication and dialogue between the teacher and the students, but also between the students themselves. Furthermore, they all believed that tasks were a suitable tool for vocational students to become activated with the language learning process. All of them also agreed that tasks could promote learner autonomy. Also, all of the three teachers mentioned how the curriculum governed what content they chose. The tasks that were created were therefore chosen within the framework of the English subject curriculum.

There were contextual factors that influenced the teachers' beliefs and practices. The first and most mentioned factor was the teachers' coworkers at the school. As the teachers all worked with other teachers, this was the first factor the respondents mentioned when they were asked about what could change their beliefs now. The second factor was the curriculum and FYR. All of the teachers mentioned that FYR had been a contributing factor to change their perceptions of the common core subjects in VET. The third factor was the teachers own schooling, which is not contextual, but a direct influence. This factor varied to some degree, where Amalie and Thor claimed they were influenced by their language teachers, whereas Kari tried to not pay attention to her experiences, as she found them to be irrelevant for students today. The fourth factor was the classes themselves and this factor was the most diverse one. Challenges that contributed to cause tensions between the teachers' beliefs and practices in the teaching context were: the size of the classes, the competence level of the classes, the motivation of the students, and the relationship between the teachers and their students.

6.1. Limitations of the study

A criticism of qualitative studies is that they have limitations in terms of general applicability (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 41). Since the study only has three respondents it becomes difficult to generalize on a larger scale, though qualitative studies do not aim to do so. Additionally, only six classes were observed, so the results found could be outliers in terms of representability of the specific teachers' "normal" lessons. Finally, the teachers that participated were in a close

proximity of each other, which could suggest that the results were indicative of the beliefs in that geographical area.

6.2. Implications and recommendations

Though the study has found that there is a strong relation between the respondents' beliefs and practice in their use of tasks in the English subject in vocational classes, there were also tensions. Tensions were reported by all of the teachers and revolved around the motivation of the students, the size of the classes, the challenge around silent students, and the importance of good relations between the students and the teacher. When students lack motivation teaching becomes more challenging, as indicated by Richards and Pennington (1998, 187-188). The results of this could decrease the teachers' motivation and innovation to create exciting lessons. A general belief among the respondents was that meaningful tasks and relevant content helps to motivate the students to pay attention and perform.

Class sizes were also mentioned as a factor that can impede how good a job the teacher can do in class. With large classes the teachers' found it more difficult to carry out tasks, thus it is recommended to keep the class sizes at a maintainable level. There were also tensions in relation to silent or reluctant speakers. The respondents wanted all of their students to participate and communicate in the classroom, but some students feel less inclined to do so. Part of this could be due to lack of confidence or a bad relation to the teacher or other students.

The tasks used by the respondents in VET have a high degree of vocational aspects in them. The respondents often focused on the vocational aspects when they selected tasks for their students. Additionally, the teachers seemed to reflect on which tasks they chose in their teaching and their reasons were thought through in advance. However, if "vocationalisation" is considered a wanted outcome, which FYR (*FYR – Fellesfag, yrkesretting og relevans (2014-2016)*, n.d., p. 3) states that it is, then it must also be mentioned that there can be too much "vocationalisation", as Kari experienced. This indicates that it is important to consider the ratio of non-vocational and vocational tasks in the English subject, but also take into consideration the meaningfulness of the tasks. This should be explored.

6.3. Further research

Little TC research has been done concerning the use of tasks in VET – both in Norway and internationally. More research is therefore necessary to understand teachers’ beliefs and practices on VET and the use of vocational tasks. Furthermore, this study has only focused on the aspect of tasks in vocational classes from the teachers’ perspectives. TC research of core and peripheral beliefs could be worth studying, as this thesis has primarily focused on core beliefs.

How the students feel and think about tasks and “vocationalisation”, has not been addressed here. To widen the scope or research on tasks and improve the quality of education the students’ perspectives must therefore also be taken into consideration. Another possible avenue of research is to conduct longitudinal studies on tasks and “vocationalisation” to try and observe long-term effects and effectiveness of tasks in vocational classes.

As this study mainly has focused on a low number of respondents, teachers’ reported beliefs and practices, it is recommended that there is conducted quantitative studies to provide generalizable results. TC research in the VET English classroom is important for both professional development of in-service teachers and the education of future teachers. Though it could be argued that quantitative studies are unable to describe the complexity of TC, the data that is available now seems to mostly be of a qualitative nature. Other suggestions for further research are TC about reading and writing in vocational classrooms, comparative TC research between GE and VET and their use of tasks, or comparative TC research between GE and VET and their choice of content.

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1

Invitation to participate in the study

Vil du delta i forskingsprosjektet

”Lærarhaldningar hjå engelsklærarar i yrkesfaglege klassar”?

Dette er eit spørsmål til deg om å delta i eit forskingsprosjekt der føremålet er å *observera lærarhaldningar hjå engelsklærarar i yrkesfaglege klassar, dokumentert gjennom observasjon og intervju*. I dette skrivet gjev me deg informasjon om måla for prosjektet og kva deltaking vil innebere for deg.

Formål

Målet med dette prosjektet er å finne ut kva lærarar tenkjer om læring, undervisning, og oppgåver. Denne datainnsamlinga er eit forsøk på å skine ljøs over kva tankar og prosessar som ligg bak dei ulike handlinga og vala ein lærar tar stilling til i løpet av klassesetimen og i førebuinga.

Dette er ei masteroppgåve, og den har difor eit relativt lite omfang, med få respondentar. Alle bidrag som kjem inn er difor svært essensielle og vil vere det empiriske grunnlaget for oppgåva.

Kven er ansvarlig for forskingsprosjektet?

Institutt for Kultur- og Språkvitskap, ved Universitetet i Stavanger er ansvarleg for prosjektet.

Kvifor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Utvalet er trekt gjennom ei geografisk utveljing. Kriteria for å vere med er at du undervis i engelsk i ein eller fleire yrkesfaglege klassar. Dine kontaktopplysingar er henta frå undervisningsinstitusjonens nettside, eller vidaresemdt frå fagleg leiar ved institusjonen.

Kva inneber det for deg å delta?

Dersom du vil vere med i prosjektet, inneber det at du blir intervjuet ein gong fyrst (pre-intervju), observert i 2 x 45 minutt, og til slutt intervjuet etter observasjon (post-intervju, ca. 45 minutt).

Intervjuet blir teke opp på ein lydopptakar, og desse opptaka vil bli lagra på ein kryptert harddisk fram til prosjektets slutt. Då vil dei bli sletta. Observasjonen vil bli dokumentert med feltnotater, som blir reinskrivne og lagra på ein kryptert harddisk. Dei fysiske feltnotata vil bli makulerte.

Det er friviljug å delta

Det er friviljug å delta i prosjektet og alle opplysningar om deg vil bli anonymisert. Viss du vel å delta, kan du kva tid som helst trekka samtykke tilbake utan å grunngje. Det vil ikkje ha nokon negative konsekvensar for deg viss du ikkje vil delta eller seinare vel å trekka deg.

Ditt personvern – korleis me oppbevarar og brukar dine opplysningar

Me vil berre bruke opplysningane om deg til formåla me har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Me behandlar opplysningane konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- Det er berre forskaren som har tilgang til personopplysningane, ingen andre vil kunne finne dine personopplysningar.
- Namnet ditt samt mail og telefonnummer blir heldt separat frå andre data, for best å kunne sikre dine opplysningar. All personinformasjon blir lagra i eit kryptert dokument på ein ekstern harddisk.

Når du skal beskrivast i oppgåva vil du ha berre ha eit fornamn, for å kunne skilja deg frå andre informantar, t.d. «Hanne» eller «Pål». Ditt eigentlege namn eller institusjonen du jobbar på vil

aldri bli nemnt med namn, ei heller geografiske skildringar som kan avsløre kvar institusjonen ligg.

Kva skjer med opplysningane dine når me avsluttar forskingsprosjektet?

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttast 15.05.2019. Etter prosjektets slutt vil alle personopplysningar, notater og opptak slettast. Det vil ikkje bli oppfølgingsprosjekt.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiserast i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i kva for nokre personopplysningar som er registrert om deg,
- å få retta personopplysningar om deg,
- få sletta personopplysningar om deg,
- få utlevert ein kopi av dine personopplysningar (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlinga av dine personopplysningar.

Kva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysningar om deg?

Me behandlar opplysningar om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag frå *Institutt for Kultur- og Språkvitskap* har NSD – Norsk senter for forskingsdata AS vurdert at behandlinga av personopplysningar i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Kvar kan eg finne ut meir?

Viss du har spørsmål til studien, eller ynskjer å nytta deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- *Institutt for Kultur- og Språkvitskap ved Torill Hestetraet* på e-post torill.hestetreet@uis.no eller på telefon 51 83 13 58.
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennleg helsing

Prosjektansvarlig

Fredrik Hellervik Lothe

Samtykkeerklæring

Eg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet *Lærarhaldningar hjå engelsklærarar i yrkesfaglege klassar*, og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Eg samtykka til:

1. å delta i *intervju*
2. å delta i *observasjon*

Eg samtykk til at mine opplysningar behandlast frem til prosjektet er avslutta, ca. 15.05.2019.

(Signert av prosjektdeltakar, dato)

Appendix 2

Interview-guide Norwegian version

Bakgrunn:

- Kor gamal er du?
- Kva utdanning har du?
- Kor lenge du vore lærar?
- Kor lenge har du vore engelsklærer for yrkesfaglege klassar?
- Kva klassar underviser du no?

- Kva for nokre fag underviser du i?
- Korleis meiner du ein best underviser i engelsk på yrkesfag?

Material brukt i undervisning:

- Kva type oppgåver brukar du i di undervisning?
 - Kvifor brukar du desse?
 - Kan du peika på fordelar og ulemper med dei ulike oppgåvene?
- Kva kriterier set du for oppgåver som du skal bruka i undervisninga di?
- Brukar du dei same oppgåvene på yrkesfag og studiespesialisering?

Utføring og bruk av oppgåvene:

- På kva for ein måte brukar du oppgåver? Er det oppgåver du ikkje kan gje? (Muntlege, skriftlege, lytting, lesing.)
- Kva for nokre emne brukar du oppgåvene til? (Spesielle ferdigheiter, tema, grammatikk, vokabular, flyt i språket, leseforståing, dialog, informasjonsuthenting, refleksjon, information gap, o.l.)
- Kva for ein type oppgåver pleier du å gje elevane?
 - Nivådifferensierte oppgåver?
 - Spesifikke oppgåver knytt til spesifikke tema?
- Kor mange oppgåver pleier du å bruke i timane dine?
 - Grunnkje.

Overtydingar og haldningar:

- Korleis var di eiga undervisning i engelsk? (Grunnskule, vgs, høgskule/universitet)
 - Er det episodar du hugsar svært godt?
 - Var det fokus på spesielle aspekt ved språket? Grammatikk, kommunikative ferdigheiter, skriving, lesing, o.l.

- I kva for ei grad hentar du inspirasjon frå eigen skulegang?
- Kven og/eller kva påverkar deg og dine lærarhaldningar i dag?
 - Tidlegare lærarar, kjende pedagogar, forskning, kollegaer, o.l.
 - Som engelsklærer i yrkesfaglege klassar?
- I kva grad meiner du oppgåver kan bidra til elevautonomi?
 - Korleis?

Ressursar:

- I kva grad lagar de i kollegiet oppgåver saman?
 - Kva for type oppgåver lagar de saman?
 - Lagar de planar saman?
- Kvar får du påfyll av nye idear og kunnskap?
 - Konferansar, bygge på med ekstra fag, forskning, sjølvstudie, kollegasamarbeid, lærebøker, lærarguidar til lærebøker, internett, etc.?

Appendix 3

Table 1. Interviews and observations

	Description and duration	Examples of questions and mode of observation
Pre-observation interview	One pre-observation interview with semi-structured interview guide. Duration from 45-60 minutes.	Establishing rapport, ask about practices and materials concerning tasks, ask about what the teachers' beliefs are in relation to tasks.

Observation	Four 45-minutes lessons of observing the respondents in-class.	Non-participant observation, field notes, audio recordings.
Post-observation interview	One post-observation interview to discuss the observation. Prepared set of questions based on observations in relation to the teachers' aforementioned beliefs. Duration from 30-45 minutes.	Ask about observed practices in relation to aforementioned beliefs, probe the answers that are given.

Appendix 4

Table 2. Teachers, classes, students, tasks

	Vg2 Sales, Service and Security	Vg1 Media and Communi- cation	Vg2 Industrial Techno- logy	Vg2 Industrial Techno- logy	Vg1 Healthcare, Children and Youth	Vg1 Healthcare,Children and Youth
Teacher:	Amalie	Amalie	Thor	Thor	Kari	Kari
Students:	13	14	9	10	22	8
Number of tasks:	5	4 (5)	4	5	1	3

Appendix 5

Table 3. Tasks used by the teachers in class

Tasks Amalie, first class	Tasks Amalie, second class	Tasks Thor, first class	Tasks Thor, second class	Tasks Kari, first class, choice of tasks	Tasks Kari, second class
Whole-class fill in a bubble-map	Whole-class fill in a Venn-diagram	Find a news article online	Find a news article online	Write a letter about a conflict with a roommate	Read the introduction of preparatory exam material in class
Reading-snake and reading-ball	Reading-snake and reading-ball	Discuss article with the group	Discuss article with the group	Write about the vocation you are studying	Discuss what the exam rules are
Match sentences with single descriptions	Fill-in-the-gap from the text	Discuss article with the class	Discuss article with the class	Write about how to be a good worker	Watch a YouTube-video
Role-play between two workers	Write down keywords from the text	Watch and listen to YouTube-video	Watch and listen to YouTube-video	Write about civic engagement	Discuss the content of the YouTube-video
Explain slogans and play on words	Answer questions from the text	Discuss the content of YouTube-video	Discuss the content of YouTube-video		Read in pairs one of the tasks from the preparatory material
Discussing a YouTube-video	Discuss and speak about the content of the text		Watch and listen to YouTube-video		Summarize and reduce the task to a question

	One-on-one conversations with the teacher		Discuss the content of YouTube-video		Present the summary of the task to the class
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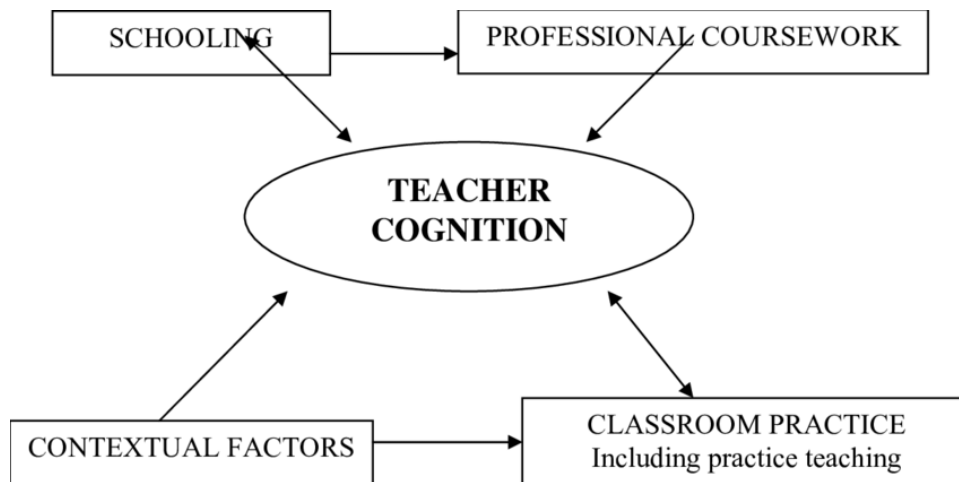
Appendix 6

Table 4. Teachers' reported tasks that were not used

Amalie	Thor	Kari
Various web-resources that focus on grammar	Listen to a debate and write a letter to the debaters	Group-talks as a form of assessment
Watch a film about indigenous people	Record and edit a presentation	Watch a film about indigenous people
Create presentations about music from the different decades	Write abstract texts	The students talk about their experiences in work-practice
Rehearse and act out radio-theater	Write argumentative text about a topic	Scavenging hunt
Whole-class presentations	Flip-classroom and Khan Academy	A task where the students are given the answer and have to create the question (Jeopardy)

Appendix 7

Table 5 Teacher cognition and its influences



Appendix 8
NSD meldeskjema

NSD NORSK SENTER FOR FORSKNINGSDATA

NSD sin vurdering

Prosjekttittel

Læringsholdninger i yrkesfaglege klassar

Referansenummer

437729

Registrert

03.12.2018 av Fredrik Hellervik Lothe - fh.lothe@stud.uis.no

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Universitetet i Stavanger / Fakultet for utdanningsvitenskap og humaniora / Institutt for kultur- og språkvitenskap

Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

Torill Hestetretet, torill.hestetretet@uis.no, tlf: 51831358

Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

Kontaktinformasjon, student

Fredrik Lothe, fredrik_bel_lot@hotmail.com, tlf: 95920682

Prosjektperiode

03.12.2018 - 15.05.2019

Status

13.12.2018 - Vurdert

Vurdering (1)

13.12.2018 - Vurdert

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 13.12.2018. Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD ENDRINGER

Dersom behandlingen av personopplysninger endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. På våre nettsider informerer vi om hvilke endringer som må meldes. Vent på svar før endringer gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET

Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 15.05.2019.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG

Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake. Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:

- lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke behandles til nye, uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med

3.5.2019

Meldeskjema for behandling av personopplysninger

prosjektet

- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19), dataportabilitet (art. 20).

NSD vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUTEJONS RETNINGSLINJER

NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og/eller rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

NSD vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Belinda Gloppen Helle
Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)