

## **English vs. music**

*A study of teachers' perceptions of the status of the English and music subject in Norway.*

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## Abstract

Today, English and music enjoy a very different status in schools. English is a prioritized subject, as evident in the demands of qualification of teachers of English. Music is a subject that continuously has to justify its place in Norwegian schools.

The aim of the study was to examine the status of the English and music subject as it is perceived today, and how structural factors may affect the teachers' professional agency. It approaches the topic through an investigation of the life worlds of some of the most central actors in the field: teachers who teach both subjects in combination. The research question was as follows: *How is the difference in status between English and music experienced by teachers who work with these subjects?*

Through a qualitative study based on a focus group interview with four teachers of English and music, I found that the teachers perceive the English subject to hold a higher status than the music subject, evident in the requirement of qualification of teachers of English. With the reality that no requirements are made for teaching music, they subsequently were concerned for the future of the music subject on school. The English subject is guarded top-down, while music is more dependent on the teacher to keep its place in school. Further, the differences in priorities given in regard to financial support and space for teaching, the teachers viewed as an indication of the subjects' status.

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# 1 Introduction

The music subject and the English subject have a different history in Norwegian schools (Engelsen, 2015; Fenner, 2005). Throughout the past few centuries, the two subjects have been justified by different sets of arguments in terms of their usefulness and importance (Kalsnes, 2008; Olsen, 2005). Today, English and music enjoy a very different status in schools. English is a prioritized subject, as evident in the demands of qualification of teachers of English (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017a). There is great consensus that English is one of the more important subjects in school. Music, on the other hand, is less prioritized and still suffers from unqualified teachers, low numbers of teaching hours and lack of space and equipment (Korsvold, 2014; Sætre, Ophus, & Neby, 2016). Music is a subject that continuously has to justify its place in Norwegian schools (Olsen, 2005).

A new curriculum is under construction and will take effect in 2020 (Utdanningsforbundet, n.d.) With this renewal, a revised Core Curriculum will replace the one transferred from the former curriculums R-94 and L97 (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015). The Ministry of Education and Training (2016b) proposes a renewal of the curriculum to deal with today's overloaded curriculum in order to facilitate more in-depth learning. An open process with hearings available for feedback has created a vibrant discussion where the arguments about the subjects' purpose are made visible.

This study examines the status of the English and music subject. It approaches the topic through an investigation of the life worlds of some of the most central actors in the field: teachers who teach both subjects in combination. *How is the difference in status between English and music experienced by teachers who work with these subjects?*

Teachers need to quickly adapt to structural changes and put them into practice. This study is concerned with how the teachers themselves perceive the relationship between structural changes and their professional agency. To what extent do the teachers feel they have influence and freedom to exercise their ideas and ideals of the subjects, within the limits of the system they work within? Do they think a new curriculum may change the status of these subjects?

## 1.1 Motivation

As a coming teacher of English and music, this topic is of special interest to me. Practice periods in the teacher training education has given me various experiences with the priorities given to both the English and the music subject. I have practiced in a school with a richly equipped

music room, and where the teachers actively and intentionally brought music into the English class. I have also taught in a school where a handful of instruments had been placed in the far corner of a bomb shelter room, mainly used for arts and crafts. I have experienced how the schools' administration financially prioritized the subjects differently and how that affected the teachers' professional agency.

Teachers of the future should shall be oriented towards cross-curricular work, where the subjects intertwine rather than being separate entities (NOU 2015: 8). Much in the same way, this thesis deals with the intersecting areas of two subjects instead of defining their contents separately.

The fact that this thesis turned out to focus more on the music subject than on English is symptomatic. As reflected in the teacher interviews, music as a subject is in constant need of justifying its own existence. Although both subject deserve their rightful place in Norwegian schools, defending the future of the music subject inevitably becomes a much more pressing matter.

## **1.2 Outline**

In chapter Two, I begin by presenting the thematic and theoretical background for the study. The subjects' background, current state and future prospects, implementation quality of new curriculums and teachers' professional agency.

Chapter Three accounts for the methodological aspects of the study. First, it provides a presentation of the methodological choices of the study. Second, the chapter discusses the choice of methods and the process of the study and analysis. Last, a discussion about the study's credibility is included.

Chapter Four presents the findings from the focus group interview.

In chapter Five, I discuss the findings and close with a conclusion and final remarks.

## **2 Thematic and theoretical background**

In this chapter, I will present a brief history of the two subjects English and music in Norway, along with the perceived purpose of each subject. Building on work by Ertesvåg (2012) and Andreassen (2014), I will address implementation quality when introducing new curricula. Last, I focus on teachers' professional agency in connection to structural factors.

### **2.1 Subjects in school**

From the earliest times, schools have sought to educate children in skills and knowledge needed in society (Høigård, Ruge, & Hansen, 1971). Subjects have been developed based on what has been perceived useful or important at a given time (Engelsen, 2015). Defining the subjects' purpose contributes to the justification of why they should be school subjects.

What subjects to include in school is established in the Education Act (1998). Section 2-3 announces that "Primary and lower secondary education shall include religion, philosophies of life and ethics, Norwegian, mathematics, foreign languages, physical education, home economics, social and natural sciences, and aesthetic, practical and social training." Discussions about school subjects may revolve around the subject's usefulness or its content. Either way, discussing subjects is tied to ideological and political concerns (Engelsen, 2015). Historically, discussions about what the various subjects should consist of – or whether they deserve a place in schools at all – have been a source of much conflict and power struggle. Sometimes, Engelsen (2015) claims, the primary focus has been to keep the dominant position rather than to discuss content or value of subjects. The work with renewal of curriculums is often conducted within each subject, separated from the processes in the other subjects, making it difficult to repeal the current structure of subjects (Engelsen, 2015). and power struggle. Sometimes, Engelsen (2015) claims, the primary focus has been to keep the dominant position rather than to discuss content or value of subjects (p. 27). The work with renewal of curriculums is often conducted within each subject, separated from the processes in the other subjects, making it difficult to repeal the current structure of subjects. Thus, Engelsen argues, if the existing subject structure of today were to dissolve into a radically different structure it would take a lot of negotiation to get all parties to agree on both form and content.

Justifications behind the various subjects in school are typically linked to either usefulness, Bildung or both (Aase, 2005). Bildung, or formation, refers to the wider issues and responsibilities of education, and of provide pupils with attitudes and perspectives that make



them develop as individuals and enable them to take part in society at large. The current Core Curriculum clearly contains a strong Bildung element (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017b). Bildung arguments are rooted in society's values; they change over time and are difficult to define and measure. It is easier to legitimize a subject in terms of benefit and usefulness (Aase, 2005). Here, arguments often turn to whether a subject has practical value and can be used after graduating. Both Bildung and benefit arguments are currently made visible through the transparent process that is now taking place with the revisions of the curriculum. (Utdanningsforbundet, n.d.).

## **2.2 The English subject in Norwegian schools**

English as a school subject was offered by Christiania Cathedral School already in 1798 but the subject had a lower rank than Latin and Greek (Fenner, 2005, p. 86). Teachers who did not have formal training conducted the teaching of the “modern languages”, which entailed English, German and French. Ytreberg (1993) attests that the English subject was taught in schools in the South of Norway from the 1860s (p. 9). It was an extra-curricular subject that cost money to attend and was primarily aimed at sailor boys who needed the language for trading purposes, dealing with merchants in Great Britain. Other institutions that offered an education in the English language were not intended for those who planned higher education, but for learners who were preparing to work in professions where English was needed as a means of communication (Ytreberg, 1993). In the 1880s, English as a subject was slowly making its way into the curriculum but its implementation was delayed due to the lack of qualified teachers. More often, German was the language of choice when schools offered a foreign language. Up until the 1920s, English still had the status as a subject aimed at people without academic skills or ambitions. Thereafter, when the school system changed and the upper secondary school was meant to build upon the existing primary school – *folkeskolen*, English became one of the theoretical subjects you had to excel in to be able to attend (Ytreberg, 1993, p. 12).

Presently, the curriculum of the English subject has four main areas; *Language learning, oral communication, written communication, and Culture, society and literature* (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, n.d.). The current main areas in English will be replaced by *core elements* (kjerneelementer). These four at the time of writing are (my translation): Communication (kommunikasjon), Intercultural competence (interkulturell kompetanse), Language learning (språklæring) and Language technology and new media (språkteknologi og nye medier) (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2018). In addition, the

basic skills – reading, writing, oral skills, digital skills and numeracy are still areas of focus and will be transferred to the next curriculum (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017a).

### 2.2.1 *Main purpose – tool or Bildung?*

The justification of the English subject alternates between being a tool or being for Bildung purposes (Fenner, 2005). In the late 1700s, learning a foreign language was mainly for purpose of personal Bildung, and written English was seen as a way to develop pupils' logical and systematic thinking. Through the 1800s, the arguments shifted towards a more tool-oriented point of view where English was also learnt for practical purposes (Fenner, 2005, p. 86). After various shifts in focus through the different curriculums, the formation purpose is firmly placed in the Core Curriculum from *Mønsterplan for grunnskolen* from 1974 (Fenner, 2005).

So, how is the current purpose of English expressed? The current curriculum states that we need English for communication, and that higher education and companies use English as the main language of communication (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013). The subject today should include language learning by reading a diversity of texts and as a result from that, the pupils should learn about various cultures where English is the official or primary language making up the formation part of the subject.

Thus, English as a school subject is both a tool and a way of gaining knowledge and personal insight. It will enable the pupils to communicate with others on personal, social, literary and interdisciplinary topics. The subject shall help build up general language proficiency through listening, speaking, reading and writing, and provide the opportunity to acquire information and specialised knowledge through the English language. Development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between persons with different cultural backgrounds (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013).

As can be read in the Purpose section of the English curriculum, the purpose of the subject today mention more points on the aspect of being a tool (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013). As society is highly globalized, the necessity for English as a subject in school is present, both today and for the future. Consequently, the skills *in* the language are more prominent than the knowledge *about* the language (Vold, 2014).

Signs of the Bildung aspect are found when examining the Main Areas of the English curriculum. When working with texts in the broad sense, pupils should “develop knowledge about, understanding of and respect for the lives and cultures of other people” (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013). Vold (2014) argues that the Bildung purposes

often are found in global or intercultural formation of identity. The Core Curriculum also explains the types of human beings the school should seek to educate (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015). The revised Core Curriculum contains the interdisciplinary topic Democracy and citizenship, which is to be incorporated into every subject. With the new core element *intercultural competency* in English, the goal is for the pupils to “develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to relate to other’s way of thinking, ways of living, forms of communication and cultural expressions in an appropriate manner” (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2018). Language learning could also contribute to the individual’s development of identity (NOU 2015: 8, p. 26). In sum, most of the Bildung aspects are evident in parts of the curriculum not solely expressed in connection to the English subject, rather as a superordinate factor. However, Vold (2014) points out that the development of language skills and Bildung aspects of the subject should not be seen as opposites, but as intertwined and positively affecting each other.

### **2.3 The music subject in Norwegian schools**

Singing as a subject has a long history in Norwegian schools. As of 1739, in the Elementary school (elementærskolen av 1739), the children would start and end their school day with psalms (Kalsnes, 2008, p. 236). Later (around 1848/1860), singing would change from being solely religious to also including worldly songs (Kalsnes, 2008). Jumping ahead to the 1939 curriculum (N39), children were expected to "sing correctly and beautifully" (Engelsen, 2015, p. 35). The singing should have an educational and disciplining quality. When the compulsory length of the education changed to nine years in 1960, the subject “singing” changed to being called “music”, and with that, understanding music and the playing of instruments were incorporated in the curriculum (Engelsen, 2015; Kalsnes, 2008). With the 1974 curriculum (M74), individuality and the social aspects of the music subject, and creativity became more prominent. In essence, it started to resemble the subject we have today. With the 1987 curriculum (M87), even more focus was placed on the identity development of the children. In this curriculum, music should be "for the whole human being", clearly emphasizing the Bildung or formation aspect of the subject (Engelsen, 2015).

Today, music as a subject is faced with a number of challenges. The subject is not controlled by national tests or bigger finishing exams after year 10 (Hovdenak, 2001). For this reason, the professional autonomy for music teachers is different than that of other subjects. The development from the former curriculum (L97) to the National Curriculum for Knowledge

Promotion 2006, gave teachers more freedom and autonomy, letting them choose more of the content themselves. As a consequence, higher demands are in fact placed on the music teachers. Making proper use of the high degree of freedom requires highly developed professional skills in the teacher (Hovdenak, 2001). As Olsen (2005) points out, without a skilled music teacher, the music subject will not facilitate creativity more than any other subject.

To analyze some of the challenges the subject faces, Sætre et al. (2016) conducted a study of 135 teachers of music to find out how they understand and conduct the music class in primary and lower secondary education. The study shows the connections between the teachers' competency in music and what they choose to include in their teaching. One of their findings was that most of the teachers were general teachers, with little formal education in music, and that this factor had a pronounced impact on their teaching. The most significant finding was the connection between their skills and knowledge and what they choose to include in the class, e.g. playing of instruments or not. Other factors, like not having the proper location or equipment to conduct instrument teaching, also affected their choice of content in class. Having unqualified music teachers has resulted in a situation where the competence aims in music in many schools are not achieved, says Geir Salvesen, senior lecturer in University College of Southeast Norway, in an article in *Aftenposten* (Korsvold, 2014). Subsequently, many schools are violating the Education Act every day, he claims.

### 2.3.1 *Arguing for music – tool or Bildung?*

What benefits do we get from having music in school? Should it be a means of enhancing performance in other educational areas (see cross-curricular work in **Feil! Fant ikke referansekilden.**), or does it hold a value in itself? The English subject holds a clear purpose in school, both in terms of its practical usefulness and in terms of developing pupils as individuals. Although Sæbø (2009) and Olsen (2005) claim arguments surrounding the music subject are concerned with value rather than purpose, there are many examples of how music is being justified in terms of its ability to develop or enhance other areas." In the case of music, arguments are typically concerned with *value* rather than purpose.

One angle of approach proposes music as a means of developing understanding in other areas. To experience a wide variety of artistic expressions may enhance reflection over today's society, and over various cultures (NOU 2015: 8, p. 27). It is also a desired goal to develop "out of the box" thinking, as this is needed in almost all areas of the business world (NOU 2015: 8, p. 33). It is often argued that the practical-aesthetical subjects contribute to the development of

a different type of understanding than the natural science-oriented subjects do, where learners can explore without searching for the right answer (Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). “The music subject’s place in school is of fundamental importance especially with regard to the pupils’ chances for development of different aspects on the personal level” (Olsen & Hovdenak, 2007, p. 13, my translation). Hovdenak (2007) places the emphasis on that music as a subject will lay the foundation of creativity, which is – and will continue to be, important in the future, both for identity formation and for development of skills needed in professions. How do we secure the future’s creative industries when we are not giving children the tools they need to initiate creative processes, asks Bergroth-Plur (2017)?

In the search for further evidence of enhancement of other areas, Winner et al. (2013, p. 4) ask what research evidence there is about the impact of arts education on various kinds of non-arts skills. By reviewing previous studies (covering all empirical studies published at least since 1980s) on the subject matter, they created a report. This report concludes that “music may improve verbal skills (...) via its facilitation of auditory skills. And music may stimulate IQ and academic performance because music education is a school-like activity and thus may train school-like skills of concentration (...)” (Winner et al., 2013, p. 6). According to this report, arts education is said to be a means of developing critical and creative thinking and skills that again enhances performance in non-arts academic subjects. However, as the evidence of the impact remains inconclusive, the suggestion is that further studies should be conducted in order to establish with greater certainty whether or not arts education is useful to other areas in school (Winner et al., 2013).

Another type of arguments focuses on the experience of music for the purpose of the social aspects and of fellowship. The Ministry of Education and Research (2016a) writes that there is a wide variety of occupations and competencies that is said to get their humble start from the work with various materials and instruments in school (p. 48).” You cannot expect the pupils to explore these subjects later in life if they do not experience them in primary and lower secondary school (NOU 2015: 8). Further, interaction and cooperation while working towards a common goal enhances the class environment. According to Olsen (2005), this can be achieved in other subjects as well, so it is not the winning argument as to why keep the music subject in school (Olsen, 2005). However, to master a craft can be a feature of *Bildung*, and in this context it would be to master some instrument and the knowledge of the theory that follows (Olsen, 2005, p. 121).

Is the human need for music innate? Jon-Roar Bjørkvold (2014), a professor in musicology, presents the musical human being in his book, *Det musiske menneske (The Muse Within)*. In this book, he declares music as being a primal force in all of us, with sound, movement and rhythm, a force that follows us through all the phases of life. In order for the pupils to be able to develop their musical side, the primal nature of their beings, they need guidance and education. The goal for the music lessons should therefore not *only* be a tool for development of creativity and a break from the more serious subjects. The primary power lies within bringing joy and experience, as a basic resource for a richer life (Bjørkvold, 2014).

With the present revision of the Core Curriculum, the debate about which position music should have in schools has flared up once more. Interestingly, the word *song* was not mentioned in the revision, something that made music teachers in the country protest loudly (Kalsnes, 2017) The feeling that school has shifted to a more goal-oriented focus over the last years is clearly visible in the ongoing debates. The fact Norway participates in PISA and conducts national test has made the music subject suffer from low priority in schools (Engelsen, 2015; Korsvold, 2014). Many schools lack both ownership, the competency and the right conditions to conduct classes in musical education, which according to Bergroth-Plur (2017) represents a serious, democratic problem. A child's geographical affiliation should not affect the degree of which they receive a music education, she claims. he claims.

What measures need to be taken to “save” the subject? Bergroth-Plur proposes six initiatives. These include: Requirements of 60 credits in music (30 for primary school); creating incentives for the school owners to prioritize continued education for music teachers; allocate funds for schools and municipalities who want to make an effort in the field and instigate a constructive dialogue with higher educations in order to bring singing back into the teacher training. This way, music and singing could again be viewed as something essential for the human development, says Bergroth-Plur (2017).

## **2.4 The school of the future**

With the renewal of the curriculum, the question about what the pupils should learn is raised once more. A committee, with Sten Ludvigsen as chairman, was set to assess the subjects in light of competences needed in the future (NOU 2015: 8). The Ludvigsen committee recommended the strengthening of the practical-aesthetical subjects (NOU 2015: 8, p. 56). Due to an increasingly more globalized and internationalized business world, the committee also recommended a strengthening of the language subjects. Further, competences like problem

solving and the ability to interact in all areas of society should be integrated into every subject, and reading, writing and oral skills should be retained as basic skills. Creativity and innovation are also considered two important skills needed. For the sake of Norway's national ability to have competitive power in a globalized business world, the demand for an educated workforce with the knowledge of research, innovation and technology development will be crucial (NOU 2015: 8, p. 22). Among promoted skills in many school subjects today are the ability to be curious, explorative and imaginative, both alone and together with others. Hence, it is essential that the school facilitates and encourages the learners' development of skills and competency in creativeness (NOU 2015: 8). "It is also a very important value for society that there is competence in creating artistic and cultural expressions. The open and experimental approach to being creative in art and culture may enrich the individual's life, and society as a whole" (NOU 2015: 8, p. 22).

#### *2.4.1 Preparing for the future*

What needs to be done with today's school to meet these needs? What is required from each actor to implement these changes? Due to more and more topics being added without anything being removed, today's curriculum is overloaded (NOU 2015: 8, p. 12). Consequently, teachers today do not have a lot of time to expand on each topic. The Ludvigsen committee views this as a substantial problem, as the process of development of lasting understanding takes time. Fewer topics integrated into each subject will promote *deep learning* by ensuring that there is enough time for learning to occur. The committee advocates deep learning on account of the theory that the pupils subsequently will develop a better understanding of connections within subject areas, making learners see the relevance in what they do in school to what they will need later in life. In addition to promoting lasting knowledge, the process of deep learning may enhance learner motivation. By recommending using deep learning as the base of every subject, their ambition is that the learners will develop a comprehensive and lasting understanding both in and across subjects (NOU 2015: 8). OECD (2018) calls for system thinkers, people who can relate topics and issues to other topics:

To be prepared for the future, individuals have to learn to think and act in a more integrated way, taking into account the interconnections and inter-relations between contradictory or incompatible ideas, logics and positions. (...) In other words, they have to learn to be systems thinkers. (OECD, 2018, p. 5)

Deciding what should be included in the new curriculum means to decide what is relevant today, what will contribute to the learners' personal development, and what will be of value to

today's society and in a perspective of 20-30 years from now (NOU 2015: 8, p. 42). This renewal might also entail a restructuring of subjects – new compositions, merging of subjects or introducing brand new ones (NOU 2015: 8, p. 47). Assessing the subjects against various types of challenges and based on what responsibility each subject has in school is a measure to make the subjects more relevant (NOU 2015: 8, p. 47).

Subject-specific attention is also needed in relation to the renewal. Birketveit and Rugesæter (2014) have called for a strengthening of the English subject, and more importantly, a higher number of teachers formally educated in English in the teacher training. It is clearly not sufficient to teach pupils the English language with the help of the textbook alone and studying English words. Teachers of English also need knowledge about language acquisition, and to have good English skills themselves, say Birketveit and Rugesæter. With the renewal work, a requirement of competence has been introduced, demanding a certain level of competence in the subjects in which teachers are allowed to teach (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017a). By 2025, all schools will need subject qualified teachers in most subjects. For English, teachers will need 30 credits to teach in primary school and 60 credits for lower secondary school. For the music subject, no such requirements are made. Although this decision has sparked a debate about whether this means that many teachers would be disqualified to teach, it is the needed rise in competence that Birketveit and Rugesæter requested.

#### *2.4.2 Restructuring the school?*

Many have suggested a reorganization of school in order to better relate to the times we live in and to create a closer correspondence between how we view knowledge inside and outside outside the school system (Engelsen, 2015, p. 19). The Ludvigsen committee contemplates whether or not to open up for a structural change (NOU 2015: 8). The committee does not conclude with a recommendation of a dissolution of today's structure, but rather advocates implementing cross-curricular topics into every subject. These are featured in the revised Core Curriculum and will be incorporated into every subject in the same manner as the content of the former Core Curriculum (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017a).

The Ministry of Education and Research has discussed the advantages and disadvantages with the division as it is (NOU 2003: 16, p. 75). One of the advantages in favour of dissolving the existing type of subject division would be that one could then better focus on the competencies needed rather than being tied to subject divisions. However, the division tradition is so strongly rooted in the Norwegian school system that it is difficult to break free from (NOU 2003: 16).



The Finnish school system has made efforts to teach topics rather than subjects (Huhmarniemi, Lilja, & Lilleberg, 2008). Rather than teaching each subject on their own without subject cross-communication, Finnish teachers collaborate in teaching each topic, emphasising the perspectives of the specific subjects so as to make the pupils see the connections between subjects and the relevance to their local community. This method of structuring the curriculum is in keeping with the new ambition of achieving deep learning (NOU 2015: 8).

Another aim of the curriculum renewal is to achieve better coherence and a more logical progress between the various elements, in which cross-curricular work is suggested as one of the measures (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2016a, p. 24). Working with the same issues and topics in every subject, the pupils will achieve a deeper understanding and see connections across subjects and between actions and consequences (NOU 2015: 8, p. 12).

Learning about a topic from different perspectives, and implement knowledges from different subjects, will ensure better understanding and competence in the different subjects, meanwhile also providing insight into how subjects focus on a topic in different ways. This can increase both the motivation, and the understanding of the subject matter (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2016a, p. 38).

The former curriculum, L97, encouraged multidisciplinary work (Kalsnes, 2008). This focus has shifted by not emphasizing or adding guidelines on how to work cross-curricularly in the Knowledge Promotion (Kalsnes, 2008, p. 257). When designing the new curriculum, the Ludvigsen committee recommends that the renewal needs to be carried out through a cooperation between subjects, and to ensure a broader focus, the renewal work should start in the subject areas, rather than within each subject. This means that the area “language subjects” will develop their curriculum in conjunction with, and closely linked to each other, by formulating competence aims that are similar and mutually support each other on areas they have in common. That will in turn create better curriculum correlation (NOU 2015: 8, p. 48). The issue with this view is that the subjects that fall under the practical-aesthetical definition are so disparate that they cannot easily complement each other in the same manner as e.g. foreign language subjects can (NOU 2015: 8).

## **2.5 Implementation of new curriculums**

The renewal of the curriculum also involves an implementation phase where schools put the changes into action. Utdanningsforbundet (n.d.) announces three phases of the implementation. The first phase is the development of the core elements for each subject. This phase is set to be

completed during 2018. This will form the foundation for the next phase – the development of the new curriculum, which then will be passed as legislation by the Ministry of Education and Research by Spring/Summer 2019. The schools then will have one year to prepare for implementation and put the new curriculum into use the school year 2020/2021.

### *2.5.1 Implementation quality*

When implementing new measures into any organization (hereafter referred to as *school*), to ensure quality in the implementation, there are several factors one need to bring attention to (Ertesvåg, 2012). Before the implementation work, one need to make sure that the school sees the need to change. In the case of implementing new curriculum, this is politically regulated, meaning the school is required to implement this. A question to then consider is: Is the school prepared to change? The expression *readiness for change* entails here that the school should have the proper motivation and capacity. The more knowledge and support the actors get, the more successful the implementation will be, and it is more likely that the actors will actively involve themselves in the change (Ertesvåg, 2012). The actors also need to understand what is expected of them and how to continue the work after the implementation phase (Ertesvåg, 2012). Comprehensive reforms, such as the Knowledge Promotion, and now the renewal, will perhaps require a 10 year of systematic work to successfully implement (Ertesvåg, 2012). Planned implementation support is also essential for a change to be successful. The actors need guidance before and under and monitoring after. The Ministry of Education and research (2016a) points to previous curriculum amendments, that it is crucial that teachers are actively involved in the development and implementation work so not to view themselves as passive recipients (p. 68).

An understanding of the curriculum's intentions also need to be present. When introducing and implementing new curriculums, instructions and guidance should accompany the curriculum (Andreassen, 2014). The current curriculum came with a more open content in the competence aims, along with what Andreassen calls vague descriptions of what this openness entailed. This enabled local interpretations, with the result that the local curriculums were being designed as aims of knowledge, not aims of competence, Andreassen argues. By this, he means that the verbs in the competence aims were changed to be narrower, predetermined actions, e.g. from *to express oneself in an optional genre* to *write well-organized reports* (Andreassen, 2014, p. 376). In his chapter, he questions the success the government had in conveying the real intentions of the Knowledge Promotion. The local curriculums designed today consequently

often end up with being similar to the former curriculum (L97), where the content was more set (Andreassen, 2014, p. 388). The vague formulation of the competence aims leads to too many interpretational possibilities by local actors and textbook authors (Engelsen, 2015, p. 97). Not until 2011, The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training published a set of instructions among other documents on how to understand the term *competence* and how to achieve the ambitions of the curriculum (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2016a).

Upon receiving the guidance instruction for the local curricula development, teachers and school leaders were not sure what function these had (Engelsen, 2015, p. 98). In essence, the guidance is meant as a help but is not a legal requirement (Brøyn, 2009). The same goes for the development of the local curricula. Teachers are not required to develop and follow local curricula (Brøyn, 2009). In a White paper, the Ministry of Education and Research also said that no mandatory guidelines were given for how to conduct this developmental work (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2016a, p. 69).

The Ludvigsen committee emphasizes the need to clarify what the local curriculums work entails (NOU 2015: 8, p. 100). The variety in capacity and competence in schools and among school leaders shows that it is imperative that the all the components need to be seen in connection with each other. When the curriculums, guidance material, competency development and assistance to local processes of development are all linked together, a full understanding of the intentions can be achieved. The Ministry of Education and Research (2016a, p. 69) expresses the aim for the renewal that the curriculum as a whole should set a clearer course for the work in schools. The coherence between purpose and the content will be clearer. Also, a concretization of the school's responsibility for a holistic teaching in accordance with the core values will be ensured (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2016a).

## **2.6 Teachers' professional agency**

OECD (2018) points to teacher agency as one of the future principles for curricula and education system changes. Their goal is that “teachers should be empowered to use their professional knowledge, skills and expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively” (p.7). The term professional agency refers to the amount of influence a teacher has on their work – how much of the teaching decisions are their own and how much their opinions are taken into consideration (Vähäsantanen, 2015). Professional agency is “practiced when professional subjects exert influence, make choices and take stances in ways that affect their work and/or their professional identities” (Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, & Paloniemi, 2013, p. 61).

Professional agency may become evident in individuals' creative initiatives for developing existing work practices (Eteläpelto et al., 2013).

Agency and structure are interdependent (Archer, 2003) and teachers' professional agency is connected to their subjects' autonomy within structural factors (Eteläpelto et al., 2013). Vähäsantanen (2015) argues that the teacher agency is reduced in reform changes that are top-down based, as the participants have little influence on the changes. Vähäsantanen's study examined teachers' professional agency in the stream of educational change. The results showed that the participants had little influence on the reform, thereby having weak agency. The teachers perceived themselves as passive objects with opinions that did not matter. However, on the individual level, they still had a sense of strong agency – they felt they had a sufficient amount of opportunities of own decision making in their work (Vähäsantanen, 2015, p. 5). Also, the teachers took different positions in relation to the reform. Standing amid a reform change, actors choose one out of two directions: Either taking a mental stance towards the reform, or engaging with it (Vähäsantanen, 2015). Previous experience with changes might determine their current situational satisfaction and commitment to upcoming implementation of new practice (Vähäsantanen, 2015). Some may welcome and approve, some may actively resist and some may be ambiguous.

For this study, I will make use of the term professional agency by examining how structural factors and structural changes may affect the professional autonomy of the teachers. However, as this thesis does explore the relationship between individuals and society in a sociological sense, the concept of agency is used in relation to the teachers' own sense of power to conduct their teaching in a professional manner within their set conditions.

### **3 Methodology**

In this chapter I present the methodological choices of my study. I will give a description of the sample and the process I went through from creating the interview questions to the administration of the interview. Then, I discuss the steps taken in the analysis, ethical considerations and lastly, the study's credibility.

As my aim is to understand the meaning of individuals, my research is qualitative (Creswell, 2014). A qualitative study allows me to be more flexible in relation to the data and the participants in a less formal manner (Christoffersen & Johannessen, 2012). Holding a social constructivist worldview, I rely on my participants' perspective of the situation studied (Creswell, 2014). The subjective meaning of a situation is formed through interaction with others, hence I conducted a group interview to gather my data (Creswell, 2014). The theory used was generated during the research process, through analysing the data (Moustakas, 1994). Thus, my study is inductive. My interpretation of the data was also shaped by my background and understanding of the subject matter (Creswell, 2014, p. 8).

I will use the interviews as a production of knowledge, as my study is phenomenological (Postholm, 2011). In phenomenological studies, the aim is to reveal the essences and meanings of human experience (Moustakas, 1994, p. 105). To dive down to an actor level to get an idea of their life world, interviews are as such the only way to collect data, to get the participants comprehensive description of a phenomenon (Christoffersen & Johannessen, 2012; Moustakas, 1994). I believe their perspective is valuable and meaningful in the social reality I want to explore (Mason, 2002). The teachers participating are the only ones who can describe their own perspective of the subject matter.

#### **3.1 Focus group interview**

The reason I decided to do a focus group interview was to get information and ideas drawn out from the conversations and discussions that would unfold naturally among the participants in the group. Teachers are familiar with cooperation in groups, so I deemed it a suitable method for the purpose of my study. In a focus group interview, the participants discuss together and react and respond to each other's statements (Thagaard, 2013). When participants reflect together, they may come up with more and other ideas than they might in a one-on-one interview, as they can build on each other's thoughts to come up with something new that they could not manage on their own. My role as a researcher and interviewer is different in a focus

group interview than in a one-on-one interview. Instead of me contributing to stimulate reflection and understanding in the participants, they would together help each other towards that goal (Thagaard, 2013). Accordingly, the interview had a social constructivist perspective, as they would create knowledge together and maybe come to realisations about themselves and the situation in this social interaction (Thagaard, 2013, p. 95). The participants describe their experiences in light of their developed understanding of those said experiences (Thagaard, 2013, p. 95).

### **3.2 Sample**

My sample was strategic, as I searched for specific participants – teachers who taught both English and Music, and preferably in lower secondary school (Mason, 2002, p. 123; Thagaard, 2013, p. 60). I also tried the "snowball sampling" method, where I asked the ones who already had agreed to participate to ask further people they knew met the criteria (Christoffersen & Johannessen, 2012). This was unsuccessful, however, as none of the participants were a result of the latter. I started by contacting by e-mail specific teachers that I knew had this combination of subjects. In the first round I inquired whether they were willing and had the time to participate, to which many of them responded positively. I did not know if my sample was representative, as what I searched for was teachers with this combination of subjects, not teachers who had a specific opinion on the subject matter or with a certain experience in the field (Thagaard, 2013, p. 64). Despite this, my hope was that the ones who agreed to participate, did not only do so because of their time capacity allowed it but also because they were especially interested in the topic.

The participants in the group differ both in age, background and years of teaching and consisted of three women and one man. They all work in different schools and both primary and lower secondary school. By using this sample, I would get participants who have experienced their value as teachers in both subjects. What was particularly interesting to explore was whether their experiences of the subject matter differed or if there was an agreement, and in the case of different experiences, what they said about this. Two of the teachers do not currently work as teachers. However, their career change was so recent that I saw no problems with including them in this interview. These two I had met before this interview, so I knew their interest in the field. The other two I met for the first time at the interview. During the presentation round at the time of the interview, I understood that they all were acquainted with at least one other in the group.

### 3.3 The process of creating the questions

The interview was prepared as a semi-structured interview but essentially conducted as unstructured (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Thagaard, 2013). I wanted my participants to have time to discuss rather than be interviewed – in the sense waiting for my next question and answer only that. I wanted them to follow their own train of thoughts without me constantly interrupting by adding new elements. At the same time I was prepared to jump in and guide the conversation further if it stopped or if I noticed that some people for some reason did not actively participate (Thagaard, 2013, p. 99). The advantage of using this structure for my study, was that I could follow the discussion in whichever direction it took and thusly discover things I had not thought of in advance (Thagaard, 2013). The disadvantage to letting the conversation flow was that I could not stop them and ask them to elaborate, as I might disturb the direction they wanted to go and miss data that might prove to be important (Thagaard, 2013, p. 106).

First, I started writing down topics and create questions within each area that I thought I might want answers to. I then categorized the questions that might result in the same answers. The draft for the questions were also sent to my supervisor for feedback. The questions I ended up with were divided in three categories, *The status of the subjects today*, *The future of the subjects* and *cross-curricular work*. For the first category, the questions were:

- How is your typical day as a teacher of English and music?
- Tell me about your opportunities/freedom you have to carry out these subjects at your school?
- In your opinion, how is the music subject prioritized at your school? In what way is that different than the English subject?

For the second category, I had prepared these questions:

- In your opinion, what should the subjects contain (in the future)?
  - What sort of competence do you think there is a need for?

And for the third category:

- How do you work with English and music cross-curricularly?

I did not request the teachers to have any specific background information on the topic nor study any documents in advance. Though, one of the participants e-mailed me a few days before

the interview to get some bullet points about the content of the interview. This made me reflect upon whether I should do that or not, as it might result in prepared answers in the areas in question. Also, I did not want to come to the interview with set ideas of what I would get information about and in that manner lead my informants in directions they might not have taken on their own. Still, I decided to e-mail her back with just a few bullet points, and then sent the same e-mail to the rest. The reason was that I thought the conversation would flow more easily if they had some time to reflect before the interview. The bullet points they received were:

- The Ludvigsen committee
- The status of the two subjects today?
- The renewal of the subjects – what do we need to learn in these two subjects in the future?
- Cross-curricular work – deep learning?

The result of me giving these bullet points beforehand was that I only had to start with the first prepared question and then their discussion kept circling around all the categories and giving answers to most of the questions. They only stopped a few times when the conversation died out and asked whether they were going in the right direction. Then I could guide them into themes they had not covered yet. However, during the interview, I still wondered if it was the right choice to give bullet points beforehand, because since they were circling round and round, I did not know if I had gotten enough information about each category before the discussion moved on to another topic. Still, I decided to have confidence in my choice, as whatever they wanted to spend more time discussing, was of importance to them, and therefore of importance to my study.

### **3.4 The interview**

Recording the interview assured me that I would keep all the data and remember it correctly, as opposed to just taking notes during the interview. To listen and transcribe the interview will assure that I do not miss points that could turn out to be important. As Thagaard (2013) also writes, to solely take notes results in less collected data and also means that the analysis already starts there, seeing as you cannot write down everything, you choose what you want to write and also how to formulate the sentences (p. 112). What Thagaard suggests is that you can take notes in addition to the recording. This is what I decided to do. Both to start the analysis by writing down thoughts I had during, and also to ensure that they had covered most of the areas



I wanted them to talk about so to know and where I needed to guide them next. Taking notes did not disturb the flow of the conversation, as the conversation was between the participants and I was mostly the silent listener.

Before I put the recorder on, we each presented ourselves to the group and the participants talked about their teaching background. To get the conversation going, we also talked about our interest in the subject matter. Thagaard (2013) explains the importance of taking control over the interview situation to create a safe environment that promotes openness and familiarity, and for that purpose I did not want to jump straight into the interview.

My role as a researcher in a focus group interview is more passive than in a one-to-one interview, where the researcher holds more responsibility in guiding the conversation on (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). At the start of the recording and conversation they all addressed me, which was natural, as I was the interviewer and the engager, but later they turned towards each other and kept the discussion between them. Often, I found it difficult for me not to join in the discussion, as I found the topics interesting. Also, to not stop them and make them expand on a topic I knew I wanted more information about. They might not find the same topics interesting, since they have another perspective on the subject matter. An hour into the interview, one of the participants had to leave. I stopped the recording to say a proper goodbye. It became apparent to me that the three that were left were not finished discussing, as the conversation started up again. So, I put the recorder back on and recorded another four minutes.

### **3.5 Analysis and interpretation**

Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017) suggest considering either transcribing the whole interview or write a summary of the data while listening to the recording. Although my choice was the most time consuming, I decided to transcribe the whole interview and not just the parts I would use and quote, because I did not want to decide that early what parts would be significant. As I would go deeper into the analysis, other parts and quotes could prove to be important. The transcription resulted in 11.919 words. To organize and analyse the data, I used NVivo 11. I found it advantageous to make use of a computer program, due to its ability to simplify the process of data classification, making it easier to keep track of my work. I did not feel the need to explore the computer program further, with all the possibilities of organizing nodes and quotes. The main purpose was to have a simple, orderly place to store the data.

I did a cross-sectional analysis, where I searched for topics, rather than focusing on what each teacher had said (Mason, 2002, p. 149; Thagaard, 2013, p. 181). I made this decision because I had no intention comparing their statements up against each other. I already had started the interpretive work when transcribing, so I knew which topics they had covered or touched upon (Mason, 2002, p. 153). After the upload in NVivo, I created nodes with these topics. These were a way to organize every part of the transcription, so I would have everything coded in case my focus shifted during the analysis. The nodes I created were *The English Subject*, *The Music Subject*, *The English Teaching*, *The Music Teaching*, *The School of the Future* and *Freedom to exercise their profession*. I deemed it necessary to separate their statements about the subject from their teaching practice because I found it interesting how there was a difference in their tone of conversation when they talked about how they felt as teachers of these subjects and when they talked about what they did in class. Often, they would quote others, both what they felt were the opinions of other people about the subjects and also experiences they had had when interacting with others. During the first round of coding, I was open to create new nodes if necessary. Two nodes and one child node appeared; *Cross-curricular work*, *Local curricula* and *The Power of Music* – the last one a child node under the node *The Music Subject*. Several sections of the transcriptions were put in more than one node, in order to assure that I had covered all topics appearing in the text. After coding the whole transcription document into these nodes, I could focus on one node at the time, as all the text regarding each node would be collected in a new folder. This made it easier to find statements that were of significance to my research.

When analysing the data from a focus group interview, Krueger (2002) suggested to notice which topics were discussed more, and also what was not said – which areas the researcher received limited information, as both these factors can indicate what is of importance to the participants. In like manner, notice the intensity to which the topics are discussed. This could be communicated by the tone of voice or the speed of speech (Krueger, 2002). These points were something I noticed while transcribing and will present in the finding.

Cohen et al. (2017) note that “qualitative data analysis focuses on in-depth, context-specific, rich, subjective data and meanings by the participants in the situation, with the researcher herself/himself as a principal research instrument (p. 643).” It is an ongoing process during the whole length of the study. My approach to the analytical work was hermeneutical (Mason, 2002; Postholm, 2011). My belief is that a phenomenon can be interpreted on different levels and that I will not find the absolute truth in my data (Thagaard, 2013). I searched for meaning

in a manner of the hermeneutical spiral, where I would go further into parts of the transcribed text, then try to see how these parts fit in a bigger context. By parts of the text I speak of either a node, a paragraph or a quote. The bigger context would be related to the topics presented in chapter 2. Then I would look at the parts again with a new understanding. The analysis would also be characterized by my understanding of the subject matter (Leseth & Tellmann, 2014, p. 179). This would prove to be important when discussing the findings, as I had to be cautious not to be too subjective.

People will place their experiences within the cultural context they are a part of and relate to (Thagaard, 2013, p. 58). Johansson (2016) explains a research process as a process where one views the data material in light of one's preconception and that this fact also influences what you search for in the text. When I study the meaning of the teachers' statements, I needed to take into account both their understandings of the social phenomena and my own interpretations (Mason, 2002, p. 149). It is important to keep the overall perspective when analysing the topics and the statements (Thagaard, 2013, p. 181). Therefore, I also searched for connections between the topics, and, in line with the hermeneutical approach, viewed parts of the data in connection to the background and theory. To achieve this, I would go through sections of the text several times, focusing on one node at the time, with some time interval. Thus, I would look through the node and extract the parts I found interesting, find quotes that illustrated the topic and write my thoughts about them in the summary and discussion. Then I would leave that node to focus on another node or another part of the thesis. By doing this, I would get some distance from the data to open up to look at it with hopefully a different perspective the next time.

### **3.6 Ethical considerations**

The Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) was notified of the study and gave approval. The informants signed an informed consent form (see Appendix 1) and were made aware that the participation was voluntary. The information I expected to receive was personal but not private or sensitive (Mason, 2002, p. 79). With consideration to the confidentiality, I would not write down any names of people, places or schools in the transcription even if the participants mentioned this during the interview. No names that could identify anyone were entered in NVivo either. Postholm (2011) comments on the importance of gaining the trust of your participants in order to ensure access to the study's needed information (p. 147). The signed consent form contained information about the study, the confidentiality of their participation and the contact information to my supervisor. By signing this, the participants agreed to the

first step of access to information. The study did not require an observation of the participants in their own environments. For that reason, I decided that the interview would be conducted at the university – Department of Education – where I had booked a conference room. The university offered free parking and was close to the city centre, so it was easily accessible. In addition, I had a coffee maker and a kettle available. I wanted to serve coffee and snacks, both because it was right after work hours for the participants, but also to create an inviting and relaxing atmosphere.

Prior to the interview, my supervisor reminded me that during the interview, the participants might want to represent themselves in a good way, to have clever things to say to be a valuable contributor in the discussion. For that reason, it was imperative that I emphasized beforehand that I was after their perspective of the situation, so whatever they contributed with to the conversation was of value to me. Thagaard (2013) writes that it is an important factor to discuss when analysing the data (p. 115). Also, in a group interview, you may get a power relation that is asymmetrical (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Some may take over the discussion, leaving others with the feeling that they may not get the chance to say what they want. In that way, I may lose important data. Also, the power relation between the interviewer and the interviewees in a manner that it is only the latter who will have to open up, not the interviewer (Fog, 2004).

I paid little attention to their body language and decided instead only to use the text as data for interpretation. To interpret body language and gesticulations can lead to misinterpretations and raises an ethical question to misuse the trust the interviewer is given in the situation, by pointing out an incoherence between what is said and what is expressed in body language (Thagaard, 2013). I as an interviewer could add meaning to gesticulations which I am not qualified to do. When presenting the analysis, it is vital that the researcher does not put words into the participants' mouths, especially when quoting. (Postholm, 2011). Otherwise, one risks breaking their trust given. All the quotes have been translated into English by me. I tried as far as possible to present quotes directly translated. The only changes made when presenting was to edit out the pauses that I had marked with three dots, both for a change in thought and when they paused.

### **3.7 The study's quality**

#### *3.7.1 Validity*

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) explain that to validate is to question, to view every stage of the study with a critical eye (p. 287). Further, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) present seven stages of validation checking (pp. 283-284). I will here discuss my study's validity from their third point

on; *Interviewing*. In this point, they state that one should assess the trustworthiness of the subjects' reports and the quality of the interviewing. I believe I have little reason to question whether the participants told the truth or not. They might have wanted to present themselves in a good way and said something they think I wanted to hear. Regardless, the topics discussed were in relation to their professional choices and experiences, and therefore less private. Another point to bring up is the group dynamics in such interviews. There might have been points of the discussion someone did not agree with, but for the sake of the flow of the conversation, the recording or out of consideration for the others, did not speak against it. Having four people who are not that familiar with each other, might have affected the freedom to really discuss.

The next point from Brinkmann and Kvale I want to address is *Analyzing*. Are the questions asked to the data valid and are the interpretations logical? By doing the transcriptions myself, questions would arise along the way. Therefore, the topics I chose to analyse the data against were created by me, which in turn were influenced by my understanding of the situation. When performing a cross-sectional analysis, the statements and text is taken out of its direct context (Thagaard, 2013, p. 191). I chose what to draw out from the data and what to leave out. In that manner I could present the findings in favour of one or another direction. By putting together statements that are far apart, I could make a connection that might not really have been there. Also, the choice I made to listen to and interpreting what the participants meant as quotes from others and were not their real opinion, may open up a discussion on whether I am correct in my analysis of when they do this. I may misinterpret their statements and tone of voice.

As the study is phenomenological, it was not a goal for the data to be representative for the whole group of teachers with this subject combination, rather to investigate these teachers' perspectives and experiences. As Mason (2002) points out, my sample was meant to "encapsulate a relevant range in relation to the wider universe, but not to represent it directly" (p. 124). With the data collected, I hoped to use that as a basis for the discussion.

### 3.7.2 *Reliability*

Christoffersen and Johannessen (2012) point out the importance of choosing the most fitting method according to one's chosen study. In this case, one could argue that I could have chosen to conduct four individual interviews and have gotten much the same data. Conversely, the topics that I expected would arise during their conversation and the thoughts and statements

created in collaboration would ensure me a fragment of today's ongoing debate about the subjects.

Cohen et al. (2017) explain reliability as “an umbrella term for dependability, consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and groups of respondents” (p. 268). The replicability factor is more correct for quantitative research, where the researcher can control the variables to a greater extent. In qualitative research, where one often studies the uniqueness in a situation, replicability is not the aim (Cohen et al., 2017). Albeit, to establish research transparency, I have tried to be thorough in my description of steps taken in my analysis, to open up for inter-rater reliability; replication if someone were to be in the possession of the same data (Cohen et al., 2017; Svartdal, 2018). Mason (2002) writes that “the key question is to ask whether your sample provides access to enough data (...) to enable you to address your research questions” (p. 134). Originally, I planned on conducting two focus group interviews, with 4-5 participants in each. Finding teachers with the specific subject combination who had the time and were willing to participate proved to be difficult. The four teachers in my interview were the only ones who agreed.

## 4 Findings

This chapter presents the findings related to the research question. I also present what the teachers said about each subject regarding the renewal of the curriculum and their opinions and thoughts about the future. Lastly, I present a paragraph about cross-curricular work.

### 4.1 Comparing subjects

Not many people are wondering about what is going on in the music class compared to the English class. In English class there are tests and all of that. But music, that can largely be left on its own.

As for the achievement of the competence aims, the teachers agreed that they felt a closer monitoring in English than in music. However, this was something they viewed as natural. They also discussed how there often are several teachers of English in each school, so they work together in teams, planning and discussing progress together. For the music subject, there may be only one teacher who does all the teaching, especially in lower secondary, where there are less teaching hours than English. Often, the lower secondary organizes the music teaching in a way that the pupils will have music class two out of three years. In sum, less need for teachers of music. Being the only music teacher at a school thus results in an independent teacher with no one to cooperate with.

To get a 6 (highest grade) in English somehow holds more pride than a 6 in music.”  
“Yes, maybe because it takes more. As it should do, since it (English) is a bigger subject. A much bigger subject.

All the teachers agreed that the grade in English seems to hold more value than the grade in music. Although, when the pupils apply for upper secondary, the grades are all equal, no matter what they had to do to achieve them or how many teaching hours each subject had. By hearing stories from others, they attested that the basis for the assessment in music sometimes is so low that it hardly can be justified. One teacher had heard about classes where pupils learn how to play guitar the whole school year, and the test at the end would define the whole grade in music. This sparked a discussion about that not everybody will excel on guitar. The curriculum does not mention guitar specifically, only *playing of instruments*, so in reality the pupils should be able to choose which instrument to be tested in, one of them noted. Essentially, the pupils can choose to perform a test on ukulele, drums or on a recorder, for that matter. As long as the school has the equipment, the freedom to choose should be present, they all concluded. When discussing the assessment in English, they agreed that since the subject was bigger, they had

more grounds on to set the grade. One teacher indicated that the demands to achieve every competence aim felt different in English than in music – with the grammar, all the written competency they had to get through and also the oral aspects of language learning. This goes again back to the monitoring of progress in English.

Nobody requires that you have music as one of your subjects to teach it, because that is something “everybody just knows how to do.” Or you could teach the subject because you know a little bit about how to play guitar or you have recorded something. It is almost like you could just say “I know a lot of music”. -OK, then you can teach the music class.

There was an agreement that lately there had been a bigger focus on subjects like mathematics and the other science subjects, almost at the expense of the language subjects. However, the fact that you now need 60 credits to teach English in lower secondary and 30 for primary school, the teachers saw as an acknowledgement of the subject as something you need qualified competence in to ensure the best teaching. They felt that the music subject is on the other side of the scale. Further, they felt that in primary school, the requirements to teach music seem even fewer. There it is more like they are pleaded to teach the class, they joked: Since it fit with their schedule, it would be nice if they would take the class.

I know we talked about not having mathematics on the last class on a Friday. You have a lot of subjects you try to place at times where the pupils are attentive and have the capacity to concentrate. I do not think it ever occurred to me that we should place the music class to a time where the pupils are receptive.

Another point from their discussion was where music class should be put on the schedule. During the interview, one teacher had an interesting realisation. Music class also calls for alert pupils and should not always be put in time slots where the pupils are not receptive. Granted, the pupils may not be receptive for anything the last class on a Friday, they joked. However, maybe one should take that into consideration when planning the schedule, one teacher noted.

## **4.2 The power of music**

(...) see the bigger context more, with music and life, right, from the very beginning. From the lullabies and the little nursery rhymes and so on, up to classical music and advanced things. We all have a unique relation to it and we are totally dependent on that, so we need to learn something about it as well. (...) The musical in us (...) it is a primal force in us. (...) It is some of the first things we experience and some of the last. (...) That is what they say about people with Alzheimer’s and other things. If you for example start to sing together with them, the lyrics will come. They may have aphasia and everything, may have lost the ability to speak, but the songs, they have stuck.



The teachers agreed that others often have the opinion that music class is just for enjoyment, a break in between the more serious subjects, so that pupils will be able to endure the school day. Likewise, sometimes they have to argue as for why music should still be kept as a subject in school. They then have to be convincing as to why music class still is valuable in itself, and that music holds a value to all of us, no matter our skills. In addition, some pupils would survive school just because of music class. Struggling in all other areas, they could excel in music, and by that find their place – and maybe even purpose in life.

An important ambition has to be creating musical enjoyment. And mastery. Experience participation and togetherness. (...) The singing tradition is an important carrier of culture. It is curious that it is gone, and that we theorize the subjects to the extent we do. Granted, they (pupils) should learn something other than playing of instruments. Then again, there has to be an aspiration that it should be exciting to attend the music class.

The teachers also brought up the matter of singing in schools. The pupils do no longer sing outside of music class, and some pupils do not sing there either. One of them added that it may be more common to sing in primary school in their everyday school day, whereas in lower secondary, singing has practically disappeared. Singing and music is important for the continuation of our culture, they agreed. In the same manner, the subject should not just be achievements of competence aims and theory, but also enjoyment and offer something different than the other school subjects.

In spite of all these arguments, they still discussed that the music subject is not in complete crisis. To have the high competency in music makes them almost irreplaceable, they said. One cannot simply put in just any substitute teacher in their planned class in music. Further, their competence is much needed on school-leaving events or other gatherings. They need to rig the sound and maybe organize the entertainment. One had noticed an increasing focus on a rise in competence in music. Apparently, someone is currently working on a master's program in practical-aesthetical subjects. However, she had very little information about this, but saw it as a recognition of the field, that maybe the tables are turning.

### **4.3 Who guards the subjects?**

Where I work, when the school started for just over ten years ago, the focus was meant to be on science subjects, they were going to be a giant within science subjects. And then there were (...) some people in the right ranges that said: -No wait, listen. We need this and this. And after some time, it has developed, with equipment and everything else. So, it depends on the school administration – what they think about those things. And I think that many do not have as much trust from

the administration and that they are given less priority. Yes, I think it depends on individuals on each work place.

The music subject's future holds an uncertainty, they all agreed. The status might become so low that it is no longer an area of priority in school. Hence, they feel like they have to work as advocates to make others see the importance in keeping it on the curriculum and to be prioritized. They fear that the subject will not be prioritized in budgets and disappear for economic reasons the same way that swimming lessons disappeared when most of the swimming pools closed. Today, whether the music department in a school is successful or not, depends on the person running it, they said. Also, it depends on whether the administration finds it an important area to prioritize. One of the teachers remembered once having received a leaflet from the municipality with the focus on reading in every subject. What he noticed, was that the practical-aesthetical subjects were not mentioned. The others remembered this, too. Upon which a discussion followed, where they protested loudly to this fact. The teacher who brought up the topic in the discussion, said he had pointed this out to the principal at the school with the feedback that it was not acceptable.

Because I think that the English subject, I think that it will keep on running, it will not disappear. Rather the opposite, it will maybe flourish. While, with the music subject you have to be attentive and keep watch around the hallways, listen to the conversations: -Will it, will we still have music?

The discussion about the English subject's future was short, almost non-existent. It has a secure future, they predicted. The communicative skills gained in the English subject is still viewed as valuable for what is needed in society. They all agreed with this quote this one teacher uttered. The music subject was a much more pressing matter to discuss.

#### **4.4 A new way of thinking?**

And that is when I think that if we really *mean* the school of the future, we cannot go into the renewal of the subjects with the same school structure we have today, with the same organization. Because then we will end up doing almost exactly the same as before.

The teachers perceive the work ahead with the change and renewal as interesting but comprehensive. It will be like starting all over with planning, implement the new requirements and work with the new competence aims and the revised Core Curriculum. With the ambition of *The School of the Future*, as envisaged, they came to the conclusion that to make this work as planned, the school cannot be organized as it is today, with separate subjects. It will require a new way of thinking. A point they brought up in relation to that was that why should the

school subjects be so divided when real life is not like that? The old division of subjects are ancient, maybe obsolete? This kind of revolutionary thinking about school – how do they plan to put it into action, the teachers asked themselves. One teacher commented that even though this work seems comprehensive, it will be exciting to see what these changes will do.

These competences in every subject, in addition to all these fancy words, I mean the great things coming now, with life skills and all that. What will it look like? What does it entail? -Yes, how do we put it into action?

Their concern is that it will be left to the teachers to just know how to integrate these skills and cross-curricular topics, like when digital skills was one of the basic skills that was supposed to be incorporated into every subject. Similarly, why design a new curriculum when the current one offers so much freedom, they asked. Bigger actions need to follow this implementation than just a new document containing the curriculum.

But I wonder: Where is the effect by renewing the curriculum? I like the fact that the competency aims in themselves are so wide. I can interpret myself, and I like that a lot. (...) So, is the solution to present a new curriculum or maybe a revision? Maybe we could receive more input now and then. It may be that neither we nor the teaching will be better by a new document.

## **4.5 Freedom and professional space**

I think the intention with K06 was to express a higher confidence in the teacher. Because L97 was too restraining. You felt that you failed to decide when Ibsen should be on the syllabus.

A more heated topic was the local curriculum, that they often are designed in such a detail that the result is not far from the former curriculum, L97. One intention with local curricula, or rather *central* local curricula, where several schools in an area operate with the same design, was that pupils could change schools either midyear or at other times and still follow the same progress. But when schools in addition to this started altering the local curricula to fit their annual school schedule, the same problem occurred, the teachers agreed. So, while the current curriculum opens up for teachers to decide more what to include in their teaching, they still do not have the feeling of freedom of action. Teachers have to adapt their teaching to what is planned in the local curriculum and the equipment available. They requested national guidance, as massive resources had been spent to design local curricula without the designers really understanding the intention behind this work. One teacher asserted that it is not the ones who designed the local curricula's "fault", rather the fact that a new curriculum (K-06) was presented without facilitating for the proper execution of it.

## 4.6 Cross-curricular work

Because to use music as an approach to things, you could use that for grammar, lyrics. You know, it is about creativity among us teachers, right, and how we view the possibilities to combine the subjects.

The topic of cross-curricular work was a divided discussion. When asked directly if they did cross-curricular work with English and music, one replied that in their school, they often used music in other subjects, sometimes to spice up pupils' presentations or to learn about different continents. She also pointed out that this was primary school, where such combinations come more naturally than in lower secondary, because teachers in primary school often have the same class in more subjects. To the same question, one other teacher answered that it depended on which topic they had. It often came to using music from the area of culture that were the subject content, which two of them agreed upon. Further, he also stated: "If there is time." One of the others acknowledged this statement and pointed out the paradox that one of *them* would utter that sentence. If there was someone who could excel in finding ways to mix these two subjects, it would be them. As advocates for the music subject and someone with high enough competency in both subjects, even they do not do it. This realization made them discuss eagerly that this was an issue they had to deal with.

## 5 Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter I discuss the findings from the previous chapter in connection to the background chapter. The main topic is status, and deriving from that, I include discussion about the future of the subjects and why the teachers may be concerned about the new curriculum.

### 5.1 Status

Teachers who teach the subject combination of music and English experience two different realities in their profession: one where they discuss what to bring to the English classroom, and the other, where they have to fight for their rights as music teachers. The findings contained more statements about the music subject than about English. When analysing the data from a focus group interview, Krueger (2002) suggested noticing the lack of information received in the conversation. As pointed out in **Feil! Fant ikke referansekinden.**, the concern about the future of the music class is a more pressing matter than that of English. The teachers mentioned often being the only one responsible for all the music teaching at their school, so coming together with peers might have sparked a much-needed venting.

All teachers agreed that the English subject has a higher status. As one of the subjects included in the national tests, the English subject is perceived as more monitored by the school administration. Even though the purpose of these tests is to map the pupils' skills to better be able to plan further teaching improve the teaching quality, researchers may use the results to compare schools' achievements (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017b). This may be viewed as an incentive to focus more on the subjects included in these tests. When the teachers themselves find it natural that they are closely monitored in English but not in music, it indicates that they share the perception of English being the more important subject in the school context. In contrast, not many are wondering what they are doing in music class and how the progress is going, they said. Their day is self-regulated with only the structural factors to take into account. This might suggest either a lack of competency or interest from the school administration to be able to monitor, but it could also be a sign of trust and that the management is confident that the music class is conducted in a right manner and according to its purpose. It may indicate that the music teachers' professional agency is stronger in regard to freedom of action but is weakened by structural factors like space, time and equipment.

English as a subject has a much larger number of teaching hours than music per year: 366 hours (60 minutes) for primary school (year 1-7 combined) and 222 hours for lower secondary school

(The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013). In contrast, music has 285 for primary and 83 on lower secondary (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2006). The English curriculum has had two revisions while the music curriculum has remained unaltered since 2006. The largest difference is in lower secondary for music. As a bigger subject, it does take more to obtain the grade in English. Though, what the teachers call attention to is their experience that sometimes the whole grade seems to solely be based on "one guitar test". With that, the Education Act is violated, and the rest of the competence aims for music are not achieved, as Salvesen stated in Korsvold's (2014) article. This perception is also in keeping with the findings in the study by Sætre et al. (2016), where many music teachers are unqualified, and several are apprehensive and less comfortable with certain aspects of the teaching. Formal education in music may not be the only way to gain enough competency to teach music, but the teachers' impression and experiences with it often takes very little to be allowed to teach music reveals that many fail to see the music class as something of importance.

That 60 or 30 credits in English now are needed in order to be allowed to teach the subject, indicates that the strengthening Birketveit and Rugesæter (2014) called for, is pending. With the qualification requirements, English as a subject has experienced a rise in status. All the teachers viewed this change as positive. Also, it is a significant indication of the fact that English is guarded from the top level, while music is argued for more from the actor level, as the teachers commented. No credits are required to teach music, and as the teachers addressed, sometimes teachers teach the subject even if they view themselves as unqualified. The priority differences from the top level are also evident in the leaflet they had received, that according to the teachers were meant to contain a guidance for reading in every subject – except for the practical-aesthetical subjects. The signal sent might be an indication of either lack of competence or lack of priority towards this subject area. The teachers found further evidence of the lack of priority when reflecting upon where to put music class on the schedule. To often put music class in a time slot where the pupils are less able to concentrate, might mean that the teachers have to adapt their teaching accordingly.

### *5.1.1 Future*

There is an agreement among the teachers that the need for new competences in the future is present. With technology taking more over our daily lives, new professions will be created (OECD, 2018). Communication and cooperation are key skills (OECD, 2018; The Ministry of Education and Research, 2016a). With society becoming more globalized, English is needed

for communication, and thus the English subject has a secure future in school, as the teachers also predicted. Two of the competences emphasized as the future aims are creativity and innovation (OECD, 2018). In this case, one might argue that music holds a stronger position than English, due to the subject being perceived as a facilitator for creativity. Although, this is only possible when there are skilled teachers, as Olsen (2005) also argues. If the pupils are not able to unfold creatively, the subject does not facilitate creativity development, she asserts. However, when conducted in a proper manner, English can also promote creativity in e.g. writing, speaking or digital projects. As Birketveit and Rugesæter (2014) likewise emphasized, skilled teachers are needed to ensure the best results. Thus, the quality in the teaching is highly dependent on teachers' competency, in *all* subjects (Sæbø, 2009). High competency facilitates a confident teacher that utilizes the subject's possibilities, gives the subjects the necessary seriousness, which in turn will create a confident pupil (Sæbø, 2009).

A concern was shared for the future of the music subject. This concern was not present for the English subject. By continually having to argue for keeping the subject and to convince the administration to be financially prioritized, the teachers would view themselves as the protectors or guardians of the subject. To succeed with music class in school, it is imperative to have an administration that views the aesthetical subjects hold as much value as the other subjects (Sæbø, 2009, p. 6). Albeit, measure has been taken from the top level as well The Ministry of Education and Research (2007) developed a strategic plan with the aim to develop aesthetical and creative competence in pupils, in light of the Knowledge Promotion. Perhaps these measures have not taken full effect, since the teachers reported a continued worry.

When discussing the School of the Future, the teachers considered whether the renewal and the future would entail restructuring the school as it is today. To be able to achieve the ambitions of deep learning and the cross-curricular topics, maybe the school would benefit from another way of organizing the school subjects, they pondered. As mentioned earlier, the Ludvigsen committee suggests reviewing today's school structure (NOU 2015: 8). To think the school subjects in a broader context and with more topics overreaching every subject, maybe the school should be divided into themes and topics in succession, rather than the subject division, independent from each other. The Ludvigsen committee suggests that each subject would taking responsibility for different areas of competence, to avoid overlap (NOU 2015: 8). The goal would then be that the subjects will complement each other instead of teaching the same thing, the committee explains. This might lead to another discussion about how the Norway should educate teachers. Would the teacher education train teachers in topic specific knowledge, rather

than subject specific knowledge? The desire for better coherence between subjects and a better progress of the content throughout the compulsory school with the facilitation of deep learning is a positive ambition. But how far should we go in this matter? The teachers did not discuss possible solutions to the potential restructuring. To teach only in topics, might entail that there is no room left for e.g. grammar and phonetic teaching in English. And what becomes of the elements of the practical-aesthetical subjects that do not fit in with other subjects? Teaching only based on usefulness – what knowledge and skills the pupils will need to become functional members of society, where does that leave such things as algebra or analyzing poems?

### *5.1.2 Implementation*

The ambiguity the teachers show towards the renewal of the curriculum is evident in their statements. The ambition is high-reaching, with new type of skills needed and the way of introducing cross-curricular work and new topics integrated into every subject. The implementation quality might depend on the actor's readiness for change, Ertesvåg (2012) comments. The implementation of the previous curriculum (K06) might not have had the desired effect. Due to the perceived failure of the Knowledge Promotion, the teachers might be hesitant to participate in this new implementation. However, teachers are obliged to take part and follow through the reform, although they may take a mental stance towards it (Vähäsantanen, 2015). Without the proper guidance and understanding of the Knowledge Promotion, the teachers observed that many still ended up with going about with their practice as before, as they could still defend their teaching in the open content of the competence aims.

A lack of curriculum understanding would also lead to misinterpretations when designing the local curricula (Andreassen, 2014). The teachers also pointed to this factor. From his own personal experiences with developing local curricula, Andreassen (2014) said he later reflected over their lacking awareness of the verbs his team inserted in the learning goals. Hence, they narrowed the actions, designing it with the same verbs as L97. He also acknowledged that the choice of words made when designing, deprives pupils of choices of content and methods. In reality, the competence aims are open for the pupils to choose content better suited to fit their interest areas, Andreassen states. To conclude, the true intentions and ambitions of the Knowledge Promotion might have gotten lost somewhere along the way, restraining the freedom teachers were meant to receive. When the new curriculum comes, the government will need to include better guidance and instruction on how to understand its intentions and how the competence aims should be interpreted and achieved (Andreassen, 2014).



### 5.1.3 *The subjects' purpose*

The usefulness of the subjects seems to be in focus when designing curricula and the Main purposes of every subject (Aase, 2005). Today's values are no longer unambiguous, making it more complicated to design and justify the content and sole purpose of each subject based on the Bildung aspect (Olsen, 2005, p. 131). But does everything have to be measured in usefulness and value? Should nothing be for pleasure? The teachers bring up this point – that simultaneously as the subjects are maintained for learning purposes, the school should facilitate motivation and joy. Maybe with the new curriculum, where the prospects are less content to facilitate deep learning, teachers will have time to plan classes not just for the purpose of reaching every competence aim, but also to capture interest and motivation of the pupils?

The discussion the teachers had about English was not about justifying why it should be kept as a subject. The discussion revolved around which skills needed in the future could be achieved in English. The communicative skills were mentioned, but also that English can facilitate creativity, as mentioned in 5.1.1. For music, the topics that emerged for a justification of the subject's continued place, are more related to the Bildung aspect. As Winner et al. (2013) acknowledged, one cannot yet conclude with certainty that music is beneficial for other areas of school, hence, the arguments then tend to focus on what other benefits the pupils can gain from being in music class. Also, if measured in usefulness in terms of what the pupils will need to master to be able to earn money in the future, Olsen (2005) indicated that music would draw one of the shortest straws (p. 131). The connection between unqualified teachers who do not fulfill the whole intention of the curriculum turns the subject into something that neither is for usefulness nor Bildung. And accordingly, may be perceived as a break from the desk-oriented subjects.

The topic the teachers discussed with the most intensity was viewing music in the bigger context, with music and life – to gather people in both tough and happy times, music as able to help the struggling pupils find their path in life. Just as music class is intended for learning and for some a break, the power of music should have a place in itself. Music is also viewed as the carrier of culture, the teachers agreed. If Bjørkvold (2014) is correct in his claims made in *The Muse Within* that music is a primal force in us all, we need music for a richer life. By not nurturing the innate musical human, the school contributes to creating burnouts, he argues. That may be a sufficient reason for keeping the subject in school, the teachers claimed.

#### 5.1.4 Teacher agency

Working in teams with other English teachers at the same school may affect the teachers' agency by constraining their freedom of choice of content, progression and methods, as they often have to collaborate to make sure the pupils at the same year follow the same plan. With that in mind, being the only teacher in music at a school implies a stronger agency, with the freedom to choose every teaching aspect (grounded in the competence aims), affected more by the structural factors like equipment and space. Moreover, the monitoring experienced by the teachers and the demands of progress reporting in English might result in teachers making other choices in teaching methods, to ensure the satisfying results in national tests or focal areas the set by the administration. By advocating to keep the music subject in school, the teachers might feel they are negotiating their right to practice their duties. This factor is less present for the English subject, as that subject does not need to be fought for to keep in school.

The Ministry of Education and Research (2017c) has stressed that the Knowledge Promotion is designed to be adapted to local conditions by the school owners. The teachers criticized some of the local curricula they had encountered. The way some local curricula are designed leads to the weakening of their professional agency. By having someone other than themselves plan the annual schedule, their teaching choices become more limited. In some areas of teaching it might aid the teachers, as it frees planning time, but on the other hand, it might hinder their range of choices. And if the requirement to conduct the local curriculum as planned is not mandatory, the problem is based on a misunderstanding (Brøyn, 2009). The originally good intention of designing the same *central* local curriculum is arrested by the failed outcome. What happens when a pupil moves to a whole other area? Further, as Andreassen stated, when the competence aims are designed in the same manner as L97, a new curriculum has not fully been implemented.

In terms of the ongoing renewal work, the teachers feel ambivalent. To take part in this type of comprehensive work will take a lot of effort on their behalf. New practices may need to be incorporated, which might affect their amount of agency. Their previous experience with structural changes was not entirely successful. On the positive side, they enjoyed the amount of freedom the competence aims of the Knowledge Promotion compared to the ones from L97. On the other side, they experienced that a change of curriculum did not necessarily result in a change of practice. Consequently, the pending renewal may offer much work and negotiation of their professional identities with not much to show for in the end.

Cross-curricular work is suggested for the school of the future, referring to the topics that are to be incorporated into every subject (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017a). Another way of working cross-curricularly is to collaborate with two or more subjects. Music and English are two subjects with possibilities for cross-curricular work, and as the teachers said, one can bring songs and music into the English class that coincides with the teaching topic. What then is peculiar, is the teachers' statements about their own conduction of cross-curricular work, uttering "only if there is time." Their agency may be affected by the monitoring and test preparations. Only after achieving the aims, then music can be brought into class, not integrated as an enhancement for learning. Where do these demands come from? The schools in Sæbø's (2009) case study report that had managed to integrate artistic expressions in other subjects had principals and administration who facilitated this work. That is consistent with the teachers' notion of that it depends on the administration what kind of work is possible on each school, and what amount of autonomy the teachers have, due to what the principals choose to prioritize.

One point important to mention is that it might be easier to organize cross-curricular work at primary schools, as most teachers there are general teachers, as opposed to more subject teachers in lower secondary, where the team work is different – divided more into subject groups. Another reason for the teachers not working cross-curricularly might be the time-consuming effort it takes to plan these classes. There might simply be not enough time to plan this type of teaching, to bring music into English class in a way that enhances learning and is a supplement to other methods instead of entertainment.

#### *5.1.5 Concluding remarks*

The status – or perceived status – of the subjects influences the choices made by school owners and school leaders. This in turn will affect the teachers' professional agency, how they feel their value as teachers and how willingly they will participate in structural changes.

When discussing the English subject, the teachers did not talk about what the subjects should contain. Conversely, a lot of attention was given to why music is and should continue to be a subject. The purpose of the music subject should be both to offer a different experience than the other subjects, it should facilitate creativity and musical joy, and most importantly, promote mastery and togetherness – especially for pupils struggling at other areas in school.

The teachers felt that the English subject is now given the priority needed by ensuring qualified teachers. This is still not the case for music, sending the signal that the subject is currently not an area of priority. This led to a necessity of working as advocates for the subject, to ensure its continued place in school.

The present study will hopefully contribute to a debate about how and why teachers' sense of value relates to the subjects they teach. For student teachers like myself, these issues are more important than ever, and connect directly to our future professional autonomy and agency in tomorrow's education.

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# Appendix 1

## Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjekt

### *Engelsk- og musikkfagets status i dagens skole*

#### **Bakgrunn og formål**

Musikkfaget i skolen i dag har en lavere status enn før. Jeg vil undersøke hva lærere i dag tenker om situasjonen. I tillegg vil jeg finne ut av om det er noe som kan gjøres tverrfaglig med engelsk og musikk, kanskje som en del av dybdeløring. I den forbindelse vil jeg gjerne snakke med lærere med fagkombinasjonen engelsk og musikk.

Dette er en mastergradsoppgave ved UiT, Norges arktiske universitet, Institutt for lærerutdanning og pedagogikk.

Jeg kontakter deg fordi jeg har fått tips om at du har denne fagkombinasjonen.

#### **Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?**

Jeg vil invitere til et gruppeintervju bestående av fem personer, der jeg presenterer påstander omhandlende musikk og engelsk som fag og lærernes tanker om deres status i hvert fag. Påstandene skal deretter diskuteres dere imellom. Intervjuet vil vare cirka én time.

Mulige tema vil være:

- Ludvigsenutvalget
- Hva burde engelskfaget inneholde nå når elevene får såpass gode engelskkunnskaper gjennom film/TV/spill?
- Er det slik at musikk skal brukes til at man blir flink til noe annet?
- Din verdi som musikk lærer og engelsklærer?
- Tverrfaglig jobbing? Hva ville idealtilstanden vært?
- Fagenes status i dag og framtidsmuligheter
- Relasjonene du har til elevene i de forskjellige fagene
- Musikk som eventuell redskap til dybdeløring i engelskfaget?

#### **Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?**

Det vil bli tatt lydopptak av intervjuet. Deler av eller hele intervjuet vil bli transkribert og anonymisert og lagret i en passordbeskyttet mappe på datamaskinen. Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Det er kun jeg og veileder som vil ha tilgang til datamaterialet og det publiserte produktet vil være anonymisert. Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes i mai 2018. Etter prosjektets slutt, vil datamaterialet bli slettet.

#### **Frivillig deltakelse**

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn.

Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med Hilde Brox på telefon 77 66 05 07/41 42 32 58 eller e-post: [hilde.brox@uit.no](mailto:hilde.brox@uit.no).

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS.

## **Samtykke til deltakelse i studien**

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)