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Teaching oral skills through feature film in English language  
teaching

*A study of how the feature film Love, Simon can be used to teach English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills*

Undervisning av muntlige ferdigheter ved bruk av spillefilm i  
engelskundervisning

30 credit assignment

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## Preface

After 5 years at OsloMet it is with this Master's thesis time to say goodbye. The motivation behind this study is my interest in English oral skills and the potential learning value which film has. This study consequently aims at discovering how one can use feature film in the teaching of English oral skills.

First and foremost, I want to start by thanking my excellent supervisor, Sissil Lea Heggernes, for her guidance and support with this thesis. This thesis would not have had the same quality if it was not for your valuable knowledge and help during the writing process.

I would also like to thank my study group for their moral support, and helpful thoughts in regard to all the questions I have faced during this writing process.

Lastly, I want to thank my friends and family for their support and patience this past year.

## Abstract

This Master thesis is a didactic thesis in the English subject which explores the possibilities of using the American film *Love, Simon* to teach English sociolinguistic skills, and the pronunciation features which may be challenging for Norwegian learners and which may affect speech intelligibility. The thesis presents an analysis of linguistic and sociolinguistic features in the film *Love, Simon* and includes an analysis of the film in its entirety and of shorter sequences. This thesis builds upon data of scholarly work on the topic of film in English language teaching as well as literature on English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. An overview of the features of pronunciation which may be challenging for Norwegian learners, and which may affect speech intelligibility is also presented and used in the analyses of the linguistic features in the film.

The results of this study reveal that the film contains a realistic and varied use of language and shows various social situations which 15-16-year-olds can relate to. Furthermore, the results show that the dialogue in the film *Love, Simon* contains several examples of pronunciation features which may be challenging for Norwegian speakers of English and can cause trouble in intelligibility. The thesis discusses the use of drama activities and listening- and discussion-based activities and suggests that using film as a starting point for these activities can be a good way of teaching English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills.

## Sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven er en didaktisk oppgave i engelskfaget som utforsker mulighetene ved å bruke den amerikanske filmen *Love, Simon* til å undervise Engelsk sosiolingvistiske ferdigheter og de trekk ved engelsk uttale som nordmenn ofte sliter med, og som kan skape problemer for forståelse, til norske elever på 10.trinn. Oppgaven presenterer en analyse av lingvistiske og sosiolingvistiske trekk i filmen *Love, Simon*, og inkluderer en analyse av filmen i sin helhet og av kortere sekvenser. Oppgaven bygger på data fra akademiske artikler om temaet film i engelsk språkundervisning, samt litteratur om engelsk uttale og sosiolingvistiske ferdigheter. En oversikt over de aspektene ved engelsk uttale som nordmenn kan finne utfordrende og som kan påvirke forståelse er også presentert og brukt i analysen av de språklige aspektene ved filmen.

Resultatene fra analysen viste at filmen inneholder realistisk og variert språkbruk og viser ulike sosiale situasjoner det er sannsynlig at 15-16 åringer kan relatere til. Resultatene viser at dialogen i filmen *Love, Simon* inneholder flere eksempler på trekk ved engelsk uttale som nordmenn ofte sliter med, og som kan skape problemer for forståelse. Oppgaven diskuterer bruken av drama aktiviteter og lytte- og diskusjons-baserte oppgaver og foreslår at å bruke film som et utgangspunkt for disse oppgavene kan være en god måte å undervise i engelsk uttale og sosiolingvistiske ferdigheter.

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# 1 Background

## 1.1 Introduction:

In the field of English teaching there appears to be a general agreement that films deserve a place in the classroom (Bakken, 2016). During the course of my studies, I found that I knew little about how to teach oral skills in a way that is motivating for students in 8-10<sup>th</sup> grade in Norwegian schools. This study aims at exploring how to use film in teaching English oral skills in Norway and suggests implications for teaching English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills through film, by using the film *Love, Simon* (Berlanti, 2018) as an example.

## 1.2 Justification of topic:

As a student I loved watching films in English class. During my teaching practice, I have seen that students in general enjoy this activity, and according to Seferoglu (2008) and King (2002) watching films in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom can be motivating for the students. Seferoglu (2008) states that for teachers of EFL it is a challenge that English is not used authentically in the settings in which students live and this is especially a challenge when developing oral skills. It is suggested that through films learners can be exposed to native speakers and can observe how people communicate in real life conversational contexts (Seferoglu, 2008).

The use of film in Norwegian schools is not new. As early as 1939 film was mentioned and promoted as a pedagogical tool to use in the classroom (Ministry of Church and Education, 1957). The curriculum of 1939 does not specify the genre of film, but according to Bakken (2016) it is likely that the curricula authors meant shorter educational films, and not feature films. Despite its history in Norwegian schools, the use of film in English language teaching (ELT) is, to the best of my knowledge, an under researched area in Norway, which is supported by Bakken (2016).

## 1.3 The status of English in Norway and the national curriculum

In Norway, English is taught from the first year of school, and we are surrounded by English through music, movies, tv-shows and social media in our daily life (Rindal & Piercy, 2013). Bakken (2016) writes that the position of English in Norway resembles in many ways that of English as a second language (ESL), since many young people are heavily exposed to the

language through media, music, books and through the internet, however it does not formally qualify as ESL. Bakken (2016) chose to look at English as a foreign language as she believes this is what best reflects the language learning context in Norway. This is supported by Rindal (2014) who also states that English in Norway is taught as a foreign language. However, Norway is one of the countries who has seen an increase in the use and access of English, and it is often used in lectures and teaching materials in higher education (Ljosland, 2008), as well as by many large companies (Hellekjær, 2007). Lialikhova (2021) suggests that since Norwegian learners are likely exposed to a significant amount of English input from media beginning at a young age, and their listening comprehension is often high. She further presents research from a Norwegian school with students in year 9 which supports her statement that most students had a well-developed level of comprehension skills at this level. Despite the increase of the use of English in Norway, I will refer to English as a foreign language as Bakken (2016) and Rindal (2014) advocates this is what best reflects the English language learning context in Norway.

Norway has a national curriculum for the English subject which is called *The Knowledge Promotion Reform of 2020* (LK20). English is to be taught from year 1 (age 6) to year 11 (age 17). The curriculum describes different competence aims which students should have accomplished after year 2, 4, 7, 10 and 11 (The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2021a), however this thesis relates to the years 8-10. In addition to the competence aims the curriculum also presents core elements, which in the English subject consists of communication, language learning and working with texts in English (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). Teachers are required to use the curriculum when planning their teaching (The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2021a).

Film is not explicitly mentioned in the English curriculum in the LK20, however, the Norwegian curriculum for the English subject uses a broad definition of text:

texts can be spoken and written, printed and digital, graphic and artistic, formal and informal, fictional and factual, contemporary and historical. The texts can contain writing, pictures, audio, drawings, graphs, numbers and other forms of expression that are combined to enhance and present a message. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019)



According to this definition of text, film can be considered as a variation of text.

Consequently film can be used as a tool when working with the core element *working with texts in English*. In addition to using film as a tool when working with said core element, film can be used as a tool when working with several competence aims in the English subject. The competence aims serves, as mentioned beforehand, as aims for what the students should accomplish after said year. It is the teacher who determines how they want to work towards achieving the competence aims (The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2021a). Research by Basol and Kartal (2019), Seferoglu (2008) and Wisniewska and Mora (2020) show that one can target several skills mentioned in the competence aims, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, idioms and fluency by using film as a pedagogical tool.

#### 1.4 Delimiting the field and personal motivation:

There are various ways of using film in the EFL classroom. It can be used to teach linguistic skills as well as historical and cultural content, and emotional and intercultural competence. Little attention has been given to the possibilities of using film in the teaching of linguistic skills in the Norwegian classroom (Bakken, 2016). Linguistics can be defined as the scientific study of language (Zhang & Wang, 2016). In Norway linguistic knowledge is by many teachers referred to as “the basics” (Chvala, 2018), and the Norwegian curriculum for the English subject describes four basic skills which include oral skills, writing skills, reading skills, and digital skills. In this thesis I have chosen to look at oral skills, as this is something I find particularly interesting in the English subject. In most situations where English is used none of the interlocutors have English as their first language (L1) (Gnutzmann, 2000 as cited in; Simensen, 2014), consequently, I believe that in today's global society being able to communicate orally is one of the most important skills you learn, as many will likely have several with people who do not share their L1.

Oral skills in the English curriculum means being able to create meaning through listening, talking, and engaging in conversation (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). Oral skills include many important communicative skills, for this thesis however, I have chosen to delimit oral skills to pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. In this master's thesis I seek to explore how pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills can be taught purposefully in school.

### 1.5 Research question:

Based on the lack of studies on the topic of using feature film as a pedagogical tool in the teaching of English oral skills, the research question being pursued in this thesis is: *How can feature films be used to teach oral skills in the EFL classroom in Norway in 10<sup>th</sup> grade?* In order to address the overarching research question, I will present an analysis of linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects in the feature film *Love, Simon* (2018) and consider how this film explicitly can be used to teach pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. I will focus on the features of pronunciation which may be challenging for Norwegian learners, and which may affect speech intelligibility. I have chosen to look at how it can be used in year 10, as the students should by then have a high enough proficiency level to understand the film. With the students being 15-16 years old they will likely feel more familiar with the language and characters in the film than what younger students may.

My experience from my own schooling as well as my practice periods show that students often find watching feature films motivating and exciting, and often pays more attention to what is happening in the film when they find the plot interesting. This is supported by King (2002) who states that feature films are more motivating for students than video made for EFL or ESL teaching. Therefore, I have chosen to write about feature film instead of other types of film such as documentaries or films made specifically for ELT.

## 2 Literature review:

As mentioned previously, there is, to the best of my knowledge, little research on the use of film in ELT in Norway. However, there is international empirical and theoretical research on the topic of using film in the teaching of English oral skills, which can be transferable to ELT in Norway. Due to the lack of research on feature films I will also include research on other types of film as well as TV-shows. In the process of looking for previous research in the field of teaching English oral skills through films I have mainly used Oria and ERIC as my database. In the initial phase of the search process, I searched for articles related to the use of film, oral skills and teaching of EFL. As this gave a limited number of relevant articles, I also used the key words tv-series and tv-shows in search of relevant research.

In the following I will first present theoretical studies on the use of film in ELT by Khan (2015) and King (2002). This is followed by a presentation of an empirical study by Basol and

Kartal (2019) on the use of mikro-level discourse markers in feature film as well as international empirical studies done by Seferoglu (2008) and Wisniewska and Mora (2020 on the use of film when teaching oral communication skills and pronunciation. Finally, I will present research by Bakken (2016) on Norwegian teachers perspective on the use of film in ELT, before I suggest some limitations of the previous studies and relevance for my thesis.

## 2.1 Theoretical studies

King (2002) has written a theoretical paper on how one can use film when teaching EFL. She compares different approaches to using film in the classroom and gives suggestions for how to use feature film in EFL training. The article discusses different film-viewing approaches, such as the short sequence approach and the whole film approach and provides an assessment of the use of closed-captioned and non-closed-captioned feature films for different levels of learners. Closed-captions can be turned on or off and are text versions of the spoken words and other important audio elements. According to King (2002) closed-captioned films can be beneficial for e.g., oral fluency, pronunciation, comprehension ability and vocabulary development and makes it easier to follow for less-advanced learners. However, one of the disadvantages with closed-captioned film is that the main activity can become reading skills and vocabulary development (King, 2002). King (2002) also provides suggestions on how to choose appropriate films to promote active viewing and interaction to maximize classroom application of feature films.

Similarly, Khan (2015) presents a theoretical paper on the topic of using film in the classroom, however this study specifically looks into how film can be used to improve communication skills of non-native English learners. Khan presents the advantages of using film in the ESL classroom and highlights the effectiveness of exposure to film on improving the speaking skills of non-native English language learners. The article presents guidelines on how to choose a “good” film to use in the classroom as well as guidelines on how to work with film in the classroom. Khan (2015) emphasizes the importance of the teacher being prepared before showing a film in class to avoid this becoming a break where the students are passively watching the film, which is supported by King (2002). Khan (2015) further presents activities teachers can use when working with film. Watching excerpts of a film and having students discuss what the theme of the film is, is suggested as a pre-watching activity. While watching the film Khan (2015) suggests the teacher can, during some scenes, turn down the

volume and have the students restructure it while watching. As a post-watching activity Khan (2015) proposes to use various discussion-based activities revolving around the plot of the film, such as debates. The studies done by King (2002) and Khan (2015) uses theoretical evidence to support their claims, whereas the next studies presented in this chapter has done research by gathering empirical evidence through observation, interviews or questionnaires.

## 2.2 International empirical studies

This section will start by presenting empirical studies on films, followed by a section on classroom studies.

A study conducted by Basol and Kartal (2019) has looked at the use of mikro-level discourse markers in British and American feature films in an EFL teaching context. Discourse markers have a critical function for pragmatic development and are among the top ten most used words in everyday conversation by native speakers, however they are given little attention in language teaching. The study investigated the use and functions of discourse markers in two British and two American feature films by comparing the functions of them in two widespread accents of English. The study found that feature films could be used as appropriate materials for teaching discourse markers in the EFL classroom. The films can be considered a natural language source which can be applied in the classroom for teaching discourse markers. Even though the discourses analyzed in the study takes place in a scenario, they still sound natural and authentic with the context presented in the films. The article suggests that through different scenes in a film students can learn how to use discourse markers in various social situations. Consequently, film may contribute to development in learners sociolinguistic skills as they are exposed to appropriate use of language for various social situations.

Whereas Basol and Kartal (2019) examined the use of mikro-level discourse in films and how one could use film to specifically teach and make the students aware of discourse markers Seferoglu (2008) has researched the use of feature film in language classes. The study aimed at finding students perspectives on integrating feature films in oral communication classes of advanced EFL learners. The participants of the study were 29 adult advanced English language teacher students, who had taken a class in oral communication in English where feature films had been used as a teaching method. The researcher's choice of data was a

questionnaire which included both open ended questions as well as questions using a likert scale from 1-5. The study showed most of the students agreed watching movies helped them with various language competencies, such as speaking skills and pronunciation, listening skills, fluency, and vocabulary. However, they did not feel it helped them improve their grammar and writing. As the study examined the students' perceptions, it remains unsure to what extent the students' oral skills improved.

Whereas Seferoglu (2008) examined how the students *experienced* their learning outcome from watching film in oral communication class, Wisniewska and Mora (2020) have done a study which *measured* the students' improvement in pronunciation. The study explored the potential benefits of extended exposure to captioned videos for second language pronunciation. The study had 90 L2 adult learners be part of an 8-week exposure treatment to 16 L2 videos from a British TV-series. Benefits for L2 English pronunciation, including speech processing skills and phonological accuracy were assessed using a pretest/posttest design. The participants were randomly assigned to one of two viewing conditions, captioned or non-captioned, and one of two task focus conditions, which were directing attention to either phonetic form or meaning. The results showed benefits in speech segmentation and speech processing skills (segmentation, speed of lexical access/productive vocabulary and sentence processing) regardless of viewing mode (Wisniewska & Mora, 2020). Speech segmentation is the process of decoding the speech at acoustic, phonetic and phonological levels (Wisniewska & Mora, 2020). There were however, not found any significant benefits for phonological accuracy in perception. In L2 production an interplay between the viewing modes and the task focus conditions were revealed. A focus on phonetic form resulted in pronunciation development, but not when videos were watched with captions. In a viewing mode with captions pronunciation benefits were only visible when attention was directed to the plot.

The findings in the presented studies reveal that film can be used to teach English pronunciation as reported by Seferoglu (2008), however gains in phonological development can vary according to viewing mode as reported by Wisniewska and Mora (2020). Basol and Kartal's (2019) study found feature films could be used as appropriate materials for teaching discourse markers in the EFL classroom as films can be considered a natural language source.

### 2.3 An empirical study from the Norwegian context

Whereas the latter section reviewed international studies focusing on learners, this section presents a Norwegian study on teachers' perspectives on the use of film in the teaching of EFL.

Bakken (2016) has examined Norwegian English teachers' attitudes and thoughts on the learning value of films in the lower secondary classroom. She found there were mixed thoughts about the use of film, but overall, the teachers tended to emphasize the importance of showing "good films" which fit the topic they were working on in class, and that film should not be used as entertainment. In the article four different assumptions of the learning value of film is identified: the referential value, the emotional value, the compensatory value, and the language value (Bakken, 2016, p. 8). Bakken (2016) explains that the term referential value relates to the reoccurring questions of referentiality in a fictional narrative, that is its relationship to an outside reality. The referential value is closely linked to the emotional value. The emotional value is seen as important if a fictional narrative is going to make students grasp some in-depth truth about a specific topic. The compensatory value builds upon the idea that film can make up for some inadequacy in a text, the learner, or in the encounter between the learner and the text. The language value can be seen as an essential dimension in the compensatory value. It relates to instances when the teachers talk about the particular benefits for language learning. The referential and the compensatory values appeared to be the most commonly used of the four values, with the emotional and language values acting as inherent properties (Bakken, 2016).

### 2.4 Limitations of previous studies

The results presented in Bakken (2016) shows that out of the four different assumptions of learning values film has, the language value is given the least focus in English classes in Norway. This could be the reason why there is, to the best of my knowledge, a dearth of research on the topic of using film to teach English oral skills in a Norwegian context. The previous studies done internationally on the topic of using film in teaching English oral skills do not present analyses of the challenging features of pronunciation or sociolinguistic features in specific film which can be used in ELT. What is common for the majority of these studies is that their main focus is *if* watching a film can encourage learning and improvement of students oral and communicative skills. The results presented in the empirical studies of Basol

and Kartal (2019), Seferoglu (2008), and Wisniewska and Mora (2020) show that watching feature film in the EFL/ESL classroom can lead to improvement in oral communication skills. My master thesis consequently aims at finding out *how* one can work with feature film to teach oral skills and will be looking at specific examples from a feature film. Neither of the empirical studies on using film to teach oral skills are executed in Norway and my thesis will look at how one can use film to teach oral skills in the Norwegian classroom and will consider the areas of oral skills which can be challenging for Norwegians in relation to pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills.

The theoretical studies by King (2002) and Khan (2015) presents and compares different approaches to using film in the classroom. In addition, they present guidelines for choosing films to work with, as well as pedagogical implementations for classroom use. The studies do, however, not give any specific examples or suggestions on how to work with specific films. My study aims at applying the guidelines and suggestions for working with film presented in these studies, and apply them to the film *Love, Simon* (2018).

### 3 Theoretical background:

In this chapter I will present the theoretical background for my thesis. I will start by presenting one of the core elements for the English subject in the LK20 which is communication (3.1). As the topic of this thesis is how feature film can be used to teach English oral skills, I will further present a definition of oral skills and theory on what is considered to be oral skills in the English subject in Norway (3.1). As this thesis is written from a foreign language teaching perspective there is also included theory regarding the use of English as a Lingua Franca (3.2) and an overview of the lingua franca core (3.2.1). As oral skills have, in this thesis, been delimited to pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills relevant theory on teaching English pronunciation is presented (3.3), followed by theory on sociolinguistic skills (3.4). Lastly, theory on the learning value of film, and criteria for choosing film to use in ELT is presented (3.5), as this was used when choosing the film analyzed in this thesis.

#### 3.1 English as a means of communication and oral skills in LK20

This chapter will start by presenting one of the core elements in the LK20 as this is one of the aims of ELT in Norwegian schools. It is essential for students to be able to use English as a

means of communication, consequently one of the core elements for the English subject in LK20 is communication (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019). One of the aims of the subject is to give students a foundation to be able to communicate with others (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019), for example by speaking English with people whom have a different L1. The LK20 defines communication as the ability to create meaning through language and the ability to use language in both formal and informal settings (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019). The LK20 further states the students shall employ suitable strategies to communicate, both orally and in writing, in different situations and by using different types of media and sources (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019).

There has been a shift in English language teaching from a focus on texts to a focus on the importance of oral competence (Oliver et al., 2005). Kaldahl (2019) states that oral competence allows us to express ourselves clearly and understandably and perform our rights in a democratic society and in our personal lives, consequently oral skills are essential skills to master to be able to participate in the global society.

As students need suitable strategies to communicate orally in today's global society it is important to include teaching of oral skills in ELT. Oral skills, in the English subject, are considered as the ability to create meaning through listening, speaking and conversation with others, and is listed as one of the four basic skills in the LK20 (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019). According to the national curriculum oral skills means one needs to be able to convey information and adapt language suited to the purpose and recipient in different situations (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019). The focus on oral skills in the teaching of EFL has traditionally revolved around issues of pronunciation and intonation, the use of appropriate grammar, vocabulary as well as formulaic expressions (Chvala, 2012). Chvala (2012) suggests that in addition to the traditional features of oral skills, one should include a broader understanding of the term oral skills: "(...) basic oral skills should also develop a pupil's ability to use English in a variety of oral genres with a variety of communicative goals, performed in a variety of situations to or with a variety of audiences, recipients or interlocutors." (Chvala, 2012, p. 234). Consequently, one should also include pragmatic and sociolinguistic skills in the teaching of oral skills. Chvala's statement is supported by Canagarajah (2006) who argues that in the assessment of oral skills one should move from a focus on proficiency in grammar and abstract linguistic features to a focus on



proficiency in pragmatics. In other words, the focus in language teaching and assessment should revolve around language as a social practice.

### 3.2 English as a lingua franca (ELF)

English is an international language (Cogo, 2012), and for this reason it is important to consider how English is used in a variety of contexts. In recent years there has been an increase in literature and interest regarding the use of ELF (Jenkins et al., 2011). There are several ways of describing what ELF is. Seidlhofer (2005) describes ELF as “(..) a ‘contact language’ between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication” (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339). Jenkins et al. (2011) present several descriptions of ELF, amongst others;

ELF is part of the GLOBAL ENGLISHES paradigm, according to which most speakers of English are non-native speakers (henceforth NNSEs), and all English varieties, native or non-native, are accepted in their own right rather than evaluated against a NSE [Native speaker of English] benchmark. (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 283)

Common for these descriptions of ELF is that English is in this setting used as a means of communication between people who do not share a first language. In Jenkins et al. (2011) description of ELF they have also added that ELF is accepted as its own variety of English and it should not be compared to a native speaker benchmark. Jenkins (2012) explains that typical global ELT coursebooks provides language production models for the classroom which are largely based on a native speaker model of English. Younger non-native English speakers are developing an awareness that the English taught in the classroom, does often not reflect the kind of English they need to communicate in their intercultural lives outside the classroom (Jenkins, 2012). It follows from this part that the influence from ELF on ELT has bearings on teaching of both pronunciation and sociolinguistic features in the classroom.

Historically the English curriculum in Norway has stated that learners should aim for a native speaker pronunciation, however, in the past decade both the LK06 and the LK20, emphasizes the use of English as a means of communication in a global context (The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2021b). The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, (2021b) states that using English as a lingua franca is considered equally important

to communicating with native speakers. The curriculum states that the school does not demand students aiming towards a certain pronunciation model. According to The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training (2021b) studies show that despite this, the idea of a native speaker accent, which was the aim in ELT for a long period of time, is still present among teachers and students, and it is therefore important to convey to the students that a Norwegian influenced English accent is accepted, as long as communication is not impaired (The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2021b). It is not stated that the students should pursue the standard of a native English speaker. However, the curriculum states that the students should learn the pronunciation of phonemes, learn vocabulary, word structure, syntax and text composition, and this will give the pupils choices and possibilities in their communication with others (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019), consequently ELT should include some pronunciation teaching.

### 3.2.1 The Lingua Franca Core

ELF scholars argue that non-native English speakers (NNES) does not need to aim for a native speaker pronunciation of English (Jenkins et al., 2011). What are the consequences of this stance to teaching of English pronunciation? Jennifer Jenkins (2002) propose a phonological syllabus for learners of English as an international language, this is called the Lingua Franca Core (LFC). “This consists of those phonological and phonetic features which, from an analysis of all the miscommunication and accommodation data (...), seem to be crucial as safeguards of mutual intelligibility in ILT [interlanguage talk]” (Jenkins, 2002, p. 96). Jenkins (2002) suggests focusing on the items presented in the LFC is likely more effective than focusing on every detail a non-native speakers pronunciation differs from a native speaker pronunciation. What follows is a presentation of part of the LFC main core items as presented by Jenkins (2002, pp. 96-97). The full presentation can be found in Appendix 1.

1. The consonant inventory with [amongst others] the following provisos:
  - some substitutions of /θ/ and /ð/ are acceptable (because they are intelligible in EIL);
2. Additional phonetic requirements
  - shortening of vowel sounds before fortis (voiceless) consonants and maintenance of length before lenis (voiced) consonants, for example the shorter /æ/ in “sat” as

contrasted with the longer /æ/ in “sad”, or the /i:/in “seat” as contrasted with that in “seed”

### 3. Consonant clusters

### 4. Vowel sounds

- Maintenance of contrast between long and short vowels for example between “live” and “leave”;
- L2 regional qualities acceptable if they are consistent, except substitutions for the sound /ɜ:/ as in “bird”, which regularly cause problems

### 5. Production and placement of tonic (nuclear) stress

- Appropriate use of contrastive stress to signal meaning. For example the difference in meaning in the utterances “I came by TAXi” and “I CAME by taxi” in which nuclear stress is shown in upper case. The former is a neutral statement of fact, whereas the latter includes an additional meaning such as “but I’m going home by bus”. (Jenkins, 2002, pp. 96-97)

#### 3.2.2 Collins and Mees ranking of potential communicative errors

Similar to Jenkins (2002) *Lingua Franca Core*, Collins and Mees (2013, pp 215-216) presents a ranking of potential errors non-native speakers of English could make, where category 1 are errors which lead to a breakdown of intelligibility, category 2 are errors which give rise to irritation or amusement, and category 3 are errors which provoke few reactions and might pass unnoticed. Category 1 errors are:

1. Confusion of crucial phonemic contrasts in vowel system, e.g. /ɪ - i:/, /ɜ: - ʌ/, /e - æ/, and /ɒ - ʌ/.
2. Confusion of fortis/lenis, such as final fortis/lenis and /f - v/.
3. Consonant clusters.
4. Crucial consonant contrasts, e.g. /b - v/, /v - w/, /f - h/, and /ʃ - s/.
5. Deletion of /h/ or replacement by /x/.
6. Word stress

Category 2 errors:

1. Inappropriate /r/ articulations, e.g. strong alveolar trills.
2. Dental fricative problems (th-sounds), e.g. replacing /θ/ with /t/ or /ð/ with /d/.
3. Less significant vowel contrasts, such as /u: - ʊ/ and /ɒ - ɔ:/.

4. Incorrect allophones of /l/, especially replacement by dark *l* throughout, or clear *l* throughout.
5. Lack of weak and contrasted forms.
6. Inappropriate rhoticism or non-rhoticism for particular models of pronunciation.
7. Strong retroflex setting

Category 3 errors:

1. Errors caused by intonation
2. Lack of syllabic consonants.
3. Compound stress (Collins & Mees, 2013, p. 216).

In line with EFL scholars (Jenkins et al., 2011) beliefs of NNES not needing a native like accent, the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018) has also replaced its description for the phonological control scale for L2 speakers of English from the 2001 framework to the 2018 framework. The CEFR explains that traditionally a native speaker pronunciation has been seen as the target pronunciation model, however the focus for the new scale is intelligibility. After revising the scale from 2001, the Council of Europe (2018, pp. 134-136) has now identified a new set of core areas for phonological control, which has been divided into three categories: overall phonological control, which includes intelligibility, the extent of influence from other languages, and control of sounds and prosodic features; sound articulation, which includes the range of sounds the speaker can articulate and with what level of precision; and lastly, prosodic features, which includes control of intonation, stress and rhythm, and the ability to exploit and vary stress and intonation to highlight their message (Council of Europe, 2018). Although the CEFR has changed its description of the learner needing a native accent there is some disagreement between the CEFR and the LFC when it comes to the features of phonological control. The CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018) states that word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation are core areas for phonological control, whereas the LFC suggests it is only the placement of nuclear/tonic stress which is of importance of the suprasegmental features (Jenkins, 2002).

The LFC has received some criticism. Bøhn and Hansen (2017) argues that the LFC seems to focus mainly on the pronunciation of segmentals (e.g., vowels and consonants) considering the only suprasegmental feature is nuclear stress, or sentence stress. It has also been criticized because of its limited empirical base and for having a too narrow focus considering it is solely concerned with intelligibility in situations where all speakers are non-native English speakers,

and it is likely that many learners will need to communicate with native speakers as well as non-native speakers of English (Bøhn & Hansen, 2017).

This thesis focuses on the features of pronunciation which may be challenging for Norwegian learners and which may affect speech intelligibility, therefore framework on which features of pronunciation that are likely to cause problems in intelligibility was presented. In section 3.4 the features of English pronunciation Norwegian learners are likely to find challenging is presented. These are in section 4.5 compared to the features of English pronunciation which are likely to cause problems in intelligibility (described in section 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). The identified features are further used in the analyses of the film.

### 3.3 Teaching pronunciation

The English curriculum of LK20 states Norwegian students should, after year 10, be able to “use key patterns of pronunciation in communication” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). However, it does not state what the key patterns of pronunciation are, or how they should be taught. Baker and Burri (2021) explains that international studies show that when pronunciation is taught in ELT class it is often unplanned and limited to traditional teacher-centered activities. The focus tends to be on segmentals rather than suprasegmentals (e.g., stress, rhythm, and intonation), because segmentals are often considered easier to teach.

Park et al. (2017) argue that unintelligible sounds can cause greater communicational problems than speech with lexical or grammatical errors, consequently students pronunciation needs some attention in the classroom. In English class the main focus when teaching pronunciation should be the sounds which can cause critical errors, in other words the features of the student’s pronunciation that are most likely to affect their comprehensibility (Avery & Ehrlich, 2013, pp. 260-261; Jenkins, 2002). Accordingly, the students should be given opportunity to practice those features in a meaningful context (Avery & Ehrlich, 2013, pp. 260-261).

Seferoglu (2008) explains that one of the challenges a teacher of EFL/ESL can face is that the students get limited exposure to authentic English language in their everyday life. Considering English is frequently not used authentically in the settings in which the students live, learners have limited opportunities to be exposed to language or to use the language in authentic

interaction (Seferoglu, 2008). In her research on the use of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in the English language classroom in Norway, Lialikhova (2021) expresses that video can be used as authentic language input for students, as well as serve as a model of authentic pronunciation. However she also suggests that Norwegian students who are exposed to native authentic English input outside school "may have sustained their willingness to imitate native speakers' pronunciation and avoid having a foreign accent" (Lialikhova, 2021, p. 683), which runs counter to the current approach from ELF theory, that a native-like accent is no longer an aim.

Regardless of a native-like accent no longer being the aim in ELT in Norway, a study conducted by Rindal and Piercy (2013) show that the majority of Norwegian high school students aim for an American English or British English accent. Some of the students reported a "neutral accent" as their aim, whereas none of the students reported a Norwegian English accent as their aim of pronunciation. Lialikhova (2021) suggests that as the Norwegian and English language both belong to the Germanic language family, this might help motivate Norwegian learners to achieve a high level of competence in English, including pronunciation skills, which could be an explanation to why the majority of the students in Rindal and Piercy's (2013) study aims at developing a native English accent. The teacher should not force students to aim for a native accent, however as the LK20 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019) states that the students should, amongst others, learn the pronunciation of phonemes, as this will give the pupils choices and possibilities in their communication with others, the teacher should consequently facilitate for the students who wish to develop a native-like accent.

Even though Norwegian and English both belong to the Germanic language family (Lialikhova, 2021), there are still differences in Norwegian and English phonology. Difficulties are most likely to arise when a learner encounters sounds which differs from the sounds in their first language (Avery & Ehrlich, 2013, p. 260). Some examples of phonemes and features of pronunciation common in English and not in Norwegian or that are different from Norwegian and English, and therefore likely to be more challenging, are according to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008): postalveolar stops (such as /tʃ/ and /dʒ/), dental fricatives (such as /θ/ and /ð/), some approximants such as alveolar lateral /l/, and bilabial-velar semivowel /w/, the short monophthong /ɪ/, /ʌ/ as in young, /ɜ:/ as in world, the short monophthongs /ʊ/ and /u/, the centring diphthongs /ɪə/, /eə/, and /ʊə/, and failure of observing the alternation of full

and weak vowels and intonation pattern. Collins and Mees (2013, p. 217) present a less detailed list of phonemes which are possible problem areas for different languages, and the phonemes listed as highly significant problem areas for Norwegians and Swedes are /f/, /v/ and /w/, /θ/ and /ð/, /s/, /z/ /tʃ/ and /dʒ/, and /ʊə/, /ɔ:/ and /ɒ/.

Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) presents examples of pedagogical activities suitable for teaching English pronunciation. They suggest that when teaching pronunciation, the teacher can collect text material for each of the sounds Norwegians learners are likely to find difficult and use in their teaching. However, they stress that it is important to not teach features of pronunciation in isolation and suggest that when teaching intonation and stress, instead of presenting a set of rules one should try out different solutions together with the students. Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) recommend teaching pronunciation of different words, phonemes, and stress and intonation in a context so the learners can see it really matters whether the correct sound is used or not. Roleplay and listening activities followed by different activities are proposed as valuable exercises when teaching pronunciation (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008).

The use of drama pedagogy is suggested by Brash and Warnecke (2009) to make language learning more realistic as it uses authentic tasks. In addition to drama being suitable to teach pronunciation, Miccoli (2003) propose drama activities can help develop learners sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence. Language should be taught in relation to culture (Zhang & Wang, 2016), and culture includes aspects such as body language, ways of talking to different people, how various emotions are expressed or how culturally accepted intonation is used to deliver various messages, such as humor or anger (Miccoli, 2003). According to Via (1976, as cited in Miccoli, 2003) drama is a way of naturally bringing these aspects of language teaching into the classroom. Consequently, the use of a film sequence, which includes realistic social situations and language appropriate for the purpose and situation, as the chosen piece to reenact can give the students a realistic situation to practice their English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills in. The use of drama in teaching pronunciation in relation to film is discussed further in section 6.3.

### 3.4 Sociolinguistic skills

Language is a sociocultural phenomenon and sociolinguistic competence includes the knowledge and skills required to deal with the social dimension of language use (Council of

Europe, 2018). Zhang and Wang (2016) explain the essence of sociolinguistics as “how social factors influence the structure and use of language. It is the field that studies relations between the use of language and the social structure of which the language users live” (Zhang & Wang, 2016, p. 830). Some of the major topics covered in sociolinguistics are according to Zhang and Wang (2016) language variation in the form of formal and informal style and the relationship between the conversation and choice of code and the interaction between the choice of code and personal relationship. This can be understood as the relationship between the purpose of the conversation and choice of language, and the choice of language based on the personal relationship the interlocutors have with each other. A formal language style is according to Zhang and Wang (2016) more polite, whereas informal language is more casual and potentially more abrupt. Gee (2015, p. 105) also presents the terms vernacular language style, which he describes as “everyday language” and the term heteroglossia which refers to a mix of vernacular language and aspects of the language often used in schools and academic work.

Canagarajah (2006) states that having an awareness of dialect differences, contextual constraints, identity considerations and sensitivity of cultures is critical as in today’s global society one shuttles between diverse communities, consequently it is essential that students have a chance to develop their sociolinguistic skills in English. Learning a new language in a way that enables us to use the language for different social and expressive purposes is not just learning vocabulary, grammar, and native like pronunciation, it also includes developing communicative competence (Schiffrin, 2009). The national curriculum for the English subject does not use the term sociolinguistic skills, however it states that the students should, after year 10, be able to express themselves with language suitable for different purposes, recipient, and situations (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019), which are skills required to deal with the social dimension and structure of language use, and consequently part of sociolinguistic skills (Council of Europe, 2018; Zhang & Wang, 2016).

Sociolinguistics studies language in its relation to society and culture and highlights communicative skills (Zhang & Wang, 2016). Zhang and Wang (2016) emphasize that language should be taught in relation to culture and students should learn cultural background and the communicative principles of language in various social and cultural situations so they are prepared to use the language successfully in different social contexts. Gee (2015) argues that in order for us to appreciate language in its social context we need to focus on what he



calls “Discourses”, with a capital D. Gee (2015) uses an example of walking into a bar to illustrate that Discourses include more than language. If you walk into a “biker bar” and ask a heavily tattooed biker “May I please have a match for my cigarette?” it is grammatically correct English, however it is still wrong unless you asked with an ironic voice. It is not just the content of what is being said which is of importance, but also how it is presented. In this example Gee (2015) suggests it would be more appropriate to say “Gotta match?”. Different social identities is accomplished through using different social language (Gee, 2015). Zhang and Wang (2016) support this and states that language can have different meaning in different situations - the same sentence can be appropriate in one social setting and inappropriate in another, which can lead to a failure in communication.

According to Yu (2008) previous studies show that misunderstandings and miscommunication of non-native speakers often occur due to lack of sociolinguistic competence. Chvala argues that teaching of oral skills should help students develop their ability to use a variety of oral skills in various situations and to different recipients or interlocutors. Schiffrin (2009) supports this as she argues learners need knowledge about appropriate use of language for specific situations of everyday life, from how to engage in a casual conversation to how to make a joke, argue or be interviewed for a job. Schiffrin (2009) adds that EFL teaching should include lessons on how different words, intonations, and syntactic forms structures the understanding of what is going on in an interaction. Schiffrin (2009) explains that intonation, speech rhythm and other signaling mechanisms have communicative significance and can cause misunderstanding, as choosing the wrong intonation pattern can according to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015) give the listener the wrong impression of the speaker’s attitude or intentions. Audiovisual products can be used to help students become aware of non-verbal cues, such as gestures and facial expressions, as well as pauses and intonation patterns (Bonsignori, 2018), consequently, films are suitable teaching materials for fostering sociolinguistic skills.

#### Intonation – the five tone units

Due to the communicative significance of intonation, I will describe the five different tones according to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015, pp. 140-150): the low fall, the high fall, the low rise, the high rise, and the fall-rise. These are later used in the analyses of the sociolinguistic features in *Love, Simon* (View section 5). The low fall is often used in statements and commands and question-word questions. Yes/no question can be asked with a low fall,

however the speaker may appear unfriendly or detached unless they know the person well, then it might sound informal rather than negative. The high fall on the other hand is often used to express strong personal involvement, in statements where the speaker wants to emphasize a friendly attitude, to focus on a special element (word) to make it stand out, and in question-word questions where it, unlike low-fall, indicates a genuine interest in the topic. The low rise is used in non-final tone units signaling there is more to come, yes/no questions, in statements and greetings where the speaker wants to express a friendly attitude and is used in WH-questions to express a particularly polite and friendly attitude or opening up for further conversation. The high rise can be divided into two subcategories – the emphatic rise and the casual response. The emphatic rise starts at a low pitch and often expresses strong surprise or disbelief and is often used to repeat what someone has already said because you hardly believe it, or it makes you angry or annoyed. The casual response starts at a mid-pitch and is pronounced with less energy, it can express surprise but in a less emotional way. Finally, the fall-rise has two main functions, either to focus on two separate elements in a tone group or to express different attitudes in different contexts. It can be used to express mild surprise or an element of doubt, to signal partial disagreement, or to express a certain reservation (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2015).

### 3.5 The use of film in the EFL classroom

#### 3.5.1 The learning value of film

As mentioned in section 2.3 Bakken (2016) showed that the language value of film in the EFL classroom was looked upon as more of a bonus and rarely came up as a primary aim or goal. This study showed that when using film in the classroom it is rarely used as an educational resource to improve language skills, but it is rather used to compensate challenges related to language. Rindal's (2019) doctoral study on Norwegian high school students' English accent and pronunciation, suggests that television is a considerable medium of English language exposure in Norway, and a noteworthy source of linguistic resources which influence learners' pronunciation, consequently film and television can be a valuable resource in teaching English pronunciation in Norway.

According to Ashcroft et al.'s (2018) study, passively watching a single film in English can result in modest levels of incidental vocabulary learning, however they suggest using film in ELT can result in higher levels of vocabulary learning by including tasks targeting vocabulary

learning, nevertheless this is not explored empirically in their study. The results of their study are likely transferable to other features of language learning e.g., pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. Consequently, when using film in ELT, the teacher should include activities targeting the chosen learning aim as this is likely more beneficial in enhancing oral skills compared to passively watching the film.

### 3.5.2 Selection of films for ELT

When choosing a film to use in ELT the teacher have several criteria to consider. For the purpose of my thesis, a selection of the criteria presented in King (2002) and Khan (2015) has been categorized into the two categories: content and language. The criteria presented was used when choosing the film analyzed in this thesis.

#### Content:

Hofmann (2018) suggests that there is a tendency to only use certain genres of film in the EFL classroom, and these are mainly film adaptations of canonical school novels or critically acclaimed high-brow movies. However, Khan (2015) recommends choosing a film whose content material is popular amongst the target audience, and which has appropriate content and is well suited for all ages and cultures. King (2002) supports this and adds that the chosen film should be suitable for all genders and preferably be of a newer release as she suggests this is more appealing for the students. Finally, when using film in the classroom the film should have appropriate content, and films with explicit sex or violence should be avoided (Khan, 2015; King, 2002).

#### Language:

King (2002) emphasizes the importance of choosing a film or scene with a balanced dialogue and high degree of visual support, meaning the visual images substantiates the verbal dialogue. She adds that the language used in the film should be comprehensible for the students' proficiency level, and the dialogue should be of a standard accent, as some actors' enunciation and accent may be difficult to understand and therefore lead to frustration amongst the students.

The English language media that surrounds us in our daily life is highly dominated by American English (Rindal & Piercy, 2013). This is an argument which can both work in favor

of choosing a film with an American accent as it is more familiar and can be easier to comprehend for the students, or in favor of not choosing a film with an American accent because they need to get familiar with other accents as well. In a study done by Rindal (2010) Norwegian adolescents stated they believed American English was the most dominant pronunciation form due to the influence from spoken media which consequently makes it easier to pronounce. However, it is important to prepare the students for their future in a global society, so they should be exposed to a variety of Englishes in class.

### 3.5.3 Whole film and short sequence approach

When working with film in the classroom one can either work with short clips or with a film in its entirety. King (2002) discusses the use of the whole film approach and the short sequence approach. She states there are advantages and disadvantages with both methods and that the teacher needs to choose the approach suitable for the aim of their teaching. King (2002) suggests the whole film approach is more convenient for the more advanced learners since it features a great amount of exposure to authentic language. For less advanced learners the whole film approach can be a burden considering the amount of language they would be presented with. She therefore suggests using a short sequence approach for less advanced learners. However, according to Krashen's input hypothesis learners can acquire language by understanding input that is slightly over their current level of proficiency (Krashen, 1982 as cited in; Lialikhova, 2021). A short sequence approach can according to King (2002) be ideal when working with film to focus on linguistic structure and form of language or for theme-based discussions around specific scenes. This is supported by Kaiser (2011) who explains that the use of shorter clips allows the students to explore the language in the shown sequence and the various components of visual semiotics such as facial expressions and gestures, i.e., the teacher should consider the purpose of the language learning activity when deciding on the whole film or short sequence approach.

## 4 Methodology:

This study aims at exploring how feature films, with the film *Love, Simon* as an example, can be used to teach oral skills in the EFL classroom in Norway in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The design of this thesis is argumentative, as it argues feature film can be a valuable way of working with English oral skills in the classroom. The thesis builds upon data of scholarly work on the topic of film in ELT as well as literature on English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. Based

on this knowledge, I will present an analysis focusing on linguistic and sociolinguistics features in the film *Love, Simon* and give suggestions for pedagogical implementations on how one can use this film in the Norwegian ELT classroom when working with improving student's oral skills. For the purpose of this thesis oral skills have been delimited to sociolinguistic skills and pronunciation features which may be challenging for Norwegian learners and which may affect speech intelligibility. The mode of analyses complies with the hermeneutic principle by alternating between preconception and newer knowledge while analyzing and interpreting the film (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2008, p. 194).

One research method which could be used to examine the use of film to teach oral skills is a classroom case study examining how film could be used to develop the students' English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. However, due to a combination of the limited timeframe of our master thesis, and the covid-19 restrictions in Norway, getting a class to do a case study in would be difficult and too time consuming for the scope of this thesis, and I therefore chose to write a theoretical thesis.

#### 4.1 Search of literature

The first step of the search strategy was to use online databases to search for previous studies on the topic of film in teaching English oral skills. I chose to use Oria, a local database, as my primary database when searching for academic articles. Furthermore, to ensure I got a widespread overview of previous research on the topic of both film and oral skills I used ERIC to complement with other relevant articles. In the initial phase, I started searching for research connected to film and teaching of English oral skills. In addition to online searches, I have also manually searched the language teaching section in the university's library. When searching for the key words film and oral skills a limited amount of relevant research was found, therefore, I had to widen my search by using both more general and more specific key words. I have listed some of the most relevant key words used in the search for literature below:

*film + oral skills, film + speaking skills, film + English as a foreign language (efl), film + teaching english as a lingua franca (elf), film + teaching English as a second language (esl), film + pronunciation, film + sociolinguistic skills, film + pragmatic skills, film + communicative skills, film + oral communication, teaching English pronunciation, sociolinguistic awareness English pronunciation, English sociolinguistic skills, english*

*pragmatic skills, English oral skills, English oral skills Norway, English pronunciation Norway, English speaking skills, English communication, English as a lingua franca, English as a lingua franca Norway, Lingua Franca core.*

Database searches were combined with an extensive use of the reference mining method.

#### 4.2 Choice of film:

Jane King (2002) presents an overview of selection criteria for choosing a film to use in the EFL classroom (view section 3.5.2). When applying the criteria presented it shows that *Love, Simon* is a “good film” to use in ELT as it is of a newer release, has an entertaining and age and culture appropriate plot, as well as being suitable for all genders.

The chosen film *Love, Simon* (2018) is a classic American “high school movie” about a teenage boy and his personal life with all its different struggles. Simon’s biggest struggle is the fact that he is gay, and he does not dare to tell his friends or family. One day there is an anonymous post on the school’s social media forum where a boy writes that he has a secret he does not dare tell anyone, that he is gay. Simon starts corresponding anonymously with this boy, who calls himself Blue, and tells him that he is gay as well. Simon tries to figure out who this person is while trying to keep his secret hidden at the same time. One day a classmate of Simon reads his email correspondence and tries blackmailing him into helping him have one of Simons friends fall in love with him unless he wants his secret to be revealed. My experience is that the movie showcases everyday life and, to some degree, realistic situations which teenagers can experience. The purpose of this thesis is to look at how one can use film to teach English oral skills, specifically pronunciation, and sociolinguistic skills, accordingly the analyses of the film will mainly look at the language being used as well as the social settings in which language is used in the film.

My experiences from practice combined with memories from my own schooling, has given me the impression that film is mostly used as pedagogical tool when teaching historical content or literary work. This is supported by Bakken’s (2016) research which shows that teachers mostly use film for the referential or compensatory value. As this master thesis will examine how one can use feature film to teach oral skills, I have chosen to use a film which has adolescents as its target audience. I have chosen to look at the film *Love, Simon* in relation

to teaching English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills, consequently the film should give a realistic and varied representation of the social contexts and use of English as a language.

### 4.3 Analytic framework

In the following, the analytical framework for analyses is presented as well as the theoretical rationale used in the selection of the criteria for analyses. The criteria is divided into two categories: content and language.

Content:

- Type and variety of social situations
- Relevance to LK20

Language:

- Q1: Is the language appropriate, as well as authentic in regard to the social settings presented in the film?
- Q2: Does the film show a varied use of language and ways of speaking adapted to the purpose and recipient of the situation?
- Q3: Does the dialogue have a high degree of words which contains the phonemes, as well as examples of various stress and intonation patterns, which may present challenges to Norwegian English language learners' pronunciation?
- Q4: Is the dialogue clear and intelligible?
- Q5: Does the dialogue have a high degree of visual support?

Theoretical rationale for analytic framework

The first criterion addresses the type and variety of the social situations presented in the film. Varied social situation means, in this context, that there is a variety of interlocutors and a variety of communicative purposes for the different conversations. This is included in the criteria for the analyses as a competence aim for the English subject in the LK20 states that the students should be able to use language adapted to different purposes, recipients and situations (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019), consequently students should be exposed to examples of language used authentically in different situations and with various interlocutors.

King (2002) states that when using film in language teaching the chosen film should have a balanced dialogue with appropriate speech delivery, appropriate speed of speech, standard accent and a high degree of visual support is of importance, as using a film which is too difficult to understand can lead to frustration for the learner. Consequently Q1, Q4 and Q5 was added as these revolve around the intelligibility and appropriateness of the dialogue appearing in the film. The term appropriate language can refer to non-offensive language use, which is important when choosing an appropriate film, however for my analyses I will refer to appropriate language as the language appropriate for the sociolinguistic context, as language can have different meaning in different situations and when spoken by different people (Zhang & Wang, 2016). Chvala (2012) states that learners need knowledge about appropriate use of language for specific situations in everyday life, which is supported by Schiffrin (2009) who states that EFL teaching should include lessons on how different words, intonations, and syntactic forms structures the understanding of what is going on in an interaction as intonation, speech rhythm and other signaling mechanisms have communicative significance and can lead to misunderstandings. Consequently, Q2 concerns the possibilities of the various social situations and the language used for different purposes and the ability to use these examples to teach sociolinguistics. For criteria regarding the film's feasibility for teaching pronunciation, Q3 concerns whether the film contains language which exposes the students to the features of English pronunciation that are likely to cause trouble and affect Norwegian speakers' intelligibility. These features should be the main focus when teaching English pronunciation to EFL students (Avery & Ehrlich, 2013, pp. 260-261; Jenkins, 2002). The areas which may present challenges to Norwegian speakers' English pronunciation is described in section 4.5.

#### 4.4 Trustworthiness and ethical considerations

When analyzing the film, I acknowledge my position as a 24-year-old woman from Norway, and the preconceptions this gives me. I acknowledge that my position will influence my interpretation. My evaluation of the plot of the film as being engaging and motivating, and the language as being suitable and realistic for adolescents might not be the same as an evaluation done by an adolescent.

The theoretical rationale for the film selection and criteria for analyses draw on theoretical studies which expand on the topic of using film in English language teaching. The studies



were combined with the Norwegian curriculum for the English subject to ensure that the analyses would consider the Norwegian English language learning context and aim of ELT in Norway. In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the analyses conducted in this thesis the criteria are developed on the background of peer reviewed sources to ensure credibility and strengthen the academic rigor of the thesis. A broad search strategy ensures a solid overview of relevant literature, with a caveat that I have not undertaken a systematic database search and do not proclaim to have covered all the research in the field. Before conducting the analyses, an overview of peer reviewed sources and pedagogical textbooks made for teachers of English as a foreign language was made to identify which errors of pronunciation were common for Norwegian learners of English. These are described in section 3.3, pronunciation teaching.

The representation of varieties of English in the English language teaching classroom has ethical implications, consequently a comment must be made on the chosen spoken English variety. The actors in the film *Love, Simon* speak with a General American accent. Two of the actors in the film are Australian, and one is from The Dominican Republic, nonetheless they speak with a general American accent in the film as the characters they are portraying are American. Choosing a film with an American English variety and using this to teach pronunciation can be an ethical concern since this gives the impression that the teacher has chosen their preferred model of pronunciation. To avoid this, it is important that one also shows other English accents to the students and consider if any varieties are given more coverage than others. The English language syllabus does not offer a specific variety of English as correct, which is in line with ELF scholars' reservations about using external models as prestige models in ELT contexts (Rindal & Piercy, 2013), so it is important that the students are made aware that the teacher does not expect them to speak with a native accent. However accent can be recognized as a significant cause of miscommunication (Park et al., 2017) and consequently needs some attention in the classroom.

#### 4.5 Mode of analyses

Prior to analyzing the film an overview of the different areas of English pronunciation that Norwegians are likely to struggle with, according to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) and Collins and Mees (2013), was made (view section 3.3). In the following, these were compared to the LFC (Jenkins, 2002) and the categories/framework for pronunciation presented by Collins and

Mees (2013), as well as the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018) to identify which features of English pronunciation that are troublesome for Norwegians *and* can lead to problems in intelligibility (view section 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). This resulted in the following features of pronunciation:

- /v/ and /w/
- /θ/ and /ð/
- Confusion of crucial phonemic contrast in vowels: /ɒ- ʌ/ and /ɪ - i:/
- the nurse vowel: /ɜ:/
- Vowel contrasts, such as /u: - ʊ/ and /ɒ - ɔ:/

[These are less significant than /ɒ- ʌ/ and /ɪ - i:/, however they can still cause problems for intelligibility. In the American English variety, the /ɒ/ and /ɔ:/ becomes /ɑ/ or /ɔr/ so the contrast between the vowels /ɒ - ɔ:/ and /ɒ- ʌ/ will not be relevant for this analyses as the spoken language of *Love, Simon* is of an American variety.]

- Placement of tonic/nuclear stress.

[This not listed as an area typically troublesome for Norwegians but included because of its importance in signaling the meaning of an utterance (Jenkins, 2002).]

- Intonation is listed as a troublesome area for many Norwegians.

[Intonation is not listed by Jenkins (2002) or Collins and Mees (2013) as important for intelligibility, however it is listed as a core area for phonological control by the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018), which is why it has been included.]

Initially the film was viewed in its entirety while noting down the plot of the film. Secondly, the film was viewed to identify sequences showing various social settings and conversations with various interlocutors. The social settings and conversation were analyzed using the following concepts from Zhang and Wang (2016) and Gee (2015): formal and informal style, the relationship between the conversation and choice of code and the interaction between the choice of code and personal relationship, and vernacular language and heteroglossia use of language. A total of five sequences was initially identified and the time stamp and plot were written down. These sequences were reviewed a second time, before choosing the two sequences described in section 5 in this thesis. The chosen sequences were selected because of its variety of social settings. In the following, the two sequences were viewed 7 times to identify words containing the chosen phonemes. To ensure focus a decision was made to only examine 3 phonemes each time, and intonation and nuclear stress separately. The identified

words were written in a table. Following, the two sequences were watched one additional time focusing on the phonemes and one additional time focusing on intonation and stress, to strengthen the analyses' validity. Some of the scenes in the film were seen additional times when analyzing the intonation pattern. While watching the film notes were taken in a separate document where the time stamp of different sequences was written down as well.

In the discussion I will show how the method of identifying words containing the features of pronunciation which Norwegians are likely to find challenging can be used to engage the students when working with pronunciation.

## 5 Results:

In this chapter, I will present the results from the conducted analyses of the film *Love, Simon*. The results will be divided into the two categories: content and language, in alignment with the structure of the criteria for analyses. These will be presented in regard to the whole film approach, meaning the film is viewed in its entirety and the entirety of the film is taken into consideration in the analyses, as well as in regard to the short sequence approach where two shorter sequences have been chosen and analyzed more in detail. I have included an analysis of both approaches in order to identify which approach is the most suitable when using feature film to teach English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. The results related to relevance to LK20, Q4 and Q5 will solely be responded to in section 5.1 regarding the whole film approach as the answers would be similar for the short sequence approach as it relates to the content of the film in its entirety, nonetheless there are given examples from each of the shorter sequences for Q4 and Q5.

### 5.1 Whole film approach

In the following section I will present the analyses of the film using the whole film approach.

#### 5.1.1 Content: Type and variety of social situations and relevance to LK20

The film depicts somewhat varied social situations common in the life of an American adolescent. The plot of the film revolves around Simon's life at school and his relationships with his friends, family, and classmates. The social situations shown in the film mostly revolve around Simon being with his friends and family and are mostly informal. These are

likely the types of situations that are most common for students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The film mostly has vernacular language use, however there are aspects of heteroglossia language use when the students talk with the teachers and vice principals. It showcases personal, informal conversations Simon has with his closest friend, brief conversations with his classmates at different locations such as a party, a restaurant and football match, and conversations with his teachers. There is a noticeable difference in how Simon talks and acts with his friends and how he talks and acts with those he does not know as well, which is described further in section 5.2. Part of the storyline revolves around Simon being blackmailed by a fellow classmate, Martin. This results in various scenes where Martin joins Simon and his friends, and it is clear that they are part of different social groups and consequently used to different social codes which is portrayed in the way they talk and act. The film contains complex conversations about love and friendships, but also more casual conversations such as discussing Halloween costumes. In addition to the conversations with his peers, we see Simon in class and at school where he interacts with the school's vice principal and teachers. In these conversations his language and attitude appear to be more polite and formal in contrast to the conversations with his friends.

The film *Love, Simon* can be used as a pedagogical tool when working with several competence aims from the English curriculum after year 10 in the LK20. The dialogue of the film is authentic and can serve as a model of pronunciation for the American English variety. The spoken language of the film consists of authentic language and includes slang, idioms, sarcasm, and youthful vocabulary used by American teenagers (examples given in section 5.2). For this reason, the film can be used when working with the following competence aims; “use key patterns of pronunciation in communication”, “express oneself with fluency and coherence with a varied vocabulary and idiomatic expressions adapted to the purpose, recipient and situation”, and “ask questions and follow up input when talking about various topics adapted to different purposes, recipients and situations” (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019). The film portrays the everyday life of American high schoolers and consequently gives insight into part of the American culture, therefore the film can be used as a pedagogical tool when working with the competence aim “explore and describe ways of living, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity in the English-speaking world” (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019). The LK20 uses a broad definition of “text”, consequently the film can be used as a pedagogical tool when covering the competence

aim: “read, discuss and present content from various types of texts, including self-chosen text” (Ministry of Education and Reserach, 2019).

### 5.1.2 Language

*Q1: Is the language appropriate, as well as realistic in regard to the social settings presented in the film?*

The language in the film is realistic, and the situations depicted in the film are recognizable situations adolescents are likely to identify with. The language is mostly informal, although there are examples of how Simon differentiates his choice of language and adapts his way of talking to the different interlocuters. There are examples of heteroglossia language use, for example when Simon speaks with the vice principal he appears more formal as he is more polite compared to his conversations with his classmates or family, however he still uses causal youthful language like “no biggie”. The vice principal is portrayed as someone who tries to connect with the students by using youthful language (e.g. in section 5.2.1), however the students still respond to him in a polite manner as he is a figure of authority.

*Q2: Does the film show a varied use of language and ways of speaking adapted to the purpose and recipient of the situation?*

Language is related to culture, accordingly students should learn about the cultural backgrounds and communicative principles of language simultaneously, so they are prepared to use language in different contexts (Zhang & Wang, 2016). Language can have different meanings in different situations and when spoken by different people (Zhang & Wang, 2016), and Chvala (2012) states that learners need knowledge about appropriate use of language for specific situations in everyday life. The film *Love, Simon* can help develop students’ sociolinguistic competence as it portrays a variety of different communicative situations and purposes, with different interlocuters. The film depicts examples of when a statement is considered appropriate or not, depending on the relation between the interlocuters and the purpose of the conversation. The film gives insight into part of the American culture and the communicative principles of some social situations in the American context, for example: calling a teacher by Mr. or Ms. followed by their last name, in contrast to calling them by their first name as is done in Norway. The film contains examples of a variety of different situations and shows appropriate use of language for specific situations in everyday life such as casual conversations, making jokes, arguing, ordering food, and having more genuine conversations with friends and family.

*Q3: Does the dialogue have a high degree of words which contains the phonemes, as well as examples of various stress and intonation patterns, which may present challenges to Norwegian English language learners' pronunciation?*

The dialogue in *Love, Simon* gives great exposure to a majority of words that are pronounced with the phonetic sounds identified to be troublesome for Norwegians throughout the entire film. This will be discussed and reviewed in more detail in section 5.2.

*Q4: Is the dialogue clear and intelligible?*

The dialogue is clear and mostly spoken in a moderate pace, which makes it is easy to follow for less proficient learners. The actors' enunciation is clear and intelligible and should be easy to comprehend. The dialogue is spoken with a general American accent and contains a limited amount of slang, which should not cause any trouble in intelligibility for the audience. The dialogue contains examples of idioms (e.g., catch feelings) which according to King (2002) can be troublesome to understand for less proficient learners, however the context of the conversations can be of support. In sequence 1 there are scenes where the audio appears in the form of a voice-over which can be troublesome as you do not see the person talking and lack support from the body language and facial expressions of the speaker, however with the use of closed-captions this should not cause major problems for intelligibility as the written dialogue can be of support.

*Q5: Does the dialogue have a high degree of visual support?*

The dialogue has a high degree of visual support as most of the dialogue is either supported by body language or visual images which support the audio. E.g., in sequence 1 there is an example where Simon says he had this reoccurring dream about Daniel Radcliff, it shows him in bed, waking up night after night starring at a poster of Daniel Radcliff. Further, there is visual support in the character's facial expressions and body language, which supports the attitudes and emotions of the speaker. Similarly in sequence 2 Simon holds up Martins t-shirts which has written print on it, points at them and says, "girls don't want to read your clothes" while looking irritated.

## 5.2 Short sequence approach:

This section will present analyses of two shorter sequences from the film. Following is an overview of the two sequences.

**Table 1**

*Overview of the short sequences.*

Sequence number	Time stamp	Scenario
Sequence 1:	00.10.42 – 00.23.31	Getting in touch with Blue. The sequence contains: conversations with friends, emailing blue and talk with the vice principal
Sequence 2:	00.25.45 – 00.35.05	Martin discovers Simon's secret. The sequence contains: Confrontation with Martin, going to Martin's house and preparing for a party

### 5.2.1 Analyses of Sequence 1:

Content:

#### *Type and variety of social situations*

The sequence depicts various social situations which mostly revolve around the same areas such as school or at Simon's house, however there are various interlocuters and purposes to the different conversations. The sequence starts by showing Simon in his bedroom talking to Leah, his best friend, on facetime about the "closeted gay kid" who has written an anonymous post on "CreekSecret" using the pseudonym "Blue". Following their conversation Simon sends Blue an email declaring his own secret. The scene cuts to Simon at school, where he is shown both in class and talking to his friends in the cafeteria. It proceeds to show Simon at play practice being eager to check if Blue has responded to his e-mail, which he has. The sequence also depicts Simon talking to the vice principal in the hallway, where he gets his phone withdrawn, and in the vice principal's office when picking up his phone as well as small talk with the vice principal in the schools' library.

Language:

*Q1: Is the language appropriate, as well as realistic in regard to the social settings presented in the film?*

The language is youthful and contains some slang and idioms which appears to be authentically used amongst adolescents, such as “get a vibe”, “took a dump”, “biggest train wreck”, “crushing hard”. There are various usage of different intonational patterns as the dialogue includes amongst others: jokes, (e.g., I can't <sup>↑</sup>have all my students <sup>↓</sup>tinderling it up, that's <sup>↑</sup>my department), sarcasm, (e.g., Oh <sup>↑</sup>my god, <sup>↑</sup>no way), questions (e.g., can I have some <sup>↑</sup>fries?), rhetorical questions (e.g., why is there no cell reception at <sup>↓</sup>this school?), disgust (e.g., guys I just found a press-on-nail <sup>↓</sup>in my salad), and irritation (e.g., I was an extra in <sup>↑</sup>the lion king and this is <sup>↑</sup>where I am). The sequence also contains conversations with the vice principal who appears to use a youthful language to connect with the students. The conversations has a vernacular language use, nevertheless Simon appears as more polite, and consequently more formal, as he answer in a more polite manner to the vice principal compared to his conversations with his friends, for example by asking follow-up questions even though it appears as if he does not find the conversation interesting, which is shown clearly as Simon leaves a conversation with the vice-principal in a hurry immediately when the bell rings.

*Q2: Does the film show a varied use of language and ways of speaking adapted to the purpose and recipient of the situation?*

This sequence shows various conversations with a variety of interlocutors and gives examples of how there is suitable and unsuitable use of language in different settings and by different speakers as explained by Gee (2015). The reactions and responses the characters have clearly shows whether they see this as the appropriate way of using the language or not. In this sequence we have examples not only of what is appropriate to say to one's peers, but also for a teacher or vice principal to say to the students. This sequence shows an example of an adult, the vice principal, using language which is meant to be used by a different social group from what he belongs in, for example when he greets Simon by saying “yo, what's up my brother?” and “can't have my students tinderling it up, that is my department”. However, based on Simon's responses it appears as Simon tries to be polite by agreeing with the vice principal's statements and answering by using a high fall intonation pattern, which according to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015) can signal interest in the subject and emphasizes a friendly attitude



(e.g., in table 2). However, by interpreting his body language, which shows him putting his hands in his pockets, nodding, looking around and smiling awkwardly, it is clear he does not find the vice principals statements and way of speaking to be as cool as the vice principal thinks.

**Table 2**

*Example of intonation pattern of non-appropriate sociolinguistic use of language.*

Intonation analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015).

Utterance	Intonation pattern
Yo, ↗ what's up my brother?	Low rise – used as a greeting where the speaker wants to express a friendly attitude
I can't ↗ have all my students ↘ tinding it up, that's ↗ my department	High rise – the speaker appears annoyed   High fall   High rise the speaker still appears annoyed
I totally see you ↘ as a person	High fall – the speaker signals interest in the subject and emphasizes a friendly attitude

The sequence also provides an example of uncertainty in the appropriate use of language in written communication as Simon writes an email to Blue, however he appears uncertain how to sign it. The scene shows him first signing the email using warmly before erasing it to write fondly, yet he ends up signing by simply using his name. This is likely a result of Simon being unsure of what message he wishes to convey to Blue, how formal he should be, and what their relation is at this point.

*Q3: Does the dialogue have a high degree of words which contains the phonemes, as well as examples of various stress and intonation patterns, which may present challenges to Norwegian English language learners' pronunciation?*

The sequence contains great exposure to words which include the English phonetical sounds which Norwegians tend to find challenging. Table 3 includes some examples of words containing the identified troublesome areas. The full analyses can be found in Appendix 2.

**Table 3**

*List of examples of words from Love, Simon containing the features of pronunciation challenging for Norwegian speakers of English*

Phoneme/feature of pronunciation	Identified examples	Amount of identified examples (view appendix 2. for full overview)
/v/	value /'vælju:/, have /hæv/, never /'nevər/, every /'evri/	6 words
/w/	want /'wa:nt/, where /wer/, with /'wɪθ/, wasn't /'wəznt/	11 words
/θ/	thanks /θæŋkz/, with /'wɪθ/, think /'θɪŋk/, nothing /'nʌθɪŋ/	5 words
/ð/	that /'ðæt/, the /ðə/, there /ðer/, though /ðəʊ/	5 words
/ɪ/	like /laɪk/, fine /faɪn/, fries /fraɪz/, tired /taɪəd/	19 words
/i:/	peak /pi:k/, see /si:/, speech /spi:tʃ/, secret /'si:krət/	5 words
/ɜ:/	world /wɜ:rld/, heard /hɜ:rd/, perfectly /'pɜ:rfektli:/	3 words
/u:/	blue /blu:/, huge /hju:dʒ/, value /'vælju:/, cute /kju:t/	9 words
/ʊ/	look /lʊk/, took /tʊk/, good /gʊd/, going /gouŋ/	6 words

The results in Q8 for sequence 1 and 2 shows that the sequences give similar exposure to words containing the various phonemes listed. Sequence 1 gives a somewhat higher level of exposure, however this sequence is longer than sequence 2 and consequently gives more exposure to language.

There are several examples of statements where the placement of the nuclear/tonic stress is important in conveying the meaning of the utterance, for example when Nick says, (**bold**

indicating the nuclear stress) “I’m **not** going to shave my legs”. In this example Nick expresses that he is not going to shave, whereas if you put the stress on “I’m not going to shave my **legs**”, this could indicate he was not going to shave his legs, but something else. Another example is when the vice principal tells Simon: “You are **glowing**. You look **happy**.” By stressing “glowing” and “happy” it indicates that this is how he looks. Nevertheless, if the nuclear stress was put on the word *you*: “**You** are glowing. **You** look happy”, this could indicate that the speaker tries to convey that *you* are glowing, and *you* look happy, however *I* am not.

**Table 4**

*Example 1 of utterances from sequence 1 with description of intonation patterns.*

Intonation analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015).

Statement	Intonation pattern
I’m not going to ↘ shave my <b>legs</b>	Low fall – statement
You are ↗ <b>glowing</b> . You ↗look <b>happy</b>	High fall- emphasize a friendly attitude   High fall also emphasize a friendly attitude

This sequence contains examples of intonation indicating sarcasm, for example: “Oh my god, no way”, “I had no idea”. There are also several examples where the intonation conveys the speakers’ emotions, for example at play practice when the teacher says, “I was an extra in the lion king and this is where I am”. This statement could change meaning based on how, and in which context it is expressed. “This is where I am today” could either imply something negative as she has moved down the ranks, or it could imply something positive as she has moved up the ranks. In this example “this is where I am today” is spoken with a high rise which according to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015) can indicate that the speaker is annoyed or angry.

**Table 5**

*Example 2 of utterances from sequence 1 with description of intonation patterns.*

Intonation analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015).

Statement	Intonation pattern
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Oh ↗my god, ↗no way	Low rise – signaling more to come   high rise – casual, expresses surprise in a less emotional way – sarcastic
I had no ↗idea	High rise – surprise, they hardly believe it, sarcastic
I was an extra in ↗the lion king and this is ↗where I am	Low rise signaling there is more to come   high rise – signaling that she is annoyed

The sequence also includes an example of Simon asking a rhetorical question “why is there no cell reception at this school?”. This is formulated as a question since it contains the word “why”, however Simon says it with a low fall tone which makes the utterance sound negative, and consequently does not appear to be a question he wishes to get an answer to, wherefore the others know they are presumably not meant to give an answer.

### Table 6

*Example 3 of utterances from sequence 1 with description of intonation patterns.*

Intonation analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015).

Statement	Intonation pattern
Why is there no cell reception at ↘ this school?	Low fall – can sound unfriendly and negative, however it is said to his close friends and therefore appears informal rather than negative

### 5.2.2 Analyses of Sequence 2:

Content:

*Type and variety of social situations*

This sequence portrays various informal situations, as it alters from school, Simon at home with his family and him hanging out with his friends and classmates. In this sequence Simon is confronted by Martin, a classmate, who has read Simon’s email correspondence with Blue, and hence know Simon is gay, which Martin uses to threaten Simon with. Later Simon tells Martin he has decided to help him have Ally, Simon’s friend, fall in love with him so that he will not disclose Simon’s secret. In the following, Simon and Martin leave school to go to his house where Simon helps him with his clothing. In the following, he invites Martin to a party and the scene cuts to Simon meeting his friends before the party. Martin shows up and

Simon’s friends are clearly not happy with him being there as they ask Simon if it is some kind of make-a-wish situation.

This sequence depicts several situations where Simon has to talk with a classmate he usually would not speak with and in a situation where Simon is clearly annoyed with Martin as the purpose of the conversation is coming to some form of agreement. As this sequence shows both Simon talking with his closest friends, as well as classmates he has little in common with, the sequence shows how the relationship between the interlocutors affects the choice of language, and how one uses language for different purposes such as confrontation versus friendly personal conversations. One example is when Simon talks with Martin at the start of the sequence (00.26.15) where Simon switches from being polite to more doubting as a consequence of Martin threatening him with leaking his e-mails, seen in contrast to how Simon greets and speaks with his close friends.

**Table 7**

*Example 1 of intonation pattern changing according to recipient and situation.*

Analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015)

Utterance	Intonation pattern
Martin: Simon! <sup>↘</sup> hey, hey	High fall – speaker shows interest and indicates a friendly attitude
Simon: Hey, <sup>↗</sup> Martin	Low rise - speaker wants to express a polite attitude
Martin: Buddy. Hey, uhm I used the <sup>↗</sup> computer in the library right after you	Low rise – the speaker is signaling there is more to come
Simon: <sup>↘</sup> Okay	Low fall - speaker appears detached, and does not desire to continue the conversation
Martin: Mhmm. Well, I went to <sup>↗</sup> g-mail, and it pulled up <sup>↗</sup> your account and I <sup>↘</sup> read some of your emails. I know I probably <sup>↘</sup> shouldn’t have, but they were like <sup>↗</sup> right there. Hehe. So, you will be	Low rise – the speaker is signaling there is more to come   Low rise- signaling there is more to come.   Low fall   Low fall   Low rise- The speaker wishes to appear friendly and signals there is more to come   High fall –

interested to know that my ↘brother is gay	the speaker focus on a special element: he knows Simon is gay.
Simon: No, Martin that wouldn't ↘↗ interest me to know	Fall-rise – there is an element of doubt, and he is signaling disagreement with Martin's statement

**Table 8**

*Example 2 of intonation pattern changing according to recipient and situation.*

Analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015)

Utterance	Intonation pattern
Simon: Oh, ↗hello	Low rise – friendly greeting
Nick: Hey, ↗what's up? Nice ↘right?	Low rise – friendly greeting   High fall – question with genuine interest
Leah: Nick, this is like a new level of laziness ↘even for you.	Low fall – they know the person well, consequently it appears informal instead of unfriendly

In the example presented in table 5, Simon starts the conversation in a friendly manner by politely responding “Hey, Martin”. As the conversation continues, he appears detached and uninterested and does not ask any follow up questions. Martin on the other hand still appears friendly. After Martin states that he knows Simon is gay, Simon’s tone changes and the intonation used shows that he does not agree with Martin as he appears doubting. In the example presented in table 8 the intonation used by Nick and Simon makes the interaction appear friendly. Leah responds with a statement which could appear unfriendly if the context of them being close friends was unknown, however knowing this makes the conversation appear informal instead (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2015).

Language:

*Q1: Is the language appropriate, as well as realistic in regard to the social settings presented in the film?*

The language is youthful and realistic and contains some slang, such as “sup?”, and idioms such as, “get something of my chest”, “banking on your great (..) personality”. The language

used is vernacular, and suitable for the informal situations shown in the sequence. The characters' way of speaking appears to reflect their attitude towards the person and purpose of the conversation, for example when Martin repeatedly tries to interrupt a conversation between two friends, and after a while one responds with "what are you talking about?" expressed using a low rise intonation which is common for WH-questions where one wants to express a friendly attitude (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2015), however based on the facial expression going from a smile to a frown, with her eyebrows lifted and lips parted, looking confusingly at Martin it assumingly looks as if she is annoyed.

*Q2: Does the film show a varied use of language and ways of speaking adapted to the purpose and recipient of the situation?*

This sequence shows how Simon's conversations with Martin are contrary to his conversations with his friends, and one could use this sequence to portray how language supports a person's social position and the appropriate use of language, intonation, and body language for different purposes, as described by Gee (2015) and Schifffrin (2009). The intonation used in the dialogue supports the message of what is said and the response it gets. One example is when Simon physically drags Martin with him to the library to confront him with the blackmailing situation. Martin proceeds to say "good section" when entering one of the book sections. The content of the utterance is appropriate to say in this location, however the setting it is presented in makes it inappropriate (Gee, 2015).

*Q3: Does the dialogue have a high degree of words which contains the phonemes, as well as examples of various stress and intonation patterns, which may present challenges to Norwegian English language learners' pronunciation?*

The sequence contains great exposure to words which include the English phonetical sounds which Norwegians tend to find challenging.: Table 9 includes some examples of words containing the identified troublesome areas. The full analyses can be found in Appendix 3.

### **Table 9**

*List of examples of words from Love, Simon containing the features of pronunciation challenging for Norwegian speakers of English*

Phoneme/feature of pronunciation	Identified examples	Amount of identified examples (view
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		appendix 3. for full overview)
/v/	have /hæv/, even /'i:vn/, very /'veri/	3 words
/w/	wouldn't /wʊdnt/, swim /swɪm/, won't /wɒnt/, went /went/	10 words
/θ/	think /'θɪŋk/, thought /θɔ:t/, thin /θɪn/, with /'wɪθ/	4 words
/ð/	there /ðer/, that /ðæt/, /bothered /'bɑ:ðərd/, clothes /kləʊðz/	7 words
/ɪ/	swim /swɪm/, with /'wɪθ/, print /prɪnt/, alright /ɔ:l'raɪt/,	19 words
/i:/	feel /fi:l/, screenshot /skri:nʃɑ:t/, read /ri:d/, each /i:tʃ/	7 words
/ɜ:/	world /wɜ:rld/, first /fɜ:rst/, turn /tɜ:rn/, girls /gɜ:rlz/	5 words
/u:/	too /tu:/, blue /blu:/, school /sku:l/, computer /kəm'pjʊ:tər/	6 words
/ʊ/	won't /wɒnt/, good /gʊd/, show /ʃəʊ/, looking /'lʊkɪŋ/,	16 words

The exposure of the chosen features of pronunciation shows the number of different words containing the various phonemes are fairly similar for several phonemes across the two sequences. The most significance difference being 16 different words containing /ʊ/ in sequence 2, versus 6 words in sequence 1. Nevertheless, the results do not report the number of times the different words appear, consequently it is possible the exposure of the sound /ʊ/ is more similar across the sequences if the words listed for /ʊ/ appear more frequently in sequence 1.

There are several examples of sentences one could use to highlight the importance of the placement of the nuclear stress, for example when Simon holds Martin's printed t-shirts and says, "girls don't want to **read** your clothes". By putting the nuclear stress at the word read we understand it as girls does not want to read anyone's clothes, whereas if the sentence was



“girls don’t want to read *'your* clothes” we would assume they would want to read somebody else’s clothes, just not his. Another example is when Simon says, “nobody *'calls* me that, Martin”. The nuclear stress is put to the word calls and the sentence therefore communicates that this is not something he is called. However, if he said “nobody calls *'me* that, Martin” it would indicate that nobody calls Simon that, however someone else gets called.

As explained previously this sequence contains several examples of how the intonation of the different speakers changes based on their attitudes and feelings towards the interlocuters, and one can use these examples to highlight the importance intonation has in expressing meaning, and how it can lead to misunderstandings (Schiffrin, 2009). For example, when Nick tells Leah “You are a bully” which is uttered using a low rise intonation pattern, which according to Nilsen and Rugesæter can signal a friendly and encouraging tone. The statement itself is not positive, however because of the intonation and the relation between the interlocuters, it does not appear to be severe or rude. Nonetheless, if this was said with a low fall tone to someone Nick was not friends with it could appear more negative and serious, according to Nilsen and Rugesæter’s understanding of intonation patterns (2015).

**Table 10**

*Examples of intonation and nuclear stress*

Analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015)

Utterance	Intonation pattern
Girls don’t want to <sup>↗</sup> <i>read</i> your clothes	High rise – the speaker appears annoyed
Nobody <i>calls</i> me <sub>↘</sub> that, Martin	Low fall – the speaker makes a statement
You are <sup>↗</sup> a bully	Low rise – the speaker sounds friendly and encouraging

### 5.3 Summary of results

To summarize, the analyses of the linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of the film showed that the film is appropriate to use in English in 10<sup>th</sup> grade according to the criteria presented in section 4.3. The plot and language of the film is suitable and appropriate for adolescents, the dialogue is clear and intelligible, and the film provides visual support for the dialogue. The plot is suitable for all genders and the age of 15–16-year-olds. The students can likely identify with the characters and theme of the film, which presumably help increase their learning

motivation. The film presents examples of various social situations and appropriate and non-appropriate use of language and intonation based on the interlocutor and context of the situation. *Love, Simon* exposes the viewer to a number of words containing the phonetic sounds which Norwegian learners of English are likely to find difficult and which can cause problems in intelligibility. Prior to analyzing the film an overview of the different areas of English pronunciation which may be challenging for Norwegians were established and further used in the analyses of Q3 in section 5.2. The analyses shows that the two shorter sequences chosen for the analyses of the film contains a great amount of words containing the phonemes which Norwegians are likely to find challenging. I do not claim to have identified all the words containing the listed phonemes, nonetheless a valid representation of words containing the various phonemes are presented. The majority of the words presented in the analyses appeared in the dialogue several times.

## 6 Discussion:

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings from the analyses of the film *Love, Simon* in light of relevant theory and prior research. This discussion is based on the thesis' research question: *How can feature films be used to teach oral skills in the EFL classroom in Norway in 10<sup>th</sup> grade?* As previously stated, oral skills have in this thesis been delimited to include sociolinguistic skills and the features of pronunciation which may be challenging for Norwegian learners and which may affect speech intelligibility.

In the following, I will discuss and give suggestions to how the film *Love, Simon* can be used to teach pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills for Norwegian learners of English in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I will begin by discussing the use of the short sequence approach and the whole film approach, when the purpose is teaching pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills, with the help of theory and prior research reviewed earlier in this thesis. Secondly, a discussion of the use of closed-captions is presented, followed by a discussion of the possibilities of using *Love, Simon* as a base when using drama as a pedagogical tool to teach English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. Lastly, a discussion of how to teach English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills through various listening- and discussion-based activities based on the film is presented.

## 6.1 Possibilities of different viewing modes when using *Love, Simon* as a pedagogical tool to teach oral skills

Before discussing which activities can be used to teach English oral skills based on feature film it is relevant to discuss which viewing mode is most beneficial for the purpose of teaching pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills.

### 6.1.1 The short sequence or the whole film approach

As described in section 3.5.3, King (2002) presents an overview of the benefits and limitations of the short sequence and whole film approach. As analyzing the words and phonemes used in the dialogue of the whole film in detail would have been too time consuming for the scope of this thesis, a decision was made to only analyze Q3 in detail using the short sequence approach. The results from the analyses of Q3 in sequence 1 and 2 shows the words containing the various phonemes identified in section 4.5 appeared several times in all the sequences. It is likely that these sequences give a valid representation of the rest of the dialogue occurring in the film, consequently one could use other sequences than the two presented in this analyses.

A comment must be made on the use of the whole film approach for the purpose of teaching pronunciation. The whole film approach has its benefits, however it is the purpose of the language learning activity which determines whether the whole film or the short sequence approach is most beneficial. Considering the learning aim would be using film to teach pronunciation, the short sequence approach is consequently more beneficial according to King (2002). One disadvantage about using the short sequence approach is that isolating a specific sequence from a feature film can decontextualize it as the characters in a film is often in dialogue with each other and conversations echo earlier conversations (Kaiser, 2011). Consequently, with the short sequence approach the viewer does not necessarily know the relation between the different characters which is important for the interpretation of the intonation and sociolinguistic context of the film as the relation between the characters matter in how they act and engage with each other. An example of this is presented under type and variety of social situations in section 5.2.2 where Leah makes statements which could be understood as negative or rude if one did not know these characters have a close relation. Based on this sequence alone one would not necessarily understand that Simon, Nick and

Leah are best friends, however if one watched the film in its entirety, one would know this based on their previous interaction in the film.

#### 6.1.2 Closed-captioned or non-closed-captioned viewing mode

The question of whether one should use closed-captions or non-closed captions when using film as a pedagogical tool depends on the teaching objectives (King, 2002). Closed-captions can be beneficial for learners pronunciation and overall comprehension of the film and make it easier to follow for less advanced learners (King, 2002). The analyses of Q4 and Q5 shows that the dialogue is mostly clear and intelligible and have a high degree of visual support. Nonetheless there are parts which students at a lower proficiency level might find challenging, for example in sequence 1 when part of the audio appears in the form of a voice-over where you do not see the speaker and do not get as much visual support. Here learners would likely benefit from the support of closed-captions in English.

King (2002) does not present what the viewer's attention should be drawn to when watching films with or without captions to ensure language learning, however this is presented in Wisniewska and Mora (2020). Wisniewska and Mora (2020) found that watching tv-series can help develop language learners' pronunciation. When watching the clips with captions the study only showed benefits in pronunciation when attention was directed to understanding the meaning of the plot, with 5.18% gains in phonological accuracy, whereas there was an increase in pronunciation accuracy for uncaptioned film when attention was directed to phonetic form with 5.28% gains in phonological accuracy. This study shows that incidental learning of pronunciation only seems to occur with the use of captions (Wisniewska & Mora, 2020). For the purpose of using film to teach pronunciation it appears as using a closed-captioned viewing mode where the students are asked to pay attention to the meaning of the plot of the film is the most beneficial. However, if the teacher aims at focusing on phonetic form when watching film, a non-closed-captioned viewing mode is likely beneficial (Wisniewska & Mora, 2020). For teaching sociolinguistic skills on the other hand, it is possible that a non-closed captioned viewing mode can be more beneficial. This is discussed further in section 6.3.

## 6.2 Teaching pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills with drama

One way feature film can be used to teach oral skills in the EFL classroom in Norway is by using drama activities such as acting out scenes from the film as a follow up activity after watching a film sequence as done by Seferoglu (2008). Drama is suggested by Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) to be a good way of teaching pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. Using the short sequence approach, one could choose various sequences and have roleplay activities with the students, where a scene from the film acts as the base of what the students will reenact. Drama pedagogy includes authentic tasks and can make language learning more realistic (Brash & Warnecke, 2009). Khan (2015) and Basol and Kartal (2019) states that film can be considered a natural language source and present diverse language scenarios which can be applied in the classroom. However, Seferoglu (2008) states that some may criticize the use of feature films in ELT as they often have dense, idiomatic language and consequently may not provide students with useful language that can be used outside the classroom. Kaiser (2011) states that feature film is created for native speakers and not learners of the language, which makes it an authentic source material. As film is authentic source material there are many potential benefits to the use of film, however it can be challenging for learners to understand, and unlike more traditional printed text which allows the learners to dwell on the language and compare the language in two sections, the information and language presented in the film changes rapidly (Kaiser 2011). However, the use of film in ELT can according to King (2002) be a refreshing learning experience for students who need a break from drill practices and textbook-oriented teaching as feature film can give exposure to living language and realistic situations. Consequently, film deserves a place in the ELT classroom.

Avery and Ehrlich (2013) suggest that the students should always practice pronunciation in meaningful contexts. Consequently, when using film as the base for roleplay activities the teacher should choose sequences which displays realistic situations and authentic language which the students can use outside the classroom, as it gives the students meaningful contexts for them to practice various features of pronunciation in. The results from Q1, Q4 and Q5 suggests that the language used in *Love, Simon* is both realistic and appropriate for adolescents and the dialogue is clearly presented with a general American accent, and it portrays a variety of social situations. This approach gives the teacher the opportunity to choose a film sequence which gives considerable exposure to the features of pronunciation which the students need to practice. Showing a film made for entertainment, such as *Love,*

*Simon*, is likely beneficial if the students' attention should be directed to the plot, as entertaining films can be more motivating, as stated by King (2002).

In the following, I will, based on the results from section 5.2, discuss how an example from a sequence in *Love, Simon* can be used to teach pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills through roleplay. The results from the analyses of Q3 shows that both sequences can be used to teach the features of pronunciation listed in section 4.5.

If the sequences presented in the analyses should be used in roleplay activities, it is likely beneficial to split them into several shorter sequences as a 10 or 13-minute roleplay would likely be too long and time consuming as that would mean the students would need to learn and memorize a great amount of dialogue. When using film as the foundation for using roleplay to teach pronunciation the teacher could identify scenes where the sounds they want the students to practice are used frequently. This allows the speaker to practice those features in a meaningful setting, which is important according to Avery and Ehrlich (2013). Language learners should learn the appropriate use of language for various situations of everyday life (Schiffrin, 2009), consequently learners should be taught how the use of formal and informal language, words, intonations, body language and syntactic forms structures and affects ones understanding of what is going on in an interaction. Therefore, the chosen sequences should, in addition to having a high exposure of the features of pronunciation which the students should practice, include realistic social situations which can serve as examples of how the mentioned sociolinguistic features affects communication. As described in section 5, *Love, Simon* includes examples of various realistic social situation such as speaking with friends and classmates, meeting the vice-principal, going to a party and ordering food at a restaurant.

The students could first watch the chosen sequence in its entirety and consequently be exposed to native speaker input which can serve as a model of pronunciation for the features of pronunciation which needs practice. To ensure that the students attention is directed towards the plot of the film, the students could answer questions related to understanding the plot of the film while watching the sequence as done in Wisniewska and Mora's (2020) study. In the following, they can be split into groups and be given manuscripts from the various scenes. If one were to use one of the sequences presented in section 5.2 the scenes where the audio appears in the form of a voice-over should be excluded as this is not an example of realistic spoken dialogue. The results for both features of pronunciation and level of exposure

to a varied level of social situations and language used accordingly, were similar across both sequences presented in the analyses, consequently both sequences give similar possibilities when used for a roleplay activity. The exposure to the chosen features of pronunciation shows that the number of different words containing the various phonemes is fairly similar for several phonemes across the two sequences. The results show that both sequences display various social settings, and the use of realistic and varied language based on the recipient and purpose of the situation.

Kaiser (2011) states that when using film in language teaching the instructor could show the students two scenes and have the students compare and contrast them. This can for instance be used when focusing on various use of appropriate language where one could show clips with different social situations and different use of language and compare them. If one were to adapt this to a roleplay activity one could have one group of students act out one scene from the film and a second group act out a different scene from the same film and succeeding have the students discuss and compare. Sequence 2 from *Love, Simon* can be used for this purpose as it shows examples of different types of social contexts, interlocutors and purposes, and how the purpose of conversation and the personal relationship between the speakers affects their choice of code. One group of students could act out the scene where Martin threatens Simon with spreading his emails and one group could act out the sequence where Simon talks with his closest friends before a party, followed by a discussion where they compare the different ways of speaking, such as informal or formal language use, e.g., in table 5 and 6. By using these scenes the students get practice speaking the features of pronunciation which may be challenging for Norwegian learners and which may affect speech intelligibility as the sequence contains examples of the words listed in table 9. As the suggested scenes illustrates the difference in language use, both spoken and body language, the discussion following the drama activity is important as this can help make the students aware of the importance e.g., intonation has in delivering a message, such as humor or anger, as described in Miccoli (2003).

Another example of how a shorter scene from sequence 1 which can be used a scene for the students to reenact and discuss is the scene where Simon eats lunch with his friends before he is caught using his phone in the hallway by the vice principal. The sequence shows Simon talking to his close friends as well as an adult with higher authority. The scene shows the appropriate way of informally speaking with friends, as well as an example of the vice

principal using language which could be appropriate if spoken by a member of a different social group, as described by Gee (2015). In the conversation Simon has with his friends in the cafeteria there are examples of intonation which indicates a yes/no questions as it is stated with a low rise: “can I have some ↗ fries?”/kæn ai hæv sʌm fraɪz/, surprise and disgust as it is said with a high rise: “guys I just found a press-on-nail ↘ in my salad” /gaɪz ai dʒʌst faʊnd ə presʌneɪl ɪn maɪ ‘sæləd/ and an utterance signaling frustration pronounced with a low fall: “why is there no cell reception at ↘this school” /waɪ ɪz ðer nəʊ selrɪ’sepʃn æt ðɪs sku:l/. The intonation patterns were analyzed using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015). As shown in these phonetically transcribed sentences the dialogue contains several examples of words containing the features of pronunciation listed in section 4.5, consequently the described sequence can be used to teach English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills.

### 6.3 Teaching pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills through listening- and discussion-based activities

Other activities which can be used to teach oral skills in the EFL classroom through feature film are listening and discussion-based activities.

*Love, Simon* can be used to teach several features of English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills as it depicts a varied use of intonational patterns which changes according to the situation, context and interlocuter of the conversation. In the LFC Jenkins (2002) suggests that intonation is not an important feature for intelligibility, however Schiffrin (2009) states that intonation have communicative significance and can lead to misunderstanding, and EFL teaching should consequently include lessons on how different intonation patterns structures a person’s understanding of what is going on in an interaction (Schiffrin, 2009). The following exercise is suggested for teaching intonation by Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008). First, the learners listen to various audio of native speakers, and then they discuss and identify if the speaker is asking for information, stating a fact or asking a question, if they are happy, annoyed, sad or bored based on what they hear and see. This exercise illustrates how intonation patterns affects the meaning of an utterance. Lialikhova (2021) express that video can be used as authentic language input, consequently, clips from *Love, Simon* can be used in this exercise. For this exercise a non-closed-captioned viewing mode is likely beneficial as King (2002) suggests it can help students enhance listening strategies such as using visual



cues and voice in guessing meaning. By using closed-captions, questions would for example be revealed as they are written with a question mark in the captions.

By only showing a short sequence the students will not have seen the film in its entirety and consequently, do not necessarily know the relation between the characters, which can be favorable in this type of exercise as they would need to make their guesses solely based on the intonation, facial expressions, and body language of the characters in the shown sequence.

The results presented in the analyses shows that the dialogue in *Love, Simon* includes examples of a variation of intonational patterns, examples shown in table 11.

**Table 11**

*Example of intonation patterns with meaning*

Analyzed by using Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015)

Intonation	Meaning	Utterance
Low rise   High fall	LR: friendly greeting HF: question with genuine interest, appears as he wishes to continue the conversation	Hey, ↗what's up? Nice ↘right?
Fall-rise	There is an element of doubt, and he is signaling disagreement to the other speaker's statement	No, Martin that wouldn't ↘↗ interest me to know
Low fall	Can sound unfriendly and negative, however if said to close friends it can appear informal rather than negative, which is the case in this example	Why is there no cell reception at ↘this school?
Low rise   High rise	LR: signaling more to come HR: casual response, expresses surprise in a less emotional way – sarcastic	Oh ↗ my god, ↗no way

High fall	Speaker emphasizes a friendly attitude	You are ↘glowing. You look ↘happy
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As culture includes aspects such as body language, ways of talking to different people, how various emotions are expressed or how culturally accepted intonation is used to deliver various messages, such as humor or anger (Miccoli, 2003) this should be a good exercise to develop the students sociolinguistic skills. The examples listed in table 11 can be interpreted differently by the students and a discussion following the exercise is therefore important. One approach could be to first play the audio of the film sequence and have the students write down how they interpret the meaning of the utterance/dialogue. In the following, the students could be shown the visual clip with the audio and see if their understanding changes based on the speaker's body language and facial expressions. An example where showing the audio separately from the visual image can change the interpretation is the clip where the vice-principal states "I can't ↗have all my students ↘tinderling it up, that's ↗my department". Because of the intonation used in this sentence he sounds annoyed, however when looking at his body language and facial expressions he does not appear to be as annoyed as he sounds considering he smiles. With this exercise students can be made aware of the possible differences in attitude reflected in intonation and the outcome appropriate or inappropriate use of intonation may have.

A fundamental idea in pedagogy and constructivist learning theory is to engage and activate the students in their learning (Imsen, 2015, p. 58). For teaching English pronunciation through film one can show a sequence from a film and have the students listen and identify words containing the features of pronunciation which Norwegians typically struggle with, as I have done for the analyses of this thesis. The students can for example be asked to identify words with /ð/ and write these down. For this exercise a non-closed captioned approach can be beneficial as they are asked to focus on phonetic structure, which is the most beneficial according to Wisniewska and Mora's (2020) study. Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015) states that the students can, in their pronunciation training, benefit from being able to read phonemic script, however the teacher should not make the students transcribe sentences phonetically. Consequently, the students should not necessarily transcribe the words phonetically as done in this thesis, rather listen and identifying some words with the chosen sound.

Lastly, one way of working with pronunciation in the classroom suggested by Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015) is to have the teacher collect text material for each of the sounds Norwegian learners tend to find difficult and present these in a context where the learner understand that it does matter whether or not the correct sound is used. Minimal pairs can be used for this exercise, however they should be presented in sentences with a relevant context, so that the learners experience that a sentence can get a different meaning if a word is pronounced incorrectly (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2015). For this exercise one could take sentences from the film which contains a word with the sound the teacher wishes to give attention and then make contrasting sentences which illustrates that by just swapping one phoneme, the meaning of the sentence is changed. For example for /i: - ɪ/ the swap in this sentence can change the meaning: /gɜ:rlz dəʊnt wɑ:nt tu: ri:d jər kləʊðz/ can be become /gɜ:rlz dəʊnt wɑ:nt tu: rɪd jər kləʊðz/. This sentence then goes from; girls don't want to read your clothes, to; girls don't want to rid your clothes, as in get rid of his clothes. These types of exercises can according to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2015, p. 160) work well, however they should be kept brief as they could be somewhat artificial.

## 7 Conclusion

In this thesis I have examined *how feature films can be used to teach oral skills in the EFL classroom in Norway in 10<sup>th</sup> grade*. More specifically this thesis has contemplated the use of feature film, with *Love, Simon* as an example, when teaching sociolinguistic skills and the features of pronunciation which Norwegian speakers of English are likely to make and which are likely to cause trouble in intelligibility.

### 7.1 Summary of findings

The findings of my MA study indicate that the film *Love, Simon* can be used to teach sociolinguistic skills and the features of pronunciation which Norwegian speakers of English are likely to make, and which are likely to cause trouble in intelligibility. The analyses conducted in this thesis reveals that a great amount of words containing the phonemes /v/, /w/, /θ/, /ð/, /ɪ - i:/, /ɜ:/ and /u: - ʊ/ was identified in the film *Love, Simon*. Several examples of authentic use of various intonation patterns and placement, and sentences illustrating the importance of the placement of the nuclear stress was found. Further, the analyses showed that the film displays examples of various social situations and ways of speaking adapted to the different purposes and interlocutors. Based on the findings of the analyses and prior

research and relevant theory, the short sequence approach combined with a closed-captioned viewing mode was identified as most beneficial for the purpose of using film to teach sociolinguistic skills and pronunciation.

Following, a discussion on how one can use drama activities and listening- and discussion-based activities to enhance pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills was presented. Using a film sequence containing realistic language and social situations as the base for a roleplay activity can give the students realistic situations to practice their pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills as well as exposing them to authentic language. This method also allows the students to act out different scenes with different social situations and various interlocutors and succeeding compare the language, intonation and body language used for the different purposes, and consequently enhancing their sociolinguistic skills. The findings show that listening- and discussion-based activities can likely be valuable activities to use when working on pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills, especially when teaching intonation and nuclear stress.

## 7.2 Implications and contributions of the findings

My MA study builds on previous research and theory on the topic of using film to teach oral skills. Previous studies have aimed at discovering if film can be used to teach oral skills, whereas this study aimed at discovering how one can use film, with the film *Love, Simon* as an example, to teach oral skills, specifically pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. The thesis has identified the areas of English pronunciation which are normally challenging for Norwegians, and which of those that are likely to lead to miscommunication and cause trouble in intelligibility. Following, various activities for developing pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills were discussed, using the film *Love, Simon* as an example. The findings illustrates that the film *Love, Simon* can through the use of drama activities, as well as listening and discussion-based activities be a valuable pedagogical tool when teaching sociolinguistic skills and the features of pronunciation which Norwegian speakers of English are likely to make, and which are likely to cause trouble in intelligibility. The activities discussed in this thesis can be used with other films and are easily applicable.

### 7.3 Suggestions for further research

I believe it is necessary to do further empirical research on this topic as this thesis explores the theoretical perspectives of using film to teach pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills and has not done empirical research in the classroom. The way forward, I believe, is to conduct an empirical classroom study where the film *Love, Simon* is shown, followed by the activities reviewed in this thesis to detect if this is successful in the classroom. The student's proficiency level in pronunciation and sociolinguistic competence could be measured prior to viewing the film and after to explore if there is any development in the students' English pronunciation and sociolinguistic skills. Research on teaching oral skills through more films and different types of film would be a valuable contribution to the field of practice and research.

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## Appendix 1: The Lingua Franca Core main items

What follows is the full presentation of the LFC main core items as presented by Jenkins (2002, pp. 96-97):

1. The consonant inventory with the following provisos:
  - some substitutions of /θ/ and /ð/ are acceptable (because they are intelligible in EIL);
  - rhotic “r” rather than non-rhotic varieties of “r”;
  - British English /t/ between vowels in words such as “latter”, “water” rather than American English flapped [ɾ];
  - Allophonic variation within phonemes are permissible as long as the pronunciation does not overlap onto another phoneme, for example Spanish pronunciation of /v/ as [β] leads in word-initial positions to its being heard as /b/ (so “vowel” is heard as “bowels” etc.)
2. Additional phonetic requirements
  - aspiration following word-initial voiceless stops /p/ /t/ and /k/ e.g. in [p<sup>h</sup>ɪn] (“pin”) as compared with /spɪn/ (“spin”), otherwise these stops sound like their voiced counterparts /b/ /d/ and /g/;
  - shortening of vowel sounds before fortis (voiceless) consonants and maintenance of length before lenis (voiced) consonants, for example the shorter /æ/ in “sat” as contrasted with the longer /æ/ in “sad”, or the /i:/ in “seat” as contrasted with that in “seed”
3. Consonant clusters
  - no omission of sounds in word-initial clusters, e.g. in promise, string;
  - omission in middle and final clusters only permissible according to L1 English rules of syllable structure, e.g. factsheet’ can be pronounced “facsheet” but not “fatsheet” or “facteet”;
  - /nt/ between vowels as in British English “winter” pronounced /wɪntər/ rather than American English where, by deletion of /t/, it becomes /wɪnər/;
  - Addition is acceptable, for example “product” pronounced [pɹɹ’ɒdʌktɔtɔ] was intelligible to NNS interlocutors, whereas omission was not, for example “product” pronounced /’pɹɹdʌk/
4. Vowel sounds

- Maintenance of contrast between long and short vowels for example between “live” and “leave”;
- L2 regional qualities acceptable if they are consistent, except substitutions for the sound /ɜ:/ as in “bird”, which regularly cause problems

#### 5. Production and placement of tonic (nuclear) stress

- Appropriate use of contrastive stress to signal meaning. For example the difference in meaning in the utterances “I came by TAXi” and “I CAME by taxi” in which nuclear stress is shown in upper case. The former is a neutral statement of fact, whereas the latter includes an additional meaning such as “but I’m going home by bus”. (Jenkins, 2002, pp. 96-97)

## Appendix 2: Table 3, full overview of identified words

**Table 3**

*List of examples of words from Love, Simon containing the features of pronunciation challenging for Norwegian speakers of English*

Phoneme/feature of pronunciation	Identified examples	Amount of identified examples
/v/	value /'vælju:/, have /hæv/, vice-principal /vaɪs 'prɪnsəpl/, never /'nevər/, obvious /'ɑ:bviəs/, every /'evri/	6 words
/w/	whatever /wət'evər/, what's up /'wɒts ʌp/, want /'wɑ:nt/, awakening /ə'weɪkənɪŋ/, where /wer/, with /'wɪθ/, wasn't /'wɒznt/, warmly /wɔ:rmli/, why /waɪ/, anyone /'eniwʌn/, world /wɜ:rld/	11 words
/θ/	thanks /θæŋkz/, with /'wɪθ/, think /'θɪŋk/, nothing /'nʌθɪŋ/, their /θer/	5 words
/ð/	that /'ðæt/, the /ðə/, there /ðer/, though /ðəʊ/, brother /'brʌðər/	5 words
/ɪ/	is /ɪs/, it /ɪt/, if /ɪf/, like /laɪk/, fine /faɪn/, fries /fraɪz/, nail /neɪl/, right /raɪt/, tired /taɪəd/, obvious /'ɑ:bviəs/, with /'wɪθ/, every /'evri/, music /'mju:zɪk/, happy /'hæpi/, shave /ʃeɪv/, lion /laɪən/, king /kɪŋ/, today /tə'deɪ/, reception /rɪ'sepʃn/	19 words

/i:/	peak /pi:k/, see /si:/, speech /spi:tʃ/, secret /'si:krət/, seems /si:mz/	5 words
/ɜ:/	world /wɜ:rld/, heard /hɜ:rd/, perfectly /'pɜ:rfektli:/	3 words
/u:/	too soon /tu: su:n/, blue /blu:/, huge /hju:dʒ/, value /'vælju:/, school /sku:l/, cute /kju:t/, student /'stu:dnt/, music /'mju:zɪk/	8 words
/ʊ/	look /lʊk/, took /tʊk/, good /gʊd/, going /goʊŋ/, glowing /gləʊŋ/, snow /snəʊ/	6 words

## Appendix 3: Table 9, full overview of identified words

**Table 9**

*List of examples of words from Love, Simon containing the features of pronunciation challenging for Norwegian speakers of English*

Phoneme/feature of pronunciation	Identified examples	Amount of identified examples
/v/	have /hæv/, even /'i:vn/, very /'veri/	3 words
/w/	wouldn't /wʊdnt/, want /'wɑ:nt/, we /wi:/, swim /swɪm/, wonder woman /'wʌndər 'wʊmən, won't /wəʊnt/, with /'wɪθ/, went /went/, world /wɜ:rld/	10 words
/θ/	think /'θɪŋk/, thought /θɔ:t/, thin /θɪn/, with /'wɪθ/	4 words
/ð/	there /ðer/, that /ðæt/, /bothered /'bɑ:ðərd/, feather /'feðər/, this /ðɪs/, the /ðə/, clothes /kləʊðz/	7 words
/ɪ/	swim /swɪm/, with /'wɪθ/, print /prɪnt/, in /ɪn/, alright /ɔ:l'raɪt/, his /hɪz/, pick /pɪk/, like /laɪk/, ripped /rɪpt/, right /raɪt/, interested /'ɪntrəstɪd/, it /ɪt/, nice /naɪs/, personality /pɜ:rsə'næləti/, hey /heɪ/, Simon /saɪmən/, buddy /bʌdi/, library /laɪbrəri/, okey /,əʊ'keɪ/	19 words
/i:/	feel /fi:l/, screenshot /skri:nʃɑ:t/, read /ri:d/, each /i:tʃ/, eat /i:t/, sleep /sli:p/, we /wi:/,	7 words

/ɜ:/	world /wɜ:rlɪd/, first /fɜ:rst/, personality /,pɜ:rsə'næləti/, turn /tɜ:rn/, girls /gɜ:rlz/	5 words
/u:/	too /tu:/, blue /blu:/, do /du:/, dude /du:d/, school /sku:l/, computer /kəm'pjʊ:tər/	6 words
/ʊ/	wouldn't /wʊdnt/, woman /wʊmən/, won't /wəʊnt/, good /gʊd/, show /ʃəʊ/, looking /'lʊkɪŋ/, could /kʊd/, look /lʊk/, okey /,əʊ'keɪ/, so /səʊ/, no /nəʊ/, know /nəʊ/, clothes /kləʊðz/, nobody /nəʊbədi/, don't /dəʊnt/, bully /bʊli/	16 words