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**MASTER'S THESIS**

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## **Abstract**

The current thesis aimed to explore Norwegian lower secondary gaming pedagogues' and their students' beliefs about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom. In addition, it aimed to investigate the gaming pedagogues' reported challenges associated with the use of digital games in the EFL classroom. Finally, this study investigated the gaming pedagogues' reported practices regarding digital games, as well as how they used them, and why.

To gather the data, the study employed a mixed methods research design, including gaming pedagogue interviews and a student questionnaire. Four lower secondary gaming pedagogues from four different Norwegian lower secondary schools were interviewed to investigate their beliefs and their reported practices concerning the use of digital games as a tool to promote EFL learning. Additionally, 102 students from the gaming pedagogues' classes participated in a questionnaire in order to provide insight into their beliefs.

The findings demonstrated an overall positive belief concerning the use of digital games as a tool for EFL learning. Both gaming pedagogues and the students reported that digital games can be beneficial when used in the EFL classroom. While the four gaming pedagogues agreed that digital games can be a source of motivation and increased engagement, the amount of implementation and their reasoning behind it varied somewhat. Whereas two gaming pedagogues had used digital games due to their cultural relevance among students, the other two focused more on implemented digital games to reduce intimidation during communication.

Despite the generally favorable beliefs, the study also identified challenges associated with using digital games in the EFL classroom, as reported by the gaming pedagogues and their students. The main challenges included the time investment required to ensure quality, in addition to the elements of distraction and varying gaming proficiency, as reported by the learners.

The present study contributes to the field of L2 English with gaining a better understanding of Norwegian lower secondary gaming pedagogues' and their students' beliefs concerning the use of digital games as an effective tool in the EFL classroom. It further contributes to the growing body of the research field by exploring it from both the gaming pedagogues' and their students' perspectives. Furthermore, the study provides insight into the reported challenges of implementing digital games in EFL instruction and

compares the findings of the present study with previous research in the Norwegian context. Finally, the study contributes by exploring what types of digital games the gaming pedagogues report that they use.

The main teaching implications proposed by the current study concern how digital games are being used in the EFL classroom and for what reasons. The use of digital games can increase both the students' engagement and motivation in and outside of the classroom, as well their ability to communicate, read, and cooperate with peers, provided that the gaming pedagogues consider criteria such as mechanical feasibility and alignment with learning objectives. The students also reported that they preferred learning through the use of digital games, compared to other instructional methods, and that they also played digital games at home. Teachers can draw on this by implementing digital games in their EFL instruction, while carefully considering the varying degrees of gaming experience among their learners, in order to provide a more varied and motivational classroom.

Further studies are recommended in order to expand the knowledge in this growing field. While the findings suggest an overall positive belief on the use of digital games in the EFL classroom, further studies could investigate the long-term impact of digital games on language acquisition and engagement to gain a better understanding of the sustainability and effectiveness of digital games as an instructional tool.

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## List of abbreviations

CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
DDV	Didaktisk Digital Verksted
DGBLL	Digital Game-Based Language Learning
EE	Extramural English
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
L2	Second Language
LK20	Norwegian Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion 2020
OBS	Open Broadcaster Software
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
SIKT	Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TL	Target Language
TX	Teacher Number. Example: T1 = Teacher 1

## 1. Introduction

The present thesis is a mixed methods study of the practices of four game pedagogues who actively use digital games in their EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching, as well as their beliefs around doing so, focusing particularly on their own views, as well as their students' ones. Game pedagogues are referred to as teachers, who employ "Gaming Pedagogy" which is an approach to teaching that utilizes digital games to promote motivation, engagement and learning among students (Von Gillern et al., 2022). The data for the thesis will be gathered through semi-structured interviews with four in-service lower secondary school teachers, as well as providing their classes with a questionnaire. The aim of this present thesis is to contribute to the knowledge about game pedagogues' beliefs and practices. This will be done by providing insight into the beliefs and practices of teachers with years of experience in the field of using digital games, focusing especially on the Norwegian context, and showcasing how the new curriculum (LK20) facilitates this. Lastly, this study will also be looking into the beliefs of learners, and their attitudes towards using digital games in the English subject.

Digital game-based language learning (DGBLL) refers to "*the design and the use of a diverse array of digital games for the purpose of learning or teaching a second or foreign language*" (Osman & Rabu, 2020, p. 56). Previous studies show that there is a lack of information in the research field regarding how experienced teachers in the field of DGBLL view digital games as an effective tool for EFL teaching, and their practices with it.

The thesis will thus address the following research questions:

- What beliefs do lower secondary school game pedagogues have about the use of digital games in EFL learning?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' beliefs about the challenges and concerns associated with the implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' practices regarding the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What beliefs do lower secondary school students have about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?



In order to answer the research questions, the researcher will make use of a mixed methods research approach, using semi-structured interviews that will be recorded, in order to map the beliefs and practices of the four game pedagogues. Additionally, a questionnaire will be provided for the 102 students who participated in the study, to get a better understanding of their beliefs regarding the use of digital games in EFL learning.

## **1.2 Relevance and Potential Contribution of the Study**

The continuous rapid development of technology influences all aspects of society, including classrooms at every educational level. Consequently, teachers face new challenges in digital pedagogical work, which must be addressed by exploring the vast technological tools and possibilities that exist and by determining how they can be applied to promote language learning in the EFL classroom. Udir's (2012) framework for teachers' professional digital competence supports this notion, stating that:

*“In order for teachers to be capable of developing the basic skills and specialised subject knowledge of their pupils, teachers must develop their own professional digital competence during their initial teacher education, and later, by continuing their professional education and development, during their teaching career”* (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2012, p 1).

While research findings demonstrate the benefits of using digital games in L2 instruction, there is a clear need for more professional development and guidance for teachers to effectively integrate digital games into their teaching practice. The introduction of LK20 significantly emphasizes the need for teachers to develop their professional digital competence, as digital skills now constitute one of the five basic skills promoted in EFL classrooms (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Therefore, further research on promoting digital competence as a basic skill is essential.

This thesis attempts to address a gap in the research domain by examining the beliefs of game pedagogues who actively employ digital games in their teaching practices and considers their pedagogical approaches and their students' perspectives. The growing number of studies conducted on the use of digital games in EFL classrooms highlights the increasing attention in this area. However, previous research in both Norwegian and other contexts indicates that while teachers generally hold positive views, very few possess the experience

or knowledge necessary to incorporate digital games into their pedagogical practices. This thesis is distinctive in its primary focus on educators with extensive experience implementing digital games and its consideration of their students' beliefs, providing a potential valuable contribution to the field. By investigating both the beliefs and practices of professional game pedagogues, this thesis may serve as a foundation for educators seeking to actualize their perspectives on digital game-based language learning.

### **1.3 Outline of the Thesis**

This master's thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the research topic and questions, highlights the relevance of the study, and reflects on its potential contribution to the field. Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of the theoretical framework related to digital game-based language learning, various types of digital games, and the existing research in the area. The chapter in particular delves into relevant learning theories associated with digital games, the connection between extramural English learning and digital games in education, and the significance of examining teacher and learner beliefs. Furthermore, Chapter 3 explains the mixed methods approach employed in this study, outlining the data collection process, which includes semi-structured interviews with teachers and a student questionnaire. It also describes the sampling, coding, and analysis procedures, as well as the measures taken to ensure validity, reliability, and ethical considerations throughout the research process. Chapter 4 presents the findings obtained from the teacher interviews and the student questionnaires. Chapter 5 engages in a discussion of these findings, connecting them to the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 2. The chapter also addresses the limitations of the study and the implications it holds for teaching practices. Lastly, Chapter 6 addresses the limitations of the study and the implications it holds for teaching practices. The chapter also offers a conclusion by answering the research questions, emphasizing the contributions made by the research study and the potential implications for future studies in the field.

## **2. Theory**

### **2.1 Digital Game-Based Language Learning**

Digital game-based language learning (DGBLL) refers to “the design and the use of a diverse array of digital games for the purpose of learning or teaching a second or foreign language” (Osman & Rabu, 2020, p. 56). As an increasing number of individuals worldwide engage with digital games spanning various genres and languages, researchers in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and L2 instructors have begun exploring the potential of games as a resource for instruction and learning in foreign language classrooms (Reinhardt, 2014, as cited in Chapelle & Sauro, 2017).

The widespread availability of games via portable consoles and computers, coupled with the possibility of connecting them to large classroom displays, has expanded the ways in which educators can incorporate DGBLL into their pedagogical practices. Previously, such integration was often deemed impractical due to technological constraints. Researchers such as Pesare (2016, p. 3) have highlighted numerous advantages of implementing DGBLL, including a more student-centered knowledge acquisition process that frequently proves more effective than traditional classroom instruction by facilitating more engaging and enjoyable learning experiences. Additionally, video games can stimulate curiosity among students, offering challenges with well-defined goals that foster intrinsic motivation, while simultaneously providing tools to facilitate communicative events within pairs and groups in a safe environment (Reinders & Wattana, 2012).

Contrary to the traditional teacher-focused pedagogy prevalent in schools, video games introduce a distinct discovery-based pedagogy that encourages students to explore their environment in ways that are more familiar to them, given their upbringing with such games. Reinhardt (2017) emphasizes the significance of this aspect, noting that video games incorporate learning principles that create opportunities for practice and mastery.

Closely linked to the concept of DGBLL is the concept of digital literacy, which according to Belshaw (2012) is a combination of different skills, knowledge and attitudes that individuals develop when interacting with digital technologies. Digital literacy and DGBLL are interconnected concepts due to how both involve the development of skills and competence through the use of digital tools such as digital games. In the context of DGBLL, digital literacy skills play a crucial role in improving the language learning experience. Digital literacy involves the development of cognitive skills, such as problem-solving, critical

thinking, and information processing. These skills are also important in DGBLL, as learners need to navigate complex gaming environments, make decisions, and process linguistic information in real-time. In addition, digital literacy emphasizes the importance of effective communication and collaboration using digital tools (Gilster, 1997). In DGBLL, learners often engage with others through in-game chat, forums or other online platforms, thus fostering communication and collaboration skills in the target language. Digital literacy can contribute to increased motivation and engagement in learning, as individuals become more comfortable and confident in using digital tools. In the context of DGBLL, this increased motivation and engagement can lead to more effective language learning outcomes.

These ideas are supported by Gee (2003) who argues that digital games provide authentic, immersive, and interactive learning environments that promote active participation and situated learning. Within these environments, learners develop digital literacy skills alongside language skills, as they engage with the game's content, mechanics, and social aspects.

## **2.2 Defining Digital Games**

The term "digital games" can be defined as "interactive systems characterized by rules, goals, and challenges that create a designed experience for the player through feedback, challenge, and conflict" (Squire, 2011, p. 2). They are played on a variety of platforms such as computers, consoles, mobile devices, and tablets. Digital games can be categorized into several types based on their design, purpose, and gameplay elements, and have emerged as a powerful tool for language learning, offering diverse, interactive, and engaging learning experiences for learners. Understanding the various types of digital games is essential for selecting and implementing appropriate games in language learning contexts. Therefore, In the following section the researcher will briefly explain the different types of digital games that will be relevant for the current thesis.

### **2.2.1 Types of Digital Games**

Digital games can be categorized into several types based on their design, purpose, and gameplay elements, including commercial games, educational games, serious games, and edutainment games.

Commercial games are primarily designed for entertainment purposes and are created by game developers to generate profit (Gee, 2003). They often have high production values, featuring cutting-edge graphics, immersive soundtracks, and intricate storylines. Examples of commercial games include the Call of Duty series, The Sims, and Fortnite. Commercial games, while primarily created for entertainment, can still provide valuable language learning opportunities if implemented appropriately (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2014). These games often feature authentic language use, diverse cultural contexts, and engaging narratives that can motivate and challenge learners (Sykes & Reinhardt, 2013).

Non-commercial games, including educational and serious games, are specifically designed to support learning outcomes, often featuring scaffolded tasks, formative feedback, and explicit connections to curricular content (Godwin-Jones, 2014). However, the effectiveness of non-commercial games can be limited by factors such as low production values, lack of engaging gameplay, or inadequate pedagogical integration (Miller & Hegelheimer, 2006).

Educational games are designed specifically for teaching and learning purposes (Hirumi, 2010). These games aim to improve users' knowledge, skills, or understanding of particular subjects or concepts. Examples of educational games include Brain Age, Math Blaster, and Carmen Sandiego.

Serious games have a primary purpose other than entertainment, often used for training, education, or social change (Michael & Chen, 2006). These games can overlap with educational games, but they may also address broader societal issues, such as health or environmental concerns. Examples of serious games include Foldit, a protein folding simulation game, and Darfur is Dying, which raises awareness about the humanitarian crisis in Sudan.

Edutainment games are a hybrid of entertainment and education, aiming to teach users through engaging and enjoyable gameplay experiences (Van Eck, 2006). These games may not have been explicitly designed for educational purposes but can still be effectively used to facilitate learning. Examples of edutainment games include the Civilization series and Minecraft.

### 2.3 Previous Research in the Field

The integration of digital games into foreign language learning, particularly in the Norwegian context, has been the subject of several studies in recent years. This chapter presents a brief overview of the key findings from several studies that investigated teacher beliefs surrounding the use of digital games in English as a second language (L2) classroom.

A significant number of children aged 9 to 18 years, approximately 76%, report playing video games in some form, with 92% being boys and 59% being girls (Medietilsynet, 2022, p. 4). However, previous research, including studies by Blume (2020) and Sandin (2015) conducted in Germany and Sweden respectively, reveals that even though teachers generally hold positive views toward using video games in classrooms, very few have actually implemented them or possess the necessary knowledge, potentially denying their students' a possibly effective and motivating tool to learn their L2 within the classroom.

In her study, Blume (2020) used a mixed-methods approach, gathering data from pre-service EFL teachers through questionnaires, interviews, and observations. In her findings, the pre-service EFL teachers displayed positive attitudes towards DGBLL and its potential benefits. However, barriers like time constraints, limited resources, and inadequate training hindered integration as well as personal gaming experiences which influenced attitudes.

Sandin (2015) on the other hand, employed a qualitative research design in her study, using semi-structured interviews to collect data from a sample of Swedish primary school teachers who taught in the English subject. Her study found that the five participating teachers generally held positive attitudes towards incorporating games into EFL teaching, recognizing the potential benefits of increased student motivation, engagement and language learning opportunities. However, several challenges and concerns also emerged, such as lack of time, insufficient training, and limited access to appropriate digital gaming resources. Some teachers also expressed concerns about classroom management, and the potential for games to be a distraction rather than a learning aid.

This issue is also prevalent in the Norwegian context, as demonstrated by studies such as Lindland (2021), Israelsson (2020) and Juveng (2018).

Lindland (2021) interviewed six teachers in total, two each from elementary, lower secondary, and upper secondary schools after they conducted a lesson using the game "Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes." The participants' responses were positive, but a lack of expertise in gaming was perceived as an obstacle to integrating games into teaching practices. Similar outcomes emerged from research conducted by Israelsson (2020), who employed a

mixed methods approach for her study, gathering data through an online survey consisting of 120 teacher respondents, and three semi-structured interviews. The findings showed that teachers generally have an interest in learning more about the use of digital games in EFL learning, but lack of time and financial resources were frequently cited as barriers for further exploration. Israelsson (2020) also found that in-service teachers reported insufficient information about digital games as language learning tools within their education. This deficiency could be attributed to the inadequate focus on digital skills before the implementation of the LK20 curriculum. Another study conducted by Juveng (2018) through the use of semi-structured interviews with teachers from Norway, sought to explore their experiences, and beliefs about DGBLL and potential challenges in implementation. The study found that teachers recognized DGBLL benefits, such as increased engagement, motivation, and problem-solving skills, but faced challenges like time constraints, insufficient training, lack of resources, and classroom management concerns. The study emphasized the potential of digital supplementary resources to facilitate game integration by providing guidance on game selection, offering pre-made lesson plans, and simplifying alignment with curriculum objectives.

More recent studies, conducted by Estensen (2021) and Hansen (2022), also illustrate the growing interest in understanding the role of digital games in English language learning and the beliefs of teachers who implement these games in their classrooms. Interesting results were also provided on the beliefs of the students.

Estensen (2021) conducted a study on the influence of digital games on Norwegian students' motivation for learning English as a second language. Through a mixed methods approach collecting qualitative and quantitative data from forty-five students, the findings suggested that digital games, both in and outside the English classroom, positively affected students' motivation for learning the L2. Students reported higher engagement and interest when using digital games, which contributed to their overall L2 motivation. The study also called for more teacher training and resources to effectively implement digital games in their classrooms.

In turn, Hansen (2022) focused on investigating teacher and learner beliefs concerning the use of digital games in English language learning in upper secondary school. The study indicated that most teachers held positive beliefs about the use of digital games in the English classroom, but there was no uniformity in their beliefs and reported practices. Students' beliefs aligned with teachers', with students believing that digital games could enhance motivation. Interestingly, the research study found that 75% of learners reported learning

more English when playing digital games at home compared to only 11.5% learning more from playing digital games in the English classroom. The study suggested that more teacher training was needed, and that harnessing students' extramural gaming activities could benefit classroom learning.

Lastly, Blikstad-Balas et al. (2022) conducted a qualitative study which investigated the home-schooling experiences of students in Norway during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study focused on the digital learning environment, the unequal access to qualified help at home, and the unequal learning opportunities provided by schools. The study revealed that the quality and quantity of digital learning materials provided by schools differed significantly. Whereas some schools were able to offer a wide range of digital resources, others struggled to adapt to the new learning environment. The findings suggested a need for policymakers to develop platform where teachers can share their digital practices, so that teachers can have equal access to learning resources. These findings strengthens the results of the previous mentioned studies, suggesting the need for more teacher training to provide more equal opportunities for the students as well, not only during a pandemic.

## **2.4 A Sociocultural Approach to Digital Games**

The enduring influence of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory is evident within the Norwegian educational system, as numerous digital games incorporate key aspects of his framework. Central to Vygotsky's (1978) theory is the role of social interaction in children's learning processes, with an emphasis on collaborative learning experiences. The sociocultural approach posits that children's developmental trajectories differ due to varying mental stages and that collaboration with educators or peers can enhance their cognitive growth. This concept is encapsulated in Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which he defines as:

*“The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”* (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).



Essentially, the ZPD describes a child's independent capabilities in contrast to their potential when assisted by a more knowledgeable mediator, such as a teacher, student, or parent. Imsen (2014) introduces the concept of "*the mediating other*", typically an educator, in her work "*Elevenes verden*". However, digital games can also function as mediators by providing ongoing guidance in the form of hints, tutorials, and essential information to facilitate game progression. With the substantial number of children engaging with digital games (Mediatilsynet, 2022), disparities in problem-solving abilities within these contexts persist. The ZPD framework offers opportunities for less adept students to learn from their more proficient peers, fostering a sense of mastery.

Scaffolding, a concept introduced by Bruner in 1976 and inspired by Vygotsky, highlights the role that adults, teachers, and more capable peers play in children's problem-solving activities (Pol et al., 2010, p. 271). Video games employ scaffolding by adjusting difficulty levels to accommodate players' abilities, helping them surmount problem-solving challenges (Edusei, 2018). This tailoring of gaming experiences enables players to succeed in various tasks (Gamerslearn, 2018) and is particularly prominent in multiplayer games, where players collaborate to solve challenges.

Estensen (2021) observes that students frequently collaborate and communicate with more proficient peers in a target language, creating significant learning potential according to Vygotsky's ZPD concept. Gass and Selinker (2008) underline the importance of meaning negotiation as a crucial component of interactions between learners, as it fosters more effective communication. Long (1987) further supports this notion, asserting that comprehensible input is primarily achieved through meaning negotiation (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.80). Estensen (2021) also explains that when students interact within multiplayer games, they often negotiate meaning due to differing language proficiencies, benefiting both participants. Moreover, the informal context of digital games reduces the anxiety and pressure commonly experienced in formal educational settings. Krashen (1982) emphasizes the importance of confidence and low-anxiety scenarios for successful second language acquisition, which may occur within digital games and home environments.

## **2.5 Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory and its Relevance to DGBLL**

Stephen Krashen's Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory is a foundational framework in the field of language education. This section explores Krashen's SLA theory in the context

of using digital games as effective tools for L2 language learning. Krashen's SLA theory comprises five key hypotheses for how one acquires a second language.

Firstly, the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis. This hypothesis posits that there are two distinct systems for developing language abilities: acquisition and learning (Krashen, 1982). Acquisition is an unconscious, intuitive process, while learning involves conscious, explicit knowledge of the language rules. Krashen (1982) argues that acquisition is more effective and essential for language fluency. Digital games, as immersive environments, can promote language acquisition by encouraging learners to engage in authentic, contextualized interactions (Gee, 2003).

The second hypothesis is the natural order hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, language structures are acquired in a predictable sequence, regardless of the learner's native language (Krashen, 1982). In other words, learners tend to grasp certain language rules before others, and this order is relatively fixed across different learners.

Thirdly, the monitor hypothesis, which according to Krashen (1982), explains how the "learned" language acts as a "monitor" that learners use to edit and refine their language output. The monitor functions to correct errors and improve linguistic accuracy based on the explicit knowledge of grammar rules. However, Krashen also points out that the monitor's effectiveness depends on the time available for self-correction, the learner's focus on form, and their knowledge of grammar rules. In digital games, learners have opportunities to practice their language skills in what is often considered to be low-stakes environments, which could allow them to use their learned knowledge to refine their linguistic output, without the typical pressure from formal language learning contexts.

The fourth hypothesis is the Input Hypothesis, in which Krashen (1982) asserts that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current proficiency level. In other words, learners need to encounter language that they can mostly understand, but which also contains some unfamiliar elements that challenge them. This input is often represented as "i+1," where "i" denotes the learner's current level of competence, and "+1" signifies the next level they need to achieve. Digital games can provide this "i+1" input through adaptive difficulty levels, scaffolding, and engaging narratives, thus promoting language acquisition (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012).

Lastly, the Affective Filter Hypothesis emphasizes the role of affective factors, such as motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence, in language acquisition. A low affective filter facilitates language acquisition, while a high affective filter hinders it (Krashen, 1982).

Digital games can lower the affective filter by creating engaging, enjoyable, and low-pressure learning experiences (Cornillie et al., 2012).

Krashen's SLA theory offers valuable insights into the potential benefits of digital games as tools for L2 language learning. By providing authentic, engaging, and adaptive learning environments, digital games align with key principles of SLA theory, supporting acquisition-based, low-pressure, and scaffolded language learning experiences.

## **2.6 Extramural English Learning**

Extramural English (EE), often explained as «English outside the walls» is a concept, introduced by Sundqvist (2009) in second language acquisition that can be defined by Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) as:

*“English outside the walls, and by that we mean the English that learners come in contact with or are involved in outside the walls of the classroom. This contact or involvement is not initiated by teachers or other people working in educational institutions; the initiative for contact or involvement lies with the learner himself/herself, or at times, with someone else, such as a friend or parent” (p. 6).*

As the definition implies, EE activities are initiated by the learners themselves, where they take charge of their own learning of English, although not necessarily intentionally, but in that regard, EE is also linked to the theory of learner autonomy (Sundqvist & Sylven, 2012). Examples of activities that can typically be linked to EE, include watching films, tv series, social media and most interestingly for this thesis, playing digital games, both online and offline (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016).

Thus, the opportunities for EE are vast, and the possible learning gains are also of great interest to us in an ever-changing classroom. An analysis conducted by Peterson (2016) investigated ten studies focusing on the use of TL in MMORPGs in which players interact in real-time in a simulated virtual world. As mentioned, these games typically focus on group-based gameplay where collaboration and social interaction among players are key components to progress within the game, encouraging players to communicate by using the TL. Peterson (2016) found that players are met with the TL both in oral and written communication, which allows them to observe gaps in their TL knowledge. Within these

types of games, you may choose to play with new players, which allows for a lot of new linguistic experiences, or you may choose to play with a group consisting of the same people. Regardless of which way players choose to go, these types of games will facilitate for learning that integrates the use of ZPD, where learners get to improve their knowledge within the TL, by communicating with others. Another important point that Peterson talks about is how games in general also facilitates for both in-game and out-of-game communities, where players can gather also outside of the game in TL-based communities. These communities are mostly Discord servers, which is a voice, video, and text chat app, where people gather to pool information surrounding the game, in text channels, or voice channels, either while inside or outside of the game. Peterson's analysis concluded that participants improved their TL output by a remarkable margin over time.

Piirainen-Marsk and Tainio (2009) as cited in Sylvén & Sundqvist (2012) found similar results when investigating the language use among players of *Final Fantasy X*, which is a science-fantasy based MMORPG, where based on data from recordings of game interaction in the home environment, the researchers found that the players, who were boys aged 10-14, developed both their linguistic and interactional competence in the TL, which in the case of this study was English. The study conducted that the players reproduced, practiced, performed and played with the styles and accents of English from the different characters within the game.

Purushotma (2005) as cited in Sylvén & Sundqvist (2012) conducted a study, using himself as the object of the study, where the goal was to teach himself German, by playing the game *Sims*, a singleplayer simulation game, in the German language. Claiming himself to be a poor language learner in school, he was able to learn a certain extent of German through playing the game. He also emphasizes how this activity can be translated over to activities such as listening to music, browsing the web, as long as the activity itself provides a sense of enjoyment for the learner, stressing the importance of enjoyment of the learner as a key component for allowing learning to occur (Purushotma, 2005). Although the study is old, *Sims* still remains a very relevant game, and with the game now also being free to play, it could be presented as a great opportunity for teachers who want to implement it in their teaching. Purushotma's point of the enjoyment of the learner, also still play a very important part in motivational theories today, making the study quite relevant.

Sylvén & Sundqvist (2016) have also made tremendous contributions in the field, through a number of studies investigating the use and spread of EE among students as well as possible correlations between EE and language learning outcomes in English, in Sweden.

According to Sylvén and Sundqvist (2016) it was made clear through their studies that digital gaming played a more prominent role for L2 English learning than other types of EE (p. 133). Sundqvist (2009) investigated oral proficiency among ninth graders and found a significant correlation between high numbers of EE activities and vocabulary proficiency and oral skills. Similar results were found by Sylvén & Sundqvist (2012) when conducting a joint study on children in the fifth grade, where they conducted an analysis based on language diaries, vocabulary tests, results on national tests in English and final grades. In the results it was clear that the students who spent more time playing digital games as an EE activity, scored significantly higher on all measures than the students who only played moderately or not at all. In a similar study, conducted on fourth graders, Sylvén & Sundqvist (2014) using the same methodology as the previous study, found that the students who played digital games frequently, were also the most motivated to study English, and reported the lowest amount of speaking anxiety. The results generally, indicate that the influence of digital games as an EE activity on the TL generally is positive, not only in terms of learning, but also in the sense of lowering affective factors of importance, as just mentioned in the form of speaking anxiety, in the L2 learning process (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2016, p. 134).

## **2.7 Motivation**

People are inherently active beings, with an unending curiosity to see how their actions take effect. The same goes for students. They are intrinsically motivated to learn, undertake new challenges, and solve problems in general, just in the same way as adults. Intrinsic motivation refers to how people get involved in certain activities for the sake of inherent satisfaction, rather than doing it for external rewards (Deci & Ryan, 1985). An example of this could be playing a video game. If someone plays a video game due to the challenge and enjoyment of completing certain tasks, they are intrinsically motivated to do so. This is entirely different from extrinsic motivation, which leads to a certain behavior in a given situation due to external rewards or punishments that may result as a part of it, such as less or extra homework (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Although not mutually exclusive, this section will focus more on the intrinsic motivation in correlation with Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

The concept of intrinsic motivation is part of Self-Determination Theory, which stems from Deci & Ryan's (1985) research and is defined as a theory of motivation "that places its emphasis on people's inherent motivational propensities for learning and growing, and how

they can be supported” (Deci & Ryan, 2020, p. 1). This theory assumes that people are actively directed towards growth, and thus toward gaining knowledge and independence, through mastery and belonging with other people. This theory can therefore be listed into three different components that are fundamental to achieve growth, namely autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2020). Autonomy is referred to as the sense to feel in control of one’s actions and behaviour, competence to the feeling of mastery and interacting effectively within their environment, and relatedness to a sense of belonging in a social group (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

All these factors within SDT are extremely relevant within the context of digital games. Games can present players with choices, and provide feedback or encouragement when completing tasks, which may result in a higher chance that the player will be willing to complete the task, which is tied in with autonomy. Through progression systems, players will steadily improve through practice, letting them overcome challenges which will provide competence and the feeling of mastery. A lot of games also focus on the interactions between other real players, addressing important factors regarding relatedness and connecting with other people. These are only a few of many examples that show how video games in education can potentially be used to promote self-determination.

## **2.8 The View on Digital Games and Technology in the EFL Classroom**

As previously stated, the primary goal of this study is to examine the beliefs of game pedagogues regarding the use of digital games in EFL classrooms. To better comprehend how their perspectives may align or differ from other teachers, it is essential to explore the role digital games play in education and the overall impact of technology on teaching and learning in Norwegian classrooms. According to Lund (2009), students now meet the English in several new contexts, which can be challenging to interpret, due to how they may be characterized by different conventions related to language and culture, that is not necessarily adapted to educational settings. Additionally, students are also met with new genres of text, through the increasing use of technology.

As use of technology increases, our perception of text is also transforming. Ørevik (2018) underlines the fundamental shift in English text culture brought about by digitization (p. 241). While traditional texts, such as factual texts, short stories, and exam essays, are commonly recognized, digital games are gradually becoming part of our text culture,

potentially indicating a significant shift in teaching practices. This notion is supported by Eck (2006), who argues that today's students have become disengaged with conventional instructional methods and require multiple information channels that enable frequent and rapid interaction with content while leveraging their exceptional visual literacy skills (p. 1). Digital games possess many of these characteristics and can enhance students' learning capabilities in ways that traditional methods cannot.

Although the more traditional text culture still remains important, it is necessary to acknowledge that digitization has massively widened the range of texts being used in the EFL English classroom. This statement is supported by Lund (2009), who explains that digital resources are not just helpful within the English subject but are also a part of changing the ways in which we teach English, with the implementation of digital games being one of several.

According to Skaug, Husøy, Staaby & Nøsen (2020), digital games have previously, and to some extent still today, been associated with the idea of a reward, or a leisure activity for the students to have fun, and occasionally as a negative influence on children in general (p. 133). However, research suggests that integrating technologies such as digital games into language teaching and learning is beneficial for both teachers and learners (Li, 2020, p. 168). For learners, using digital games in a classroom setting can according to Li (2020), “*reduce anxiety, increase learner motivation and engagement, reduce workload and enhance linguistic gain*” (p. 165). Moreover, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) suggests that technology can offer a minimum of six advantages in language instruction and acquisition (Li, 2020). Firstly, technology supplies learners with high quality and genuine linguistic and cultural resources. Secondly, it can function as a cognitive instrument to support the assimilation of linguistic knowledge and the advancement of language competencies. Thirdly, technology serves as a mediating tool for learning. Fourthly, it affords students increased opportunities for interaction amongst themselves. Fifthly, technology has the potential to deliver both instantaneous and personalized feedback, particularly in the context of digital games. Finally, technology bolsters student motivation and significantly amplifies engagement.

Similar ideas are shared by Shute et al. (2009) who emphasize the capability digital games have to integrate systems that provides formative assessment to the players, while also enabling and assisting teachers when monitoring and evaluating each student's progress within the game. Formative assessment in this case, can be explained as feedback on performance that is given during the learning and playing process, which serves to modify or

guide the teaching and learning in order to improve each student's ability to improve (Heritage, 2007). An example of modification, that is often implemented into digital games by developers is referred to as "*Dynamic Game Balancing*" (DGB), which is a system that allows the difficulty of the given content within a game, to adapt based on each player's individual abilities. By using digital games that make use of DGB in the classroom, it is possible to enable differentiated learning, where students are provided with content and learning materials that are appropriate for their own language levels, while also avoiding frustration or boredom due to inappropriate difficulty levels by letting the game dynamically regulating the challenges (Andrade, et al., 2005).

Nevertheless, it's essential to recognize the potential difficulties that might arise in the implementation of digital games in the classroom. Blikstad-Balas (2019) emphasizes that the efficacy of student learning outcomes significantly depends on the practices and methodologies employed by the teacher, reinforcing the importance of teaching quality. She clarifies that mere access to technology does not guarantee learning. Instead, it is the pedagogical strategy and the underlying instructional framework that play a more substantial role than the currently available tools at the students' disposal (p. 61).

She further highlights two typical challenges encountered when integrating digital tools into teaching practice, connected to two key concepts. Firstly, digital tools are not being used sufficiently. Secondly, the digital resources that are available are often misapplied, serving as "disruptive elements" rather than helpful tools. This latter point is supported by Ørevik (2018), who proposes that digital resources, at times, can act more as a source of student distraction than a valuable tool for information on academic subjects (p. 250).

## **2.9 Teacher Beliefs**

Teacher cognitions can be defined as "*what teachers think, know and believe and the relationship of these mental constructs to what teachers do in the language teaching classroom*" (Borg, 2003, p. 1).

Teacher beliefs play a crucial role in shaping classroom practices and instructional decisions. Beliefs, as personal constructs, guide the way teachers perceive, interpret, and respond to various educational phenomena, ultimately influencing their pedagogical approaches (Pajares, 1992). Understanding the nature and development of teacher beliefs is essential in exploring their impact on teaching practices, particularly in the context of using digital games for language learning. However, as Borg (2018) points out, as teachers hold



many beliefs in general about a variety of issues such as the teaching itself, their students and different subject matters, studying the concept of beliefs is a rather complex task. These beliefs may also be held tacitly by teachers, making it even more challenging to study them in a practical manner to see if they are consistent with each teachers' beliefs. It is for that reason, incredibly important when attempting to study the beliefs of teachers, to distinguish between professed beliefs, and enacted beliefs, or rather what teachers say they do, and what they do in practice. According to Borg (2018), studies have shown that there often occur discrepancies between the two, which is also clearly shown in the research previously done on teacher beliefs on the use of digital games as a language learning tool.

Nonetheless, there are multiple reasons to study beliefs and practices. Borg (2018) suggests that one reason is to help teachers recognize gaps in their beliefs and practices, potentially prompting a realization about their professed and enacted beliefs and leading to changes in practice if necessary. Additionally, insights into teachers' beliefs and practices can be valuable for determining the extent to which teachers' cognition and professional work align with good practices as defined in the literature or whether professional development is needed. Moreover, examining beliefs and practices and the potential discrepancies between them can provide insights into the effectiveness of innovation in terms of practice. Furthermore, if teachers' practices are deemed ineffective, studying their beliefs can aid in understanding the rationale behind such practices. Collectively, the importance of exploring and addressing these various aspects will have significant implications for the design of future pre-service teacher education programs, potentially resulting in improved teaching practices overall. Finally, Borg (2018) argues that teaching is more effective when beliefs and practices are consistent but emphasizes the need for caution when defining effective practice and the importance of having a clear rationale for further investigation.

In the context of digital games for language learning, teachers' beliefs about the educational value of games, their perceived efficacy in using digital games, and their understanding of the relationship between gaming and language learning can affect their adoption and implementation of digital games in the classroom. Teachers who hold positive beliefs about the potential of digital games for language learning may be more inclined to integrate them into their teaching practices, whereas those who harbor skepticism or doubt may resist such integration (Ertmer, 2005).

Research suggests that teachers' beliefs about digital games can be influenced by several factors, including their experiences with games, their attitudes towards technology, their knowledge of game-based learning research, and their perceptions of students' gaming

habits (Bourgonjon et al., 2013). In addition, teachers' beliefs about their ability to integrate digital games into their instructional practices, known as self-efficacy beliefs, can also impact their willingness to use games in the classroom (Bandura, 1997). Teachers with higher self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to experiment with new pedagogical approaches, persevere in the face of challenges, and adapt their teaching strategies to meet the needs of their students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

It is essential to recognize that teacher beliefs are not static but can evolve over time as a result of professional development, reflection, and changes in context (Calderhead, 1996). Therefore, understanding and addressing teacher beliefs about digital games for language learning is a critical aspect of fostering the effective integration of games in educational settings. Providing opportunities for teachers to engage with research on game-based learning, reflect on their beliefs, and receive training and support in using digital games can help promote a more positive and informed perspective on the use of games in language learning (Kenny & McDaniel, 2011).

Teacher beliefs have a significant impact on the integration of digital games into language learning practices. A deeper understanding of these beliefs and the factors that influence them can help educators, policymakers, and researchers develop strategies to support the effective adoption of digital games in language learning contexts, which is the intended purpose of the current thesis. As the use of digital games in education continues to grow, examining and addressing teacher beliefs will remain an essential aspect of enhancing language learning experiences for students.

## **2.10 Learners Beliefs**

In this thesis, learner beliefs will also be investigated. Learner beliefs as defined by Kalaja, Barcelos and Aro (2018, p. 222) “*refers to the conceptions, ideas and opinions learners have about L2 learning and teaching and language itself*”. The definition is acknowledged as rather broad, due to the fact that the term has been studied from various perspectives where the definitions changes based on the aims and design of a given study. For the scope of this thesis however, it would be practical to look into Lightbown & Spada’s (2006, p. 91) definition as well, who share the same ideas suggesting that all learners have certain beliefs regarding how they believe the teaching would be the most effective. However, their definition focuses especially on how “*beliefs that are based on previous learning experiences*

*and the assumption that a particular type of learning is the best one for them to learn*". This definition allows the researcher to look more directly into learners' experiences using digital video games as a resource, and to what extent the learners found it to be useful or not, and compare it with other types of teaching practice, in order to challenge and or confirm their beliefs.

Learner beliefs play a crucial role in language learning, as they can influence motivation, learning strategies, and overall success in second language acquisition (Horwitz, 1987; Dörnyei, 2005). Understanding the beliefs that learners hold about language learning can help educators design more effective instructional strategies and create learning environments that foster positive attitudes and better language learning outcomes. Closely related to learner beliefs is the concept of learner autonomy, which according to Benson (2013) refers to the ability and willingness of a learner to take control of their own learning process. In the context of language learning, learner autonomy involves learners taking an active role in their language development by practicing independently, reflecting on their language use, and seeking out opportunities to improve their proficiency. It is argued that autonomous learners are more likely to be motivated and persistent in their L2 learning (Benson, 2013), and that learner autonomy is rooted in the belief that individuals learn most effectively when they are motivated, engaged, and responsible for their own learning experiences, which is why learner beliefs must be considered.

Learner beliefs about language learning can be shaped by a variety of factors, including personal experiences, cultural background, and educational context (Wenden, 1991). These beliefs may be conscious or subconscious, and they can significantly affect learners' motivation, learning strategies, and the way they approach language learning tasks (Horwitz, 1987; Dörnyei, 2005). Research has shown that students with positive beliefs about their language learning abilities and the process of language learning tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation and engagement, leading to better learning outcomes (Pajares, 1992; Dörnyei, 2005). Conversely, students with negative beliefs about language learning may become less motivated and less likely to persist in their language learning efforts (Horwitz, 1987). Learner beliefs are important both for future research into how to provide good teaching practice, but also for teachers in order to challenge their own beliefs. Understanding and addressing learner beliefs is essential in language learning, as these beliefs can significantly impact motivation, learning strategies, and overall success. Dörnyei (2005) supports this notion, emphasizing the correlation between learners' beliefs and their efficacy in L2 language acquisition, thereby underlining the importance of investigating this area.

There are some challenges however, as the complexities of the relationship between learner beliefs and practices have only increased, as highlighted by Kajala, Barcelos and Aro (2018), making it increasingly difficult to investigate.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The following sections of this chapter present the research tools and methods used for gathering data to answer the research questions presented in the introduction of the thesis. As outlined in the introduction chapter, the current thesis addresses the following research questions:

- What beliefs do lower secondary school game pedagogues have about the use of digital games in EFL learning?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' beliefs about the challenges and concerns associated with the implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' practices regarding the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What beliefs do lower secondary school students have about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?

In order to collect the data for the current mixed-methods study, interviews and a student questionnaire will be employed. Section 3.2 outlines the research design chosen for this thesis and the reasoning behind employing mixed methods. Section 3.3 elaborates on qualitative research and the interview approach adopted for this thesis, detailing how the researcher intends to conduct the interviews. Section 3.4 defines quantitative research and data collection through a student questionnaire. Section 3.5 describes the sampling method employed in this thesis and the process of selecting participants. Section 3.6 explains the procedures for obtaining and managing audio recordings and transcriptions throughout the thesis. Section 3.7 discusses the analysis of the collected data. Section 3.8 addresses the validity and reliability of the findings for the current thesis. Finally, section 3.9 examines the research ethics associated with this thesis.

### 3.2 Research Design

This study was conducted using a mixed methods approach to collect the necessary data. Mixed methods research, as defined by Dörnyei (2007), refers to "*some sort of combination of qualitative and quantitative methods within a single research project*" (p. 44). The thesis collected qualitative data through semi-structured teacher interviews and quantitative data in the form of a student questionnaire. Qualitative research often involves the collection of non-numerical, open-ended data that is primarily analyzed through non-statistical procedures (Dörnyei, 2007, p.24). Conversely, quantitative research typically involves gathering numerical data that is subjected to statistical analysis. Creswell (2015) characterizes it as "a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables" (p. 247). Creswell (2015) further defines mixed-methods research as:

*"An approach to research in the social, behavioral, and health sciences in which investigators gather both quantitative (close-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data, integrate the two, and then draw interpretations based on the combined strengths of both sets of data to understand research problems"* (p. 2).

Numerous researchers advocate the use of mixed methods due to various advantages. As Christensen & Johnson (2019) explains, qualitative and quantitative methodologies complement each other, capitalizing on the strengths of each approach. In this way, the advantages of one method can counterbalance the limitations of the other, yielding a variety of data and knowledge types. The mixed methods approach also enables researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of intricate research topics by merging the numerical data derived from quantitative strategies with the more profound and focused data obtained from qualitative strategies. Additionally, the validity of a study can be enhanced through mixed-methods research, as it generates evidence from two disparate research methods that converge in the results. This idea is supported by Christensen & Johnson (2019), who state that "*when combining two or more research methods with different strengths and weaknesses in a research study, it could potentially make it less likely to miss out on something important or making a mistake*" (p. 50). It is also worth noting that when combining qualitative and quantitative methods, researchers may reach a larger audience.

As mentioned by Christensen & Johnson (2019), having two separate research methods complementing each other means that the sum of the two may be greater than its parts. Although there is research supporting this idea, there is also a need to address the potential weaknesses of mixed methods research. Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2006) in Dörnyei (2007) suggest that the sum of the two may not necessarily be greater than its parts, arguing that it is difficult for a researcher to master and be equally skilled in using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, which could result in mistakes or overlooked findings.

While the mixed methods approach has potential limitations, its numerous strengths made it an appropriate choice for this specific study. As Dörnyei (2007) explains, questionnaires provide time-efficiency, enabling the researcher to collect quantitative data that characterizes the student population while concurrently conducting interviews. The questionnaire was digitally disseminated to four different lower secondary school classes across four different schools. Simultaneously, interviews were conducted with four game pedagogues, each from different lower secondary schools.

This methodology enabled a comprehensive examination of both the beliefs of game pedagogues and their students, as well as their instructional practices. This comprehensive examination would have either been too time-consuming or lacked sufficient depth if a single approach had been adopted. The qualitative strategy facilitated an in-depth exploration of game pedagogues' beliefs and their approaches to the use of digital games in the classroom. While on the other hand, the quantitative technique permitted the efficient collection of a large volume of numerical data concerning the students' beliefs.

### **3.3 Sampling**

In order to gather qualitative data for the thesis, the researcher has stated that interviews will be conducted with four game pedagogues who actively work as English teachers in lower secondary school.

For this thesis, the researcher will make use of a non-probability sampling technique, focusing on the individual, providing an in-depth representation of the participants experiences, using a criterion sampling strategy, which is a purposive, specific sampling technique. Criterion sampling was used for this thesis due to how it intentionally samples a group of people based on certain qualities they possess, making them the most capable of contributing to the research in order to answer the research questions (Miyahara, 2020, as cited in McKinley & Rose, 2020, p. 55). As Dörnyei (2007) states, it is common to use

purposive sampling for qualitative research, meaning that the researcher relies on their own judgement to choose the participants for the study (p. 127). In order to get participants for the study, the researcher made use of his own personal network, consisting of game pedagogues from various schools around the local area appropriate for the study. These participants were chosen because they had the characteristics and necessary experience needed to answer the research questions, making this a purposeful sampling with a criterion strategy (Dörnyei, 2007). The researcher made contact through e-mail and Microsoft Teams to reach out to possible participants. Four game pedagogues from four different schools agreed to participate in the study, as well as 102 students across four different classes. All four game pedagogues were male, although the researcher attempted to include more variety to both gender and experience. Their years of experience are presented in Table 1 below.

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>
Teacher 1	4
Teacher 2	6
Teacher 3	4
Teacher 4	3

### **3.4 Interviews**

The present study aims to investigate game pedagogues' beliefs and their practices surrounding the use of digital games in the classroom. For that reason, interviews have been chosen as a data collection method, seeing as the main purpose of an interview is to obtain a certain type of information as stated by Merriam & Tisdell (2015). According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) in Brinkmann (2014), qualitative research interviews can be defined as “an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena” (p. 286-287).

It can be however, as noted by Kagan (1992) challenging to study beliefs due to the fact that they are tacit and for that reason not easily observable in themselves, possibly



making it hard to articulate for the interviewee as well. This is pointed out by Patton (2015) as well, who states that when interviewing, the researcher is trying to find out what is on someone else's mind, and that certain concepts and ideas cannot be observed themselves. It is therefore important when planning interviews, to choose an appropriate method of conducting interviews that will allow the researcher to gather valid and authentic data, allowing the interviewee to articulate and expand on their ideas, without being locked to very specific questions, which is why the researcher has chosen a semi-structured interview method.

The reasoning behind choosing a semi-structured format for the interview section lies in the possibility of knowledge-producing potentials that dialogues provide, where the interviewer is given more freedom to follow up on interesting angles, rephrasing questions and adjusting as the interview proceeds, with the interviewee being free to participate in the process itself, rather than being locked to a pre-set interview guide (Brinkmann, 2020). Also, the semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to guide the conversation towards the issues that he or she considers important within the proposed thesis, which is crucial when focusing on beliefs.

Borg (2015) argues that a semi-structured interview format, allows the researcher to interpret the participants experiences surrounding the topic from their point of view, and present these experiences in their own words, by encouraging the interviewee through engaging two-way conversations. Additionally, Borg (2012) mentions that semi-structured interviews are often used in teacher cognition research, and Dörnyei (2007) also states that semi structured interviews are also the most used type of interviews in applied linguistic research, which is also another reason for the researcher to apply it within this thesis.

Although the interviews for this thesis will maintain an open-ended format, Dörnyei (2007) emphasizes the importance of preparing a detailed interview guide, which is why for this thesis, the researcher has created an interview guide, that will serve as a guide for both the researcher and interviewee, which they can fall back on, but that also ensures that every participant will respond to the same type of questions, while not delving too much into other topics, as suggested by Patton (2015, p. 439). It is still important to emphasize, that although an interview guide is provided, the interviewees will be encouraged to elaborate on concepts they find particularly important or interesting, which may result in follow-up questions by the researcher, with the option of guiding the interview back to the guide when deemed necessary. For this reason, it is appropriate to categorize this method of conducting interviews as a semi-structured interview (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 136). Additionally, Dörnyei

(2007) explains that the semi-structured interview is suitable for whenever the researcher has a good enough overview of the topic that is being researched and is therefore able to produce questions about the topic in advance, while not making use of pre-made response categories which can potentially limit the depth of the respondent's answers and ideas. Due to the background of the researcher as a lecturer on the use of digital games both in a pedagogical setting, as well as other settings, the semi-structured interview form is also deemed suitable for the topic that is being researched.

The interview guide consists of four separate sections (see Appendix 3). According to Dörnyei (2007), the first questions in an interview are important to set the tone, which is why the researcher has opted to start off the interview with some simple introductory questions, that aims to make the interviewee feel comfortable. By talking about a subject that both the researcher and interviewee find interesting, the researcher aims to enable the interviewees to open up and engage in a conversation that leads the interview into its main section, focusing on beliefs and practices.

The introductory questions for the game pedagogues will sound as following:

- How long have you been working as a game pedagogue?
- How and what made you decide to become a game pedagogue?
- Have you gone through specific education or courses to become a game pedagogue?
- Do you enjoy being a game pedagogue?
- Can you elaborate a bit about your job as a game pedagogue, and if there are any differences as to being a “normal” teacher?

The second section of the interview guide was designed to investigate the game pedagogues' beliefs surrounding the use of digital games in language learning and teaching, by asking questions such as “Do you have any general thoughts surrounding digital games in the EFL classroom, and how does it work as a tool for language learning?” and “Do you think the students are more motivated to learn English when digital games are being applied?”.

The third theme focused on the implementation of digital games in their teaching practice. Additionally, questions regarding the amounts of use are of interest to the researcher as well as perceived challenges and concerns such as time, equipment, experience and so on, that are highlighted in previous research as gatekeepers for teachers who may be interested to dive in. Some of the questions focus on practice, such as “What types of games do you

usually use?”, “Are some games better suited than others?”, “What type of games do you recommend staying away from?” and “What types of games get the best response from the students, in terms of motivation, effectiveness and other general points of importance?” The last theme focused on personal reflections on their experiences and the future of digital games in education as a teaching approach.

The interviews were conducted in Norwegian, allowing the participants to convey their responses with accuracy and as comprehensively as possible, in order to generate as authentic data as possible.

### **3.5 Questionnaire**

In this thesis, the researcher employed a questionnaire to collect quantitative numerical data, along with some student-focused qualitative data. A questionnaire is defined as "any written instrument that presents respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (Brown, 2001, in Barnard & Burns, 2012, p. 31). According to Dörnyei, questionnaires are one of the most common methods of data collection for research within second language learning. One of the strengths of questionnaires is their ease of construction, which allows the researcher to gather data efficiently while ensuring the anonymity of the participants (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2011).

To protect the participants' anonymity and avoid any ethical concerns, a SurveyXact questionnaire was used. This data collection tool, recommended by the University of Stavanger, ensured the anonymity of the respondents was handled professionally. The students were provided with an introductory text explaining the project, the reason for their participation, and how their answers would contribute to the research. The student questionnaire comprised nineteen close-ended questions aimed at understanding lower secondary English students' beliefs regarding the use of digital games as an effective tool for language learning in the EFL classroom. Additionally, four open-ended questions allowed the students to express themselves more fully, providing greater insight for the researcher into the beliefs of students of game pedagogues. Before collecting the data from the questionnaire, a pilot was conducted by twelve students in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade in a lower secondary school, who were not affiliated with the study. The pilot found that the questions were clear and easy to

understand, but had some questions that was deemed repetitive, resulting in changes prior to the data collection by the researcher.

The questionnaire was written in Norwegian to accommodate the lower secondary school students who may have faced challenges due to a lack of necessary vocabulary to complete the form in English, which could have led to misunderstandings and unclear responses. Consequently, the questions were designed to be simple and straightforward.

A five-item Likert-scale questionnaire was applied (Wagner, 2015), which consisted of close-ended statements with five response options (see Appendix 4) Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed (Dörnyei, 2009, p.27). The response options available to the students were: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. Following the first section of nineteen close-ended statements, the respondents answered the following open-ended questions:

- What do you believe are the biggest advantages of using digital games when it comes to your own personal English language learning?
- What do you believe are the biggest disadvantages of using digital games when it comes to your own personal English language learning?
- Why do you personally believe you learn more/less by using digital games in the English classroom?
- If you play digital games at home, do you believe it has helped you to improve in the English subject in school? If so, why?

### **3.6 Audio-Recordings and Transcription**

In this study, four interviews were carried out using Microsoft Teams as the primary platform, allowing both the researcher and the participants to connect remotely. This method facilitated increased convenience and scheduling flexibility for the respondents. The interviews were recorded using an audio device capable of capturing sound from the computer speakers and the researcher's own voice.

As highlighted by Dörnyei (2007), it is essential to record interviews since notetaking alone may not capture all the subtle aspects of personal meaning, and it can also interrupt the flow of the interview (p. 139). Furthermore, it is critical to consider the potential discomfort some individuals may have with being recorded, necessitating a discussion with the

interviewees before proceeding. In the present study, the researcher informed participants about the audio recording beforehand and obtained required ethical approvals, including consent from the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt) (See Appendix 1).

During the interviews, the audio recording device was set up to capture the exchange between the researcher and the participants. Following the interviews, the researcher transcribed the recordings for data analysis purposes. Dörnyei (2007) notes that qualitative data analysis primarily deals with words and language-based materials, with the initial step being the conversion of the audio recording into a text format.

The study employed the intelligent verbatim transcription method, which allowed for the omission of discourse fillers, pauses, and markers while still maintaining the integrity of the participants' beliefs and reported practices (Eppich et al., 2019). This technique differs from true verbatim transcription, in which every spoken utterance is recorded textually (Eppich et al., 2019). The intelligent verbatim transcription method prioritizes the content of the participants' messages over their manner of expression, ensuring the accuracy and readability of their responses.

Due to ethical considerations and confidentiality, the transcriptions were not included in the appendix. Researchers should be cautious when working with transcripts, as Kvale (1998), cited in Gibbs (2018), warns that potential issues may arise when transitioning from spoken interviews to written transcripts. These concerns include superficial coding, decontextualization, neglecting what preceded or followed a respondent's account, and overlooking the broader conversation context. It is crucial for researchers to be aware of these challenges and strive to transcribe and interpret interviews as accurately and genuinely as possible.

### **3.7 Analyzing and Categorizing the Data**

Upon completing the step of data collection and transcription from the interviews, the following phase involved coding and analyzing the data. Stake (1995), as cited in Dörnyei (2007), defines analysis as a "matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations." In this thesis, the analysis aimed to derive meaningful insights from the information gathered through interviews and questionnaires. As mentioned previously, the data for the current thesis was gathered through a mixed methods approach, including both

qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews, as well as quantitative data through a student questionnaire. In order to sort the interviews, the researcher will label them based on numbers from one to four, according to when the interview took place.

Categorization, or coding, is the process of breaking down large amounts of data into smaller, more manageable segments (Bailey, 2007, p. 127). Dörnyei (2007) asserts that it is essential to maintain clarity when coding, as the purpose of categorization is defeated if the meaning of a code is not immediately evident.

For this thesis, a two-stage coding approach was used, consisting of initial coding and second-level coding (Dörnyei, 2007). The initial coding process involved reviewing the interview transcripts multiple times to gain an overall understanding of the data and become acquainted with the participants' answers (Dörnyei, 2007). This step facilitated the identification of emerging themes and patterns within the data.

During initial coding, various colors were used to emphasize relevant sections in the transcripts, aiding in the organization of the material. This method helped in uncovering key themes and patterns related to the research questions.

Following the initial coding, second-level coding was conducted. This stage involved reexamining the initially coded data to refine the codes, ensuring clarity and consistency (Dörnyei, 2007). Second-level coding also allowed for further exploration of themes and patterns identified in the initial stage, offering a deeper understanding of participants' views and practices concerning digital games in EFL classrooms.

In terms of quantitative data analysis, the five-item Likert scale response options were assigned numerical values from 1 to 5. This process facilitated the analysis of questionnaire data by quantifying the responses and enabling statistical tables. The numerical assignment allowed for a clear understanding of the participants' perspectives and facilitated the identification of trends within the data.

By employing both initial and second-level coding, as well as quantitative data analysis, the data collected from interviews and questionnaires was systematically organized and examined. This approach effectively addressed the research questions and provided valuable insights into the beliefs and practices of lower secondary school game pedagogues and their students.

### 3.8 Validity and reliability

When conducting research, validity and reliability are two main components that are tied closely together, which the researcher must address regarding the methodology chosen for the research project as well as the results. Validity can be explained as a measurement, that determines if the research is conducted in ways that are validated and pre-defined, if the research measured what it was supposed to, and whether the results are trustworthy and factual or not (Golafshani, 2003). For that reason, it is also important that the researcher informs the readers of the different methods being used to collect the data, how the data has been treated, and if there were any anomalies in the present study. Golafshani (2003) states that it can be more challenging to evaluate the validity of qualitative research compared to quantitative research. This has to do with the fact that qualitative research aims to gain insight into individuals' experiences, behaviors and most importantly for this thesis, beliefs, which are all abstract phenomena's that cannot be measured and evaluated similarly to the way you deal with quantitative research (Golafshani, 2003). It is for that reason important as a researcher to take steps to minimize factors that can potentially harm the validity of the research.

Although this cannot fully be ensured by researchers (Golafshani, 2003), evaluating the validity of a study can be done by looking at both the internal and external validity of the research, and is considered an important step one can take as a researcher in order to make sure the research is trustworthy. Dörnyei (2007) states that a research study has internal validity if "*the outcome is a function of the variables that are measured, controlled or manipulated in the study*" (p. 52). External validity, on the other hand, is "*the extent to which we can generalize our findings to a larger group, to other contexts or to different times*" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 52). Explained differently, a study is therefore considered externally invalid, if the results cannot be applied to settings other than the ones in which they were found. Due to how low the sample size of the game pedagogues is, although there is a limited amount of game pedagogues in total, due to it being a rather new title, it could be argued that the external validity of the current thesis may be challenged due to this factor, and that it is not possible to generalize the potential findings to a larger group for that reason.

Reliability is understood as to what degree a result is repeatable and reproducible, and according to Morse & Richard (2002) as cited in Dörnyei, (2007) "*requires that the same result would be obtained if the study were replicated*" (p. 57). Reliability is an essential aspect of research, as it ensures the consistency and dependability of the study's results. In

this study, several measures were taken to strengthen the reliability of the research. Data collection procedures were standardized to ensure consistency across interviews and questionnaires. For the interviews, a pre-defined interview guide with open-ended questions was used to guarantee that all participants were asked the same set of questions in a consistent manner. Similarly, a standardized questionnaire with clear instructions and Likert scale response options was employed to ensure uniformity in the way participants responded to the items. The questionnaire was piloted before the main data collection to identify potential issues, such as ambiguous or unclear questions, and to allow for refinements to be made. By conducting testing of the questionnaire with a small sample of participants, the researcher ensured that the data collection tools were appropriate, clear, and effective. The pilot was done by 12 students in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade class in a lower secondary school that was not affiliated with the study. The students reported that the questionnaire was clear and easy to understand, but that some questions seemed repetitive and had already been answered, resulting in a couple of necessary changes before the actual data collection.

Transparency was maintained throughout the research process, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Bryman (2016) emphasizes the significance of transparency and the need for researchers to provide clear, detailed accounts of their research methods, as well as the rationale behind their decisions. By following such an approach, the researcher enables readers to evaluate the trustworthiness of the study, contributing to the overall credibility of the research. The game pedagogues who participated in the interviews were provided with information about the overarching themes of the study prior to the interview. However, they were not given explicit details about the specific questions they would be asked during the interview. The researcher made a conscious effort to ensure authenticity by maintaining neutrality throughout the interviews and refraining from expressing personal beliefs or asking leading questions. The participating teachers were assured anonymity and were not offered any financial incentives or other forms of personal gain or recognition for their involvement in the study. This approach minimized any potential biases and contributed to the overall integrity and validity of the research. Furthermore, the researcher documented any challenges encountered and the decisions made in response to these challenges, enhancing the credibility of the research (Dörnyei, 2007).

In the present study, all data were gathered and analyzed by the researcher independently. While research credibility is often enhanced by involving multiple researchers in the data gathering process, the adoption of a mixed methods approach in this study helped ensure the reliability of the findings. As mentioned previously, the use of both qualitative and



quantitative methods of data collection allowed for the strengths of one approach to compensate for the weaknesses of the other. As a result, the mixed-methods approach employed in this study contributed to enhancing the internal and external validity of the research as well as the reliability of the results obtained.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

In this section, the focus is on outlining the various ethical considerations that have been taken into account throughout this study. Educational research, as a subset of social research, involves people's lives and is consequently subject to ethical concerns (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 63). As a result, it is essential to address ethical considerations in every aspect of the research, including planning, data collection, analysis, and reporting.

According to Dörnyei (2007), mixed-methods studies are more likely to face ethical dilemmas. For that reason, in this study, careful attention has been paid to data collection methods, anonymity, confidentiality, data handling, and data ownership for both qualitative and quantitative phases. For example, the identities of the participants in the quantitative phase were protected through the use of an anonymized questionnaire feature in SurveyXact. In January 2023, the researcher applied for and received approval from the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (Sikt) to conduct this research (see Appendix 1). Sikt is responsible for ensuring that data related to people and society can be collected, stored, and shared in a safe and legal manner, as well as for certifying research projects in Norway. Sikt adheres to high standards concerning ethical and legal guidelines, and several ethical concerns were considered before receiving approval.

One of the primary ethical considerations in any study is informed consent (Dörnyei, 2007). Participants need to be fully informed about the research to make an informed decision about whether they wish to participate (Seidman, 2013, p. 64). The researcher aimed to explore the participants' beliefs and experiences concerning the use of digital games as an effective tool in L2 language learning. To ensure the participants' fully informed consent, the researcher drafted information letters for the teachers and the students, which were approved by Sikt (See Appendix 2). These letters informed the participants about the study's purpose, procedures in place to protect their confidentiality, how their responses would be managed, and their rights to withdraw or request changes during the study.

In this thesis, the identities of all game pedagogues were maintained as strictly confidential. The game pedagogues' identities were coded with as Teacher 1 (T1), Teacher 2

(T2), etc., and the schools' names and any other personal information were not published. Moreover, as the students attended lower secondary school, Sikt made sure that the researcher made use of appropriate data material collection, and that the students were truly anonymous throughout the study. For that reason, Sikt abandoned the need for a consent form for the questionnaire for the students but made sure the researcher made it clear on the first page of the questionnaire that it was entirely optional to participate, the purpose of the study, as well as the students' right to withdraw at any time during the questionnaire.

Throughout the research process, only the researcher had access to sensitive data, including recordings, transcriptions, and signed consent letters. All digital information was kept in a password-encrypted hard drive. After the study was completed in May, all materials were deleted. The quantitative data, collected in the form of questionnaires, was stored in SurveyXact and kept anonymized for the entire duration of the study to preserve confidentiality.

## **4. Findings**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the findings derived from the current study, which explores the beliefs of gaming pedagogues about the use of digital games in lower secondary EFL classrooms, their reported practices, and learners' beliefs regarding the application of digital games as language learning tools. As described in the methodology chapter, a mixed-method approach was employed to collect data for this study. Section 4.2 details the findings related to gaming pedagogues, which have been organized according to the structure of the interviews, divided into four sections. Section 4.2.1 offers an overview of the gaming pedagogues' educational backgrounds and roles. Section 4.2.2 presents the findings concerning the gaming pedagogues' beliefs about employing digital games as a tool in EFL classrooms. Section 4.2.3 summarizes the reported practices of gaming pedagogues. Section 4.2.4 discusses the gaming pedagogues' perspectives on challenges and concerns associated with the use of digital games. Finally, Section 4.3 provides the results from the student questionnaire, shedding light on their beliefs regarding the implementation of digital games in the classroom.

### **4.2 Teacher Interviews**

The table below presents a general overview of the findings related to the gaming pedagogues' answers and is organized according to the research questions.

**Table 1***Overview of the gaming pedagogy findings*

	<b>RQ 1: Beliefs about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom</b>	<b>RQ2: Beliefs about the challenges and concerns, and suggested ideas</b>	<b>RQ3: Reported Practices</b>
<b>Teacher 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive</li> <li>- Motivates and increases engagement</li> <li>- Improves reading, writing and communication skills</li> <li>- Cultural relevance</li> <li>- Reduce awkwardness in communication</li> <li>- Facilitates creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acknowledges the time investment.</li> <li>- Start small,</li> <li>- Use easy games,</li> <li>- Employ Whole Class Gaming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commercial games and puzzle games for the most part</li> <li>- Avoid excessive use, implement when appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive</li> <li>- Motivates and increases engagement</li> <li>- Improves reading, writing and communication skills</li> <li>- Implementing EE activities may have a positive effect.</li> <li>- Facilitates creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acknowledges the time investment.</li> <li>- Employ browser games, whole class gaming.</li> <li>- Share teaching plans with colleagues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commercial games and Edutainment games for the most part</li> <li>- Implements DGBLL atleast monthly</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive</li> <li>- Motivates and increases engagement</li> <li>- Improves reading, writing and communication skills</li> <li>- Enjoyable and effective</li> <li>- Facilitates creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acknowledges the time investment.</li> <li>- Several funding options</li> <li>Start small</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commercial games for the most part</li> <li>- Applies DGBLL during larger projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive</li> <li>- Motivates and increases engagement</li> <li>- Improves reading, writing and communication skills</li> <li>- Learning through progression</li> <li>- Less intimidating</li> <li>- Easier to practice</li> <li>- Facilitates creativity through active decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acknowledges the time investment.</li> <li>- Borrow equipment to test out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any types of games</li> <li>- Implements as frequently as possible</li> </ul>

As the table shows, there were a lot of similarities among the gaming pedagogues answers. While they all had positive beliefs and believed digital games could both be motivating and increase student engagement, there was a difference in the amount of implementation among them. The gaming pedagogues also generally favored commercial games. However, a widespread range of genres were found to be used depending on the topic. Time investment was deemed a common challenge among all the gaming pedagogues.

#### 4.2.1 Educational Background and views on the role of a gaming pedagogue.

The present study's qualitative data collection involved interviewing four lower secondary teachers employed at four distinct schools. Teacher 1 (T1) possessed 4 years of teaching experience and instructed Social Studies and English, having dedicated both their BA and MA degrees to examining the application of games as educational tools. Teacher 2 (T2) had 6 years of experience in lower secondary education, teaching English and English Specialization subjects. Both T1 and T2 also had ICT integrated into their professional roles. Teacher 3 (T3) had 4 years of teaching experience in English and English specialization, while Teacher 4 (T4) had been an English teacher for 3 years, with additional prior experience as an educator specializing in the use of games in the English classroom during their studies.

A common feature among the gaming pedagogues was their relatively recent entry into the education field, with only T2 possessing over 5 years of experience in lower secondary education. Only T1 and T3 had completed specific courses to become gaming pedagogues. However, all of them had a background in playing games, which they cited as a significant factor in their pursuit of becoming gaming pedagogues. Although T2 and T4 had not undertaken any specific courses or training to become gaming pedagogues, their experience with using games as teaching tools, both before and during their teaching careers, qualified them to participate in this study. This is particularly relevant considering the novelty of the gaming pedagogue title in Norway.

When discussing their perspectives on the role of a gaming pedagogue and how it diverges from that of a traditional teacher, T1 underscored that the primary distinction lies in the possession of a sought-after skill set or expertise not yet prevalent among the broader teaching community. Approximately 50% of T1's position is dedicated to game pedagogy,

which entails assisting other teachers in incorporating games into their teaching and developing and testing game-based curricula. Describing their role, T1 stated:

"I have become a valuable resource at work and within the local community, allowing me to travel and speak about the use of games, provide guidance to other teachers and schools on digital game-based language learning, and participate in presentations and practice sessions" (Teacher 1).

A shared belief among all the gaming pedagogues, as articulated by T2, is that designing and implementing game-based lessons is more labor-intensive and intricate than conventional teaching methods. T2 elaborated on how gaming pedagogues need to search for appropriate games, test them, choose one to utilize, and then devise a teaching plan around it. Both T3 and T4 also emphasized that the planning before and after the sessions was a significant difference, along with the increased difficulty in improvising when something does not go according to plan during the session. Notably, all the gaming pedagogues worked at schools with dedicated computer rooms, which meant they spent considerable time on maintenance tasks, such as ensuring computers had up-to-date drivers and games

#### 4.2.2 Gaming Pedagogues Beliefs about the use of Digital Games in the EFL Classroom

This section presents the findings of the study regarding the four gaming pedagogues' beliefs concerning the use of digital games in the EFL classroom. The responses of the four teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4) have been analyzed to identify similarities and different patterns that emerged from their perspectives.

The four teachers expressed positive views on the use of digital games in school for language learning purposes. They concurred that digital games possess the potential to serve as effective tools for teaching English as a foreign language. However, their specific reasons for this belief varied a bit among them. T1 emphasized the cultural relevance of digital games and the importance of incorporating them into education, considering the prevalence of gaming culture among students. However, they did not advocate for using games excessively for learning purposes but suggested incorporating them where appropriate, just like any other media form. T1 also noted that games can help reduce awkwardness in certain learning activities but also the importance of understanding that playing games does not automatically

improve language skills. Similarly, T2 highlighted the students' familiarity with gaming outside of school and the potential for harnessing that within the school for educational purposes. They also pointed out that most students engaged in some form of gaming, which could be beneficial for language learning, sharing the same beliefs as T1. Meanwhile, T3 found digital games to be enjoyable and effective, particularly since they are a relatively new approach to language learning. They also believed that digital game-based language learning could be applied to teaching various language skills, including reading, writing and communication. This belief was shared among all the teachers, but T1 and T2 emphasized the role of the teacher for such success. T4 focused on the idea that digital games can promote language learning by requiring students to understand and use English to progress in the game. They also mentioned that using English in games might be less intimidating for students than in formal settings, making it easier for them to practice.

In terms of perceptions of the impact of digital games on student motivation to learn English, the teachers unanimously agreed that digital games can enhance students' motivation to learn English. However, they also recognized that the degree of motivation varies among students and is contingent upon the type of game and the pedagogical approach employed. T1 emphasized that digital games could be highly motivating for some students but not universally appealing. They stressed the importance of understanding students' diverse preferences and shared an anecdote of students losing motivation while playing the game "Never Alone". Due to a poorly designed game which resulted in them continuously failing to progress because of flaws within the game and unresponsiveness. T1 was also clear to mention that "games themselves are not necessarily motivating", emphasizing the importance that the teacher makes clear frames for how to use the games, and using the games to learn something, rather than only for entertainment purposes. T2 reported that approximately 95% of their students were more motivated when digital games were incorporated into English lessons, according to a survey they had completed at their school, there was also notable increased student engagement whenever games were made use of. T3 and T4 both contended that digital games foster motivation by blurring the lines between play and learning, thus creating a more enjoyable and engaging learning environment.

When asked whether the teachers believed digital games could facilitate more creative language learning, all four educators acknowledged the potential of digital games to facilitate creativity in language learning. Nevertheless, they also highlighted that the extent to which creativity is promoted depends on the game selection and the pedagogical framework implemented. T1 argued that digital games can enable creative language learning, but this is

contingent upon the teacher's ability to select suitable games and create effective learning experiences. He also emphasizes the interactivity that games provide in general, noting that “it is easy for students to become passive in traditional classroom instruction, games however, force them to make decisions and actively participate in the learning process, making it more engaging” (Teacher 1). One example provided involved the use of a game called "Once Upon a Crime in the West," where students must uncover the perpetrator of a murder by exploring and searching for clues independently. Instead of progressing through a linear narrative from beginning to end, where the detective in the story reveals how the crime was solved, students must invest time and make active decisions to piece together the events. Such an approach to storytelling in English teaching promotes a more open interpretation and encourages students to consider alternative narrative structures, recognizing that not all stories need to be linear. T1 is a strong proponent of this method, arguing that the format of games fosters greater creativity than what could be achieved through movies or books. T2 and T3 shared similar views, positing that games offer opportunities for creative learning through player agency, allowing students to make choices and construct their own narratives. However, they also stressed the importance of providing appropriate guidance and structure to maximize creative potential. T4 also reported that the interactive nature of digital games, which necessitates active decision-making and engagement, can foster creativity in language learning.

The four gaming pedagogues were also asked in what ways they believed the use of digital games could help develop skills such as reading comprehension, writing skills, vocabulary, and pronunciation. According to T1, the effectiveness of games in promoting these skills depends on how the teacher frames the activities and tasks. “A game alone will not necessarily promote these skills, but a teacher can create opportunities for language development by actively engaging students in discussions and activities related to the game” (Teacher 1). T1 provided an example using the game "Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes," in which players must cooperate by having one team describe the bomb's appearance, while the other team consults a manual to explain how to defuse it based on the information provided by the first team. Although the game is not specifically designed to teach communication, its core element of success relies on effective communication, making it applicable for enhancing that skill. Additionally, instructors can ask students to speak using a British accent, shifting the focus towards pronunciation. T2 argues that digital games facilitate English language development by engaging students in active learning. Games with a wide array of options and actions can adapt to individual students' needs, simultaneously



engaging them in reading, listening, interpreting, understanding, and decision-making. Intriguingly, while T3 shares T2's belief regarding the potential of digital games to foster various language learning skills, T3 emphasizes the use of distinct games for teaching specific skills. For instance, text-based games could be employed for teaching writing, sentence construction, and grammar, while communication games might help students overcome initial apprehensions about speaking English in class. On the other hand, T4 adopts a more progressive perspective, asserting that "digital games can enhance English language development in areas such as reading, comprehension, writing skills, and vocabulary, as these skills are often required to advance within the games" (Teacher 4). Moreover, T4 highlighted how students feel more at ease experimenting and learning in informal settings, such as those provided by digital games.

With the increased focus on digital skills, and the need for teachers to improve their digital competence as part of the relatively new LK20, the gaming pedagogues were asked as to whether or not they believed that LK20 has facilitated for the use of digital games in the lower secondary school EFL classroom, and whether or not they have noticed an increased focus on digital games within their workplace after its implementation. Some common themes emerged.

T1 suggested that LK20 is open to interpretation, which is advantageous for game-based pedagogy since many aspects are vague. They mentioned that core elements such as experience and exploration align well with their goals for students using games in education. However, they expressed frustration that upper secondary school has a specific competency goal mentioning gaming, while lower school does not. T2 agreed that LK20 allows for greater creativity and exploration, with more open competency goals that enable the incorporation of games. They believe that the increased freedom in LK20 facilitates game-based teaching. T3 acknowledged the presence of digital focus in the English subject curriculum but noted that it is not explicitly tied to gaming. They suggested that the curriculum could be more explicit in promoting game-based learning, as it is mainly left up to teachers to identify and implement it. In their view, game-based learning can be justified effectively in English, but the overall curriculum does not strongly emphasize its inclusion. T4 emphasized that the curriculum's openness to interpretation allows teachers to use digital games when they believe it is beneficial. This flexibility makes it possible to incorporate game-based learning in a variety of contexts. Regarding the perception of an increased focus on implementing digital games in their workplaces, the general consensus among the teachers was that the new curriculum, LK20, encourages educators to think creatively and explore

new approaches. However, they agreed that it would be an overstatement to claim that there has been a significant increase in the emphasis on digital games specifically.

Lastly, upon asking about their peers' perspectives on the incorporation of digital games within the educational setting, a recurring theme across all four teachers' responses as a generally positive attitude towards the use of digital games in education. This positivity also extended to teachers who did not necessarily incorporate games into their teaching, which constituted the majority. The extent of actual implementation varied somewhat among the teachers at the different schools, but overall, it was relatively low. Teacher 1's response highlights the generational gap in attitudes, with older teachers tending to rely on traditional methods, while their younger counterpart's express curiosity and openness to using digital games in the classroom. This teacher also emphasizes the need for support and guidance for educators who are interested in incorporating games but may not possess the required expertise or experience.

“Many teachers appreciate the idea of using games, but they may not know how to implement them or need assistance in doing so. As a gaming pedagogue, I can actively help those who want to try this approach. While there are positive attitudes towards digital games in education, not all teachers are independent in implementing them. There are still many teachers who have never conducted a single gaming session in their entire careers, and it takes time to integrate this approach into education.” (Teacher 1).

Similarly, Teacher 2 notes that “although there is goodwill and positivity surrounding the use of digital games in education, few teachers actively engage with this approach” (Teacher 2). In their school, only three teachers are reported to make use of the gaming room for educational purposes. Teacher 3's response sheds light on the nervousness and uncertainty experienced by some educators when confronted with the prospect of using digital games in their teaching. To mitigate these concerns, a support system providing guidance and assistance has been established in their school. This system has been well-received by teachers who appreciate the structured help in planning and implementing gaming sessions. Lastly, Teacher 4 points out that the limited use of digital games in education is primarily due to time constraints and the lack of necessary competence. Despite the positive attitude towards the concept, busy schedules and insufficient expertise prevent many teachers from

incorporating digital games in their teaching. No other teachers made use of the gaming room in Teacher 4's school.

#### 4.2.3 Gaming Pedagogues' reported practices

As observed in the previous section, several shared beliefs emerged among the gaming pedagogues regarding the efficacy of digital games as a tool in the EFL classroom. The reasons for these similarities varied slightly among them, with T1 and T2 exhibiting somewhat more caution in their approach to incorporating digital games in the classroom. Similar patterns can be identified in their reported practices; however, the extent of usage differs significantly among all participants. A commonality among them is their use of digital games as a resource when it serves a purpose and aids in teaching a specific subject or theme, rather than relying on it as a primary source for all aspects of EFL learning. When asked how often they made use of digital games as a tool in the classroom, T1 responded with the following:

“The use of games in the classroom greatly varies depending on the current topic being taught. In the first semester, we focused extensively on storytelling, frequently using the game "Storyteller" to initiate the theme of "how to tell a story", during which we employed the whole-class gameplay method. However, since then, games have not been actively incorporated, largely due to the necessity for their use to be purposeful rather than simply for gaming's sake. It is difficult to provide a definitive answer, as the implementation of games is highly dependent on the topic being covered, and they are often utilized in clusters when the subject matter lends itself well to game-based learning.”

Additionally, T1 made sure to add that their class had made use of brief segments of browser-based flash games that take about 5 minutes to play through as a means of initiating writing exercises on previous occasions. “The game does not necessarily have to occupy the entire class period but can be effectively employed to kick-start another activity, such as a writing session” (Teacher 1).

As for the other gaming pedagogues, T2 reported that the usage varies a bit, but teaching both a regular English class as well as English specialization, they made use of the gaming room “roughly around once every month or more often” (Teacher 2). There is a noticeable difference in Teacher 3's approach, where digital games are primarily employed in larger projects that span several weeks. For instance, T3 had their students assume the role of

content creators, requiring them to use OBS (Open Broadcaster Software) to produce gameplay commentary videos. In these videos, students would play a game of their choice while explaining the fundamental aspects and gameplay mechanics, effectively creating a tutorial. This project lasted for multiple weeks and was incorporated as part of their assessment. While T3 also mentioned shorter instances of utilizing digital games, they expressed a positive attitude towards integrating digital games into more extensive projects and received positive feedback from students. In contrast to the more cautious approaches of particularly T1, but also T2, and T3, Teacher 4 adopted a different strategy, attempting to incorporate digital games as frequently as possible. However, T4 emphasized the increased workload resulting from the substantial planning required. Furthermore, the fact that two or three teachers could teach the same class made it challenging to implement digital games as often as desired, due to differing beliefs about the use of digital games in the classroom.

Different beliefs were observed among the gaming pedagogues when inquired about the implementation of digital games for 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grades in EFL lower secondary classrooms. While T1 believes that digital games are suitable for all levels of lower secondary education, they also acknowledged certain limitations regarding the choice of games and the extent of understanding among students in that age group. Which T1 argued could potentially lead to a reduced frequency of digital game utilization in their teaching practices, seeing as they only taught 8<sup>th</sup> grade. T2 on the other hand, currently only teaches 10<sup>th</sup> grade, but has previously had no reported issues applying digital games for the lower levels, exemplifying how they had the entire 8<sup>th</sup> grade level help create a timeline visualizing the history of the English language within the game Minecraft. Interestingly, T3 and T4 were more reserved on the employment of digital games in the lower grades, with T3 noting they had only employed it within 10<sup>th</sup> grade so far

*“Mainly due to how new I am to the teaching profession and gaming pedagogue role in general, I have only been using it with 10<sup>th</sup> grade, but as I am learning to know the 9<sup>th</sup> grade more and seeing their potential, I am planning to test out digital games with them pretty soon, as I believe they can handle it” (Teacher 3).*

Also, T3 noted that when you are working with equipment such as that in the gaming room, a lot of responsibility is involved, that they believe 8<sup>th</sup> grade did not necessarily understand the seriousness of yet. T4 also shared the same thoughts in that regard, stating they only employ

it in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, as the lower grades are “still a bit too energetic and restless for me to feel completely comfortable bringing them into that environment” (Teacher 4).

The present study explored the reported practices on the usage of digital games in the EFL classroom, as such, the gaming pedagogues were asked what type of criteria they weigh in when deciding on which games to use for educational purposes. T1 and T2 shared similar beliefs here, where the primary criterion they considered, was whether a game is linguistically and mechanically feasible and comprehensible for the students. T1 provided an example in which he has been eager to use the game Divinity, which is a role-playing video game, but according to T1; “the problem is that it involves advanced English and requires a certain level of experience to understand how to play it properly. It needs a group of students who are knowledgeable enough about gaming to comprehend its gameplay” (Teacher 1). Additionally, T1 emphasizes factors such as the game’s playability, how easy it is to extract content, with a preference of introducing games to the students that they are unfamiliar with, exposing them to a different type of game culture than they are accustomed to. Another example by T1 is how they in the classroom had used games like “Inside” and “Limbo”, which are dark puzzle games but work well for promoting communication and collaboration. “While that may not be a specific learning objective, the overall curriculum includes learning to cooperate, listening to others’ suggestions, and actively participating in a democratic process” (Teacher 1), which the students focused on through playing and analyzing the game.

Similarly, T3 and T4 also emphasized the importance of learning outcomes, and making use of the competence aims. However, they also strongly supported the idea of using digital games as a class building tool as well, as it sometimes may be difficult to align certain digital games and competence aims.

In addition, the four gaming pedagogues were asked what type of games they generally would avoid making use of in the classroom, and what types of games they believed worked well. Some patterns emerged, as the teachers generally showed a preference for non-educational, commercial games that allow for adaptability and encourage interactivity and communication. Teacher 1 considers educational games to be boring and compares it to asking the students to pick up a book and read certain pages before answering the tasks on the last page. “*It might be correct pedagogically, but very few students would consider this to be very meaningful teaching*” (Teacher 1). This idea is supported by teachers 2, and 3, who believe educational games should be avoided, as they are limiting in terms of providing a genuine gaming experience that promotes engagement and learning. Teacher 2 also emphasizes the need to avoid games with excessive violence, blood, and gore, as they

can distract students from their educational objectives. Teacher 3 also mentions how games such as FIFA and Rocket League, which are typically played among the students at that age, do not really have a place in the classroom in terms of educational value, supporting teacher 1's earlier statement to not bring games into the classroom just for the sake of it. Teacher 4 does not explicitly suggest avoiding any games but recommends considering age restrictions and seeking parental permission when necessary. In terms of which games are better suited for educational purposes, all the teachers shared the belief that commercial games can be more engaging and better suited for teaching, as long as they can be adapted to meet learning objectives. Teacher 1 and 4 also both emphasize the importance of interactivity and communication in games, suggesting that games requiring collaboration or discussion are valuable in an educational context. Teacher 2 also highlighted the need for games to be accessible and easy to learn, ensuring that all students can participate and benefit from the experience. Teacher 1 also strongly supported this.

The gaming pedagogues were also asked to share their recommendations for digital games they have used or would suggest for educational purposes. While commercial games were generally preferred as explained earlier, the participants provided a diverse range of specific game examples suitable for educational contexts. T1 strongly recommended "Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes" due to its applicability to various aspects of language learning, especially communication. They also pointed out that the game was easily understandable for both teachers and students in terms of its purpose and impact on English language learning. Another game that T1 recommended was "Loneliness," which doesn't require specific equipment and is accessible through most web browsers. This game serves as an excellent writing starter for students and can be played individually or as a whole class, sparking discussions on themes like alienation and loneliness. T1 also suggested games like "Dark Room," "What Remains of Edith," and "Gone Home," which all require minimal experience with digital games. T2 found great success with "Gone Home" as well, as it allows students to engage with text more immersively. Additionally, T2 frequently used and recommended games like "Stanley Parable" and "Minecraft." Both T3 and T4 also strongly endorsed "Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes." However, T3 emphasized that any game could be suitable, as long as there are clear guidelines and framework factors in place. They referred to their earlier example of students creating gameplay commentary videos, where even popular games like "Fortnite" could offer genuine opportunities for language learning when used appropriately.

#### 4.2.4 gaming pedagogues' views on challenges and concerns associated with the use of digital games

A crucial objective of this thesis was to examine the beliefs of Gaming Pedagogues regarding the perceived challenges and concerns associated with the use of digital games in education. These concerns, derived from prior research in the Norwegian context, encompass issues such as time, experience, equipment, and school budget constraints.

Despite holding generally positive views on the concept of digital game implementation, the teachers provided valuable insights regarding potential challenges. Teacher 1 compared the situation to asking a science teacher about the challenges of setting up experiments without the use of a science lab in comparison to using games without a gaming room. T1 stressed that acquiring extensive equipment is not the most critical factor for successfully incorporating digital games into educational practice. They argued that procuring a substantial amount of equipment and designating a room solely for gaming could be detrimental, as teachers might feel overwhelmed by unfamiliar technology. T1 proposed that starting small, utilizing simple games accessible on teachers' and students' Chromebooks or laptops, could prove more beneficial in the long run. They suggested employing Whole Class Gaming through browser games such as "Spent" or using a personal gaming console from home or a school-purchased Nintendo Switch to provide an affordable solution that could be expanded upon once a digital gaming culture has been established among the teachers.

T2 also recommended utilizing browser games on students' Chromebooks and Whole Class Gaming, emphasizing the importance of documenting and sharing teaching plans that have proven successful among experienced gaming teachers. This would enable the creation of a compendium for teachers interested in experimenting with digital games in their classrooms. T3 and T4 shared similar ideas, with T4 highlighting their experience using Didactic Digital Workshops (DDV) at the University of Stavanger, where they had the opportunity to borrow equipment for free to evaluate the suitability of digital games for their school. T3 underscored the availability of various funding options for procuring additional or superior equipment when necessary.

Subsequently, teachers were asked about any negative experiences they had encountered while using digital games. Although their experiences were predominantly positive, all teachers emphasized the importance of selecting appropriate games concerning

content, story, and game mechanics for a successful session. As Teacher 1 noted, "*Most pitfalls can be avoided if you choose games with the right content, an appropriate difficulty level, and if you know the game well enough yourself.*" The teachers also stressed the necessity of having clear session guidelines, a contingency plan in case of emergencies or technical difficulties and dedicating sufficient time for preparation and equipment maintenance. They acknowledged that incorporating digital games into teaching requires significant effort, motivation, and time for both technical preparations and familiarizing themselves with the games to ensure optimal learning outcomes for students. Teacher 4 (T4) added that some games might be challenging for many students, necessitating the teacher to spend ample time learning the game themselves, allowing them to demonstrate it to the whole class using a projector or smart screen.

A common reason cited in previous studies for not incorporating digital games in educational contexts is the lack of competence and fear that students may possess significantly more advanced skills than their teachers. Consequently, the gaming pedagogues were asked how teachers could address or mitigate the intimidation caused by having students who are substantially more knowledgeable. All gaming pedagogues concurred on this issue, emphasizing the importance of embracing and leveraging the expertise of skilled students, rather than perceiving it as a drawback or a reason to avoid using digital games in the classroom. One strategy proposed by Teacher 2 involves inverting the conventional teacher-student relationship by having students instruct teachers about games. This approach may prompt students to contemplate their preferred learning styles and how they would like to impart knowledge to others, thereby increasing their understanding of the teacher's perspective. Furthermore, by maintaining control over gaming activities and establishing well-defined parameters, such as game selection, group organization, and objectives, teachers can reinforce their role in the classroom. Additionally, by engaging proficient students and creating resource groups, teachers can capitalize on their expertise to provide assistance across various classes and subjects. This not only benefits teachers by reducing their workload but also allows students to experience a sense of mastery as their skills are applied in an educational setting. As emphasized by Teacher 1: "In numerous instances, teachers will encounter students who have greater knowledge than themselves, and this is not limited to digital games" (Teacher 1). Overall, the key takeaway is to view knowledgeable students as valuable resources and make use of their expertise for the betterment of the entire class.

As mentioned earlier with previous research by Norwegian scholars Lindland (2021), Israelsson (2020), Estensen (2021), and Hansen (2022), there were participating teachers in



these studies who demonstrated an interest in employing digital games in education. However, insufficient experience, knowledge, and teacher training were identified as major barriers to implementation according to the studies. Consequently, the present thesis sought to explore how teachers could obtain the requisite knowledge and experience for effectively integrating digital games into their EFL teaching practices.

When asked, the teachers mentioned several resources in which they recommended as ideal starting points for beginners, including the "spillpedagogene" podcast, which discusses topics such as getting started and various applicable games. Furthermore, a book titled "Spillpedagogikk" delves into these subjects with greater depth. Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 advocated reaching out to a local gaming pedagogue, if available, for guidance and support during the initial phase. Teacher 2 concurred, reiterating the potential value of drawing on students' knowledge. Additionally, the teachers referred to "Spillpedagogbanken" as an invaluable resource for both beginner and advanced educators interested in incorporating digital games. This website features a collection of suggested teaching plans illustrating how digital games can be employed in instructional practice, with many of the suggestions available free of charge. Moreover, the site offers a brief course that encourages participants to experiment with digital games in their teaching.

Lastly, all teachers emphasized the importance of being open to experimentation, starting with simple options, and accepting the possibility of failure as an inherent aspect of teaching and human experience. Teacher 1 recounted conversations with other educators interested in utilizing digital games who found reassurance after speaking with a gaming pedagogue: *"I have talked to a lot of teachers previously who wanted to start using digital games, and who felt relief after having had a conversation with me as a gaming pedagogue"* (Teacher 1). This teacher further explained that educators often have grandiose visions of digital game implementation in the classroom, but answering their questions can help dispel the misconception that incorporating digital games into their practice must be a complex endeavour.

### **4.3 Student Questionnaires**

In this section, the data collected from the questionnaire is presented, featuring numerical values presented in tables with mean scores, as well as graphs providing numbers and percentages. A total of 102 students consented to partake in the questionnaire. The response

alternatives were founded on the five-point Likert scale, providing options such as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Correspondingly, the value of strongly agree is designated as 5, while strongly disagree holds a value of 1. The results are presented comprehensively, rather than dividing them by class or school, owing to the absence of considerable discrepancies between various classes and schools. The primary objective was to examine prevailing trends, as opposed to comparing similarities and differences among classes and schools. Additionally, the findings do not differentiate between male and female participants, as the investigation sought to evaluate the entirety of students' beliefs, without emphasizing gender-specific distinctions. The following results are arranged in a descending manner, starting with the highest score, and ending with the lowest.

**Table 2**

*Students' beliefs (N=102)*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Mode Score</b>
Digital games make learning English more enjoyable.	4.44	5
Using digital games in the English classroom increased my motivation to learn English.	4.36	5
Using digital games in English teaching adds to the variety in teaching.	4.35	5
Through using digital games in the English subject, my communication skills have improved.	4.34	5
I believe we should spend more time using digital games in the English subject	4.34	5
I prefer using digital games over other instructional methods in the English subject	4.34	5
I learn more English by using digital games over schoolbooks and other resources	4.31	5
Digital games are useful when I have to learn English	4.29	5
Digital games make learning English easier	4.26	5

By using digital games in the classroom, I believe I become more creative in the subject	4.25	5
I have access to digital games at home and learn English by playing them	4.25	5
I believe I learn more English through the use of digital games in the classroom	4.25	5
Through using digital games in the English subject, my pronunciation has improved.	4.23	5
Through using digital games in the English subject, my reading skills have improved	4.21	5
Through using digital games in the English subject, my vocabulary has improved.	4.19	5
Digital games are important, to learn English in school	4.11	5
I cooperate better with my peers when we use digital games in the English subject	4.11	4
It is important to be proficient at gaming, to effectively learn English, when using digital games in the English subject.	2.47	1

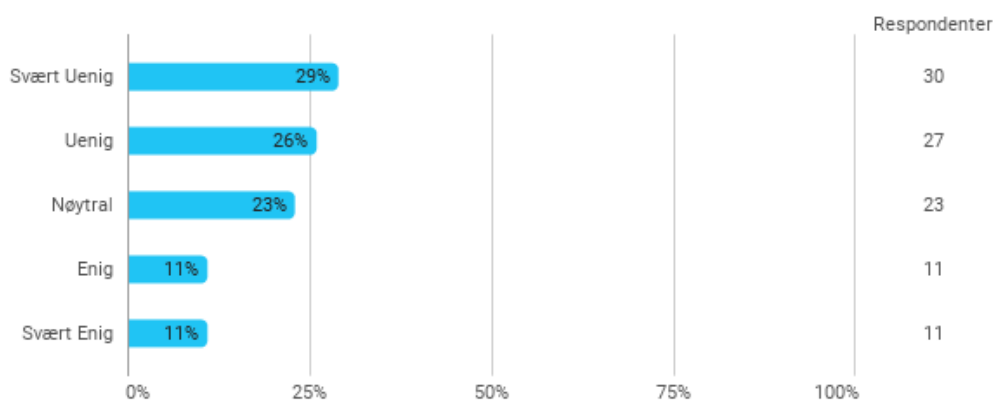
The table presented in this study offers substantial evidence that students predominantly hold affirmative beliefs about the implementation of digital games within the EFL classroom. An exception to this pattern is observed in the students' opinions on the necessity of gaming proficiency in order to benefit from utilizing digital games in English instruction, with more comprehensive data being presented in the subsequent figure. A remarkable 91.2% of students acknowledged that integrating digital games into EFL instruction rendered the English subject more engaging, while 6.9% remained impartial, and 2% expressed disagreement. Concerning the perceived utility of digital games in an educational context, 87.3% of students concurred, with 9.8% maintaining neutrality, and 2.9% expressing disagreement.

Furthermore, 88.2% of students indicated that the incorporation of digital games contributed to increased diversity in lesson content, with a small 2.9% of the students in disagreement. With respect to motivation, 90.2% of students experienced heightened drive when digital games were employed in EFL instruction, with 5.9% adopting a neutral stance, and 3.9% opposing the notion. The students also perceived that digital games facilitated the enhancement of their communication, reading, and vocabulary skills. A noteworthy 83.3% of

students disclosed that they had access to and actively utilized digital games beyond the school environment for English language acquisition.

One statement sought to examine students' beliefs about the importance of being exposed to digital games for English language learning within the educational setting, revealing that 72.5% of students agreed, while 21.6% remained ambivalent, and 5.9% deemed it inconsequential. Students also expressed a preference for digital games over alternative instructional methods in English education and perceived greater learning outcomes through digital game usage compared to textbooks and other resources. Moreover, students reported experiencing an increase in creativity and engagement with the English subject after exposure to digital games.

Another inquiry explored students' self-reported capacity for collaboration with peers when employing digital games, with 77.5% of students affirming that digital games made it easier to cooperate with others, 18.6% remaining neutral, and 3.9% in disagreement. The figure presented below describes the extent to which students perceived gaming proficiency as a prerequisite for capitalizing on the advantages of digital game integration in the EFL learning environment.



**Figure 1.** Gaming proficiency is necessary when learning English through digital games.

As the table indicates, the students reported very different answers, with the majority of the students' (55%), believing that gaming proficiency was not necessary in order to benefit from the usage of digital games in the EFL classroom. 22.5% were neutral, whereas 21.6% saw it as a necessity for it to be useful.

Although the table above indicates that there is a split among the students believes as to whether gaming proficiency is necessary or not, the following tables below presents the

students' views of the usefulness of digital games in the EFL classroom, as well as their reported motivation in using them.

The figure presented below presents to what extent the students believed digital games were considered useful in the EFL classroom.

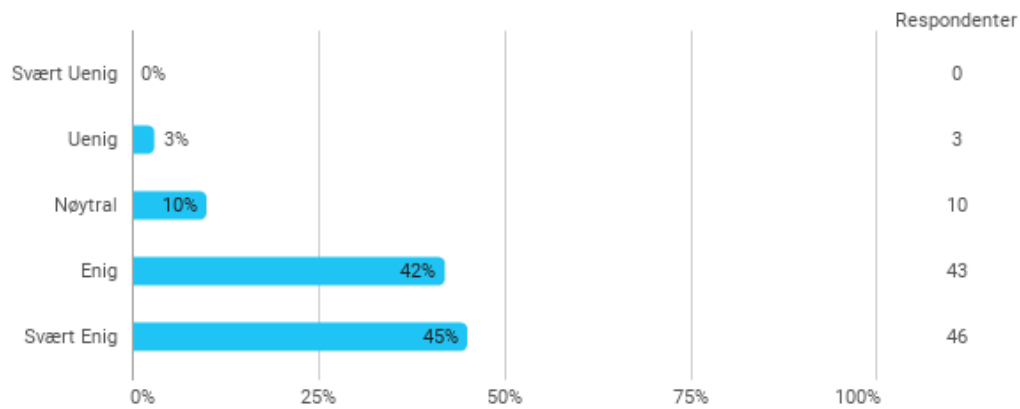


Figure 2. Digital games are useful when learning English in the EFL classroom.

Interestingly, only 3% of the students reported that they did not find digital games useful in the EFL classroom. The figure demonstrates that the use of digital games is useful for the majority of the students.

The figure presented below presents to what extent the students believed digital games can increase motivation towards learning English in the EFL classroom.

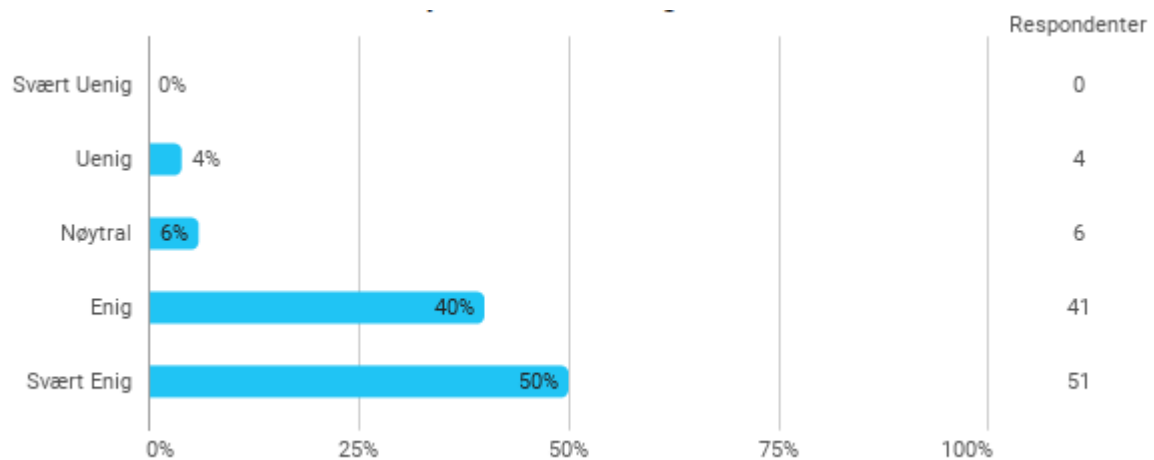


Figure 3. How the use of digital games increases the students' motivation of learning English in the EFL classroom.

Additionally, as the table above shows, the motivation among the students remain rather high whenever digital games are implemented into the classroom, compared to their beliefs regarding gaming proficiency. The figure demonstrates that the use of digital games mostly increases motivation among students.

The following table presents the students beliefs concerning the benefits and challenges of implementing digital games in the EFL subject, deriving from their responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire.

**Table 3**

*Students' beliefs about benefits and challenges concerning the use of digital games in the EFL classroom (N = 102)*

<b>Benefits of using digital games in the EFL classroom</b>	<b>Why does playing digital games at home help/not help</b>	<b>Challenges of using digital games in the EFL classroom</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyable</li> <li>• Increases motivation</li> <li>• Easier to pay attention</li> <li>• Interesting and more willing to learn</li> <li>• Variation</li> <li>• More genuine communication</li> <li>• Less awkward</li> <li>• Easier to communicate with peers</li> <li>• Increases vocabulary</li> <li>• More comfortable speaking English</li> <li>• Increases engagement in the classroom</li> <li>• Fun to bring hobbies outside of school into school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High exposure to language when playing with others</li> <li>• Spend a lot of time reading while playing games at home</li> <li>• It is more fun when, and it makes me want to communicate</li> <li>• Games make the English subject feel more important, as I use it all the time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenging game mechanics</li> <li>• Gets repetitive</li> <li>• Students get mad when they fail within the game</li> <li>• Less focus on writing skills</li> <li>• Certain games can be scary</li> <li>• Curse words among other players</li> <li>• Increased noise during class</li> <li>• Content within the games does not necessarily apply to the real world</li> <li>• Challenging to cooperate with someone who does not enjoy digital games</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easier to understand words and phrases due to visuals within the games</li> <li>• Increases mastery of the subject</li> <li>• Promotes learning through the use of chat systems and voice chat, creating a lot of opportunities</li> <li>• More fun in school when games are used</li> <li>• Learning new terms that would not necessary occur in more typical instruction</li> <li>• Can make use of previous experiences outside of school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I do not think games have the possibility to learn me anything outside of school, I just play for fun”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to get distracted by other things within the game</li> </ul>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The table above reveals that a significant portion of students asserted enhanced motivation in engaging with the English subject when digital games were incorporated into the pedagogical approach. Students also experienced less communication apprehension and found it simpler to interact and collaborate with their peers in the classroom setting. Besides introducing an element of enjoyment to the learning process, students reported that digital games facilitated a better comprehension of vocabulary and textual meaning, courtesy of the visual support and interactive nature provided by the games. Nevertheless, challenges were also identified in relation to digital game integration in the EFL classroom. One such challenge included the increased usage of profanities among students or other online players, which was perceived as problematic by several participants. Some students also found that specific games featured intricate game mechanics, causing them to invest considerable time learning to play the game rather than focusing on the EFL learning aspects embedded within the gameplay. Moreover,

expansive open-world games occasionally led to students becoming distracted or pursuing unrelated in-game objectives, which deviated from the primary educational goals.

A question was posed to the students regarding their engagement in digital gaming at home, and whether they believed it contributed to improved English language proficiency within the school context. Among the 84% of students who played digital games at home, an overwhelming 91% felt that their home gaming experiences positively impacted their performance in lower secondary English, while 5% remained uncertain, and another 4% perceived no difference. Interestingly, several students who did not engage in digital gaming at home acknowledged the potential learning benefits if they were to begin, as they had found it useful during classroom sessions. The majority of students indicated that their extramural gaming experiences involved playing online with friends or strangers, which prompted communication within the game, as it significantly increases their chances of winning. When interacting with strangers, students typically defaulted to English as the lingua franca, providing them with valuable opportunities to practice their language skills. Students also expressed greater ease in communicating in English when games were involved and felt more confident in school communication due to their enhanced language proficiency acquired through gaming.

Some students attributed their advanced vocabulary and improved reading skills to gaming experiences, particularly story-driven games. They believed that the exposure to diverse language contexts within these games enriched their linguistic abilities. Conversely, a few students did not perceive gaming as instrumental in boosting their English proficiency, either because they viewed it solely as a leisure activity without learning outcomes or attributed their language skills to other extracurricular activities, such as watching YouTube videos, television series, or engaging in various online platforms.



## **5. Discussion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to discuss the main findings presented in Chapter 4 in relation to the theoretical framework and previous research outlined in Chapter 2. The discussion is organized according to the research questions. The research questions are as follows:

- What beliefs do lower secondary school game pedagogues have about the use of digital games in EFL learning?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' beliefs about the challenges and concerns associated with the implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' practices regarding the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What beliefs do lower secondary school students have about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?

Section 5.2 delves into teachers' beliefs concerning the use of digital games to promote EFL learning and examines how these beliefs align with the theoretical framework and learning theories. Section 5.3 discusses and focuses on the experienced opinions of the interviewed gaming pedagogues regarding the challenges and concerns with implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom and compares it to previous research in the Norwegian context. This section aims to analyze the interview responses in relation to existing literature and research, while identifying common concerns and potential solutions. Section 5.4 explores the reported practices of lower secondary English gaming pedagogues, examining the aims, frequency, and types of games employed in the classroom. Finally, Section 5.5 investigates learners' beliefs about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom and considers how these beliefs relate to the broader context of EFL education.

## **5.2 Gaming pedagogues' beliefs concerning the use of digital games as a tool in the EFL Classroom**

As argued by Borg (2018), teaching will be more effective when beliefs and practices are consistent. Additionally, it is important to understand what teachers believe, in order to understand their teaching practices. The first question in this current study sought to investigate gaming pedagogues' beliefs concerning the use of digital games in the English subject in Lower Secondary School. Generally speaking, all four teachers expressed positive views on using digital games in the EFL classroom, believing that they can serve as affective tools for teaching English as a foreign language. The teachers also unanimously agreed that digital games can enhance students' motivation when implemented in the classroom, which aligns with the intrinsic motivation concept (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This idea is also supported by Pesare (2016), who suggests using digital games allows for a more student-centered knowledge acquisition, that facilitates more engaging and enjoyable learning experiences. Additionally, as explained by Reinders & Wattana (2012), it is said that video games can stimulate curiosity among students, where challenges with well-defined goals are offered which foster intrinsic motivation and encourages the students to use the L2 language in a safe environment, as suggested by the teachers in this study. The teachers also recognize that the degree of motivation varies among students and depends on the type of game and the pedagogical approach employed, indicating that not all students are intrinsically motivated by digital games. Teacher 1 also noted that often the motivation was directed towards the fact that the students could play games, rather than the actual learning aspect.

In terms of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the findings relate to the three fundamental components: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2020). The teachers' beliefs suggest that digital games can promote a sense of autonomy by providing students with choices and requiring them to make decisions within the game. For instance, T1 mentioned using "Once Upon a Crime in the West," which promotes player agency and requires students to make active decisions to progress. This aligns with the SDT concept of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2020), as students feel in control of their actions and behavior within the game environment. Regarding competence, the teachers' responses indicate that digital games can foster a feeling of mastery and effectiveness in language learning. For example, T4 mentioned that using English in games might be less intimidating for students than in formal settings, making it easier for them to practice and develop their language skills. This supports the idea that digital games can enhance students' sense of competence

within the language learning process. As for relatedness, the teachers' beliefs on the impact of digital games on student motivation suggest that these games can create a more enjoyable and engaging learning environment, which can foster a sense of belonging in a social group. For example, T1 provided an example using the game "Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes," which relies on effective communication and collaboration, fostering a sense of relatedness among students (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

The beliefs among the teachers regarding the positive impact from the implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom are also in line with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978). The sociocultural approach posits that learning occurs through social interactions within a specific cultural context. In this study, the cultural relevance of digital games is emphasized by T1, who notes the prevalence of gaming culture among students. The idea that games can provide opportunities for meaningful interactions and social learning within this cultural context is also highlighted by all four teachers. Moreover, the teachers agree that games can help develop various language skills such as reading comprehension, writing skills, vocabulary, and pronunciation when integrated within a suitable pedagogical framework. This aligns with the sociocultural approach, which emphasizes the importance of context and interaction in learning.

Similarly, the reported beliefs among the teachers also fall in line with some of the hypotheses comprised in Krashen's SLA theory, in which the input hypothesis suggests that learners acquire language through comprehensible input, which is slightly beyond their current language proficiency (Krashen, 1982). Teachers T2 and T4 mention how exploring and using English in games might be less intimidating for students than in formal settings, which could make it easier for them to practice and receive input that is more comprehensible. Also, within the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis Krashen (1982) distinguishes between acquisition (an unconscious and natural process) and learning (a conscious and formal process). The teacher beliefs findings suggest that digital games blur the lines between play and learning, creating a more enjoyable and engaging learning environment. This could potentially facilitate the natural acquisition of English in addition to more formal learning processes. Lastly, according to the Affective Filter Hypothesis, affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence play a crucial role in language learning. One of the main study findings revealed that digital games can enhance students' motivation to learn English as previously mentioned. Furthermore, T4 mentions how students feel more at ease experimenting and learning in the informal settings provided by digital games, which could lower their affective filter and facilitate language acquisition.

As the global engagement with digital games continues to rise, with 76% of Norwegian youth aged 9-18 participating in digital gaming (Medietilsynet, 2022), it was relevant to examine teachers' perspectives on the extent to which the LK20 curriculum facilitates the integration of digital games in English language instruction for lower secondary school. The teachers noted that LK20's openness to interpretation allows for incorporating digital games in education, but there is room for improvement in explicitly promoting game-based language learning within the curriculum. This correlates to previous studies conducted by Blikstad-Balas (2022) and Hansen (2022), in which one of the main challenges reported by Blikstad-Balas, was the need for more professional development and a lack of clear guidelines on how to find and integrate digital tools effectively in language learning. In the lower secondary competence aims, there is currently not any mention directly towards digital games, which makes it difficult for teachers with lack of experience to know how to implement them in their practice.

This was also evident in Hansen's (2022) study, who found that learners reported that they learned more English when playing digital games at home, compared to in the English classroom, which suggests teachers need more training and direct guidelines if they are to successfully allow students to benefit from digital games in the classroom. This also falls in line with the findings from the teacher interviews, which showed that even though LK20 encourages teachers to think creatively and explore new approaches, the extent of actual implementation of digital games in the workplaces of the interviewed teachers remained relatively low. One of the major components for this however, in addition to a lack of clear guidelines in LK20, was highlighted by T1 as a generational gap in attitudes whereas older teachers tended to rely on traditional methods, and younger teachers tend to be more curious and open to the idea. T1 still emphasized the need for support and guidance for teachers who are interested in incorporating games but who may not possess the required expertise, Similar ideas could be seen with the results of the from studies Blikstad-Balas (2022), Estensen (2021), and Hansen (2022) in which all concluded that more teacher training, clear guidelines in terms of implementation is deemed necessary in order for students to benefit even more from digital games in the EFL classroom.

Compared to other studies conducted by Norwegian researchers, the findings from the current thesis suggests an overall positive belief among the teacher participants, in terms of how digital games can be seen as an effective tool in the English subject. A major difference, however, is that unlike in previous research, the current thesis focused entirely on teachers,

who actively make use of digital games in their teaching practice, and have substantially more experience, than the teachers interviewed in works within other Norwegian contexts. It is important however, to reiterate that although the teachers in the current thesis generally held positive beliefs, the amount of implementation varied a lot, and there were also not entirely uniform beliefs as to how often, and why implementation of digital games were applied.

### **5.3 Game Pedagogues Reported Challenges and Concerns**

Although previous studies conducted by other Norwegian researchers showed that most teachers held positive beliefs, there were still low implementation among the teacher participants in those research studies. It is therefore interesting to discuss what differentiates the gaming pedagogues from this thesis compared to other teachers in previous research and look into some of the challenges and concerns voiced by them, such as lack of experience, time and equipment, and how these can be addressed according to the findings from this study.

Aside from the most obvious reason, that the gaming pedagogues in question generally enjoy playing digital games themselves, and have built up experience by doing so, it is explained by Ertmer (2005), that teachers who hold positive beliefs about the potential of digital games for language learning, are more likely to implement them in their practice, compared to those who remain skeptical. Bourgonjon et al. (2013), also points out that teachers' beliefs surrounding the effects of digital games as a language learning tool, are often influenced by their experiences with games, and their knowledge of game-based learning research, as well as their perceptions of students' gaming habits. The findings in this thesis suggested that the teachers are well aware of the impact digital games have on their students lives, with T1 stating how it has become a cultural phenomenon, and due to their general interest and positive view on the potential, are also therefore more likely to implement it into their teaching practice. Borg (2018) supports this notion by arguing that teaching generally is deemed more effective whenever beliefs and practices are consistent.

Furthermore, experience also plays a big role in their positive beliefs, as stated by Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001), teachers who have higher self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to experiment and adapt teaching strategies to meet the needs of students. As Bandura (1997) explains, willingness to implement digital games in teaching practice is dependent on

the teachers' beliefs surrounding their own ability, in which experience plays a major role. It is however important to recognize, as explained by Calderhead (1996), that beliefs may change over time as a result of development, reflection and changes in context. This was also found to be the case in the findings, with T1 making an example of how teachers with no experience, and lack of knowledge became more willing, and confident to try implementing digital games in their practice. This came as a result of reflection and clarification on the more technical sides of the implementation and general questions, given through conversation with a more experienced teacher. Additionally, in order to increase one's knowledge in order to be able to more confidently apply digital games into the teaching practice, was according to the findings, to make use of the various resources and support systems available for teachers interested in incorporating digital games in their teaching practices. These include podcasts, books, local gaming pedagogues, and websites offering teaching plans and courses.

Also, as revealed in the findings, the most important thing for teachers in order to implement such a tool in their practice, is not expensive equipment. But rather, a genuine interest and will to try out new approaches, and an arena to do so. This falls in line with what Kenny & McDaniel (2011) explained, with the importance of providing teachers with opportunities to engage with digital games, while also providing support, which then may result in a more positive and informed perspective on how digital games can be implemented as an effective tool in the EFL classroom. Another important note based off the findings, is the importance of being open to experimentation, embracing simplicity, and accepting the possibility of failure as an inherent aspect of teaching and human experience, when incorporating digital games into educational practice.

Another challenge that is conceived among researchers, and explained by Ørevik is that at times digital resources, which include games may serve as a distraction rather than an effective tool for language learning. Also, as noted by Blikstad-Balas (2019) digital tools are not being used appropriately, which results in less-than-optimal learning outcomes. During the interviews, T2 especially did note that they spent a lot of time selecting appropriate games that had minimal amounts of content that may serve as disturbing elements, such as unnecessary amounts of violence and so on. Additionally, the teachers were very clear in emphasizing the importance of selecting appropriate games concerning content, story, and game mechanics, as well as having clear session guidelines and contingency plans, to ensure successful implementation of digital gaming sessions and optimal learning outcomes for students. Blikstad-Balas (2019) also explained that access to digital games does not necessarily increase learning outcome, but instead, it is very much dependent on the teacher

and their pedagogical thought process and framework that allows for successful instruction, which was also evident in this study's findings.

#### **5.4 Game Pedagogues' Reported Practices**

When looking into the teachers' reported practices, some varying approaches were found among them. While all the teachers recognized the efficacy of digital games in the EFL classroom, the extent of usage differed significantly among them. Whereas T1 and T2 considered a more cautious approach, in the sense that the implementation of digital games was highly dependent on the topic being covered, and often used in clusters whenever the subject matter lends itself well to Digital Game Based Language Learning, T4 attempted to incorporate digital games as frequently as possible. T3 had a somewhat different approach where they mostly implemented digital games whenever the students worked on larger projects. There were also some different beliefs regarding whether digital games were considered suitable for all grades of lower secondary school. Whereas T3 and T4 mentioned they only employed digital games in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, T1 believed that digital games could be suitable for all grades, but that limitations were a factor. At the point of the interview, T1 mentioned they only taught 8<sup>th</sup> grade, which may explain a lower level of implementation compared to the other teachers who taught 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The varying implementation may also be explained by how open LK20 is to interpretation, where different teachers may have different views on what is deemed suitable and not, in addition to the age gap in the classes taught by the teachers.

When deciding on which games to use for educational purposes, the gaming pedagogues considered criteria such as linguistic and mechanical feasibility, accessibility, playability, and alignment with learning outcomes. Often, they chose to implement games that engage learners in authentic communicative situations, which are consistent with the principles of effective game-based learning proposed by Gee (2003). Furthermore, the teachers generally showed a preference for non-educational, commercial games that allow for adaptability and encourage interactivity and communication. This preference is in line with the growing body of research suggesting that commercial games, when used appropriately, can offer genuine opportunities for language learning, as explained by Sundqvist & Sylvén (2014). Researchers Sykes & Reinhardt (2013) also support this notion, arguing that commercial games tend to feature authentic language use, diverse cultural contexts, and also

provide narratives that motivate and challenge students. Although there was a preference for commercial games, other types were also frequently mentioned by the teachers.

The gaming pedagogues provided a diverse range of games that they found suitable for educational contexts, including both commercial and browser-based games for ease of access. Edutainment games were also mentioned however, as being used quite a lot by T2. All of the teachers had quite a lot of experience using the game *Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes*, which is a game made for commercial use. As previously mentioned, this game is not intended to teach communication, like an educational game, but is referred to as a party game created for entertainment purposes. Due to the nature of the game however, it is often applied by the gaming pedagogues of this study in the EFL classroom, due to how the game fosters cooperation and improves communication skills. T1 shared a number of different games which they had implemented for various reasons. Among them were *Limbo* and *Inside*, which are puzzle platform games which are typically characterized by their platform structure which players proceed through by solving challenging puzzles. These games are appropriate to use whenever the aim is to foster collaboration and communication among students, as you can pair them two and two to work through the puzzles.

Additionally, the games *Storyteller* and *Once Upon a Crime in the West* which both function to teach students about narrative structures in stories, and how to structure texts when learning how to write. Additional games that were mentioned among the teachers were *Never Alone*, *Minecraft*, *Play Spent*, *Gone Home*, *Stanley Parable*, *Dark Room*, and *What Remains of Edith*. *Minecraft* is what is typically known as an edutainment game, which according to Van Eck (2006) aims to teach the players through engaging and enjoyable gameplay experiences. *Minecraft* is characterized by its open-world environment, with the primary focus being on creativity, exploration and resource gathering, allowing players to engage with the virtual environment, where players can construct various buildings and objects using the game's blocks. As stated by Van Eck (2006), games such as this are not explicitly designed for educational purposes, but due to how open *Minecraft* is, with the endless possibilities that *Minecraft* provide, there are several different scenarios for EFL learning through the use of these games. As exemplified by T2, who had the entire 8<sup>th</sup> grade level at their lower secondary school create a visual timeline explaining the history of the English language.

*Gone Home* was also frequently mentioned. In an educational context, *Gone Home* offers a unique opportunity to foster critical thinking, reading comprehension, and interpretive skills in students. The game's non-linear narrative structure, which relies on



environmental storytelling and player-driven exploration, encourages learners to piece together a complex and emotionally resonant story by analyzing the information they discover throughout the game. This process can help develop students' inferential and deductive reasoning abilities, as well as their capacity to engage with a text (in this case, the game) on a deeper level. According to the teachers, students generally respond well to the use of this game, due to how simple it is to play mechanically, and mostly depends on the student's ability to pick up information through their visual skills. Van Eck (2006) also argues how students who grow up today require several streams of information, rather than through only traditional methods such as textbooks and other types of instruction, in which they can make use of their visual literacy skills. It can be argued that the teachers have had great success with the use of *Gone Home* due to how capable their students are of picking up important information through these types of media. It does align with what Ørevik (2018) also mentioned, in that the text culture is fundamentally changing, and based on the findings it could be argued as Ørevik also suggests, that we may experience a great shift of focus within teaching practice and how we view text in educational contexts.

The findings suggest that gaming pedagogues make use of a wide variety of digital games, which all may be effective in the EFL classroom, provided that there are clear pedagogical frameworks supporting them, and adapted to meet the learning objectives. These findings fall in line with Sykes & Reinhardt's (2013) research which suggest that as long as certain criteria are met, there are a great number of digital games that can be effective in language acquisition, as long as they are used in a purposeful and pedagogically sound manner.

### **5.5 Learner beliefs concerning the use of digital games in the EFL classroom**

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of students hold positive beliefs about the integration of digital games in the EFL classroom. A significant percentage of students (90.2%) reported that the inclusion of digital games made English lessons more engaging which aligns with previous research that has highlighted how implementation of DGBLL provides numerous advantages such as engaging and enjoyable learning experiences, which proves more effective than traditional classroom instruction (Pesare, 2016). This increased engagement can be attributed to the interactive nature of games, which allows students to

actively participate in the learning process and take responsibility for their own language development (Gee, 2003).

Additionally, the students' reported an increased ability to cooperate with their peers when using digital games, suggesting that digital games have the ability to facilitate collaborative learning experiences and scaffold problem-solving, both of which are essential aspects of Vygotsky's ZPD framework (Vygotsky, 1978). By incorporating the ZPD, digital games provide opportunities for students to collaborate with more proficient peers, allowing less students to learn from their more knowledgeable counterparts. This fosters a sense of mastery and can help reduce disparities in problem-solving abilities.

The majority of students in this study perceived that digital games contributed to the development of their communication, reading, and vocabulary skills, which correlates to the findings among the teachers and their beliefs. As Pajares (1992; Dörnyei, 2005) states, research shows that students who have positive beliefs about their language learning abilities and the process in which this language learning is done, often exhibit higher levels of motivation and engagement. This is also the case for this study, in which 90% of the students reported high levels of motivation whenever digital games were implemented in the instruction. As many as 85% of the students believed that digital games should be implemented to a greater degree in the EFL instruction, which can be assumed is because students find digital games increase their engagement, motivation as well as their skills within the subject. Lightbown & Spada (2006) supports this idea, suggesting that all learners have certain beliefs as to how they acquire knowledge most effectively, and that previous learning experiences help students to understand in what way that knowledge is acquired. It can therefore be argued that students experience high motivation and engagement with the subject, as well as beliefs that they are improving their skills to a greater degree, because they are being exposed to the type of instruction, that is the most beneficial for them to learn.

The majority of students (84%) engaged in digital gaming outside of school, with 91% of them believing that their home gaming experiences positively impacted their English language proficiency. This finding supports the notion that extramural gaming can serve as a valuable supplementary language learning resource as suggested by Sundqvist & Sylvén (2012) in their joint study on EE gaming activities in relation to national test results. The students also reported that digital games made it less awkward to communicate in English, and that communication with peers was deemed easier, and more comfortable, suggesting that digital games may lower students speaking anxiety. Similar results were found in Sylvén & Sundqvist's (2014) study which found that students who played digital games frequently

reported the lowest amount of speaking anxiety, and higher levels of motivation to learn English.

Despite the overall positive beliefs about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom, students also reported challenges and potential drawbacks. These included the increased usage of profanities, the complexity of certain game mechanics in games, and distractions caused by expansive open-world games. The results of this study revealed a split among students' beliefs regarding the necessity of gaming proficiency for benefiting from the use of digital games in EFL classrooms. While 55% of the students did not see gaming proficiency as necessary, 21.6% considered it essential. This finding suggests that although many students believe that they can benefit from digital games without prior experience, there is still a portion of the students that may feel disadvantaged or excluded if they lack gaming proficiency. These concerns should be carefully considered by educators when selecting and implementing digital games in the EFL classroom, ensuring that the chosen games align with learning objectives, and minimize potential distractions (Blikstad-Balas, 2019). As well as the importance of ensuring that digital games used in educational settings are understandable and appropriate for learners with varying degrees of gaming experience, seeing as learner beliefs may be shaped by factors such as personal experience (Wenden, 1991), and can significantly affect the way learners' approach certain tasks (Horwitz, 1987; Dörnyei, 2005).

In summary, this study investigated the beliefs of EFL teachers and learners concerning the use of digital games in the EFL classroom. Both groups shared predominantly positive beliefs, highlighting increased engagement, motivation, and development of language skills as key benefits. Digital games were found to facilitate collaborative learning experiences and scaffold problem-solving, in line with Vygotsky's ZPD framework. The majority of students also reported that extramural gaming positively impacted their English language proficiency and made communication in English less awkward and more comfortable.

Despite these advantages, potential challenges and drawbacks were identified. These include the increased usage of profanities, the complexity of certain game mechanics, and distractions caused by expansive open-world games. The study also revealed a divide among students' beliefs concerning the necessity of gaming proficiency for benefiting from the use of digital games in EFL classrooms. While many students believed they could benefit without prior experience, a portion felt disadvantaged or excluded if they lacked gaming proficiency.

In light of these findings, educators should carefully consider the selection and implementation of digital games in EFL classrooms to ensure alignment with learning objectives, minimize potential distractions, and accommodate learners with varying degrees of gaming experience.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Main findings

The current thesis aimed to explore gaming pedagogues' beliefs concerning the use of digital games as an effective tool to promote EFL learning. Additionally, the thesis aimed to investigate the gaming pedagogues' beliefs about the challenges and concerns associated with DGBLL, as well as their reported practices. Lastly, the thesis sought to explore the learners' beliefs about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom. Through a mixed method research design, including four gaming pedagogue interviews, and a student questionnaire distributed to 102 students across four different schools, the thesis aimed to answer the following research questions:

- What beliefs do lower secondary school game pedagogues have about the use of digital games in EFL learning?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' beliefs about the challenges and concerns associated with the implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What are the lower secondary school game pedagogues' practices regarding the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?
- What beliefs do lower secondary school students have about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom?

The four gaming pedagogues in the study acknowledged the potential of digital games as effective tools for teaching English as a foreign language. They highlighted the cultural relevance of gaming, the potential for harnessing students' familiarity with gaming, and the unique attributes of digital games in the way it provides engaging learning situations that often are seen as less intimidating, especially in communicative learning scenarios. The teachers also discussed the potential of digital games in developing skills such as reading comprehension, writing skills, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The effectiveness of games in promoting these skills was found to depend on how the teacher frames the activities and tasks, and the role of the teacher in guiding and engaging students in discussions and activities related to the game. The gaming pedagogues also noted that digital games lead to increased motivation among the students. However, the degree of motivation varied among

students and was contingent upon the type of game and the pedagogical approach employed. The teachers acknowledged the importance of understanding students' diverse preferences and the need for clear frameworks on using games for educational purposes, rather than solely for entertainment. In terms of fostering creativity in language learning, the educators agreed on the potential of digital games. However, they also noted that the extent to which creativity is promoted depends on the game selection and the pedagogical framework implemented. The interactive nature of digital games was recognized as a factor that could foster creativity in language learning, as it requires active decision-making and engagement.

When asked about challenges and concerns such as lack of time and equipment reported in studies conducted by Lindland (2021) and Israelsson (2020), the gaming pedagogues acknowledged the workload that the implementation of digital games in teaching practice involved, noting that teachers must be willing to put in much effort and time, in order to be successful. Equipment, however, was not believed to be a significant challenge according to the game pedagogues. They stated that several valid options could be accessed through web browsers, which are available to students on their chromebooks or laptops, as well as teachers' laptops, or potentially game consoles brought from home, where whole class gaming could be implemented. The study also reported that access to digital games alone does not guarantee improved learning outcomes, where teachers pedagogical approach and framework play a significant role in successful instruction, which is acquired through experience. Estensen (2021) and Hansen (2022) found that professional development was deemed necessary to increase and improve implementation of digital games. To address this challenge, the gaming pedagogues suggested teachers leverage available resources and support systems such as *Spillpedagogene's* podcast and book, as well as potential local gaming pedagogues, and websites offering teaching plans and courses. Additionally, teachers' willingness to experiment, embrace simplicity, and accept the possibility of failure was also considered crucial when incorporating digital games into educational practice.

While the gaming pedagogues shared several beliefs regarding the efficacy of DGBLL, the extent and frequency of usage varied somewhat in their reported practices. The differences were mostly attributed to factors such as the teacher's assessment of student readiness and capabilities in terms of maturity, as well as individual pedagogical beliefs. T1 and T2 were more cautious and sought to implement digital games mostly whenever it served a purpose in teaching a specific subject, whereas T4 used it as frequently as possible, with T3 mostly implementing it in larger projects. The game pedagogues all preferred commercial games but implemented other variants to whenever it made sense. Conclusively, the gaming

pedagogues mostly shared their beliefs concerning the use of digital games but reported different practices.

The learners' beliefs were very much in line with the beliefs of the gaming pedagogues, where similarities were found in terms of increased levels of engagement, motivation and increased proficiency in communication, vocabulary and reading skills. The learner's also believed they cooperated better with their peers, whenever digital games were implemented in the EFL classroom. One belief stood out however, where 21,6% of the students deemed it necessary to be proficient at gaming in order to fully benefit from the implementation in DGBLL. These numbers may suggest that the teachers need to investigate how they are catering to diverse learner needs and preferences within their DGBLL activities.

## **6.2 Limitations**

This study aimed to investigate teachers' and students' beliefs about the use of digital games in the EFL classroom, as well as the reported practices of gaming pedagogues. While the findings provide valuable insights into the potential benefits of digital games in language learning, the study has several limitations that should be acknowledged.

One of the main limitations of this study is the relatively small sample size. The research was conducted with four gaming pedagogues and a limited number of students (102). Consequently, the findings may not be generalizable to a broader population of teachers and students (Dörnyei, 2007). Further research with larger, more diverse samples of gaming pedagogues and learners is needed to validate and extend the findings of this study. The thesis also had a limited scope. The study focuses on students' beliefs, which may not necessarily reflect their actual learning outcomes or the effectiveness of digital games in EFL instruction. A more comprehensive study design, such as one that incorporates objective measures of language proficiency or tracks students' performance over time, would provide more robust evidence. As a result of the scope, there are also potential issues concerning the choice of methodology of the present study that may threaten the validity and reliability of the research. For this thesis, a mixed methods approach was implemented, in order to gather both qualitative and quantitative data through interviews and a questionnaire. Since the section on learner beliefs mostly relies on students' self-reported beliefs, there is the possibility of a response bias (Dörnyei, 2007). Students may be inclined to report positively on the use of digital games as it could potentially result in a higher implementation in the

future. Also, one must take into consideration that students may be subjected to social desirability bias (Dörnyei, p. 54, 2007) in which students try to meet their social expectations of them and over-report desirable attitudes. Although the questionnaire was entirely anonymous it was still conducted within the classroom, which is why it must be considered. This is also why further research on the students' performance over time after implementing digital games as a tool would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of digital games in the EFL classroom. It is also worth noting that the interviews themselves were conducted in Norwegian before later translated and transcribed to English potentially having some meaning lost through translation, even though the researcher has tried to translate them as directly as possible. Lastly, certain questions in the interview guide and questionnaire may be perceived as leading, which has a chance of affecting the results. However, as the researcher implemented both qualitative and quantitative research data and included both teachers' and learners believe on the use of digital games as an effective tool in the EFL classroom, the responses may be compared and discussed which in return strengthens the validity of the research (Dörnyei, 2007).

### **6.3 Implications for teaching**

This section aims to outline the main teaching implications proposed by the findings of this study. Based on the findings from this study, several implications for teaching practices can be identified. These implications can inform teachers' decisions on incorporating digital games in EFL classrooms and provide insights into how to maximize the benefits of digital game-based language learning.

According to the findings, both teachers and students held positive beliefs concerning the use of digital games in EFL instruction and considered it to be an effective tool for language learning. The teachers believed that whenever digital games were implemented, both student engagement and motivation was considered higher compared to more traditional approaches. The student reported similar results, in addition to an increased ability to cooperate with peers and their ability to communicate and read, supporting the motivational theory on Self-Determination by Ryan and Deci (2020), that seeks to achieve growth through autonomy, competence and relatedness. With the overly positive results provided from the questionnaire, alongside Medietilsynet's (2022) numbers that show how 76% of youth



between the age of 9 to 18 play digital games, it could be argued that digital games as a tool should be given much more attention both in the curriculum, and in teaching educations.

The findings also indicate that teachers should consider criteria such as linguistic and mechanical feasibility, accessibility, playability, and alignment with learning outcomes when selecting digital games for educational purposes. The study revealed a preference for non-educational, commercial games that foster authentic communicative situations and promote interactivity and communication, however, most types of games are applicable, provided that the necessary pedagogical though processes and frameworks are in place before implementation. These findings align with the findings of Blikstad-Balas (2019) who argues that technology such as digital games, does not necessarily contribute to learning, but is rather much more dependent on the teacher. Additionally, this may involve scaffolding game-based learning activities, providing learners with the necessary support and guidance to help them overcome challenges, and facilitating collaboration and peer learning opportunities consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD framework. When selecting games, teachers should prioritize those that support the development of language skills while maintaining a high level of engagement and motivation for learners.

The study also revealed a split among students' beliefs regarding the necessity of gaming proficiency. This means teachers should carefully consider the varying degrees of gaming experience among their learners and select games that are appropriate for learners with diverse gaming backgrounds, so that all students have equal opportunities to benefit from DGBLL. Students who engage in digital gaming outside of school reported positive impacts on their English language proficiency. Teachers can draw on this by encouraging extramural gaming activities that support language learning, fostering a connection between in-class and out-of-class experiences. This approach can help to increase students' motivation and engagement with the English language, both in and outside the classroom. This falls in line with previous studies conducted by Estensen (2021) and Sylvén & Sundqvist (2016) suggesting digital games both inside and outside of the English classroom positively affected students' motivation and could even significantly increase language proficiency (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012).

Lastly, as digital games continue to evolve and new research emerges, it is crucial for teachers to engage in continuous professional development to stay up-to-date with the latest findings and best practices in digital game-based language learning. By participating in professional development opportunities, such as workshops, conferences, or online courses, teachers can enhance their knowledge and skills in using digital games effectively in the EFL

classroom. This is supported by Udir, who suggests that teachers should actively develop their professional digital competence, especially now that digital skills constitute one of the five basic skills in the EFL classroom (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

#### **6.4 Contributions and implications for further research**

The present thesis aimed to contribute within the field of L2 English to gain a better understanding of gaming pedagogues' and their students' beliefs concerning the use of digital games as a tool in EFL learning. Whereas previous research in this field has focused on teachers generally, the present study has contributed to the field by specifically focusing on the beliefs of the teachers with substantial experience in the field of Digital Game Based Language Learning, so called *game pedagogues*. Additionally, the study has contributed by exploring the beliefs from both the teachers' and students' perspectives. Furthermore, the study aimed to get a better understanding of the gaming pedagogues' reported practices, contributing to the field of educational research by highlighting the factors that influence teachers' implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom, and the types of games typically used.

Additional research is recommended to further increase one's understanding of the growing body of research on Digital Game Based Language Learning within the context of the English subject. This study opens several suggestions for further research in the field of digital game-based learning. Some potential areas of investigation may be directed towards the long-term impact of digital games on language acquisition and student engagement. This could provide valuable insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of digital games as an instructional tool in EFL classrooms. Further studies could also include a larger sample size, and also investigate the impact of DGBLL on various learner populations, distinguishing between gender, and looking at students with diverse linguistic backgrounds, or different age groups. This research could help identify strategies to ensure that digital games are accessible and effective for all learners.

There are currently not a lot of programs or guidelines directly related to implementation of digital games in the EFL classroom. Future studies could attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of different teacher training program courses designed to support the integration of digital games into the EFL classroom. This research could inform the

design of more effective programs that help teachers develop the necessary skills and knowledge to use digital games effectively in their instruction.

By addressing these areas, future research can continue to expand the understanding of digital game-based language learning and contribute to the development of more effective strategies for integrating digital games into the EFL classroom.

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## 8. Appendices

### Appendix 1: SIKT Approval letter



[Meldeskjema](#) / [Master Thesis - A study of the beliefs and practices among Norwegian...](#) / Vurdering

## Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

**Referansenummer**

868522

**Vurderingstype**

Standard

**Dato**

09.01.2023

**Prosjekttittel**

Master Thesis - A study of the beliefs and practices among Norwegian lower secondary school game pedagogues and their students on the use of digital games in the EFL classroom

**Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon**

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

**Prosjektansvarlig**

Dina Lialikhova

**Student**

Nicolas Lone

**Prosjektperiode**

15.12.2022 - 15.05.2023

**Kategorier personopplysninger**

Alminnelige

**Lovlig grunnlag**

Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 15.05.2023.

[Meldeskjema](#)

**Kommentar**

OM VURDERINGEN

SIKT har en avtale med institusjonen du forsker eller studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personverregelverket.

**FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER**

Vi har vurdert at du har lovlig grunnlag til å behandle personopplysningene, men husk at det er institusjonen du er ansatt/student ved som avgjør hvilke databehandlere du kan bruke og hvordan du må lagre og sikre data i ditt prosjekt. Husk å bruke leverandører som din institusjon har avtale med (f.eks. ved skylagring, nettspørreskjema, videosamtale el.)

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

**MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER**

Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Se våre nettsider om hvilke endringer du må melde: <https://sikt.no/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema>

**OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET**

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

Lykke til med prosjektet!

## Appendix 2: Teacher Information Letter and Consent Form for the Interviews

### Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

En studie om spillpedagogers og deres elevers holdninger og praksiser rundt bruken av digitale spill i Engelsk klasserommet

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke hvilke holdninger spillpedagoger og deres elever har rundt bruken av digitale spill i undervisningen, og hvorvidt dette anses som et effektivt verktøy i Engelsk undervisningen, og hvordan dette praktiseres. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

#### Formål

Formålet med denne masteroppgaven er å få innsikt i spillpedagogers tanker om bruken av digitale spill som et effektivt verktøy til å fremme språklæring i engelskfaget på ungdomstrinnet, samt undersøke spillpedagogers praksis knyttet til dette, og holdninger blant deres elever.

Problemstillingene i prosjektet er som følgende:

- Hvilke holdninger har spillpedagoger i ungdomsskolen rundt bruken av digitale spill i engelsk språklæring i klasserommet?
- Hvilke holdninger har spillpedagoger i ungdomsskolen knyttet til utfordringer rundt implementering av digitale spill i engelsk klasserommet?
- Hva er spillpedagogenes praksis knyttet til bruken av digitale spill som verktøy i Engelsk faget på ungdomsskolen?
- Hvilke holdninger har ungdomsskole elever rundt bruken av digitale spill i Engelsk klasserommet?

### **Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?**

*Universitetet i Stavanger er ansvarlig for prosjektet.*

### **Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?**

For å gjennomføre prosjektet mitt, ønsker jeg å intervju fire spillpedagoger som arbeider med engelskfaget i ungdomsskolen fra ulike skoler i området.

### **Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?**

Hvis du velger å delta, innebærer det at du stiller til et intervju. Det vil ta deg omtrent én time. Intervjuet omhandler dine meninger og praksis knyttet til bruken av digitale spill for å fremme språklæring i Engelsk på ungdomsskole trinnet. Jeg kommer også til å be deg om å gi noen opplysninger om deg selv i intervjuet. Disse omhandler opplysninger rundt arbeidsstilling, og utdanning. Jeg kommer til å ta lydopptak av intervjuet, som jeg vil bruke til masteroppgaven min.

### **Det er frivillig å delta**

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

### **Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger**

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrevet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Student Nicolas Lone vil ha tilgang til dine opplysninger. Ingen uvedkommende vil under noen omstendigheter få tilgang til dine personopplysninger. Det kommer til å bli iverksatt tiltak for å sikre dette, hvor navnet ditt og kontaktopplysningene dine vil bli erstattet med en kode som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data.

### **Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?**

Datamaterialet med dine personopplysninger vil anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er ved midten av mai 2023.

Lyddopptaket vil slettes ved prosjektslutt

### **Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?**

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra Universitetet i Stavanger har Personverntjenester vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

### **Dine rettigheter**

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

- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger jeg behandler om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om deg som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger

### **Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?**

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å vite mer om eller benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- *Universitetet i Stavanger* ved Dina Lialikhova. Hun kan du kontaktes på:  
[Dina.lialikhova@uis.no](mailto:Dina.lialikhova@uis.no)
- *Universitetet i Stavanger* ved Nicolas Lone. Han kan du kontaktes på:  
n.lone@stud.uis.no
- Vårt personvernombud: [personvernombud@uis.no](mailto:personvernombud@uis.no)

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til Personverntjenester sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:

- Personverntjenester på epost ([personverntjenester@sikt.no](mailto:personverntjenester@sikt.no)) eller på telefon: 53 21 15 00.

Med vennlig hilsen

Dina Lialikhova  
(Forsker/veileder)

*Nicolas Lone*  
(Forsker)

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## Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet [*En studie om spillpedagogers og deres elevers holdninger og praksiser rundt bruken av digitale spill i Engelsk klasserommet*], og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

å delta i intervju

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)



## Appendix 3: Teacher Interview Guide

### Intervjuspørsmål

#### Introduction

1. Hvor lenge har du jobbet som lærer?
2. Hvordan bestemte du deg for å bli spillpedagog?
3. Har du tatt noen spesiell utdanning eller kurs for å bli spillpedagog?
4. Trives du godt som spillpedagog?
5. Kan du fortelle litt om jobben din som spillpedagog og hvordan det skiller seg ut fra den vanlige lærer

#### Beliefs

1. Har du noe generelle tanker rundt digitale spill i skolen, og hvordan det fungerer som et verktøy for språklæring?
2. Tror du at elevene er mer motiverte for å lære engelsk når det brukes digitale spill i undervisningen?
3. Tror du at bruken av digitale spill i klasserommet tillater elever å være mer kreative i måten de lærer engelsk på?
4. På hvilken måte kan bruken av digitale spill være med på å promotere engelsk språkutvikling, i form av leseforståelse, skriveferdigheter, vokabular og uttale feks?
5. Hvordan syntes du den nye læreplanen LK20 har tilrettelagt for spill i undervisningen på ungdomstrinnet?
6. Har du merket et økt fokus på din arbeidsplass i forhold til bruken av digitale spill og generelt andre verktøy siden implementeringen av LK20?
7. Du jobber jo med mye forskjellige lærere, er det andre som bruker digitale spill i egen undervisning, og oppfatter du generelt at det er positive holdninger og god praksis rundt det?

## Practices

1. Hvor ofte bruker du digitale spill i engelsk undervisningen?
2. Bruker du digitale spill på alle trinn og i alle klasser i engelsk du underviser i iløpet av året, eller egner det seg ikke alltid?
3. Anvender du forskjellige spill for å utvikle forskjellige språklige evner slik som kommunikasjon, grammatikk, leseferdigheter osv, har du konkrete eksempler?
4. Har du noen kriterier du vektlegger når du skal velge ut spill i undervisnings sammenheng?
5. Hvilke typer spill bør man styre unna?
6. Hvilke typer spill egner seg bedre enn andre?
7. Hvilke spill opplever du at du får best respons av hos elevene? Alt fra motivasjon, til effektivitet, og det mer generelle.
8. Hvilke konkrete spill anbefaler du for noen som har lyst å prøve seg på spillbruk i engelsk undervisningen, men som gjerne ikke har mye erfaring?

## Challenges

1. Hvilke negative erfaringer har du hatt med bruk av digitale spill i skolen? Og har du noen gode metoder for hvordan man kan styre unna dem etter beste evne?
2. Hva er de største utfordringene du opplever med å bruke digitale spill i undervisning?
3. Det er mange lærere som peker på faktorer som manglende tid, erfaring, utstyr og økonomi til dette, som grunn til at de ikke velger å benytte seg av digitale spill i deres praksis, til tross for at de syntes det er interessant. Har du noen anbefalinger til slike lærere, og hvordan stiller du deg til disse faktorene?
4. Mange lærere er også redde for at elevene skal inneha enormt mye mer kunnskaper enn dem selv innenfor feltet digitale spill. Hvordan kan man tilrettelegge for at det skal virke mindre skummelt for lærere?
5. Mange lærerstudenter peker også på manglende informasjon i løpet av studiet om hvordan digitale spill kan brukes som en ressurs i undervisningen, tror du det er avgjørende for hvorvidt de bruker det senere?

6. Flere studier viser at det er generelt positive holdninger til bruk av spill i undervisningen, men det er veldig få som har noe erfaring eller vet hvor de skal begynne – hvordan kan lærere få kunnskap om hvordan de kan bruke digitale spill i undervisningen?
7. Hva tenker du om veien videre, hvor viktig er det å kunne tilby digitale spill som en ressurs i undervisningen, og i så fall hvordan kan dette fremmes på en enda bedre måte?

## **Appendix 4: Student Questionnaire**

### **Spørreskjema: Elevers holdninger rundt bruken av digitale spill i engelsk undervisningen**

Dette er en undersøkelse om hvordan hvilke holdninger elever har rundt bruken av digitale spill til å fremme språklæring i engelskfaget. Undersøkelsen har som mål å finne ut av hva du som elev med erfaring av bruk av spill i undervisning tenker rundt dette. Eksempler på digitale spill kan være «Keep talking and nobody explodes», «Storyteller» og «Orwell: Keeping an Eye on you» for å nevne noen.

#### **Det er frivillig å delta**

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn, fram til skjemaet er levert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta, eller trekker deg underveis i spørreskjemaet.

Jeg setter enormt stor pris på at du velger å delta i denne undersøkelsen, og jeg håper du leser påstandene nøye og svarer så ærlig som du klarer. Alle spørsmålene handler om det engelske språket, og undervisning i engelsk faget. Besvarelsen din forblir anonym og vil oppbevares helt konfidensielt, hvor det ikke vil være mulig å identifisere deg som deltaker under noen omstendigheter.

Den første delen av undersøkelsen består av påstander hvor du skal svare i hvilken grad du er enig eller uenig, eller om du er usikker, nøytralt. Den siste delen skal du skrive fritt på, om du har noen tanker og meninger du ønsker å dele.

Igjen, tusen takk for din deltakelse!

	Svært Uenig	Uenig	Nøytral	Enig	Sterkt Enig
Digitale spill er nyttige når jeg skal lære engelsk.					
Digitale spill gjør det lettere å lære engelsk.					
Jeg syntes jeg lærer mer engelsk av å bruke digitale spill i undervisningen.					
Digitale spill gjør det mer kjekt å lære engelsk.					
Å bruke digitale spill i engelsk undervisningen bidrar til at det blir mer variert.					
Ved å bruke digitale spill i undervisningen syntes jeg at jeg blir mer kreativ i engelskfaget.					
Ved å bruke spill i engelsktimene øker det min motivasjon for å lære engelsk.					
Jeg syntes vi burde bruke mer digitale spill i engelsk undervisningen.					
Jeg samarbeider bedre med andre medelever når vi bruker digitale spill i undervisningen.					
Det er viktig å være god i digitale spill for å lære mye i engelsk undervisningen når vi bruker dem.					
Gjennom å bruke digitale spill i engelskfaget har jeg blitt bedre på å kommunisere.					
Gjennom å bruke digitale spill i engelskfaget har jeg fått et bedre ordforråd.					

Gjennom å bruke digitale spill i engelskfaget har jeg fått bedre leseforståelse i engelsk.					
Gjennom å bruke digitale spill i engelskfaget har jeg fått bedre uttale i engelsk.					
Digitale spill er viktig for å lære engelsk på skolen.					
Digitale spill er viktig for å lære engelsk på fritiden.					
Jeg har tilgang til digitale spill hjemme og lærer engelsk gjennom å bruke dem.					
Jeg foretrekker å bruke digitale spill framfor andre metoder i skolen i engelskfaget.					
Jeg lærer mer engelsk av å bruke digitale spill framfor skolebøker og andre ressurser.					

Hva mener du er de største fordelene med å bruke digitale spill når det gjelder din egen engelsk språkutvikling?

Hva mener du er de største ulempene med å bruke digitale spill når det gjelder din egen engelsk språkutvikling?

Hvorfor mener du at du lærer mer/mindre av å bruke digitale spill i undervisningen?

Dersom du spiller digitale spill hjemme, tror du at det har hjulpet deg til å bli bedre i engelskfaget på skolen? Hvorfor?