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“Sometimes I think I will faint”

A study on introvert proficient language learners’ experiences on oral activity in English lessons

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Acknowledgements

Writing my master thesis has been like taking a rollercoaster. During this period, I have experienced both highs and lows, I have shed tears and had enjoyable moments through the entire process. Writing this thesis has challenged me, but at the same time, it has been an interesting and educational experience given me insight into the field of introverts' experiences towards speaking English in the classroom. I believe that this thesis has provided me with beneficial knowledge as a future teacher to be.

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Abstract

This study investigates how proficient, but introvert language learners experience speaking English in the classroom and addresses factors that affect their reluctance to speak. Introvert behaviour involves individuals who abstain from speaking, who put more consideration on what they chose to say, tend to listen more than they speak and struggle to show their skills in public (Lund, 2012; Skyggebjerg, 2014; Kvarme & Thu, 2015). Schools in the Nordic countries promote learning that involves pupils presenting their language skills and knowledge in front of others (Flatén, 2010) and pupils in secondary school are assessed on the basis of their oral performances. This study applies qualitative group interviews in order to examine secondary school pupils' knowledge and experience of being introverts in the English language classroom. A total of six pupils participated in the study, all whom their teachers characterised as talented but passive in the English lessons. The study shows that oral activity in English is a dreaded and scary experience for introverts, and that factors such as language anxiety, self-image, learning conditions and grades influence their unwillingness to speak English in the classroom.

Sammendrag

Denne studien undersøker hvordan flinke, men introverte språkelever opplever å snakke engelsk i klasserommet og hvilke faktorer som påvirker deres motvilje til å snakke. Introvert oppførsel er når individer avstår fra å snakke, tenker mer over hva de velger å si, lytter mer enn de snakker og sliter med å vise sine ferdigheter i plenum (Lund, 2012; Skyggeberg, 2014; Kvarme & Thu, 2015). Nordiske skoler fremmer læring hvor elever skal presentere sine ferdigheter og kunnskaper foran andre (Flaten, 2010) og elever på ungdomsskolen blir vurdert på bakgrunn av sine muntlige ferdigheter. I denne studien ble kvalitative gruppeintervju brukt for å undersøke en gruppe på seks ungdomsskoleelevers kunnskaper og opplevelser av å være introverte i det engelske klasserommet. Alle var valgt ut og karakterisert av lærerne deres som talentfulle, men passive elever i engelsk timene.

Studien viser at muntlig aktivitet i engelsktimene er en fryktet og skummel opplevelse for introverte elever, og at faktorer som språkangst, selvbilde, læringsmiljø og karakterer påvirker deres motvilje til å snakke engelsk i klasserommet.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Oral skills and students' speaking proficiency in the classroom received more attention with the introduction of the new core curriculum in 2006 (Svenkerud, 2013). The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training states that:

Oral skills relate to creating meaning through listening and speaking. This involves mastering different linguistic and communicative activities and coordinating verbal and other partial skills. It includes being able to listen to others, to respond to others and to be conscious of the interlocutor while speaking (2012a, p. 6).

Moreover, it states that “oral skills are a precondition for exploring interactions in which knowledge is constructed and shared, and are a precondition for lifelong learning and for active participation in working and civic life” (p.6). Teachers teaching in Norway are required to follow the statements from the Norwegian Directorate concerning oral skills. Pupils oral performance plays an essential part in their assessment and is based on pupils' ability to use relevant information, their ability to reflect the information, their ability to participate in conversations, their ability to communicate, their pronunciation and their vocabulary (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017).

Learning and mastering a foreign language can be a challenge for some pupils as they might struggle with various aspects of it such as understanding, grammar or pronunciation. Also, there has been a growing interest in how anxiety weighs on language learners acquire a new language (e.g., Dörnyei, 2005; Horwitz, 2001; Oxford, 1999; Amiri & Ghonsooly, 2015; Phillips, 1992). However, some pupils are proficient in the language but may still refuse to show their skills in larger groups due to their introvert behaviour (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Thus, their anxiety has not been an obstacle for learning the language but is rather an obstacle for demonstrating their skills. There is still little available research on this particular group of learners (Lund, 2012). Introvert pupils that are shy and non-responding are often a neglected group (Lund, 2012). Both Lund (2012) and Nordahl, Sørli, Magner & Tveit (2005) claim that introvert behaviour over the last period has received less attention in school as teachers have had to direct their focus towards the loud, more demanding and extrovert pupils. This despite the fact that, as Paulsen & Bru (2016) claim, every teacher has experienced having introvert pupils in the classroom.

1.2 Research questions

The study departs from the following two questions:

How do proficient, but introvert secondary school pupils experience speaking in the subject English? Which factors are significant for their reluctance to speak?

The focus of my study is the pupils. It aims to shed light on why some introvert pupils master the second language well, but still are reluctant to speak up in larger groups. This thesis does not aim to develop an understanding of how to make these pupils more active in the classroom, but rather to explore their experiences and feelings on speaking English in the classroom and on what factors that cause them being silent. As such, the study may be valuable for teachers in order to understand introvert pupils so that they better can cater for this group in their teaching.

1.3 Motivation

As a young secondary school pupil, I gained first-hand experiences of introvert behaviour and oral activity. Locking my knowledge and voice inside myself resulted in evaluations where teachers concluded that I mastered the subject English well, but advised me to “be more orally active” in class. As a teacher training student, I have experienced how some pupils keep quiet in English lessons despite excellent language skills. On occasions alone with pupils inside or outside the classroom, I have witnessed that many of them have a very high level of proficiency that they never show in full class. Although some of these pupils are passive in other subjects as well, it seems as the subject English makes them more reluctant to raise their hand and speak. Secondary pupils receive grades on their performance in subjects, and one of these grades reflects their skill to communicate in English orally. Based on my own experiences, I have found that pupils care about their school performance and the grades achieved. As a third-year teacher training student, my practice teacher informed me that she had several pupils in her class that she had advised being more orally active in class in order to improve or to maintain their grade. Still, most of them struggled to do so. My former experiences give me the motivation to investigate the topic further. I also wanted to contribute to a field that is highly relevant in the English subject and for me as a future teacher to be.

1.4 Outline

This study will follow a traditional structure.

Chapter Two accounts for the theoretical framework and previous research relevant to the fields oral activity in English, language anxiety and introvert behaviour. Cultural aspects of introvert behaviour will also be addressed. Chapter Three outlines the methodological framework for the study, considerations about my role in the interview and addresses the contrasts between the two interviews. In addition, this chapter will discuss the reliability, validity and ethical considerations, the chosen analysis, and the limitations of this study. Chapter Four presents the findings from the interviews and discusses the in light of the research literature. In Chapter Five I suggest some conclusions to be drawn from the study and point to opportunities for further studies.

2 Theoretical framework

This chapter provides a theoretical framing to the study. It provides definitions of central concepts such as oral activity, introvert behaviour and language anxiety, and accounts for relationships between gender and language acquisition and between language anxiety and learning conditions.

2.1 Oral skills in the subject English

According to White Paper No. 30 (2003-2004), the five basic skills are required to be used across all school subjects, and be implemented in the Core Curriculum's competence aims. These are writing skills, reading skills, digital skills, numeracy and oral skills (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2003-2004). In the aftermath of the White Paper, oral skills received a larger focus (Penne & Hertzberg, 2015). Oral skills involve speaking as either spontaneous speech or as prepared speech (Bakke & Kverndokken, 2010, p. 60). In addition, it involves a receptive aspect, namely listening so that oral skills in English in fact include "being able to listen, speak and interact using the English language" (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013, p.4). In the transition from L97 to LK06, the designation "to express oneself orally" was changed to "oral skills" on the basis that this better highlights the two sides of oral skills and thereby safeguards the dialogical aspect of oral skills as a relationship between speaking and listening (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2012b).

Aasen, Møller, Rye, Ottesen, Prøitz & Hertzberg (2012) state that headmasters and teachers interpret oral skills as something that primarily belongs in primary school. However, they further claim that this interpretation is wrong as the purpose of oral skills is that they should get more complex and be more highlighted in the Core Curriculum, and in the classroom. It is important that pupils engage in oral skills (Svenkerud, Klette & Hertzberg, 2012), but Møller, Prøitz & Aasen (2009) claim that systematic work on the basic skills is missing in Norwegian Schools, especially oral skills. Practicing standing in front of others and express oneself in a precise manner, being able to participate in conversations and being able to listen to and respond to other peoples' views and statements, are anticipated as vital skills for active participation in our community (Svenkerud, et. al. 2012).

Yet, Svenkerud's et.al (2012) study point out that oral skills to a large extent turned out to be synonymous with oral presentations in front of larger groups. Svenkerud's et. al. study showed that oral presentations accounts for 80% of the amount of time pupils practice oral skills in the

classroom. Typically, children in primary school are asked to bring an item from home, or to show a drawing to their whole class. Flaten (2010) claims that schools in the Western part of the world practice a culture where children at an early age shall present their oral skills and knowledge in front of others, although this is not stated directly in the Curriculum.

2.2 Introvert behaviour

Lund (2012) defines introverts as people who display a withdrawn behaviour. These people tend to shy away from social interactions, tend to listen more, and abstain from the initiative to speak (Lund, 2012; Kvarme & Thu, 2015). Shyness affects individuals' behaviour, thoughts and how the individual relates to the environment: "Shyness can be reflected as a natural gentle restraint in new situations or as a problem that evolves to isolation, loneliness and self-loathing" (Lund, 2012, p. 15) [my transl.]. According to Lund (2012) there is less research done on introvert behaviour than on extrovert behaviour concerning adolescents and children. Possibly, introvert behaviour lies in the shadow of extrovert behaviour (Lund, 2012), but Lund reminds us that "problem behaviour" also includes the silent pupils, not only the loud ones.

2.2.1 Introverts in school

Introverts think before they talk and tends to listen more than they speak (Skyggebjerg, 2014). Introverts may have many abilities and skills, but struggle to show them as they may perceive the world as threatening, which again makew them withdrawn and socially passive. Based on their view of the world, introvert pupils do not always get to display their competence and talent in the best manner (Kvarme & Thu, 2015). A study by Kvarme & Thu (2015:63) shows that "introvert pupils trial to regulate their feelings and thoughts commonly, namely by getting it together" [my transl.]. Instead of getting it together, they physically shy away from social interaction to calm themselves down by leaving the rest of the group. Pupils who shy away from others, end up being silent on the outside while dealing with intense emotions on the inside. The silent person is therefore unaware of him or her being passive (Kvarme & Thu, 2015). Silent pupils who favour staying in the outskirts of a group (such as a class) tend to lose a lot of the group interactions (Flaten, 2010).

2.2.2 The cultural aspect of introvert behaviour

Shyness and introvert behaviour have since long been viewed as a handicap in the United States of America (Flaten, 2010). According to Flaten (2010), the Nordic countries have traditionally accepted introvert behaviour, but is becoming less acceptable due to the social changes in our society. In order to be accepted by today's society, people are expected to showcase themselves

through presentations, and in addition, seek out situations where presentations are expected. As a consequence, quiet or introvert people get less attention and response than those who speak more.

2.2.3 The self-image of introverts

Tetzner (2012) defines self-image as the way in which individuals picture and recognize themselves. Flaten (2010) states that adolescents categorised as shy and passive experience being constantly evaluated by those around them. Introvert pupils shy away from interaction as they worry about being evaluated by others (Flaten, 2010). “To show oneself off to others, include to voluntarily stand open for other peoples’ interpretation, something they absolutely do not want to do” (Flaten, 2010: 94) [my transl.]. In such situations they might lose sight of the fact that they are being evaluated positively as their self-image considers all evaluation to be negative (Flaten, 2010). Introvert pupils function as their own critics as well, they tend to be very hard on themselves (even harder than they would be on other people around them). They also believe that their mistakes are being noticed more than they actually are. Though the circumstances around may not have noticed their mistake at all the introvert individual feels that their mistake put the world on pause in order to judge their statement or behaviour. Moreover, introverts tend to memorise their mistakes more and use these mistakes as a self-critique from time to time (Flaten, 2010). Since introverts tend to believe that other people notice and observe their behaviour this is comparable to constantly performing on a stage surrounded by a critical audience.

2.2.4 Introverts versus extroverts’ language achievement

According to Fillmore, Klempler & Wang (1979) the personalities of extroverts are well suited for language acquisition because of their social strategies: they are able to thrive in group settings, desire to talk to other people, this promote language acquisition, say Fillmore et.al. (1979). It also adds pressure on introverts (Fillmore et.al., 1979). In terms of cognitive manifestation of arousal, Riding and Dayer (1980) state that there is a continuous sequence of cognitive performance which parallels the extrovert and introvert dimension as extroverts are verbalisers and introverts are imagers, meaning that extroverts are superior when speaking is used as learning style, and that introverts, in contrast are superior when reading and writing are used as learning style.

2.3 Language anxiety

Fear protects humans against danger and is crucial for our survival. It is useful for all of us to have a certain level of danger perception, however, for some, the fear is there constant instead of disappearing after finishing the fearing task (Flaten, 2010). “When the fear is exaggerated in relation to what the fear represents, it is defined as a type of anxiety” (Flaten, 2010, p. 15) [my transl.]. When the sense of fear does not switch off, one can start to view it as a state of anxiety. (Flaten, 2010) There are several types of anxiety, one of them is *language anxiety* (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Foreign language anxiety is defined by MacIntyre (1999) as negative and worrying emotions aroused when learning a foreign language that causes learners to react. Language anxiety is considered as a negative factor affecting pupils’ communicative ability (Amiri & Ghonsooly, 2015). For many language learners it can be alarming to speak another language (Hoang Tuan & Ngoc Mai, 2015). Speaking in the classroom, learners often get inhibited based on fear of making a mistake, losing face, or of receiving criticism. Language learners’ inhibition results in them getting shy of the attention that their speech attracts (Hoang Tuan & Ngoc Mai, 2015). Language anxiety is intimately linked to self-expression and self-concept. “It reflects the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning and using a second language and is especially relevant in a classroom where self-expression takes place.” (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 3). Foreign language anxiety is thus closely tied to the situation and setting. Learners can be anxiety-free in other environments, but the anxiety kicks in entering the language classroom. Language anxiety can affect the learning by producing shortfalls in attention and distraction by dividing the learners’ energies between emotional drama and cognitive engagement, resulting in a limited amount of linguistic received information available to be processed (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Although it is common knowledge that some assert anxiety and nerves as positive, Oxford (1999) argues that most research prove that there is a negative relationship between anxiety and language learning. Oxford (1999) calls this ‘debilitating anxiety’ as it harms learners’ language performance. The debilitating anxiety relates to “plummeting motivation, negative attitudes and beliefs, and language performance difficulties” (Oxford, 1999, p. 60).

Effects of anxiety on processing the input go hand in hand with the complexity of the given task (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). “If the learners’ abilities are commensurate with the task, little interference is likely to occur; but if the task is cognitively taxing, the combination of challenging task and high anxiety will result in difficulties during processing” (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 4). Though the learners cognately might be able to produce the second

language, their aroused language anxiety cause them sit with blank looks on their faces struggling to find that ever-elusive vocabulary item that they know they know (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

According to Gregersen & MacIntyre (2014) and Park & Lee (2005), language anxiety and self-confidence results in a litany of specific manifestations that together weaken learners' language progress. The more anxiety learners have towards speaking English, the lower oral activity is performed by them, and the more confidence learners have, the higher oral performance will be showed (Park & Lee, 2005). Phillips (1992) investigates effects of language anxiety and how anxiety had an impact on learners' oral performance. Her findings prove that even though learners indicate that they have an interest in developing their language capacity, their anxiety has a debilitating influence to speak the target language.

Four natural categories emerge concerning language anxiety (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). The first category of language anxiety symptoms are the physical ones. Learners who suffer from this experience trembling, increased heartbeat and tension. The second category that hinders language progress is emotional. These language learners feel insecure about speaking, panic at the thought of being unprepared, fear not being able to understand the target language, worry about the consequences of failure, struggle to study for a test as they compare themselves with other pupils and are afraid of the class moving ahead of them. Furthermore, these learners worry about what the others might think of them. The third category is anxiety tied up to the cognitive/linguistic realm. This significant type of anxiety inhibits learners' ability to produce language. Symptoms shown by these learners are inepti in imitating sound patterns, sound misrepresentation and forgetting learned linguistic information. Free speech is particularly hard for them. Finally, the last category for language anxiety is the social/interactional realm. These learners prefer to be silent as much as possible (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Gregersen & MacIntyre (2014, p. 8) refer to Schlenker & Leary (1982) who claim that anxious learners will proactively limit social trades. Learners will allow silence to hang heavily in conversation and speak for shorter periods in plenary.

Amiri & Ghonsooly (2015, p. 856) state that there is a term called test anxiety. "Test anxiety includes unpleasant emotional experiences, feelings and worries in situations in which one's performance is being evaluated". Further, Amiri & Ghonsooly (2015) state that test anxiety refers to any condition were the pupil fears about his or hers' capabilities "the outcome of which is a decrease in one's ability to cope with stressful conditions such as test-tasking situations (p. 856).

Affective filters refer to variables such as self-confidence, motivation and anxiety (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). According to the affective filter hypothesis, these affective filters effect learners' language acquisition by preventing input reaching the language acquisition devise (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Affect refers to negative attitudes towards language learning and to feelings of anxiety (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Lower filters encourage input and keep the learner motivated. "The affective filter acts to prevent input from being used for language acquisition" (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p. 39). The "affective filter hypothesis is proposed to account for the fact that some people who are exposed to large quantities of comprehensible input do not necessarily acquire language successfully" (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 106). Krashen & Terrell (1983, p. 38) say that "certain affective variables are related to second language achievements". Also, they propose that there is a correlation between motivation and pupils' self-image, and that language acquisition develops further in situations which encourage lower anxiety levels. Affective factors relate to second language acquisition on many levels, including when communicative activities are used. Referring to Dulay and Burt (in Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p. 8) affective filters relate to second language acquisition as they perform with optimal attitudes. The lower affective filters the performer has, the more open is the performer to language input (Krashen & Terrell, 1983)

2.3.1 Gender and language acquisition

Research by Park & French (2013) points to gender differences and language anxiety and shows that language anxiety is more frequent with girls. Riding and Banner (1988) suggest that there are some differences between girls and boys concerning language acquisition. First, girls seem to process verbal information better than boys and that they sometimes learn better than boys when the material is repeated. Second, they claim, girls tend to be more submissive to adults, while boys are more submissive to their peers. "Hence, it is possible that boys are liable to respond and learn in group situation only if success is acceptable to the group" (Riding & Banner, 1988, p. 66).

2.4 Learning environment

In primary school language learners are often allowed to be silent until they feel ready to speak in public or larger groups. They practice the language in games and songs, which allows them to blend their voice with those of the other children. Secondary school language learners, by contrast, are often required to utter their voice from their first days in order to meet the

requirements of the classroom instruction (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Lund (2012) claims that although some pupils are born shy, environment is a vital factor for the introverts' ability to break through their passive barrier. In her view, stressful and frightening environments are alarming for introverts, making them stay passive. Furthermore, the presence of other people goes hand in hand with introverts' shyness. Oxford (1999) supports the idea that learning conditions affect foreign language learners' ability to speak the target language. Consequently, teachers have the power to create learning atmospheres that are supportive and cooperative as such environments that become low-anxiety classrooms (Oxford, 1999). Krashen & Terrell (1983) agree to the idea that low filter classrooms in order to ensure better language acquisition and that low filtered classrooms promote low anxiety among learners.

3 Methodology

This chapter includes the chosen approaches I used for data collection and analysis. It also addresses the selection of informants, as well as validity, reliability and ethical considerations.

3.1 The choice of method – Group interview

Postholm (2010) state that there a range of different interviews and that interviews amount to be vital tools in research. For this research, I chose a qualitative approach as it is better equipped to get profound information. Qualitative methods are generally more flexible than quantitative methods as they into a greater extent provide possibilities for spontaneity and adaption to the interaction between the researcher and the informants (Christoffersen & Johannessen, 2012). In other words, this mean that using a qualitative method gives the opportunity to ask more open-ended questions, rather than using closed-ended questions. Qualitative methods are well suited to a small range of informants, collecting more depth to a topic, seeking deeper understanding of the informants' world views (Creswell, 2014). According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2015), the goal of a qualitative research is that the researcher gains an understanding of the perspective the informants' perspective. In this thesis, the goal is to understand what introvert pupils think about expressing themselves orally in English in the classroom.

Group interviews give the inquirer the ability to lead the interaction between the informants in a structured, or unstructured way (Postholm, 2010). I chose a semi-structured group interview as an approach for collecting data, in the sense that I had some questions planned before the interview, and that some questions were asked on the spot based on the given answers from the informants. Postholm (2010) defines the informal interview as the open interview. The information is gathered through unpredicted conversations. Postholm (2010, p. 73) refers to Spradley (1979) who claims that semi-structured interviews are intended to understand rather than explain the topic being researched. A “group interview is a qualitative method where a group of people gathers, discusses and focuses on a given topic” (Bjørklund (2005, p. 42) [my transl.].

Considering the kind of informants I was working with, I had some initial doubts when I chose this method. The fact that the pupils tend to be orally passive when they interact with others do in one hand promote that I should have interviewed them one by one to save the risk of them not being willing to share their thoughts and experiences. However, Halkier (2012:36) highlights the fact that group interview can contribute to more reflection and discussion in a

group interview as the informants get ideas and thoughts from the other contributors. Moreover, Halkier (2012:37) points out that a more profound reflection and conversation between the informants are based on their relationship with each other. Tied up to my thesis, one can argue that a group interview will raise the reflection as the informants are from the same class, know that they are there for the same reason, are good friends and are not chosen randomly. The goal of the interview, and my belief, is that the group setting will encourage the informants to share their experiences and seem less frightening and personal than an individual interview.

I could have chosen different approaches to assemble my data. I did not choose observation as a method mainly because I do not believe it would have ensured me with answers to my thesis. Since I was interested in a specific group of pupils' experiences of being orally active in English, not the whole class. Also, I need them to utter their thoughts to get answers to my thesis, which cannot be done just by observing an English lesson. A questionnaire would have provided the opportunity for the pupils to respond in writing, but it would not have given me in-depth answers of their experiences and understandings, since Andersen (2010) states that the detriment of using a questionnaire is that there is a chance of leaving out necessary and elaborating information as the answers usually are shorter and more imprecise than those asked in an interview. Furthermore, the distance created between the informants and the researcher when using a questionnaire removes the opportunity to correct misunderstandings and to ask follow-up questions. An unstructured group interview provides possibilities for clearing up misunderstandings, and for asking follow-up questions if I want the informants to elaborate more on a specific topic. Also, an unstructured interview sets a more relaxed setting which might contribute to the informants bringing in other areas of oral activity the researcher may not have thought about.

3.1.1 Categories of questions in the interviews

Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) account for a range of diverse types of questions that can be used in interviews. The two group interviews performed for this thesis included several types of questions. For starter, *Introductory Question* were asked. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) define Introductory Questions as opening questions, "such questions may yield spontaneous, rich descriptions where subjects themselves provide what they have experienced as the main aspects of the phenomena investigated" (p.135). An example of an Introductory Question asked to gather data about my field of research was: "How do you feel about expressing yourself orally in English in the classroom?". The second approach of questions asked in the two group interviews is what Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) call *Follow-up Questions*. These questions strike

through direct questioning of what has just been said, or through a nod, or “mm”, or by a pause to interfere that the subject should go on with descriptions. I used Follow-up Questions such as: “So, you are saying that the fear is with you even when you are taken out of the classroom to express yourself orally in English?”. The informants of my study brought many interesting topics to the table but did sometimes stop in the middle of the sentence or provide short answers. To gather more information, I used what Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, p. 135) refer to as *Probing Questions*. Using Probing Questions, the inquirer “pursues the answers, probing their content, but without stating what dimensions are to be taken into account”. Examples of *Probing Questions* used in the interviews for this thesis were: “Can you elaborate more?”, or “Can you give me more details on this?”. Finally, I used some *Specifying Questions* in my collection of data. These questions are more operationalizing and aim to get more precise descriptions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). An example for this type of question used for this assignment was: “*How did your body react when you felt a mounting anxiety?*”.

Before asking the informants any questions, I shared some of my personal experiences as a secondary school pupil. I told them that I for many years struggled to show my oral skill in larger groups and that I viewed oral activity in English as a feared situation. Additionally, I told them that my own experiences as an adolescent was played as a motivation factor for wanting to write my thesis on introverts’ experience on speaking English in the classroom. I chose to share my experiences with the informants so they more could see me as their peer.

To get the conversation going, I started by asking the pupils about their feelings toward the subject English. Initially, I also asked this question to gather insight of their experience towards foreign language learning in general, and not just towards oral language learning activities. Although, as my thesis centres around oral activity in English, I wanted to find out whether they had issues or negative thoughts to the whole spectre of the subject, or in contrast, if they enjoy and view the subject as a positive experience.

Tied up to my research question the pupils were asked about their experiences on expressing themselves orally in the English classroom. Asking this question, I wanted to investigate whether they had positive or negative experiences towards expressing themselves. Beforehand, I knew that these people tend to stay away from oral activity in English, but lacked information whether their feelings where strictly adverse. Regarding experiences on oral activity, I wanted to ask the informants whether they had different experiences concerning prepared speech and spontaneous speech. Additionally, the informants also brought up the difference between

speaking in front of the whole class versus speaking in smaller groups. I had not thought about asking them about this aspect of oral activity, but found their shared experiences valuable to the field of my research.

After hearing the girls' experiences and feelings toward the subject English and their thoughts of speaking English in the classroom, I wanted to explore whether oral activity in English differed from oral activity in other subjects and why.

Based on first-hand experiences as a secondary pupil, I remembered experiencing physical body reactions whenever I had to express myself orally in the classroom. A vital question I asked the pupils was if they experienced such reactions when having to speak English in the classroom and if they could explain these reactions. I did not ask the pupils directly what/which factors made them reluctant to speak English in the classroom because I did not need to. Through both interviews, they entered this field within oral activity in English by themselves.

Because secondary pupils receive a degree on their oral performance speaking English, I asked the pupils whether their grade concerning their oral performance influenced their will to speak English in the classroom.

Finally, I wanted to investigate the perspective the informants had on the extrovert pupils in class, to see whether the louder pupils had an effect on their oral performance in the classroom. After explaining what extrovert behaviour means, I questioned them whether they felt extroverts made it harder for them to utter their voice in class.

3.2 Selection of informants

My master thesis is a phenomenological study, that aims to describe “the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants” (Creswell, 2014, p. 14). Qualitative studies is based on strategic selections of informants, researchers chose informants with qualifications and qualities that are strategic in relationship to the research question (Thagaard, 2013). The selection of informants for this study was strategic. This study aims to gather information on pupils that have a relative high competence and skills in English but still do not want to express themselves orally in English in the classroom. In the e-mails sent to two teachers, I specifically asked them to select pupils that they would characterise as talented, but silent language learners. The reason why I decided to use secondary school pupils rather than primary school pupils was to study the effect of grades. Does the awareness of evaluation in the form of grades affect the pupils' experience of being anxious? Also, older pupils could be

expected to have more insight into the topic as they have more experience into speaking English in the classroom as well having enough insight into their own thoughts and feelings to be able to put these into words.

Two Schools in Tromsø provided participants from the age 14-15 for this study, which I here refer to as Sjøen and Elva. Both interviews took place in classrooms at the Elva and Sjøen School during school hours. The teachers in each school had singled out these specific pupils as they viewed them as excellent language learners who refused to show their knowledge and language skills in larger groups. I conducted two group interviews in total, consisting of three pupils participating in each of them. The pupils were aware of the fact that they got chosen because of their introvert behaviour in the classroom, and aware of the fact that their teachers viewed them as talented language speakers. Both interviews were conducted in Norwegian because it was the mother tongue of all six informants and because I wanted the pupils to be more relaxed.

3.3 The agonistic approach

Although I collected sufficient data from both group interviews, I still feel the need to reflect and even problematize my chosen method for gathering information about introverts' perspective on oral activity. In interviews, the inquirer functions as an instrument for collecting data material. However, interviews can be challenging as the informants can show a reluctant and passive attitude towards sharing their experiences. The participants in interviews are free to choose what they want to tell and share with the researcher, in other words, interviews are not a method where the inquirer scans the informants' brains.

Vitus (2007, p. 1) refers to Visveswaran (1994) who addresses that silence, secrets and lies are considered strategies of resistance in interviews. In the performed interviews in my study, I engaged in silence from one of the groups. Whether they told me the truth or lied to me is a question that is hard to answer. Some pupils view interviews as an examination and may tell the researcher what they believe he or she wants to hear. However, this can also be said about other types of research methods, such as questionnaires. One can never be sure that the participants simply convey the truth.

Researchers may assume that field participants meet them with consent. Sadly, this is not always the case: Participants often resist our project researchers in unrecognisable ways (Vitus, 2007). "Researchers often struggle to make field participants fit into a specific research mode.

Whether this struggle takes place indirectly or directly, consciously or unconsciously, overcoming resistance is nevertheless an underlying prerequisite for most methodological thought and practice” (Visweswaran, 1994, in Vitus, 2007, p. 2). Mentioning other researchers, such as Bourdieu (1999) and Adler & Adler (2002), who believe that a remedy for counteracting reluctance or resistance exists, Vitus proposes that instead of trying to overcome field participants resistance, one should rather incorporate the different strategies of resistance that field participants can use into the research. One strategy Vitus refers to is called the agonistic approach. The agonistic approach “offers the researcher a framework for understanding and developing a sensitivity toward context-related resistance dynamics, and a framework to use both at the outset and during the data analyses” (Vitus, 2007, p. 2). Vitus (2007, p. 1) “uses the agonistic approach to examine the identity construction problems and resistance dynamics in interviews”. The goal of the agonistic approach is to embrace conflicting perspectives and differences in relation to the people being studied. Further, the approach welcomes for “participants’ articulations, signs, or strategies for resistance as a lens for studying the social relations at work in the research process” (Vitus, 2007, p. 5). Vitus argues that researchers must move beyond Adler & Adler (2002) and Bourdieu’s (1999) liberal perspectives, involving technical ways of explaining resistance from respondents such as social hierarchies and social positions in the room. Rather the researcher must include a critical examination of how the researcher, in interview situations, positions himself or herself. Researchers have to be aware of the ways in which he or her takes “part in reproducing the structures of power and patterns of identification within a specific field and to reflect on the ways in which these processes shape the material” (Vitus, 2007, p. 10). Research processes identify field participants through categories by which they are met and understood (Visweswaran, 1994 in Vitus, 2007, p. 13). The pupils in the interviews were categorised as proficient, but passive language learners. Vitus (2007, p. 13) refers to Visweswaran (1994), who argues that resistance from informants in interview situations can be viewed as “strategies against submitting to the identity categories with which the researcher presents them resistance against subjecting themselves to the power relationships that are part of these identity categories”. The pupils from Elva and Sjøen were aware of why they were put in the interviews. Their teachers had classified them as introverts in the classroom, and they received a document describing why they were fitted for this study (see Appendix). In other words, the pupils had been identified and categorised by both their teachers and by me as a researcher. By showing opposition to speak in the interview, the pupils did not just display resistance against submitting themselves in identity categories. On the

contrary, by being reluctant to speak they in fact reinforced their identity and that they were a part of the identity category “proficient, but passive language learners”.

3.4 My role in the interviews

The researcher plays a significant role in interviews. “The role of the researcher as a person, of researcher’s integrity, is critical to the quality of the soundness of ethical decisions in a qualitative inquiry” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 74). In an interview, the researcher’s integrity is important and magnified as the researcher is the main instrument for collecting data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Factors that can help the researcher make choices in the interview process are to be aware of value issues, ethical guidelines and ethical theory, however, the researcher’s integrity, knowledge, experience, fairness, and honesty are considered as the decisive factors (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). I knew the pupils from Elva School as I had my third-year practice period in their class and thought that our relationship would result in a vivid conversation with the girls. However, the interview at Elva turned out to be the opposite, and could possibly be a methodological weakness in my study. Visweswaran (1994) states in (Vitus, 2007, p. 13) that when conducting interviews, the inquirer needs to be aware of how he or she positions him/herself. Reflecting on my role in the performed interviews, I would say that I kept a clear integrity and positioned myself as an equal with the informants as much as possible. I shared some of my own experiences as an introvert secondary pupil with them, not to put ideas in their mind, but to make them aware that I understand what they are going through. Furthermore, I acted in a calm and friendly manner and aim to give the informants room to share their feelings and knowledge on the topic while simultaneously staying objective to their experiences.

3.5 Validity

“Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures” (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). Christoffersen & Johannessen (2012:24) use approximately the same definition as Creswell as they claim the following of validity: “Data is not the actual reality, but representations of it. A vital question is how solid, or relevant the data represent the phenomena in question” [my transl.]. Creswell (2014) states that validity connects to words like authenticity, trustworthiness, and credibility. By interviewing two groups of secondary pupils, I got two data resources. Two resources of informants made it possible to investigate whether the two groups of learners have the same thoughts, experiences and perspective on speaking English in the classroom, or whether they

bring forward inconsistent information. Postholm (2010) calls this procedure triangulation. If themes are established on “converging several sources of data or perspectives from participants, then this process can be claimed as adding validity to the study” (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). In this study, as with much qualitative research in general, it is difficult to generalise the collected data. Based on the small size of my sample, it is difficult to assume a transfer of the findings to a general scale. However, since the responses from the informants correlated with much of the research literature and that most answers from the informants from the informants were in correspondence, I believe the results can be generalised. I consider it likely that other introvert pupils in secondary schools would recognise themselves in the statements given by the secondary pupils’ performing in this study.

3.6 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and credibility of the gathered data. Reliability is tied up to the accuracy of the data, and relates to which data is used, how it is collected and how it is analysed (Christoffersen & Johannessen, 2012). Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2017) describes reliability as an umbrella term as it involves dependability, consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and groups of respondents. In qualitative research the term reliability connects to words like credibility, neutrality, consistency and transferability (Cohen, et. al., 2017). According to Postholm (2010), reliability highlights how reliable the results are; this implies that results can be repeated and reproduced. Considering my study, the reliability can be threatened by several factors. First and foremost, the number of participants is incomplete to apply for the population of secondary school pupils in Norway. However, the collected information gathered from the pupils can represent tendencies, and thereby provide valuable insight into the experience of pupils in secondary school in speaking English in the classroom. As an inquiry, it is sufficient that each of the pupils being interviewed get the same amount of credibility in the study (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, Postholm (2010) anticipates that reliability can lessen if the inquirer uses concepts and terms that are unfamiliar or strange for the informants. By using an unstructured interview as a method, I hoped to prevent this from happening as unstructured interviews provide the opportunity to clear up eventual misunderstandings or strange concepts that appear along the way (Postholm, 2010). Finally, a study is examined reliable if the interview measures what it is supposed (Postholm, 2010), which in my research is secondary pupils’ experience of expressing themselves in a foreign language in the classroom. Based on the goal of my thesis, it is therefore essential to make the

informants aware of different concepts necessary for the topic, and that the questions asked are considered relevant.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Research requires that ethical principles and legal guidelines are followed. Creswell (2014) claims that the ethical considerations that need to be anticipated are extensive and necessary through the whole research process. At the beginning of the research, it is important that the researcher identifies a topic that will benefit participants, does not stress participants into signing consent forms and pays attention and shows sensitivity to vulnerable informants. Using secondary school pupils as informants, I am obligated to obtain appropriate consent. To meet this requirement the pupils' parents had to authorize that their child could participate in the study. The parents of the informants received an information sheet describing the purpose of the study they were required to sign as their legal guardians (see Appendix 1).

Ethical research also involves giving the participants the same treatment and warding off deceiving participants, (Creswell, 2014). In an unstructured group interview, it is vital to give each of the informants the opportunity to speak their mind. Furthermore, there are ethical considerations in the analysis of the collected data. To fulfil the ethical guidelines in the analysis of the collected data, Creswell (2014) state that the researcher must avoid siding with participants. Having experienced being passive in English lessons myself, it is possible that I might relate to the thoughts of one informant more than the others. However, as a researcher, I have to give the same amount of attention to all the pupils' perspectives. Finally, it is critical to respect the privacy of the informants by making them anonymous (Creswell, 2014). To meet the requirement of anonymity, I have given the schools and pupils fictional names when presenting the collected data.

Christoffersen & Johannessen (2012) state that people who participate in a study should have the right to determine their own participation. They can withdraw from the project at any moment. They are also entitled to decide what and how much of their personal thoughts and experiences they want to share. Furthermore, the participants should be confident that the researcher shields confidential information and treats it carefully (Christoffersen & Johannessen. "Research concerning universities, colleges, a number of health enterprises and other research institutions are established under a privacy representative called "Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS", NSD" (Norwegian Centre for Research Data) (Christoffersen & Johannessen (2012, p. 44). As the data collected in this study contained

sensitive and personal information, I was required to send an application to NSD describing how I intended to gather and store the data during my research process.

3.8 Thematic analysis

In a qualitative study, the process of analysis begins the moment the inquirer starts to collect data (Postholm, 2010). This is something I experienced in both of my interviews as the informants provided interesting elements of oral activity that I had not thought about myself, but chose to explore further as they were relevant for this thesis. To assemble my data, I used Braun & Clarke's model of analysis. Braun & Clarke (2006) point to six steps using a thematic analysis as a method for organizing data. Thematic analysis is used as an approach for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within the data. "It minimally organizes and describes the data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). In their model, Braun & Clarke have set the six steps of the analysis process in a specific order. However, they highlight that the order of the steps is meant as a guideline rather than rules for the researcher. The steps need to be followed with flexibility as analysis is a recursive process rather than a linear process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Analysis is a vital role in research, it should not be rushed. The process goes back and forth throughout phases, and it develops over time (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I decided to use Braun & Clarke's thematic analysis because it had clear guidelines on how to analysis the collected data material and because the analysis required reflections and forced me to perform an in-depth analysis.

As a first step in a thematic analysis, it is required that the researcher is familiar with the collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To immerse myself in the collected data, I listened to both interviews, transcribed them and re-read the informants' statements. Braun and Clarke's next step in the analysis process is to organize data by coding it.

This involves the production of initial codes from the data that appears interesting to the analyst, and refer to the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88).

After coding the data, the third step of the analysis process is to start searching for themes of the coded data. Examples of themes that I used in my analysis were: body reactions, oral activity, grades and so on. The fourth step in the process is to review the themes, which involves reviewing and refining themes founded in the former step to see if the themes appear from

coherent patterns. When the themes seem to be in coherence with each other, the inquirer considers the validity of individual themes in relation to the dataset and if the themes can reflect meanings evidence in the data set as a whole. The goal of this step is that the inquirer gets a fairly good idea of the different themes, how they fit together, and their coherence (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Concerning this study, this step showed coherence between different themes, such as language anxiety and different oral activities and oral activity and grades. Naming themes are the fifth phase of Braun & Clarke's thematic analysis. This step involves naming themes that will be presented in the thesis and finding the essence of what each theme is about and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures. The last step in the analysis involves the final analysis and write up of the reported themes. The write-up should provide sufficient evidence of themes within the data by using extracts to demonstrate the prevalence of the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.9 Reflections about my performed study

Although I believe I gathered data that answer my research question, I still would have done a few changes if I was to do it all over again. For starters, I would have asked more questions regarding oral activity and grades since grades are an essential part of secondary school. Though the informants provided information about grades and how grades influenced their will to speak, I believe I could have gather more valuable insight if I had provided more questions concerning assessment. Secondly, I would have tried harder to get boys as informants. Even though the schools Sjøen and Elva not had any boys at their disposal, I could have asked other schools if they had any introvert talented boys. In terms of the methodological aspect of my study, I would, in the aftermath of this study, perhaps conducted one on one interviews with the informants as the girls within each group provided similar answers as their peers. However, I could not have known this when I started my research, and I cannot be sure that the given answers would have turned out any different.

Summing up the main elements of this chapter, I used qualitative group interviews as method for collecting data. Secondary school pupils were used as informants and there was a total of six pupils who participated in this study. The agonistic approach by Vitus (2007) addresses that researchers can meet informants who are reluctant to speak in interviews, as did I in one of my interviews. Two sources of data promote validity for this study (Creswell, 2014). The results can be considered to some extent reliable as most of the comments from both interview was repetitive (Postholm, 2010). Also, unstructured group interviews strengthen the reliability of my study as they provided opportunities to clear up misunderstandings along the way

(Postholm, 2010). I followed ethical considerations through the whole research process as I obtained appropriate consent by giving the pupils legal guardians an information sheet they were required to sign, I maintained the anonymity of the pupils by giving them fictional names, and did not deceive participants (Creswell, 2014). Finally, I used Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis for analysing my data.

4 Findings and discussion

This chapter presents the findings and discusses them in relation to the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Two.

In the end of this chapter I turn to a discussion of the three striking differences between the interviews. The first connects to the informants' willingness to speak; the second to who the informants felt were primarily to blame for their reluctance to speak English in the classroom. Rather than seeing these as variations, I argue that there may well be interesting connections between these differences.

4.1 Feelings towards the subject English

All the participants saw English as a valuable and essential subject that allowed them to learn a language common all over the world. They expressed that their English lessons involved fun learning, which one described as “learning that brings them joy”. The girls at Sjøen School, in particular had positive attitudes regarding the subject English. They considered it as a valuable and exciting subject where goals and accomplishment were within reach:

Sigrid: *It is beyond doubt my favourite subject in school because I enjoy learning a new language as it is one of my strongest suits, it is a subject I accomplish, and English is therefore a subject I like.*

Krashen & Terrell (1983) and Lightbown & Spada (2013) claim that affective filters can prevent language acquisition. Further, they say that examples of affective filters can be language anxiety, attitudes and motivation. In other words, can pupils who have negative attitudes or lack motivation struggle more to accomplish a foreign language. For both Sjøen and Elva pupils, I consider their language anxiety as an affective filter (this will be discussed further in chapter 4.2.6) but the same cannot be said about their attitudes and motivation as they all shared that they enjoyed the subject and wanted to learn as much English as possible.

4.2 Introverts' experience on speaking English

Although all the participants in this study had positive attitudes concerning the subject English, their attitudes changed when I asked them about their experience of expressing themselves in the target language. All of the informants at Sjøen School agreed that speaking English in the classroom was tied up to discomfort and triggered feelings of fear, panic and anxiety. All of the

informants used the word “uncomfortable” (Norwegian: *ubehagelig*) to address the experience. They wished they were more willing to show their expertise in the classroom, but remained silent in the classroom in order to avoid being judged by other pupils in the classroom. The pupils at Sjøen School said that comments from other pupils in class happened daily and that the comments most of the time were addressed in a negative tone:

Sarah: *I want to express myself orally in English in front of the class, to show them that I understand and know the subject, but unfortunately, I do not feel comfortable with it. I am afraid I will get ugly comments from my classmates.*

Sunniva: *I agree with Sarah, it feels better to sit silent and let someone else take the fall by expressing themselves in English. That way I can get myself out of the situation in a safe manner, unhurt, and save myself the risk of humiliating myself.*

The pupils at Elva School provided corresponding answers. All of the girls described speaking English in the classroom as an uncomfortable and scary situation. Their fear was also based on making mistakes. However, they stated that no one in their class delivered rude comments when someone uttered their voice in the classroom. Rather, their judgement seemed to come from themselves, and they suffered from the pressure of speaking English proficiently:

Erika: *It is uncomfortable to talk in front of the whole class. I am terrified of making a mistake. I also begin to evaluate myself and my language, do I speak fast enough, is my language fluent enough, which words should I use. If it takes too long for the words to come out of my mouth, I start to feel bad.*

The quotes reveal how three introvert pupils share negative experiences towards expressing themselves orally in the classroom. The informants were characterised by their teachers as passive pupils in the classroom, their responses on oral activity in the classroom reinforced that the chosen pupils could be viewed as introverts as they abstained from initiative to speak (Lund, 2012). All six of the girls tended to listen more than they spoke and to put more consideration about what they chose to express when they found themselves in a crowded environment. The responses from the informants thus correlate with Skyggebjerg (2014) perspective on introverts' behaviour patterns.

4.2.1 Different situations of oral activity in English

In both interviews, the informants mentioned different scenarios within oral activity in English that made it worse or better for them to utter their voice. Informants at Elva School touched upon the difference between speaking English in front of the whole class versus talking in front of a hand of pupils. Comments that resurfaced were that speaking in small groups or in front of individuals made the experience less frightening than speaking in a full set classroom, mostly, because their voices were blended in with the rest of the class, making fewer pupils notice their mistakes if they made any:

Emilie: It is okay to express myself in English in front of a small group or one person, but to express myself in English for the whole class is uncomfortable. I do not want to make a mistake in front of all.

The informant Eirin at Elva School, shared a personal experience she had endured in an English lesson that had been tough on her. Being forced to talk English in front of the whole class by one of her former teachers, the experience turned out to be so overwhelming that she had started to cry when she entered the blackboard to present her presentation. Pupils at Sjøen School also concluded that they felt less frightened when they spoke English with a smaller set of people. Emilie stated that she preferred when the teacher divided the class in two so there would be fewer eyes staring at her and less ears listening to her.

The second aspect of oral activity I asked both groups about experiences about spontaneous oral activity and prepared oral activity. The respondents reflected well on this aspect of oral activity in English and evaluated advantages and disadvantages to spontaneous and prepared oral activity. Five of six pupils stated that the downside of spontaneous language activity was that they easier could lose track of their vocabulary, speak less proficiently and that spontaneous activity made the risk of failure higher. In contrast, the values of spontaneous activity were that the teacher expected less from them, they did not have to speak as formal, spontaneous oral activity allowed them to speak with shorter sentences, and that spontaneous activity usually was performed in small groups. Overall, most of the pupils claimed that they preferred prepared oral activities in English as they got to practice speaking proper English, could provide more in-depth and reflected answers and could prepare themselves mentally:

Emilie: *I get more insecure when I have to express myself spontaneously because I am afraid to forget words and think about which words to use. If it gets really quiet in the classroom and everybody is waiting for my point I get really nervous. Or, if I have to read something that I have not read before and I get unsure how to pronounce the sentence or a word correctly... The teacher does help me if I struggle, which is nice, but at the same time, she does point out my mistake in front of the whole class, making them aware that I struggle with that exact word.*

One of the six informants reflected a while on the question, but concluded that she preferred spontaneous activity as she felt stressed for a more extended period when she had to express prepared oral activities:

Sigrid: *Conversations in a small group are the best. The teacher can observe my oral activity and hear how proficient I am. These conversations are spontaneous and do not involve time for preparations. I do not enjoy prepared oral activity as it often involves a presentation. Presentations are usually presented in front of the whole class. Luckily, I get to have mine alone with the teacher. However, presentation demands lots of work and preparation, and I lay in bed days before the presentation dreading the task to come.*

As stated by Bakke & Kverndokken, 2010, p. 60), there are two main categories of oral activity. All except one, the girls from both schools, claimed that they preferred prepared speech and that they got more insecure when they had to speak spontaneously as they feared that they would lose track of vocabulary and at their pronunciations not would hold a certain standard. The girls from both schools informed me that they had several presentations in their classes, which correlates with Svenkerud et. al. (2012) findings. At first, I thought it was interesting and a bit strange that the girls preferred prepared oral activities due to the fact that prepared oral activities often include a presentation in front of the rest of the class. However, as the interviews proceeded, most of the girls informed me that they rarely held oral presentations in front of the whole class. Their teacher usually removed the girls from the classroom and let them present their prepared presentation in front of a smaller group of pupils. I doubt that the girls who claimed to favour prepared oral activity would have preferred it if they were forced to do it in front of the whole class. Introvert pupils shy away from speaking in front of larger settings of people (Flaten, 2010). All these points made by the girls themselves confirm their description

as introverts. Their reasons for wanting to speak outside the classroom, also correlates with Flaten's (2010) view on introvert behaviour as the girls from Sjøen feared being evaluated by their classmates.

4.2.2 Oral activity in English versus oral activity in other subjects

Regarding how they felt about oral activity in English versus oral activity in other subjects, the responses from the two schools did not correspond with each other. The girls at Sjøen School stated that they felt more comfortable expressing themselves orally in the subject English as they claimed that they understood the topics in English better than for example topics in mathematics and science. It was clear that their oral activity did not depend on the language, as much as the themes and topics within the subjects. The girls at Elva School, on the other hand, said that they felt more secure expressing themselves in their mother tongue. Although they touched upon topics in other subjects that they felt were more challenging than the topics in their English lessons, they said that they rather would speak Norwegian than English in the classroom since they did not have to think about grammar structures, vocabulary and pronunciation when they spoke in their mother tongue. Before sitting down with the girls from Elva, I got aware that they feared speaking English and preferred to express themselves in their mother tongue. Meeting their teacher, she told me that the girls had been a bit stressed for the interview as they were concerned they would have to answer me in English.

Language anxiety plays a vital role regarding learners' willingness to speak the target language (Park & Lee, 2005). Although the data is insufficient and inadequate for diagnosing the girls with language anxiety, their responses fit several of the distinct categories concerning language anxiety. Language anxiety is defined as worrying emotions aroused when learning a foreign language (MacIntyre, 1999). Throughout the interviews, it became clear that the girls have insecurity about speaking English in the classroom, fear that they will struggle with the understanding of the target language, fear of making a mistake in front of others, compare themselves with others and fear that their classmates will move ahead of them. According to Gregersen & MacIntyre (2014), all the mentioned factors suggest that their anxiety to speaking the language is emotional. Concerning the cognitive category of language anxiety, the girls fit to one principle, that some of them struggle with free speech. Most of the girls stated that they preferred to speak English in the classroom when they had prepared themselves. Their nerves were aroused when they had to talk spontaneously in the classroom based on fear of losing words and worrying about their level of proficiency. Furthermore, the interviews provided

proof of the girls desiring to be as silent as possible and for speaking in shorter periods in public. According to Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014), one can conclude that the girls lean towards the interactional realm of language anxiety as well.

4.2.3 Introvert versus extroverts

The girls from both Elva and Sjøen and their teachers said that they mastered the language and that they all received high marks on their performance. Thus these findings do not correlate with the findings of Riding & Banner (1988), Riding & Dayer (1980) and Fillmore et.al. (1979) on extroverts and introverts regarding language achievement. However, Riding and Banner's research was conducted with 432 secondary school pupils while my study only involved six secondary school pupils. Besides, their study aimed directly towards seeing whether there were inequalities between introverts and extroverts' language achievements. Although I was aware that most of the girls were among the most proficient language learners in their classes, I lacked insight into the extroverts' performance.

Even though the participants from both schools were aware that the teacher saw them and had not forgotten them in the classroom, it became clear that they believed that the extrovert pupils stole their attention. The extroverts were usually the first to raise their hands, making it possible for the introverts to remain quietly seated without receiving any attention.

Occasionally, they claimed, extrovert pupils tended to shout out the answer in the classroom before raising their hand, stealing these girls' opportunity to, on a rare basis, wanting to raise their hand and speak. The informants evaluated the extrovert pupils as talented language learners that often provided the correct answer and spoke fluently and proficiently. It is interesting that the introvert girls were eager to point out that they viewed the extrovert pupils as excellent language speakers. I got the impression that they pictured them as more talented learners than themselves. This is interesting, especially considering I had personal experience with this class at Elva and knew for certain that these introverts were just as proficient as their louder classmates. In addition, their teachers had told me that some of these girls were the most talented speakers in class and that they had made the girls aware of this as well. It is very clear to me, that these girls struggle to acknowledge that they are more than good enough. Based on the replies from the informants, one can argue that Lund's (2012) perspective on introverts and extroverts in our culture is accurate: that extroverts steal attention and focus from introverts. School is an arena for social growth and wellbeing for children, and these abilities can be promoted through mastered accomplishments (Kvarme &

Thu, 2015). If teachers overlook these pupils, it can delay and prevent their social development according to Lund (2012). However, even though the extrovert pupils steal attention and focus from the introvert pupils, one can argue, based on the gathered information, that living in the shadow of extroverts is not the only reason why the group of informants choose to stay orally passive in the classroom.

4.2.4 Most decisive factors for not speaking English in the classroom

The group from Sjøen School stayed passive due to the environment in the classroom. Their fear was based on expected comments from other pupils in the class, in other words, they blamed the learning environment. Pupils from Sjøen School viewed their class as unsupportive and rude. They responded that there were at least five pupils that tended to comment on others and that this threatened their will to speak English in the classroom. This indicates that their learning environment was not optimal. The informants reflected that they tended to speak more if they found themselves in smaller groups with pupils that they knew and could trust not to make an unpleasant comment on their language. The three informants from Sjøen School claimed that they wanted to act regarding the offensive comments from their classmates, but that they shied away from the confrontation because they were afraid that it would result in adverse comments towards them as well as the person that just had received critique:

Sarah: *If a pupil speaks in the classroom in front of the whole class and someone comment on her statement the rest of the class want to support her but do not do this as they know they will throw an insulting comment in their face too. Based on this, we stay silent in the classroom, knowing that no one will back us up if others remark our language or statement.*

Founded on the responses from the girls at Sjøen School, it seems that the stress of being judged and receiving comments from others, disturb these pupils' learning environment and inhibits their ability to break through their social barrier. This can be seen in correlation with Lund's (2012) perspective on language learning and learning environment.

In the second group interview performed at Elva School, the informants had a different view of what made the experience of speaking English in the classroom uncomfortable and alarming. They did not appear to have any issues concerning learning environments as they stated that

their classmates did not throw comments and negative attitudes if someone were to make a mistake. Their fear seemed to be based on their self-image and tendency to judge themselves:

Erika: *I have never experienced that others in the class comment if someone makes a mistake in English in the classroom. I consider myself my worst enemy. I put a lot of pressure on myself and want to deliver perfect answers in the classroom, so I do not make a fool of myself. It is my personal thoughts that contribute to me being introvert in the lessons.*

Eirin and Emilie, from Elva School, expressed that they both experienced feelings of regret when they refrained from speaking English in the classroom. During several English lessons, both wanted to raise their hands as they were sure the answer would satisfy the teacher's question but did not find the courage to do so. They both addressed that they felt anger or experienced feelings of regret when they heard that the answers given by one of their co-pupils corresponded with what they thought about saying. However, it did not take long before their conscious self-image justified that they were right not to speak English in the classroom since they viewed the given answer as better than their own:

Eirin: *Sometimes I do not regret not raising my hand as I feel that the given answer delivered by another pupil was better than mine. Although, my answer and the spoken answer resemble, I feel that the given answer was better than mine.*

As observed by Flaten (2010) introverts experience a more constant level of evaluation. Due to their own self-image they find environments to be intimidated and threatening (Skyggebjerg, 2014). Both groups of girls expressed that their self-image played a vital role concerning their ability to speak their mind in English in the classroom, the girls from Elva School in particular. One of the informants stated that she was her own worst enemy affecting her oral performance in the classroom. During several lessons, this girl stopped herself from speaking English in the classroom because she wanted her English to be perfect, or to give a perfect answer. In other words, she stressed herself. This relates to Flaten's (2010) observation. Claiming that introverts function as their own critics, correlates with the girls' statements.

Self-image and learning environment overlapped in the interview with the girls from Sjøen School. They claim that they evaluated their own performance, but that they also were afraid of being judged by others in the classroom. Flaten (2010) explain that introverts fear failure and think about their mistake longer. One can argue that the comments from both interviews reflect

both Flaten's and Skyggeberg's view on introvert behaviour as the girls said they fear failure. What is interesting is that all the girls in the study receives high marks in English and have been told by their teachers that they master the subject English well. Nevertheless, their self-image persuades them into thinking that others in the class are better than them. Inhibition for speaking a target language influences the amount of how much learners chose to practice the language orally (Hoang Tuan & Ngoc Mai, 2015). These girls' self-image inhibits their will to speak English in front of the class. They remain silent because they are scared of making mistakes, fear humiliation and dread criticism from others (Hoang Tuan & Ngoc Mai, 2015).

In both interviews, the girls stated that their self-image varied from day to day. On occasional days they said that they felt inspired to speak English in the classroom. At Sjøen School, the girls claimed that some days, their self-image did not stand in the way of their will to speak up in the classroom, one of the girls referred to this as "good days":

Sarah: *...it depends whether I have "good" or "bad" day. Some days, I can put up with more adversity and tend to think less what anybody thinks of me. However, some days I wake up nervous before I have even stepped into the school. On such days there is no way that I will speak in the classroom.*

Sigrid: *I agree with Sarah. If I have a bad day, I rarely say anything, not even to my friends... I just sit there silent. If I have a good day the others can comment what they want on my oral performance. I do not care as there is nothing I can do with it. Entering my classroom on good days I convince myself that "today it is my time to shine!". I feel proud of myself when I have a good day.*

4.2.5 Gender differences and language acquisition

All the pupils chosen were girls. The teachers said they had many girls that could be available and useful for this study. I asked each of the teachers to submit me with a group of three to four informants. At first, I worried that asking for three to four informants would be too ambitious, but it became very clear it was not. Both teachers informed me that if I needed more informants, or if any of the informants were to withdraw from performing in the study, they both had a handful of other girls that fitted as informants at their disposal. I asked both teachers to search for boys to fit the category "proficient, but orally passive", but neither of them had any. Based on both the process of selecting informants and on the findings, it seems as if girls are more reluctant to speak than boys, and that their language anxiety can be

pictured as a reason for this. This concurs with Park & French (2013), who found that language anxiety is more common with girls. Flaten (2010) emphasises that anxiety should be taken seriously, but that it sadly sometimes is overlooked. Most people have endured with some level of anxiety (Flaten, 2010). Though, dreading to accomplish something or to do a specific task, people manage to overcome their fear and do the task in hand. However, because anxiety is a known phenomenon for many, Flaten (2010, p. 15) state that people tend to trivialise anxiety: “We overlook that anxiety for some people is an overwhelming feeling rather than just a little suction in the stomach”.

According to Riding & Banner (1988), boys are submissive to their peers and learn in group situations where the group accepts accomplishments, and that girls more frequently submissive to adults. The girls from Sjøen School claimed that the boys in their class were more willing to show their language skills in larger groups:

Sarah: *In English lessons, there are hardly any girls who voluntarily speak English. Frequently, the boys raise their hand and answer the teacher’s question...Some of them provide well reflected answers and speak the language very well.*

Sarah’s statement implies that the boys in her class can be pictured as talented language learners that are willing to share their skills in public. Tied to what Riding & Banner (1988) say, this could imply that the boys at Sjøen School in fact are submissive to their peers and that they raise their hand in class because the group of boys in their class accept accomplishments. As the interview proceeded, it became clear that the boys from Sjøen influence each other. Not just to show their success, but sadly also in terms of negative comments:

Sunniva: *If one boy, especially a boy with popular status, comments on a girl’s language or answer, more boys will follow that boy’s example and start to throw comments.*

Based on Sarah and Sunniva’s responses, it seems as the boys in their class pay a lot of attention to their peers’ behaviour and attitude. Like a domino set, one boy’s comment starts the process of rudeness, and one by one, the other boys will follow. Although Riding & Banner’s (1988) perspective on submission correlates with the boys from Sjøen School, one can argue that their perspective is not accurate for the girls. Seemingly, the girls are more submissive to the boys in their class rather than to their adult teacher.

4.2.6 Influence of grades

Five of six pupils stated that they thought it was easier to speak English in the classroom when they were primary pupils because of their learning environment, ability to be less informal and because the general level of proficiency in their primary class was lower than it was in secondary school. Further, three of the informants said that they favoured a less formal evaluation, in the way they received it as primary school pupils:

Sigrid: *In the lower grades, our assessment were comments from the teacher, and that was it. The fact that I receive an assessment in the form of a number now makes it easier to compare myself to others in class.*

The pupils reflected on the two sides concerning oral activity and grades. They claimed that grades added pressure as each one of them wanted to receive a high mark in oral activity at the end of the school semester. It was obvious that the informants thought a great deal about their grades as they considered them necessary for their future. On the other hand, they viewed this pressure as necessary as they thought they would speak less in the classroom if the teacher would not evaluate them and speak more when the grade was put in focus:

Emilie: *I rarely speak English in the classroom, but if it is written on our weekly schedule, or if the teacher tells us that the focus of a specific lesson is oral activity, I feel more pressure to address myself in English as it has received extra focus that week or hour.*

Secondary school language learners receive grades on their spoken performance. The informants stated that the influence of grades played a vital role for their will to speak English in the classroom. As evident from their comments, grades seem to add pressure and force them into being more active in the classroom. However, they all concluded that they thought it was easier to speak in the classroom in their earlier classes as the expectations from their teachers and classmates had a lower standard and that they did not receive evaluation in the form of a number.

Tied up to language anxiety, the findings indicate that grades added more stress on pupils' oral performance as they claimed that they thought it was easier to raise their hand and speak English in primary school. Their evaluation in secondary school can be viewed as a test that endures

over the whole semester. In relation to Amiri & Ghonsooly's (2015) research, one can argue that grades in secondary school can promote test anxiety as the pupils put a lot of attention and worry on their assessment on their oral performance.

In my own experiences as a teacher training student in the classroom, I have observed that pupils put a lot of consideration on their received grades. When offering assessment to secondary school pupils, I have tried to give feedback in form of comments as well as a mark in the form of a number. Unfortunately, I have noticed that secondary pupils tend to overlook the comments and just focus on their received number. Additionally, they start to self-compare their grade with their co-pupils. Tied to Gregersen & MacIntyre's (2014) theory about language anxiety, pupils do this because they fear that others in the class move ahead of them in the learning process.

Phillips (1992) claims that even though learners' language anxiety debilitates their act to speak the target language, their interest and will for practising and evolving their language is another matter. Krashen & Terrell (1983) claim that language anxiety, attitude and motivation are considered as affective filters regarding language acquisition. The findings indicate that the informants' anxiety connected to their self-image stop them from using their voice in the classroom. However, the results also imply that the girls still have a will to do well and to become better language learners. The fact that two of the girls claimed that they became regretful when they remained silent while knowing the answer suggests that they are interested and want to speak in the classroom. Concerning the influence of grades, it becomes clear that all of the girls have a desire to succeed in the subject and try to push themselves into breaking through their safe comfort zone. In other words, these secondary school girls have a positive attitude and high motivation to learn English. One can therefore argue that attitude and motivation are not to be reckoned as affective filters for the chosen informants.

4.2.7 Bodily reactions

The girls describe how they feel about speaking English in the classroom made me realise the struggle they endure for several hours a week. I choose to use the word "struggle" as it fits the way they talk about physical, embodied reactions from having to speak in class., as exemplified by the following statements from Sarah and Sunniva:

Sarah: *It is not a pleasant experience. Actually, I do not think that I have ever raised my hand voluntarily in the classroom my entire period as a secondary school pupil. It starts with me getting symptoms of an anxiety attack. My heart starts to beat, I start to*

focus at one specific point in the classroom, usually the floor ... Then I get dizzy, my head hurts because I have to concentrate hard, my body gets tense, I start to shiver and to sweat. All in all, it is an uncomfortable situation.

Sunniva: *My heartbeat raises. Even when I have prepared myself and knows exactly what to answer, I start to panic in fear of losing my voice. Sometimes I believe that I am going to faint. I have to work hard to calm myself down, things start to get blurry, and I have to remind myself to breathe. In the worst moments, it feels as if I am going to cry.*

The second group of informants got the same question concerning bodily reactions and oral activity. They answered with shorter and less in-depth answers. Summing up their responses, they corresponded with the first group's responses: Their bodies tremble, they sweat, and the feeling of panic sneaks in.

All of the girls stated that their bodies suffered from a range of psychical reactions when they had to speak English in class. Sharing their experiences on speaking English in the classroom, the results also corresponds with Gregersen & MacIntyre's (2014) fourth category of language anxiety, the physical category. Almost starting to cry when having to speak English in the classroom shows these pupils deal with extremely negative and frightening situations on a regular basis. Their bodies react as bodies do when confronted with danger.

Some of the reactions the introvert pupils experience when they have to speak English can be seen on their bodies, such as sweat and shivering. However, the same cannot be said about their heartbeat, dizziness and intense stress. Teachers might struggle to see how tough the experience of speaking in the classroom is for introverts as they deal with psychical emotions inside them. In light of what Kvarme & Thu (2015) state about introverts' ability to regulate their feelings and thoughts one can argue that these girls become silent because they endure with chaos inside them. Speaking while enduring with tough emotions can be overwhelming. Even knowing the correct answer, the stress inside introverts debilitates their ability to speak up.

4.2.8 Final remarks

The findings correlate with Gregersen & MacIntyre's (2014) view on language anxiety as the girls fitted to all the categories of language anxiety. Also, the findings can be seen in coherence with Lund (2012) and Lightbown & Spada's (2013) perspective on learning environment and

language acquisitions. Additionally, the findings also fit Flaten (2010) view on introverts versus extroverts, and Skyggebjerg (2014) and Kvarme & Thu's (2015) prospect on introvert pupils' behaviour in the classroom. The most profound findings from the interviews are:

- Introverts experiences oral activity in English as a dreaded and scary situation.
- There are inequalities between different oral activities concerning their level of anxiety.
- Generally, the pupils blame learning environment and self-image for their reluctance to speak.
- Grades effect the secondary school girls' oral performance in class.

4.3 Comparing the interviews

The two interviews turned out to bring forth different experiences and thoughts on the topic at hand and also delivered two different experiences for me as a researcher. Informants in the first interview at Sjøen School were more willing and eager to share and speak about their experiences of oral activity in the classroom. This interview lasted about one hour and ten minutes, longer than expected, but the informants had much to tell. My role as a moderator seemed to be more necessary in this interview as I had to break in and stop them to make sure they did not interrupt each other and to make sure each of the pupils got a chance to utter their opinions. I experienced the second interview as a clear contrast to the first. The informants in the second interview were more silent, struggled to put their thoughts into words and provided less in-depth answers. Throughout the second interview, the pupils at Elva School let me take the lead. Although they answered the questions I asked them, they acted in an insecure manner. The girls from Elva School provided many “yes”, “no” and “I am not sure” answers, that contained limited information about the topic of my thesis. As a moderator in this interview, I heard myself over and over asking follow-up question such as “can you elaborate?”, “can you tell me more”, and “why is it like that?”. In other words, I had to press them for answers, something that was unnecessary with the first group. Also, the last interview lasted twenty minutes less than the first one.

It is hard to conclude why differences emerged between the two interviews. What is interesting, is that I thought it would be the other way around. I believed the second group interview would provide me with more inside information since I previously have performed as a teacher for the informants in the second interview. Also, I felt a lot more prepared for my last interview. I had added some follow-up question and rearranged the order of some of the questions to cater for a more natural and better flow. Although I collected more information from the interview at Sjøen

School, the second interview was by no means unnecessary. It did indeed administer valuable data.

I cannot help but wonder, why were the girls from Elva so reluctant to share their thoughts and experiences about oral activity in class, while the informants from Sjøen so eager? One reason for this discrepancy could be based on their provided answers. The willing informants from Sjøen School did, to a large extent blame other pupils in class for their own silence, while the girls from Elva School had seemed to blame only themselves. As Flaten (2010) states, introverts engage emotionally on their mistakes. Perhaps the girls from Elva School felt that by telling me that they only had themselves to blame for their silence in the classroom, they saw this as a personal failure. Furthermore, Flaten (2010) claims that introverts shy away from interactions with others as they are afraid of being evaluated. Because I have performed as a teacher for the girls from Elva School, I had already taken part in assessing their school performance. It is possible that the girls from Elva still pictured me as their teacher and therefore assumed that I would evaluate their performance in the interview, causing them to be nervous, and thereby resulting in them being passive.

Although, the pupils' engagement in the interviews and some of the responses differed between the two interviews, the responses and behaviour of the girls within each group was consistent. It is interesting that all of the girls from Elva School agreed that their self-image and personal thoughts of their desired achievement stopped them from raising their hand in the classroom. The same goes for the informants from Sjøen, where all girls had the same thoughts regarding their class' learning environment. Halkier (2012, p. 36) says that informants in group interviews get ideas and thoughts from other contributors. This could be an answer to why the girls acted and answered concurrently within their group setting. Maybe the girls from Sjøen School encouraged and motivated each other to share their thoughts and experiences and influenced each other into being excited to speak in the interviews. Similarly, Emilie, Eirin and Erika from Elva were affected to give the same answer and to be passive in the interview.

In light of what Visweswaran (1994) in (Vitus, 2007, p. 13) says about informants' reluctance to give information in order to prevent themselves from being submitted to identity categories, the girls, at least from Elva School, in fact did exactly the opposite, they submitted themselves to the category. By being silent in the interview, they submitted themselves in the category that their teacher beforehand had put them in. The girls from Sjøen School were not reluctant to share their experiences in the interview, and one can therefore argue that they discharged

themselves from categorised the identity category as passive pupils. However, of course there is a difference between speaking in a small group setting, like the interview, and speaking in front of an entire class. Based on the provided information from the girls from Sjøen School, I will conclude that they fit into the identity category “proficient, but passive language learners”. On the other hand, in the interview situation, they categorised themselves as orally active girls by being willing to share their knowledge and experience of the topic.

5 Conclusion

The results in this study indicate that introverts struggle when having to express themselves in English and that language anxiety was one of the factors hampering secondary school pupils' will to speak the target language. Moreover, the results reveal that the pupils' language anxiety was more triggered in specific activities within oral activities, especially activities regarding speaking in front of larger groups. The five basic skills are required by White Paper No. 30 (2003-2004) to be used in all subjects in school. However, research by Møller, Prøitz & Aasen (2009) address the fact that schools in Norway fail to work systematically with the basic skills, especially oral skills. According to Svenkerud et. al. (2012), oral skills are mostly practised through conducting presentations. Furthermore, studies by Phillips, (1992); Dörnyei, (2005); Horwitz; (2001); Oxoford, (1999); Amiri & Ghonsooly, (2015), show that the focus of language acquisition, pupils speaking proficiency and language anxiety have received increased focus over the last period, but that it seems as if the schools in the Nordic countries have failed to yet incorporate the insights provided by the studies as they still promote pupils speaking in front of others (Flaten, 2010; Svenkerud et. al, 2012).

The provided findings of this study correspond with previous research by Phillips (1992), that reveals that even though learners had a positive attitude and were motivated to learn the target language, their language anxiety stopped them from speaking in the classroom. The result of this study also showed that grades affected pupils' will to speak in the classroom: grades added pressure on the introvert pupils by making them more concerned about their language performance. Introverts have a certain tendency to function as their own critics, this influences their self-image (Flaten, 2010). The girls taking part of this study highlighted that their self-image played a vital role regarding their oral activity, one can, therefore, argue that introverts' self-image can be considered as a factor affecting their will to speak English in the classroom, and that their self-image differed from day to day. Although, not considered as a problem in both groups of informants, learning conditions is considered as a factor that influences learners' ability to speak a foreign language in the classroom. Oral activity is pictured as a negative experience by introvert secondary school pupils that even bring forth bodily reactions normally found in situations of danger and extreme stress.

5.1 Further research

This study provides insight into introvert secondary school pupils' experience on oral activity in English. What it does not include is information concerning how to make introverts' speak

more in the classroom, these perspectives of parents and teachers or conclusive evidence about connections between gender and language anxiety. All these concerns are valid for future research. What does it take to make introverts more comfortable to speak a foreign language in the classroom? What measures can be taken to lower their anxiety? Secondly, it would have been interesting to explore the perspective of their teachers and parents. To what extent are they aware of their adolescents' introvert behaviour and the pressure they have to endure with for several hours a week? Based on the present study it is hypothesised that girls have a more introvert behaviour and boys, at least in a classroom situation. However, the relationship between gender and language anxiety must be studied further. Finally, as a response to Riding & Banner's (1988) findings, the relationship between extroverts and introverts' language achievement requires further investigations.

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Appendix

1. Information sheet to the parents and pupils

Til elever og foresatte ved Sjøen/Elva Skole.

Bakgrunn og formål:

I henhold til min masteroppgave som skal leveres våren 2018 ønsker jeg å se nærmere på muntlig aktivitet i faget Engelsk. Mer spesifikt ønsker jeg å intervju en gruppe med elever som behersker faget engelsk godt, men som ikke snakker så veldig mye i timen. Av egen erfaring som ungdomsskoleelev og som lærerstudent i praksis, opplever jeg at noen elever holder tilbake deres kunnskap og blir mindre muntlig aktiv i faget engelsk enn i andre fag. Hensikten med masteroppgaven vil være å få en oversikt over opplevelsen elever som mestrer faget engelsk relativt godt, men som likevel er passive i engelsktimene har til engelsk muntlig aktivitet i plenum.

Av din engelsklærer har jeg fått tips om å spørre om du kunne tenke deg å være informant i min oppgave da hun/han mener du er flink i engelsk, men ikke er den som bidrar med mest muntlig aktivitet i timen.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Dersom du kunne tenke deg å være informant, vil informasjonen bli rekruttert i et gruppeintervju bestående av deg selv sammen med 2-3 av dine medelever. Under intervjuet vil temaet være opplevelse av det å uttrykke seg muntlig på engelsk i klasserommet knyttet til følgende faktorer: motivasjon, klasse miljø, relasjoner, forberedt muntlig aktivitet, spontan muntlig aktivitet og engelsk samtale med andre medelever.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Innsamlingsmaterialet vil bli tatt opp på lydopptak. Alle informanter anonymiseres og innsamlingsmateriale vil være utilgjengelig for andre enn meg selv og min veileder. Når masteroppgaven leveres vil det ikke være mulig å gjenkjennes i publikasjonen.

Periode

Prosjektet avsluttes 15.05.2018. Når masteroppgaven er levert vil opptak 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 trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert.

Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med min veileder Hilde Brox.

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

Samtykke til deltakelse av studien

I og med at du ikke er 18 år må foresatte underskrive om du skal delta i studien.

(Signert av foresatte, dato).