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Author: Ingrid Synnøve Meinich Hoel

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(Author's signature)

Supervisor: Deborah Larssen

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Abstract

This thesis is an investigation of how extensive writing, as homework, affects Norwegian fifth graders' attitudes and writing skills in English. To investigate this, data was collected from two fifth grade classes of children, aged 9-10, at two different primary schools; one intervention group, which was included in an intervention study, and one control group.

One of the reasons behind this study was the experience that writing instruction in the language subjects Norwegian and English are being done differently in Norwegian schools. Whilst feedback on early writing in Norwegian is generally focused on positive aspects in order to motivate the pupils to write, feedback given on early writing in English is often focused on mistakes.

In the intervention study, the pupils were given a weekly writing task for homework throughout the semester, on topics linked to the pupils' own lives, experiences and/or opinions. The pupils received positive feedback on content and text functions in their homework text, by the teacher giving praise to something interesting, fun or sad, in addition to how the information was presented. Good homework texts were read aloud in class. When it came to teaching, writing instruction as well as vocabulary learning were indirect. The lessons at school were mostly used for reading or talking activities, introducing new topics and doing individual or group activities.

The overall approach of this thesis was the use of mixed methods, using data triangulation, including text analysis, questionnaires and interviews. Both groups wrote a text and answered a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the research period. The texts were analysed according to the AYLLIT assessment scale, and the number of words they wrote were counted. Additionally, ten pupils from the intervention group were interviewed about their experience of the intervention study.

From the data acquired in this research, it was concluded that weekly writing, for homework, could indeed affect pupils' attitudes and writing skills in English. Such writing improves how much pupils like to write, and how good they are at it. What it does not affect is how much, or for what purposes they write in English at home. Furthermore, it can be argued that the feedback and use of the homework tasks are equally important to the writing in itself. Finally, the results from this thesis can imply that what happens in the classroom, when it comes to writing instruction and vocabulary learning, might affect the pupils just as much.

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1 Introduction

“Independent, extended writing is really the goal of the L2 [second language] writing class, for while writers do not learn to write *only* by writing, they cannot learn to write without writing” (Hyland, 1996:132). The quotation above clearly underlines the importance of extended writing within second language education. However, if extended writing is the goal, the question of how teachers can support the learners towards achieving this still remains unanswered.

This thesis is a study of how extensive writing, in the form of homework assignments, affects fifth graders’ attitudes and writing skills. The first aim of the study was to establish if building a routine of weekly homework writing would improve the pupils’ written language and their ability to convey meaning. The second aim of the study was to discover if extensive writing would result in positive attitudes towards writing in English, and finally if there was a change in the amount of English pupils wrote for themselves, at home.

1.1 Context information and scope of the project

To investigate the aims of this thesis, data was collected from two fifth grade classes of children, aged 9-10, at two different primary schools; one intervention group, which was included in an intervention study, and one control group. Both of these groups attend urban schools within walking distance of a city centre. Both the intervention and the control group have been taught English since first grade using the textbook series *Stairs*. Furthermore, both groups have had word lists each week; these are lists of English words with a Norwegian translation, given by the teacher. Additionally, they have both had occasional vocabulary tests connected to these word lists. More details of the study groups will be presented in section 3.2.1.

According to the competence aims concerning writing in the Knowledge Promotion Curriculum (LK06) in English, the pupils should at the end of the 4th grade, be able to:

- use simple reading and writing strategies
- understand the relation between English phonemes and letters and put sounds together to form words
- read, understand and write English words and expressions related to one’s needs and feelings, daily life, leisure time and own interests

- write short texts that express opinions and interests, and that describe, narrate and enquire
- use some common short words and simple spelling and sentence patterns
- use digital tools to retrieve information and experiment in creating texts

(The Directorate for Education and Training 2006)

From these competence aims, it can be expected that the pupils in both groups should have the ability to write words, as well as short texts, and that they know some words and expressions needed in their daily lives. Furthermore, they should be aware of some spelling and sentence patterns when writing in English. Nevertheless, most of the writing done in both groups before fifth grade has been simple sentences, or filling in correct words in given sentences.

The research for the current thesis took place in the autumn semester 2015/2016, between August and December. At the beginning of the semester, both groups wrote a letter about themselves where they shared information about their families, hobbies, interests and friends. The pupils suggested the topics they were to write about, and these were written on the whiteboard. Furthermore, they were allocated approximately 20-25 minutes in class to write their text. During this session, the pupils received minimal help from their teacher, but were allowed to use dictionaries, to ask other pupils for word translations or to use a Norwegian word if necessary.

Additionally, both groups answered a questionnaire about their attitudes towards writing in English, and if/what, they wrote in English at home. For comparison, they answered the same questions about writing in Norwegian as well. They were also asked if their mother tongue was Norwegian and/or to specify their mother tongue if this was not the case. The purpose of this question being to explain why a pupil might not like to write in Norwegian and/or English, or to see if any of them had English as a mother tongue. This would perhaps help explain why some used written English at home.

Having completed the writing task and the questionnaire the control group continued with their classes as normal, the details of which can be found in Appendix 1 – Control group's half year plan, autumn 2015. The intervention group, on the other hand, participated in an intervention study with the researcher as the intervention group's teacher of English. In this intervention study, the pupils had weekly free writing tasks for homework, throughout the semester. Examples of writing tasks given were; to write about a happy memory (week 38), to write about the chores you do at home (week 36) and to write about your opinion of a book you are reading (week 40). The focus of this weekly homework was to share content and a range of information from their

own lives without a conscious focus on accuracy skills such as grammar or spelling. These, together with the remaining homework tasks are included in the intervention group's half-year plan in Appendix 2 – Intervention group's half year plan, autumn 2015.

In addition to the homework tasks, different methods were used for teaching in the intervention group than the control group, in regards to both writing instruction and reading (Appendix 1 – Control group's half year plan, autumn 2015, and Appendix 2 – Intervention group's half year plan, autumn 2015 for reference). Whilst the teacher of the control group based her teaching on the textbook *Stairs*, the teacher of the intervention only used this textbook once during the semester; in week 35, for individual work at school. Instead, reading activities in the intervention group included texts written by their teacher, Wings' graded readers or authentic English books from the library. Furthermore, during writing instruction, the control group was taught grammatical principles as well as words from word lists, and received feedback on these items in their writing. The intervention group, on the other hand, did not have any word lists or vocabulary tests, and the writing instruction was indirect, by the teacher giving feedback on positive aspects of the pupils' texts as well as reading what the teacher assessed as good texts aloud in class. These similarities and differences will be further explained in section 3.1.

At the end of the semester, the pupils in both groups were asked to write a new text about themselves, as well as to answer the questionnaire again. This showed if there were any differences in the improvement of attitude and writing skills between the pre and post research data within each group, and between the control and intervention group.

1.2 Rationale

In Norway, "there is a strong textbook tradition" (Drew and Sørheim 2009:115) when teaching English as a second language. This means that the teaching of English largely relies upon the textbooks. Different grammatical aspects and vocabulary are included in every chapter of the textbook, which the pupils practice through different tasks in a workbook. These are tasks such as the cloze tests, where the pupil needs to fill in the correct form of for example a verb in a sentence. For example in the sentence 'Sarah _____ a happy girl', the pupil should add the verb 'is' to complete the sentence. From the researcher's own experience, both as a student teacher and teacher, tasks where the pupils write coherent texts are often reserved for older pupils in the

later grades of primary school, or at lower secondary school. Instead, attention is on vocabulary, grammar or word ‘chunks’.

There are both positive and negative aspects of using a textbook when teaching. First, Drew and Sørheim (2009:15) argue that a textbook provides both teacher and pupils with a sense of security in a structured program. Additionally, it delivers a wide range of ready-made material for both individual, pair and group work, as well as ready-made word lists and homework materials. Furthermore, this saves the teacher hours of preparation work (Halliwell 1992:113). Nevertheless, Drew and Sørheim (2009:16) warn that for some teachers for some teachers, the textbook can feel subscribing and delimiting, making them teach in ways that they are not comfortable with. One solution to this problem may be for the teacher to disregard the textbook completely, and to make their own materials instead. This approach is called the ‘do-it-yourself’ approach by Maley (1998, in Drew and Sørheim 2009:123), and involves the teacher making tasks or activities that coincide with the pupils’ needs and interests. Additionally, the teacher is more able to adjust the work in response to the pupil’s reactions (Halliwell 1992:122). This could for example be done if the pupils find the work too easy or too difficult. Halliwell (1992:122) further argues that there are several aspects of teaching where a teacher can do a better job than a textbook, including communicative aspects and pronunciation, as well as “setting up learning activities which encourage learners to talk and interact”. Nevertheless, such work can be time-consuming, and in the worst-case, such a method can result in a “random set of materials that do not link well together” (Drew and Sørheim 2009:123). Based on this, it can be suggested that a combination of the textbook and teacher-made tasks might be the best solution. The teacher can choose to use the textbook when it seems relevant and valuable, but add own materials when she needs to or is inspired, and when she has the time and energy to do so (Drew and Sørheim 2009:123).

In addition, it seems that there are, in the researcher’s view, differences between early writing instruction in the language subjects Norwegian and English in Norwegian schools. Corrections in red pen on pupils’ early writing in Norwegian, indicating the mistakes in their writing, was the norm in Norway up until the 1980s. From this, the practice developed into providing the pupils with positive feedback instead in order to motivate the pupils to write (Traavik and Alver 2008). In this context, positive feedback is defined as praise, and a focus on what is good in the learner’s writing. However, feedback given on writing in the pupils’ second

language of English is still focused on mistakes rather than positive aspects of the text. It can therefore be argued that the development in feedback on early writing in Norwegian has not been transferred to the practices when teaching young learners to write in English.

Even though theory shows that the most common method of teaching is not necessarily the best for pupils' learning¹, teachers still seem to teach in the same manner. Waters (2012 in Munden 2014) states that even when research and theory changes, the methodology used for teaching English, as a second language (ESL), in Norwegian schools is still the same. From this it can be suggested that teachers require specific suggestions for how this theory can be applied in practice. The rationale for this study is therefore to investigate whether a different method for teaching pupils writing will increase attitudes, and perhaps help them increase their writing skills as well. This method being more similar to how pupils learn to write in their first language (L1).

Furthermore, LK06 does not state neither method nor activity, but rather competence aims the pupils should achieve at the end of their learning. These aims are designed for the end of years 2, 4, 7 and 10 in primary education. The teacher is then free to decide how to help pupils achieve these aims. Furthermore, all of the competence aims have been phrased in a manner that can be assessed by the teachers (Hasselgreen 2005:8). In addition to different competence aims, pupils should also develop in five basic skills of oral, reading, writing, digital skills and numeracy during their education.

Within the basic skill of writing, pupils should be able to plan, construct, communicate, reflect and assess (The Directorate of Education and Training 2006). This implies that writing is a complex skill, which involves several different aspects. The pupils should for example be able to master spelling and grammar, but they should also be able to express their own opinions or use writing as a tool for awareness on own learning. These skills are further connected within each subject's competence aims.

Within the English subject curriculum, there are four categories; language learning, oral communication, written communication and culture, society and literature. Within the category of written communication, in which this thesis is situated, there are eight competence aims. These include aims on both reading and writing. All of the aims shown below state what the learners

¹ This will be further explained and argued for in chapter 2 – Theoretical background.

should be able to do at the end of year seven. The aims should therefore be improved on between year five and seven. Within writing, the pupils should be able to

- use reading and writing strategies
- understand and use a vocabulary related to familiar topics
- take notes to create different types of texts
- write coherent texts that narrate, retell and describe experiences and express own opinions
- use basic patterns for orthography, word inflection, sentence and text construction to produce texts
- use digital tools and other aids to find relevant information and to create different types of texts

(The Directorate of Education and Training 2006)

These aims provide clear guidelines to what teachers should support their pupils in achieving, and the aim of this investigation is to discover whether there are alternative ways of how teachers can do this in practice.

The most central competence aim in this project is for the pupils to be able to “write coherent texts that narrate, retell and describe experiences and express own opinions” (The Directorate of Education and Training 2006). The homework tasks for the intervention group are mainly focused on this aim.

Furthermore, when it comes to reading, the pupils should be able to

- understand and use a vocabulary related to familiar topics
- understand the main content of texts one has chosen
- read and understand different types of texts of varying length from different sources

These aims are important as well, because reading can help support pupils’ vocabulary and writing skills. The intervention group will therefore also read different types of texts, such as graded readers or song lyrics, as well as undertake an extensive reading project and in the research period.

From the basis of this rationale, the main research question of the thesis is: Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes and writing skills in English? Within this main question, there are three secondary research questions:

1. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes towards writing in English?
2. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' use of written English at home?
3. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' writing skills in English?

1.3 Organisation of dissertation

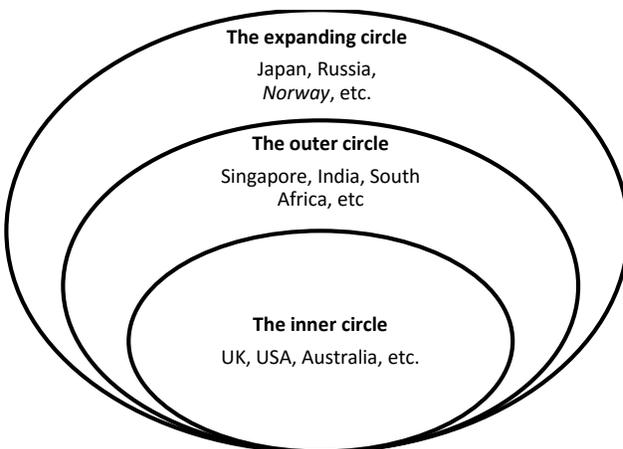
The thesis is divided into six chapters, starting with the introduction and ending with the conclusion. In chapter 2, the theoretical background of the thesis will be presented. This will be further drawn into chapter 3, where the methods of the research will be discussed in light of the theory. Chapter 4 will be a presentation of the results from the research, whilst chapter 5 will be a discussion of these results in light of the theoretical background from chapter 2. Finally, the conclusion in chapter 6 will bring all the different chapters together.

2 Theoretical background

In this chapter, an overview of the theoretical background of the thesis will be presented. First, an introduction to learning English as a Second Language (ESL) will be established. Secondly, an explanation of how Norwegian pupils learn to write in their L1 will be provided, accompanied by an explanation of writing skills that can be applied to both L1 and L2. Furthermore, a discussion of how pupils should learn to write in their L2 or foreign language will be provided, followed by some challenges within teaching writing to second language learners, including attitudes, homework and feedback.

2.1 Introduction to ESL

Braj Kachru developed a model categorising countries' relationship to the English language. As shown in Figure 1 (Adapted from Munden 2014:58), the 'inner circle' includes the countries where English is the official and first language for most of the population, this includes the United Kingdom and the United States of America, among others. The 'outer circle' on the other hand, includes countries where English is considered a second language, and may be used as an official language as well, such as in Singapore and India. Finally, the 'expanding circle' includes all the countries in which English is considered a foreign language, meaning that it is used "for contact with people in other countries" (Munden 2014:57), as for example Japan and Russia. Even though Norway is in the expanded circle, as shown in Figure 1, some scholars, for example Simensen (2008 in Munden 2014:57), believe that it belongs in the outer circle instead, as English is a widespread language in this country.



The view that English is a second language, rather than a foreign language, in Norway, can be supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research's view on the English subject. In the purpose of the English subject curriculum, it is written that:

English is a universal language. When we meet people from other countries, at home or abroad, we need English for communication. English is used in films, literature, songs, sports, trade, products, science and technology, and through these areas many English words and expressions have found their way into our own languages. When we want information on something of private or professional interest, we often search for it in English. In addition, English is increasingly used in education and as a working language in many companies.

(The Directorate of Education and Training 2006:2).

English is taught in Norwegian schools from year 1 to 10, and is also compulsory for students in upper secondary school. Furthermore, in the Norwegian National Centre for Foreign Language Learning's mandate provided by the Department of Education, foreign languages and English have been separated:

“Senteret er et nasjonalt ressurscenter for opplæringen i fremmedspråk og engelsk i barnehage og grunnsopplæring” - “The centre is a national resource centre for the teaching of foreign languages and English in pre-school and primary education” (researcher's translation) (The Norwegian National Centre for Foreign Language Learning 2010).

Additionally, the centre refers to a trial research in 2010-2012, where 70 schools have provided their sixth and seventh graders with teaching of foreign languages, which includes the languages as Spanish, French and German (the Norwegian National Centre for Foreign Language Learning 2012). English is of course not included, as this is already being taught in every grade in the Norwegian school.

Furthermore, English is, together with the subjects Norwegian and Mathematics, considered a core subject in the Norwegian school system. With the new competency demands from the Norwegian government for teachers, those who teach these three subjects are required to have between 30 and 60 study points from university, in each subject, in order to be allowed to teach them in primary or secondary schools.

From this argument, it can be suggested that theory on teaching and learning English as a Second Language (ESL) can be applied to teaching and learning English in a Norwegian context. ESL will therefore be the term used throughout this thesis in regards to Norwegian pupils learning, and being taught, English.

This section will continue by presenting hypotheses of second language acquisition, such as explicit and implicit learning and the input and output hypotheses, as well as the noticing hypothesis. When focusing on pupils' writing in this thesis, it is important to be aware of how pupils in general acquire a second language, before looking at writing acquisition specifically.

2.1.1 Defining explicit and implicit learning

“Explicit learning involves conscious awareness and intention” (Brown 2007:291), in other words it implies that the learner knows something is being taught and supposed to be learned. Implicit learning on the other hand is “learning without conscious attention or awareness” (Brown 2007:291). Here the learner may not be aware that learning is occurring. Brown argues that it is not a case of ranking one above the other, as there is an overall understanding that both are necessary. Instead, the discussion should be focused on when each approach is required and for which learners (Brown 2007:292). Theories within this area include the Noticing Hypothesis by Schmidt (2010), which argues for explicit learning in connection with language errors. Krashen's theory about language input, on the other hand, argues for the importance of implicit learning. These theories will be further explained in section 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

2.1.2 The input and output hypotheses

Krashen (1985:2) argues that “humans acquire language in only one way – by understanding messages, or by receiving comprehensible input”. This input is at one level above the learner's level of competence, which Krashen called $i+1$. The view is that the learner is able to understand the language, which they previously could not, due to the support provided through context. In the classroom, for example, a teacher might use pictures or objects while talking about familiar topics in the target language. The learner then acquires the language through “context, our knowledge of the world, our extra-linguistic information to help us understand language directed at us” (Krashen 1982:21). Krashen (1982:21) further explains that learners acquire language by

understanding the meaning and from this acquires a language structure as a result. Furthermore, it is argued, “if input is understood, and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar is automatically provided” (Krashen 1985:2). In other words, the learner subconsciously becomes aware of the sounds, rhythms and common sentence chunks of their new foreign language (Brown 2007:297). Finally, Krashen states that speaking “emerges over time”; it is not taught but developed when the learner receives more comprehensible input (Krashen 1982:22).

However, the input hypothesis has not been fully accepted by other researchers, such as Swain (2005), Gass and Selinker (2001) or de Bot (1996) (in Brown 2007:296). Many have criticized Krashen, and among them Zafar (2010). He claims that Krashen has not given any “real” evidence supporting his theory, and that he only used ideas or examples that worked to support it (Zafar 2010:141). He also notes that Krashen never defines the term “comprehensible input”, nor provides any method for measuring “the level of competence” (Zafar 2010:141). These points, Zafar claims, therefore makes the theory “nontestable” (2010:144). This view states that the input hypothesis cannot be tested, and therefore can neither be proven nor rejected. In Zafar’s opinion, this greatly weakens the hypothesis.

When it comes to output, conversely, Krashen disputes that it “is too scarce to make any important impact on language development” (1997:7 in Brown, 2007:298). Linguists such as Swain (in Brown 2007:298) have questioned this argumentation. She claims that the learner through producing language, by either speaking or writing, may acquire language (Swain 1985 in Swain 1993:159). Firstly, she proposes that output “provides the opportunity for meaningful practice” (Swain 1993:159), meaning that such production leads learners to ‘try out’, for example expressions, to see if and how they work. By ‘trying out’, they also reflect around their own language. One example of trying out and reflecting is when learners test their language production skills to discover if their communication is understandable (Brown 2007:298-299).

Secondly, production of language might force the learners to “recognize what they do not know or know only partially (Swain 1993:159). Swain proposes that when they notice this, they might identify what they need and therefore “pay attention to relevant input”. This is where the “loop between output and input is created” (Swain 1993:160). If the learners, on the other hand, choose to ignore it, their language is unlikely to develop.

Finally, Brown (2007:292) states that the argument of input versus output has become less controversial, and that it is “obvious that both input and output are necessary processes”. On the

other hand, what is now being discussed is the “optimal proportion of each mode”, as well as the “optimal quality” of the two. In the context of this research for example, the pupils will receive language input through reading and listening, additionally they will be required to provide language output mainly through writing during their homework tasks but also through speaking activities in class.

2.1.3 The noticing hypothesis

The ‘recognizing’ that Swain argues the pupils do when “they do not know or know only partially” (Swain 1993:159) has been named the “noticing the gap” hypothesis by Schmidt, which explains that “in order to overcome errors, learners must make conscious comparisons between their own output and target language input” (Schmidt 2010:4). As a result, the learner has to notice the difference between what the language looks like or sounds, and how it is when written or spoken by the learner. This is how the learner can learn from their mistakes.

Furthermore, the noticing hypothesis claims that the “learner must attend to and notice linguistic features of the input that they are exposed to if those forms are to become intake for learning” (Schmidt 2010:4). Schmidt further explains this as “a hypothesis that input does not become intake for language learning unless it is noticed, that is, *consciously registered*” (Schmidt 1990, 2001 in Schmidt, 2010:1). Using the terminology from this quotation, noticing will further be referred to as ‘conscious registration’. In other words, the learners must find, and consciously register the language they read or hear, in order to learn from it. However, this does not mean understanding, which could include “a higher level of awareness”, as the consciously registering of generalizations (Schmidt 2010:5).

The learning generalization is that learners need to understand as well as consciously register; however, Schmidt claims that only conscious registration is required (2010:6). This claim “implies that both explicit and implicit learning of generalizations are possible” (Schmidt, 2010:6). When the learning is done explicitly, that which is consciously registered “become(s) the basis for explicit hypothesis formation and testing” (Schmidt 2010:6). The implicit learning of generalizations on the other hand is when the learner hypothesizes based on mechanisms that has been automatically noticed through many instances. This results in, by Schmidt, “an intuitive form of knowledge that goes beyond what can be verbalized” (2010:6).

2.2 Learning to write in L1

When a child learns to write in his mother tongue, he goes through different developmental stages, ranging from stage 0 to 4 (Gentry 2007). In the beginning of kindergarten, or around the age of two, children discover that the written language exists (Traavik and Alver 2008:64) and they start to scribble letter like forms (Gentry 2007:2). They

“etterlikner [...] den skriften det observerer i miljøet rundt seg” - “imitate [...] the writing they observe in the environment around them” (researcher’s translation)

by pretending to write by the use of lines or waves in their scribbling (Traavik and Alver 2008:64).

In the pre-alphabetic writing of stage 1, approximately from the age of three, the child starts to draw random letters without any correspondence to sound (Gentry 2007:3). These letters might be similar to those in the child’s own name, or the names of family members or pets (Traavik and Alver 2008:66). Additionally, Traavik and Alver (2008:66) suggest that children start noticing their own letter ‘everywhere’, as they view it as linked to their own identity.

Furthermore, Gentry (2007:4) states that children at the end of kindergarten, from the age of four to five, should be at stage 2, which includes partial alphabetic writing. Here, the children have an understanding of the alphabetic principle, that graphemes are linked to phonemes (Traavik and Alver 2008:69). Therefore they start writing words closely linked to how they sound, as the letters BT for boat, or AT for eighty (Gentry 2007:4).

When the pupils are in the middle of first grade, at the age of six, they should be representing “all the surface sound features in words”, as MOTR BOT for motor boat (Gentry 2007:5). Then the pupils have achieved stage 3, full alphabetic writing. Furthermore, they are phonetically able to write anything they can say by listening to the sounds in the word (Gentry 2007:5), which by Traavik and Alver (2008:70) is defined as a one to one correspondence between letter and sound.

Finally, at the end of first grade the pupils should be able to show evidence of phonics knowledge (Gentry 2007:5). Evidence of such knowledge can be shown when writing the silent ‘e’ in the word take, or the syllable ‘ea’ in meat. Furthermore, Traavik and Alver (2008:74) suggest that when they start learning different spelling rules, these might be overgeneralised. An

example of such overgeneralisation can be when writing ‘writed’ instead of ‘wrote’ after learning the –ed ending.

When moving through the years of primary school, pupils should gradually approach conventional writing norms, and finally a full mastery of the rules of written language (Traavik and Alver (2008:75). During this educational path of writing acquisition, teachers should assess and provide the pupils with feedback on their writing.

2.2.1 Feedback on pupils’ writing

As mentioned in section 1.2, up until the 1980’s in Norway, the norm among teachers of L1 was to correct pupil’s texts by using a red pen, underlining or writing the correction of spelling or grammatical errors (Traavik and Alver 2008:76). This practice was generally followed from the very start of the pupil’s writing education. However, a discussion emerged regarding this practice, and teachers in the early grades of primary school started changing their feedback as they decided that:

“Det gjelder å motivere elevene best mulig, blant annet ved å gi dem positive tilbakemeldinger på tekster og andre produkter de lager. Dette har de gjort ut fra innsikten om at ros virker bedre enn ris, og at ingen blir flinkere i noe som helst ved hele tida å få påpekt det som ikke er så vellykket” - “What is important is to motivate the pupils as much as possible, for example by giving them positive feedback on texts and other products they make. This has been done from the knowledge that a carrot works better than a stick and that no one becomes better at anything by the unsuccessful being pointed out all the time” (researcher’s translation) (Traavik and Alver 2008:77).

This thought is further supported by Casbergue and Plauché (2005:23) who state that pupils need a risk-free environment in order to feel free to engage fully in their writing. However, pupils still need to learn how to write correctly during their years in primary school, as one of the competence aims for written communication in Norwegian states that pupils at the end of year seven should be able to “master key rules of morphology and orthography and write texts with varied syntax and functional punctuation” (The Directorate of Education and Training 2006). The question then, is how this can be achieved through feedback on the pupils’ writing.

Casbergue and Plauché (2005:24) suggest that pupils do not necessarily have to receive feedback on “every piece of writing”, but that the teacher can choose when to provide feedback according to the individual child and his needs. This can for example be done by pointing out misspelled words the teacher knows the pupil can sound out, or simple high-frequency words the pupil have seen on several occasions. This approach to error correction in pupil’s written work is supported by Traavik and Alver (2008). They suggest that although error correction can be provided for pupils who have reached a certain level of competencies in writing, the focus of this feedback should be on one word at a time (Traavik and Alver 2008:77). However, two different forms of feedback are more important to begin with concerning early writing, Traavik and Alver suggest (2008:77). These are firstly that the teacher should be positive towards the pupil’s written product, in order to motivate them, and secondly that they should provide concrete feedback on what exactly was good in their pupils’ text (Traavik and Alver 2008:77). From this, it can be concluded: “without the strictures to perfection for every piece of writing, emergent writers will feel free to express themselves” (Casbergue and Plauché 2005:24).

2.3 Learning to write in L2

So far, the focus has been on how pupils learn to write in their first language. The following section will now further discuss how second language writing is acquired. The main research question is, as pointed out in the introduction: Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ attitudes and writing skills in English? In this section, therefore, the domain of writing, as well as what to focus on when teaching writing will be discussed.

2.3.1 The domain of writing

Drew takes a functional approach to writing when he suggests that “writing is primarily an act of communication” (1998:25), and explains that writers normally write in order to communicate to a reader/readers, for example through letters or notes. Furthermore, he underlines that “the functions of writing will vary according to the genre, degree of formality and the expected readership” (Drew 1998:25). Such functions could vary from a note informing a spouse you will be home late, a letter to a former supervisor asking for a recommendation, or a story written to

entertain several readers. Drew therefore concludes that in nature “writing is multifaceted” (Drew 1998:25).

However, although people mainly write in order to communicate, writing can also be a “process of learning, re-experience and discovery” (Drew, 1998:28). Such use of writing, for example, can be done in a diary or journal that is usually only read by the writer. By writing, Drew suggests, we generate writing (1998:28). Additionally, by writing, we may find ourselves informed by new ideas and thoughts. From this, it can be stated, “writing is a process of discovery” (Drew 1998:29).

2.3.2 Writing skills

Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki and Kim (1998) present three categories of writing skills, which all show second language learners’ development in writing. These are fluency, accuracy and complexity (both grammatical and lexical). The argument is that learners’ written language becomes more fluent, accurate and complex as they become more proficient (Wolfe-Quintero et al, 1998:4). The methods for measuring these skills, promoted by Wolfe Quintero et al (1998) are by the use of quantifiable measures. For example by counting the amount of spelling errors in a text for measuring accuracy. Nevertheless, it can be suggested that this method is not one teachers would prefer when assessing pupils’ writing. One could argue that such a method would require a particular focus on one or two aspects of the texts, instead of assessing it holistically.

A more holistic approach to assessing writing is the Assessment of Young Learner Literacy (AYLLIT), which was a project linked to the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR). The CEFR provided, as an assignment from the Council of Europe, a “common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe” (Council of Europe 2001:1). Furthermore, the CEFR has become a useful assessment tool in Europe, as it divided foreign language learner abilities into six levels: users in level A1 and A2 are defined as basic users, B1 and B2 as independent users, and finally C1 and C2 are defined as proficient users (Council of Europe 2001:24). Nevertheless, these were originally made for adult language learners and a more adapted grid for younger learners was therefore needed as well (Figueras 2007 in Hasselgreen et al 2011:9). Even though this had been done by the CEFR when making the European Language Portfolio, by using Can-do statements as ‘I can write an email message’, the development only

expanded over three levels: A1, A2 and B1. Hasselgreen et al (2011) state that levels beyond B1 are too high for this age group. Furthermore, as the development from one level to the next is a slow process, this could be demotivating for the pupils. Thus, the AYLLIT project aimed to design a useful method for teachers in primary school to assess their pupil's writing, by additionally adding some 'approaching' levels in between the three.

The AYLLIT project resulted in an assessment scale (Appendix 3 – AYLLIT assessment scale), which shows the projects' view on which skills pupils should display in their writing, as well as how these skills develop (Hasselgreen et al 2011). The scale resulted in six levels: approaching A1, A1, A1/A2, A2, A2/B1 and B1. Additionally, the scale has four categories to assess within each level.

As the AYLLIT assessment scale will be central in the analysis of pupils' texts in this thesis, the categories within the scale will be introduced within each of the overall writing skills presented by Wolfe-Quintero et al, in order to link the two views on writing skills.

Fluency is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2010:596) as "the quality of being able to speak or write a language, especially a foreign language, easily and well".

A similar definition of the term is given by Nunan, who explains fluency as the ability of an individual to speak or write without undue hesitation" (1999:307). Wolfe-Quintero et al, on the other hand, state that writing fluency means accessing more words and structures in a limited amount of time.

If only a few words or structures are accessed, this means the learner has a lack of fluency (Wolfe-Quintero et al 1998:14). Fluency is not addressed in the AYLLIT assessment scale, but will be assessed in the current study through a word count in the text analysis. This will be further discussed in section 3.2.2.

Accuracy is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2010:11) as "the state of being exact or correct; the ability to do something skilfully without making mistakes". Wolfe-Quintero et al agree with this definition, stating that "accuracy is the ability to be free from errors while using language to communicate in either writing or speech" (1998:33). There are two categories in the AYLLIT assessment scale, which belongs in the category of accuracy. The first of these is "Misformed words and punctuation", which measures the amount of words that are spelled incorrectly in a pupil's text. Secondly, the category "Sentence structure and grammatical

accuracy”, where the grammatical accuracy section measures the amount of errors in, as well as awareness of, the basic grammar in a text (Hasselgreen et al 2011).

Complexity is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2010:306) as “the state of being formed by many parts; the state of being difficult to understand”. Wolfe-Quintero et al on the other hand, divide complexity in two parts, distinguishing between lexical and grammatical complexity. First, lexical complexity is defined as the learner having a range of “basic and sophisticated words” which can be “accessed quickly” (Wolfe-Quintero et al 1998:101). This is measured in the category “Vocabulary and choice of phrase” in the AYLLIT assessment scale. Here it measures what type of vocabulary the learner uses, if it resembles the L1 or if it consists of common and/or frequent words, as well as the range of the vocabulary used. Additionally, it measures the learner’s use of idiomatic phrases and the use of “words and phrases to add colour and interest to the message (e.g. using adjectives)” (Hasselgreen et al 2011).

Grammatical complexity on the other hand is a variety in “basic and sophisticated structures”. This is shown in the categories “Overall structure and range of information” and “Sentence structure and grammatical accuracy” in the AYLLIT assessment scale. The first category assesses the use of different tenses, as well as the ability to present a variety of ideas and use linking words. Sentence structures within the second category measures the variety of clause types, and variation of sentences and phrases (Hasselgreen et al 2011).

2.3.3 Teaching focus

Having established what writing is, and the skills that are necessary to acquire when learning to write, theories on how teachers should, or could, be teaching writing will be presented. Hyland suggests that there are many different views a teacher can have on what the best focus for effective writing instruction is. Hyland (1996:2) presents a list of seven different teaching focuses, which will be described in the following sections.

2.3.1.1 *Language structures*

The first focus Hyland introduces is the focus on language structures, the building blocks of written language, for example the writing of words. Teachers who focus on language structures, view writing as a product and therefore teach accordingly, and require the learners’ final written

to be a “coherent, error-free text” (Nunan 1999:272). In order to achieve this, pupils need to “command grammatical and lexical knowledge” (Hyland 1996:3). The methods used within this approach are often the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, writing using fixed patterns, imitating model texts and finally using the learnt patterns to produce a written product (Hyland 1996:4). Hyland stresses, however, that this focus, when used in isolation, can cause “serious problems”. Pupils learning only the language structures might struggle to write according to “particular communicative setting[s]” (Hyland 1996:4) as they have not been trained to keep their reader in mind. The product approach was mainly popular until the mid-1970s, when the process of writing was discovered (Nunan 1999:271).

2.3.3.2 Process

During the 1970s, the focus on writing changed to the writing process, and the writer came to be viewed as “an independent producer of text” (Hyland 1996:10). Accordingly, teaching focused on suggestions to the learners on how to “perform a writing task” (Hyland 1996:10). This included planning, drafting, revising and editing texts. However, this was not a linear process, but could be done in different orders, as well as be repeated several times. Again, Hyland argues that this focus alone cannot be used to teach pupils how to write, as learning how good writers write does not necessarily make one a good writer (Hyland 1996:14).

2.3.3.3 Text functions

This leads to the third focus, which is on the function of text as focused on by Drew (1998). Here the pupils learn how to structure their texts, by using certain “communicative functions” in order to convey meaning. Examples of such a focus are the teaching of topic sentences in paragraphs, or the ‘Introduction-Body-Conclusion’ text structure. Even though this focus teaches how to structure a text for meaning to be displayed, it does not teach how to write according to context or prospective readers. Hyland therefore claims that a focus on text functions alone, detaches the learners “from the practical purposes and personal experiences of the writer” (1996:7).

However, functional writing can also include teaching genres with practical functions, meaning that they are used outside of school and are “functional of nature” (Nunan 1999:88). Examples of functional genres are letters, reports or emails (Nunan 1999:88). By teaching such

functional genres, Nunan (1999:89) suggests, pupils can learn to be aware of the organisation and use of language.

2.3.3.4 *Genre*

By focusing on the genre of writing, teachers “see writing as attempts to communicate with readers” (Hyland 1996:18). The attention is on what to write in order to achieve a purpose of writing. This is taught according to the social conventions connected to the organizing of a message with a certain purpose, normally called genre. Martin (1992 in Hyland 1996) “defines genre as goal-oriented”, meaning that it is used to achieve something. Furthermore, Grabe and Kaplan (1996:138) state that when learners understand genres, they “also learn to control language, writing purpose, content and context”. Furthermore, Hyland (1996:87) suggests that teachers should provide their pupils with samples of different genres, in order to show the differences and similarities between them, as well as how they are constructed. Such genres can be functional, as explained above, argumentative or creative/expressive.

2.3.3.5 *Creative expression*

Teachers who focus on the genre of creative expression, want to encourage their pupils “to find their own voices to produce writing that is fresh and spontaneous” (Hyland 1996:8). The pupils should be given the opportunity to express themselves creatively. In this perspective, Hyland explains, “Writing is learned, not taught” (1996:9). The teacher becomes more of a facilitator, and guide, providing the pupils with a place to make meaning, often through free writing. Furthermore, as Nunan (1999:88) suggests, children normally enjoy creative writing, and often find it easier to be creative in writing than in speech. The negative side of this focus, however, is that it neglects the “social consequences of writing” as well as “the purposes of communication in the real world” (Hyland 1996:10).

2.3.3.6 *Content*

Finally, a teacher can choose to focus on content, what the pupils are supposed to write *about*. In this view, pupils are provided with topics they have some personal knowledge of, which will

result in them being “able to write meaningfully about them” (Hyland 1996:14). This focus is rarely used on its own, however, but is combined along with other focuses on writing. Hyland further stresses that such focus “tend to rely heavily on reading and exploit the close relationship between writing and reading in the L2 literacy development”. This notion is supported by Krashen who claims that “second language writing skills cannot be acquired successfully by practice in writing alone but also need to be supported with extensive reading” (Krashen 1993 in Hyland 1996:17). This will be further argued for in section 2.3.5.

To conclude, Hyland suggests that teachers normally mix these focuses instead of relying on one simple focus to writing instruction. However, teachers commonly choose “either a process or genre orientation”, which argues between a focus on the text and its social nature, or the cognitive aspects of a writer-centred process. Hyland, instead of choosing one or the other, suggests that they should be combined, as the “strengths of one might compliment the weaknesses of the other” (Hyland 1996:23).

2.3.4 Vocabulary learning

An overview of different focuses within teaching writing have now been explained. However, whilst these concentrate on learning to write in general, it could be suggested that another important aspect within second language learning is the acquisition and use of new vocabulary:

“Learners of a second language need words as much as structures in their endeavours to communicate in that language, that many of their difficulties with language result in an inadequate vocabulary” (Drew 1998:49).

For example, it can be argued that the text functions that were presented in section 2.3.3 are important, but that these cannot be learned without learning vocabulary. Teaching pupils new words might be equally, if not more important, than teaching grammar or sentence building. Brewster and Ellis further argue that learning new vocabulary is a “continuous process that can carry on throughout” the learners’ lives (2012:81). It is therefore important to provide the pupils with methods or strategies for learning such vocabulary.

Drew and Sørheim (2009) argue for some distinctions within vocabulary learning. The first of these is the difference between direct and indirect learning. Whereas direct learning is done explicitly, as in using word lists or other specific training, indirect vocabulary learning is

done implicitly through guessing by context. Today, it is suggested that “far more time should be spent on indirect vocabulary learning” (Nation 1990:3 in Drew and Sørheim 2009:159).

The other distinction that is drawn by Drew and Sørheim is between active and passive vocabulary. Passive words are those the pupils are able to understand when spoken or written, but may not use actively themselves, whereas active vocabulary are used actively through speaking or writing. A learner’s passive vocabulary is larger than the active vocabulary in both the L1 and L2 (Drew and Sørheim 2009:159).

Drew (1998) notes that up until the 1950s, the methodology traditionally used for vocabulary learning was to translate words from L1 to L2. Despite research on more favourable methods, this method is still used by teachers in Norway today, often through giving the pupils word lists. Below is an example of a word list, borrowed from Munden (2014:118)

Table 1 Example of word list

bottom	bunn
factory	fabrikk
free	gratis
pelican	pelikan
scissors	saks
toast	riste
umbrella	paraply

Even though such word lists are commonly used in Norway, there are several positive and negative aspects with the use of these. Starting with the positive aspects, word lists can provide the pupils with a habitual structure to their vocabulary learning, which is predictable and easy to work on alone. For example, the pupils can test themselves by holding their hand over the English or Norwegian translation. Additionally, for the teacher, these lists are easy to make and tests are easy to correct. On the other hand, one cannot necessarily be sure if the translation of the words correspond, that the meaning does not get lost in translation (Drew 1998:50). Furthermore, a word can have more than one meaning. An example of this can be seen in the word bottom, which is translated to ‘bunn’ above, but which could also be translated into ‘ rumpe’ (Munden 2014:119). Finally, the most negative aspect with these types of lists might be that the words are learned out of context, for example with the word scissors in Table 1. This does indeed translate to the word ‘saks’ in Norwegian, however, in a sentence they are used quite differently. Whilst

Norwegians speak of scissors as a singular noun, it is used as a plural noun in English (Munden 2014:119).

Even though word lists provide an easy method for pupils to practice new words, “it is extremely doubtful if vocabulary that has been memorized as wordlists will form part of learner’s active vocabulary” (Cook 1991:43 in Drew 1998:50). Instead, new words should be learned through experience, by using the words in context they can easier be remembered and internalised (Drew 1998:50). If words are learnt in this way, it can also bring with it “important grammatical and collocational information” about the words (Cameron 2001:91).

Finally, Allen (1983:41 in Drew 1998:51) states that pupils are more likely “to learn a word when one feels a personal need for that word”. This is supported by Cameron who suggests that instead of finding the vocabulary in the textbook, the teacher could instead ask the pupils what words they already know and which they want to learn (Cameron 2001:91).

2.3.5 Extensive reading

One approach to teaching new vocabulary through the pupils own experiences, is by reading extensively. As quoted in section 2.3.3.6, “second language writing skills cannot be acquired successfully by practice in writing alone but also need to be supported with extensive reading” (Krashen 1993 in Hyland 1996:17). Munden defines extensive writing as reading for pleasure, without answering questions, doing exercises or deliberately learning new language” (2014:325). Palmer (1921/1964:111 in Day and Bamford 1998:5) further supports this by defining it as “real-world reading but for a pedagogical purpose”.

When using the extensive reading approach in the classroom, there are some important principles to follow. First, and most importantly, is the principle that pupils should be able to choose for themselves what book to read (Munden 2014:325), from a wide “variety of materials on a wide range of topics” (Day and Bamford 1998:8). Furthermore, these materials should be within the level of competence of the pupils, in regards to vocabulary and grammar (Day and Bamford 1998:8). There should be allocated time for reading at school, silently in class (Munden 2014:325), but also the possibility for the pupils to take the book with them to read at home as well (Day and Bamford 1998:8). The teacher should also make time in class for the pupils to talk about the books they read (Munden 2014:325). Finally, the teacher’s role is mainly as a facilitator, keeping track of what the pupils read, and guiding them in their choices, but also as a

role model as a reader herself (Day and Bamford 1998:8). It can therefore be suggested that the teacher too can read a book during these extensive reading lessons.

The principles of extensive reading are indirectly reflected in the competence aims provided by the Ministry of Education and Research. As shown in the introduction, pupils at the end of year seven should be able to “understand the main content of texts one has chosen” (The Directorate of Education and Training 2006), which strengthens the view that pupils should choose their own texts during extensive reading. Furthermore, they should be able to “read and understand different types of texts of varying length from different sources”, which extensive reading would help provided them with. Additionally, they should be able to “understand and use a vocabulary related to familiar topics” (The Directorate of Education and Training 2006).

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, extensive reading can help extend pupils’ vocabulary, and furthermore improve their writing. Day and Bamford (1998:16-18) argue that extensive reading can help pupils improve their sight vocabulary as well as their general vocabulary knowledge. Within sight vocabulary, words in which the pupil have some familiarity have been read so many times that the pupil can recognize them automatically. “The best and easiest way to accomplish this is to read a great deal” (Day and Bamford 1998:16). Furthermore, general vocabulary knowledge regards incidental vocabulary learning through guessing in context. Within L1 vocabulary learning, accomplishing this through reading “may be the easiest and single most powerful means of promoting large-scale vocabulary growth” (Nagy and Herman 1987:27 in Day and Bamford 1996:17). Stoller and Grabe (1993:31-32 in Day and Bamford 1996:18) argue that this can be applied to second language vocabulary acquisition as well, given that the pupils have achieved “a certain level of knowledge (and vocabulary)”. Then, they will be able to learn new vocabulary from reading materials with a “low ratio of unknown words” (Day and Bamford 1996:18). Finally, Day and Bamford (1996:18) conclude that by reading in the second language, pupils can improve on their sight vocabulary, and the incidental vocabulary will become easier.

Krashen (2004:37 in Drew and Sørheim 2009:77) further argues that “reading is a powerful means of developing reading comprehension ability, writing style, vocabulary, grammar and spelling”. Studies done by both Janopoulos (1986) and Hafiz and Tudor (1989) showed that extensive reading helped improve the pupils’ writing skills (Drew and Sørheim 2009:77). Furthermore, Larssen and Høie (2012:48 in Munden 2014:325), after a project where they

provided 6th graders with seventy book titles over a five week period, concludes that if having to choose between buying authentic books or new course books, schools and teachers “should seriously consider the former. The gains from extensive reading are substantial”.

In addition to the clear second language benefits of extensive reading, Day and Bamford (1996:26) further argues that it can also have a great improvement on pupils attitudes. The reason for this, they state, is that the individual pupils “can enter the second language culture on their own terms”, by choosing what to read according to own their interests.

2.4 Challenges in writing acquisition

2.4.1 Attitudes (to writing)

As explained in section 1.1, one focus of the main research question is on the pupils’ attitudes towards writing in English. Attitudes are important, as negative attitudes can lead to decreased motivation, which in return can “affect the success of language learning” (Brown 2007:71). Nevertheless, such attitudes can be changed, for example by exposing them to reality (Brown 2007:193). From this, it can be suggested that by exposing pupils to writing in English in a positive manner, they can increase their positive attitudes.

Attitude is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2010:84) as “the way you think and feel about somebody/something; the way you behave towards somebody/something that shows how you think and feel”. However, feelings and attitudes are not necessarily the same thing. First, the word feelings is a complicated one, as it can be used as a synonym to emotions. Conversely, it can also be used as a description of our “bodily sensations that are part of the affective experience-the sweaty palms, constricted breath, dry mouth...” (McLeod 1991:98). One should therefore use the term emotions instead. McLeod defines emotions as “where the organism is aroused for a fairly short period of time” (1991:97). By referring to this definition, we can say that for example happiness and anger are emotions. Feelings, on the other hand, is how our body acts due to these emotions. For example, the experience of fatigue linked to sadness.

Secondly, “attitudes are psychological states acquired over a period of time as a result of our experiences” (McLeod 1991:98), or simply put, a set of mind due to earlier experiences. In order to link this to writing, it can be suggested that negative writing experiences can lead to a

negative attitude towards writing in general. McLeod explains this further by stating: “An attitude is not a response, but a readiness to respond in certain ways” (McLeod 1991:98). Finally, it can be said that emotions and attitudes are distinctive terms, but that an attitude can “lead to an emotional response and then to a feeling or bodily response, as in a student's negative attitude toward writing resulting in anger and perspiration” (Musgrove, 1998:2).

2.4.2 Homework

As the research question of this thesis measures the pupils writing after writing in English for homework each week, it is necessary to look at research on the use of homework in school. However, it appears to be a lack of research on homework in the second language classroom, and even less on writing as homework in such settings. Nevertheless, a few researchers have made some interesting conclusions within this context.

Motlagh et al concludes that written homework could aid vocabulary learning in foreign language learners, as opposed to memorization or other mechanical practices for learning new vocabulary (2015:440). Additionally, their research concluded that the learners acquire new words easier when the words are used in context, as well as in a meaningful and purposeful matter (Motlagh et al 2015:440).

Although homework can achieve positive outcomes for the learner, some pupils still decline to do their homework. One reason for this might be their total amount of homework in all the subjects at school, which might lead the learners to become demotivated and frustrated. Additionally, if the homework type in itself is “too difficult, too easy, uninteresting, monotonous, or perceived as irrelevant”, it too can cause the learner to be demotivated (North and Pillay 2002:144).

Therefore, Fukuda and Oshida (2012) suggest some guidelines on how teachers should design their homework tasks. Although their research was done in a university setting with professors and students, the factors could still be seen as universal for all teachers providing homework for their learners. First, the homework should be integrated in a clear course aim (Fukuda and Oshida, 2012:38), making it “an integrated part of a scheme of work” (North and Pillay 2002:144). Secondly, a strong learner-teacher relationship encourages out of class study time. This includes knowing the learners’ names and faces, as well as individual interaction. This point is perhaps more natural in a primary school setting. Thirdly, the classroom environment

should be non-threatening, meaning that there should be room for error without the fear of being ridiculed or laughed at. If a learner feels free to try and fail within the classroom, they might feel more secure doing the same at home. Finally, a classroom filled with interactive procedures can engage learners. Such activities include group work and presentations, but also the opportunity for using what they have done at home in the classroom. The learners should also be involved in choosing the activity content, or what activities to do, at home or at school. If all of these factors have been thought about and applied by the teacher, the learners will expectantly be motivated to work outside of class as well. (Fukuda and Oshida 2012).

Finally, there are a few other possible challenges concerning written homework in an ESL context. As experienced by the researcher, there can be great variations in the amount of help pupils receive from their parents whilst doing their homework. Those who do receive much help might create texts with fewer errors or a greater vocabulary than the pupils would be able to achieve on their own. In return, this can create a false image for the teacher of what the pupil actually can produce.

On the other hand, pupils who do receive much help at home on their homework might have a greater opportunity of learning. Those who do not receive such help at home might therefore be at a disadvantage. Nevertheless, researchers have found differing results when it comes to parent's influence on pupils' achievement. Whilst some have found positive links to such help, other have been more negative. Hoover-Dempsey et al (2001:204) argue that one of the reasons for this spread in results can be due to the parents' motivation for involvement; whether their child is successful and shares this with her parents, or if she struggles and requires help. Nevertheless, the greatest influence parents can have on their child in connection with homework is on their attitudes, ideas and behaviours (Hoover-Dempsey et al 2001:204). If the parent displays positive attitudes about homework, and encourages the work, it can influence the child's attitudes as well. Furthermore, if the parent understands her child's level of competence, the involvement can support the child's own "sense of competence and ability" (Hoover-Dempsey et al 2001:205). Additionally, the mentioned positive attitudes towards homework can affect the pupil's own attention to prioritizing schoolwork both at home and at school (Hoover-Dempsey et al 2001:205). From this it can be suggested that encouraging parent involvement in regards to being positive towards homework, being familiar with the pupil's abilities and prioritizing homework can in return have positive effects on the learners as well.

From the researcher's perspective, it is therefore important to have a close relationship between the school and the home, in order to achieve common grounds on the amount of parent involvement and help that might be acquired, or not acquired, during the pupils' homework tasks.

2.4.3 Teacher written feedback

As part of the methodology of this thesis, the teacher will provide the intervention group pupils with feedback on what they have written for homework. This feedback can be of great importance when it comes to the pupils' learning. For example by helping encouraging positive attitudes towards writing. Nevertheless, feedback can be designed differently with regards to what the teacher decides to focus on. "Written feedback from teachers can play a significant role in improving L2 students' writing, but this role is complex and requires careful reflection to be used effectively" (Hyland 1996:192). When pupils deliver their written homework, or other written work, teachers should reflect on how to provide feedback. Such reflections as Hyland refers to in the quote above, concern the form of the written feedback, what the teacher gives feedback on, as well as how the feedback is formulated. Some choices that need to be made within these categories will now be presented, starting with the form of the written feedback.

2.4.3.1 *Forms of written feedback*

When deciding to provide a pupil with written feedback on a text, the teacher first needs to decide whether to give a commentary or to use rubrics or minimal markings. When giving a commentary to a text, the teacher either writes a comment at the end of the text, or supplements this with marginal comments. While end comments are a good way to summarize a text, marginal comments give immediate response directly in the places in the text (Hyland 1996:180-181).

Another way to respond to a pupil's text is to use rubrics. This includes a cover sheet with a list of criteria. This list can be given to the pupils while writing, so they will know what their texts will be judged on by the teacher. Such criteria often include specifics to the genre, but can also include certain language focuses, as spelling or grammar. The earlier explained AYLLIT rubrics are an example of criteria the teacher can use when responding to a text. However, the language of it may be too advanced to give out to younger pupils; nevertheless, it could be simplified or translated into the L1 by the teacher.

The final form of written feedback is the use of minimal marking. These are different “correction codes” (Byrne 1988 in Hyland 1996:181) that are form-based, in order to point out to the pupil the location and type of error in their text. Such codes can for example be an *s* for spelling mistake or a *p* for punctuation mistake. However, Hyland states, a proper minimal marking should instead simply show the place of error, but not type. This in order to develop the learner’s “self-editing strategies” (Hyland 1996:181).

Although three forms of feedback have been presented here, teachers may use them all, either separately, but also together. As an example, one can use minimal marking for the errors in the text, and then an end comment summarizing these, as well as the content of the text. However, whether to focus on content or form, *or both*, is not necessarily an easy question.

Some teachers favour a focus on content, meaning what the learner has written about and how the ideas have been presented, while others favour a focus on form, which is linked to grammar and other language specific errors. Zamel argues that teachers generally “respond as language teachers rather than writing teachers” (1985 in Hyland 1996:183), meaning that they much rather focus on spelling and grammar than the content of the text. This focus on form is supported by Ferris who found in his research that this “attention to form led to a reduction in errors in later assignments” (1997 in Hyland 1996:184). Truscott on the other hand “concluded that error correction is ineffective in improving on student writing” (1996 in Hyland 1996:183). Hyland, however, concludes that content and form “cannot be realistically separated when responding to writing” (1996:185). Fathman and Whalley, who “discovered that texts improved most when students received feedback on both content and form” (1990 in Hyland 1996:184), also support this conclusion. Furthermore, in connection to the LK06 competence aims displayed in section 1.2, both content and form are included. For example, pupils at the end of year seven should be able to “use basic patterns for orthography, word inflection, sentence and text construction to produce texts” (The Directorate of Education and Training 2006), but they should also be able to “write coherent texts that narrate, retell and describe experiences and express own opinions” (The Directorate of Education and Training 2006). As stated previously, these aims were designed with the purpose of being assessed by the teachers. It can therefore be suggested that the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research wants pupils to learn, and receive feedback, on both content and form.

2.4.3.2 *Feedback formulation*

How the feedback should be formulated also depends on the different assignments, as well as the different learners (Hyland 1996:187). The teacher needs to decide if the feedback should be praise, pointing to the positive parts of the text, which can encourage and motivate the learners, or alternatively if the feedback should be criticizing and/or suggestive. An overall critical feedback can feel quite negative and forceful on the learner, while a suggestive feedback can show the pupil in a clear way in which the writing can be improved (Hyland 1996:187).

Hyland recommends that the best feedback is a combination of the responses, however, he stresses the notion that feedback to pupils' work can feel quite personal for them, and that it can affect the pupil-teacher relationship. Therefore, Hyland recommends four ways in which to mitigate the feedback, in order to 'soften the blow' of the criticism (1996:191). These are paired or hedged comments, personal attribution or interrogative forms. Paired comments pair the criticism either with praise or with suggestions, while hedged comments use modal verbs, as *possibly*. Personal attribution, on the other hand, is when the teacher comments as a reader rather than an expert. Furthermore, using interrogative forms means expressing doubt or uncertainty in the comment. Finally, Hyland warns that indirect comments, as hedged comments, might cause misunderstandings or confusion for the learner, which in a worst-case scenario can cause the learner to disregard the feedback without taking it into account, leading to loss of learning (1996:191), leading to loss of learning.

2.5 **Summary**

In this chapter, it was first established that it could be correct to use the term ESL as opposed to EFL in a Norwegian context. Furthermore, the terms explicit and implicit learning was presented, followed by the input and output hypotheses as well as the noticing hypothesis.

Moreover, how pupils learn to write in their L1 was explained, followed by an overview of how young learner's early L1 writing has been provided with feedback in Norway. Up until the 1980s, feedback was mainly on errors, but the practice changed to giving feedback on positive aspects instead in order to motivate the pupils.

From this, different theories regarding learning to write in L2 were presented. Pupils need to acquire the writing skills fluency, accuracy and complexity; and these skills can be assessed

holistically through the AYLLIT assessment scale. Furthermore, writing instruction and feedback can be done according to different teaching focuses. Such focuses range from language structures to creative expression. Additionally, the pupils need to learn new vocabulary in order to produce language. Nevertheless, this can be done in different ways, either explicitly or implicitly. Whilst explicit learning, using word lists and translations, are quite normal in Norwegian schools, it can be argued that implicit vocabulary learning through ‘guessing by context’ is a better approach. Furthermore, it was argued that extensive reading could be a method for extending sight vocabulary and general vocabulary knowledge through pleasure reading, which in return also could improve attitudes.

Finally, three challenges regarding writing instruction were explained. First, the term attitudes was explained, followed by suggestions to how homework should be done in order to encourage work at home. Additionally, it was noted that parents could help their children’s homework by showing positive attitudes towards school and schoolwork.

The last challenge concerned feedback on the pupils’ writing, both on how this could be done and what the feedback should be on. The teacher can choose between end or marginal comments or minimal markings, or a combination of the three. Additionally, the teacher can choose to focus on either content or form, or a combination of both. Nevertheless, if the feedback is not mainly praise, it was suggested that suggestions or critique should be mitigated.

3 Methods

In the following chapter, an overview of the methods used in this thesis will be given. As presented in the introduction, the main research question of the current thesis is: Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes and writing skills in English? Within this, there are three secondary research questions:

1. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes towards writing in English?
2. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' use of written English at home?
3. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' writing skills in English?

To answer these research questions, the research was divided between what concerns the pupils' attitudes towards, and amount of, writing, and their actual writing. In this chapter, a project description will be given, as well as an explanation of the overall approach. Furthermore, the learner groups will be presented, followed by an explanation of the methods concerning, respectively, the writing and attitude part of the thesis. These include text measures, questionnaires and interviews. Finally, a discussion of validity and reliability, as well as ethical issues, will be presented.

3.1 Classroom project description

During the research project, the intervention group was given a weekly writing task for homework throughout the semester. The tasks given were topics linked to the pupils' own lives, experiences and/or opinions, in other words topics that can be meaningful for the pupils to write about (Hyland 1996). Furthermore, "personal narratives have always played an important role in writing development since writing based on personal experience is often the easiest to produce" (Nunan 1999:88). However, the tasks were also mainly linked to the topics they worked on at school in the particular week, as it was important that the homework tasks were "integrated in the course aim" (Fukuda and Oshida 2012). Nevertheless, the topics were often connected to the pupils' daily lives. For example, in week 36 (see Appendix 2 – Intervention group's half year plan, autumn 2015), the topic was 'the home' and about who does what in the house. The aim of the week was then to "be able to write about the chores I do at home" and the pupils had this as their writing task for homework. The task was therefore integrated in the aim, as well as it

concerned the pupils' lives. Furthermore, the pupils learned new vocabulary about chores in the home, which they used when writing about their own chores. When using the words, or terms, in a context like this, the aim is that homework becomes more meaningful and purposeful (Motlagh et al 2015). Additionally, Motlagh et al (2015) suggest that young learners learn vocabulary easier this way, than just through memorizing words.

On the subject of teaching, writing instruction was rather limited in the research period. The reason for this choice was due to the aim of the project, to see how weekly writing would influence the pupils. If writing instruction had been given in addition, it would be difficult to know how the individual writing tasks would have affected them. Instead, the lessons at school were mostly used for reading or talking activities, introducing new topics and doing activities in groups or individually. Their reading consisted of texts written by their teacher, or extensive reading projects. Even though the intervention group had the *Stairs* textbook, this was not followed from start to finish, but was rather used for giving occasional tasks when this was deemed suitable within the learning aim. However, most of the tasks given were provided by the teacher without the use of the textbook, ranging from word searches to finding and listening to a song on You Tube. Nevertheless, some of the topics focused on was the same as the topics given in the textbook *Stairs*, which the other teachers used at this school.

As presented in section 2.3.3, there are several possible focuses teacher can have towards pupils writing (Hyland 1996). The main focus of this project was on content, as that was the centre of the tasks given to the pupils. However, as Hyland (1996) suggests, one should combine this with other focuses as well. Therefore, additionally, a focus on text functions was provided. The reason for this combination was that it concentrated on providing the pupils with the opportunity to use their personal knowledge of topics, as well as how they presented this knowledge. Meaning that the range of information, and how this was presented, had the overall attention. This could include interesting or fun content, if the content was presented in a funny or interesting way, or if the pupil had used a headline, beginning and/or end in their writing. However, there was also a slight focus on genre, by praising those who wrote a form of 'hello' and 'bye' in their correspondence to the teacher. This was done in order to help the pupils' concentration on the purpose of their writing: communicating with their reader. Indirectly, it can also be suggested that creative expression was, actually, the focus of it all, as the tasks required

the pupils to be creative in writing rather freely, though on a given topic (Hyland 1996), as they were not provided with any criteria on their writing.

Furthermore, these focuses became clear when providing the pupils with feedback on their writing. Feedback was mainly given on content and text functions, by giving praise to something interesting, fun or sad, in addition to how the information was presented. As discussed in section 2.4.3.2, giving such praise can encourage and motivate the pupils to write more (Hyland 1996). This method of feedback resembles how young learners receive feedback on their writing in an L1 teaching context. The feedback should mainly focus on what is good in the pupil's written product (Traavik and Alver 2008:77). Consequently, pupils will learn in a risk-free environment where they can "fully engage in their writing" and "feel free to express themselves" (Casbergue and Plauché 2005:23-24).

Nevertheless, some suggestions were given for improvement as well. Mostly these suggestions were given to pupils who were at a more advanced level in their writing, and normally only one aspect of the text was commented on, as recommended by Traavik and Alver (2008:77). The feedback for example looked at whether the pupil wrote a headline or an introduction to the text, and whether the text was written in full sentences. Generally, critical comments were mitigated in order to ease the pupil's reaction, and "soften the blow" (Hyland 1996). This was done mainly through the use of personal attribution as "I missed an introduction to tell me what the text is about", or "I would love if you wrote full sentences next time". The feedback was mainly given as an end comment to summarize the text (Hyland 1996), but the use of marginal comments were also used if something was very good, for example, a great headline. The reason for using mainly end comments was first that the pupils texts are rather short, therefore marginal comments within the text could be quite overwhelming. Secondly, as the focus was not on language, as grammar or errors, the marginal comments might not have been as necessary.

When the pupils received their feedback, which was generally written in English, they were given time to read it and ask questions if they did not understand the comment or had other questions. Because of this, they were then given the opportunity to consciously register (Schmidt 2010) what they had done, and how to improve. Finally, the pupils expectantly used the given suggestions in the next text they wrote the week after.

As discussed previously, the explicit writing instruction was rather limited during the period of the intervention study. There was nevertheless some instruction as to how to complete their homework tasks, although this was done mostly implicitly. One example of such implicit instruction was when the teacher, every week, selected two completed homework tasks to read aloud in class. When this was done, the pupils had the opportunity to see what the teacher considered a good text. This in return might have made the pupils more motivated, and more aware of how to structure or write their texts. When choosing what texts to read aloud, the teacher focused on the same aspects as when giving feedback to the pupils' texts. It was considered important to maintain coherence between what was focused on in the feedback of the pupils' texts, and what was chosen to read aloud in class. For example, if many pupils received feedback telling them to write in full sentences, it would be incoherent and confusing to read aloud a text written in bullet points.

3.2 Data collection

The overall approach of this thesis was the use of mixed methods, both qualitative and quantitative. This was done using data triangulation, meaning that three different sources for analysis was used in order to support and confirm each other, and thereby strengthening the reliability and validity of the findings (Postholm and Jacobsen 2011:130). The methods used within this triangulation were questionnaires, text samples and interviews.

While some of these are qualitative measures of information, others are quantitative. The definitions of, and arguments for, these two separate methods will now be presented, with an argument for the use of mixed methods in the end of this section.

The OED defines quantitative analysis/research as being “connected with the amount of number of something, rather than with how good it is” (OED 2010:1240). The benefits of such research can be to be able to reach a great amount of research subjects, as in the use of a questionnaire. However, by doing so, such research can result in general conclusions on the research topic (Postholm & Jacobsen 2011:42). The qualitative measures used in this thesis were primarily the questionnaire, but also the word count of the personal texts. Additionally, statistics concerning the levels of the pupils will be presented quantitatively.

Qualitative measures on the other hand are defined by the OED as “connected with how good something is, rather than with how much of it there is” (OED 2010:1240). The benefit of

qualitative measures is that the researcher can go more in depth with the research subjects, and make conclusions that are more specific to the subjects. However, this often is quite time consuming, a consequence being that the range of data might need to be limited (Postholm & Jacobsen 2011:42). The qualitative measures used in this thesis were the analysis of the personal texts written by the pupils, as well as the interviews and the homework texts the intervention group wrote throughout the semester. These tools will be defined and argued for later in the thesis.

The choice to combine quantitative and qualitative measures can be argued by the use of Postholm and Jacobsen (2011). They claim that these methods should not be looked at as opposites, but rather as complimentary to each other. By using mixed methods, the results can give different types of information as well as inspire reflection and discussion (Postholm & Jacobsen 2011:41). Consequently, in this thesis, the different methods bring in different types of information, concerning the groups as a whole, or individual pupils' writing or opinions. Together, it can be suggested that this will give a much more reliable answer to the research questions than one method would do alone.

3.2.1 Participants

As presented in section 1.1, the research included both an intervention group and a control group. Due to convenience, the intervention group consists of classes that the researcher was already teaching at the time of the study. The control group, on the other hand, is taught by a different teacher at another school. This group was selected on the basis that the researcher was familiar with the school from previous work experience, consequently making it natural to ask the teacher to be a part of the research. Additionally, the groups have several common traits. Both of the pupil groups are in the fifth grade, at a school within walking distance to a city centre. The schools are located in the Norwegian southwest coast. Both classes have two English lessons a week, with teachers having a minimum of 30 study points in English from a semi-urban university in Norway.

In the control group, 38 pupils participated in the pre-intervention research and 41 pupils in the post-intervention research. Of these, 36 pupils participated in both parts. In the intervention group on the other hand, 41 pupils participated in the pre-intervention research, and 37 in the

post-intervention research. 39 pupils participated in both pre and post questionnaire, whilst 41 pupils in the intervention group participated in the intervention research throughout the semester. There was an even distribution of boys and girls in each of the groups.

Both the control and intervention group answered a questionnaire and wrote a letter about themselves at the beginning of the semester. The letters were handwritten, as were the questionnaires. At the end of the semester, both the intervention and control group answered the same questionnaire again, and wrote a new letter on the same topic as in the beginning of the semester. The intervention group, however, were more involved with the research. They were given open writing tasks for homework every week throughout the semester, to be written in a designated A5 notebook. Additionally, ten pupils from the intervention group were interviewed, as to hear more about their opinions and views on the project; they had been part of during the semester. This will be further explained in the next section.

3.2.2 Analysing the pupil's texts

As explained in section 3.2, one of the qualitative measures of this thesis was to analyse the pupils' texts. This was the first part of the triangulation method used in this research. 75 texts were gathered from the pupils, and the aim of the text analysis was to "create a system, pattern or meaning within the substantial amount of text" (Postholm and Jacobsen 2011:102). Furthermore, a text analysis is about "constructing an understanding that can contribute to change and development of practice" (Postholm and Jacobsen 2011:102). Finally, the analysis of the pupils' texts were included in order to find evidence of how, or if, the pupils' writing skills developed during the research project.

At the beginning of the semester, the pupils from both the research and intervention groups wrote a letter about themselves where they shared information about their families, hobbies, interests and friends. They were allocated approximately 20-25 minutes in class to write their text and had minimal help from their teacher. They were, however, allowed to use dictionaries, to ask other pupils for translations or to use the Norwegian word if necessary. The reasons for these choices was first that by providing them with a time limit, there would be no difference between the groups of how long they were able to write. This would lead to fewer variables, and therefore a better ground for comparison. Secondly, the teacher would assume the role as facilitator, in order for the pupils to show what they were able to write without too much

help. By being allowed to find the words they were lacking, in dictionaries or by asking a fellow pupil, they would be provided with the opportunity to write as much as possible. Furthermore, they were allowed to write the Norwegian word if the English word was not found. By finding the words they needed, they would be able to write according to their active knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. If this opportunity had not been provided, there could have been a risk of the pupils not writing what they wanted to. The clear guidelines stated above were given to the teacher of the control group, to make sure that the groups would have as similar conditions as possible when writing their texts.

After the pupils finished their writing, the texts were gathered in order to be assessed according to the Assessment of young learner literacy (AYLLIT). By using this procedure, the pupil's texts were assessed in four different categories (see Appendix 3 – AYLLIT assessment scale): overall structure and range of information, sentence structure and grammatical accuracy, vocabulary and choice of phrase, misformed words and punctuation (Hasselgreen et al 2011). The description of this method was described in more detail in section 2.3.2.

The qualitative measure of the AYLLIT assessment scale was chosen due to its holistic assessment, “considering a whole thing [...] to be more than a collection of parts” (OED 2010:743), as this is the assessment approach most teachers take when assessing their pupils. In addition to spelling and grammar, the AYLLIT scale also includes measures concerning content and the range of information presented in the pupils' writing. Furthermore, the amount of words written was taken into account, in order to get one clear, quantifiable measure to compare the groups. It was then apparent whether the length of the texts had increased or if they wrote approximately the same length as before.

In each category, the pupils' writing was assessed based on the AYLLIT levels, ranging from approaching A1 to Above B1. Approaching A1 being the lowest level, and Above B1 the highest. According to Hasselgreen (2005:9), approaching A1 is where the pupils are when they have just started learning to write in a second or foreign language. When the pupils finish fourth grade, as the pupils in this research had recently done before the project started, they should be between level A1 and A2. Finally, the pupils should be at level B1 when they finish primary school in the seventh grade (Hasselgreen 2005:9).

By the end of the semester, the pupils wrote a second text similar to the first, and these were then analysed, and the results showed whether a pupil had increased or decreased their

proficiency level, or if they had not changed their level at all. Nevertheless, as it was possible to increase or decrease in one or two categories without it necessarily affecting the total level, statistics of each category were made as well.

Another method for analysing the pupil's texts could have been to use a quantifiable method as Wolfe-Quintero et al have done, where different aspects of the texts were counted, such as T-units or clauses, in order to measure fluency, accuracy or complexity (1998). However, as suggested in section 2.3.2, these aspects are all included in the AYLLIT as well, though measured through holistic assessment and not through quantifiable measures. Furthermore, it can be argued that using the AYLLIT assessment scale is likely to be more comparable to the work teachers do when assessing their pupils' texts.

3.2.3 Questionnaire

The second part of the triangulation approach was the use of a questionnaire, which is a structured method for gathering information. This is generally associated with qualitative data, as the questions are clear and the alternatives for answers are mostly given. Furthermore, the answers can be transformed into numbers and used as statistics (Postholm and Jacobsen 2011:86).

The pupils in both the intervention and control group were given a pre and post questionnaire, to be used when analysing the pupils' attitudes to writing in English. The aim was to use these data as statistics for the two groups as wholes, in order to compare them and their views, as well as to compare the individual group's answers from pre to post.

The questionnaire was divided into three categories: attitudes towards writing in English, attitudes towards writing in Norwegian, and the pupils' mother tongue. It consisted of 13 questions in total, where 11 were closed and two were open. The choice of using mostly closed questions was due to the possibility for achieving clear, quantitative results for the group as a whole, and consequently be able to make a conclusion based on these (Postholm and Jacobsen 2011:42). The closed answers would make it easier to group the different opinions. Nevertheless, two questions were left open, to include a qualitative aspect. The reason for this will be explained below.

Question 1 asked the pupils to write down three words describing what they associated with writing in English. If this had been made a closed question, alternatives of words would

have to be provided, for example the words easy or difficult. It was therefore chosen to have it open as not to inflict an opinion upon the pupil. Answers therefore ranged from positive and negative, and from different word types, as nouns, verbs or adjectives. If many pupils wrote verbs, one reason could be that they associate writing in English with certain actions they often do when writing, such as spell or think. Nouns, on the other hand, could mean that they associated it with the genres they usually write in, or resources they use, as vocabulary or story. Finally, adjectives could describe the pupil's feeling towards writing in English, as fun or boring. Therefore, the results of this question are qualitative as it provides more in depth information about the pupils' views on the English subject.

Question 2 and 3 were concerned with the pupils' attitudes towards writing in a school context, both at school and as homework. These were used to see how the pupils viewed such writing, which further could be used for comparison after the project period to answer questions such as if weekly writing for homework make the pupils like writing more, or less, and in what context.

This was followed by questions 4 and 5, which asked if the pupils ever wrote outside of school besides homework, and then if they liked writing at home. These were included in order to map the pupil's use of English, which might show different positive or negative attitudes towards English. Furthermore, question 6 was added in order to find out for what purposes the pupils wrote in English at home, to see whether these purposes could support or explain their attitude towards written English. For example, if a pupil use English strictly for communicative purposes, perhaps because of an English-speaking family member, this do not answer whether they enjoy this writing or not. Using English for searching purposes does not equal positive attitudes either, though it does mean that the pupil, at least to some extent, appreciate how English can aid them online. Finally, if a pupil uses English for themselves, for writing poems or a diary, it could be assumed that the pupil enjoys the English language, and writing in English as well.

Questions 7 to 11 were similar to those above, though concerned with writing in Norwegian instead. These were included in order to compare pupils' attitudes towards English versus Norwegian. If, for example, a pupil does not like writing in English at all, it could be interesting to see whether he likes writing in Norwegian. Perhaps if a pupil answers that he does not like to write in English at all, and then the same in Norwegian, a possible conclusion could be that it is not necessarily because of the language in itself, but because of writing in general. On

the other hand, it could turn out that someone like writing in Norwegian very much, but not in English. Then it could be suggested that the language was the challenge.

Finally, questions 12 and 13 concerned the pupils' mother tongue. Here, the pupils were asked if their mother tongue is Norwegian, and if not, what their mother tongue is. If a pupil has English as a mother tongue, this could explain both how much the pupil liked writing in English, and their use of English at home.

3.2.4 Interview

The final part of the triangulation was an individual interview conducted with a group of pupils from the intervention group. An interview is a targeted conversation, aimed at receiving information needed for answering a research question (Postholm and Jacobsen 2011:62). The first reason for including interviews in the triangulation method was the limitation of the quantitative questionnaire. As presented in section 3.2.3, the questionnaire had mainly closed questions in order to be able to group the answers and make conclusions across the group. As an addition to these overall opinions of the groups, it considered to be of interest to hear some of the intervention pupils' opinions of the project itself. This part of the project was therefore qualitative, and only included a selection of pupils due to the restricted scope of the study. The results from the interviews can therefore not provide an overall view on how the intervention group experienced the project, but it can provide a direction as to what they may have thought.

Before conduction the interview, the pupils had first been separated into groups based on the level they had from their first personal letter in the beginning of the semester: Approaching A1, A1, A1/A2, A2 or A2/B1. This was done in order to talk to two representatives from each level. By doing this, it could be found out if perhaps the pupils from the lower levels had a greater increase in attitudes than those from the higher levels, or vice versa. Furthermore, the interview subjects were chosen by drawing lots. In total, 10 pupils were interviewed, two from each group, in individual interviews.

The interviews were arranged in the last week of the semester. The reason for only having interviews at the end of the project, and not before, was that they only sought to hear the pupils' opinions after the project had ended. As the pupils had not participated in another project before, there was no need for a comparison with previous opinions. Furthermore, the interviews occurred in the school library, face-to-face between the researcher and the pupil, and lasted approximately

7 minutes each. All of the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, in order for the pupils to be able to express themselves fully, without having to be limited by their sentence building, vocabulary, or other language limitations they might have incurred.

The interviews were semi-structured, meaning that the questions were set in advance, but that the conversation could shift and include topics the researcher had not planned (Postholm and Jacobsen 2011:75). The reason for this choice was for the researcher to keep an open mind, and allow the pupils to express their thoughts and opinions without being limited to the prepared questions. Furthermore, the pupils were asked questions about their attitudes within the areas of homework and feedback (see Appendix 4 – Interview questions), as well as some general questions on their attitudes of writing in English and the subject/language of English itself. Additionally, some questions concerned language acquisition, asking the pupils if/what they had learned and if they had had a development in their English writing. All of the topics from the interview were chosen on the grounds of the research questions, which include the areas mentioned.

During the interviews, the researcher took notes by hand, which have been transferred to a computer and made available in Appendix 5 – Interview notes. These notes were further analysed through a content analysis, in order to compare the pupils' statements and answers. A content analysis is a quantitative method defined by Berelson (1952:18 in Rourke and Anderson 2004:5) as “a research technique for the systematic, objective, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”. Meaning that the interviews, in this context, are divided into separate units that are further divided into categories. Statistics can then be made about these categories (Rourke and Anderson 2004:5). In this specific context, the categories are the given questions, and the units are the different answers provided by the pupils.

3.3 Validity and reliability

3.3.1 Validity

Validity is referred to as “the extent to which the instrument measures what it was intended to measure” (Bui 2009:149). This includes the three methods contained within the triangulation of this thesis, text analysis, questionnaire and interview. Even though these have all been explained and argued for earlier in this chapter, a summary of the validity of each will be provided.

Additionally, a paragraph concerning the validity of the project in itself will be discussed at the end of this section.

The first method concerned the text analysis of the control and intervention groups' letters, as explained in section 3.2.2. As the research aim was to investigate how the pupils' writing skills would be affected by the homework writing tasks, no explicit writing instruction was provided by the teacher throughout the research period. This was done in order to avoid invalid results. Had the pupils received such explicit instruction, an increase of their writing skills could be related primarily to this instruction rather than the homework tasks.

Furthermore, the pupils were given the task to write a personal letter about themselves to the researcher at the beginning and end of the research semester. When doing this, as explained in section 1.1, the pupils were also involved in suggesting topics that should be included in their text. Topics suggested by the pupils were, among others, their name, age, interests and family. However, by doing this, some pupils wrote bullet points on each topic instead of a coherent text. This consequently meant that they might have been allocated a lower level than they originally should have, as a coherent text is required for achieving level A2. It could therefore be suggested that in order to increase the validity of the results, the pupils could have written for example a story instead, as they are familiar with the genre from their reading, and therefore that such a genre would be easier to write coherently. Nevertheless, the genre of a letter was decided on as it included topics the pupils had learned about throughout their English education. In LK06 one of the aims within written communication state that pupils at the end of year four should be able to "read, understand and write English words and expressions related to one's needs and feelings, daily life, leisure time and own interests". As the pupils should be able to do this at the beginning of year five, it could be expected that they would be able to use these words, expressions and sentence patterns when writing a letter about themselves. Furthermore, as both the pre- and post-intervention texts were of the same genre, the choice of genre is not likely to have had considerable influence on the results.

Secondly, the pupils answered a questionnaire, as explained in section 3.2.3. In question one, the pupils were asked to write up to three words they associated with writing in English. This question was attempted to be as objective as possible, as not to lead the pupils in either a positive or a negative direction. The remaining questions were not written as objectively. For example, question two asked the pupils if they liked writing in English at school. It could be

suggested that such phrasing implies that the pupils should like to write in English at school, and therefore that it might lead the pupils to answer positively to the question. Although, it cannot be stated that the pupils beyond doubt would view these questions in this manner. Additionally, when doing the analysis of the questionnaire answers, it was clear that at least a given amount of pupils had answered negatively to the questions. These numbers will be presented in section 4.3.

Furthermore, the idea that pupils could view the questions in a positive leading manner was not thought of by the researcher before after the pre questionnaire had been distributed, answered and analysed. At this point, it would not be possible to change the phrasing of the questions, and have them answer it again. The reason being first that the pupils in the intervention group were now too far into the project, and the answers to a new questionnaire would therefore possibly be affected by this. Secondly, if the questions in the post questionnaire were rephrased instead, this would make a direct comparison between the pre and post questionnaires difficult.

Therefore, it was decided that the questions would remain as they were. This meant that all of the pupils answered the same questions in both the pre and the post questionnaire. One could therefore argue that even if some pupils would view the questions as positively loaded, an increase of positive or negative answers from pre to post would be due to the pupils' experiences during the semester. The comparison between the two questionnaires are therefore considered valid.

To further strengthen the validity of the questionnaire results, the teachers in both groups stressed, before each of the two questionnaires, how important it was that the pupils answered all of the questions as honestly as possible. It was explained that such honest answers would be far more helpful to the researcher's thesis, and that false results could weaken the research. From this, an assumption can be made that the pupils did answer honestly. This strengthens the validity of the results as well.

The final method used within the triangulation was the interviews presented in section 3.2.4. Here, all of the questions were phrased as objectively as possible; to assure the pupils would not be lead in any direction. In the interviews as well as the questionnaires, the pupils were asked in advance to be as honest as possible, and as will be showed in section 4.3.2, it can be assumed that they were. Additionally, the interview subjects were divided between the different AYLLIT ability levels, in order to receive as broad a view as possible from the amount of pupils interviewed. In can therefore be argued that the interviews can provide an indication of how the

pupils in the intervention group experienced the research project. This argument can be further connected to the results from the project as a whole.

The intervention group is, as presented in section 3.2.1, a group of approximately 40 pupils. The results from this research project alone will therefore not be able to conclude how pupils, in general, will be effected by weekly writing. Nonetheless, it can give an indication of how teachers should, or should not; teach writing to this age group. Additionally, it can provide a view of how these exact pupils are effected by weekly homework writing. The results will be valid, as the pupils have not had any direct writing instruction, meaning that any improvement in their writing will have come from the writing they have done for homework. However, the improvement can also be an effect of the extensive reading they have done, or the teaching they have been part of. Nevertheless, it would have been unethical, and practically impossible, to stop teaching the pupils whilst the intervention study of the homework tasks went on. As in any research within a school context, the teaching is a part of the pupils' whole experience. However, it could be suggested that the affect within this study mainly will come from the writing they have done themselves, due to the mentioned lack of writing instruction. Furthermore, the indirect writing instruction argued for, including the reading done during the research period, has been included as a part of this intervention study.

When it comes to the attitudes, on the other hand, there is always a risk of the pupils answering what they think their teacher wants to 'hear'. This risk has been attempted lessened by the pupils' answering anonymously to the questionnaire, as well as their teacher clearly underlining the desire for honest answers in both the questionnaire and the interview.

3.3.2 Reliability

Reliability is defined by Bui (2009:149) as "the extent to which an instrument consistently measures what it was intended to measure". Whilst validity is about whether the method measures the intended aspects, reliability concerns whether the method results in the same results every time it is used.

Within the questionnaires, the pre and post research questions were not altered, in order to measure the same aspects and therefore allow for comparisons. Additionally, in question one were the pupils were asked to write down three words they associated with writing in English,

categories and distinctions between them were established before the analysis started. For example, the word easy was categorized as a positive adjective, whilst difficult was categorized as a negative adjective. By doing this, no words would be categorized differently. Furthermore, new words that could be categorized in different ways were written down by the researcher for further reference, in order to avoid categorizing them differently the next time. An example of a word that was written by a pupil is “love”. This could either be categorized as a verb (I *love* it), or as a noun (I write about *love*).

Nevertheless, the method the researcher experienced needed most reflection concerning reliability was the text analysis. All of the texts were analysed according to the AYLLIT assessment scale, meaning that the pupils would be assessed on the same criteria, which principally meant that the analysis would be reliable. Nevertheless, a few aspects needed to be considered as well.

The results of the text analysis would be the basis for the conclusion of the research question. Here, the researcher would analyse the pupils’ pre and post research texts in order to see whether there were any differences in the separate groups’ writing skills. Additionally, the researcher would compare the groups to each other, to see whether one group had developed more than the other had. Therefore, it was important for the researcher to make sure that the results would not be affected by the researcher’s own hope for positive results.

First, the researcher analysed ten different texts from both groups, which was then analysed by two other teachers. This was done in order to make sure that the researcher managed to stay objective whilst analysing the texts, whether it was a text from an intervention pupil or a control pupil.

Secondly, the researcher decided to analyse the texts from each group independently of each other. This was done by analysing one group first, and then waiting two weeks before analysing the second group. The idea behind this was that by waiting such an amount of time, the researcher would not remember all the levels of the previous group, and would therefore not compare the groups while analysing the texts.

Finally, when analysing the post research texts, the researcher did not look at the previous level achieved by the pupil. The reason for this choice was to prevent comparisons between the two texts, as the researcher could have been tempted to raise the level for one in the intervention

group or lower a level for one in the control group. By not being allowed to look at the previous results beforehand, this could be avoided, and the results would consequently be more reliable.

The aspects concerning the validity and reliability of the research have now been described. Below, an explanation of how the research questions will be answered will be presented.

3.3.3 How will the research questions be answered?

As mentioned earlier, the main research question of this thesis is if weekly writing, for homework, affects pupils' attitudes and writing skills in English. This main question will be answered by answering each of the secondary research questions. The first of these concerns the pupils writing, if weekly writing, for homework, will affect pupils' writing skills in English. This question will be answered by doing the text analysis explained above, using the AYLLIT assessment scale. Statistics will then be made, showing how many pupils have achieved each level on their pre research text and their post research text. Furthermore, these results will be compared in order to see how many pupils have increased or decreased their level. Finally, the results will be compared between the two groups as well. Additionally, the analysis will attempt to find the development within each category in the AYLLITT assessment scale, and further link this development to the different levels.

If the pupils in the intervention group turn out to have a positive development, and perhaps a greater development than the control group, it can be concluded that such writing affects the pupils in a positive manner. If the results do not change, that there has been no improvement, the answer will be that no effect was achieved. If the pupils' results on the other hand have worsened, it can be concluded that such writing has a negative effect on the pupils' writing. The results from the pupils' texts will be presented primarily through diagrams, comparing the pupil's individual texts, the groups' general change in competence levels, as well as a comparison between the intervention group and control group.

The two other secondary research question questions concern the pupils' attitudes towards writing in English; Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils use of written English at home? Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes towards writing in English? These questions will be answered by the results from the questionnaires and interviews. The pre questionnaire will be used as a benchmark of the pupils' attitudes at the start of the semester. The

answers will then be grouped into questions, in order to see how many pupils answered what. The answers from the post questionnaire will then be used for comparison to see whether their attitudes have changed, and if so whether they have improved or worsened. It is also clear that some aspects can have improved while others have worsened. Perhaps the pupils like writing for homework more than they did before, but that they do not necessarily write more at home. Additionally, these results will be compared to the pupils' answers on writing in Norwegian, as well as their mother tongue. Finally, the results from the questionnaires will be presented mainly in diagrams, comparing the groups' results from post to post, but also comparing the control and intervention groups.

Furthermore, the interviews will be analysed according to the content analysis explained above. This will then be used as statistics in order to see how many pupils answered what in the interview, and further attempt to group them into different opinions. Additionally, some quotations or rephrased utterances will be added to show what the individual pupils answered, or to support the results from the content analysis.

3.4 Ethical issues

3.4.1 Permissions

When researching pupils, it is important to obtain permission from the pupils' parents as well as the pupils themselves. As stated by the Norwegian National Committees for Research Ethics (NE) (2014:1), "consent is the main rule in research on individuals or on information and material that can be linked to individuals". This should be done in order to make the parents feel respected as guardians of their child, and for the child to feel respected as an individual. Consequently, it would not be ethically justifiable to include samples from a pupil's text or utterance in an interview, if the pupil or his parents had not been asked in advance. Furthermore, the Norwegian Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH) notes that "parental consent is usually required when children under the age of 15 will be taking part in research" (2006:16).

Before starting the research project, permission was obtained from the principals of both research schools. Furthermore, a letter was sent out to all the parents involved, explaining the project and asking for permission to use their child's texts in the thesis. Finally, the pupils were

explained that research had started on their writing. However, the research question, or aim of the research, was not given. The reason for this was in order to prevent the pupils from answering a certain way when answering the questionnaires. Nevertheless, the pupils were informed that they, as well as their parents, could choose not to have their text used in the research data. This could be done both when the research started, or during the research period.

Furthermore, at the beginning and end of the semester, all the pupils could choose not to answer the given questionnaires. The letters to the teacher, on the other hand, was voluntary for the pupils in the control group, but not the intervention group. The reason for this was that the pupils' texts were able to give their teacher an overall look of the pupils' competence. Nevertheless, they did have the opportunity to ask for the text not being used in the thesis. This also applied to the homework texts. As these texts were homework, there was no choice whether to complete them or not.

3.4.2 Anonymization

One of the most important ethical considerations in this thesis concerns the anonymity of the research subjects. There should not be a possibility for any of the pupils to be recognized throughout the paper, as "research material must usually be anonymised and strict requirements must apply for how lists of names or other information that would make it possible to identify individuals are stored and destroyed" (NESH 2006:18).

Therefore, each pupil received a codename, consisting of a letter and a number. The control group had the letter Y, and the intervention group had the letter . Only the researcher herself had access to the pupils' names linked to codenames. By using such codenames, it was still possible to compare the pupils' texts from pre to post, without revealing the identity of the pupils to the readers of the thesis. The lists of names, as well as the texts written by the pupils were all stored manually, as stated in NESH (2006:19), "personally identifiable information should be stored separately and not electronically". Furthermore, the lists of names were destroyed at the end of the research period, when all of the data has been collected and analysed. The pupils' texts on the other hand were given back to the pupils, to be stored in their individual portfolios at school. In regards to the interviews, the notes only included the pupils' given code names.

3.4.3 Teacher as researcher

As explained in section 3.1, the researcher of this thesis is also the teacher of the intervention group. Consequently, some ethical considerations had to be made. For example, the teacher/researcher had to attempt an objective view when analysing the pupils' texts. This was further explained in section 3.3.2. Furthermore, the teacher/researcher had to be cautious not to teach what is measured in the AYLLIT form, in order as not to improve the pupils writing or achieve a certain conclusion. It was therefore important that the research plan be followed carefully. Finally, as suggested by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968), the teacher's high expectations of the pupils' performance can in return lead to a higher performance by the pupils. This should therefore be kept in mind when analysing the final results of the research.

3.4.4 Community learning

The research results from this thesis should be made available after completion. This is supported by the NE who state that "openness regarding research findings is essential for ensuring verifiability, for returning some benefit to the research participants and society in general, and for ensuring a dialogue with the public" (2014:1). Therefore, after the thesis is finished, the headmasters at both participating schools, as well as the teacher of the control group, will be given a copy of the thesis. This teacher will also receive an emailed copy of the thesis before submission, in order to have the opportunity to "correct any misunderstandings" (NESH 2006:35). Furthermore, the researcher will give a presentation for the colleagues at the intervention school about the study and results. A short presentation of the results will also be given to the parents of the intervention group at a PTA meeting during the spring. The teacher of the control group was also given a small gift as a thank you at the end of the research period, for her work on collecting the control group texts and questionnaires.

3.5 Summary

In this chapter, a project description has been provided, describing how the project was conducted, including writing tasks, teaching focuses, feedback on homework texts and writing instruction – or lack thereof. Furthermore, a definition of and arguments for the overall approach

was presented, including quantitative and qualitative measures, and the choice of combining them using mixed methods. Then an explanation of how the data was collected was provided, including the text measures, questionnaire and interview, as well as a presentation of the participants. Topics concerning the validity and reliability of the research was further explored, as was the question – How will the research questions be answered? This was answered by explaining that the text measures, questionnaires and interviews would be answered by the use of discussion around respectively, diagrams, tables and recollection. The results would be reliable due to the lack of writing instruction as well as the underlined desire for honest answers. Finally, four ethical issues were discussed, hereunder permissions from participants and their parents, anonymization of the participants, the teacher as researcher, as well as community learning after completion of the thesis.

4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results from the data collection will be presented. The main research question of this thesis is: Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes and writing skills in English? The results have been grouped into two sections, attitudes and writing skills. As discussed in the methods section, the data on the pupils' attitudes included questionnaires and interviews, whilst data on writing skills was done using text analysis. Findings within the section on attitudes will be presented first, followed by the writing skills section.

Before presenting the results from the questionnaire and writing skills, an overview of the numbers within the intervention and control group will be given, as well as an overview of differences and similarities between the groups concerning teaching and homework.

4.1.1 Number of pupils in both groups

First, the intervention group had 39 pupils who participated in both pre and post research, whilst the control group had 36 pupils. The results from the pupils who only participated in either pre or post have been removed from the statistics in the writing skills section, in order to be able to compare the data as a whole without exceptions. However, as the researcher did not know who had answered what in the questionnaires, to remove these pupils was not possible. In the intervention group, 41 pupils answered the pre questionnaire and 37 pupils the post questionnaire. In the control group on the other hand, 38 pupils answered the pre questionnaire and 41 in the post questionnaire.

4.1.2 Teaching and homework

Even though the two groups follow the same curriculum, and subsequently also the same competence aims, the teaching instructions and tasks given were quite different between them. The following description is based on the control group's half-year plan, and oral information received from their teacher. Please return to section 3.1 for a description of the intervention group's teaching and homework tasks.

As shown in Appendix 1 – Control group’s half year plan, autumn 2015, the pupils worked through their Stairs 5 textbook and workbook, starting with chapter 1 in August and then following the books chronologically throughout the semester. They were given reading assignments and tasks from these books for homework, as well as individual or pair work at school. In addition to this, the pupils occasionally had a graded reader book from Wings as homework. These were given to the pupils from the teacher according to their level of competence in reading.

The control group’s pupils were divided into steps, which the textbook Stairs is based on. Step 1 is for the weakest pupils and step 3 is for the strongest, whilst step 2 is for the medium able language learner. The reading and tasks were all given according to their step. The pupils also practiced vocabulary from word lists every week. These words were taken from the textbook, and normally from a step 1 text. All of the pupils received the same word list. These were normally part of their homework as well.

In September, October and December, the pupils completed a chapter test, as well as a vocabulary test of the words practiced that period. The chapter tests were made by Stairs, they were divided between their steps, and the tasks were different accordingly. It consists of three parts. One listening part, one reading and one writing part. Appendix 6 – Example of chapter test in Stairs, written tasks, shows some examples of the writing tasks at each step.

The control group had different writing tasks throughout the semester. They used written English when doing tasks in their Stairs workbook, when they practiced their vocabulary from the word lists and when they answered the writing tasks in the chapter tests. In addition, the pupils also wrote a five-line poem in December.

4.2 Findings from the text analysis

The last secondary research question asks if weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ writing skills in English. This was attempted answered through analysing both the focus and control groups’ texts from the beginning and end of the post semester. The method for doing so was by using the AYLLIT assessment scale, as presented in the methods chapter, as well as a word count of each text to achieve an average word count for each group. Additionally, a closer look at the development within the different levels as well as AYLLITT assessment categories will be presented. The results will be presented in the following order; the analysis first, followed by the

average word count and the development of levels and categories. Within the analysis, the distribution of levels within each group from pre to post will be presented, followed by a comparison of how much the levels of these groups have increased or decreased during the period. This will be succeeded by a couple of figures showing how the average word count for each group has developed from pre to post. Finally, some tables presenting the development of levels and categories within the intervention group will be presented.

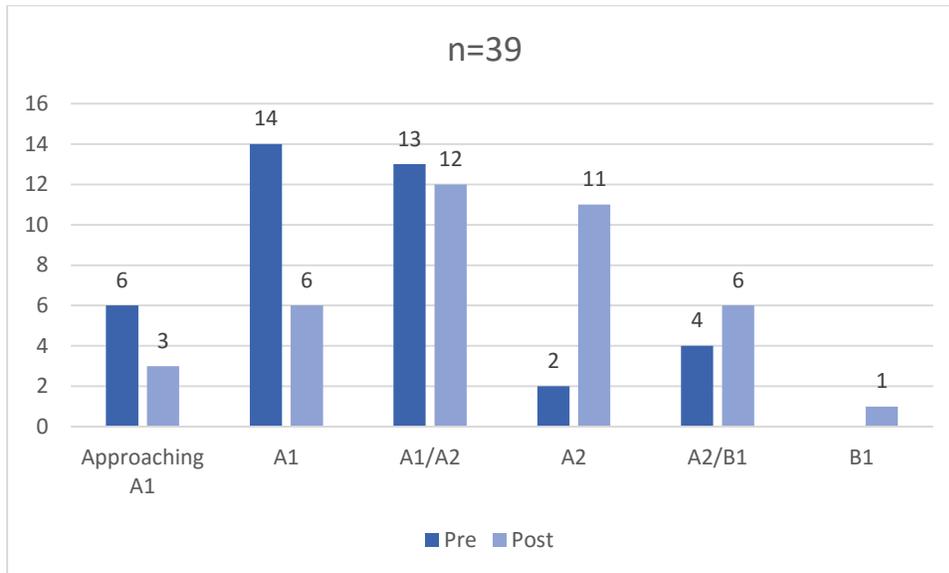


Figure 2 Intervention group - distribution of levels

Starting therefore with the distribution of levels in the intervention group, *Figure 2* shows that in the analysis of the pre texts the majority of the pupils in the intervention group achieved level A1 or A1/A2. Six of the pupils were in the lowest level, Approaching A1, whilst six pupils were in the two higher levels, A2 or A2/B1.

In the post text analysis however, the majority of the pupils are in level A1/A2 or A2. Additionally, one pupil have achieved level B1, which none of the pupils were in before. The lowest level Approaching A1 has been halved, from six to three pupils. Additionally, level A1 has decreased by a total of ten pupils. The greatest difference in the intervention groups' levels is in level A2, which has gone from two to eleven pupils in total.

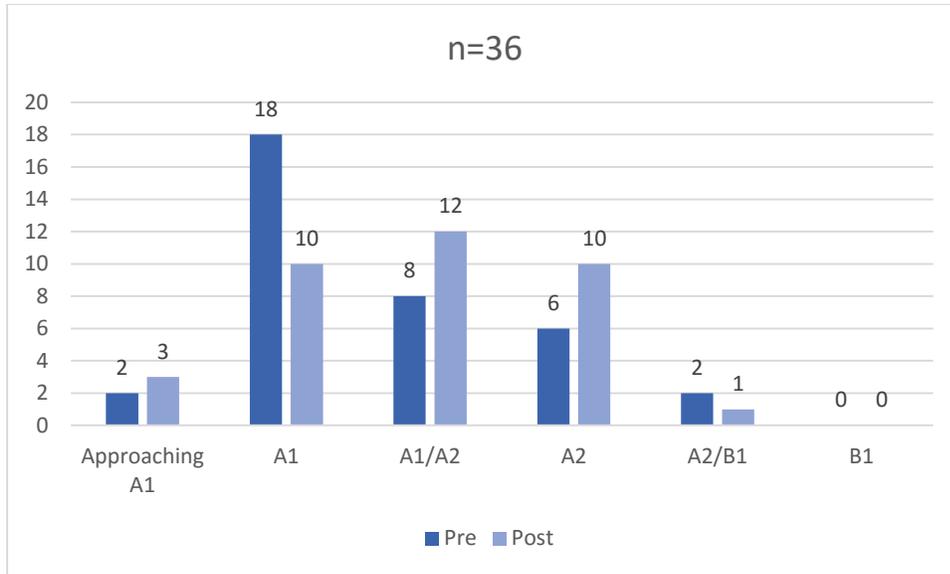


Figure 3 Control group - distribution of levels

When it comes to the distribution of levels in the control group, presented in Figure 3, approximately half of the pupils achieved level A1 in the post text analysis. Three pupils were in the lowest level, Approaching A1, whilst the remaining pupils were in the three higher levels, A1/A2, A2 or A2/B1.

In the post analysis, on the other hand, level A1 has been cut in half. Additionally, Figure 3 shows an increase of four pupils in both level A1/A2 and A2. Level Approaching A1 remains equal to the beginning of the semester, whilst level A2/B1 has not changed at all. No new levels have been added to this group.

In the following figures, Figure 4 and Figure 5 the increase/decrease of levels in each group are presented.

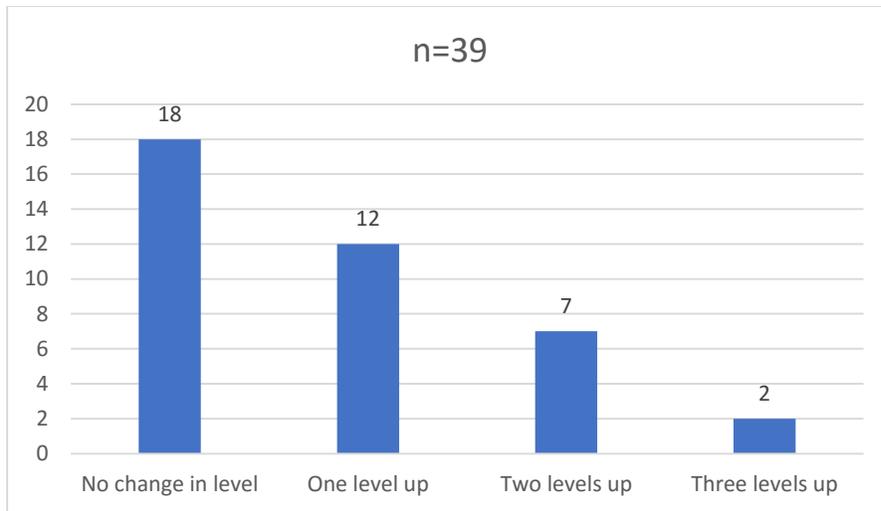


Figure 4 Intervention group - change in levels

As seen in Figure 4, 18 of the pupils in the intervention group remained in the same level from the pre to the post text analysis. However, 21 pupils, slightly more than half the group, have increased their level with one or more. Two pupils have even achieved an increase of three levels. The majority of the pupils who did increase their level increased it by one. No pupils in the intervention group decreased their level.

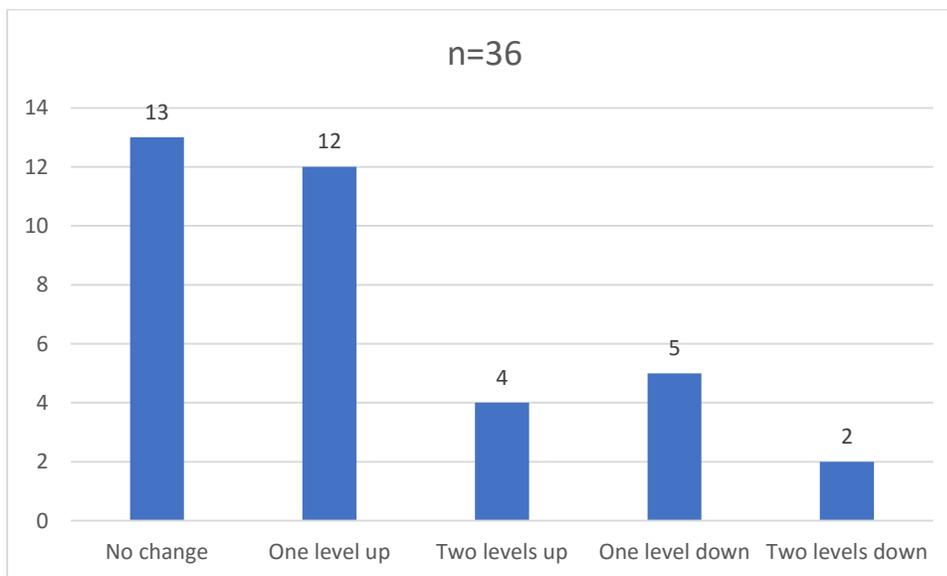


Figure 5 Control group - change in levels

In the control group, 13 of the pupils remained at the same level from pre to post, whilst the majority of 16 pupils achieved one or two levels more. However, as shown in Figure 5, seven pupils also decreased their level by one or two.

Finally, within text measures, the groups' total average word count will be compared between the pre and post text analysis.

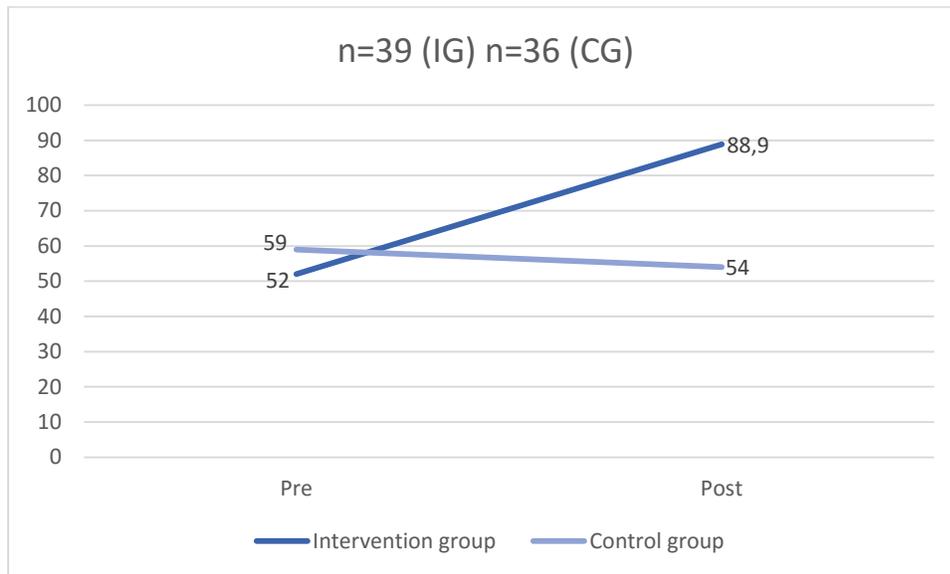


Figure 6 Average word count

At the beginning of the post semester, the control group had a seven-word higher average word count than the intervention group, whilst at the end of the semester the average word count of the intervention was 35-word higher than the control group. This shows a great increase of words in the texts from the intervention group, compared to a 4-word decrease in the control group.

4.2.1 Levels and categories

In this section, the distribution of pupils within each level will be compared to how many of these pupils achieved a higher level at the end of the project period. Additionally, a presentation of which categories within the AYLLIT assessment scale pupils mostly developed within will be presented. This has only been done with the data from the intervention group, in order to see the exact impact the project had on the levels and categories within this group.

First, a look will be taken on the different levels, and how many of the pupils who developed within each level.

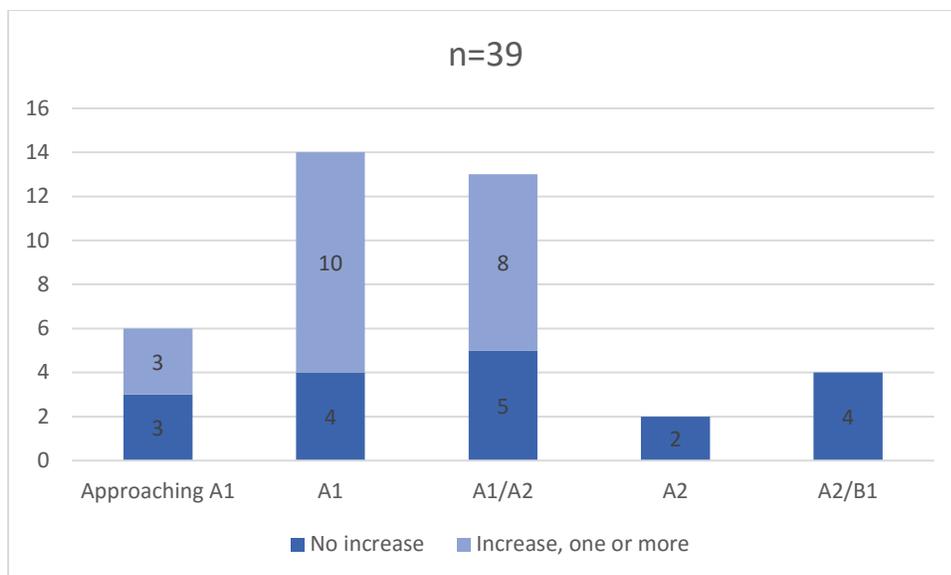


Figure 7 Intervention group - number of pupils who increased in each level

In Figure 7, the distribution of pupils within each level at the post text analysis is presented as a whole column. The top area within the column are the amount of pupils who increased their level, whilst the lower area shows the amount of pupils who stayed in the same level from the pre to the post text analysis.

As shown in Figure 2 above, the majority of the pupils are in level A1 and A1/A2. However, the object of this figure is to see how many pupils within each category increased their level at the end of the semester. Here it is apparent that half or more of the pupils within the three lowest levels improved on their level, whilst those in the two higher levels did not. The two levels in which the majority of the intervention group were in, above half of them increased their level. As a conclusion, it is possible to state that the pupils in the middle-levels had the greatest effect of the project. This will be further discussed in the discussion chapter.

As mentioned, the analysis of the pupils' texts was done by using the AYLLIT assessment scale. This scale has four categories, and as seen in Appendix 3 – AYLLIT assessment scale, the pupils can achieve a higher level in one category without achieving it in all of them. In Table 2 below, an overview of the categories are presented.

Table 2 Categories - n=39

Category	Amount increased	Pupils-total
<i>Overall structure and range of information</i>	23	39
<i>Sentence structure and grammatical accuracy</i>	21	39

<i>Vocabulary and choice of phrase</i>	21	39
<i>Misformed words and punctuation</i>	19	39

In category 1, overall structure and range of information, 23 out of 39 pupils improved on this area, making it the category where most of the pupils have developed. Furthermore, 21 of the pupils improved in category 2, sentence structure and grammatical accuracy, as well as in category 3, vocabulary and choice of phrase. Finally, in category 4, misformed words and punctuation, 19 of the pupils improved. Even though the first category is the one most of the pupils have developed in, the table shows that the difference between the categories are not great. Table 3 is therefore included to see whether some of the levels have improved more in one category than the others.

Table 3 Category level improvement - n=39

Category	Approaching A1 (6)	A1 (14)	A1/A2 (13)	A2 (2)	A2/B1 (4)
<i>Overall structure and range of information</i>	3	10	8	0	2
<i>Sentence structure and grammatical accuracy</i>	3	9	8	0	1
<i>Vocabulary and choice of phrase</i>	3	10	7	0	1
<i>Misformed words and punctuation</i>	3	9	8	0	-1

Above, Table 3 shows the distribution of pupils in regards to the category development. The numbers in the parentheses are the total amount of pupils in each level, as they were at the beginning of the post semester. When compared to Figure 7, we can see that the category development corresponds with the amount of pupils who increased their level. However, even though Figure 7 shows that none of the pupils in level A2/B1 increased theirs, we can see in Table 3 that some of them still developed in different categories. For example, two of the pupils improved in their overall structure and range of information. This can imply that some of them did benefit from the project, and improved on their writing, even though they did not achieve a new level. This will be further discussed in chapter 0.

4.3 Attitudes

The secondary research questions regarding attitudes are:

1. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes towards writing in English?
2. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' use of written English?

In order to answer these questions, questionnaires were given to the young language learners before and after the research period. In addition, interviews have also been completed with ten pupils.

In this section, the results from the questionnaires will be presented first. The results include the intervention and control groups' answers at the beginning of the autumn semester, together with their answers at the end of that same semester. During the presentation of these results, comparisons will be made between the pre and post questionnaires, and between the two groups. Finally, the results from the interviews with ten of the pupils from the intervention group will be presented.

4.3.1 Questionnaires

To summarize, the questionnaires consisted of 13 questions in total, whereas six of them concerned writing in English, five of them concerned writing in Norwegian, whilst two asked about their mother tongue (see Appendix 7 – Questionnaire). In this presentation of results, the questions concerning writing in English will have the overall focus. However, the questions about writing in Norwegian will be used as a basis of comparison. Additionally, the pupils' mother tongue will be used to describe the pupil groups, as well as a comparison between the two.

In the pre-questionnaire 43 pupils from the intervention group and 38 from the control group participated. In the post-questionnaire on the other hand, 37 from the intervention group participated, compared to 41 in the control group. However, not all of the pupils have answered all of the questions in the questionnaire. In each figure or table it will therefore be shown how many pupils answered by the use of $n = x$.

4.3.1.1 *Mother tongue*

In question 12 (see Appendix 7 – Questionnaire), the pupils were asked if Norwegian was their mother tongue.

Table 4 Intervention group – question 12 – Is Norwegian your mother tongue?

Is Norwegian your mother tongue?	Pre	Post
Yes	25	20
No	16	17
N=	41	37

Table 5 Control group – question 12 – Is Norwegian your mother tongue?

Is Norwegian your mother tongue?	Pre	Post
Yes	27	12
No	11	29
N=	38	41

Above in Table 4 and, 41 pupils in the intervention group answered the pre questionnaire, against 37 pupils in the post questionnaire. In Table 5 of the control group, on the other hand, 38 pupils answered the pre questionnaire against 41 pupils in the post questionnaire. As no pupils in neither school moved or changed schools during the semester, the results within this question will be based on the area where most pupils answered. Accordingly, the pre answers in the intervention group and the post answers in the control group.

When comparing these results, it is possible to see that the control group had 13 pupils more than the intervention group who stated they had another mother tongue than Norwegian. Nonetheless, as a follow up in question 13, the pupils were asked to write down if their mother tongue was English or something else.

Table 6 Intervention group – question 13 – If no, what is your mother tongue?

If no, what is your mother tongue?	Pre	Post
English		1
Other	16	16
N=	17	17

Table 7 Control group – question 13 – If no, what is your mother tongue?

If no, what is your mother tongue?	Pre	Post
English	1	3
Other	10	9
N=	11	12

As shown in Table 6 and Table 7, only 11 out of 29 pupils from the control group answered the question, compared to 17 out of 17 in the intervention group. From those who answered the question, three pupils from the control group wrote down English as their mother tongue, compared to one in the intervention group. It could be suggested that the reasons for lack of answers from the control group is that they do not necessarily know what a mother tongue is. As an example, two of the pupils who answered that Norwegian was not their mother tongue, answered the word ‘nothing’ in question 13. Some of the languages, besides English, that were answered from both groups were Rumanian, Polish, Lithuanian and French. Furthermore, a short presentation on the group’s answers on writing in Norwegian will be presented.

4.3.1.2 Attitudes towards written Norwegian

First, in question seven, the pupils were asked whether they liked writing in Norwegian at school.

Table 8 Intervention group - question 7 - Do you like writing in Norwegian at school?

Do you like writing in Norwegian in school?	Pre	Post
1 - Like it a lot	20	23
2 - Like it a little	9	7
3 - Neutral	7	4
4 - Like it less	4	1
5 - Do not like it		2
N=	40	37

Table 9 Control group - question 7 - Do you like writing in Norwegian at school?

7. Do you like writing in Norwegian in school?	Pre	Post
1 - Like it a lot	23	26
2 - Like it a little	8	10
3 - Neutral	6	5
4 - Like it less		
5 - Do not like it		
N=	37	41

As seen in Table 8 and Table 9, both groups were quite positive towards writing in Norwegian at school. In the control group, none of the pupils gave a negative answer; compared to the intervention group were 3-4 pupils answered negatively. Nevertheless, it can be stated that the groups’ have a similar attitude towards such writing.

Furthermore, the pupils were asked whether they liked writing in Norwegian as homework.

Table 10 Intervention group – question 8 – Do you like writing in Norwegian for homework?

Do you like writing in Norwegian for homework?	Pre	Post
1 - Like it a lot	23	19
2 - Like it a little	6	9
3 - Neutral	9	7
4 - Like it less	1	1
5 - Do not like it	2	1
N=	41	37

Table 11 Control group – question 8 – Do you like writing in Norwegian for homework?

Do you like writing in Norwegian for homework?	Pre	Post
1 - Like it a lot	12	17
2 - Like it a little	11	11
3 - Neutral	11	11
4 - Like it less	2	1
5 - Do not like it		1
N=	36	41

In Table 10 and Table 11 as well, the pupils in both groups have answered positively to writing in Norwegian for homework. Only 2-3 pupils answered negatively in both groups. Even though the total of positive answers are similar, the intervention group have a higher amount of pupils whom answered that they like to write in Norwegian for homework a lot.

Furthermore, the pupils were asked whether they ever wrote in Norwegian at home, besides their homework, and how much they liked this.

Table 12 Intervention group - question 9 - Do you write in Norwegian at home besides homework?

Do you write in Norwegian at home besides homework?	Pre	Post
1 - Often	16	17
2 - A little often	7	5
3 - Sometimes	14	7
4 - Rarely	1	5
5 - Never	1	3
N=	39	37

Table 13 Intervention group - question 10 - Do you like writing in Norwegian at home?

Do you like writing in Norwegian at home?	Pre	Post
1 - Like it a lot	18	22
2 - Like it a little	9	5
3 - Neutral	9	8
4 - Like it less	1	2
5 - Do not like it	2	
N=	39	37

Table 14 Control group - question 9 - Do you write in Norwegian at home besides homework?

9. Do you write Norwegian at home besides homework?	Pre	Post
1 - Often	19	23
2 - A little ofte	4	4
3 - Sometimes	15	14
4 - Rarely		
5 - Never		
N=	38	41

Table 15 Control group - question 10 - Do you like writing in Norwegian at home?

10. Do you like writing Norwegian at home?	Pre	Post
1 - Like it a lot	19	18
2 - Like it a little	8	11
3 - Neutral	11	12
4 - Like it less		
5 - Do not like it		
N=	38	41

By looking at Table 12, Table 13, Table 14 and Table 15, it is apparent that most of the pupils in both groups do write in Norwegian at home, and that they are generally positive towards this. Nevertheless, eight pupils from the intervention group answered in the post research questionnaire that they rarely or never write in Norwegian at home. It can be suggested that these pupils might be some of those who did not have Norwegian as their mother tongue, and therefore perhaps use this as their written language at home instead. Furthermore, none of the pupils in the control group answered negatively in neither question. Nevertheless, it can be suggested in these results as well, that the two groups are generally positive towards writing in English at home, and that the majority of them do this sometimes or more.

Finally, the pupils were asked for what purposes they use written Norwegian at home, besides homework. In this question, the pupils were allowed to tick of one or more of the answers, and it is therefore not possible to see from these results how many pupils answered the question.

Table 16 Intervention group – question 11 – Why do you write in Norwegian at home?

Why do you write in Norwegian at home?	Pre	Post
A. For myself. (For example diary, poem, songs...)	21	21
B. For communication. (For example letter, SMS, chat...)	24	23
C. For searching in the internet. (For example Google).	13	15

Table 17 Control group – question 11 – Why do you write in Norwegian at home?

Why do you write in Norwegian at home?	Pre	Post
A. For myself. (For example diary, poem, songs...)	18	19
B. For communication. (For example letter, SMS, chat...)	30	32
C. For searching in the internet. (For example Google).	22	26

Table 16 and Table 17 show that the pupils in both groups use written Norwegian in all of the contexts available from the questionnaire. However, a greater amount of pupils in the control group answered that they write in Norwegian for communication purpose. This also applies to using written Norwegian for searching on the internet. On the other hand, a close to equal amount of pupils from both groups answered that they write in Norwegian for themselves, for example in a diary.

As seen in the different tables in this section, the answers are quite similar between the groups. The majority of the pupils are generally positive towards writing in Norwegian, both at school, at home and as homework. However, the results from question 11 show that the pupils in the control group use written Norwegian more within the categories of communication and online searching than the intervention pupils do. Overall, though, there are no great differences between the groups, in either pre or post questionnaires.

4.3.1.3 Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes towards writing in English in English?

This secondary research question is approached by four questions in the questionnaire, questions 1, 2, 3 and 5 in Appendix 7 – Questionnaire. The results from these questions will be presented in this order, with the intervention group's answers from the pre and post questionnaires first, followed by the control group's answers.

In question one, the pupils were asked to write down three words they associate with writing in English. These have then been divided into four categories, negative and positive adjectives, nouns and verbs.

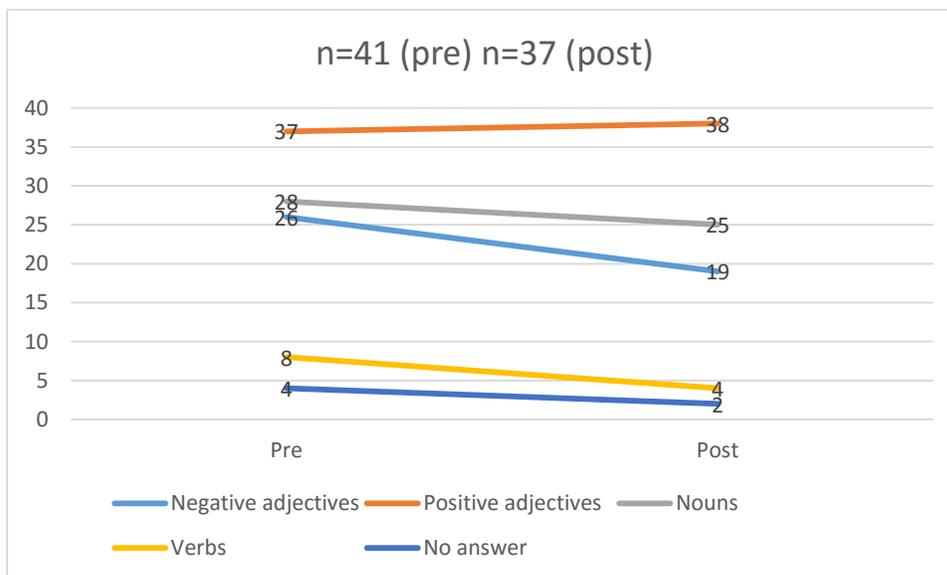


Figure 8 Intervention group - question 1 - What three words do you associate with writing in English?

As presented in Figure 8, there has been a decrease in amount of negative adjectives, as well as verbs and nouns. The number of positive adjectives on the other hand are quite similar from pre to post. The words written by more than one pupil within each category are presented below.

Table 18 Intervention group - words written in question 1

Negative adjectives	Pre	Post	Nouns	Pre	Post
Difficult	7	8	Family	3	1
A little difficult	9	5	School	2	1
Boring	5	4	Grammar	3	0
Positive adjectives	Pre	Post	Verb	Pre	Post
Easy	6	9	Write	1	1
Fun	17	16			

From Table 18, above, it can be stated that even though the pupils in the intervention group had a decrease of negative adjectives written in question one, there were no great changes in the words written by more than one pupil. For example, the word “difficult” was written by approximately the same amount of pupils, as was the word “boring”. Nevertheless, the amount of pupils writing “a little difficult” did decrease from nine to five. In the pre research questionnaire, three pupils also wrote the words “weird” and “tiring”, but neither of these were written in the post questionnaire.

This trend is the same in regards to the positive adjectives “easy” and “fun”, where the amount of pupils who wrote this is approximately the same between the pre and post questionnaires. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see that approximately 16 pupils wrote the words “fun” in both questionnaires, which is the word written by most pupils in the intervention group, and that this attitude did not change over the research course. Other positive adjectives written were “awesome”, “challenging” and “educational”.

When it comes to the nouns and verbs, hardly any pupil wrote the same word as another. However, the words “family” and “school” were written by, respectively, three and two pupils in the pre questionnaire but were written by only one in the post questionnaire. In addition, three pupils wrote the word “grammar” in the pre questionnaire, compared to none in the post questionnaire. It could be argued that the reason for this change was that the pupils did not learn, nor focus on, grammar during the research period. Other nouns that were written within this question were “homework”, “information” and “You Tube”.

Within the verbs, the word “write” was written in both the pre and post questionnaire, though only by one pupil in each. The rest of the verbs were written by one pupil, in either the pre or the post questionnaire. Examples of verbs written were “talking”, “understand” and “practice”.

Furthermore, the results from the control group’s answers in question one will be presented.

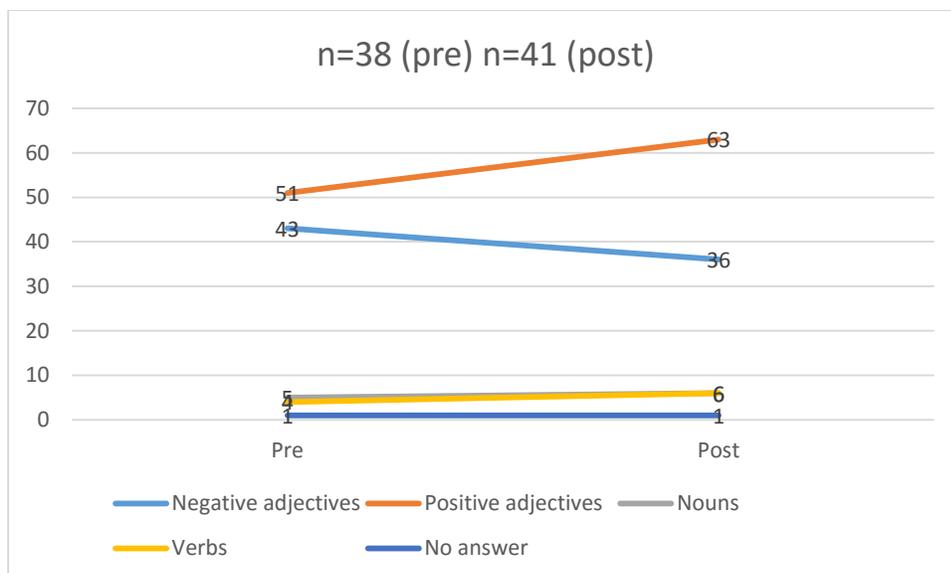


Figure 9 Control group - question 1 - What three words do you associate with writing in English?

Figure 9 shows the control group’s answers to question one in the questionnaire. Here, there has been a great increase in positive adjectives, as well as a great decrease in negative adjectives. The amount of nouns and verbs are on the other hand quite similar between the pre and post questionnaires. Examples of words written by more than one pupil within each category are presented below.

Table 19 Control group - words written in question 1

Negative adjectives	Pre	Post	Nouns	Pre	Post
Difficult	16	9			
A little difficult	10	10			
Boring	8	11			
Positive adjectives	Pre	Post	Verb	Pre	Post
Easy	7	6	Learn	2	0
Cool	0	16	Talk	0	2
Fun	14	11			

First, none of the pupils in the control group wrote the same noun, in either the pre or post questionnaire. Therefore, no words have been added under nouns in Table 19. Nevertheless, a few nouns were written by one pupil in the questionnaire, for example the words “errors” and “internet”. Furthermore, only the two verbs noted in Table 19 were written by more than one pupil, respectively “learn and “talk”. Other verbs written in the questionnaires were “chatting” (online), “translating” and “thinking”.

Within positive adjectives, there were a few changes between the two questionnaires as well. First, three less pupils wrote the word “fun” in the post questionnaire. Nevertheless, the word “cool” was not written at all in the pre questionnaire, but was written by 16 pupils in the post questionnaire. It can therefore clearly be stated that also the control group had a positive attitude towards writing in English.

When it comes to the adjectives, there are greater changes within the amount of pupils who wrote these words, compared to the intervention group. For example, the word “difficult” was written by seven less pupils in the post questionnaire than the pre. Additionally, three more pupils wrote the word “boring”.

Question 2 in the questionnaire asked the pupils how much they like to write in English at school.

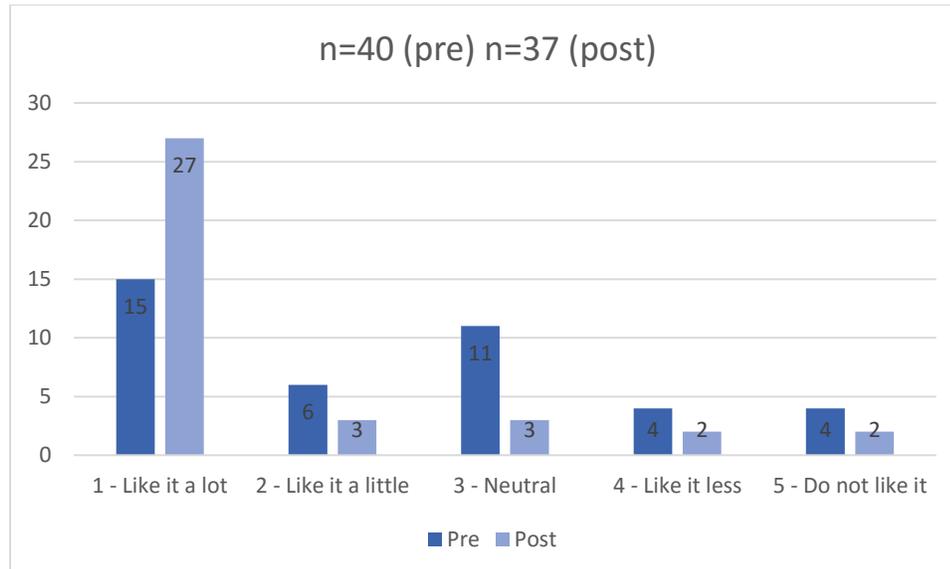


Figure 10 Intervention group - question 2 – Do you like writing in English at school?

Figure 10 shows a great increase in the most positive answer “Like it a lot”. In total, the two positive answers have increased from 21 to 30, even though the total amount of pupils who answered have decreased by three. Additionally, the negative answers have decreased from eight to four pupils. When comparing this to the pupils’ answers in question seven, it is apparent that the pupils’ attitudes have changed more in regards to writing in English in school than in Norwegian. Approximately the same amount of pupils answered negatively to writing in either language at school, whilst the development of positive attitudes towards writing in English has reached the same level as in Norwegian. In fact, 23 pupils answered that they like writing in

Norwegian at school in the post questionnaire, compared to 27 pupils who answered the same in regards to English.

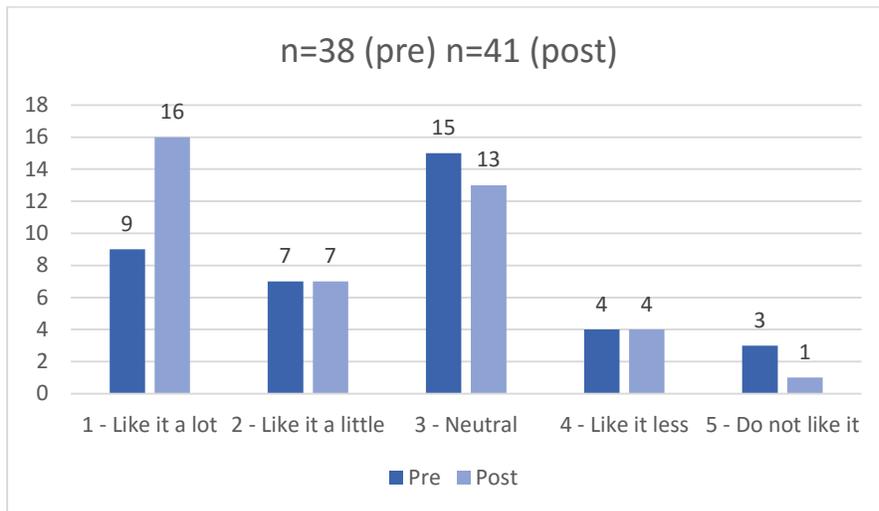


Figure 11 Control group - question 2 - Do you like writing in English at school?

The control group had an increase in pupils answering positively as well, as shown in Figure 11. Here, the increase is from 16 to 23 pupils, which is larger than the increase of pupils from pre to post. The negative answers on the other hand have decreased slightly, from seven to five. As with the intervention group, there has been a development in the control group's attitudes towards written English at school, compared to no changes in regards to Norwegian. Nevertheless, the pupils' attitudes towards writing in English at school are still less positive than towards Norwegian.

In question three, the pupils were asked to what extent they like writing in English for homework.

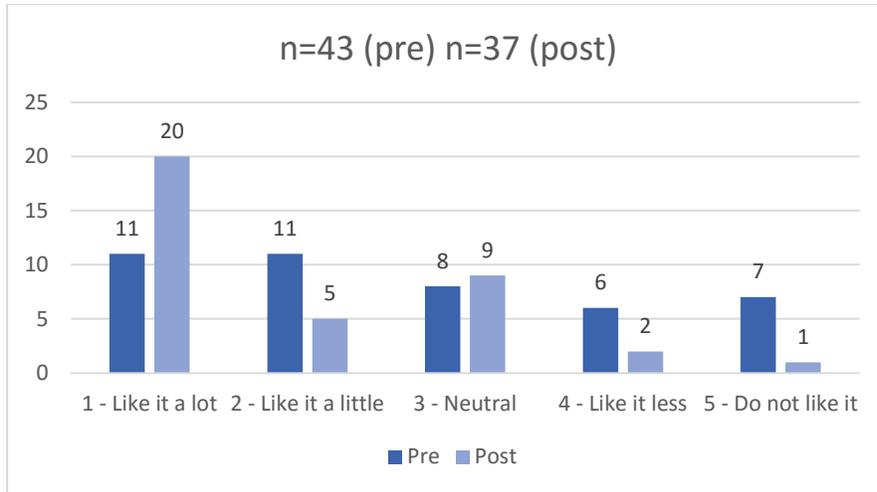


Figure 12 Intervention group - question 3 - Do you like writing in English for homework?

As seen in Figure 12, the greatest difference from the pre to the post questionnaire for the intervention group was in the negative answers. This has decreased from 13 to three pupils, a difference of 10 pupils in total. Additionally, the total of positive answers have increased slightly, from 22 to 25 pupils. Here as well, the numbers show a development of attitudes closer to the pupils' view on writing in Norwegian for homework. 20 pupils answered that they like to write in English for homework a lot, which the same amount of pupils answered in regards to Norwegian as well. In addition, three pupils answered negatively to both question 3 and 8.

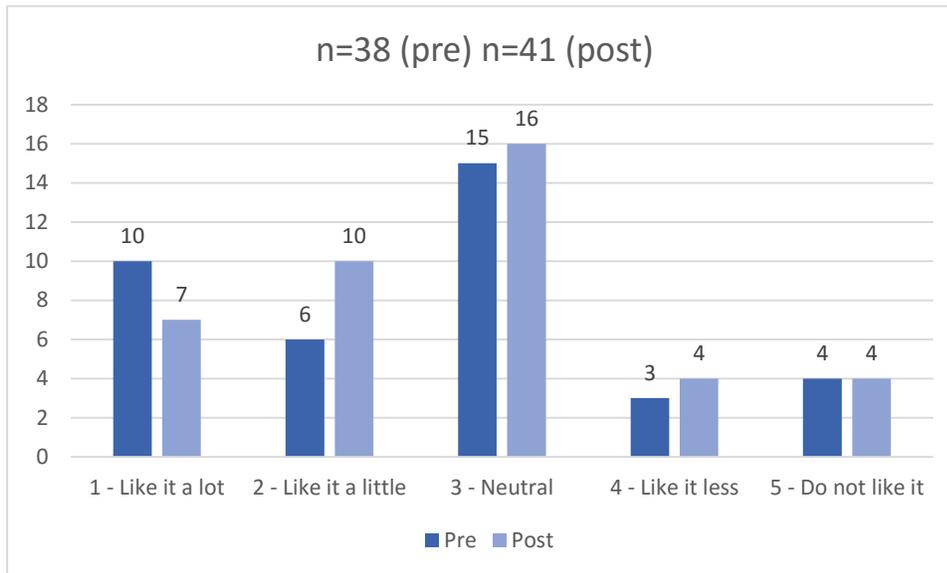


Figure 13 Control group - question 3 - Do you like writing in English for homework?

For the control group, the results between the pre and post questionnaires are quite similar. The positive answers have increased from 16 to 17, as have the negative answers, from seven to eight. Overall, the intervention group had a much greater difference in answers from pre to post than the control group had. Furthermore, when comparing to writing in Norwegian for homework, as shown in Table 11, the answers are quite similar. 17 pupils in both questions answered, in the pre questionnaire, that they like this a lot. Additionally, the majority of pupils in both questions answered neutral or positively.

Finally, in question 5, the pupils were asked how much they like writing in English at home, outside their homework. This could be writing text messages, stories or using written English to search on the internet.

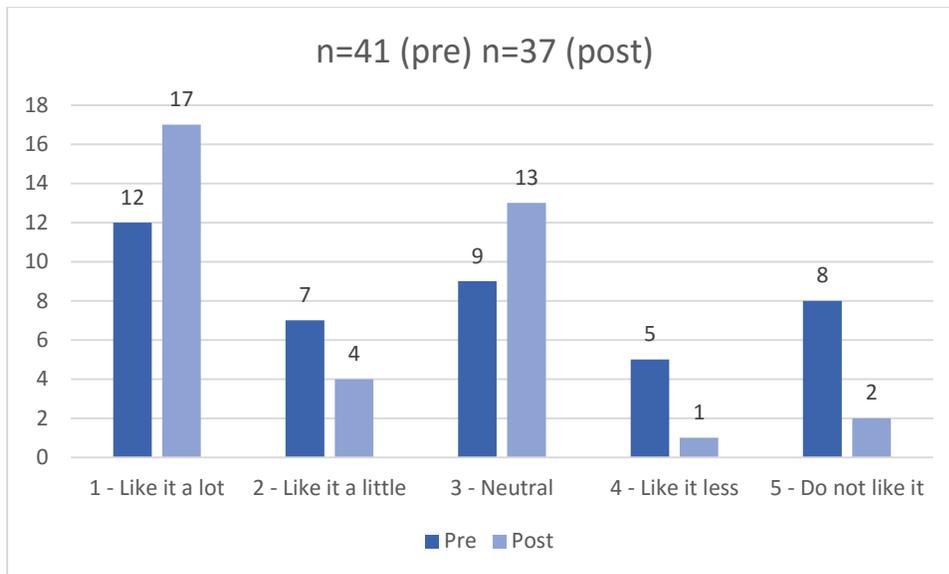


Figure 14 Intervention group - question 5 - Do you like writing in English at home?

The intervention group had approximately the same amount of pupils who answered positively to question five, from pre to post. As shown in Figure 14, the increase is mostly in the positive answer “like it a lot” which has increased with five pupils. The greatest difference from pre to post, however, is in the negative answers, which has decreased from 13 to three pupils. Ending up with the same amount of negative answers as in Figure 12. This resembles the pupils’ answers concerning writing in Norwegian at home, where only three (pre) and two (post) pupils answered negatively as well.

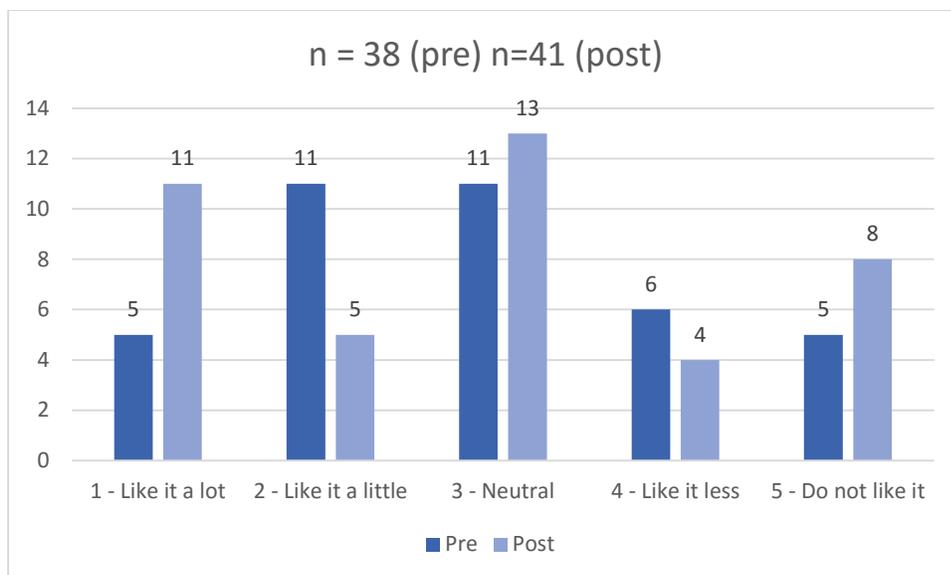


Figure 15 - Control group – question 5 – Do you like writing in English at home?

In Figure 15, as in Figure 13, it is shown that the control group’s answers from pre to post had no significant change in either direction when looking at the positive or negative answers as a whole. Although, in the positive answers, there has been an increase in the most positive answer “like it a lot” which is the same as the decrease in the answer “like it a little”. When comparing these results to the results linked to writing in Norwegian at home, it is apparent that the pupils in the control group are more negative towards writing in English than in Norwegian. Whilst none of the pupils answered negatively at all in question 10, showed in Table 15, twelve pupils answered negatively in the post questionnaire in regards to writing in English at home. Additionally, 11 pupils in the pre questionnaire say they like writing in English at home a lot, 18 answered the same when it came to writing in Norwegian.

4.3.1.4 Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ use of written English at home?

Furthermore, an overview of the results concerning the second secondary research question will be presented. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ use of written English at home? This is approached by questions 4 and 6 in the questionnaire (see Appendix 7 – Questionnaire). The results from these questions will be presented equally to the presentation within the previous research question.

Question 4 asks the pupils if they write in English at home besides their homework.

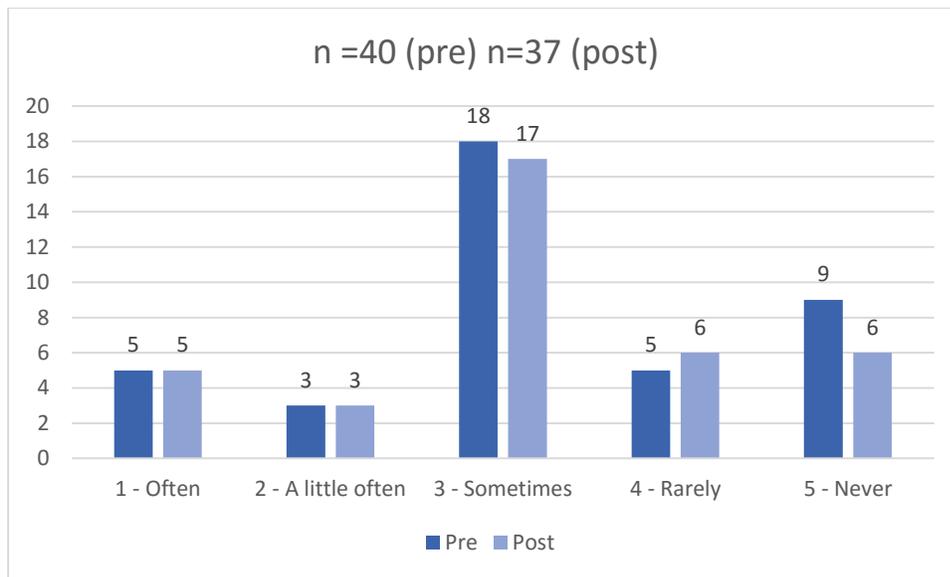


Figure 16 Intervention group - question 4 - Do you write in English at home besides homework?

In Figure 16 it is shown that the differences between the pre and post questionnaires are practically non-existent in this question. Although there has been a decrease of negative answers, from 14 to 12, this can be due to the increase in amount of pupil participants. When comparing to the result on writing in Norwegian, as shown in Table 12, the majority of the pupils answered that they did this sometimes or more in both languages. Nevertheless, whilst 17 pupils answered that they often write in Norwegian at home, only five pupils said the same about English. It can therefore be stated that the pupils in the intervention group use written Norwegian more than they use English at home.

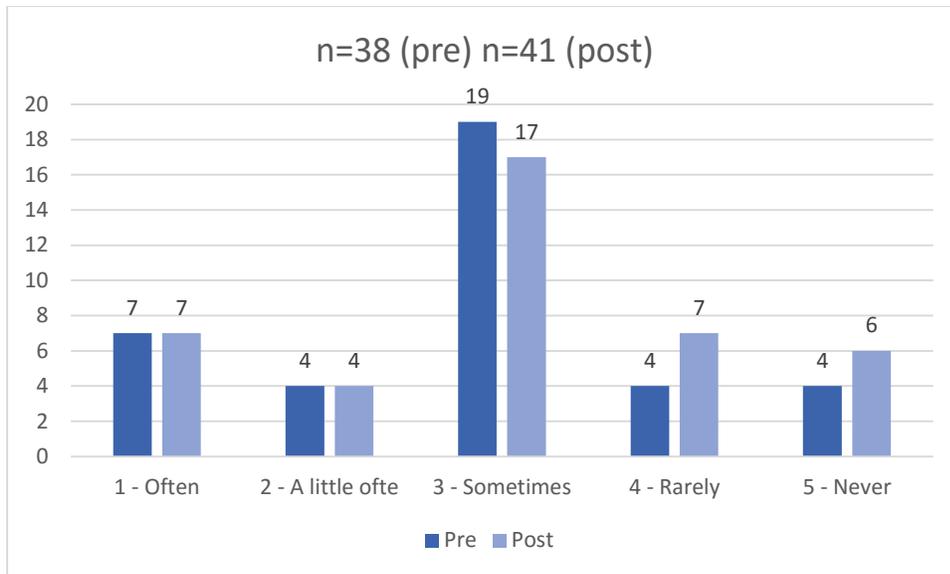


Figure 17 Control group - question 4 - Do you write in English at home besides homework?

Figure 17 shows the control group's results from question four. Similarly to that of Figure 16; there is only small differences between pre and post. However, here as well, there is a change in the negative answers. As opposed to the intervention group, though, there has been an increase in such answers from eight to 13. This is two more than the increase of three pupils who answered the post questionnaire. As with the intervention group, the control group too show that they use written Norwegian more than they use English at home. Whilst 23 pupils in the post questionnaire answered that they write in Norwegian at home, shown in Table 14, only seven answered the same about English. Furthermore, none of the pupils in the control group answered that they write in Norwegian rarely or never in the pre or post questionnaire. In regards to English on the other hand, 8 pupils in the pre questionnaire and 13 pupils in the post questionnaire answered this.

Moving on to the second question in this area, which is question 6 in the questionnaire. This asks the pupils for what purposes they use written English at home, be it for themselves, for communication and/or for searching on the internet.

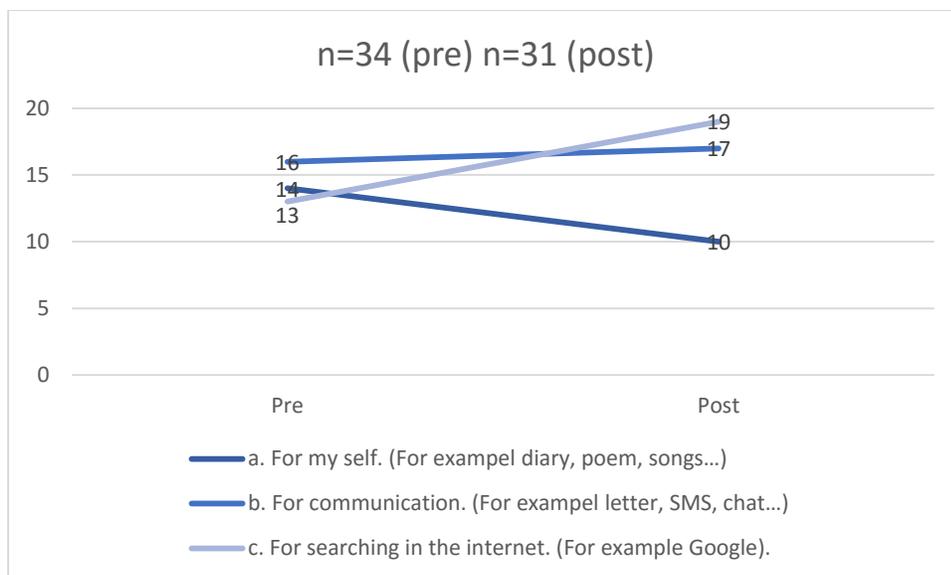


Figure 18 Intervention group - question 6 - Why do you write in English at home?

In Figure 18, the development of each category are shown from the pre to the post questionnaire. Here, it is apparent that the pupils use written English more for searching on the internet, though less for themselves. When it comes to using written English for communication purposes, it is quite similar between pre and post. Compared to the results concerning use of Norwegian in Table 16, pupils use Norwegian more than English in each of the categories shown above. Nevertheless, the differences are not great. For example, 21 pupils in both the pre and post questionnaires answered that they write in Norwegian for themselves, compared to 16 or 17 who write in English. On the other hand, though, 15 pupils in the pre questionnaire said they used Norwegian for searching online, compare to 19 pupils using English for the same purpose.

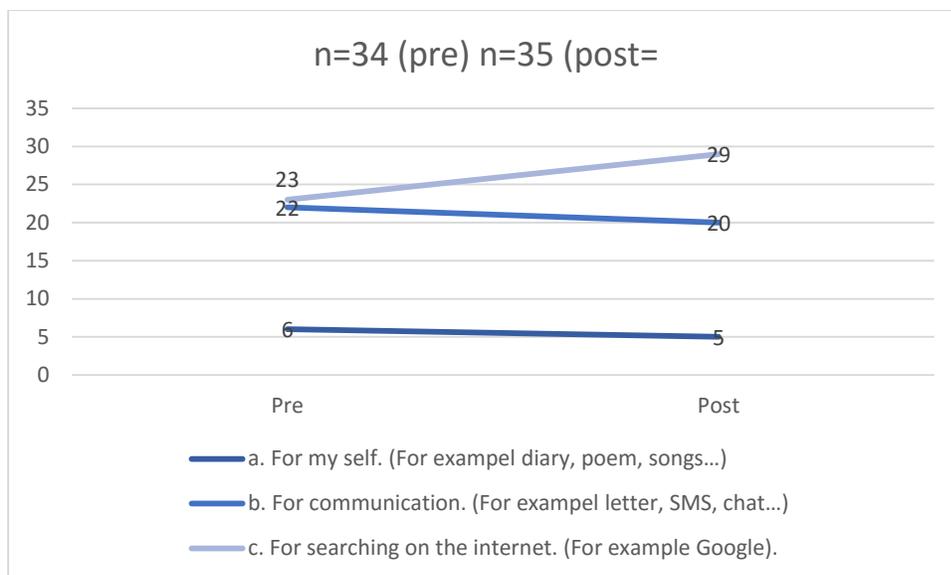


Figure 19 Control group - question 6 - Why do you write in English at home?

Similar to the intervention group, the control group also had an increase in use of written English when searching on the Internet. As shown in Figure 19, this has increased from 23 to 29 pupils. The two other alternatives are, on the other hand, quite similar between the pre and post questionnaires. There are greater differences between Norwegian and English in the control group than the intervention group in regards to this question. As shown in Table 17, 19 pupils said they wrote in English for themselves, compared to five writing for themselves in English. Furthermore, approximately 30 pupils answered that they use written Norwegian for communication, compared to 20 who said the same about written English. In regards to searching online, however, the numbers are quite similar between the languages. 29 pupils in the post questionnaire stated they used written English for this purpose, compared to 26 who used written Norwegian.

Additionally, there are a few differences between the intervention and control groups when it comes to using written English. As seen in Figure 18, 10 pupils answered that they used English for writing for themselves, as opposed to five in the control group. On the other hand, a greater amount of pupils in the control group use written English for communication or searching on the internet than the intervention group.

So far, the results from the pre and post questionnaires have been presented. A discussion of these results will follow in chapter 5. First, however, the results from the interviews will be presented in the following section.

4.3.2 Interviews

The interviews were conducted individually with ten of the pupils from the intervention group. These were chosen by first dividing the intervention group into the different AYLLIT ability levels, then two pupils from each group were chosen by drawing their names from a cup. Even though the interview was planned to be semi-structured in advance, none of the pupils raised any new topics or ideas outside of the interview plan. Consequently, one question will be presented at a time.

As explained in section 3.2.4, the researcher did a content analysis of the interview notes. A table of this analysis, within each question, will be presented together with a summary of the pupils' answers, highlighting the most important information. Please see Appendix 4 – Interview questions for the interview questions. In addition, the notes from the interviews are included in Appendix 5 – Interview notes. All quotations from the pupils will be written in both Norwegian and English, the translation being done by the researcher.

The first question asked the pupils how it has been for them to write in English for homework every week.

Table 20 Interview - question one, n=10

How has it been for you to write in English for homework every week?	Pupils who answered:	Amount of answers:
A I was late to hand in my homework.	X10	1
B The tasks were easy	X10, X35	2
C It was hard to write a lot	X10, X35, X30, X1	4
D It was hard to know what to write	X10, X15, X1	3
E It was easy to write in general	X10, X14	2
F It was hard to find the words	X14, X32, X6, X18, X7	5
G I loved writing in English for homework	X32, X6, X7, X1	4
H The spelling was difficult	X15, X7	2
I It took me a while to do	X15, X30	2
J I suddenly wrote more, and more varied	X1	1

Four of the pupils who were interviewed explained that they had loved writing in English for homework. Additionally, pupil X10 and X35 stated that the homework tasks had been easy, supported by X14 who said that it was easy to write in general. In total, seven of the ten interview objects uttered a positive view on writing in English for homework.

Nevertheless, most of the pupils highlighted some aspects of the homework tasks that had been challenging or difficult to them. For instance, five of the pupils explained that it was hard to

find the words they needed when they wrote their text. Additionally, four other pupils stated that it was hard to write a lot in regards to length. Furthermore, X15 elaborated that the spelling was difficult, and that it took her a while to finish the tasks. This was supported by, respectively, X7 and X30. On the other hand, X1 explained that during the semester he experienced that he suddenly wrote longer texts with a more varied language. From this question, it can therefore be stated that the majority of the pupils were positive towards the homework tasks of writing in English, however that they did encounter different challenges whilst completing them.

After talking about their initial experience of the homework, the pupils were asked whether they received any help with their homework. As explained earlier, the teacher had underlined for the parents that minimal help was required in these homework tasks, especially concerning spelling or grammar. Nevertheless, helping them with translations, or what to write about, would be perfectly fine.

Table 21 Interview - question two, n=10

Have you received any help with your homework?	Pupils who answered:	Amount of answers
A Yes	X10, X18, X7, X32, X6, X1	6
B Yes, from a parent	X10, X18, X7	3
C No	X35, X5	2
D I received help on correcting my mistakes	X10, X6, X1	2
E I received help on how to write more.	X10	1
F I received help on translating words	X14, X32, X7, X30, X1	5
G I received help on spelling	X14, X6, X18	3
H I received help on how to think	X18	1

Six pupils answered directly yes to the question about help, and three of them further explained that they received help from a parent. Even though pupil X14 and X30 did not answer yes to the question, they did explain areas on which they received help. If the pupils were not helped by their parents, it can be assumed that they received help from a sibling, or from the ‘homework help’ program at their school. On the other hand, though, pupil X35 and X5 answered directly no to the question of receiving help on their homework. Both of these pupils were allocated the level approaching A1 in the text analysis.

Furthermore, the eight pupils elaborated on what they received help for. Five of the pupils explained that they had received help on translating words, whilst three pupils said they received help on how to spell words. Additionally, three other pupils described that they had received help on correcting mistakes in their text. Finally, X10 explained he had received help on how to write

more in his text, whilst X18 said he received help on how to think when planning and writing his text.

Moreover, the pupils were asked whether they had learned anything about writing in English during this research project.

Table 22 Interview - question 3, n=10

Have you learned anything about writing in English?	Pupils who answered:	Amount of answers
A No	X15	1
B Yes, spelling	X10, X7	2
C Yes, to write full sentences	X10	1
D Yes, new words	X35, X32, X6, X18, X7, X30, X1	7
E Yes, to learn new words easier	X32	1
F Yes, to write coherently	X32	1
G Yes, to conjugate verbs	X18	1
H Yes, to express myself	X1	1
I Yes, to read	X14	1

Within this question, all of but one pupil explained that they had indeed learned something, which differed from pupil to pupil. Nevertheless, seven out of ten pupils stated that they had learned new words throughout the semester. Additionally, X32 elaborated that he now could learn new words faster, and X10 explained that he had learned to write full sentences. Furthermore, X10 and X7 stated that they had learned more about spelling words, and X18 said he had learned to conjugate verbs. Finally, X1 said he had learned how to express him better, followed by X14 who stated he had become a better reader his period. Nevertheless, X15 in level Approaching A1 stated that he had not learned anything.

The pupils were further asked to elaborate on if they thought there were a difference between how they wrote English before and after the research project.

Table 23 Interview - question 4, n=10

Do you think there is a difference between how you wrote in English before and after this project?	Pupils who answered:	Amount of answers
A No	X6	1
B Yes, I write better sentences	X10	1
C Yes, I am better at spelling (high frequency words)	X10	1
D Yes, I challenge myself more	X35	1
E Yes, I practice more at home	X35	1
F Yes, now I can write texts	X35	1
G Yes, I know more words	X32, X18, X7	3

H Yes, I can write more detailed	X18	1
I Yes, I learn more, faster	X18	1
J Yes, I write better content	X15	1
K Yes, I have an uglier handwriting	X15	1
L Yes, I have a prettier handwriting	X7	1

Within question four, all but X6 stated that they had become better in their writing. Even though X15 stated he had an uglier handwriting that before the project, he also said that he wrote better content wise now than earlier. The rest of the utterances, on the other hand, was mainly positive. Three of the interview objects repeated the use of new words. The rest of the things the pupils meant they had become better at, however, varied between the pupils.

X18 mentioned he wrote more detailed now and that he could learn faster, while X10 explained his sentences had become better, and that he was better at spelling high frequency words. X35 in level A1/A2 explained that he had challenged himself more this semester, and that he practiced his English more at home as well. Furthermore, X7 explained next to knowing more words, that he also had improved his handwriting. Finally, Pupil X32 in level A1 told the researcher that this project had allowed her to

“uttrykke at jeg kunne mye mer enn jeg trodde” - *express that I knew more than I thought.*

In question five, the pupils were asked to elaborate on whether they thought writing in English was different now compared to when they finished 4th grade six months from then.

Table 24 Interview - question 5, n=10

What do you think about writing in English? – Is this different from the 4th grade?	Pupils who answered;	Amount of answers
A I think it is fun	X10, X32, X6, X15, X30	5
B I think it is a little boring	X18	1
C I think it is a little difficult	X1	1
D I think it has become easier	X14, X7	2
E I think it is easier to write in Norwegian	X18	1
F If I don't have to, I don't do it	X1	1
G I write English more often now	X14	1
H I write better now	X35	1
I I write faster now	X35	1
J I have started using English when chatting online	X10	1
K I have started using English when playing online games	X14	1
L I have started using English when drawing	X7	1
M I think it is more exciting to learn a new language	X32, X6	2

The pupils were generally positive to writing in English, were five of them stated that writing in English is fun. X7 and X14 said they thought writing in English had become easier, and X14 also explained that he wrote English more often now than before. Furthermore, X35 said that he wrote both better and faster at the end of this semester, than at the end of fourth grade. X32 and X6 also stated that they thought it was more exciting now to learn a new language.

In addition, three pupils explained that they use written English more now, be it when chatting, in online games or when drawing. On the other hand, though, pupil x1 in level A2/B1 stated that writing in English is a little difficult,

“Hvis jeg ikke trenger, gjør jeg det ikke” – *If I don't have to, I don't do it.*

Finally, pupil X18 in level A1/A2 explained that written English is a little boring and that it is easier to write in Norwegian.

Furthermore, question six asked the pupils whether the homework tasks had affected their view of English in general, for example as a school subject or as a language.

Table 25 Interview - question 6, n=10

Has the homework affected your view on English? – As a subject or language.	Pupils who answered:	Amount of answers:
A Yes, I want to write more English	X10	1
B Yes, it has given me more information about English	X14, X18	2
C Yes, now I think it is very cool	X14	1
D Yes, it has made me better at English	X35	1
E Yes, English has become more fun	X3, X18, X7, X1	4
F Yes, English has become easier	X1	1
G Yes, it has become more difficult because I write longer	X32	1
H Yes, I know more words	X32	1
I Yes, I can find more to write about	X6	1
J Yes, I am able to write on my own	X6	1
K Yes, English has become more exciting and interesting	X 18	1
L Yes, I write faster now	X15	1
M Yes, I use it online	X15	1
N Yes, it is fun with Ingrid as a teacher	X7, X30	2
O Yes, I have learned more	X30	1

To this question, all of the pupils answered that the project had changed or improved their view of English as a school subject, or language.

First, X14 and X18 said that they had been given more information about English during this semester. Secondly, X10, an A2/B1 pupil, stated that he generally wanted to write more in English, whilst X35 explained that the project had made him better at English. Furthermore, four pupils said that English had become more fun, elaborated by X18 as more exciting and interesting than earlier years. Pupil X7 and X30 suggested that the subject had become more fun due to their teacher, Ingrid, further explained by X30 who said he had learned more. Whilst X6 said that he now was able to write on his own and find more to write about, and X1 said that English had become easier, X32 explained that the subject had become more difficult. Nevertheless, he explained that this was due to him writing longer texts now, and on the other hand, he stated that he had learned new words as well. Finally, X35, an Approaching A1 pupil, said that his project had made him generally better in English.

Returning to the homework tasks, the pupils were asked about their opinions towards the feedback given on their homework. They were also asked what they thought about the focus of the feedback being mainly on content, and not on language.

Table 26 Interview - question 7, n=10

What do you think about the feedback given on your homework? – Focus on content, not language.	Pupils who answered:	Amount of answers:
A It was helpful	X10	1
B It was nice to know the teacher’s thoughts	X10, X35, X32	3
C I often thought about the comments	X10	1
D It is nice to know what I can do to be better	X14, X32, X18	3
E It was nice not to receive feedback on errors/mistakes	X14	1
F It was fine (greit)	X35, X6	2
G It was good	X32, X6, X18, X30	4
H It was fun to read	X6, X1	2
I It was fun to receive compliments	X15, X30	2
J It was a little bad (litt dumt)	X15	1
K I would have wanted feedback on errors/mistakes	X7, X1	2

In general, the pupils were quite positive towards the feedback they had received on their homework writing. Four of the pupils said the feedback was good, whilst two said it was fine. Pupil X32 (A1) explained that the feedback was good

“Fordi vi får vite hva vi har gjort bra og ikke bra så vi kan gjøre det bedre neste gang” - *because we are told what we did well and not well, so that we can do better next time.*

This thought was supported by X14 and X18, whilst three other pupils explained that it was nice to know the teacher’s thoughts. X6 and X1 further said that it was fun to read the comments, and X15 and X30 explained that it was fun to receive compliments on their writing.

“Det er gøy fordi det kommer fra deg” *It is fun because it’s coming from you*

Pupil X30 (A2) said, and explained further that it was good because:

“Du likte det jeg skrev, setter pris på det vi klarer” – *You liked what I wrote, appreciate what we can do.*

Pupil X15 (Approaching A1) said that he liked the compliments because:

“Kommer liksom alltid noe godt ut av det” - *something good always comes out of it.*

Additionally, X10 said that the feedback was helpful, and that he often thought about the comments.

Nevertheless, there were differing views on not receiving feedback on errors or mistakes in their texts. While X14 stated that it was nice not receive such comments, X15 believed that it was a little bad. This was supported by X7 and X1 who both said that they would have wanted feedback on their errors or mistakes as well.

Finally, the pupils were asked whether they had any suggestion on how the homework could be improved, either within the tasks, feedback or criteria given, or something completely different.

Table 27 Interview - question 8, n=10

Do you have any suggestions on how the homework could have been done? – Task, feedback, criteria...	Pupils who answered:	Amount of answers
A Nothing	X10	1
B Criteria on length	X14, X35	2
C Receive feedback on one think to practice on	X18	1
D Receive questions to answer next time	X18	1
E Write on computers, send by email	X15	1
F More varied tasks	X6, X7	2
G Write factual texts	X32	1
H Spend more time on a text; story, with criteria	X30	1
I Receive tasks divided by steps (1, 2 or 3)	X30	1

Several suggestions were given by the pupils, and what most of them agreed on concerned the variation of homework tasks. X6 and X7 suggested this; whilst X32 said factual texts could be an idea, and X30 suggested that the pupils could spend more time on a text rather than one homework session. This could for example be by writing a story, from a criteria list, which they

could work on both at school and at home over a period. Additionally, X30 suggested that they could receive some tasks divided by steps as they were used to before. Furthermore, X15 suggested that they could be allowed to write their homework text on the computer, and send by email instead.

In addition to this, X14 and X35 wanted some criteria in regards to length. X14 elaborated that the struggling pupils would not have to write as much as those who were strong in written English. X35 on the other hand simply wished that their texts could be shorter. Finally, X18 suggested that the pupils could receive feedback on one thing to practice on for the next homework task, or that the teacher could ask questions for them to answer in writing.

5 Discussion

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the previous results displayed in chapter 4 will be discussed. The main research question of this thesis is: “Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils attitudes and writing skills in English? Hereunder, the results, and therefore also the discussion, have been divided between the areas of attitudes and writing skills. Within attitudes are two secondary research questions that will be discussed separately. These are:

1. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ attitudes towards writing in English in English?
2. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ use of written English at home?

Within writing skills, one secondary research question asks:

3. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ writing skills in English?

First, a discussion of the results concerning secondary research question 1 and 2 within attitudes will be done, followed by a discussion on the third secondary research question concerning writing skills. Before this, however, a short summary will be provided of the key theory depicted in chapter two.

5.2 Writing skills

Within this section, the results concerning the secondary research question “Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils writing skills in English?” will be discussed in light of the results presented in section 4.2.

5.2.1 Difference in levels

There was a greater positive increase, or shift, for the intervention group than the control group, in regards to the AYLLIT levels. As shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3, the intervention group shifted from the lower levels to the higher levels, whilst the control group had a positive increase in some of the levels. Additionally, as seen in Figure 4 and Figure 5, 21 pupils in the intervention group increased their level with one or more, as opposed to 16 in the control group. Moreover,

two pupils in the intervention group increased their level with three, whilst seven pupils in the control group decreased their level with two or more. A discussion on why these results occurred will follow.

First, there was a difference in the teaching and writing instruction between the two groups. As seen in Appendix 1 – Control group’s half year plan, autumn 2015, every month there was a focus on at least one aspect of grammar and/or vocabulary. For example, in August, the focus was on question words as well as the verb “to be” in the present tense. In the IV on the other hand, the writing instruction has been indirect, by encouraging pupils to find out what they need as they write their texts. Additionally, the teacher has read aloud homework texts to highlight different aspects, as a good headline or an introduction to the text.

One can argue that even though the control group have learned important aspects within grammar, they have not necessarily learned how to put these into context, or how to build a good text. An example of this is in a pupil at level A1/A2 in the control group, who writes:

“My hobby is swimming, klaiming and scaot” (climbing and scouting).

Here we can see that she has indeed chosen the right conjugation of ‘to be’ when she writes about her hobby. Nevertheless, as she lists more than one hobby, the noun should have been in plural, as in “my hobbies are...”. One can suggest that this example shows us that the pupil know the conjugation of ‘to be’, and that she has probably practiced the ‘I am, you are, he/she/it is...’ rule, but that she has not necessarily been taught how to use this in practice in regards to sentence building.

The intervention on the other hand have learned more on how to build a good text with focus on content, and not much on grammar. Nevertheless, focus on grammar is only one out of four categories within the AYLLIT assessment scale. Hyland states that “Writing is learned, not taught” (1996:9), which is what has been attempted through the indirect writing instruction in the IG explained above. An example of how to write good text is shown in pupil x28 in the intervention group. She went from level A1/A2 to level B1, and was one out of two pupils who developed three levels from pre to post. In the first text, she starts with “Hello and my name is –. I’m 10 years old”. In the second text however, she introduces it like this:

“Dear Ingrid today I’m gonna write about myself, actually i don’t know where to start beacuse it’s so much I have to write. Okey, let’s just start”.

Here we can see how this pupil has developed in regards to writing for an audience, and how she “is able to combine words and phrases to add colour and interest to the message” (AYLLIT assessment scale, Vocabulary and choice of phrase).

This great difference in writing instruction may have affected the pupils’ development in their writing skills. As quoted in the first paragraph of this thesis, “Independent, extended writing is really the goal of the L2 writing class, for while writers do not learn to write only by writing, they cannot learn to write without writing” (Hyland 1996:132).

Secondly, as with writing instruction, the different teachers have used different methods for teaching their pupils new vocabulary. Whilst the control group have had word lists and vocabulary tests, the intervention group have had to find words as they are needed in their texts. This led to a great variation within the intervention group on what words they learned. However, the pupils in the interview did state that they had indeed learned new words. Allen (1983:41 in Drew 1998:50) suggests that pupils are more likely “to learn a word when one feels a personal need for that word”. This need often came when they wrote their texts at home. Within section Homework, it was explained how written homework might aid vocabulary learning better than memorization as a glossary test expects. Additionally, words are easier acquired when used in a context, as in the writing tasks completed by the IV (Motlagh et al 2015:440). Finally, this can also have provided the pupils with “important grammatical and collocational information” (Cameron 2001:91) about the words, when they are used in context and through experience. Such experience helps the pupils better to remember and internalise the new words as well (Drew 1998:50).

As an example, in the control group one of the words they had in their word lists during this period was “detached house”. Nevertheless, only one pupil have used this word in his post text. This could of course indicate that none of the other pupils lives in a detached house, but it is more likely that they have not internalised the word. In fact, all of the pupils have written about where they live, both city, address and whom they live with. It should therefore be room for this word if they had thought about it.

Furthermore, the intervention group had a one-month extensive reading project, from week 38-42 as shown in Appendix 2 – Intervention group’s half year plan, autumn 2015. Here the pupils themselves chose which books to read in English, and read as much as they could in a one-month period. The control group on the other hand did not have a designated period for such

reading. As seen in their half-year plan (see Appendix 1 – Control group’s half year plan, autumn 2015), the pupils did read in their textbooks, but not extensively for a given period. This may have affected the intervention group’s level of competence, as Krashen states: “second language writing skills cannot be acquired successfully by practice in writing alone but also need to be supported with extensive reading” (Krashen, 1993 in Hyland 1996:17). The extensive reading done in the IG may therefore have helped develop their writing skills. This thought is supported by scholars as Janopoulos (1986), Hafiz and Tudor (1989) (both in Drew and Sørheim 2009:77) and Larssen and Høie (2012:48 in Munden 2014) who all state that extensive reading helps improve the pupils’ writing skills.

Furthermore, it can also be suggested that this period of reading has affected the intervention group’s vocabulary, by providing them with indirect learning through reading. By reading extensively, the pupils’ sight vocabulary might have improved, with incidental vocabulary learning consequently (Day and Bamford 1998:16-18). According to Nation (1990:3 in Drew and Sørheim 2009:159), more time should be spent on such vocabulary learning.

5.2.2 Difference in average word count

There was a great positive increase in the average word count for the IG, but a slight decrease in the control group. As shown in Figure 6, the IV went from 52 to 89 words, whilst the control group went from 59 to 54 words, from the pre to the post research texts. In the intervention group, the greatest development was with pupil X28 who increased with 205 words. Secondly, pupil X11 increased her words with 126 and pupil X7 with 73 words. As mentioned, only three pupils decreased their word count, X6 decreased her words with 39, X29 text decreased by 38 words whilst X17 decreased by 9. In the control group, the greatest increase was with pupil y30 who increased her text by 59 words. Most of the pupils in the control group, however, had approximately the same amount of words in both the pre and post research text. For example, Y2 who went from 45 to 48 words, or Y23 who went from 74 to 75 words. The greatest decrease was in pupil Y4’s text, which decreased by 41 words, from 115 to 74.

One explanation for this development in fluency for the IG can be the fact that all of the pupils wrote texts regularly, from week to week. This means that, in the end of the research period, they were able to access more words and structures than the control group in the same amount of time (Wolf-Quintero et al 1995:14). It can therefore be suggested that the pupils have

indeed learned more vocabulary throughout this project period, as discussed above. These words have been internalised and could therefore be accessed when writing their second text. Finally, the pupils who increased their level, and improved their writing skills, might also have improved their fluency as a positive consequence.

5.3 Attitudes

Within this section, the last two secondary research questions will be discussed in light of the results presented in section 4.3. First, section 5.3.1 will discuss findings related to the secondary research question: Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes towards writing in English in English? Sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.3, on the other hand, will discuss findings on the final secondary research question: Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' use of written English at home?

5.3.1 Difference in increase of positive attitudes

The intervention group has had a greater increase in positive attitudes than the control group. As shown in chapter 4, and in Figure 10, Figure 11, Figure 12, Figure 13, Figure 14 and Figure 15, the intervention group experienced a positive increase in their attitudes towards writing at school and less of a dislike towards writing as homework or at home. The control group on the other hand experienced an increase in attitudes towards writing in English at school, though not as great as the intervention group. Additionally, their view on writing in English for homework or at home stayed approximately the same from the pre to the post questionnaires.

Furthermore, some of the possible reasons for why the two groups differ in relation to attitudes will be discussed. "Attitudes are psychological states acquired over a period of time as a result of our experiences" (McLeod 1996:98). From this quote, it can be noted that, as the pupils in the intervention group have been writing regularly, as well as receiving positive feedback on their writing, the pupils have had positive experiences that in return has led to positive attitudes towards writing in English.

However, by looking at the half-year plan of the control group (see Appendix 1 – Control group's half year plan, autumn 2015), we can see that they too have had some assessed writing tasks while answering the chapter tests and glossary tests. Nevertheless, one could argue that

writing in a test situation, knowing one are being assessed, is not necessarily a situation that results in a positive experience for the pupils. This can of course vary from pupil to pupil. When it comes to writing in English for homework, this has mainly been practicing their word lists, which would lead to a vocabulary test at the end of the month. It can be assumed that such a test might include both criticism and praise, as opposed to the mostly use of praise in the intervention group's feedback.

In chapter 2, feedback on content versus form was discussed. Here, the conclusion was that these should not be separated but rather combined. However, by looking at the two different types of tasks given to the two research groups, it is apparent that they are divided between content and form. The control group was given feedback on their spelling and translation in the glossary test, as well as grammar and sentence building in the chapter test.

The intervention group received no feedback on errors, which many of them found motivating. It led them to be more adventurous with their writing, both when it came to spelling words, but also in relation to grammar or sentence building. Nevertheless, some pupils in the intervention group struggled with this in the beginning of the semester. One parent even approached the teacher, informing that her daughter cried whilst doing her homework out of fear of doing something wrong. The praise given every week on her writing encouraged her to try more, and in the end of the semester, the teacher was told that the nervousness this pupil experienced had completely disappeared. She had become more confident in her writing. However, as written in chapter 4, some pupils said in the interviews that it would be nice to know what they could improve on, concerning their spelling and/or grammar.

Nonetheless, when comparing the pupils' attitudes towards writing in English, it can be argued that this praise and ignoring of errors have affected these attitudes in a positive way. As the control group received feedback in a different way, it can be argued that it did not have the same effect on their attitudes. If they did in fact receive feedback on the content in their text as well, one can argue that the focus on language structures was experienced to be more important.

There are great differences between the writing tasks in a chapter test and glossary test, which the control group completed, and the homework tasks the intervention group completed. First, that which Hyland (1996) calls the teaching focus of the writing task. One could argue that especially the glossary test, but also the chapter test, focus on the language structures of English. This means that they need to show how they "command grammatical and lexical knowledge"

(Hyland 1996:3). In the glossary test, the words and their spelling are corrected, whilst the chapter test assesses grammar as well. As written in the theory chapter², such focus alone can cause “serious problems” (Hyland 1996:4).

Another difference between the two are within the teaching focus on genre, this focus “see writing as attempts to communicate with the readers” (Hyland 1996:14). Whilst the tests used in the control group are used strictly for the teacher to assess the pupils writing, the homework tasks given to the intervention group are made for them to write to their teacher about different topics. One could argue that the teacher as a reader might become lost in a test situation as opposed to this homework situation.

The final teaching focus difference between these tasks is the focus on creative expression. This is done by encouraging pupils “to find their own voices to produce writing that is fresh and spontaneous” (Hyland 1996:8), by providing them with a place to make meaning, often through free writing. The homework tasks were given with this strongly in mind, by providing them both with a place to be creative in their writing and tasks that are open. As seen in the chapter test for chapter one in *Stairs* (see Appendix 6 – Example of chapter test in *Stairs*, written tasks), the tasks are not open. The pupils are given a topic, as well as guidelines on how to write on this topic, often by the use sentence starters. This does not provide them with much room for being creative in their way of responding to the task, as the sentence starters might feel binding for the pupils.

Finally, though, there are one similarity between the writing task types, and that is the focus on content. Both the chapter test and the homework tasks use topics that, at least to some extent, the pupils have some personal knowledge about. This results in the pupils being “able to write meaningfully about them” (Hyland 1996:14). Nevertheless, one could argue that writing about Kieran’s sister³ is less meaningful than writing a description about someone you know. The latter being the first homework task the intervention group had.

² Chapter 2

³ Step 1 writing task, appendix 7

5.3.2 No difference in how much the groups write at home

The pupils in either group did not start writing more during this project period. This was presented in Figure 16 and Figure 17, which show that both groups are quite stable, in their use of written English, from the pre to the post questionnaire. Subsequently, it raises the question of what the reasons for this lack of change are.

First, one can argue on behalf of the intervention group, that when they wrote in English regularly, they might not have had any need to write in English on other occasions as well. Perhaps the writing done for homework was more than enough for this age group to express themselves in English. Nevertheless, this could not have been the case for the control group's pupils, as they did not write coherent texts in English regularly. One could therefore further argue that writing in English is not typical for this age group. This can be supported by Hasselgreen (2005:8) who state that at the end of grade 4 should be able to produce "simple phrases and sentences on well-known themes". The pupils in this research were at this stage only six months before the post questionnaire was answered. Furthermore, it is not before pupils finish year 7 that they should be able to "produce gradually longer stretches of [...] writing". It can therefore be argued that this is something pupils are on their way to achieving, and not necessarily something they should be able to do right now. This can further explain why their use of written English at home has not developed significantly.

When compared with the results from the questions on writing in Norwegian from the pre and post questionnaires, we can see that these results are also quite stable. However, we can see also that a greater amount of pupils in both groups writes *often* in Norwegian, as opposed to in English.

By writing, we generate writing, Drew (1998:29) states. Moreover, by this assumption, the pupils from the intervention group should be writing more now than they did before the project started. However, it can be argued that Drew is right, but that this would take a longer period than the five months the project lasted. Perhaps if the pupils had gone through this method of working over a year or so, their habits on writing in English would develop as well.

None of the pupils answered that they write more in English for themselves. This might be because the teaching did not focus on the type of genres in which it would be natural for them to write for themselves. In neither of the groups did the teaching focus on the genres stories,

diaries or fairy tales, for example. If the pupils had written more within these genres at school, perhaps the pupils would do this more at home as well. As seen when comparing with Norwegian, both groups answered that they write in Norwegian for themselves. At this grade, the pupils should have written in different genres in Norwegian at school, which can have inspired them to write this at home as well. However, when looking at the half-year plan of the control group, it is shown that they did write poems. Nevertheless, this has not affected their use of written English at home.

The final purpose the pupils were asked about was writing in English for communication. Here it is quite natural that the pupils generally write more in Norwegian for this purpose, than in English. The reason for this is likely to be that most of the pupils are Norwegian or have Norwegian as their second language. Naturally then, most of the people they communicate with are the same. It can therefore be assumed that most of the pupils who answered that they did communicate in written English did this with people they know who are English or who they do not share a mother tongue with. Another reason can be that they might chat with people from other countries online, or that they use some written English when texting each other.

5.3.3 Change in writing online

Nevertheless, even though there were hardly any changes in how often the pupils wrote in English, there were some changes in the purposes for such writing. This was when searching online, for example on Google, as shown in Figure 18 and Figure 19. One of the reasons for why they would use English the most online, could be that it is a typical spare time activity for young people to be online. By using sites as Google and YouTube, the pupils can enhance their experience if using English by achieving a broader search result, and therefore access to more information.

On the other hand, it can also be stated that using English more in this setting shows a security in using English. Perhaps by writing as much as the intervention group has, writing in English has become more natural to them. Taking into consideration that their writing was mostly informal, which most online use are as well.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Main findings

The main research question of this thesis is “Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupil’s attitudes and writing skills in English?” The research have been divided between the topics of attitudes and writing skills, and thus the conclusion will be as well. First, a conclusion of the results within attitudes will be provided, followed by a conclusion on writing skills, and finally a conclusion on the main research question stated above.

6.1.1 Writing skills

Within writing skills, one research question asked:

1. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils’ writing skills in English?

This project of weekly writing in English for homework did affect the pupils in the intervention group’s writing skills greatly. The reasons for this great increase can be due to the indirect writing instruction provided by the teacher, including reading aloud good texts in class as well as pointing out positive aspects of the pupils’ texts. The feedback on their texts were focused mainly on the content of their writing, and how this was portrayed, rather than grammar or spelling. Additionally, the teacher would answer them more as a reader than a teacher, providing them with the opportunity to write to an audience. Moreover, the pupils in the intervention group had a one-month period of extensive reading that might have provided them with more indirect writing instruction through reading different texts.

Another aspect that might have influenced this increase is their vocabulary learning. As opposed to word lists and vocabulary tests as the control group were given, the pupils in the intervention group had to find new words when and if they needed them. This required them to find out for themselves if they needed a word, and further made them experience and use the word in writing.

Finally, the pupils in the intervention group also greatly increased the amount of words they wrote from the pre to the post text, as opposed to a slight decrease in the control group. This increase in word count was most likely due to the amount of writing they did throughout the

semester. By writing in English every week, the pupils improved their fluency, and were able to access more words and structures in the same amount of time than they had at first. Additionally, the increase in vocabulary, as well as general writing skills as stated above, might have influenced their word count as well.

6.1.2 Attitudes

Within attitudes, there were two research questions.

1. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' attitudes towards writing in English in English?
2. Does weekly writing, for homework, affect pupils' use of written English?

The first secondary research question received quite positive results. From the discussion in chapter 5, it can be stated that such writing can indeed affect the attitudes, and positively at that, but in certain conditions. Firstly, it can be suggested that the pupils should receive feedback on the content of what they have written, as opposed to solely on form. Secondly, the teaching focus should be on creative expression in free writing tasks, as well as providing the pupils with an opportunity for writing to a reader and writing about a topic that is meaningful to them. As all of these conditions were fulfilled with the homework tasks for the intervention group, and not in the chapter tests or glossary tests in the control group, one can argue that this is the reason for the difference in increase of positive attitudes towards writing in English.

The second secondary research question on the other hand, did not achieve such positive results. Regarding how much pupils write in English, the groups developed in neither direction, and the results were therefore quite stable. It can therefore be concluded that such writing does not affect how much pupils write. This can be due to their age group, or the genres they had yet to learn. Additionally, it can be suggested that they simply need more time to write in English in connection with school work before they are comfortable writing by themselves. On the other hand, it cannot be expected that pupils should choose their L2 over their L1.

Nevertheless, there were some change in using written English for searching online, as on Google. This might be because it is something the pupils already use, and the English language might help them to broaden their searches. In addition, one might suggest that the pupils in the

intervention group have become more secure in using their English, and that it has become more natural to use it in such contexts.

6.1.3 Main research question

From the two sections above, it can be concluded that weekly writing, for homework, can indeed affect pupils' attitudes and writing skills in English. Such writing improves how much pupils like to write, and how good they are at it. What it does not affect is how much, or for what purposes they write in English at home. Furthermore, it can be argued that the feedback and use of the homework tasks are equally important to the writing in itself. Finally, the results from this thesis can imply that what happens in the classroom, when it comes to writing instruction and vocabulary learning, might affect the pupils just as much.

6.2 Implications of findings

The conclusions written above bring with them several implications for future teaching. As written earlier in the thesis, Norwegian teachers of English tend to rely heavily on the textbook, as well as traditional methods of vocabulary teaching. What this thesis shows is that some of these teaching methods can be positively changed for our learners. The project in itself, giving pupils open, written homework assignments every week can help inspire them with the English language and help lift their language to a new level. It can be a good method, especially, for engaging pupils with written English at the beginning of their written language learning, concerning coherent texts which normally first occur in the Norwegian fifth grade. As in this project, where it was done with fifth graders, but it could possibly be used in lower grades, as well as higher. The idea behind it all is to encourage pupils to write without worrying about errors. This idea is not revolutionary, as these methods are being used in the L1 early writing instruction in Norway today. Nevertheless, what this research project have helped strengthen is the idea that these agreed on methods should be transferred to early writing in the pupils' L2 as well. This could further be transferred into other foreign language subjects, as Spanish, German or French in the lower secondary school.

Advice for teachers reading this thesis would be to dare to put down the textbook, dare to look beyond the tasks and feedback given, both for homework and at school, which were typical before. By trying out new methods, tasks and activities, the pupils can become more engaged in the subject and further be more willing to learn. This view is supported by LK06 that by providing competence aims, do not state how these should be met. Therefore, teachers have the opportunity to be researchers themselves in the classroom, to try out different methods, tasks and activities to see how the pupils are affected by them.

6.3 Limitations of research

The research in this thesis have been done on two fifth grade classes during a five-month period. Of course, the results discussed above cannot imply that all fifth graders would react in the exact same way as the intervention group has. The pupils' relationship to their teacher and her involvement may have greatly affected the pupils' attitudes. One can assume that an engaged teacher makes engaged learners. Still, it would be difficult for a teacher to affect the pupils' level of competence according to the AYLLIT assessment scale. A greater amount of research subjects could have strengthened the research, but would have required more time and effort than a master thesis would allow.

6.4 Recommendations for future research

There are several different aspects of this research, which would be interesting to develop further. First, it would be interesting to see how the pupils would further develop their writing skills if this method would be used throughout their middle school education. Furthermore, how it would affect their attitudes if the writing instruction eventually became more direct. It would also be interesting to see what the affect would be on pupils of the traditional teaching through a textbook would be combined with these free writing homework tasks.

Finally, a research on how this could be done with either younger or older pupils would be interesting as well. Of course, doing the same research on a greater amount of subjects would be interesting, in order to see whether they achieved the same results.

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8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Control group’s half year plan, autumn 2015

Engelsk	August	September	Oktober	November	Desember
Stairs 5: Textbook Workbook CD mangler ITL: Lydspor	Uke 34-35 Chapter 1: All about me Snakke om seg selv: -navn, alder, klær, hobby, mat.. -ulike hus Spørreord To be i presens	Uke 36-40 Chapter 1, forts.: All about me -kroppen -klær -familie -hus og hjem Gloseprøver Kapitteltest 1 Chapter 2: Hobbies -kjæledyr -sport	Uke 40+ 42-44 Chapter 2 forts.: Hobbies -sport Retell a story: -drama og teater Grammatikk, strukturer: What do you like doing? -I like -I don't like -I can -Can you....? -Yes, I can/No, I can't Gloseprøver Kapitteltest 2	Uke 45-48 Chapter 3: All year round -Klokka -Ordenstall Grammatikk: -a/an -the -substantiv : bøying i kjønn og tall -Årstider -Måneder -Halloween Framføre skuespill	Uke 49-51 Chapter 3 forts: All year round. Grammatikk: -Verb i infinitiv/presens/preteritum (svake) Dikt: Femrader Sanger Gloseprøver Kapitteltest 3

8.2 Appendix 2 – Intervention group’s half year plan, autumn 2015

<i>Uke</i>	<i>Kompetanse i faget og kompetansemål</i>	<i>Læringsmål eller kriterier på vei mot kompetansemål</i>	<i>Arbeidsmåter, innhold, valg og tilpasset opplæring egnet til å nå kompetansemålet</i>	<i>Underveisvurdering</i>
35	Forstå og bruke et ordforråd knyttet til kjente emner. Ta notater for å lage ulike tekster. Skrive sammenhengende tekster som forteller, gjenforteller, beskriver egne opplevelser og begrunner egne meninger.	1. Know the different question words. 2. Be able to describe another person.	1. Gjennomgang av spørreordene på tavla. Lager spørsmål i plenum til hvert av ordene. 2. Samtale om hva vi må vite for å beskrive noen. Vi ser på bilde av Ariana Grande. Elevene får utdelt ark med punkter. I par beskriver de sammen Ariana Grande, og noterer i boken sin.	1. Arbeidsplan: Elevene leser s. 11 i TB og gjør oppgave 8 a og b s. 8 i WB. 2. Lekse: Beskrive et familiemedlem eller en kjendis i lekseboken sin.
36	Forstå og bruke et ordforråd knyttet til kjente emner. Lese og forstå ulike typer tekster av varierende omfang fra forskjellige kilder. Skrive sammenhengende tekster som forteller, gjenforteller, beskriver egne opplevelser og begrunner egne meninger.	1. Be able to read and write about chores.	1. Lærer leser høyt en tekst om en jentes plikter I hjemmet. Elevene får så utdelt teksten, og skal sette strek under alle pliktene de finner. Først alene, så to og to. Etter hvert får de også utdelt en liste over plikter på engelsk og norsk. Denne kan de også bruke når de gjør leksen.	Lekse: Skrive om hvilke plikter de har hjemme. Evt. Hvilke plikter barn kan ha hjemme (hvis de ikke har faste plikter).
37	Forstå og bruke et ordforråd knyttet til kjente emner. Skrive sammenhengende tekster som forteller, gjenforteller,	1. Know different English words about family. 2. Know different English words about home.	1. Vi snakker om familieord, og skriver dem på tavla. Etterpå fyller elevene ut sitt eget familietre. 2. PP om The Simpsons’ house. Bilder av hvert rom i huset. Hvilket rom er	1. Familietreet 2. Lekse: Skriv om ditt soverom.

	<p>beskriver egne opplevelser og begrunner egne meninger.</p> <p>Uttrykke og begrunne egen mening om kjente emner.</p> <p>Innlede, holde i gang og avslutte samtaler knyttet til kjente emner.</p>		<p>dette? Hvorfor? Hva heter de forskjellige møblene?</p> <p>Siste bilde er av soverommet til Bart Simpson. Her skal elevene snakke sammen om rommet. Start-setninger på tavla.</p>	
38	<p>Forstå og bruke et ordforråd knyttet til kjente emner.</p> <p>Skrive sammenhengende tekster som forteller, gjenforteller, beskriver egne opplevelser og begrunner egne meninger.</p>	<p>Know different words for clothes.</p>	<p>1. PP om klær. Et plagg per slide, elevene kommer med forslag om navn. Ukjente plagg skrives på tavlen. Elevene skriver hvert plagg inn i en rute på bingoark (totalt 25 ruter).</p> <p>2. Vi har bingo! Elevene får se bildet av et plagg, og må finne det engelske ordet på bingoarket sitt. Ekstra: Ark med en tegnet kropp på. Lærer sier hva personen har på, og elevene må tegne det på arket.</p>	<p>Selve bingoen, klarer de å finne riktig ord?</p> <p>Lekse: Skrive om et lykkelig minne.</p>
39-43	<p>Forstå hovedinnholdet i selvvalgte tekster.</p> <p>Lese engelskspråklig barne – og ungdomslitteratur og samtale om personer og innhold.</p> <p>Gi uttrykk for egne reaksjoner på engelskspråklig litterære tekster [...]</p> <p>Uttrykke og begrunne egen</p>	<p>1. Be able to read a book in English.</p> <p>2. Be able to read a book in English, and to talk/write about your book.</p> <p>3. Be able to read a book in English.</p> <p>4. Be able to read in English, and explain what you think about the book.</p>	<p>1. Elevene velger seg en engelsk bok i bokkassen fra Sandnes bibliotek. Resten av timen brukes til å lese rolig.</p> <p>2. Eleven leser stille i 20 min. Deretter deles de inn i grupper og snakker om boka si. Hvorfor valgte du denne boken? Hva handler boken om?</p> <p>Hjelpesetninger på tavlen (PP).</p> <p>3. Elevene leser stille hele timen.</p> <p>4. Elevene leser stille i 20 min. Deretter deles de inn i grupper og snakker om</p>	<p>Uke 39: Grppesamtalen. Lekse: Skrive om hvorfor de valgte boka, og hva den handler om.</p> <p>Uke 40: Grppesamtalen. Lekse: Skrive om hvorfor/hvorfor ikke de liker boka de leser. Skrive om hvorfor/hvorfor ikke de liker å lese på engelsk.</p> <p>Uke 43: Grppesamtalen.</p>

	<p>mening om kjente emner. Skrive sammenhengende tekster som forteller, gjenforteller, beskriver egne opplevelser og begrunner egne meninger. Bruke lese- og skrivestrategier Lese og forstå ulike typer tekster av varierende omfang fra forskjellige kilder.</p>	<p>5. Be able to read a book in English. 6. Be able to read in English, and to talk/write about the characters in the book. 7. Be able to read in English. 8. Be able to read in English, and to talk/write about their favourite book.</p>	<p>boka si. Hva synes du om boka? Liker du å lese på engelsk? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? 5. Elevene leser stille hele timen. 6. Elevene leser stille i 20 min. Deretter deles de inn i grupper og snakker om boka si. 7. Elevene leser stille hele timen. 8. Elevene leser stille i 20 min. Deretter deles de inn i grupper og snakker om boka si.</p>	<p>Lekse: Skrive et brev til læreren som en person i boken. Uke 44: Gruppesamtalen. Lekse: Skrive om sin favoritt engelske bok.</p>
44	<p>Bruke lese- og skrivestrategier. Forstå og bruke et ordforråd knyttet til kjente emner. Lese og forstå ulike typer tekster av varierende omfang fra forskjellige kilder.</p>	<p>Be able to complete a National test in English.</p>	<p>1 og 2. Gjennomgang av oppgavetyperne i NP. Vi går gjennom fjorårets NP på active board, i plenum. Elevene diskuterer noe to og to.</p>	<p>Resultatene fra Nasjonale prøver i engelsk. Lekse: Skrive om høstferien.</p>
45-48	<p>Bruke lytte- og talestrategier. Bruke lese- og skrivestrategier. Gi uttrykk for egne reaksjoner på engelskspråklig [...] musikk. Identifisere og bruke ulike situasjoner og læringsstrategier for å utvide egne ferdigheter i engelsk. Forstå hovedinnholdet i selvvalgte tekster.</p>	<p>Be able to react to and understand English songs. Be able to use the dictionary. Be able to listen to and understand English songs. Be able to listen and react to English songs.</p>	<p>1. Vi hører på forskjellige musikkklipp, og skriver opp hva vi føler. Deretter får elevene utdelt en sangtekst som de skal jobbe med. Her skal elevene sette strek under ord de ikke forstår, og slå disse opp i ordbok. 2. Fortsettelse av forrige time. 3. Elevene skal streke under ord de ikke forstår i sangteksten de valgte i plan uken før, samt finne ordene i ordboken. De velger ut fem ord som de skal øve på denne uken</p>	<p>Uke 45: Lekse: Skrive om en sang de liker. Hvorfor liker de den, hva føler de når de hører den, hva handler den om. Uke 46: Lekse: Tekst om hva de vil, men inkludert de fem ordene de valgte seg i timen. Uke 47: Lekse: Skrive om hva de ønsker å skrive om i lekse fremover.</p>

			<p>(disse skrives på norsk og engelsk i lekseboken).</p> <p>4. Ordbok-konkurranse. Lærer leser opp ord, elevene (i par) finner ordet og får et poeng for hver kategori: Sidetall, oversettelse og ordtype (adj, sub, verb).</p> <p>5. Lytte til en sang, og rette feil ord (i grupper).</p> <p>6. Lytte til en sang, og fylle inn ord som mangler (individuell).</p> <p>7. «The voice» i grupper. Vi lytter til auditions på youtube, elevene i grupper må bestemme om denne stemmen går videre eller ikke, samt gi et terningkast. Begrunne!</p>	<p>Blå perm: lyttetest</p> <p>Uke 48:</p> <p>Lekse: Skrive om hva de vil bli når de blir voksne.</p>
9	<p>Identifisere noen språklige likheter og ulikheter mellom engelsk og eget morsmål. Forstå og bruke et ordforråd knyttet til kjente emner. Bruke [...] situasjonsrelaterte uttrykk.</p>	<p>Be able to tell the time in English.</p>	<p>1. Vi snakker om klokka. Sammenligner uttrykk på norsk og engelsk. Går nøye gjennom de engelske uttrykkene, prøver oss i plenum på tavla. En og en kommer opp og svarer. Tilslutt arbeidsark.</p> <p>2. Klokkebingo. Forts. arbeidsark.</p>	

8.3 Appendix 3 – AYLLIT assessment scale

Levels	Overall structure and range of information	Sentence structure and grammatical accuracy	Vocabulary and choice of phrase	Misformed words and punctuation
Above B1	Is able to create quite complicated texts, using effects such as switching tense and interspersing dialogue with ease. The more common linking words are used quite skilfully.	Sentences can contain a wide variety of clause types, with frequent complex clauses. Errors in basic grammar only occur from time to time.	Vocabulary may be very wide, although the range is not generally sufficient to allow stylistic choices to be made.	Misformed words only occur from time to time.
B1	Is able to write texts on themes which do not necessarily draw only on personal experience and where the message has some complication. Common linking words are used.	Is able to create quite long and varied sentences with complex phrases, e.g. adverbials. Basic grammar is more often correct than not.	Vocabulary is generally made up of frequent words and phrases, but this does not seem to restrict the message. Some idiomatic phrases used appropriately.	Most sentences do not contain misformed words, even when the text contains a wide variety and quantity of words.
A2/B1	Is able to make reasonable attempt at texts on familiar themes that are not completely	Sentences contain some longer clauses, and signs are shown of	Vocabulary is made up of very common words, but is able to combine words	Clear evidence of awareness of some spelling and punctuation rules, but misformed words

	straightforward, including very simple narratives. Clauses are normally linked using connectors, such as <i>and, then, because, but</i> .	awareness of basic grammar, including a range of tenses.	and phrases to add colour and interest to the message (e.g. using adjectives).	may occur in most sentences in more independent texts.
A2	Can write short straightforward coherent texts on very familiar themes. A variety of ideas are presented with some logical linking.	Is able to make simple independent sentences with a limited number of underlying structures.	Vocabulary is made up of very frequent words but has sufficient words and phrases to get across the essentials of the message aspired to.	Some evidence of knowledge of simple punctuation rules, and the independent spelling of very common, words.
A1/A2	Can adapt and build on to a few learnt patterns to make a series of short and simple sentences. This may be a short description or set of related facts on a very familiar personal theme.		Can use some words which may resemble L1, but on the whole the message is recognisable to a reader who does not know the L1. Spelling may be influenced by the sound of the word and mother tongue spelling conventions.	
A1	Can write a small number of very familiar or copied words and phrases and very simple (pre-learnt) sentence patterns, usually in an easily recognisable way. The spelling often reflects the sound of the word and mother tongue spelling conventions.			
Approaching A1	Makes an attempt to write some words and phrases, but needs support or model to do this correctly.			

8.4 Appendix 4 – Interview questions

Intervjuspørsmål

1. Hvordan har det vært for deg å skrive engelsk i lekse hver uke?
 - a. Hva har vært lett/vanskelig?
2. Har du fått noe hjelp med skrivingen hjemme? (Hva slags hjelp?)
3. Har du lært noe om det å skrive engelsk?
4. Synes du at det er en forskjell mellom hvordan du skrev engelsk før og etter dette prosjektet? Forklar.
5. Hva synes du om å skrive på engelsk?
 - a. Har du et annerledes syn enn du hadde før prosjektet begynte?
6. Har leksene gjort noe med din mening om engelsk generelt?
7. Hva synes du om kommentarene som ble gitt fra læreren på leksene?
 - a. Hva synes du om at det kun var fokus på innhold, og ikke språk?
8. Er det noe du tenker kunne vært gjort annerledes med engelskleksen hjemme?

8.5 Appendix 5 – Interview notes

Interview one – pupil X10

1. Starten, sen med levering. Oppgavene var let, skrev litt lite, matte bare gjøre det. Vanskelig, finne opp va i temaet. Lett å skrive generelt.
2. Pappa, mer tekst, hva forklare, retter feil.
3. Rettskriving, helhetlige setninger.
4. Bedre setninger, rettskriving – vanlige ord (this)
5. Bruker det mye med søskenbarn i NY (chat), kjekt.
6. Generelt mer lyst å skrive engelsk.
7. Hjelpsomt, fint å vite lærers tanke om teksten, tenkte ofte på kommentaren.
8. Nei.

Interview two – pupil X14

1 + 2. Enkelt å skrive, kanskje skreve feil, får ukjente ord av mamma + staving, føler jeg kan mye.

3. Lært mye å lese, snakke mer flytende.
4. Lært mer engelsk i 5. trinn, enn på andre trinn. Utfordret meg selv – vil klare det. Gjort litt mer. Skriver engelsk hjemme for å øve seg.
5. Blitt lett nå, skriver engelsk ofte (hver dag), på spill, mer nå.
6. Følte meg dårlig i engelsk før, men nå har det gitt meg mer info, nå er det veldig kult.
7. Faktakommentarer – hva som kan gjøres bedre neste gang. Bra å ikke kommentere feil, heller lære det i timene.
8. Greit. Hvis de ikke er gode trenger de ikke å skrive så mye, eller hvis de er gode kan de skrive mer.

Interview three – pupil X35

1. Liker engelsk. Vanskelig – skrive mye, sliten hånd. Lett – små historier.
2. Trenger ikke, jobbet alene.
3. Litt vanskelige ord, nye ord.

4. Nytt med tekster.
5. Greit. Skriver bedre og raskere.
6. Gjort meg bedre i engelsk.
7. Litt greit, fint kommentar.
8. Kunne skrive litt kortere.

Interview four – pupil X32

1. Ikke vanskelig, elsker å skrive engelsk i lekse. Litt krevende/vanskelig å uttrykke det jeg vil skrive, noen ord jeg ikke forstår.
2. Hjelp – hvis det er noe jeg ikke forstår, forskjellig, oversettelser f.eks frisør. Bra å kunne skrive i parentes [norsk].
3. Lettere å lære nye ord, ikke gloser men sammenheng. Mindre press/stress. Nye ord.
4. Enklere. Gøyere. Kan flere ord, kan mer enn jeg egentlig vet. «Fikk uttrykke at jeg kunne mye mer enn jeg trodde».
5. Gøy, spennende å lære et nytt språk.
6. Gøyere, lettere, litt vanskeligere – skrive mer, noen spesielle ord.
7. Bra med kommentar – fordi vi får vite hva vi har gjort bra og ikke bra, så vi kan gjøre det bedre neste gang. Bra, det blir mindre å skrive/lese.
8. Faktatekst.

Interview five – pupil X6

1. Fint. Gøy å skrive engelsk av og til. Vanskelig med ordene – spør først, ser på nett.
2. Hvordan det skrives, om det er riktig.
3. Nye ord, litt forskjellig.
4. Nei...
5. Veldig gøy, engelsk er gøy å lære.
6. Finner mer ting å skrive om, nye ideer, kan gjøre det alene.
7. Gøy å lese de, kjekt med tilbakemeldinger, OK.
8. Varierte oppgaver.

Interview six – pupil X18

1. Heilt greit. Blitt litt frustrert – kunne ikke skrive alle ordene – oversettelse.
2. Mamma hjelper, hvordan tenke. Ordene setter seg ikke i hjernen – rettskriving.
3. Lært noe verbbøyning. Nye ord. Th-lyden (skrive ‘the’).
4. Får med mer detaljer, flere ord, lettere å skrive mer detaljert. Lærer mer ‘småord’ enn før.
Lærer mer på en gang.
5. Heilt greit. Litt kjedelig. Lettere på norsk.
6. Litt gøyere nå. Lærer mer spennende/interessant, mer variert. Får mer kunnskap.
- 7 + 8. Bra med kommentar. Kan skrive en ting som en kan utvikle/øve på til neste gang. Skrive spørsmål som de kan svare på til neste gang.

Interview seven – pupil X15

1. Ikke lett. Tatt tid. Vanskelig med rettskriving. Vanskelig med fantasi.
2. Ingen hjelp.
3. Nei.
4. Litt, skriver styggere. Klarer ikke skrive fint. Innhold bedre.
5. Litt lett. Korte lekser – bra. Liker å skrive om ekte. Kjekt med forslagene. Litt kjekkere nå enn i fjerde. Bruker mindre tid.
6. Multiplayer minecraft, skriver med team + youtube. Skriver raskere nå.
7. Litt dumt. Kejkt med kkomplimenter – “Kommer liksom alltid noe godt utav det”.
8. Skrive på pc (mail), lettere å lese. Bra å skrive så mye jeg kan/vil.

Interview eight – pupil X7

1. Heilt greit og gøy. Liker å skrive (spesielt). Litt vanskelig, ord (rettskriving) og oversettelser.
2. Foreldre hjelper litt. Mamma søker på nett, pappa har det i hodet – «Sier jeg må klare det selv».
3. Lært nye ord, skrive noen ord riktig.
4. Finere skrift, kan flere ord,
5. Ganske greit, ikke vanskelig. Skriver engelsk til tegninger.
6. Litt gøyere med Ingrid som lærer. Kjekt med musikk. Ikke så streng.

7. Greit at det blir gitt et svar. Kunne vært greit å få beskjed hvis noe var feil, så kunne en prøvd å forbedre seg.
8. Kunne skrevet egen sang, om fremtiden, dyr. Minimumslengde.

Interview nine – pupil X30

1. Kjekt, men dumt med dårlig tid. Hvis skrive lite – tegning. Lette oppgaver.
2. Ord – oversettelser, eller hvordan de høres ut – de sier høyt, jeg skriver sånn jeg tror.
3. Nye ord – sangen.
4. Skriver mer avansert, lengre, nye ord/annerledes.
5. Pleier ikke hjemme, kjekt når jeg først begynner.
6. Likte ikke engelsk før, kanskje noe med læreren å gjøre. Lært to måter engelsk, AM og BE.
7. Gøy – «Fordi det kommer fra deg». Gøy med skryt. Bra fordi «du likte det jeg skrev», «setter pris på det vi klarer».
8. Historie og kriterier, noe som tar lenger tid.

Interview ten – pupil X1

1. Veldig gøy, men noen ganger bruker google translate. Forstår hva jeg skriver lett. Litt vanskelig å skrive langt, vanskelig å finne på (tar tid). Liker veldig godt å skrive. Plutselig skriver mye, variert.
2. Av søsken. Ord. Forstå setningene bedre
3. Lært flere ord/uttrykk – uttrykke seg.
4. Skrev ikke så mye før, hatet det før. Men skrivingen – mer interessert.
5. Litt vanskelig, men vil gjøre det. Hvis jeg ikke trenger, gjør jeg det ikke.
6. Lettere å forstå engelsk nå, blitt mer glad i det.
7. «Oi, ka har hu skreve nå». Mye det samme, kunne vært mer variert. Kunne rettet litt, hvis det er store feil, «du lærer av feil».
8. Variert i steps, leksene.

My hobby ...

My best friend ...

I like ...

My favourite subject ...

Skriv og fortell om deg selv. Fortell hvor gammel du er, og hvordan du ser ut (hårfarge, øyenfarge). Fortell hvor du bor, om familien din, om hobbyer, interesser og om kjæledyr hvis du har. Skriv med hele setninger.

Step 3:

Describe your favourite place, and tell what you like to do there. Beskriv ditt favorittsted og hva du pleier å gjøre der.

My favourite place is ...

It is ...

When I go there I ...

