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Eight-Grade Students' Motivation in the English Subject

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Abstract

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to explore eighth-grade students' motivation to learn English in a Norwegian lower secondary school. Specifically, the study aimed to investigate the level of motivation among the students, as well as identifying factors contributing to their motivation, or demotivation. Additionally, the study aimed to investigate the motivation among students when specific motivational strategies were implemented in English lessons by the teacher-researcher. A sample of 80 students participated in one main questionnaire, while 21 of those students participated in a classroom intervention consisting of six English lessons over three weeks, where videos, games, and group work were implemented. The study found that most participants reported high levels of motivation to learn English, while only a few were not motivated, claiming boredom to be the reason. Among the several reasons that students had for being motivated to learn English, the main ones were related to the necessity of knowing the language to engage in activities they enjoyed in their spare time, mainly consuming media such as English TV, films, websites, and social media sites. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the effective use of videos can positively influence students' motivation. However, it is essential to remember the educational purposes of using videos in lessons, and the need for them to be accompanied by appropriate tasks. The findings also show the need to balance engaging activities that students find enjoyable, such as games, with other instructional tasks, such as writing assignments. The study highlights a challenge wherein students perceive traditional English lesson tasks as boring and advocates for a greater emphasis on physical engagement and a reduction in conventional reading and writing activities. The findings revealed mixed feelings about group work, highlighting the importance of group dynamics and composition, as well as the need to cater to individual preferences.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables

1. Introduction

1.1. The Present study

This mixed methods study aims to explore the motivation to learn English as a second language (ESL) of eighth-grade students in one Norwegian upper secondary school. Specifically, it seeks to explore the factors that positively influence the students' motivation levels and identify any reasons for a lack of motivation. Additionally, the study aims to examine how the implementation of various motivational strategies used in ESL lessons, taught by the researcher, affect the students' motivation. Motivational strategies, according to Dörnyei (2001), are "methods and techniques to generate and maintain the learners' motivation" (p. 2). To achieve an insight into the various aspects of student motivation in the ESL classroom, this study poses the following research questions:

RQ 1.a: How motivated to learn English are eighth-grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school?

RQ 1.b: What motivating factors or reasons for lack of motivation do they identify?

RQ 2: According to students, how is their motivation during English lessons affected by a selection of motivational strategies which the teacher uses?

1.2. The Context and the Significance of the Research

"School shall facilitate learning for all pupils and stimulate each pupil's motivation, willingness to learn and faith in their own mastering" (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017, p. p. 1). English is a compulsory subject in the Norwegian educational system, from elementary school to the first year of upper secondary school (The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). According to the Ministry of Education and Research, English is a crucial subject that the students will need for many purposes. The subject, along with all other subjects, aims to "promote curiosity and engagement" with the students (The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 2). In order to achieve this, *motivation* is a key element in the students' learning as it is closely linked with those fundamental aspects of curiosity and engagement. As will be explained further in Chapter 2, there are different theories that define motivation in various ways, but common for them all is the acknowledgment of its pivotal role in driving individuals toward specific goals or actions (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner, 2010; Keller, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The decline in motivation among Norwegian students, as documented by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2024, p. 15), is a concerning trend that highlights the significance of addressing motivational factors within the educational system. Dörnyei (2001) underlines the importance of motivation in language learning, further emphasizing its importance in the English subject. According to Dörnyei (2001), "99 per cent of language learners who really want to learn a foreign language (i.e. who are really motivated) will be able to master a reasonable working knowledge of it as a minimum, regardless of their language aptitude" (p.2). This insight emphasizes the need for educators to cultivate and sustain motivation among students. By understanding motivational factors, educators can potentially influence the decline in student motivation and enhance overall learning experiences and outcomes in the English subject. The study aims to contribute to the knowledge of the important field of L2 motivation among lower secondary students in the English subject by providing insights into specific motivational factors influencing their language learning experience. While the study's scope is limited to one school in Norway, the findings may offer some guidance for teachers in their efforts to create motivational learning environments for their students.

Rindal and Brevik (2019) argue that the Norwegian context for learning English is in a transition "from one place to a yet unknown other" (Rindal 2019, as cited in Rindal & Brevik 2019, p. 435) because it is "no longer EFL, but not qualified for ESL" (p. 435). Although English is not an official language in Norway, throughout this study, English as a second language (ESL) will be used to describe the status of English in the Norwegian classroom. This is due to the evolving nature of English language learning in Norway, where English is integrated into the education system from an early age and functions beyond just a foreign language (Rindal & Brevik, 219, p. 435). However, previous research that uses the term EFL (English as a foreign language) will be discussed because it refers to a similar context of learning English as the Norwegian one and provides valuable insights into relevant research. The study also uses the term L2 (second language) about English as it "refers to English as a second or later language" (Rindal & Brevik, 2019, p. 435).

1.3. Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six main chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides a theoretical framework of L2 motivation and gives an overview of previous research on the topic. Chapter 3 describes the study's methodology, namely the mixed methods approach, the tools for data collection, the participants, validity and reliability as well as ethical considerations made. Chapter 4 presents the

findings from the research, while Chapter 5 discusses the findings in relation to the research questions, motivational theories, and previous research. Chapter 6 concludes the thesis.

2. Motivation in Language Learning

This chapter introduces the theoretical concepts and terminology relevant to this thesis. The study aimed to investigate the motivational aspects of the ESL (English as a second language) classroom in the eighth grade in a Norwegian lower secondary school, making *motivation* the chapter's overarching theme. The chapter aims to provide a foundational understanding of motivation through Ryan and Deci's widely known Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Keller's ARCS model (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) before delving into specific second language (L2) motivational theories, namely, Gardner's Socio-educational Model of Second Language Acquisition, and Dörnyei's Second Language (L2) Motivational Self System Model (L2MSS). Further, the chapter provides insight into Dörnyei's (2001) general conditions for a motivational atmosphere in the language classroom, and three motivational strategies for the ESL classroom that were used during the practical component of this study: using videos in teaching, using games in teaching, and group work.

2.1 Defining Motivation

According to Wu and Tao (2022), numerous scholars agree that motivation is one of the most important factors affecting second language acquisition (SLA) (p. 417). Further, they highlight motivation's crucial role in learners' academic success in language learning (p. 417). "The word "motivation" derives from the Latin verb *movere* meaning "to move"" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, p. 3), which means that motivation is what *moves* people. Motivation can be viewed as the inner force people have that moves them to think, behave, and act the way they do. Gardner (2010) explains that motivated people are goal-oriented, and their actions are driven by underlying reasons, commonly referred to as motives (p.8). The term 'motivation' is a complex one and has multiple definitions. Common for many definitions is that motivation drives people to take action. Ryan and Deci (2000) put it like this: "motivation concerns energy, direction, persistence and equifinality[1] – all aspects of activation and intention" (p.69). This means that motivation is the driving force behind one's actions, such as enthusiasm, determination, or willingness to invest effort when working towards a goal. As well as a sense of purpose that keeps individuals focused on tasks and goals. Motivation is not only about starting a task but also about persistence to endure it and finding ways to make something happen. While there are many different ways of defining motivation, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021) state that the only consensus among most researchers regarding motivation is that it is about the "direction" and "magnitude" of human behavior,

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[1] «the property of allowing or having the same effect or result from different events» ("Merriam-Webster" n.d.)

further explaining that "motivation is responsible for *why* people decide to do something; *how long* they are willing to sustain the activity; *how hard* they are going to pursue it" (p. 4).

2.2. Motivational Theories

2.2.1. Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory was developed by psychologists Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci in the 1980s. The theory is a psychological framework focused on motivation and personality (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 68). SDT suggests that it lies in human nature to be motivated to satisfy the three basic psychological needs for "autonomy", "competence", and "relatedness", which are described as being "essential for facilitating optimal functioning of the natural propensities for growth and integration, as well as for social development and personal well-being" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 68). The theory implies that when the three basic psychological needs are met, it is likely that one will feel a high level of motivation. Autonomy in SDT refers to "the need to self-regulate one's experiences and actions" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p.10). The need for autonomy is linked with self-endorsed behavior and being able to choose for oneself in alignment with one's authentic interests. Competence is about feeling a sense of mastery. It is hard to stay motivated if one does not feel efficient or capable in the task at hand (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 11). Relatedness is the need for social connections with other human beings. It can mean being a part of a social group, feeling a sense of belongingness with people who have similar experiences and goals, and having meaningful relationships. These needs have been proven to be important for motivation and people's well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 11).

Ryan and Deci (2000) state that motivation is often viewed as a singular construct, even though there are different ways of being motivated. (p. 69). People can be motivated for a multitude of reasons, whether it is because of an inherent interest or because they are offered an award for meeting goals. Some students will be motivated to learn based on their enjoyment and interest in the subject matter, wanting a deeper understanding. This type of inherent motivation is often referred to as *intrinsic motivation* (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). According to Sansone and Harackiewicz (2000), "The phenomenon of intrinsic motivation reflects the primary propensity of organisms to engage in activities that interest them and, in so doing, to learn, develop, and expand their capacities" (p. 16). Ryan and Deci (2000) agree that it lies in human nature to want to actively pursue new and stimulating experiences, explore, and gain knowledge and skills (p.70). The idea is that people naturally possess the ability to motivate themselves when interested in something.

As one ages, intrinsic motivation is harder to maintain, as "the freedom to be intrinsically motivated is increasingly curtailed by social pressures to do activities that are not interesting and to assume a variety of new responsibilities" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71). *Extrinsic motivation* is important when one is not inherently interested in a task because it is about the external factors that influence one's actions. The influences can often be represented by, for instance, social expectations, self-expectations, or awards for certain behaviors, such as high grades in school or diplomas and other rewards. Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that "extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome and, thus, contrasts with intrinsic motivation" (p.71). There are several nuanced types of extrinsic motivation that all have different levels of autonomy. There is, for instance, a difference between someone who is extrinsically motivated by their own expectations and ideas of themselves and someone who is motivated solely to get a reward.

2.2.2. The ARCS Model

A lesser known, yet relevant theory about motivation is John M. Keller's ARCS model, which was first introduced in 1984 (Keller, 1984, as cited in Keller 2010, p. 44). The model is based on four categories, "Attention", "Relevance", "Confidence", and "Satisfaction" (p. 45), which Keller (2010) describes as "major dimensions of human motivation" (p. 44). He further states that the dimensions can be applied when developing strategies that encourage and maintain motivation (p. 44).

According to Keller (2010), the first category, attention, deals with motivating learners by stimulating and maintaining their curiosity and interest. In terms of motivation, attention involves grabbing and retaining learners' interest in the learning process. This is achieved by using "cues and prompts" (pp. 44 – 45) to guide the learners' focus toward the specific learning objectives. Therefore, the main aim is to capture and hold learners' attention to facilitate effective learning (p.45). Furthermore, it is important for learners to sense a relevance to the subject matter. For learners to feel motivated to learn, they need to perceive the instruction as relevant to their personal goals or motivations and feel a sense of connection to the learning environment (p. 45). The third category is confidence, which can positively or negatively affect the learners depending on the level of confidence they experience. Low confidence levels among learners can lead to fears and anxiety about the subject. Overconfidence, on the other hand, may lead to careless behavior, such as overlooking certain aspects of the learning activities because they think they know everything about the subject (pp. 45 – 46). To sustain the desire for learning, the learners must also feel satisfaction in regard to the learning process or outcomes, which can stem from both external factors such as "grades, opportunities for advancement, certificates, and other material rewards" (p. 46), and internal factors which include "experiences that enhance their feelings of self-

esteem, experience positive interactions with other people, having their views heard and respected, and from mastering challenges that enhance their feelings of competence" (p. 46).

2.3. L2 Specific Motivational Theories

2.3.1. The Socio-educational Model of Second Language Acquisition

The social-educational model of second language acquisition has, for a long time, been a dominant model in the SLA field (MacIntyre, 2007). The model was proposed by Canadian psychologist Robert Gardner as a theoretical framework that emphasizes the influence of social and environmental factors on language learning outcomes (Gardner, 1985, as cited in Gardner, 2019, p. 25). The model divides motivation into integrative motivation, which is about the learners' desire to become similar to the L2 community, and instrumental motivation, which is about the learners' desire for pragmatic gains. A student learning English as an L2 could, for example, be interested and motivated to learn English for economic reasons, such as job offers and promotions at work (Gardner, 2010, p. 127). Dörnyei (2001) states that while the two categories are recognized in the field of L2, it is not the distinction between them that is commonly researched but rather the idea of the "integrative motive" (p. 16).

The attitude motivation test battery (AMTB) is a research tool initially developed in 1972 by Gardner, which has been revised and used by multiple researchers over the years (Gardner, 2019, p.23). The AMTB aims to assess "individual differences in four classes of complex variables that have been shown to have motivational implications in second language acquisition as expected on the basis of our socio-educational model" (Gardner, 2019, p. 24), namely integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, language anxiety and motivation (Gardner, 2019, p.25). AMTB is closely related to the socio-educational model of second language acquisition, which "recognizes that the motivation to learn a second language is influenced by the three classes of variables, Integrativeness, Attitudes toward the Learning Situation, and Language Anxiety" (Gardner, 2019, p. 25).

Integrativeness is an important construct of the socio-educational model and refers to the learner's desire to integrate into the community and culture of the target language (Gardner, 2010, p. 114). The level of integrativeness can vary from a complete lack of interest in learning a language to eagerness to join the language community. Gardner (2010) argues that the general trend of language learners is to be somewhere in the middle of these "two extremes" (p.114). In the AMTB, Integrativeness can be divided into three scales: "Integrative Orientation, Attitudes toward the Second Language Community, and Interest in Foreign Languages" (Gardner, 2019, p. 24). Integrative

orientation refers to the learner's views on the importance of "social aspects of English communication" (Gardner, 2010, p. 116). Attitudes toward the Second Language Community, or "Attitudes toward English speaking people" (Gardner, 2010, p. 117), is made up of items targeting English-speaking people. The scale Interest in Foreign Languages is focused on the learner's "general interest in or tolerance to other groups" with a focus on the groups' language (p. 117).

Attitudes toward the Learning Situation is recognized in the socio-educational model as an important factor in language learning (Gardner, 2010, p. 119). The elements that are included in this scale include the evaluation of "the objective nature of the curriculum, the teacher, the individual course, the views and regulations of the school authorities, the materials, the time and importance allotted to language instruction, and the quality of instruction, etc." (p. 119). It is assumed that these aspects influence or play a dominant role in the learners' motivation to learn a language (Gardner, 2019, p. 24). Gardner (2010) explains that the main focus in the AMTB regarding Attitudes toward the Learning Situation is the English teacher and course evaluation (pp. 119 – 120).

The class Language Anxiety is divided into two categories, "Language Class Anxiety", which is about anxiety to speak English in a classroom environment, and "Language Use Anxiety", which is about anxiety to speak English in other social settings (Gardner, 2019, p. 25). Many students face language anxiety in the L2 classroom and in society in general (Horwitz & Young, 1991, p. xiii). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) suggest that language anxiety is developed while learning, rather than being present in the individual beforehand (pp. 52 – 53).

The socio-educational model is essentially "a theoretically-grounded, construct-oriented approach to understanding L2 motivation" (Lamb et al., 2019, p. 7). Gardner (201) emphasizes motivation as a crucial factor that can influence language learning outcomes for each individual language learner. Furthermore, he states that motivation is an intricate term that can be evaluated in many ways because of its complexity. However, in the socio-educational model, there are especially three aspects of motivation that are highlighted, these are: "how much effort the individual expends to learn the language", "how much the individual wants to learn the language", and "how much the individual enjoys the language" (p. 121). In the AMTB, these three categories are assessed and measured using the three scales "Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn the Language, and Attitudes toward Learning the Language" (Gardner, 2019, p. 25).

Motivational intensity is regarded as an essential element for attaining proficiency in language learning. It signifies the level of dedication and effort put towards mastering the material and skills. While effort is an important factor when it comes to motivation in language learning, it is not broad enough to measure motivation on its own. Desire to learn English represents the drive that learners can have to learn English, and it is also an important element of language proficiency. The third component, attitudes towards learning English, is linked with the enjoyment of the language learner while learning English and the positive effect it can have on language proficiency. The three components are unable to give a full picture of motivation on their own, however, together they are important because they offer a multifaceted view of the English learners' motivation that contribute to a better understanding of the topic (Gardner, 2010, pp. 121 – 124).

Additionally, Gardner (2010) argues that there is one additional element to L2 learners' motivation, namely parental encouragement (p. 128). Gardner (2010) states that based on the socio-educational model of language acquisition, the social environment has the potential to influence the motivation of language learners. Further it is argued that the parent's interest and investment in the students' language journey could apply to younger students of an L2. (p. 128).

2.3.2. The L2 Motivational Self System Model (L2MSS)

According to Csizér (2019), the development of the L2MSS started in 2002 when Zoltán Dörnyei and Kata Csizér carried out a study exploring Hungarian students' L2 motivation, with a focus on some of the concepts used by Gardner and his colleagues, namely integrativeness and the L2 learners' desire to integrate into the L2 community (p.72). The L2MSS model is rooted in "Markus and Nurius' (1986) theory of possible selves, and Higgins' (1987) theory of self-discrepancy" (Csizér, 2019, p. 73).

Possible selves "derive from representations of the self in the past, and they include representations of the self and the future" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954). In other words, the theory of possible selves is about people's thoughts about what they "might become", "would like to become", and "are afraid of becoming" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 11). Dörnyei (2009) highlights that Markus and Nurius (1986) differentiate between three types of potential selves. Firstly, the self that one would like to become, which Dörnyei (2009) refers to as "the default option" (p. 12) of possible selves. Secondly, the self that one could become, which is related to "the best case" scenario of a possible self. Lastly, the self that one would be afraid of becoming, which is described as "the worst case" (p. 12) scenario. According to Higgins (1987), the theory of self-discrepancy is about "how different types of discrepancies between self-state representations are related to different kinds of emotional vulnerabilities" (p. 319). The theory

suggests that people are driven to align their self-concept with their internal standards, leading to motivation aimed at making the gap between their actual selves and their ideal selves smaller (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 18). Inspired by these theories, Dörnyei (2005, as cited in Dörnyei, 2009) suggested that the L2MSS was made up of three components, or self-guides: the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and the L2 Learning Experience (p. 29).

The notion of the Ideal L2 Self revolves around how one envisions oneself in language learning. If someone's ideal self is skilled in a second language, it motivates them strongly to achieve proficiency in that language, aiming to bridge the gap between their current and ideal selves. This type of motivation is commonly linked with traditional integrative and internalized instrumental motivation, as described by Dörnyei (2009, p. 29). According to Csizér (2019), Dörnyei lists several important criteria that must be met for the ideal selves to have an influence on a learner's motivation:

> (i) that a future self-image is an elaborate, vivid and available, (ii) that there is perceived plausibility, (ii) that there is harmony between the ideal and ought-to selves, (iv) that there is necessary activation/priming, (v) that an ideal self is accompanied by necessary procedural strategies, and (vi) that an ideal self is offset by a feared self (p. 75)

Further, it is argued that each element within the L2 model can individually play a significant role in motivating students, and in many quantitative studies conducted using the L2MSS, the main focus has been on the notion of the ideal self (Csizér, 2019, p. 75).

The Ought-to L2 Self pertains to the qualities the language learners believe they should possess to fulfill expectations and prevent potential negative outcomes. (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29). This aspect aligns with Higgins' concept of the ought self and corresponds to more extrinsic forms of instrumental motivation (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29). Csizér (2019) explains that Higgins' theory of self-discrepancy points out that when people perceive a gap between who they are and who they want to be, it can lead to negative emotions. According to this theory, motivation arises from the desire to bridge the gap between the ideal self and the ought-to self (p. 73). Dörnyei (2009) explains that while initially, Higgins (1987, as cited in Dörnyei, 2009) defined the ought self as a positive reference point, representing the self the individual believed they ought to become, he later proposed expanding the definition to include a negative reference point (Higgins, 1996, as cited in Dörnyei, 2009), similar to Markus and Nurius' concept of the feared self (1986, as cited in Dörnyei, 2009) (p.15).

The L2 Learning Experience in L2MSS focuses on the contextual 'executive' motives tied to the "immediate learning environment and experience" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29). This means that factors

such as the influence of the teacher, the content in the curriculum, and the peer group dynamics are important for L2 motivation. Additionally, the individual's experiences with the actual language learning process can be a motivator if they have been successful (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29). This aspect of L2MSS explores how the setting influences self-development, considering the learners' past and present language learning encounters. The L2 Learning Experience is about how learners interact with external factors during their learning journey (Liu & Thompson, 2018, p. 38). As mentioned, the three aspects of the L2SMM can be viewed separately, however, when all three systems are aligned, they create an amplified, cumulative effect, resulting in greater motivation (Dörnyei, 2009b, as cited in Csizér, 2019, p. 75).

2.4. General Motivational Conditions in the ESL Classroom

According to Dörnyei (2001), there are several preconditions that are vital to generating motivation in the L2 classroom (p. 31). He further identifies three important conditions that affect and depend on each other in order to create a motivational atmosphere in the classroom, namely "appropriate teacher behaviors and a good relationship with the students", "a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere" and "a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 31).

2.4.1. Appropriate Teacher Behaviors

Dörnyei and Csizér (1998, as cited in Dörnyei 2001) conducted a survey about teachers' thoughts about the use of different motivational strategies in their own practice. The study included summarized responses from 200 Hungarian English teachers from primary school to college level. The findings from the study indicated that the participants regarded the teacher's personal conduct as the primary motivational factor. Additionally, the results highlighted that despite its significance, this aspect was among the least utilized motivational resources in the teacher's classroom practice (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 31). Further, Dörnyei (2001) states that a different study by Gary Chambers (1999, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001) found similar results among British secondary school learners of German (p. 31). Dörnyei (2001) suggests that there are four general elements of appropriate teacher behaviors that are important to motivate learners, namely "enthusiasm", "commitment to and expectations for the students' learning", "relationship with the students", and "relationship with the students' parents" (p. 32).

According to Dörnyei (2001), many scholars agree that the teacher's enthusiasm is important to motivate students by setting examples for them (p. 33). He further underlines that one should keep in mind that enthusiasm does not necessarily mean "pep talks" or "theatrical performance" (p. 33), but that

the teacher should be visibly interested in the topic and share their reasons for interest with the students (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 33). Dörnyei (2001) also states that if the teacher shows commitment to and expectations for the student's learning and progress, the students are likely to reciprocate. Further, he highlights the importance of teachers showing the students that they genuinely care (p. 34). In order for the teacher to express that the student's learning is important to them, they could, among other things, offer help, explain things individually, respond promptly, or grade quickly (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 34). To underline the importance of teachers' expectations for the students, Dörnyei (2001) refers to a study by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001), which showed that students tended to live up to their teachers' expectations for them (p. 35). Furthermore, having a good relationship with the students, not only academically but also on a personal level, is crucial in order to create a motivational environment for the learners (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 36). To achieve this, Dörnyei (2001) argues that teachers should show the students that they accept them, be able to listen and pay attention to them, and be available for personal contact (p. 37). Lastly, Dörnyei (2001) states that teachers should also develop good relationships with their students' parents because younger students often value their parents' opinions. To do this, the teacher should keep the parents informed and include them in making decisions (p. 39).

2.4.2. A pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere

Dörnyei (2001) states that in addition to showing appropriate teacher behaviors, the teacher should use other methods to create a "pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 31). In agreeance with other scholars (Gardner 1991, 2019; Horwitz & Young, 1991; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991), Dörnyei (2001) identifies language anxiety as a potential hindrance to L2 learning achievement (p. 40). In order to combat language anxiety, he suggests that the classroom atmosphere plays an important role. One of the specific tools Dörnyei (2001) recommends for creating a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere is to ensure that there is a 'norm of tolerance' in the classroom, giving the students the opportunity to try and fail without being afraid of being judged by others. To achieve this, it is important that students know "that mistakes are a natural part of learning" (p. 41). Further Dörnyei (2001) suggests that 'humor' is an important tool that often tends to be forgotten in theoretical writings about motivation. Humor is not necessarily about telling jokes, but rather about the teacher's ability to relax and not take themselves too seriously (p. 41). Additionally, he points out the importance of the physicality of the classroom, stating that the atmosphere could be heavily influenced by, for instance, decorations. It is, however, not about the aesthetics of the classroom, but rather the student's "involvement of personalizing the classroom", which is linked to the feeling of ownership of the classroom (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 42).

2.4.3. A cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms

When it comes to motivating students, Dörnyei (2001) argues that the group dynamic is crucial (p. 42). He especially highlights the importance of creating a cohesive learner group and establishing constructive group norms, two aspects of group dynamics that he claims have "direct motivational bearings" (p. 43).

According to Dörnyei (2001), "A cohesive learner group is one which is 'together'; in which there is a strong 'we' feeling; and which students are happy to belong to" (p. 43). This means that a cohesive learner group is one where the members are committed to each other and feel a shared responsibility because of a common goal, which Dörnyei (2001) argues can "make the learning process more enjoyable in general" (p. 43). There are several ways in which the teacher can contribute to the group's cohesiveness, among others, helping the students get to know each other, moving assigned seats every once in a while, and assigning group work to encourage dialogue between students and give a common goal for them to reach (43 – 44). Furthermore, Dörnyei (2001) argues that in order for successful joint learning, the group must establish constructive classroom norms (p. 45). Ideally, the norms have been "*explicitly discussed* and *willingly adopted* by members" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 46). Further Dörnyei suggests five points that can be used in an "explicit *norm-building procedure*" (p. 46), namely "formulating potential norms", "justifying their purpose in order to enlist support for them", "having them discussed by the whole group", "eliciting further potential norms from the learners and subjecting these to discussion too", and "agreeing on a mutually accepted set of 'class rules'" (p. 46). The teacher plays an important role in making the group norms work by making sure that they are enforced and taken seriously (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 47).

2.5. Three Specific Motivational Strategies

The literature on L2 motivation highlights different strategies that can be used in the ESL classroom. This section presents three strategies that are of particular interest to this study, namely, the use of *video*s, *games*, and *cooperative learning* (CL), or *group work*, in the ESL classroom.

2.5.1. The Use of Videos in the ESL Classroom

Using audiovisual material such as films or videos in the ESL classroom has been heavily promoted during the last 20 years or so (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019, p. xv). According to Berk (2009), the use of different tools such as music and visual scenes in videos can have a big impact on the viewers'

emotions, influencing both deep and superficial feelings (p.2). Furthermore, he lists some potential benefits of using videos in teaching, the first one being that videos can be used to capture learners' attention (which, as mentioned before, is also an important aspect of Keller's ARCS model). Some other benefits listed are, among others, that the use of videos in teaching can "Focus students' concentration", "Generate interest in class", "Improve attitudes toward content and learning", "Foster deeper learning", "Serve as a vehicle for collaboration", "Inspire and motivate students", and "Make learning fun" (Berk, 2009, p. 2). The potential benefits of using videos in teaching are, according to Berk (2009), linked to "(a) the core intelligences of verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, and emotional, (b) left and right hemispheres, (c) triune brain, (d) brain wave frequencies" (Berk, 2009, p. 3).

The core intelligences mentioned are a part of Gardner's (1993, as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 231) "Multiple Intelligences Model". Gardner suggested nine intelligences that described the favored approach to learning that all learners naturally exhibit (p. 231). Armstrong (1999, as cited in in Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 231) proposed convenient memory tags for the intelligences that can help identify what they represent. Verbal/linguistic intelligence is marked "word smart", visual/spatial intelligence is "picture smart", musical/rhythmical is "music smart" (p. 231). Emotional intelligence was suggested by Goleman (1998, as cited in Berk, 2009, p. 3), and is similar to Gardner's intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, which are marked "self smart" and "people smart" by Armstrong (1999, as cited in in Richards and Rodgers, 2014, p. 231). According to Berk (2009), "Videos can tap" into these intelligences (p. 3). The emotional intelligence is included in this setting because it can be argued that "Video clips can be used to communicate with learners at a deeper level of understanding by touching their emotions" (p. 3). By including several types of teaching strategies in the curriculum, the teacher can reach a larger portion of the learners by relating the teaching to their preferred way of learning according to the multiple intelligences (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 232).

Berk (2009) further argues that videos can engage both the left and right hemispheres of the brain. The left hemisphere handles aspects such as "dialogue, plot, rhythm, and lyrics", while the right hemisphere manages "visual images, relationships, sound effects, melodies, and harmonic relationships" (p. 3). Berk (2009) claims that the concept of the *Triune Brain* describes the brain's three layers: the reptilian brain responsible for basic functions like breathing and pulse, the limbic brain regulating emotions and memory, and the neocortex controlling higher-level functions like language and intellect (pp. 3 – 4). Berk (2009) suggests that these layers work together to process and respond to video stimuli, aiding comprehension of video clips. Furthermore, brain wave frequencies play a crucial role in brain functioning, with Alpha and Beta waves being particularly relevant to videos. Alpha waves are

associated with relaxed states of awareness, such as during reading or reflection, where emotions take precedence over rationality. Slow, thought-provoking video clips can induce Alpha waves, facilitating relaxation and potentially aiding in content retention for long-term memory (Millbower, 2000, as cited in Berk, 2009, p. 4). Beta waves represent full wakefulness, with the left hemisphere active, especially in multitasking. Action-packed video clips can quickly engage students initially in relaxed states, making them alert for planned activities (p. 4).

Harmer (2015) argues that using videos in lessons can be beneficial, for instance, by letting the language learner see the target language being used. However, many students are very used to watching videos in their free time, which could potentially mean that those students associate watching videos with entertainment and relaxation (p. 344). To combat this issue, Harmer (2015) suggests that teachers should include appropriate viewing and listening tasks so that the students may fully appreciate what they see and hear in the videos they watch (p. 344). Further, several viewing and listening techniques are listed, such as 'silent viewing (for language)', where the teacher plays a video clip without sound and the students have to guess the dialogue, and 'silent viewing (for music)', which is just the same as the previous task, but the students have to guess the kind of music being used, 'freeze frame', where the teacher randomly pauses the video and asks students what they think will happen, and 'partial viewing', where students only view parts of the screen because the teacher covers it up, in order to encourage curiosity (Harmer, 2015, p. 344).

2.5.2. The Use of Games in the ESL Classroom

According to Pavey (2021), it is important to separate gamification and game-based learning in an education setting. Further, she explains that "gamification is based on providing incentives to learn whereas game-based learning is learning through play" (p. 1). Gamification is about motivating someone to do something they normally would not find attractive through prizes such as badges or points (p. 1). Game-based learning is often defined as a type of game that has learning outcomes (Shaffer et al., 2005, as cited in Pavey, 2021). When it comes to games in the ESL classroom, this thesis concentrates on the use of one communication game, which falls under the category of game-based learning, and one digital game, which falls under the category of gamification.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a widely used method for teaching focused on either "learning to use" English or "using English to learn it" (Howatt, 1984, as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 86). The teaching methodology in CLT is influenced by these principles:

- Make real communication the focus of language learning.

- Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.

- Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence.

- Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.

- Link the different skills such as speaking, reading, and listening together, since they usually occur together in the real world.

- Let students induce or discover grammar rules. (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 95)

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), there are many types of activities that can be used in CLT to engage learners in communication while also assuring that the learners are able to meet the communicative aims of the curriculum (p. 96). A significant aim in second language learning is for the student to "develop fluency, accuracy, and appropriacy in language use" (p. 96). In order to achieve this, activities such as games, often group games, are commonly used in the classroom (p. 97). Communication games can be suitable activities in CLT because the goal of such games is to provide the learner a space to speak freely and fluently (Harmer, 2015, p. 389).

According to Sercanoğlu et al. (2021) Kahoot! is one of the most popularly used gamified student response systems in education. It is an application that does not require much time or effort from the teachers and allows users to make game-based quizzes that the students partake in using electronic devices. (p. 684). Furthermore, Kahoot! is a game that often engages and motivates learners (p. 685). Additionally, Lee et al. (2019) state that Kahoot! may increase motivation among the students (p. 217). However, according to Pavey (2021), when using gamification in education there are some problems one must be aware of, and gamification may not be fitted for each student. For instance, some students may focus only on the competition aspect of the game and not care about the learning aspect. Some students might refuse to participate based on rejection of the confinement of gameplay and some students may experience a decrease in motivation while others experience increased motivation (p. 124). Moreover, Pavey (2021) highlights that if one keeps in mind SDT, making sure that the gamification meets the criteria of competence, autonomy, and relatedness, it may be an appropriate motivational tool (p. 124).

Pavey (2021) argues that most people like to play games and that by incorporating games into educational settings, one can achieve fun learning (p. xvii). To summarize some of the previous points made in this chapter, it is essential to recognize that enjoyment plays a crucial role in motivating L2 learning. Ryan and Deci (2000) and Gardner (2010) both mention that enjoyment is an important factor

in motivating language learners. According to Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), exploring positive emotions in greater depth is important in order to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying processes (p. 240). *The broaden and build theory* is a theory within the area of positive emotions developed by Fredrickson (1998). The theory suggests that specific emotions lead to specific actions, which means that positive emotions such as "joy, interest, pride, and love" possess the ability to make people think more openly and behave in certain ways. Over time these types of emotions can also help build up various personal strengths, "ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources" (Fredrickson, 2003, p. 219).

2.5.3. Cooperative Learning (CL) in the ESL Classroom

According to Johnson et al. (1994), there are three possible ways for a teacher to structure a lesson: *competition*, where the students are pitted against each other to find out who is best, *individualism*, where the teaching is tailored to the individual student to work in their own pace on their own goals, or *cooperation*, where students work together (p. 1). Cooperative learning (CL) can be defined as learners working together in small groups, where it is possible for all participants to collaborate on the collective task that has been assigned (Cohen, 1994, p. 3). This is a broad definition of CL that "encompasses what is called collaborative learning, cooperative learning, and group work" (Cohen, 1994, p. 3). Anderson (2019) states that the terms "cooperative learning", "collaborative learning", and "interactive learning" (p.4) are commonly interchanged in discussions and articles about teaching. They all refer to learners working together in the classroom; however, he argues that CL stands out from the other approaches because of the specific principles that define it (p. 4). The principles that separate CL from collaborative and interactive learning are "positive interdependence" and "individual accountability" (p. 5).

Positive interdependence is an important aspect of CL and occurs when the individual learners in the group feel that they can accomplish their goals, but only if the other members of the group can accomplish their goals, "and therefore they promote each other's efforts to achieve the goals" (Johnson & Johnson, 2003, p. 143). Similarly, Anderson (2019) points out that the members of the group must work together and not compete to meet the common goal so that they can "sink or swim together" (p. 3). Johnson et al. (1994) argue that positive interdependence is the most important aspect of CL as it links the students together, having them help each other and sharing resources, providing mutual support for each other, and results in joint success (p. 5). "Positive interdependence results in promotive action" (Johnson & Johnson, 2003, p. 143). Promotive action refers to learners helping and assisting each other and trusting each other. Negative interdependence, on the other hand, is when the individual learner in a group only feels that they can accomplish their goals if the other learners of the group fail to accomplish

their goals resulting in "oppositional or contrient interaction" (Johnson & Johnson, 2003, p. 143), characterized by obstruction of others' efforts and distrust in each other.

Individual accountability in CL is about the individual learner's effort in the group task. For the whole group to succeed, each member must take accountability for their own learning and for their contribution to the group (Anderson, 2019, p. 3). Johnson and Johnson (1989, 2003) argue that individual accountability can affect the learners' motivation because learners can feel that their contributions are non-essential for the group to succeed in their shared goals, which will decrease their motivation (p. 145). When individuals perceive their efforts as insignificant to the group's success, motivation decreases, leading to reduced contributions or "social loafing" (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2003, p. 145). Social loafing tends to increase with larger group sizes, as members may perceive their individual contributions as less important and communicate less frequently (p. 145). Interestingly, a study was done (Morgan et al., 1970, as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2003, p. 145) where it was shown that when groups of five students found themselves missing one member, the four remaining students' performance were enhanced, likely because they perceived that their efforts were more important because they had to fill in for the missing student. "Increasing individual accountability tends to increase perceived positive interdependence among group members" (Archer-Kath et al. 1994, as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2003, p. 145).

Richards and Rodgers (2014) state that the goals of CL in language learning include, among others, "to provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities" and "to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate" (p. 245). Further, they underline the importance of positive interdependence for successful CL and suggest that in order to achieve positive interdependence, 'group formation' is a key ingredient (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 250). Moreover, Richards and Rodgers (2014) provide three important factors involved in making groups. The first factor is "Deciding the size of the group", which may vary based on the task, however, they argue that groups of two to four are normal. The second factor is "Assigning students to groups", which can be done in multiple ways, either by letting the students decide, setting up random groups, or the teacher deciding. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), teacher-selected groups are preferable to achieve diverse groupings. The third factor is "Student roles in groups", which refers to different assigned roles the students have in the group, for instance, "noise monitor, turn-taker monitor, recorder, or summarizer" (p. 250).

2.6. Previous Research

This section aims to provide an overview of a selection of studies that represent the substantial number of studies conducted about motivation in the L2 classroom.

2.6.1. Previous Research on L2 Motivation

A large volume of L2 motivation studies have been conducted during the past two decades (Mahmoodi & Yousefi, 2021) and this has identified several general factors that affect students' L2 learning motivation at school such as integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation and language anxiety (Gardner, 2019, p. 25), the notion of 'possible selves', namely the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29), and 'appropriate teacher behaviors', 'a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere' and 'a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms' (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 31).

Integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, language anxiety, and motivation can be measured using the AMTB (Gardner 2010, 2019). There have been several studies conducted that has used the AMTB or other questionnaires based on the AMTB (Gardner et al., 1976; Gliksman et al., 1982; Gardner, 1997, as cited in Gardner, 2019, pp. 23 – 24), such as Wu & Tao (2022), who used the questionnaire as a measure of motivation over time and found an increase when incorporating CL in lessons (p. 417), and Park and Jung (2016), who also saw an increase in motivation over time, but by the use of videos in lessons (p. 85).

The second language motivational self-system has been applied to several studies, and Boo et al. (2015, as cited in Csizér, 2019) identify a surge of publications drawing on L2MSS (p. 74). Kim and Kim (2012) found that in a Korean secondary school context, the L2MSS and specifically the ideal L2 self was more relevant than Gardner's socio-educational model when trying to understand students' L2 learning motivation (p. 115). Yetkin and Ekin (2018) found high scores on all variables of the L2MSS among secondary-level Turkish EFL students. Students' efforts for language learning were most closely linked with the learning experience, and scores for the ought-to L2 self were higher than the ideal L2 self (as they got older, the tendency towards the ought-to L2 self decreased) (p. 375). Andrade et al. (2022) found that the ideal L2 self was a "strong predictor of language learning motivation" among high school students in Ecuador (p. 39) and that the L2 learning experience had a significant impact on student's motivation.

Similarly to Dörnyei and Csizér (1998, as cited in Dornyei, 2001), Guilloteaux (2013) found that the category 'appropriate teacher behavior' to motivate students was highly regarded by Korean teachers (p.10). In the same study, Guilloteaux (2013) found that Korean teachers did not value a friendly classroom climate and a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms as much as was found in Hungary (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998, as cited in Dornyei, 2001). Ruesch et al. (2011) researched L2 motivation in an American context and found similar results to Dörnyei and Csizér (1998, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001), especially highlighting the importance of relationships between students and teachers, arguing that both teachers and students regarded this aspect as important (p. 10)

Another study done in a Lebanese context, whose findings are relevant to this thesis, found that a demotivating factor of students' L2 learning was writing assignments. The study also found that students felt a disproportionate focus on writing in the L2 classroom (Bahous et al., 2011, p. 33). Furthermore, a Norwegian Master's thesis found that upper secondary students generally felt a lack of knowledge about formal and argumentative writing, which was especially prominent during the transition from lower to upper secondary school (Munkejord, 2021, p. 3).

2.6.2. Previous Research About Videos, Games and Group Work in the ESL Classroom

Several studies have been conducted about the three approaches used in this study's classroom intervention, namely, group work, videos, and games in ESL lessons. This section provides an overview of some relevant studies. It is, however, important to acknowledge the limitations of the research, such as restricted geographic scope and the influence of English as a medium of instruction, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to the broader population.

2.6.2.2. Videos and Motivation

Park and Jung (2016) conducted an action research study to explore students' motivation and participation when using video clips in English lessons with 15 Korean EFL students in a South Korean secondary school, utilizing mixed methods for data collection. The results indicated a positive change in the students, who reported higher levels of motivation at the end of the study compared to the start of the eight-week research period (Park & Jung, 2016, p. 85). Some students emphasized the opportunity they got to participate in discussions as one of the positive outcomes of the study. Park and Jung (2016) concluded by suggesting that teachers should consider using visual materials in class because it is effective in motivating students (p. 87). They further emphasized that achieving increased motivation

among L2 students over a relatively short period of time is possible through the use of videos (and relevant activities) (Park & Jung, 2016, p. 87).

Similarly, in a study conducted by Kanamoto et al. (2021), it was found that effective use of videos (namely YouTube videos) could be a motivating approach in the EFL classroom (p. 55). The study was conducted in Japan, collecting data from 128 junior high school students. The findings from the study show that students were motivated by the use of YouTube videos in EFL lessons (p. 55). Further, it is suggested that the students' positive response to videos in the classroom could be due to, not the videos in themselves, but rather the teacher's facilitation of a meaningful learning experience by including appropriate activities relevant to the videos (Kelsen, 2009; Silviuanti, 2014, as cited in Kanamoto et al., 2021, p. 61). While Kanamoto et al. (2021) highlight the positive sides of using videos in L2 lessons, they underline the importance of the effective use of videos. This means that watching videos without guidance or support does not necessarily increase students' motivation. However, effective use (including appropriate activities) of videos has largely positive effects on the students' motivation (p. 61).

Jeliseh and Gilakjani (2022) carried out a study in Iran, exploring the impact of using educational videos in the L2 classroom on 100 high school students, with a focus on EFL learners' vocabulary (p. 621). The study found that the use of YouTube videos had several positive effects on the students' vocabulary learning. The findings suggested that the impact of educational videos was significant in enhancing students' vocabulary learning, which is in line with other studies that also found that videos could enhance learning (Ghasemi et al., 2011; Mahdiloo & Izadpanah, 2017, as cited in Jeliseh & Gilakjani, 2022, p. 625). Further, the findings from the study indicated that the findings also showed that the use of educational YouTube videos was more effective than traditional methods for vocabulary learning and that students generally felt more motivated to learn when using videos in the lessons (Jeliseh & Gilakjani, 2022, p. 625).

In a Norwegian Master's thesis, it was found that teachers who used short videos in their ESL lessons saw several positive outcomes, such as students' increased motivation and engagement. Additionally, the teachers claimed that students were able to remember more content after watching videos than they would have remembered if traditional approaches were used (Skjæveland, 2016, p. 3). The study was conducted in a lower secondary school and looked at both teachers' and students' perspectives (Skjæveland, 2016, p. 44). Skjæveland's (2016) study revealed that students' attitudes toward learning with the use of short videos were generally positive. The students identified multiple

positive aspects of using videos, such as increased learning, enhanced focus, and being able to remember more (p. 4).

2.6.2.3. Games and Motivation

Anyaegbu et al. (2012) conducted a qualitative study about how serious games can motivate children to learn EFL and which factors affect students' motivation and engagement when playing a digital game in class. The study was carried out in two Chinese primary schools, including 229 participants from different socio-economic classes. (Anyaegbu et al., 2012, pp. 156 – 157). The findings showed that the majority of students stated that using a game in lessons motivated them to learn English. Further, Anyaegbu et al. (2012) identified six categories of how the game motivated the students: "Feeling of fun and satisfaction" (p. 158), "Autonomy, Free from loosing face and scared of teachers", "It improved collaboration and co-operation" (p. 159), "Reward and Encouragement" (p. 159), which are two motivating factors pertaining to the specific game used in the study, but can also be relevant for other games, "problem solving ability" (p. 159), and lastly "Good learning environment" (p. 160). Some challenges were also observed during the study, such as digital games being time-consuming if they do not work properly or if there are any technical issues (p. 163).

Although this study pertains to one specific digital game, it can be argued that the findings can be applied to the use of other games in the L2 classroom because the underlying principles of engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes are likely to be similar across various gaming experiences. Anyaegbu et al. (2012) state that Mingoville (which was used in the study) or any other serious game can motivate and engage students if properly integrated into the L2 classroom (p. 163). Further, it is argued that the integration of games as a supplement to traditional teaching methods can improve many aspects of the L2 classroom, such as the atmosphere and anxiety levels (p. 163).

The use of Kahoot! in the EFL classroom was explored in a study carried out by Tao and Zou (2021). The study used a mixed methods approach to explore 80 participants' (aged 18 – 19 years old) perceptions about the use of Kahoot! in EFL lessons (Tao & Zou, 2021, p. 1674). The findings from the study showed that students generally viewed games as "positive and satisfactory for classroom learning" (Tao & Zou, 2021, p. 1676). Tao and Zou (2021) link these perceptions to intrinsic motivation. Further, the data indicated that the majority of the participants found games helpful for learning and "expressed their affection for game-based learning" (p. 1676). The findings also suggest that students were positive about the gamification aspect of Kahoot!, stating that it made the lessons more interesting. Tao and Zou

(2021) also point out that these findings were similar to other research about games in EFL learning (Bolliger et al., 2015; Chiang, 2020, as cited in Tao & Zou, 2021, p. 1676). Using Kahoot! in lessons was also linked to extrinsic motivation, focusing on the competitive aspects of the game, such as the "scores, ranking, name on scoreboard, distance with others" (Tao & Zou, 2021, p. 1679). The study mostly found that students perceived Kahoot! as a valuable tool, enhancing both motivation and learning effectiveness.

Stojković & Jerotijević (2011) carried out a study about games in the EFL classroom, specifically, reasons for using or not using them, in Serbia. Nineteen teachers' and 178 EFL students' (from the fifth to eighth grade) attitudes toward the use of games were studied (p. 941). The study found that students identified a significantly higher interest in playing games as a part of the EFL lessons than not playing games. Some of the most prominent reasons they had for this were that the lessons would be more interesting with games, the group work aspect often linked with gameplay, and games as a beneficial tool to increase learning (Stojković & Jerotijević, 2011, p. 942). Teachers also showed a tendency towards using games in the EFL lessons, naming reasons such as the educational value and motivational aspects of games, yet some teachers felt that the use of games could potentially make a mess in the classroom (Stojković & Jerotijević, 2011, p. 944).

Furthermore, Cirocki et al. (2019) carried out a study that looked at motivational strategies in the secondary school EFL classroom in Ecuador. The study included 430 participants, 80 of whom were teachers, and the rest were EFL students in the secondary level (aged 11 – 15) (Cirocki et al., 2019, p. 254). The study revealed that among other motivational strategies, the use of games in EFL teaching was something that students wanted the teachers to include more of (p. 262). The students claimed that they enjoyed learning through the use of games but that they seldom had the opportunity to (p. 259). Further, it was found that the reasons that students wanted to increase the use of games in lessons were that they wanted the lessons to be more varied in nature and they believed that games were beneficial in educational settings (Cirocki et al., 2019, p. 262).

2.6.2.1. Group Work and Motivation

Wu and Tao (2022) conducted a study that explored EFL learners' motivation levels when participating in CL over a period of seven weeks. Mixed methods research was used to obtain data for the study, and the participants were 30 Chinese tenth-grade L2 students (p. 417). Using a questionnaire based on Gardner's AMTB, Wu and Tao (2022) discovered that after seven weeks of CL, learners' motivation

notably increased compared to what was measured in the pretest (Wu & Tao, 2022, p. 417). Wu and Tao's (2022) study shows that CL can be a good motivator for L2 learners, which according to them is a finding that is in accordance with previous studies on the matter (Kambiss, 1990; Tran, 2019; Wang, 2020, as cited in Wu & Tao, 2022, p. 422).

Another study about group work was conducted by Hung and Mai (2020) and focused mostly on teachers' perspectives (p. 445). The research proved that the majority of the 105 high school teachers included in the study believed that group work offered students the chance to actively engage in English communication, discover their speaking skills within the classroom environment, alleviate stress, and receive additional English input from their peers (Hung & Mai, 2020, p. 454). The findings from this study coincided with previous research which indicated positive attitudes towards group work in the EFL classroom (Duyen & Huan, 2017; Le, 2006; Pham, 2019; Tran & Lewis, 2012, as cited in Hung & Mai, 2020, p. 454). Further, some potential issues concerning group work were identified in the study, namely that some students might not be able to speak as much as others, either because they do not get the opportunity to, or they are afraid to, or because others speak too much (Hung & Mai, 2020, p. 455).

Koç (2018) conducted a study that focused on 25 teachers and their 486 EFL students' perspectives on CL and group activities (p. 582). Contrary to the findings of Hung and Mai's (2020) study, Koç (2018) found that teachers were less enthusiastic about group work in the L2 classroom than their students (p. 582). Koç (2018) suggests that while teachers acknowledge the advantages of group work, they may not favor it because they find it difficult to include in the L2 lessons, based on "a lack of understanding and skills needed for the implementation of effective group work activities in the classroom" (Doymuş and Koç,2012; Kocaman, 2005, as cited in Koç, 2018, p. 591). The teachers that did favor group work, pointed to the motivational aspects of the approach, as well as students' participation and contribution increasing with group work (Koç, 2018, p. 588). Further, it was found that most students were positive about the use of group work in the EFL classroom, favoring it over other approaches and finding it motivating (Koç, 2018, p. 591). However, the findings also revealed that some students did not enjoy group work. Koç (2018) suggests that this finding highlights the importance of teachers' ability to recognize the individual students' needs and preferred learning styles and plan the lessons with this in mind (p. 591). Koç (2018) identifies individual accountability as one of the positive aspects of using group work in the L2 classroom (see also Anderson, 2019; Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2003). Koç (2018) highlights the importance of the ability to take responsibility for oneself as an important aspect of group learning (p. 593).

2.7. Conclusion

Motivation is a key ingredient in learning generally. There has been much specific theorizing around L2 motivation, and plenty of advice is also available in the literature for motivational strategies in the L2 classroom. Through an exploration of relevant theories such as Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the ARCS model, Gardner's Socio-educational Model of Second Language Acquisition, and Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System Model (L2MSS), this chapter aimed to provide a foundational understanding of motivational dynamics within the ESL classroom. Additionally, the discussion of specific motivational strategies, including Dörnyei's (2001) general conditions for a motivational atmosphere, and specifically the integration of videos, the use of games, and the use of cooperative learning and group work, highlights potential pedagogical approaches to fostering motivation and engagement which will be explored in this study.

In conclusion, this chapter has explored the extensive landscape of L2 motivation research, highlighting various factors shaping students' motivation within second language learning contexts. Building upon Gardner (1985, as cited in Gardner, 2019), Dörnyei (2005, as cited in Dörnyei, 2009), and Dörnyei and Csizér (1998, as cited in Dörnyei, 2001), central elements such as integrativeness, attitudes towards language learning, possible selves and other motivational strategies have been thoroughly researched. Additionally, the chapter has provided an overview of relevant research about the efficacy of three classroom intervention approaches: group work, videos, and games in L2 lessons. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognize the limitations inherent in the existing research, which may hinder the generalizability of findings to a broader population. Despite these constraints, the synthesis of research presented in this chapter contributes valuable insights into enhancing L2 learning motivation and underscores the importance of considering diverse instructional strategies to cater to the dynamic needs of language learners.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore motivation in the ESL classroom in one Norwegian lower secondary school. The participants of the study were eighth grade students in the age range 13 – 14.

The research questions for the study were as follows:

RQ 1.a: How motivated to learn English are eighth grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school?

RQ 1.b: What motivating factors or reasons for lack of motivation do they identify?

RQ 2: According to students, how is their motivation during English lessons affected by a selection of motivational strategies which the teacher uses?

There are three main approaches used for research in applied linguistics, namely quantitative method, qualitative method, and mixed methods (Newby, 2010, p. 92). The research conducted for this thesis was conducted using a mixed methods approach. A quantitative method was used in the form of student questionnaires, and a qualitative method was used when teaching and observing an eighth-grade class over a period of three weeks. One questionnaire was designed for the entire eighth grade at the school, while several questionnaires concerning the lessons in the classroom intervention were designed for the class participating in those lessons.

3.2. Mixed Methods Approach

Dörnyei (2007) states that "A mixed methods study involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study with some attempts to integrate the two approaches at one or more stages of the research process" (p. 163). Although there are strengths to both qualitative and quantitative research methods, one could argue that neither offers a complete picture when studying a topic. The advantage of mixed methods research is that it is flexible and can cover more ground by combining the strongest assets of qualitative and quantitative methods. (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45). Christensen and Johnson (2012) argue that the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research complement each other and can make a study better because of it (p. 51). Another quality of mixed methods research is that it lets the researcher analyze more than one side of the researched issue

by collecting numbers and going in depth into participants' opinions: "it allows investigators to obtain data about both the individual and the broader societal context" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45). For the research of this thesis, mixed methods research was chosen because of its duality and flexibility when researching students' motivation.

3.3. Quantitative Aspects

3.3.1. Quantitative Research

According to Newby (2010) qualitative and quantitative methods can give different types of information, and the "division between qualitative and quantitative data is well established, extensively used and deeply rooted in all areas of social research" (p. 142). Furthermore, Newby (2010) states that the data yielded from quantitative research methods focuses on numbers, in other words, the data have "numerical value" (p. 142). While agreeing that the focus on numbers is the "single most important feature of quantitative research" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 32), Dörnyei (2007) states that there are several characteristics that can distinguish quantitative research from qualitative research. The main characteristics that he mentions are "A priori categorization", "Variables rather than cases", "Statistics and the language of statistics", "Standardized procedures to assess objective reality", and "Quest for generalizability" (pp. 32 – 34). These characteristics provide a foundation for understanding the precision and objectivity in quantitative research that are useful to make a structured framework for understanding different aspects of the world. In educational research, such as in this study, quantitative data can be used to measure the number of students who feel motivated to learn English (Newby, 2010, p. 142).

3.3.2. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are amongst the most commonly used tools used to collect data (Newby, 2010, p. 297). According to Dörnyei (2010), questionnaires are efficient because they do not require the researcher to spend too much time, effort, or resources to make and distribute them. Questionnaires are advantageous because they can reach many participants and gather much data in a short amount of time (p. 6). Additionally, questionnaires are "versatile" because they can be used in many ways for many purposes (p. 6). Yet, there are disadvantages to questionnaires. Some even claim that these disadvantages are so prominent that the data collected using questionnaires cannot be considered "reliable or valid" (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 6).

Questionnaires can contain closed (or structured) questions or open (or unstructured) questions (Newby, 2010, p. 298). Closed questions do not give the participant an opportunity to personalize their response because they contain response categories that are formed ahead of time (p. 298). Open questions facilitate for the respondents to formulate their answers freely in their own words. These types of questions can be used to achieve a broader understanding of the researched area or to make sure that the data is not restricted by insufficient closed questions (p. 298). Open questions can also be advantageous because they grant access to authentic direct quotes from respondents that can be used when writing reports (p. 299). According to Dörnyei (2010), questionnaires can measure three types of data: "*factual, behavioral,* and *attitudinal*" (p. 5). The main questionnaire for this study contained questions that related to two of these types of data, the first being "*factual questions*". Factual questions are closed questions that often yield information about who the participants are, in this case, age and gender (p. 5). The second type of questions in the questionnaire, which the questionnaire mainly consists of, was "*attitudinal questions*", which are open questions used to learn about the participants' "*attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests*, and *values*" (p. 5). In this study, questions about the students' opinions about their own motivation and enjoyment regarding the English subject were most prominent. Opinions can be defined as subjective, yet "more factually based and more changeable" than attitudes (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 5). This is because people are more likely aware of their own opinions, in contrast to their attitudes, which can be hidden from oneself (Aiken, 1996, as cited in Dörnyei, 2010, p. 5).

According to Dörnyei (2010), the disadvantages of using questionnaires are many, for instance, "Unreliable and unmotivated respondents" who view questionnaires as a nuisance (p. 7). One reason that people are unmotivated to answer questionnaires could, according to Dörnyei (2010), be that they generally feel that they will not "enjoy or benefit" from doing so (p. 7). Another possible issue when using questionnaires to collect data is "Respondent Literacy Problems" (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 7). To combat this possible problem, one could follow one of the "key principles for questionnaire construction" listed by Christensen and Johnson (2012), which is to "Use natural and familiar language" (p. 165). This includes writing the questionnaire in a language that the respondent is comfortable in, especially when working with young L2 learners (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 7). There are several ways the researcher can ensure that their questionnaires can obtain meaningful data and be comprehensible to the participants. It is, for instance, important to refrain from using loaded or leading questions that contain "emotionally charged words" (Christensen & Johnson, 2012, p. 166). These types of words can guide the respondent in certain ways because they can have positive or negative associations (p. 167). Furthermore, developing questionnaires that are properly organized and easy to use is crucial for ensuring accurate data collection and participant engagement. This is important because poorly designed questionnaires may lead to

confusion or frustration among respondents, resulting in incomplete or inaccurate responses, ultimately undermining the reliability and validity of the research findings (pp. 180 – 182).

The main questionnaire in this study was developed using SurveyXact, an online tool used for producing, distributing, and analyzing surveys. The questionnaire consisted of two 'factual questions' about the participants' gender and which grade they belonged to, as well as six 'attitudinal questions' about the participants' opinions about various aspects of their own L2 motivation and English lessons. Two of the questions from the questionnaire were closed questions with a rating scale (Christensen and Johnson, 2012, p. 172). There is some debate among researchers as to exactly how many points the rating scale should have, however, Christensen and Johnson (2012) argue that a six-point rating scale ("strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, agree, strongly agree") is sufficient due to its ability to "provide more gradated choices" without having too many options (pp. 173 – 174). The six-point scale was utilized in the questionnaire for this study. One English version of the questionnaire was made first, and then a translation to Norwegian was developed.

3.4. Qualitative Aspects

3.4.1. Qualitative Research

While quantitative research is based on numbers and statistics, qualitative research focuses on other aspects, qualitative data can be used to understand the reasons why, for example, students feel motivated or not (Newby, 2010, p. 142). There are varying opinions as to how exactly qualitative research methods should be described because of their complexity (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 35). Johnson and Christensen (2012) state that it is about going in depth on a topic to explore it and to further one's knowledge about it: "qualitative research primarily follows the exploratory scientific method … Qualitative research is used when little is known about a topic or phenomenon and when one wants to discover or learn more about it" (p. 33). Dörnyei (2007) explains qualitative research methods as having a focus on "describing, understanding, and clarifying a human experience" (p. 126).

Dörnyei discusses a number of main characteristics of qualitative research: emergent research design, the varied nature of qualitative data, the natural research setting, insider meaning, small sample size, and interpretive analysis (pp. 37 – 38). Emergent research design refers to the fact that the research design is not fully planned or closed off, so that it is possible to gradually define "the analytic categories/concepts" as one is working with the study (p. 37). Another characteristic he highlights is the nature of qualitative data, which can occur in many different forms. Interviews are commonly used, as

well as texts such as field notes or diary entries, and pictures and videos. (p. 37). Because of the different forms qualitative data can take, Newby (2010) argues that the complexity of qualitative data surpasses that of quantitative data (p. 143). The characteristics of the research setting refer to the fact that qualitative research is conducted in a "natural setting" over a longer period of time, where the researcher often immerges in the situation they are researching (p. 38). The characteristic insider meaning is about how the subjective beliefs of the participants are important in qualitative research. Qualitative researchers aim to collect data from the "insiders'" perspective, in contrast to quantitative researchers who tend to look at data from an outsider's perspective (p. 38).

3.4.2. Classroom Research and Action Research (AR)

According to Dörnyei (2007), classroom research "concerns any study that examines how teaching and learning takes place in context" (p. 176). He further argues that three important elements unique to research conducted in classrooms should be considered. The first one is classroom observation, which is a typical research method (explained in more detail in section 3.4.3.1.). Secondly, researchers in the classroom context often utilize a mixed methods approach to explore the various elements of the classroom. Lastly, Dörnyei highlights the unique challenges that classroom research poses because of the intricate nature of the setting (pp. 176 – 177). Challenges include, among others, meeting the different expectations, needs, and standards of the learners, teachers, and researchers (p. 188). For instance, students have specific educational goals, such as curriculum aims, which teachers are required to assist them in achieving.

The classroom intervention in this study can be considered action research because of "the close link between research and teaching, as well as the researcher and the teacher: action research is conducted by or in cooperation with teachers" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 191). As previously mentioned, the researcher acted as the teacher during the classroom intervention of this study. According to Rust and Clark (2007), AR involves taking steps to enhance teaching and learning while systematically studying the outcomes of these actions (p. 4). AR is typically led by practitioners with the aim of using workplace data to improve one's own teaching methods. Essentially, it is a form of applied research where the researcher actively participates in the situation where the research is conducted (p. 4). According to Bradbury (2015, Bradbury et al., 2019), "Action research brings together action and reflection, as well as theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern" (p. 11). How we interact with others is shaped by our understanding of our past experiences and social connections. For instance, an action researcher collaborating with first graders must establish trust with the students, which relies on factors like attentive listening, interpersonal skills, and a sense of

playfulness. It is essential for the researcher to also consider the students' backgrounds, relationships with other adults, and previous experiences with learning success and failure. Action researchers aim to create an environment that accommodates the needs and histories of all participants involved in the research process (Bradbury et al., 2019, pp. 11 – 12).

3.4.3. Classroom Intervention

The methods for gathering data during the three-week classroom intervention were observations from the research lessons and student questionnaires. During the three weeks of classroom intervention, there were six lessons, two times 60 minutes each week, planned and conducted in one eighth grade English class. During these lessons, three themes were chosen to enhance motivation among the students: group work, using videos in the lessons, and using games in the lessons. The first week, the lessons were structured around collaborative learning and group work. The students were divided into groups and instructed to work on shared tasks. In the second week, the lessons were centered around the use of videos in the teaching. The students watched short educational videos from YouTube and Elevkanalen.no, and they were instructed to take notes and work on tasks relating to the videos. In the third week, the students played one communicative game at the end of the first lesson, and made quizzes and played Kahoot! for the second lesson.

The first lesson was divided into two parts, and the first 20 minutes were taught by the class's regular English teacher, their contact teacher (henceforth referred to as 'S'), to finish up previous work before starting the research lessons. The classroom intervention began in the second part of the lesson. The teacher-researcher started by introducing the theme and plan for the coming lessons. The teacher-researcher instructed the students to work in groups to collaborate on a shared task. S assigned groups for the students because she knew them well and knew who could and could not work well together (Dörnyei, 2001). The task was for the students to collaborate on writing a text in a shared document (Richards & Rodgers). The text was supposed to be a fictional story with the theme 'the UK' (this was the overreaching theme for the entire eighth grade at the time and during the three weeks), be about one page long, and contain six or more words from a provided topic word list from the student's textbook *Enter 8*. This task was supposed to be relatively time-consuming and stretch over the first and second research lessons. However, some students worked faster than anticipated, and they only needed about half of the next lesson to finish their texts. For the second lesson, the students finished their assignments from the previous lesson; then each group read their texts aloud to one other group; this took about 25 minutes. Following that, the teacher introduced Readers Theatre (RT), which is an activity where students, in groups, read a text aloud in front of others, as if it were a theatre (Rinehart, 2001, p. 67). S

assigned the students to new groups, and they had 20 minutes to assign roles and practice before presenting the text in front of the class for the last 15 minutes. The competence aims that pertained to the first two lessons included: "use a variety of strategies for language learning, text creation and communication", "write formal and informal texts, including multimedia texts with structure and coherence that describe, narrate and reflect, and are adapted to the purpose, recipient and situation", and "use key patterns of pronunciation in communication" (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, pp. 8 – 9).

       The third and fourth lessons were centered around using videos in the teaching. For the third lesson, a video from YouTube (about British customs and habits) was shown to the students. They were instructed to take notes during the video and use the notes to write a summary where they pointed out the most important aspects. The link to the video was shared with the students via *Classroom*, which is an educational technology tool made by Google that the school used for all their classes. The students at the school had a general rule to bring headphones to use with their Chromebooks provided by the school, and they used those to watch the video as many times as they needed after the joint viewing. After finishing their summaries, the students read them to the person sitting next to them. For the fourth lesson, the researcher had booked the school's 'film room', which is an auditorium with a projector, where a couple of videos (about the life and death of Queen Elizabeth II) were shown to the students from elevkanalen.no. Again, the students were encouraged to take notes during the videos. The links to these videos were also posted in Classroom for the students to access if needed. After watching the videos, the students were instructed to make a digital poster about the content of the video. They used the presentation tool on their Chromebooks to make the posters. They had to use the internet to find fitting pictures and add information that they had picked up from the videos. The posters were later printed out, laminated, and hung in the classroom as decoration (Dörnyei, 2001). The following competence aims applied to the third and fourth lesson of the classroom intervention: "use different digital resources and other aids in language learning, text creation and interaction", "listen to and understand words and expressions in variants of English", and "explore and describe ways of living, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity in the English-speaking world" (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, pp. 8 – 9).

The fifth and sixth lessons were focused on games. For the fifth lesson, the overall theme was Kahoot!, a digital quiz game. For the first part of the lesson, the students were instructed to create their own quizzes using Kahoot!. The teacher-researcher started the lesson by asking students which specific topics within the main theme, the UK, could be used to create quizzes. S assigned groups of about five students each.

Each group was assigned a topic for their Kahoot! (for instance, sports, food, culture, etc.). They used their textbooks, the content discussed in previous lessons, and the internet to find content for the quizzes. For the last portion of the lesson, the students played through each other's quizzes. The sixth, and final, lesson was divided into two parts, for the first 35 minutes of the lesson, S conducted normal English teaching, and for the last 25 minutes, the teacher-researcher instructed the students to play a game called Alias while speaking English. The game is about explaining words without using the actual words to get points. The words used in the game were chosen by the teacher-researcher and related to the theme 'the UK'. The words were words that the students had encountered in their textbooks, and in general during the time they had worked with the theme, and some 'new' words were included to make the game more challenging. For the fifth and sixth lessons, the competence aims that were relevant were "use a variety of strategies for language learning, text creation and communication", "use key patterns of pronunciation in communication", "use different digital resources and other aids in language learning, text creation and interaction", "use sources in a critical and accountable manner", and "explore and describe ways of living, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity in the English-speaking world" (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, pp. 8 – 9).

3.4.3.1. Observations

According to Dörnyei (2007), observation can be divided into participant and non-participant observation (p. 179). Christensen and Johnson (2012) take the idea of participant and non-participant observation further and divide it into four sections, "complete participant", which is when the observer becomes a member of the researched group without telling the other participants; "participant-as-observer", which is when the observer spends extended time as an insider of the researched group and lets them know they are being observed; "observer-as-participant", which is when the observer spends a limited amount of time with the researched group and observes them while letting them know they are being observed; and "complete observer", which is when the researcher acts as an outside observer and observes without letting the observed group know they are being observed (p. 209). It is hard to define the observation in terms of participant to nonparticipant in the case of this study because the researcher acted as a teacher while observing the class. The researcher was, however, a full participant in the research lessons.

The observation for this study was unstructured, which means that there was no observation scheme to guide the observation, in contrast to structured observation, where there is an observation scheme to follow (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 179). In unstructured observation, the researcher writes down information that is potentially important to the study in a "field note", which consists of the researcher's

notes during and after the observation takes place (Christensen and Johnson, 2012, p. 208). According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), it is important to edit or correct field notes soon after taking them because it can be difficult to interpret them if one waits too long (p. 208). The aim of the observations in the classroom intervention was to see if the use of certain teaching methods used resulted in enjoyment among the students and, ultimately, if they were motivated. As stated by Wragg (1999, as cited in Dörnyei, 2007), "Classrooms are exceptionally busy places, so observers must be on their toes" (p. 178). Observing while teaching proved to be a challenging task because of the different responsibilities tied to acting as the teacher while observing the students and taking field notes at the same time.

3.4.3.2. Questionnaires for the Research Lessons

While a researcher can observe the overall motivation and enjoyment level in a classroom by looking at, for instance, facial expressions, it can be difficult to understand what everyone in the classroom is feeling. The classroom is relatively big, and there are many students to observe, and to get a better picture of the situation, it can be a good idea to include questionnaires in the observed lessons (Rust & Clark, 2007, p. 11). The questionnaires conducted in the research lessons were also developed using SurveyXact and distributed digitally. The questionnaires typically contained two questions: the first was a statement with a seven-point scale about the students' opinions on the different motivational strategies, and the second was an open question where the students could utter additional information, such as comments about the lessons, or statements about what they enjoyed or did not enjoy during the lessons.

3.2. Sampling Method and Selection of Participants

3.2.1. Sampling Method

"Convenience or opportunity sampling" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 98), also known as "availability sampling" or "haphazard sampling" (Check and Schutt, 2012, p. 102) (henceforth referred to as convenience sampling) is commonly used in L2 research (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 98), and was also used for the research for this thesis. The criterion for convenience sampling is that the participants are chosen because the research has access to them. The participants are chosen based on "criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, easy accessibility, or the willingness to volunteer" (p. 99). The school chosen for the given research is the school where the researcher works as a substitute teacher. Ideally, several schools would have been contacted and used in the research; however, considering time restrictions and workload, the one school was chosen.

Dörnyei (2007) explains that sampling methods can be divided into two categories:

(a) Scientifically sound 'probability sampling', which involves complex and expensive procedures that are usually well beyond the means of applied linguists, and (b) 'non-probability sampling', which consists of a number of strategies that try to achieve a trade-off, that is, a reasonably representative sample using resources that are within the means of the ordinary researcher. (p. 97)

The selection procedure in probability sampling gives random sampling, which is considered desirable because it most accurately represents the population (Check and Schutt, 2012, p. 96). Convenience sampling falls under non-probability sampling because it does "not use a random selection procedure", which in turn cannot result in a fully representative sample (p. 102). Dörnyei (2007) argues that the amount of research conducted using non-probability sampling is surprising because of the inability to yield representable results; however he agrees with Kemper et al. (2203) in that "the hard reality of time and recourses" (Kemper et. al., 2003, as cited in Dörnyei, 2007, p. 99) makes non-probability sampling "practical" and "reasonably representative".

When making decisions about sampling, one must be aware of some possible issues that can occur. Since it is not possible to make participation in research mandatory, one has to consider "the problem of self-selection" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 101). This issue is about how people who volunteer are often different from people who do not volunteer. When working with the topic for this thesis, motivation in the lower secondary school, the issue of self-selection is important to note because as Dörnyei (2007) argues, the people that are eager to participate often have a different foundation or way of thinking than those who are not eager to participate (p. 101). This issue can lead to inaccurate representation of the population. However, for this study, the students, who, of course, had the final say, did not get to choose entirely by themselves if they wanted to participate, as it was their parents who were contacted and who had to sign consent forms for their children to participate.

3.2.2. Selection of Participants

The participants of the study were 13 -14 years old students in a Norwegian school. Eighty students from the school participated in the study. All 80 students filled out questionnaires and 21 of them were part of a three week long teaching project where the researcher taught and observed six English lessons. At the end of each lesson, the 21 students were asked to fill out short questions questionnaires regarding the lessons.

The school where the research was conducted was contacted personally and asked to participate. The researcher attended a meeting with the eighth-grade contact teachers and informed them about the

research and the thesis so that they could pass on the information the students needed to participate in the study. The questionnaire was handed out electronically via a link to the contact teachers in the eighth grade. Regarding the research lessons, one contact teacher was asked to let the researcher teach their English lessons for three weeks. The contact teacher was present for the lessons and acted as an assistant teacher.

The criteria for the participants in the research was that they were in the eighth grade and studying English. Since English is a mandatory subject in the first year of the lower secondary school in Norway, this excluded only those who, for any reason, had an exemption from the subject. Because the participants were under 16 years old, according to Sikt, their parents had to give written consent in order for their children to participate in the research. Out of the 80 participants, the 59 who did not participate in the research lessons consented electronically through Stavanger municipality's chosen website for contacting parents, Vigilo.no. Regarding the remaining 21 that participated in the research lessons, physical consent forms were handed out for the students' parents to sign per the contact teacher's request.

3.5. Processing and Presenting Data

Bailey (207) states that the "process of analysis requires that the researcher make sense of the data: break it down, study its components, investigate its importance, and interpret its meanings" (p. 125). As previously explained, the quantitative data for this mixed methods study were obtained through student questionnaires, while the qualitative data were obtained through open questions in questionnaires and observations. After the data had been collected, they were analyzed. According to Dörnyei (2007), research reports can be organized and presented in various ways, and there are no set rules for how one should do this (p. 291). In Chapter 4, the data are presented methodically. The findings are divided into two categories: data from the main questionnaire and data from the classroom intervention.

The quantitative data, acquired through student questionnaires, were processed by SurveyXact's data analysis tool. This involved processing the data and generating frequency bars to visually represent response frequencies as percentages, facilitating a clear understanding of the distribution of responses across various parameters. The qualitative data were analyzed and categorized by the researcher. The researcher carefully read through and reviewed the responses and organized them into various categories and subcategories based on their content and themes. The data obtained from the unstructured

observations were first documented in field notes in Norwegian, then translated to English and written in a document, and finally, they were written as cohesive paragraphs.

3.6. Validity and Reliability

Fraenkel et al. (2023) argue that using high-quality instruments in research is crucial because researchers rely on the data obtained from these tools to draw conclusions. Therefore, researchers must employ various methods to ensure that the conclusions based on the collected data are valid and reliable (p. 143). Furthermore, it is described that in recent years, the definition of validity has been based on "the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness, and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes", while reliability is about "the consistency of scores or answers from one administration of an instrument to another, and from one set of items to another" (p. 143).

According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), researchers should aim to ensure a valid, or legitimate, conclusion to their study. Fraenkel et al. (2023) argue that "validity depends on the amount and type of evidence there is to support the interpretations researchers wish to make concerning data they have collected" (p. 144). This means that the accuracy of researchers' conclusions relies heavily on the evidence they gather and how well it supports their interpretations of the data. Dörnyei (2007) underlines the importance of 'research validity' and 'measurement validity'. Research validity covers the entire research process and ensures the integrity of the design and the generalizability of the results. The number of participants in this study (80) can potentially limit the validity and generalizability of the results as it is not representative of the larger population. Measurement validity is about how meaningful and appropriate the interpretations from different test scores or outcomes from other assessment procedures are. Fraenkel et al. (2023) suggest that there are three types of evidence researchers can gather: "Content-related evidence of validity", "Criterion-related evidence of validity", and "Construct-related evidence of validity" (p. 144).

Content-related evidence pertains to the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the content and format of the research instrument (Fraenkel et al., 2023, p. 144). For this study, the development of a main questionnaire and several questionnaires for the classroom intervention and the selection of appropriate methods (open and closed questions, unstructured observation) for data collection attempted to ensure that the content and format of the research instruments covered relevant aspects of the research topic, contributing to content-related evidence. Johnson and Christensen (2012) claim that in order to improve the validity of a study, the researcher should facilitate methods triangulation and data

triangulation. Methods triangulation includes the use of two or more methods for research in one study, while data triangulation is the utilization of several data sources in one study (pp. 269 – 270). Triangulation can aid the researcher in exploring different aspects of the same issue in depth by employing the strengths of the different methods. Dörnyei (2007) suggests that method and data triangulation is a characteristic found in mixed methods research. He further claims that it can be beneficial because the convergence between similar findings across various methods and data collection strengthens the validity (pp. 61 – 63).

According to Fraenkel et al. (2023), criterion-related evidence involves comparing the results of scores obtained from a measurement instrument to those obtained from an external criterion (Fraenkel et al., 2023, p. 144). "A criterion is a second test or other assessment procedure presumed to measure the same variable" (Fraenkel et al., 2023, p. 147). By using a mixed methods approach to investigate aspects of student motivation, this study aims to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings. For this study, the main questionnaire responses and the classroom intervention outcomes were viewed in light of each other, which can contribute to criterion-related evidence of validity.

Construct-related evidence is a complex issue that pertains to the measurement instrument accurately capturing the underlying psychological construct and explaining differences in behavior or performance (Fraenkel et al., 2023, pp. 144 – 149). In this study, efforts were made to enhance construct-related evidence by revising and editing the main questionnaire to ensure clarity and prevent leading questions. Additionally, improvements were made to the questionnaires used in the classroom intervention to gain a clearer understanding of student motivation. These measures collectively contributed to the construct-related evidence of validity for the study.

Furthermore, Fraenkel et al. (2023) state that reliability pertains to the consistency of the test scores collected in a study. This refers to the consistency for each individual participant across different administrations of a research instrument to another and across various sets of research items. Silverman (2005, as cited in Dörnyei, 2007) describes reliability as referring to the "degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions" (p. 57). Kirk and Miller (1986, as cited in Dörnyei, 2007) define reliability in the field research setting as "the degree to which an ethnographer would expect to obtain the finding if he or she tried again in the same way" (p. 57). As shown by the many studies conducted that have found similar results to this study (see section the results from the study can be duplicated. The main issue with

reliability in regard to this study lies in the changing nature of the variables being measured over time, which may be influenced by shifts in societal and school culture.

3.7. Ethical Issues and Limitations

"Ethics are the principles and guidelines that help us uphold the things we value" (Christensen and Johnson, 2012, p. 99). According to Check and Schutt (2012), ethical issues are covered by these guidelines: "Research should cause no harm to subjects", "Participation in research should be voluntary, and therefore subjects must give their informed consent to participate in the research", "Researchers should fully disclose their identity", "Anonymity or confidentiality must be maintained for individual research participants unless it is voluntarily and explicitly waived", and "Benefits from research projects should outweigh any foreseeable risks" (p.50) Keeping these guidelines in mind, the researcher set out to plan the methods for data collecting for the study.

Before conducting the research, the data collection methods had to be approved by Sikt, the Norwegian agency that provides infrastructure and solutions that are needed for the educational sector to reach its goals of digitalization, data sharing, and open research. First, a request to gather data from the eighth grade of the chosen school had to be approved. Secondly, a request to teach and observe in one class had to be approved. Consent forms were made in accordance with the guidelines provided by Sikt, and participation was voluntary. The consent forms were distributed to the parents of the eighth graders at the chosen school. As mentioned earlier, the students were not old enough to give consent themselves. In the consent forms, sufficient information about the study was given to obtain informed consent.

When planning and conducting the research lessons, some considerations had to be made. Firstly, the lessons needed to fit into the eighth-grade curriculum so that the class would not fall behind on the semester plan. The lessons also had to be planned around the national competence aims of The Norwegian Directorate of Education. Informed consent was a requirement for the participants of this study. According to Sikt, the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research, when children under 15 years old participate in research, parents should consent on behalf of the child. However, when guardians consent for their child, it can be challenging to ensure with certainty that the consenting individual is actually the one with parental responsibility. It may, however, be sufficient for parents to consent via email in projects with low privacy impact or low risk, such as this study.

4. Findings

The research questions for this study were:

RQ 1.a: How motivated to learn English are eighth grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school?

RQ 1.b: What motivating factors or reasons for lack of motivation do they identify?

RQ 2: According to students, how is their motivation during English lessons affected by a selection of motivational strategies which the teacher uses?

As explained in Chapter 3, data were collected using a student questionnaire and a classroom intervention consisting of six lessons. The results for each part of the study are now presented.

4.1. Student Questionnaire

To answer RQ 1.a and RQ 1.b, a questionnaire was developed. The student questionnaire was distributed digitally to 82 participants via a link given to their teachers. Of the 82 participants who received the link, 80 participants completed it. Of the participants, 55% were male, 40% were female, and 5% were other or preferred not to identify their gender. As explained in Chapter 3, the questionnaire covered several themes relevant to students' motivation during English lessons, and these are now discussed in turn.

4.1.1. Importance of Learning English

One issue addressed in the questionnaire was the participants' views on the importance of learning English. On the scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," a significant majority, consisting of 93% of the respondents agreed that it was important to learn English (see Figure 1). Of the 93%, only 6% slightly agreed, while the remaining agreed or strongly agreed. On the other hand, 7% of the participants did not agree that it was important to learn English.
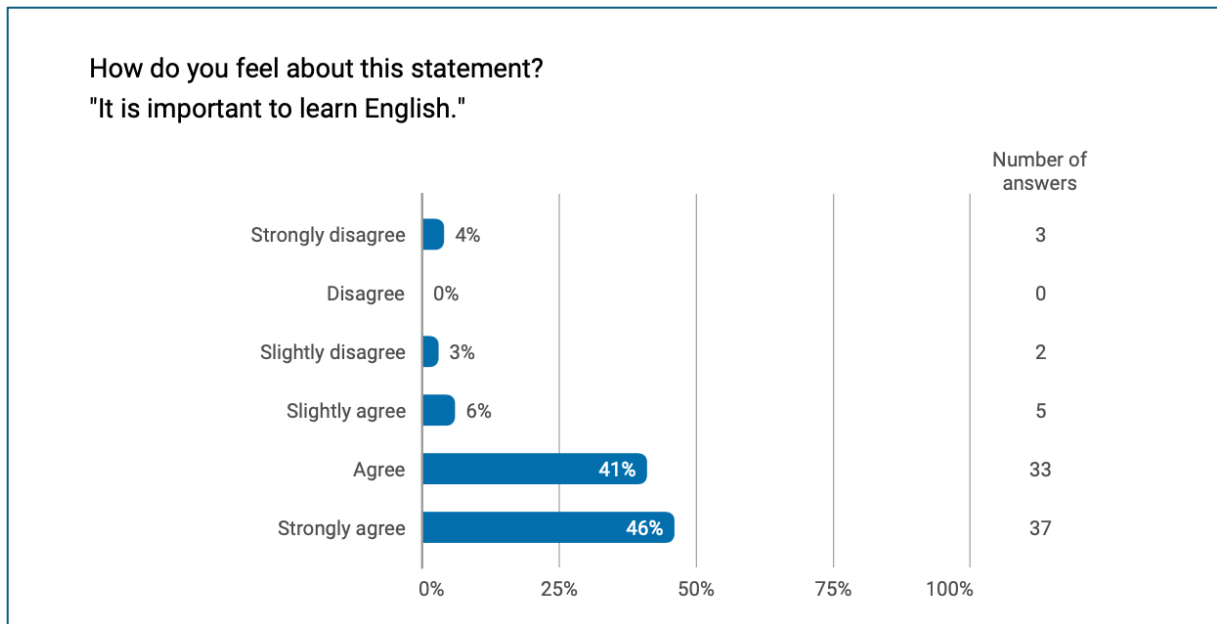
Figure 1: The importance of learning English according to students.

4.1.2. The Most Important English Skill

As presented in Figure 2, when asked to choose the two English skills that are most important to them, 83% of the participants chose "Writing" as the most important skill. In comparison, 45% answered "Speaking", 31% answered "Reading", and 23% answered "Listening". This is an interesting finding as it may be assumed that speaking is the function of an L2 that students value most. For these students, though, writing was the skill most commonly chosen.
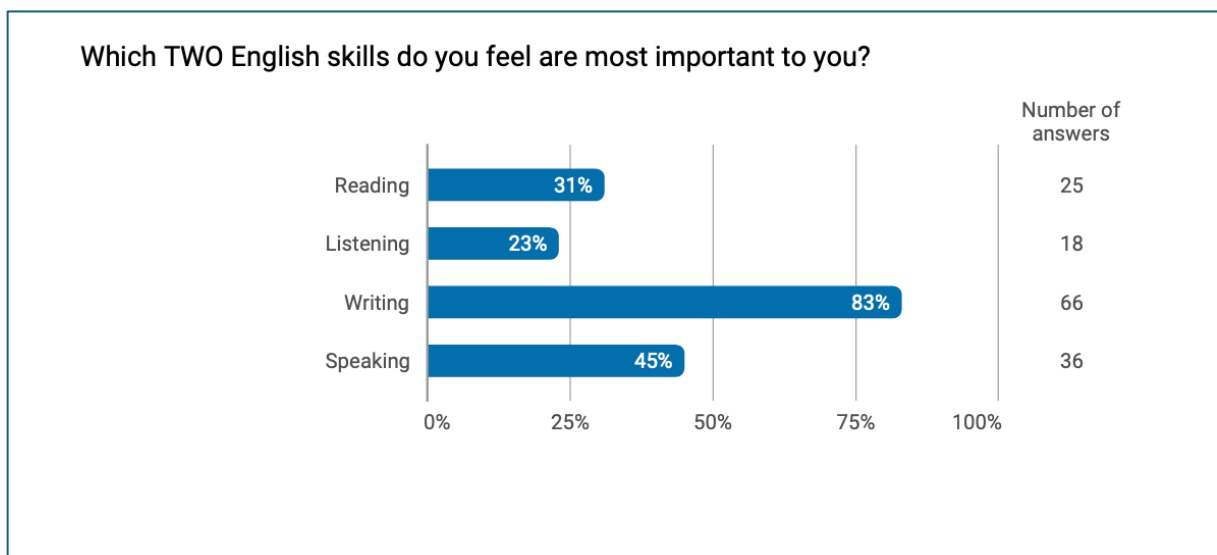

Figure 2: The most important English skills according to students.

4.1.3. Motivation to Learn English

For the next item in the questionnaire, the participants were again required to select from a scale of "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree", however, this time to comment on their motivation to learn English (see Figure 3). To this statement, the majority of the participants (85%) agreed that they were motivated to learn English, while only 15% did not agree. Of the 85% that stated that they were motivated to learn English, 11% chose that that they strongly agreed, while 36% agreed, and 38% slightly agreed.
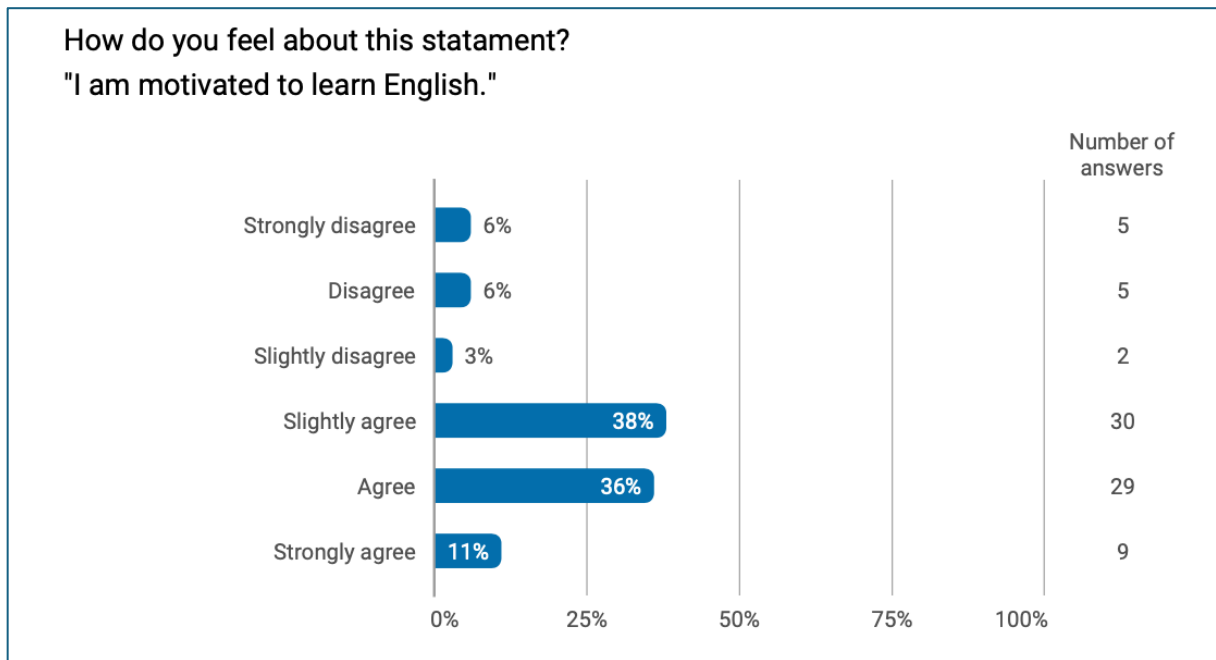

Figure 3: Students' motivation to learn English.

4.1.4. Reasons For Lack of Motivation

The 15% of the participants that stated that they were not motivated to learn English consisted of 12 students. These 12 were directed to answer a question about their reasons for lack of motivation. The question required that the participant chose at least one reason out of the five provided in the questionnaire, but they were allowed to choose several. As presented in Figure 4, of the unmotivated participants, eight replied that they were not motivated to learn English because the English lessons were boring, while three stated that they did not see the point in having English at school. A further three answered that they would not have use for the things they learned in the eighth grade when they finished lower secondary school, and lastly, two students replied that they were not motivated to learn English because the subject was too difficult. The question also included the option "Other" as an answer. However, no participants chose that option, and therefore, no other reasons than the ones already listed for lack of motivation were named.
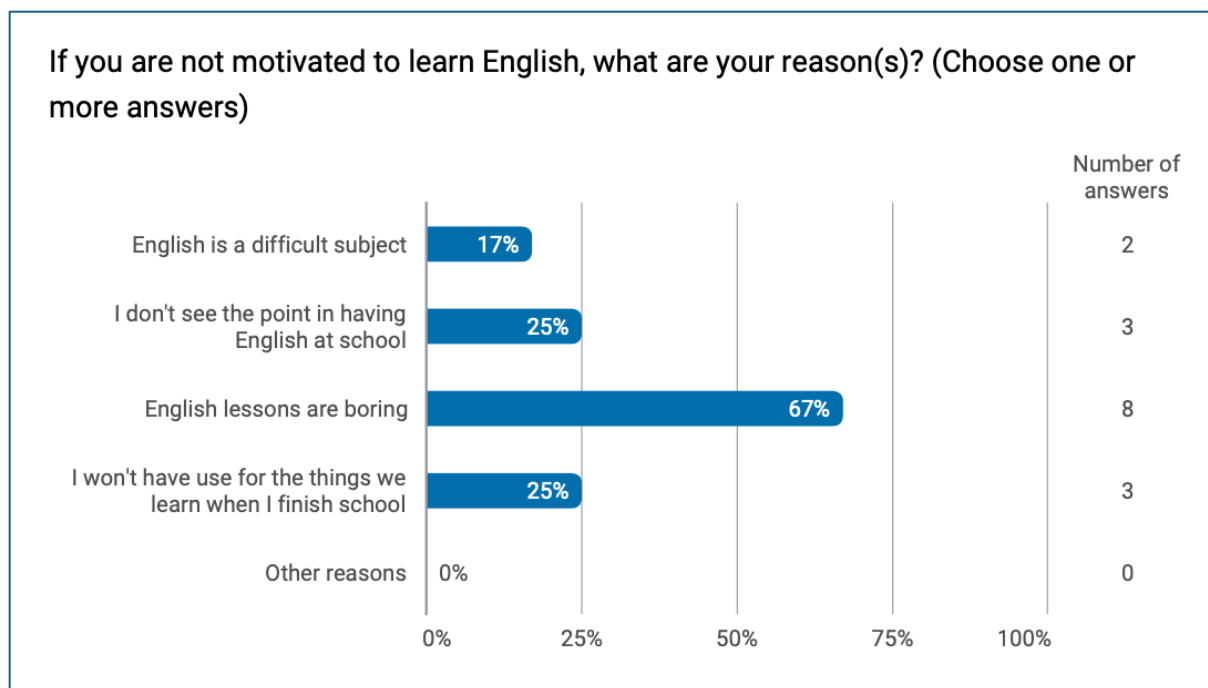
Figure 4: Reasons for lack of motivation according to students.

4.1.5. Reasons For Motivation

The 85% of participants that were motivated to learn English were directed to answer a question about their reasons for being motivated, the results of which can be found in Figure 5. To this question, there were 12 possible items to choose from, including an "Other" category, and the participants were asked to choose one or more answers. The most popular reply, chosen by 81%, was that the participants were motivated to learn English because they liked to watch English TV and films. Following this trend, 74% replied that they were motivated to learn English because it allowed them to understand websites and social media sites, while 71% answered that they found it useful to know English. These were the only items that were selected by over 50% of respondents. It was also interesting, though, to see that 46% said they were motivated because "My parents think it is important that I know English".

If you are motivated to learn English, what is it that motivates you? (Choose one or more answers)

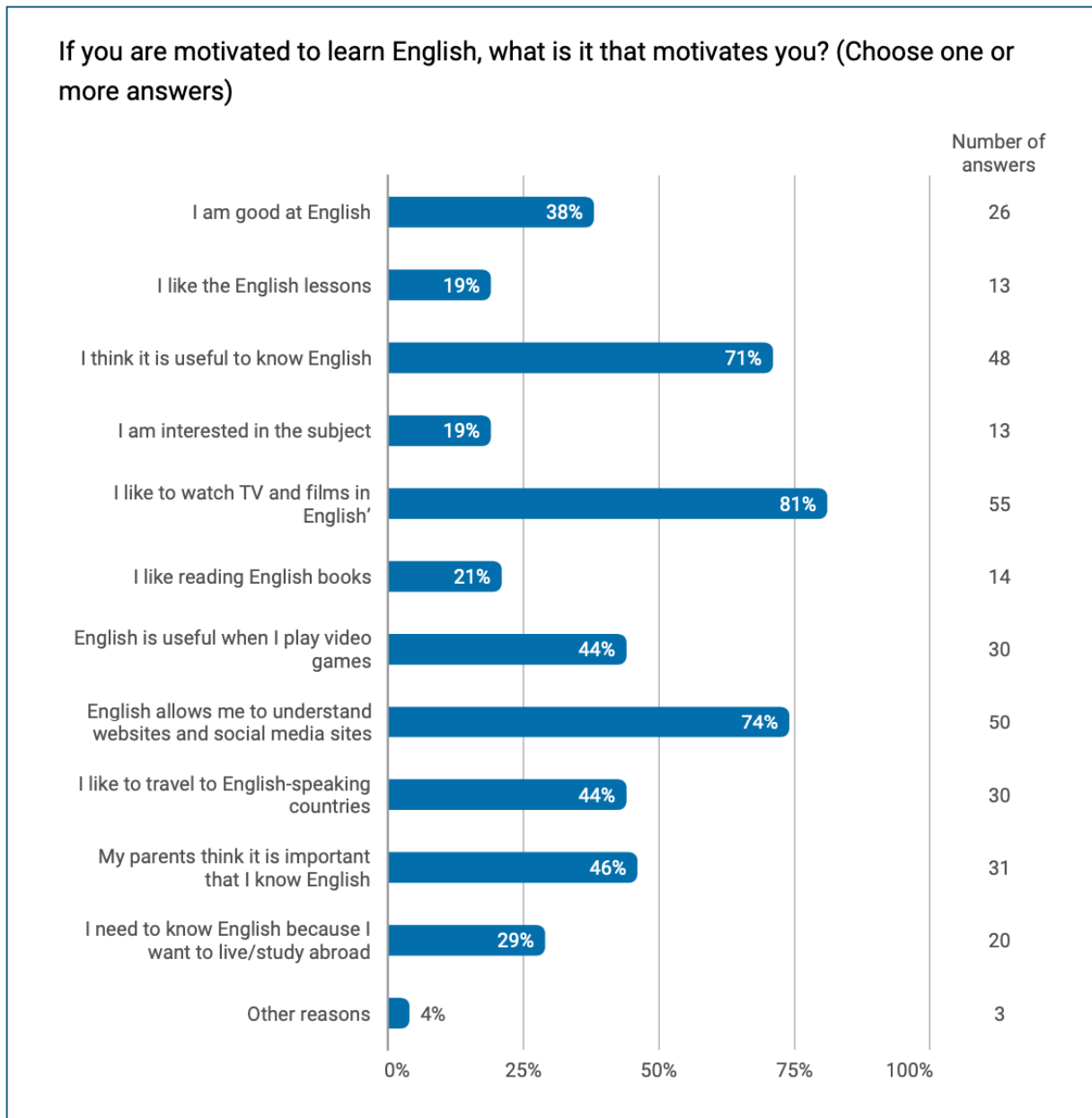|	Percentage	Number of answers
I am good at English	38%	26
I like the English lessons	19%	13
I think it is useful to know English	71%	48
I am interested in the subject	19%	13
I like to watch TV and films in English'	81%	55
I like reading English books	21%	14
English is useful when I play video games	44%	30
English allows me to understand websites and social media sites	74%	50
I like to travel to English-speaking countries	44%	30
My parents think it is important that I know English	46%	31
I need to know English because I want to live/study abroad	29%	20
Other reasons	4%	3

Figure 5: Reasons for motivation according to students.

4.1.6. Preferred Learning Activities

Participants were also required to choose up to three activities that they liked most during English lessons, from a list with 15 options, including "Other" (see Figure 6). Of the options, the most prominent one was to use films in the lessons, which 81% of the participants agreed on. Furthermore, 68% answered "Games", and 53% answered "Group projects". After these three answers, there was a substantial gap in percentage points to the fourth most popular category, "Using music", which only had 18% of the votes. The remaining activities "Group discussions", "Doing technology-based English activities (on the Chromebook")", "Projects and presentations", "Writing paragraphs and essays",

"Reading self-chosen texts/books", and "Working with tasks from the textbook" ranged from 15% to 3%.
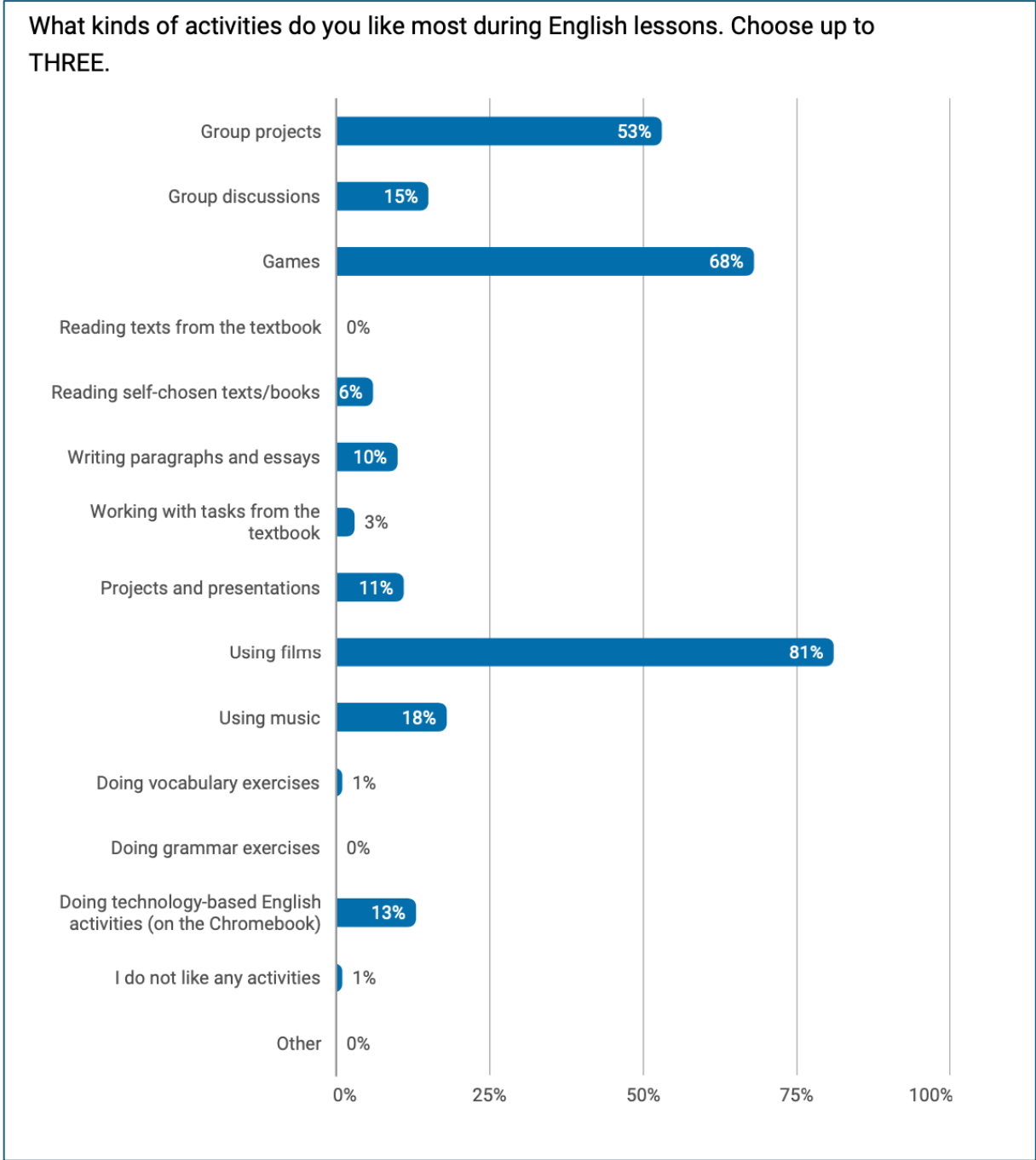

Figure 6: Students' preferred activities.

4.1.7. Participants' Suggestions for Changes in English Lessons

The last question in the questionnaire was "Can you suggest ONE change the teacher could make to your English lessons to make them more enjoyable for you?". This was an open question, and the students offered a range of answers. An analysis of the answers suggested seven categories and four sub-categories, as presented in Table A.

Category	Sub-Categories	Number of Responses	Comments
1. Videos/films		24	
2. Games		16	Digital and non-digital games.
3. Group work		16	Group activities, collaboration, and social aspects.
4. Additional activities	4.1 Various activities	12	Other activities that the students want more of, beyond the most popular in categories 1-3.
	4.2 Oral activities	6	
	4.3 Physical activity	5	
	4.4 Student involvement	3	
	4.5 Atmosphere	4 (in total: 28)	
5. Activities the students want less of		9	
6. No desired changes		9	
7. Other/undecided/unserious answers		8	

Although the participants were asked to name only one change, many offered two or more. Some of these answers are divided and placed in several categories, for instance, one participant wrote "Watch movies or do something active. Not only write and read" [translated from Norwegian]. This response was divided into four parts: "watch movies", "do something active", "not only read", and (not only) "write". The first part of the reply was placed under the category *videos/films*, the second was placed under the sub-category *physical activities*, and the third and fourth were placed under *activities the students want less of* as two separate suggestions of activities that the participant wanted to spend less time doing.

Some of the answers to the open question requiring the participants to suggest a specific activity were difficult to categorize. For instance, two answers, which mentioned bringing snacks, candy, and soda to class: "Games and lots of snacks" [translated from Norwegian] and "Playing English games and watching movies twice a month (and bringing a soda of our choosing & candy." [translated from Norwegian], were challenging. These answers were first placed under the category *other/undecided/unserious answers,* as they seemed irrelevant, however, ultimately, they were placed under *games,* *films/movies*, and *activities that the students want more of.* This is because while they at first glance may be regarded as irrelevant or unserious, it could be that the teacher previously had allowed bringing snacks to a lesson, or maybe even practiced it regularly and the students viewed it as motivating.

4.1.8. Summary of Main Questionnaire Findings

The main questionnaire findings reveal a strong consensus among participants regarding the importance of learning English, with 93% expressing agreement. Writing emerged as the most valued skill, followed by speaking. Motivation to learn English was high among the majority (85%) of respondents, however, only 11% stated that they strongly agreed that they were motivated. The most common reasons for being motivated were that the participants enjoyed watching English TV and films, because English allowed them to understand websites and social media sites, and that they found it useful to know English. Further, a notable minority (15%) reported a lack of motivation, citing reasons such as boredom and perceived irrelevance of the English subject. Preferred learning activities among the students included watching films and videos, playing games, and engaging in group work, these were also the most frequently suggested activities by the students in the open question.

4.2. Classroom Intervention

To answer RQ 2, six research lessons (two each week) were planned and conducted. As explained in Chapter 3, during these English lessons, the researcher (as the teacher) introduced different motivational strategies, observed students' reactions to them, and invited the students to provide written feedback on them at the end of the lessons. The strategies introduced in the lessons were group work, or Cooperative learning, using videos in lessons, and using games in the lessons.

4.2.1. Group Work in English Lessons

4.2.1.1. Observations

As previously explained in Chapter 3, the first lesson was dedicated to CL, and the students were divided into groups of four and instructed to collaborate to write a text together (see section 3.4.3. for details about the assignment). When I introduced the theme of the week, which was group work, many of the students were visibly excited, some smiling, while some started talking (cheerfully) with the person sitting next to them. One student immediately stood up and looked around the classroom to locate his friends because he wanted to choose his own group, and one student exclaimed, "Yes!" because he was excited about working in groups. It seemed that most of the students seemed excited, however, this could be because those students were most visible or audible in their reactions. There were also students who seemed indifferent, and some even bored. When it was announced that the students would not be able to choose their own groups, a few of the students responded negatively, seemingly disappointed, that they could not work in groups with their best friends. However, after having been assigned their groups and after working together for a few minutes, these students seemed like they were enjoying themselves. While working on the task, one group seemed like they were bored or unhappy about the assignment. The group consisted of three students, and I noticed that two of them were playing games on their Chromebooks, and the third student was trying to work with the task. I spoke with them, and they eventually ended up working together, however quietly. In one of the groups, some of the students were laughing and talking loudly about the task and their contributions to the text and had to be told to quiet down. Most of the groups seemed to enjoy working together. I observed many smiles and quiet laughter, and many looked concentrated.

For the second lesson of the first week, the students were going to continue working with the groups they had been assigned in the previous lesson. Before I had gotten the chance to greet the students at the beginning of the lessons (it was customary at the school for the students to stand by their desks at the start of each lesson and greet the teacher), two of the students met me at the door of the classroom and asked if they should go find their groups immediately, which I interpreted as a sign of motivation because they seemed eager to continue working with their group, based on their demeanors and body language, which looked activated. The students seemed calmer in the second lesson compared to the first. Some of the students were visibly focused on getting the task done, while some were joking around. Two students from one group told me they were excited to share their texts with me and their classmates. When the students were told to read their text aloud to another group, some seemed nervous,

but many of them seemed excited to share their work. Some students insisted on reading their texts first, while some were hesitant to read aloud.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the students finished the writing task during the second lesson, and in the last part of the lesson, the students were instructed to participate in Readers Theatre (explained in section 3.4.3) in groups of four. When I explained this activity, one of the students asked if they could choose their own groups this time; when I replied that the groups would be assigned by the teacher, he seemed a little disappointed but was ultimately fine with the fact. Some of the students seemed like they were tired of working in groups, a couple were sighing, and some seemed neutral. However, when the students got together with their new groups, many seemed excited to collaborate. I spent most of my time this lesson talking with two groups who seemed to enjoy themselves quite a bit. They were standing up rather than sitting at their desks (like some other groups did), practicing reading aloud and acting out a scene from their textbook. Two students in one group were very excited to perform the Readers Theatre for the class, while the other two seemed more nervous yet still smiling.

4.2.1.2. Questionnaire

After the lessons where the students worked in groups, they were required to answer a questionnaire. For the first week of research lessons, two questionnaires were developed. The first questionnaire was about the collaborative writing task and was distributed at the end of the first lesson. The question was, "Do you have any comments about the group task?". The responses were divided into five categories, as presented in Table B.

Table B: Students' comments about the collaborative writing task

Category	Number of responses
No comment	11
Negative feedback	2
Neutral feedback	2
Positive feedback	5
Dissatisfaction with the group	4

Of the 20 participants that completed the questionnaire after the first lesson, 11 participants' answers applied to the category *no comment*. Since over half of the students opted to give no comments, the

questions were worded differently in the next questionnaires, asking if they had any comments about what they liked or did not like during the activity in the lesson. After this category, *positive comeback* was the next largest category, with five responses; one typed that "it was a bit more fun than regular course work", while one stated that "it was very fun and motivating and entertaining" [translated from Norwegian]. There were four answers that fell under the category of *dissatisfaction with the group*. Interestingly, they all had in common that they were also put in the category of *positive feedback*. This was because while the participants were satisfied with the assignment, they also commented that they had some dissatisfaction about their groups. One typed, "I thought this task was very good, but for this class, I think we work better individually", and one said "It was fun, but it could be hard to cooperate".

After the second lesson, where the students continued and completed the task from the previous lesson and participated in Readers Theatre, another questionnaire was distributed to the participants about the use of RT as a group activity and using group work in general. The participants were asked if they thought RT was fun, and they were instructed to choose an option from a seven-point scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree". The majority of the participants were positive to the statement, however the most chosen answer was "Neutral" (35%).

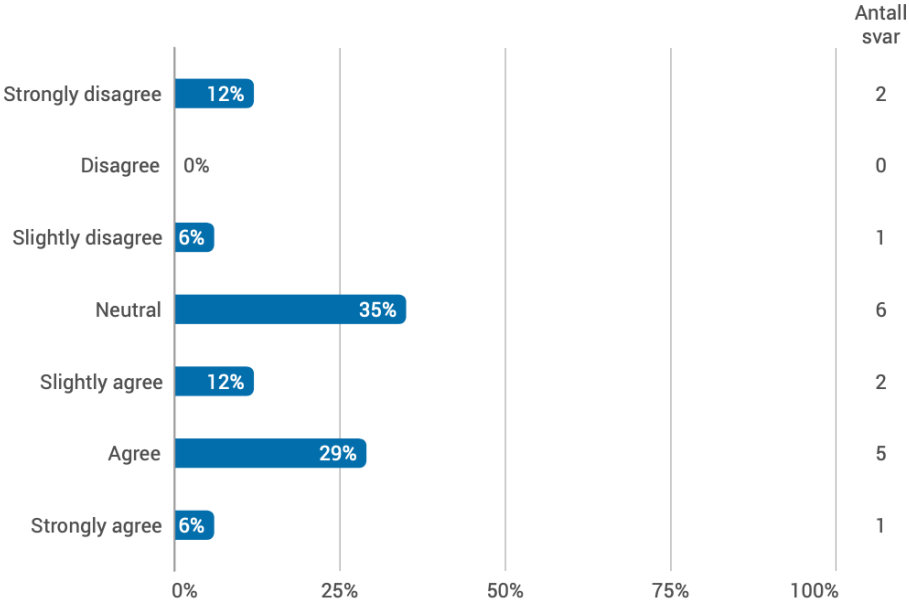How do you feel about this statement: "Readers Theatre is a fun activity"?

Figure 7: Students' opinions about Readers Theatre

The second question from this questionnaire was an open question about what they liked or did not like about the activity. Seventeen participants were present and completed the questionnaire. The largest category was *no comment*, with nine answers. Under *positive feedback*, there were four answers, where the participants made points about RT being fun and a good way to practice speaking, and one participant said, "I liked that we did not need to write anything" [translated from Norwegian]. Only one answer was appropriate for the category *dissatisfaction with the group*, the participant stated that it was "Senseless having group work if someone is fooling around" [translated from Norwegian].

Table C: Students' feedback about RT in lessons

Category	Number of responses
No comment	9
Negative feedback	1
Neutral feedback	3
Positive feedback	4
Dissatisfaction with the group	1

After having focused on CL and group work for two lessons, the participants were asked to answer a statement about if they thought group work was a good way to learn English, with a seven-point scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree". Figure 8 presents the findings of this item. Interestingly, to answer the statement, none of the participants disagreed that group work was a good way to learn. However, 24% of the participants replied that they were "Neutral" to the statement. Further, the remaining 77% agreed that group work was a good way to work with English. Of the 77%, the majority answered that they simply agreed with the statement, while 24% slightly agreed, and 12% strongly agreed.
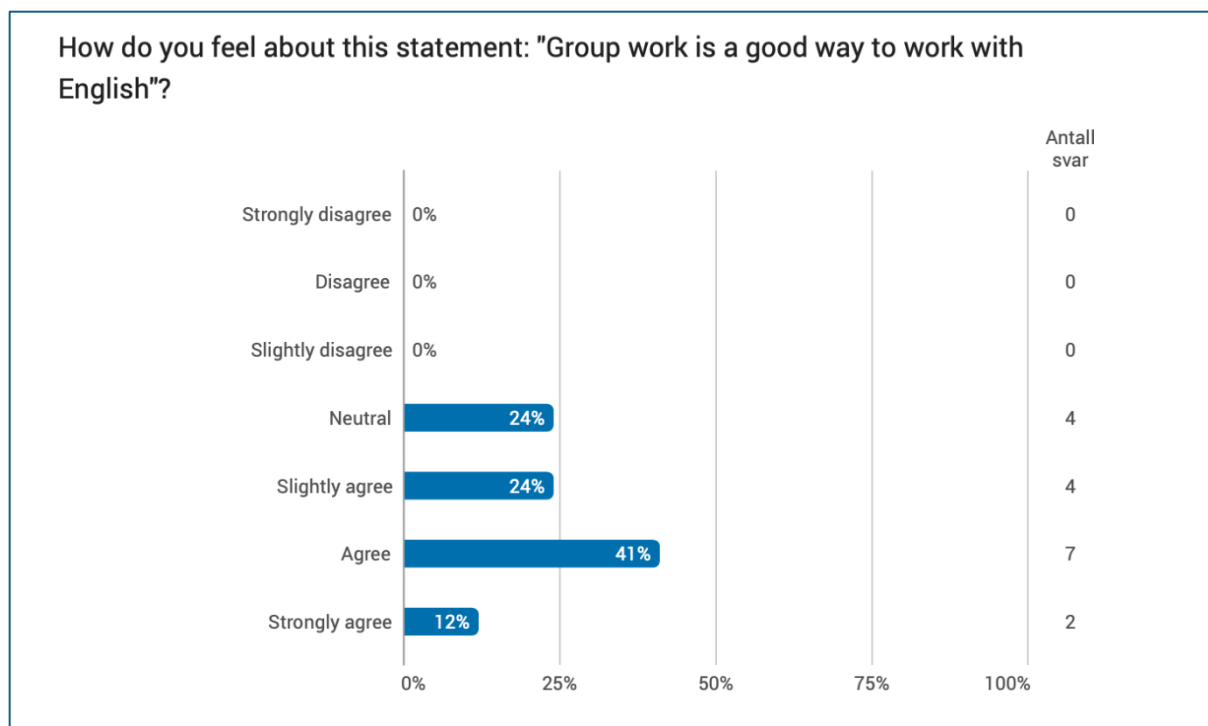
Figure 8: Students' opinions about group work.

4.2.2. Using Videos in English Lessons

4.2.2.1. Observations

For the first lesson of the second week, the theme was using videos in the English lessons (see section 3.4.3 for details). When I introduced the theme, many of the students seemed excited, visible by their expressions and body language. I saw many bright eyes and interested looks, and smiles, and some students leaned forward on their desks, which, to the observer, signaled that they were motivated. When I told them they were going to watch a video, some students immediately asked if we could go to the 'film room' (the school auditorium). When I told them no, some seemed disappointed, while others did not seem to care. As explained in Chapter 3, I asked the students to take notes while watching the video to use for the task they were instructed to do after watching the video. Some students responded slightly negatively to this, frowning and sighing, while the majority of the class seemed relatively neutral to the assignment. While watching the video, I noticed some students slouching in their chairs, barely writing any notes, which could signal either boredom or relaxation. Some of the students were eager to take notes, their faces visibly concentrated. After watching the video, the students were instructed to summarize the content briefly for the person sitting next to them. Some students did this loudly and with an unserious tone, while some were quieter and more serious in their discussions. Most of the students did, however, seem motivated and eager to discuss the video they had watched. The overall tone in the classroom for this lesson was a bit muted, especially compared to the previous week, where the students

were talking more, and maybe due to the nature of the theme, they were more energetic. The students did, however, seem content to watch the video and work with the task that followed. When they had written a summary of the video, the students were instructed to share their work with the person sitting next to them. This seemed to engage many of the students, and I noticed that many were positive and excited to share. Yet, some seemed neutral and relaxed.

For the second lesson of the second week, I had booked the auditorium to watch videos in; the students seemed very happy about this. It was visible by the body language of many students that they were eager to get started with the lesson (standing up, showing energetic movements, ready to move to the auditorium), which could be because they were excited to watch videos in the lessons, or because they were excited about having the lesson in another location than they were used to. While watching the videos for this lesson, many of the students seemed more eager to take notes, maybe because of the experiences of taking notes from the previous lesson. After watching both videos, I asked the students if they wanted to watch them one more time; about half or more of the class answered "yes" or nodded, while the rest seemed neutral. When watching the videos for a second time, some were still eagerly writing notes, while some of the students leaned back and watched without taking notes. It seemed that the students enjoyed watching the videos and the setting where they watched them. After watching the videos. The class walked back to the classroom where we started the lesson. Back in the classroom, the students worked individually on the task for the lesson, which, as mentioned in Chapter 3, was to make a digital poster about the content of the videos. Because the students worked individually in this lesson, the class was calmer, and this made it more difficult to register the enjoyment levels while they were watching the videos and working on the task. However, I noticed that the students seemed excited to be watching videos and that most of them worked well and effectively with the task.

4.2.2.2. Questionnaire

For the second week, one questionnaire was distributed at the end of the second lesson. As presented in Figure 9, when asked to choose between a seven-point scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree" if they thought using videos in the lessons was a good way to learn English, only one student disagreed while the rest were either neutral or agreed that videos are a good way to learn English. Of these, 47% strongly agreed.
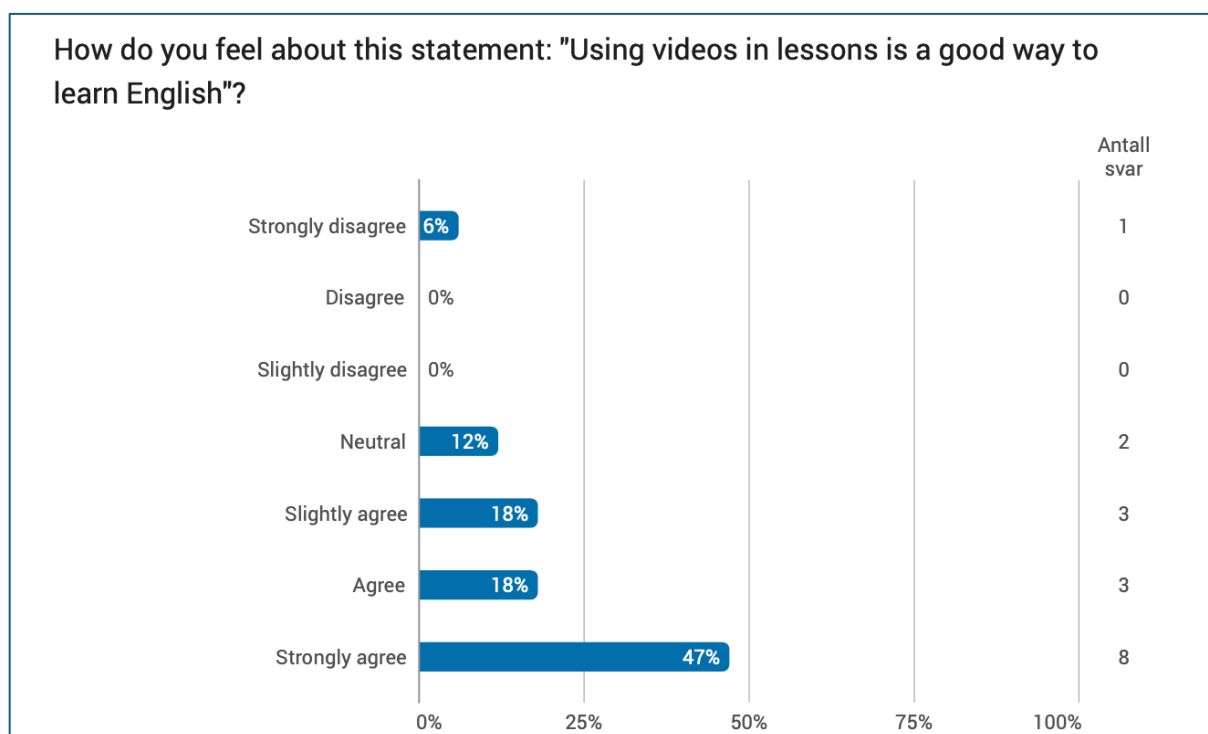
How do you feel about this statement: "Using videos in lessons is a good way to learn English"?

Response	Percentage	Antall svar
Strongly disagree	6%	1
Disagree	0%	0
Slightly disagree	0%	0
Neutral	12%	2
Slightly agree	18%	3
Agree	18%	3
Strongly agree	47%	8

Figure 9: Students' opinions about videos in English lessons.

When asked the open question, "What did you like/not like about using videos in the lessons?" the 16 answers were divided into categories, as presented in Table D. Fourteen answers were placed under *positive feedback*. Since the category *positive feedback* applied to the majority of the answers, the category was divided into sub-categories. The category *positive feedback about learning benefits* included seven answers, such as "I liked it because I remember more when I watch videos", "It was easier to understand, sometimes the teachers talk too much, making the lessons boring", and "There was nothing I did not like, I thought it was a good way to learn by watching videos and taking notes" [translated from Norwegian]. The category *positive feedback about engagement and interest* also included seven answers, for instance "instead of teaching in the old way, it is more fun to watch videos" and "it was more interesting" [translated from Norwegian]. Two of the replies mentioned that it was difficult to take notes at the same time as watching videos. However, these responses also mentioned that they enjoyed using videos in the lessons. The two responses that were placed under *challenges* (as well as *positive feedback about engagement and interest*) were that watching videos was "More exciting. But difficult to take notes fast" and "it was fun to write notes while watching the video, but it went quite fast and it was difficult to note everything" [translated from Norwegian].

Table D: Students' feedback about videos in lessons

Category	Sub-categories	Number of responses
No comment		2
Positive feedback	positive feedback about learning benefits	7
	positive feedback about engagement and interest	7 (in total: 14)
Challenges		2

4.2.3. Playing Games in English Lessons

4.2.3.1. Observations

For the third week of the classroom intervention, the theme was using games in the lessons (see section 3.4.3. for details). When I introduced the theme for the week, many of the students seemed energetic, smiling, and looking excitedly at me to tell them which games they would be playing. In the first lesson, the students made Kahoots (quizzes) about relevant topics from the current curriculum theme in groups and played through some of them at the end of the lesson. Most of the students were smiling and laughing a lot when they were making the questions for the Kahoots. In a couple of groups, it seemed like one or two of the group members took control, and the other members did not fully apply themselves or contribute to making the questions for the quiz, mostly spending their time messing around while they were visibly having fun – it was not ideal. When the students were going to play through the first Kahoot, there were some technical difficulties, which resulted in us not having enough time to go through all the Kahoots. Some students seemed demotivated by having to wait, while some were frustrated that it took a little while for the technical difficulties to be over. However, many of the students seemed positive throughout the lesson, even though they had to wait, and some used the extra time to make additional questions for their Kahoots. When playing through the Kahoots, some of the students leaned back, seemingly relaxed, while many of the students seemed very excited, leaning forward, expressing interest and eagerness. Many of the students were very engaged in the game, some yelled out the wrong answers to confuse other students, many exclaiming joyfully when getting questions right, and some uttering annoyance when they answered questions wrong, yet still with a

positive and enthusiastic tone. When the winners of the Kahoots were presented at the end of the games, the students applauded them, and the students who won seemed confident and energetic.

For the second lesson of this week, the game the students played was Alias, which was explained in Chapter 3. The students were divided into groups of four, and the last part of the lesson was used to play the game. Many students seemed excited to play Alias, while a few were hesitant. When I explained the rules and handed out the cards to the groups, most seemed eager to play. Many students talked loudly and with a lively tone while I handed out the cards. When they started playing, I walked around the classroom, stopping first by one group that had divided themselves into two teams, and one student was explaining eagerly a term from one of the cards. The teammate was listening intently, trying to guess the term. They seemed very focused, but there was a lively tone, and they were smiling a lot. In another group, a few of the students seemed a little anxious and shy when speaking in front of the others; their body language was more reserved than that of some of the other students who were talking loudly and eagerly. One student was so excited that he jumped up from his chair in the middle of a sentence when explaining a term. However, some students were more withdrawn, and some seemed relaxed. The classroom seemed a bit chaotic during this activity, but the overall energy and atmosphere were positive. There was a relatively loud volume in the classroom, but the voices were enthusiastic and lively.

4.2.3.2. Questionnaire

For the third week of research lessons, one questionnaire was distributed at the end of the second lesson of the week. As presented in Figure 10, when the participants were asked to choose from a seven-point scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree" about what they thought about a statement that said "It is fun to play games, such as Kahoot! and Alias, in the English lessons", of the 19 participants that completed the questionnaire, 89% answered that they agreed that it was fun playing games in the lessons, 68% of these strongly agreed, while 21% agreed. Because the actual playing of the games happened towards the end of the lessons, the participants were asked to give their opinion to the statement "Games, such as Kahoot! and Alias, can motivate me to work well during the English lesson", by choosing an option from a seven-point scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree", as presented in Figure 11. The answers to this item were fairly similar to the previous one, with 68% voting "Strongly agree" and 21% voting "Agree".
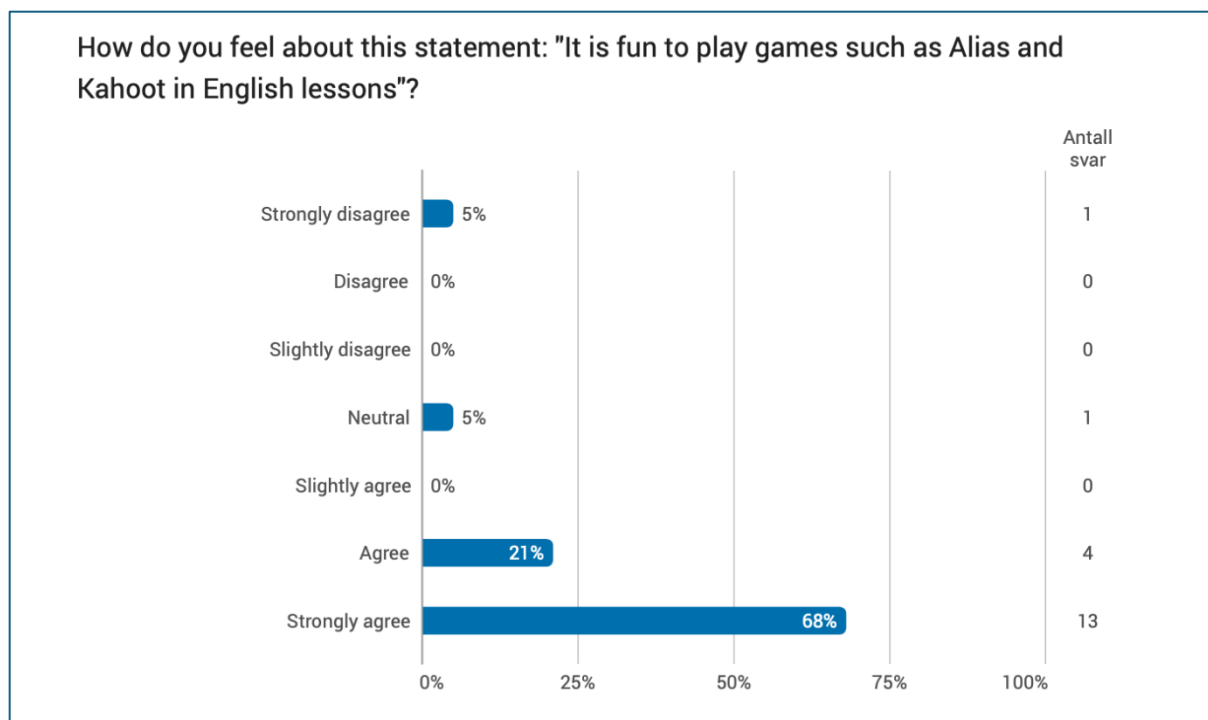
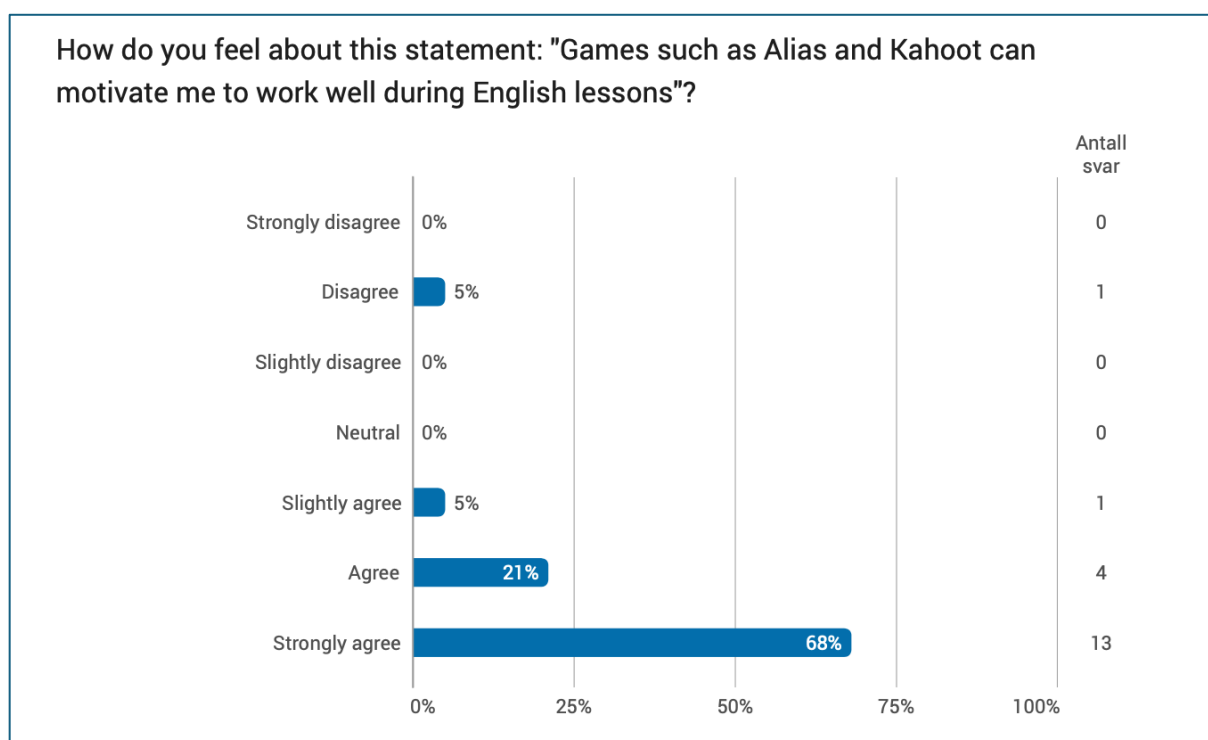*Figure 10: Students' enjoyment when playing games in English lessons.*

Figure 11: Students' motivation when playing games in English lessons.

In Table E, findings from the open question about what the participants liked or did not like about using games in the English lessons are presented. Two answers were placed under *negative feedback*, namely "Could be [grounds for] too much messing around" and "Could become a bad habit to

play games in the lessons" [translated from Norwegian]. The category *neutral feedback* applied to two of the answers, one of which was hard to define: "just took too much time with the kahoot" [translated from Norwegian]. This statement was placed under *neutral feedback* because while it implied something negative (taking too much time), it also implied that the other aspects of using games went fine. Eleven answers were relevant to the category of *positive feedback*. In this category, all the answers mentioned that playing games was enjoyable or that it was "good", for instance, one answer was "Very good sooooo fun" [translated from Norwegian]. Some participants also gave reasons for why they thought that it was enjoyable or "good", namely "It can be a bit unpleasant to talk in front of people, but it is fun doing something different", "it is good because it is fun and if what we do in the lessons is fun, I learn more", and "I think it is good because it is a fun way to learn English" [translated from Norwegian]. One of the answers could be interpreted as both *negative feedback* and *positive feedback*, depending on the viewpoint and preferences of the participant, namely "that everyone had to talk" [translated from Norwegian], which could for some be positive because they enjoy practicing speaking, while for others it could be negative for instance if they experience anxiety to talk in front of others. This answer was not placed under any of the categories because of its ambiguous nature.

Table E: Students' feedback about games in English lessons

Category	Number of responses
No comment/undecided	3
Negative feedback	2
Neutral feedback	2
Positive feedback	11

4.2.4. Summary of Classroom Intervention Findings

From the observations, it seemed like the majority of the students enjoyed all three topics, group work, videos, and games in the lessons. There were nuances to consider, however, many seemed motivated during the lessons. From the questionnaires, it was clear that the students mostly felt that the activities were good ways to learn English. While no students disagreed that group work is a good way to learn English, only two students strongly agreed, while 11 students agreed or slightly agreed, and four students were neutral. For the activities used in the lessons, collaborative writing and RT, the tendency leaned towards neutrality towards the tasks. When it came to using videos in English lessons, most students (14 of 17) agreed that it is a good way to learn English, and eight students strongly agreed, while six students

agreed or slightly agreed. This was reflected in the open question about the use of videos in lessons, where the majority gave positive feedback. When asked if they thought games such as Alias and Kahoot are good ways to learn English, the students mostly agreed (17 of 19), whereas 13 students strongly agreed. In the open question about games in English lessons, 11 of 16 students gave answers that were categorized as positive feedback. The findings show that, all in all, using games in English lessons had the most positive responses, while using movies came in second, and group work had the least positive responses.

4.3. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, the findings will be presented in regards to the research questions, which were:

RQ 1.a: How motivated to learn English are eighth grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school?

RQ 1.b: What motivating factors or reasons for lack of motivation do they identify?

RQ 2: According to students, how is their motivation during English lessons affected by a selection of motivational strategies which the teacher uses?

In conclusion, the findings from this study have shed light on several key aspects of English language learning motivation among eighth-grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school. Firstly, regarding RQ 1.a, the findings indicate that a significant majority of students demonstrate a high level of motivation to learn English, with only a small percentage expressing a lack of motivation. RQ 1.b revealed various motivating factors identified by students, including interest in English media and perceived usefulness of the language, while the biggest reasons for lack of motivation were that participants found the subject boring and doubts about the relevancy of the subject. Lastly, RQ 2 explored the impact of motivational strategies employed by the researcher (as the teacher) on student motivation during English lessons. The results suggest that activities such as using videos, games, and group work are highly valued by students and positively influence their motivation. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of understanding student motivation and employing effective strategies to enhance the language learning experience.

5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore student motivation towards the English subject in the eighth grade of a Norwegian lower secondary school. This chapter will present and discuss the main findings from this study in light of the theoretical framework provided in Chapter 2. As previously mentioned, the data was gathered through quantitative and qualitative methods, using one main questionnaire with 80 responses and a classroom intervention (six English lessons), which were analyzed through the teacher-researcher's observations and reflections and student feedback. This chapter aims to delve into the interesting discoveries related to the research questions, offering valuable insights into the topic. The research questions for the study were:

RQ 1.a: How motivated to learn English are eighth grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school?

RQ 1.b: What motivating factors or reasons for lack of motivation do they identify?

RQ 2: According to students, how is their motivation during English lessons affected by a selection of motivational strategies which the teacher uses?

Section 5.1. deals with RQ 1.a and 1.b, exploring the motivation levels among the students and examining the motivating factors they identify and the reasons for lack of motivation they identify. Following this, Section 5.2. deals with RQ 2, investigating how students perceive the impact of motivational strategies employed by the teacher-researcher during English lessons.

5.1. ESL Motivation

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the main questionnaire used in this study revealed insightful findings regarding the motivation of eighth-grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school to learn English. Regarding RQ 1.a, the findings revealed that most students reported high levels of motivation to learn English and that most students believed it was important to learn the language. The study also found that while students generally acknowledged the significance of English proficiency, there appears to be variability in the depth of their motivation. Further exploration into the factors influencing this misalignment could provide valuable insights for enhancing student engagement and commitment to language learning.

The findings showed that regarding RQ 1.b, the students identified several reasons for being motivated to learn English. The most prominent reasons students gave for being motivated to learn English were related to a need to understand the language in order to do activities that they enjoyed. For instance, consuming media in English, such as TV, films, websites, social media sites, and video games. Additionally, some participants claimed to be motivated to learn English because it is useful to know the language in general. These findings suggest that while some students were motivated to learn English based on interest in the subject and fondness of English lessons, most students' motivation did not stem from school-related reasons but rather from a desire to know the language for purposes that required them to know and use it in their free time. The students' interest in learning English for these purposes suggests an interest to learn English rooted in their intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). The students' intrinsic motivation can be grounded in their instinct "to learn, develop, and expand their capacities" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 16).

Some students also said they were motivated by their desire to travel or live and study abroad in English-speaking countries. These findings can be linked to an element in Gardner's (2010) socio-educational model of second language acquisition, namely integrativeness. Gardner (2010) argues that the L2 learner can be motivated to learn the language in order to become a part of the language community (p.114). The study revealed that some students also expressed that their motivation to learn English stemmed from their parents' belief in its importance. This aligns with another element stemming from Gardner's (2010) socio-educational model, namely his theory suggesting that the social environment affects young learners, with parental interest in the subject potentially impacting the motivation of younger students in language learning (p. 128). This finding can also be linked to extrinsic motivation because of the external factors that can influence people, such as social expectations, in this case, parents' expectations (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71). Extrinsic motivation is also a key element in Dörnyei's (2009) theory about the ought-to self, which refers to language learners' motivation driven by their perception of what they should achieve in terms of proficiency in the second language (p. 29).

5.1.2. ESL Writing

When asked what they believed was the most important skill to have regarding the English language, most students replied "Writing". This finding was unexpected because the general impression from the main questionnaire was that the students did not enjoy doing writing tasks. The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Research (2020) has decided that students in lower secondary school may be required to have either a written or oral exam in their tenth year, and the students get one grade in the subject that

represents both oral and written effort (p. 10). However, students may perceive a disproportionate emphasis on written assessment during the school year or have certain beliefs about their future academic careers that may possibly influence their perception of the importance of writing. Bahous et al. (2011) discovered that many students were not motivated in language learning because they perceived an over-focus on writing skills in EFL education (p. 33). It was further explained that the participants felt that way because they had more written assessments than other assessments (Bahous et al., 2011, p. 38). Another reason that the participants of this study believe writing is the most important English language skill could be that they do not feel that they have adequate writing skills and need to improve in that area. According to Munkejord's (2021) study about academic writing in Norwegian upper secondary schools, it was revealed that the participants perceived a lack of knowledge about academic writing (p. 3). Munkejord (2021) further argued that this lack of knowledge could be traced back all the way to the lower secondary school and stated that many students felt a lack of knowledge during the transition from lower secondary school to upper secondary school (p. 57).

In accordance with the finding that students perceived writing to be the most important skill within the ESL context, the significance of creating motivating activities to promote writing skills is evident. Although most students who participated in this study claimed that they perceived writing as the most important skill, only a few replied that they enjoyed "Writing paragraphs and essays" in the English lessons. As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, one of the activities for the classroom intervention in this study was that the students worked in groups to collaborate on a shared writing assignment, in which high motivation levels were measured. While many students were motivated during this assignment, a few complained about having to write in the lessons. Further, this study found that students preferred other activities over writing activities, and some even suggested that the lessons should include fewer writing activities.

According to Munkejord's (2021) study, it was revealed that many upper secondary students felt a lack of knowledge about academic writing (p. 3). If the issue is that the students find the writing aspect of the English subject difficult because they feel they have insufficient knowledge, this could, in accordance with Ryan and Deci's (1985) SDT and Keller's (2010) ARCS theory, result in a lack of motivation to participate in writing activities. According to Ryan and Deci's SDT, competence is an important factor in motivation. This means that feeling a sense of mastery, or competence, in one specific area could help the learner become motivated to work more with the topic, in this case, writing (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 11). Additionally, Keller's (2010) ARCS model supports the need for mastery in order to feel motivated and lists confidence as one of the main elements for feeling motivated to do

something. (p. 46). The idea that competence and confidence are crucial components for feeling motivated is supported by another finding in this study that showed that from all the students who were motivated to learn English, a relatively large number (38%) replied, "I am good at English" as their reason for being motivated.

5.2. Student Response to Motivational Strategies

As described in Chapter 3, the classroom intervention in this study consisted of three weeks (two lessons a week) where three different motivational strategies were used. Regarding RQ 2, "According to students, how is their motivation during English lessons affected by a selection of motivational strategies which the teacher uses?", the study showed that the students generally enjoyed the three approaches used in the classroom intervention, namely including videos, games, and group work in the lessons.

5.2.1. Videos in the ESL Classroom

The findings from this study revealed that most participants highly value using videos in the ESL lessons. As shown by the main questionnaire and the classroom intervention of this study, watching videos in lessons was a favored activity and a prominent motivating factor for many students. This has also been found in several other studies which found that using videos enhanced learners' motivation (Jeliseh & Gilakjani, 2022; Kanamoto et al., 2021; Park & Jung, 2016; Skjæveland, 2016). This study also found that some students claimed that their learning outcomes were enhanced by the use of videos in lessons, which is in accordance with Berk's (2009) argument that videos can be a good tool to "Focus students' concentration" and "Foster deeper learning" (p. 2). In the questionnaire for the classroom intervention of this study, some students claimed to be able to remember more of the content in videos compared with other methods. This was also found in Skjæveland (2016), where it was suggested that both teachers and students agreed that the students remembered more when watching videos (pp. 3 – 4). This finding can also be viewed in light of Berk's (2009) suggestion that videos can be good tools for teaching students based on "the core intelligence of verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, and emotional" (p. 3), which refers to Gardner's (1993, as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) Multiple Intelligences Model about to how students prefer different approaches to learning (p. 231).

Harmer (2015) states that some students may link videos with relaxation because they are used to watching videos at home (p. 344). In line with this, a student in the classroom intervention of this study suggested that using videos in class allowed them to relax while learning. While this comment could be linked with, for instance, reduced language class anxiety (Gardner, 2019) or other factors

influencing the students' learning, it could be viewed as indicative of a potential challenge in effectively integrating video-based learning strategies into the classroom, as it suggests that some students may perceive videos primarily as a means of relaxation rather than as educational tools. Moreover, Harmer (2015) underlines the significance of employing viewing and listening tasks in order to prevent students from viewing videos in lessons as relaxing entertainment (p. 344).

This study found that a notable number of students suggested that in order to make English lessons more enjoyable, teachers should employ more videos in their teaching. While this study, and several others (Jeliseh & Gilakjani, 2022; Kanamoto et al., 2021; Park & Jung, 2016; Skjæveland, 2016), suggest that using videos in L2 lessons is a popular approach among students and that it has educational value, it does not mean that the teachers should only plan lessons where the students watch videos. It is useful to find out what students want and enjoy. Still, teachers must also fulfill educational objectives, as highlighted by Kanamoto et al. (2021), who underline the importance of the effective use of videos. Kanamoto et al. (2021) also state that using videos in lessons without sufficient guidance from the teacher will not necessarily increase the learners' motivation (p. 61). In the classroom intervention of this study, the findings from observations and a questionnaire suggested that students enjoyed both watching videos and doing accompanying tasks. Jeliseh and Gilakjani, 2022, Park & Jung, 2016 and Skjæveland, 2016 also highlighted the importance of including appropriate assignments when using videos in lessons.

5.2.2. Games in the ESL Classroom

According to the findings in this study, the participants mostly enjoyed the implementation of games during English lessons. This was found in the main questionnaire, where a majority conveyed that they enjoyed playing games in English lessons, and in the classroom intervention, where the students largely agreed that the games pertaining to this study (Kahoot! and Alias) were enjoyable and motivating. The findings from this study were similar to other research, which showed that students were motivated by playing games in the EFL classroom (Anyaegbu et al., 2012; Cirocki et al., 2019; Stojković & Jerotijević, 2011; Tao & Zou, 2021). In the main questionnaire of this study, some students suggested that English teachers should include more games in lessons to make them more enjoyable. This finding is similar to one made by Cirocki et al. (2019), which suggested that students wanted more games in EFL lessons. Cirocki et al. (2019) discovered that the students' desire for teachers to incorporate more games stemmed from a desire for more varied lessons and a belief that games had educational value (p. 262). The fact that students who participated in this study were positive to playing the games Alias and Kahoot! in the EFL lessons correlates to Pavey's (2021) argument that most people enjoy playing games and that by including games in lessons, one can make learning fun for the students (p. xvii).

Moreover, Pavey (2021) argues that if the games used in the educational setting meet the criteria of competence, autonomy, and relatedness highlighted in Ryan and Deci's (1985, as cited in Pavey, 2021) SDT, they can be a suitable instrument which can be used to increase motivation (p. 124). In the same way that lessons including videos should also include appropriate activities, games used in the classroom should have an educational value, as argued by Pavey (2021) and Anyaegbu et al. (2012), both highlighting the importance of making the games relevant and using serious games. Anyaegbu et al. (2012) state that serious gameplay could motivate and engage students and improve many aspects of EFL learning if used as an addition to regular teaching approaches (p. 163). According to Pavey (2021), using gamification, which she describes as "providing incentives to learn" (p.1), in education, for instance, through Kahoot!, may not be ideal for all students because of the focus on competition in the game (Pavey 2021, p. 124). However, Tao and Zou (2023) argue that gamification in Kahoot! was a motivating factor for the participants of their study (p. 1676).

This study also discovered that some students were concerned about possible negative consequences of playing games. During the classroom intervention, a participant implied that other students might not take playing games in lessons seriously, which could result in chaos in the classroom. This finding can be linked to Stojković & Jerotijević (2011), where it was found that some teachers were worried that playing games in lessons could result in mess in the classroom (p. 944). Observations in the classroom intervention in this study showed that the classroom could sometimes seem chaotic and loud. However, an overall good tone indicated that the students enjoyed themselves while playing the games seriously. According to Dörnyei (2001), one vital factor for creating motivation in the classroom is that there should be a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere (p. 31). It would, however, be rather tiresome for both students and teachers if every lesson were characterized by the same amount of noise and 'chaos', no matter how positive the undertone. This highlights the need for a balance between activities that the students think are fun, such as games, and other activities, such as writing tasks. The problem, as shown by the findings of this study, is that students find more traditional tasks boring, requesting more physical activity and less reading and writing.

5.2.3. Group Work in ESL Lessons

The main questionnaire of this study revealed that a little more than half of the participants claimed to enjoy group projects during English lessons, and some students suggested that teachers should include more group activities in the English classroom. During the classroom intervention, the questionnaires indicated that students were primarily neutral to working in groups. There were, however, more students

who said they enjoyed group work than students who said they did not like it, and the observations showed that many students enjoyed themselves and were eager to participate. This finding was partially in line with several other studies, which found that students enjoy group work (Hung & Mai, 2020; Koç, 2018; Wu & Tao, 2022). Wu and Tao (2022) noticed increased motivation among students after seven weeks of group work in the L2 classroom, concluding that group work was a good motivator for students (p. 417). Similarly, Hung and Mai (2020) found that teachers mostly had positive attitudes toward group work in the classroom (p. 454).

Further, findings from the classroom intervention suggested that group composition was an important factor in group work activities. This issue was identified by some students, who, in addition to being positive toward group work, noted dissatisfaction with their assigned groups, which could lead to decreased motivation and learning outcomes. The students commented on not liking their assigned groups and that learning can be disrupted if other students mess around instead of taking the assignment seriously. Richards and Rodgers (2014) highlight the importance of positive interdependence as a prominent factor in cooperative learning (CL) (p. 259). They suggest that in order to achieve effective group work in the L2 classroom, the teacher should assign the groups to appropriate sizes and keep in mind the composition of different students. It could also be beneficial to assign student roles within the groups, such as "noise monitor, turn-taker monitor, recorder or summarizer" (p. 250). Dörnyei (2001) suggests that the group dynamic in the L2 classroom is crucial for creating a motivational environment (p. 42). He further implies that the teacher should aim to achieve a cohesive learner group, which is a group with a strong sense of community, to make learning more enjoyable for the students (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 43). To do this, Dörnyei (2001) claims that teachers should help the students get to know each other, which can create a sense of safety and security. He also argues that teachers should facilitate the planning and upkeep of appropriate norms made by and followed by the group (p. 43). Dörnyei (2001) made these suggestions with the learner group as a whole in mind. However, it could also be applied to smaller groups within the classroom. For instance, having set norms for how one should behave in a smaller group can be helpful for the student's sense of safety within the group. It can also be argued that by creating a cohesive learner group, there are more opportunities for combinations of students in groups because everyone can work together.

Although a majority of students claimed to enjoy group work in English lessons, it was only a small majority, and almost half of the participants in this study did not choose group work as an enjoyable classroom activity. This could be because they do not enjoy group work or because they favor other strategies. In the classroom intervention, it was found that not all students actively participated in

the group work at all times, confirming a potential negative aspect of group work identified in other studies, namely Hung and Mai (2020), who claimed that a possible problem with group work is that not all students speak. They further suggest that this issue can be due to students' fear of speaking, not getting the opportunity to talk, or because other students take up too much space, and the quieter students stay quiet (p. 455). As pointed out by Richards and Rodgers (2014), one of the goals of group work in the ESL classroom is "to provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities" (p. 245), which highlights the depth to the issue of students not speaking when participating in group work.

Another issue that springs from the finding that almost half of the students participating in the main questionnaire did not regard group work as an activity they enjoyed in ESL lessons is the need to cater to individual learners. This study discovered that students have varying preferred learning methods in the ESL context. Keeping in mind Cirocki et al.'s (2019) finding that students' desire for more games in ESL lessons was rooted in a desire for more varied lessons, it could be suggested that one should include several different approaches and methods to the teaching in order to meet as many of the students' interests and needs as possible.

5.3. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has discussed key themes emerging from this examination of student motivation toward the English subject in the eighth grade of a Norwegian lower secondary school. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including a main questionnaire and a classroom intervention, the study sought to address the research questions outlined in the introduction of this chapter. The findings discussed in Sections 5.1. and 5.2. shed light on various aspects of student motivation, including their level of motivation, identified motivating factors, reasons for lack of motivation, and the impact of motivational strategies employed by the teacher during English lessons.

This study found that the participating students acknowledged the importance of learning English and were mostly highly motivated to learn the language. Students had several reasons for their motivation to learn English, such as the usefulness of being proficient in the language in order to engage in activities they enjoyed in their free time as well as traveling abroad. They identified using films and videos in ESL lessons as a motivating factor in their language learning and suggested implementing more videos in ESL lessons to make them more enjoyable. Interestingly, the students identified writing

as the most important skill in relation to ESL, although very few enjoyed doing writing assignments in lessons. This brings forward the issue of making lessons more motivating for students.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that the effective use of videos can positively influence students' learning. However, it is essential to remember the educational aspects of using videos in lessons, including appropriate viewing tasks. The findings also show the need to balance engaging activities that students find enjoyable, such as games, and other instructional tasks, such as writing assignments. The findings of this study illuminate a challenge wherein students perceive traditional tasks as boring, advocating for a greater emphasis on physical engagement and a reduction in conventional reading and writing activities. The findings revealed mixed feelings about group projects, highlighting the importance of group dynamics and group composition in group work (Dörnyei, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). While most students enjoyed group work, nearly half did not, highlighting the importance of catering to individual preferences.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore motivation among eighth-grade students at a Norwegian lower secondary school. Specifically, it investigated the students' motivation levels in the English subject and their reasons for motivation or lack of motivation. Additionally, it aimed to find out how the students' motivation was influenced by three motivational strategies used in the classroom intervention, namely the use of videos, games, and group work in the lessons. The study used a mixed methods approach to obtain data from participants through a main questionnaire, which pertained to RQ 1 a and b, and a classroom intervention, which pertained to RQ 2. The main questionnaire had 80 participants, 21 of whom participated in the classroom intervention consisting of six lessons over three weeks. The study posed the following research questions:

RQ 1.a: How motivated to learn English are eighth grade students in a Norwegian lower secondary school?

RQ 1.b: What motivating factors or reasons for lack of motivation do they identify?

RQ 2: According to students, how is their motivation during English lessons affected by a selection of motivational strategies which the teacher uses?

To answer RQ 1. a, the study showed that the students who participated were highly motivated to learn English. Additionally, most students believed that it was important to learn the language. To answer RQ 1. b, the study revealed that most students were motivated to learn English because they enjoyed consuming media that required a knowledge of the language, namely English films and TV, in addition to websites, social media sites, and digital games. Many students also identified travel as an important motivator. A noticeable portion of the students also claimed to be motivated because their parents believed it was important that they learned English. The students' most enjoyed activity within the ESL classroom was watching films/videos and playing games. A little over half of the students chose group projects as their favorite activity, revealing mixed opinions about group work. However, some students suggested that English teachers should include more group work in lessons and that games should be included in more lessons. Moreover, many students suggested that English teachers should include more films/videos in the ESL lessons. The few students who did not claim to be motivated in the English subject declared that boredom was the main reason for demotivation, which emphasizes the importance of motivating the students. Another interesting finding from the main questionnaire was that

a significant majority of the students perceived writing to be the most important skill within the ESL context. This was interesting because it was also found that very few of the students claimed to like participating in writing activities in the English lessons. Additionally, some students even suggested that the teachers include less conventional activities such as writing assignments.

To answer RQ 2, the study found that many students were motivated during the six lessons in the classroom intervention, where videos, games, and group work were used as motivational strategies. Similar to the findings from the questionnaire, the classroom intervention found that group work received mixed responses. However, none of the students were directly opposed to it, and many were neutral or enjoyed it. It was also discovered that most students believed watching videos and doing appropriate tasks was a good way to work with English. The classroom intervention showed that most students enjoyed using games in the lessons, viewing them as motivating. The students did raise some concerns regarding the use of group work and games in the classroom, claiming that the group composition could have a negative impact if some students did not take the assignments seriously.

The findings from the study indicate that while students want to do activities that they enjoy in the ESL classroom, such as watching videos and playing games, they also acknowledge the importance of learning crucial ESL skills, for instance, writing. Following this, the challenge for educators is to find a way to motivate students to engage in more conventional tasks such as reading and writing. The study also emphasized the need for teachers to find a balance between the students' wants, namely more enjoyable approaches such as videos and games, and their needs, practicing important skills that will help them further in life, such as reading and writing. Additionally, regarding the finding that students had mixed opinions about group work, the study identified two issues, namely the challenge of making group work effective and the challenge of catering to individual learners.

While the study provides valuable insights into the motivation levels of eighth-grade students learning English in a Norwegian upper secondary school, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. Firstly, the sample size is relatively small, consisting of 80 students who completed the main questionnaire and 21 students who participated in the classroom intervention. This limited sample size may affect the generalizability of the findings to a broader population of eighth-grade students in similar contexts. Secondly, the relatively short duration of the classroom intervention, spanning six lessons, may also limit the depth of understanding regarding the long-term impact of motivational strategies on student engagement and motivation in English language learning.

The thesis contributes to the research on L2 motivation in lower secondary schools in Norway, and it has given insight into eighth-grade students' motivation to learn English. Motivation is one of the key ingredients in fostering successful language learning experiences. Motivation is an important element in the core curriculum provided by The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Learning, where it is stated that "The teaching and training shall fuel the pupils' motivation" (p. 14). Through the exploration of motivating factors and motivational strategies employed in the classroom intervention, the thesis enhances understanding of how to promote student engagement and foster a positive learning environment in ESL contexts. By identifying and exploring various factors that influence eighth-grade students' motivation to learn English, this thesis provides insights for educators seeking to tailor their teaching approaches to better meet the needs of their students.

Future research in this area could investigate the long-term effects of the motivational strategies used in the classroom intervention on students' language learning motivation. It could be insightful to follow students for a longer period to see if their motivation stays high and if it positively affects their English learning in the longer run. Additionally, a more detailed investigation of how teachers try to balance the varying preferences of students in implementing motivational strategies could provide practical insights for classroom practice. Understanding which strategies work best for different students and contexts could help teachers tailor their approaches to better support student motivation. Based on the findings of this study, which revealed that most students prefer watching films and videos during English lessons, further research could explore the types of engaging activities that can accompany videos to ensure they have an educational purpose. Moreover, this study highlights the importance of making writing more engaging for students. Further research could focus on finding new ways to teach writing that students find interesting and motivating.

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8. Appendix

Appendix 1: Main Questionnaire

What grade do you belong to?

- 8th grade
- 9th grade
- 10th grade

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- I prefer not to answer

How do you feel about this statement?

"It is important to learn English."

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Slightly agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Which TWO English skills do you feel are most important to you?

- Reading
- Listening
- Writing
- Speaking

How do you feel about this statament?

"I am motivated to learn English."

- Strongly disagree

- Disagree

- Slightly disagree

- Slightly agree

- Agree

- Strongly agree

If you are not motivated to learn English, what are your reason(s)? (Choose one or more answers)

- English is a difficult subject

- I don't see the point in having English at school

- English lessons are boring

- I won't have use for the things we learn when I finish school

- Other reasons

If you chose 'other reasons', please explain.

If you are motivated to learn English, what is it that motivates you? (Choose one or more answers)

- I am good at English

- I like the English lessons

- I think it's useful to know English

- I am interested in the subject

- I like to watch TV and films in English

- I like reading English books

- English is useful when I play video games

- English allows me to understand websites and social media sites

- I like to travel to English speaking countries

- My parents think it is important that I know English

- I need to know English because I want to study abroad

- Other reasons

If you chose 'other reasons', please explain.

What kinds of activities do you like most during English lessons. Choose up to THREE.

- Group projects
- Group discussions
- Games
- Reading texts from the textbook
- Reading self-chosen texts/books
- Writing paragraphs or essays
- Working with tasks from the textbook
- Projects and presentations
- Using films
- Using music
- Doing vocabulary exercises
- Doing grammar exercises
- Doing technology-based English activities (on the Chromebook)
- I do not like any activities
- Other

If you chose 'other', can you give some examples of activities you enjoy doing during English lessons?

Can you suggest ONE change the teacher could make to your English lessons to make them more enjoyable for you?

Appendix 2: Classroom Intervention Questionnaires

Week 1

After the first lesson:

Do you have any comments about the collaborative writing task?

After the second lesson:

How do you feel about this statement: "Readers Theatre is a fun activity"?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Slightly agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

What did you like/not like about Readers Theatre?

How do you feel about this statement: "Group work is a good way to work with English"?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Week 2

How do you feel about this statement: "Using videos in lessons is a good way to learn English"?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree

- Agree
- Strongly agree

What did you like/not like about using videos in the lessons?

Week 3

How do you feel about this statement: "It is fun to play games such as Alias and Kahoot in English lessons"?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

How do you feel about this statement: "Games such as Alias and Kahoot can motivate me to work well during English lessons"?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Neutral
- Slightly agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

What did you like/not like about using games in the lessons?

Appendix 3: Approval from Sikt

Approval for main questionnaire:

Approval for classroom intervention:

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

🖨 Skriv ut   ⁞≣ 02.01.2024 ▾

Referansenummer	**Vurderingstype**	**Dato**
405451	Standard	02.01.2024

Tittel
Masteroppgave - Elevers syn på motivasjon i engelskfaget på ungdomsskolen

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

Prosjektansvarlig
Simon Borg

Student
Frida Gjøringbø

Prosjektperiode
10.12.2023 - 07.05.2024

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 07.05.2024.

Meldeskjema ↗

Kommentar
OM VURDERINGEN
Sikt har en avtale med institusjonen du studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket. Vi har nå vurdert at du har lovlig grunnlag til å behandle personopplysningene.

BEHANDLINGSGRUNNLAG

Meldeskjema ↗

Kommentar
OM VURDERINGEN
Sikt har en avtale med institusjonen du studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket. Vi har nå vurdert at du har lovlig grunnlag til å behandle personopplysningene.

BEHANDLINGSGRUNNLAG
Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a).

KOMMENTARER TIL INFORMASJONSSKRIV
GDPR stiller krav til både formen og innholdet i informasjonsskrivene til deltakere og derfor skal du i tråd med lovkravene gi så presis, lettfattelig og konkret informasjon som mulig til de det gjelder. Ber deg derfor om å endre følgende i informasjonsskrivet:
-Legg til en setning om at lydopptakene slettes når prosjektet er ferdig under punktet "Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes? "

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
Det er institusjonen du er student ved som avgjør hvordan du må lagre og sikre data i ditt prosjekt og hvilke databehandlere du kan bruke. 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-endringar-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!

b2e10a108

Digital consent form for main questionnaire:

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet
«Motivasjon i engelskfaget på ungdomsskolen»?

Dette er et spørsmål til ditt barn om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å se på elevers syn på motivasjon i engelskfaget på ungdomsskolen. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for ditt barn.

Formål

Formålet med prosjektet er å spørre elever i 8., 9. og 10. trinn om deres motivasjon i engelskfaget på skolen. Ønsket er å finne ut hvor motiverte elevene er til å lære engelsk, både på og utenom skolen, og hvordan man kan opprettholde eller øke motivasjonen hos elevene. Prosjektet inngår i en masteroppgave ved Universitetet i Stavanger.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?
Universitetet i Stavanger er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?
Alle elever ved skolen får spørsmål om å delta fordi prosjektet baserer seg på ungdomsskoleelevers tanker om motivasjon i engelskfaget. Ditt barn får spørsmål om å delta fordi det er i aldersgruppen 13-16 år og deltar i engelsk undervisning på skolen.

Hva innebærer det for ditt barn å delta?

Hvis du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det at du fyller ut et spørreskjema. Det vil ta ca. 15 minutter. Spørreskjemaet inneholder spørsmål om elevens motivasjon i engelskfaget. Svar fra spørreskjemaet blir registrert elektronisk.

Foreldre kan få tilgang på spørreskjemaet på forhånd om ønskelig.

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.

Dersom du ikke ønsker å delta vil det bli tilrettelagt for at du får et alternativt opplegg når spørreundersøkelsen blir gitt.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger
Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- De som vil ha tilgang ved behandlingsansvarlig institusjon er student Frida Gjøringbø og veileder Simon Borg.
- Deltagere i undersøkelsen vil ikke være gjenkjennelige basert på opplysninger samlet inn i undersøkelsen. **Opplysningen som blir samlet inn er hvilket klassetrinn elevene hører til.**

Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?
Prosjektet vil etter planen avsluttes (når oppgaven blir godkjent) 8. mai 2024.

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 Sikt – Kunnskapssektorens tjenesteleverandør 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 vi 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

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å vite mer om eller benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:
- Student Frida Gjøringbø ved e-post frida.gjoringbø@hotmail.com
- Veileder Simon Borg ved e-post simon.borg@hvl.no
- Vårt personvernombud: Marianne Trå ved e-post marianne.traa@uis.no

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til vurderingen som er gjort av personverntjenestene fra Sikt, kan du ta kontakt via:
- Epost: personverntjenester@sikt.no eller telefon: 73 98 40 40.

Med vennlig hilsen

Simon Borg   Frida Gjøringbø
(Forsker/veileder)

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

«Elevers syn på motivasjon i engelskfaget på ungdomsskolen»?

Dette er et spørsmål til elever i 8C om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke elevers motivasjon i engelskfaget. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for eleven.

Formål

Formålet med prosjektet er å finne ut hvor motiverte elevene ved åttende trinn på Kristianslyst skole er i engelskfaget. Vi ønsker å finne ut hva som motiverer dem og hvordan man kan opprettholde eller øke motivasjonen til elevene. Undersøkelsen går ut på at elevene skal svare på et spørreskjema om sin egen motivasjon. Deretter blir det en periode på tre uker (uke 3, 4 og 5), der vi tester ut ulike strategier og aktiviteter for å øke motivasjonen i faget. Innholdet i faget og kompetansemålene blir likt som det ellers ville vært, fokuset er på ulike motivasjonsstrategier. Elevene vil bli observert i timene, og spurt om deres motivasjon underveis. Personopplysningene som samles inn i prosjektet er opplysninger om alder og kjønn. Prosjektet er en masteroppgave av student ved lektorprogrammet for trinn 8 – 13 ved Universitet i Stavanger. Resultatene vil ikke bli brukt til andre formål enn selve masteroppgaven.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?
Universitetet i Stavanger er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får ditt barn spørsmål om å delta?
Alle elever i 8C blir spurt om å delta i undersøkelsen.

Hva innebærer det for ditt barn å delta?

- Hvis ditt barn velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det at de fyller ut et spørreskjema. Det vil ta ca. 20 minutter. Spørreskjemaet inneholder spørsmål om motivasjon i engelskfaget. Svar fra spørreskjemaet blir registrert elektronisk.

- Deltakelse innebærer også at ditt barn er med på undervisning i tre uker, der ulike motivasjonsstrategier bli testet ut. Undervisningen blir observert av student.

Foresatte kan få tilgang til spørreundersøkelsen på forhånd om ønskelig.

Det er frivillig å delta

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

Elever som ikke deltar i spørreundersøkelsen vil få alternative opplegg. Alle elevene i 8c får den samme undervisningen, og kun de som gir samtykke til å være med i prosjektet vil bli observert i samband med prosjektet. De andre vil fortsatt delta i undervisningen da den er relevant for alle.

Ditt barns personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker deres opplysninger

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

- Masterstudenten, Frida Gjøringbø, vil ha tilgang til opplysninger.
- Navnet til elevene vil jeg erstatte med en kode som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data.
- Deltakere vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i publikasjon. Kun opplysninger om kjønn og alder vil publiseres.

Hva skjer med personopplysningene når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?

Prosjektet vil etter planen avsluttes (når oppgaven blir godkjent) 7. mai 2024. Etter prosjektslutt vil datamaterialet med personopplysninger anonymiseres. Anonymiserte opplysninger vil ikke slettes, men vil kunne gjenbrukes til forskning.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om ditt barn?

Vi behandler opplysninger om ditt. barn basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra Universitetet i Stavanger har Sikt – Kunnskapssektorens tjenesteleverandør vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Elevens rettigheter

Så lenge eleven kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har de rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger vi behandler om dem, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om dem som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om seg selv
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av deres personopplysninger

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

- Student Frida Gjøringbø ved e-post frida.gjoringbø@hotmail.com
- Veileder Simon Borg ved e-post simon.borg@hvl.no
- Vårt personvernombud: Marianne Trå ved e-post marianne.traa@uis.no

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til vurderingen som er gjort av personverntjenestene fra Sikt, kan du ta kontakt via:

- Epost: personverntjenester@sikt.no eller telefon: 73 98 40 40.

Med vennlig hilsen

Simon Borg   Frida Gjøringbø

(Forsker/veileder)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet *Elevers syn på motivasjon i engelskfaget på ungdomsskolen,* og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

☐ å delta i spørreundersøkelse
☐ å delta i observert klasseromsundervisning

Jeg samtykker til at mitt barns opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

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(Signert av prosjektdeltakers foresatte, dato)