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Norwegian EFL teachers' perspectives on the relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak

A qualitative interview study

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Abstract

This thesis aims to uncover Norwegian lower-secondary EFL teachers' perspectives on the relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak. Through qualitative inquiry in the form of semi-structured interviews, three teachers have been asked to elaborate on their experiences, perspectives, and thoughts on their pupils' willingness to speak, their views on formative assessment and their perspectives on the relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak.

The findings revealed that the teachers consider their pupils' willingness to speak to be heavily influenced by their classroom environment, social relations, and beliefs about their own competences. The teachers consider that formative assessment can help pupils become better speakers and increase their willingness to speak if each individual pupil's current competence and emotional state is considered when providing formative assessment. They believed that conveying for the pupils that formative assessment is for learning, through incremental gains in learning and competence could lead to less stress and more willingness to speak as it would allow the pupils to see learning as a trial-and-error process. Further, they consider the provision of encouraging and specific feedback on pupils' current accomplishments when speaking, as well as providing situations in which they would feel competent enough to speak could increase their willingness to speak.

The project concluded with suggesting that if formative assessment is conducted in a way that emphasizes an incremental, process-oriented view of learning, through creating appropriate goals adjusted to the pupils' competences and not emphasizing too many areas for improvement, as well as providing pupils evidence of their speaking capabilities, their anxiety may lower, and their self-perceived competence may increase. This could lead to further increases in their willingness to speak. As such, it is postulated that there may be a relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak.

Because of the limited scope of this paper, further research on Norwegian EFL teachers', as well as Norwegian EFL pupils' perspectives through quantitative, action-research or qualitative studies must be conducted to confirm these findings.

Sammendrag

Denne avhandlingen har som mål å avdekke norsklæreres perspektiver om forholdet mellom formativ vurdering og elever sin talevillighet i engelsk på ungdomstrinnet. Gjennom kvalitativ forskning i form av semi-strukturerte intervjuer, har tre lærere blitt bedt om å utdype om sine erfaringer, perspektiver og tanker om elevers talevillighet, deres syn på formativ vurdering og deres perspektiver på sammenhengen mellom formativ vurdering og talevillighet.

Resultatene avdekket at lærerne anser elevers talevillighet som sterkt påvirket av klasseromsmiljøet, sosiale relasjoner og troen på deres egne ferdigheter. Lærerne mener at formativ vurdering kan hjelpe elevene til å øke kompetanse i muntlig engelsk, samt øke deres talevillighet dersom hver enkelt elevs nåværende kompetanse og følelsesmessige tilstand blir tatt i betraktning ved vurderingen. De påstår at å formidle til elevene at formativ vurdering er *for* læring, gjennom inkrementelle fremskritt i læring og kompetanse, kan føre til mindre stress og økt vilje til å snakke, da elevene vil kunne se læring som en prosess som innebærer prøving og feiling. Videre mener de at å gi oppmuntrende og spesifikke tilbakemeldinger på elevenes nåværende prestasjoner når de snakker, samt å skape situasjoner der elevene føler seg kompetente nok til å snakke, kan øke deres talevillighet.

Prosjektet konkluderte med å antyde at hvis formativ vurdering blir gjennomført på en måte som legger vekt på et inkrementelt og prosessorientert syn på læring, ved å sette passende mål tilpasset elevenes kompetanse og å gi et begrenset antall forbedringsmål, samt bidra med bevis for elevers taleferdigheter kan angsten deres reduseres og deres selvoppfattede kompetanse kan øke. Dette kan føre til ytterligere økninger i deres talevillighet. Det antydes derfor i denne oppgaven at det kan være en sammenheng mellom formativ vurdering og talevillighet.

På grunn av begrensninger i denne oppgaven må det gjennomføres ytterligere forskning på engelsklærere (EFL) i Norge, samt på perspektivene til norske engelskelever gjennom kvantitative studier, aksjonsforskning eller kvalitative studier for å bekrefte funnene.

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1. Introduction

1.1   Background

In the EFL classroom, the ability to communicate is seen as one of the main aims of the subject. According to Dörnyei (2005, p. 207), the general goal of communicative language education methods is to advance the learners' communication competences. McIntyre and Charos (1996) point out that trends related to conversational approaches to second language pedagogy reflect that use of a language precedes proficiency. In other words, one must talk to learn (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996, p. 3). In the relevance and central values section in the Norwegian national curriculum for the English subject, it is stated that "The pupils shall become confident users of English so that they can use English to learn, communicate and connect to others" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). If language use precedes language learning, the curriculum aim can be seen as both a means and an end. Communication becomes part the learning method. Within the communicative language teaching approach (CLT), meaning, interaction and social contexts are emphasized (Skulstad, 2020, p. 56). Skulstad cites Vygotsky (1978) and claims that his view on social learning is in accordance with CLT. A child's learning processes truly awakens through interaction and cooperation with people in the immediate environment (Skulstad, 2020, p. 56; Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90). Therefore, it is necessary for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners to engage in communication in the foreign language to facilitate learning. Having an English classroom that encourages and supports students in engaging in oral communication is relevant for furthering their competences in English.

1.2   Thesis aim and research question

Given the importance of oral communication in the EFL classroom, this thesis aims to uncover what may influence pupils' willingness to speak. In this thesis, willingness to speak refers to pupils' interest, tendencies, and volitional acts of engaging in oral communication in the classroom. Acts such as raising one's hand, talking English when working with tasks in groups or pairs, engaging in classroom discussions and choosing to use English when asking questions or having a conversation in the EFL classroom all relate to willingness to speak (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547). When discussing avoidance of speaking, which could be the result of factors

that have a negative influence on willingness to speak, speaking reluctance will be used to refer to English speaking avoidance.

Further, the issue related to how teachers may facilitate willingness to speak in the EFL classroom will be seen through the lens of formative assessment. Formative assessment is an assessment form meant to gauge what learning competences and skills pupils currently possess, provide appropriate and realistic goal setting for pupils, and provide them with feedback to further their learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 7). Formative assessment has a considerable position in Norwegian education, as all pupils have a right to receive formative assessment (Forskrift til opplæringslova, 2006, §3-2). In the core curriculum for English, it is stated that formative assessment shall help promote learning and competence development in the subject, through teacher-student dialogue, self-reflection, and teacher's guidance (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). Because of the prominent position formative assessment has in Norwegian education, examining the influence formative assessment may have on willingness to speak can have pedagogical implications for EFL teaching. Examining teachers' attitudes towards the relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak, could offer insight into how formative assessment should be carried out to increase oral participation and thus enhance Norwegian EFL pupils' competences in oral English.

The research question for this study is as follows:

"What are Norwegian EFL teachers' perceptions of the role of formative assessment in relation to lower-secondary school pupils' willingness to speak English?"

The aim is to uncover Norwegian EFL teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and teaching practices regarding formative assessment in relation to pupils' English speaking in class. I aim to uncover if the teachers see formative assessment practices as influential for pupils' willingness to speak and gain insight into how they believe formative assessment should be practiced to facilitate increase in willingness to speak.

1.3 Previous research

Influences on willingness to speak, or willingness to communicate (the abbreviated form is WTC, which will be used throughout this paper) as it has been conceptualized by MacIntyre et al. (1998), have been discussed in the research literature as multi-faceted, complex, and consisting of a multitude of different factors. These include anxiety (Fatima et al., 2020, p. 920), self-perceived communicative confidence (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 549; Ghonsooly et al., 2012, p. 208; Yashima, 2002, p. 62; Öz et al., 2015, p. 274), enjoyable classroom activities and a supportive classroom environment (Khajavi et al., 2018, p. 620), and motivation (Hashimoto, 2002, p. 56). Additionally, the interdependent nature of situational elements such as individual factors (self-confidence, motivation, and emotion) as well as classroom environmental factors (topic, task, teacher, and group size) have also been discussed as influencing willingness to communicate (Cao, 2011, p. 468).

While research on formative assessment has shown the positive implications formative assessment has for learning, especially among low achievers (Black and Wiliam, 2009, p. 83), the literature on the role of formative assessment in relation to willingness to communicate is limited. A Chinese study aimed to explore the effectiveness of formative assessment in alleviating speaking apprehension (Tang, 2016, p. 751). Tang (2016, p. 754) considered positive feedback from teachers and peers, self-assessment and creating objectives for solving problems emerging from feedback on areas for improvement to be helpful in increasing participants' confidence and decreasing speaking anxiety. Further, dynamic assessment, an assessment form focused on individual mediation through test, instruction and retesting of learners, was shown to heighten oral performance and lower anxiety among Iranian EFL learners (Estaji and Farahanynia, 2019, p. 135). This is supported by Rahmaty & Zarei (2021, p. 26) who found that dynamic assessment reduced foreign language anxiety among learners. However, its influence on willingness to communicate was insignificant (Rahmaty & Zarei, 2021, p. 13). Estaji & Farahanynia (2019, p. 151) claim that the mediational nature of dynamic assessment provides a non-threatening approach to assessment which decreases anxiety, especially when the teacher exhibits a positive and supportive attitude towards the pupils' responses. Although dynamic assessment differs from formative assessment, these results may have implications for this study, as they suggest that increasing learners' knowledge through a non-threatening assessment process decreases anxiety, which is a part of state communicative

confidence influencing willingness to communicate (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 569). Formative assessment may offer similar affordances for increasing learning among pupils, and the way teachers approach their assessment practices can have an impact on how pupils experience formative assessment, and in turn this may influence their willingness to communicate.

Considering the lack of research on EFL teachers' perceptions of the role of formative assessment and its influence on willingness to communicate, this study may have implications for educational research on formative assessment and willingness to communicate in Norway. Examining teachers' perspectives may reveal findings that can lead to a further discussion on the role of formative assessment in influencing pupils' willingness to speak English in school.

2. Theory

In this chapter, theory pertaining to willingness to speak, and formative assessment will be addressed to create a framework which will form the basis for interpretations of the data collected from the interviews. Since language learning theory, theory on assessment and willingness to speak are broad concepts, it has been deemed necessary to limit the scope of the literature. I will examine the role of formative assessment in relation to willingness to speak through focusing on emotional and perception-based aspects that affect willingness to speak such as self-perceived communicative competence, anxiety, and foreign language anxiety as well as Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis to consider how emotions affect language acquisition. Regarding formative assessment, the focus is on Black and Wiliam's three key elements comprising formative assessment, namely "where the learners currently are", "where they are going" and "what needs to be done to get there" (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 7). Different theoretical views will be discussed within each of these areas of formative assessment.

2.1 Willingness to Communicate

Factors affecting pupils' willingness to speak is a vast subject, since the classroom is an interwoven interactional arena, with relationships between pupils, between teachers and pupils and each pupil's personality, emotions, and background. To understand why learners of a second language (L2) would be willing to speak, MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei and Noels (1998, p. 547) proposed a heuristic model called willingness to communicate, that shows the relationship between different variables that influence a person's willingness to communicate (WTC). This pyramid model depicts WTC as being determined by factors other than personal attributes and states. It is, in MacIntyre's words, "a state of readiness occurring in the present moment" (Macintyre, 2007, p. 568-569). According to MacIntyre, WTC is a volitional act and its immediate influences include state communicative self-confidence and a desire to interact with a particular person (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 569). MacIntyre (2007, p. 569) defines state communicative self-confidence as a state in which there is lower anxiety coupled with a perception of L2 competence. Research has shown both positive and negative influences on WTC, including supportive classroom environment and enjoyment (Khajavy et al., 2018), self-perceived communicative competence (Öz et al., 2014; Ghonsooly, 2012; Hashimoto, 2002; Yashimata, 2002), motivation (Hashimoto, 2002), pronunciation anxiety (Baran-Luzarz, 2014) and anxiety (Hashimoto, 2002; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Khajavy et al., 2018).
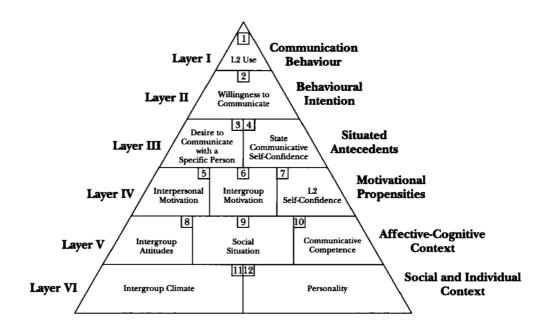
Figure 1. Heuristic model of Variables Influencing WTC (McIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547)

As this model forms a complicated picture of interrelated factors influencing WTC, I see it as necessary to limit the scope of the model in this thesis. MacIntyre (2007, p. 569) considers state communicative self-confidence to be one of two most immediate factors influencing WTC. This factor is seen as a state influence, which means that it fluctuates in different situations and contexts. It could therefore be relevant in relation to teaching and assessment since the teacher has a considerable amount of influence in creating situational contexts for the learners. The way teachers formatively assess pupils by creating goals and providing feedback to further learning could alter the way the pupils relate to their own learning process. Because of this, I will focus on two elements that are considered by MacIntyre et al. (2007) to influence state communicative self-confidence, namely anxiety and self-perceived communicative competence (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 569).

2.1.1 Self-perceived communicative competence

Where one might assume that students having higher linguistic competence would engage in speaking more frequently, even English speakers who exhibit higher levels of EFL communication proficiency may avoid conversing with others (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 545). MacIntyre (1994) proposes that communication apprehension and perceived competence are causes for WTC (MacIntyre, 1994, p. 138). Communication apprehension is defined as "an

individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person" (Cole & McCroskey, 2003, p. 102). In other words, people who are not apprehensive about communicating, and have a perception of themselves as capable communicators may have higher willingness to communicate. Self-perceived confidence is, according to MacIntyre et al. (1998, p. 549), "the feeling that one has the capacity to communicate effectively at a particular moment". MacIntyre et al. (1998, p. 549) consider perceived competence as varying in different circumstances. They postulate that WTC may decrease as a result of the learner of an L2 encountering unfamiliar speaking circumstances. If the learner believes he or she can communicate in the present situational context, the self-perceived competence would be higher than when facing a newer, more challenging task that has vocabulary, language skills or competence requirements that the learner is unable to sufficiently meet at the present moment (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 549). As self-perceived communicative competence regards the *perception* of competence, it could be argued that pupils may believe that they are not competent enough to speak even if they possess the competences required for the speaking situation. Formative assessment may play a role in working with pupil beliefs about their own competences.

As MacIntyre (2007, p. 569), Ghonsooly et al. (2012) consider L2 state communicative confidence to be a construct comprised of anxiety and self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC). This means that anxiety and SPCC influence a L2 learner's communicative confidence in his or her present state. In their study on Iranian L2 students, L2 confidence was shown to be the most significant predictor of L2WTC (Ghonsooly et al., 2012, p. 208). With an increase of self-perceived communicative competence, and/or a decrease in anxiety, the Iranian students' WTC increased (Ghonsooly et al., 2012, p. 208). Yashima (2002) supports this, revealing that motivation does not have a direct link to L2 communication, but affects WTC through L2 confidence. In other words, motivated L2 learners who study often, may perceive themselves to have higher competence in L2 communication and lower levels of anxiety than less motivated learners who do not study as much. This perception of competence would in turn influence the former group's WTC positively (Yashima, 2002, p. 62). Additionally, the positive relationship between SPCC and WTC was shown to be significant in a study on EFL learners in Iran. In fact, it was the strongest factor of influence on WTC (Öz et al., 2015, p. 274). Put simply, research suggests that students who perceive themselves as competent communicators may be more willing to speak. One can argue that the effect of a

positive self-perception of one's own communicative competence can lead to seized opportunities of speaking, which in turn may enable the speaker to enhance their competences further through practice. This may add to a positive spiraling effect on future L2 self-confidence through positive self-perception and reduced anxiety, culminating in further increase in WTC. The opposite would also be true, where apprehensiveness would result in less practice and experiences in speaking, which could cement the learner in a belief that he or she does not have the competence required to communicate efficiently, leading to further apprehensive feelings towards speaking. It is important to remember that one's self-perceived communicative competence can be transient, depending on the demands of the specific situation. As such, the difficulty of a task could lead to changes in the learner's state self-perceived competence (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 549).

2.2 Anxiety and Foreign language anxiety

Dörnyei (2005, p. 195) considers anxiety to be a variable that affects L2 performance. However, he notes that the concept of anxiety is multifaceted and cannot be seen as a single unitary factor. He distinguishes between trait and state anxiety. Trait anxiety is defined as a proclivity to become nervous in many contexts, whereas state anxiety is defined as a brief, emotional reaction to a specific moment (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 198). Additionally, Dörnyei contends that anxiety can be both inhibiting and beneficial. Worry as a reaction to anxiety can be harmful, whereas the emotional response to anxiety may improve performance (Dörnyei, 2005, pp. 198-199). Thus, anxiety can also be seen as a necessary emotional reaction, which is an idea Brown (2007, p. 163) shares, suggesting that anxiety is a continuum in which too much or too little anxiety could hinder language learning. There is a point in that continuum that may facilitate optimal learning (Brown, 2007, p. 163).

Horwitz et al. (1986) conceptualized a new anxiety construct that they called foreign language anxiety (FLA). Their study on high anxiety pupils reveals that individuals had anxious feelings and thoughts about language instruction in particular. High-anxiety students admit that language classes make them feel more tense and worried than other classes, and they also mention feeling overburdened by the sheer volume of rules one must master to speak a foreign language (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 130). Based on the results, the researchers suggest that FLA is a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behavior that relates specifically to foreign language classroom situations (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 130).

Horwitz et al. (1986) relate foreign language anxiety to three types of performance anxieties. These anxieties are communication apprehension, test-anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is defined as anxiety about communicating with others. People may demonstrate shyness and avoidance when faced with a situation in which they must speak in groups or in public. Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 127) consider that even those who would normally communicate could be reluctant to do so due to the demands that speaking a foreign language places on the speaker. Test anxiety is anxiety that stems from a fear of failure, according to Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 127). Students who experience this form of anxiety usually place high demands on themselves. If test performance results fall short of what the students expect of themselves, they could interpret these outcomes as a sign of failure (Horwitz et al., 1986, p 128). Moreover, being tested in oral communication may activate both communication apprehension and test anxiety simultaneously (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Fear of negative evaluation is considered by Horwitz et al. (1986) to be a similar form of anxiety as test anxiety. But this kind of anxiety relates to social and academic circumstances outside of regular, formal testing (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). It is an apprehension about how others might evaluate or perceive one's performance in any situation (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Speaking in class would in the EFL context be a situation that may spark a fear of negative evaluation, either from the teacher or from peers (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). This is relevant for this thesis, because by the same logic, being assessed formatively on speaking may also spark a fear of negative evaluation.

2.3 Krashen's affective filter hypothesis

Considering how anxiety can affect L2 performance, lead to communication apprehension and reduce a learner's WTC (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 198; Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127; MacIntyre, 2007, p. 569), I see it as necessary to consider how affective states can influence language acquisition. In relation to formative assessment, investigating what may influence language acquisition is relevant to research because it would give insight into what teachers should consider when providing assessment and feedback, so that learners can benefit from the assessment and subsequent learning process that follows. Krashen's affective filter hypothesis is a theory that considers how language acquisition may be influenced by affective states, and as such, it is relevant to discuss. According to Krashen (1982, p. 10), there is a distinction between language learning and language acquisition. Where language learning happens by consciously observing and evaluating rules pertaining to the target language through what could be called explicit

learning, language acquisition is an implicit learning process in which learning happens through developing a "feel" for what is correct and incorrect, and is a subconscious process (Krashen, 1982, p. 10). Krashen (1982, p. 10) considers that the language acquisition process is a significant process in second language learning for adults, even though it is usually related to how younger children learn their native language. It would therefore also be applicable to lower secondary pupils.

In relation to language acquisition, Krashen (1982, p. 21) states that linguistic competence is acquired through understanding the meaning of the *input* language learners are exposed to. Learners develop their competence when they are able to comprehend and interpret new linguistic forms or structures that go beyond their current comprehension. The use of context and extralinguistic data can facilitate this (Krashen, 1982, p. 21).

The Affective Filter Hypothesis is related to how feelings and emotions can influence this process of input comprehension and subsequent language acquisition (Krashen, 1982, p. 21). The affective filter consists of three different categories, namely motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety (Krashen, 1982, p. 31). These affective variables influence the way input is processed. Should motivation and self-confidence be low, and anxiety high, the affective filter can hinder the input to reach the part of the brain that is responsible for acquisition (Krashen, 1982, p. 31). Learners that possess attitudes such as high motivation and self-confidence will not only seek input more often, but because of the reduced affective filter, the input can lead to a higher degree of acquisition (Krashen, 1982, p. 31). It is therefore important that the learner not only is exposed to enough input so he or she can enhance their competences but seen in light of the affective filter hypothesis it is necessary that the learner is also provided a low anxiety learning environment which would reduce the affective filter and therefore be more facilitative for language acquisition (Krashen, 1982, p. 32). The Affective Filter Hypothesis will in this project be used as be an interpreting lens through which I will see the various teacher's reflections on willingness to speak and formative assessment practices.

2.4 Formative assessment

For decades educators have been faced with the challenge of designing and providing assessment that would promote a desire to learn English. In this paper, formative assessment is in focus because of its prominent position in Norwegian education, as well as its purpose for being a learning promoting assessment form, which may have implications for pupils' willingness to speak. According to "*Forskrift til opplæringsloven*" §3-3, "*the purpose of assessment is to promote learning, contribute to a desire to learn and provide information about pupil competence during and at the end of training in the subject*" (Forskrift til opplæringslova, 2006, §3-3). Further it states that all pupils have right to receive formative assessment (Forskrift til opplæringslova, 2006, §3-2). The government has the expectation that assessment should have an active role in increasing learning and inspiring desire to learn among pupils. It is therefore not just seen as a tool for assessing pupils' subject achievements, but as a tool that should benefit the pupils' learning process and contribute to motivation for learning.

In the twenty-first century, formative evaluation has received a lot of attention in Norway. This was done in response to a critique that the prior emphasis on summative evaluation was not doing enough to promote learning (Hasselgreen & Ørevik, 2020, p. 369). In the core curriculum for the English subject, this becomes evident. The competence aims and assessment criteria for 10th grade state that formative assessment shall help promote learning and develop competence in the subject. Subject competence involves being able to communicate with structure and coherence adapted to different and varied situations and recipients, both orally and in writing (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). The teacher should allow for student participation and stimulate learning desire through varied strategies and teaching resources (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). The core curriculum promotes teacher-student dialogue about how the pupils experience their current subject achievements, how they should be given opportunities for reflecting over their development, and how the teacher should provide guidance to the pupils to further development in the basic skills in the subject (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019).

The Assessment Reform Group defines assessment for learning, which is synonymous with formative assessment, as "the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there" (Assessment Reform Group, 2002). The aim of formative assessment is

to provide the students with enough information and guidance so that they can improve upon their skills (Hasselgreen & Ørevik, 2020, p. 374). Black and Wiliam (2009, p. 7) is in accordance with the Assessment Reform Group, and specify that within this process, the teacher, the learner, and peers function as agents, influencing learning achievement (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8). Further, they provide five key strategies for conceptualizing formative assessment:

1. Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success.
2. Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding.
3. Providing feedback that move learners forward
4. Activating students as instructional resources for one another.
5. Activating students as the owners of their own learning. (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8)

The following model (see Figure 2) provides a framework for how agents, processes and strategies are connected in formative assessment.

	Where the learner is going	Where the learner is right now	How to get there
Teacher	**1** Clarifying learning intentions and criteria for success	**2** Engineering effective class-room discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding	**3** Providing feedback that moves learners forward
Peer	Understanding and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success	**4** Activating students as instructional resources for one another	
Learner	Understanding learning intentions and criteria for success	**5** Activating students as the owners of their own learning	

Figure 2. Aspects of formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8)

I will be using this model as a backdrop to further discuss what these different areas of formative assessment entail, through reviewing literature on formative assessment.

2.4.1 Where the learner is going

To identify the trajectory for learning development the teacher must clarify the learning intentions and criteria for success (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8). While criteria should be connected to the competence aims in the curriculum, these aims are often represented as development that is supposed to take place over several years. It could prove difficult for the learners to use such broad and long-term competence aims to guide their learning process. To remedy this problem, Chvala and Graedler (2010, p. 81) suggest that curriculum aims should be divided into manageable short- and long-term goals or criteria. These criteria can be included, for instance, in an analytical table, that divides criteria into different proficiency levels, such as "Elementary", "Intermediate" and "Advanced" (Chvala & Graedler, 2010, p. 82). Within each level, the criteria should be made clear for the student, for instance, "While talking, the student uses different words and expressions to communicate their ideas". This would allow the teacher to gather information for monitoring students' current level of achievement and use this information to create subsequent goals and provide scaffolding for each individual student (Chvala & Graedler, 2010, p. 81). As each student will show different levels of proficiency, these subsequent goals should be differentiated for each pupil to ensure they are well within the student's proximal zone of development, according to Vygotsky's view on social learning and scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). This is reflected in the education act, which states that each individual pupil has a legal right to receive differentiated instruction adjusted to their abilities (Opplæringslova, 1998). Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 88) support this, emphasizing how exceedingly difficult goals may lead to less exerted effort being made by the student, leading to a decrease in motivation.

Further, Black and Wiliam (2009, p. 8) suggest that learners need to understand what the learning intentions and criteria are, as well as share this understanding with other pupils so that there exists a collective understanding of the criteria and goals. Gamlem (2021, p. 30) states that student-teacher dialogue is important for student understanding of goals and criteria, and that this understanding enables the pupils to see the goals in relation to their own learning process. Research on the assessment practices of teachers in Norway has shown the importance of dialogue, clear expectations, and feedback for assessment practices (Sandvik & Buland, 2014, p. 134). Having an interplay of explicit learning goals, work forms based on dialogue and visible evidence of learning, facilitates feelings of worthiness among pupils, and meaningful experiences in the classroom (Sandvik & Buland, 2014, p. 134). The involvement

of students when developing assessment criteria is seen as beneficial for creating efficient learning practices (Sandvik & Buland, 2014, p. 134). Slemmen (2017, p. 105) adds to this, proposing that through the involvement of defining goals and criteria, pupils will have more ownership of their own learning process.

The benefits of the use of goals are clear: Using and defining goals for pupils can promote persistence when challenges become harder, ensuring that the learner sticks to the learning process through goal-oriented action, and facilitates learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 88). Additionally, teachers and pupils experience that clearly defined goals that are communicated before instruction takes place have a motivational effect, so creating smaller goals related to the specific class would show the pupils what the classroom activities are supposed to help them achieve, giving them a sense of goal-oriented direction (Gamlem, 2021, p. 32).

2.4.2   Where the learner is right now

For the teacher to know how to adjust the teaching to facilitate for further learning, and to create appropriate learning goals, he or she must know what the pupils' competence levels are. In order to reveal the students' current level of topic competence and knowledge, Black and Wiliam (2009, p. 8) recommend designing efficient classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit proof of student understanding. Bøhn (2018, p. 244) suggests the use of varied strategies for assessing pupils' competence and understanding, which could appear in the form of vocabulary tests, grammar tests, oral assignments, logs, and teacher-student talks. Another example of finding evidence for current learning is the use of "exit tickets" or "traffic lights" at the end of a class to gauge what the pupils have learned, or how they felt they performed in the classroom activities (Bøhn, 2018, p. 244). As previously mentioned, the teacher may also assess pupils' competence through evaluating their achievement on criteria goals, which are smaller goals formulated from the competence aims in the subject (Chvala & Graedler, 2010, p. 81). The Assessment Reform Group (2002) regard assessment for learning as being a continuous process happening in everyday classroom experiences. In the ordinary learning environment, the way pupils respond to tasks, questions and how they discuss and interact with each other can be used as ways to uncover what learners already know, or where their competences currently lie, which provides information on how the teacher can adjust teaching to further the pupils' learning (Assessment Reform Group, 2002).

As Black and Wiliam (2009, p. 8) indicate, when assessing learner competences and knowledge, pupils and peers can also be sources of assessment. Andrade and Valtcheva (2009, p. 12) consider that pupils themselves are good sources of feedback, which is useful given the teacher's limited time to provide feedback and assessment on pupils' work and progress. Self-assessment can promote both self-regulation and learning (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009, p. 13). This is reinforced by Stobart (2008, p. 149) who believes that self- and peer assessment give students the chance to recognize their current skills while also being aware of their performance goals. This awareness forms the basis of self-regulated learning, which increases its effectiveness (Stobart, 2008, p. 149). Black and Wiliam (1998, p. 85) consider self-assessment to be an essential component of formative assessment, as formative assessment relies on the pupils' abilities to reflect on their own learning processes. Burner (2018, p. 250) states that pupils can assess their own work quite precisely, so the use of self-assessment is possible, even among younger pupils. However, pupils must know what the criteria and targets of their learning are if they are to self-assess (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 85). According to Andrade and Valtcheva (2009, p. 13), this can be accomplished by having students actively use rubrics that list criteria to evaluate their own work under the supervision by the teacher. It has been found that using this criteria-referenced self-assessment form helps students produce better English writing (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009, p. 15). In relation to oral communication, Joo (2016, p. 80) proposes that learners can successfully assess oral performances of their own and of their peers and suggests that self- and peer assessment practices could improve speaking skills. However, in order for student assessments to be successful, certain requirements must be met, such as giving students task criteria and adequate assessment training, being aware of how student characteristics like anxiety, motivation, and self-esteem can affect the quality of assessment, and incorporating the curriculum into assessment practices (Joo, 2016, pp. 77, 80). Similarly, Ross (2006, pp. 8-9) states four criteria for successful self-assessment: 1) having criteria for assessment that are clear, understandable, and familiar to the pupils, 2) teaching the pupils how to apply the criteria, through teacher explanation, teacher modeling and student self-practice; 3) giving pupils feedback on their self-assessment; 4) guiding pupils in how to use self-assessment data to improve their performance (Ross, 2006, pp. 8-9).

However, self-assessment should be done with a sense of caution. Burner (2018, pp. 250-251) refers to Krashen's monitor hypothesis, which describes how second language learners

constantly monitor and edit what they say or write. Spontaneous language acquisition may be hindered by this constant monitoring, if the pupil pays too much attention to, for instance, grammar rules while speaking (Krashen, 1982, p. 19). Burner (2018, p. 251) suggests that since reflection on learning *while* learning can lead to a reduction of acquisition, self-assessment should be done after activities, so as not to make pupils too self-conscious and focused on possible mistakes. This may allow the pupils to see learning English as a trial-and-error process (Burner, 2018, p. 251). The teacher should carefully consider how to balance spontaneous communication and English language learning so that the pupils both receive explicit instruction and are given opportunities for implicit language acquisition (Burner, 2018, p. 251; Krashen, 1982, p. 10).

2.4.3 How to get there

The benefits of formative assessment can be lost on the pupils if they are not given ways to advance their learning. This is where feedback on pupil work becomes relevant (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8). Research suggests that feedback has a positive impact on learning (Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013 , p. 30). However, for it to be facilitative of learning and lessen possible negative impact, the teacher should consider what type of feedback they make use of. Because feedback may cause anxiety reactions in students, teachers often show a preference for less direct ways of giving feedback, as well as giving prompts rather than reformulating for the student (Ellis, 2009, p. 10). Additionally, in a study done on error correction, 90% of the students agreed that they should be corrected on their oral mistakes, compared to the teachers, where only 34% agreed (Schulz, 1996, p. 347). There has been done extensive research on the impact of different forms of corrective feedback. These include seeing larger effects from giving implicit feedback through prompts, leading to greater long-term gains in learning and deeper processing (Lyster & Saito, 2010, p. 290; Li, 2014, p. 197; Li 2010, p. 344), but also that explicit, instructional feedback is more efficient, especially in the short term (Ellis et al., 2006, pp. 364-366; Li, 2010, p. 344).

Based on the varied research results, it is hard to determine which type of feedback is optimal. However, as the different forms all have been shown to have positive effects, the teacher may find it relevant to change tactics according to how the students react to the different forms of feedback, as well as consider the different effects of the feedback forms (Lyster, Saito & Sato,

2013, p. 30). Explicit feedback, for instance, may be incorporated if the pupil is unable to produce the correct form on his or her own when given prompts or other implicit feedback.

Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 82) propose that feedback on pupil work is most beneficial when it addresses faulty interpretations instead of a total lack of understanding. In order for the feedback to be appropriate and relevant for students, it must also be tied to the student's present level of understanding; otherwise, the student won't be able to connect the new information to what he or she already knows (Hasselgreen & Ørevik, 2020, p. 374).

Additionally, feedback should be directed towards clearly defined goals. It is often the case that unrelated feedback outside of specific goals is given. This is not an efficient method for closing the learning gap, according to Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 89).

As for learner anxiety, research has shown the negative effects anxiety has on language acquisition (Zhang & Rahimi, 2014, p. 430). Research also suggests that teacher feedback can influence students' affective states (Goo & Takeuchi, 2021, p. 714). To lessen potential anxiety related to corrective feedback, Zhang & Rahimi (2014, p. 435) suggest that the teacher should aid the pupils in developing more positive attitudes to corrective feedback, through mediating the benefits of corrective feedback, informing them of its significance and negotiating agreed-upon goals that the corrective feedback should have. According to Ellis (2009, p. 12), the teacher should keep track of how much anxiety the feedback produces and modify their techniques in reaction to the students' responses. Burner (2018, p. 255) expands on this by emphasizing how the students should be informed about what the assessment process involves, such as by informing them of why and when it is conducted as well as how they may use the assessment to advance their learning.

Stobart (2008, p. 165) draws attention to how feedback has been shown to impact students negatively, through the expectations of being praised on their abilities, rather than effort and incremental progress towards goals. Instead of being seen as having value in and of itself, learning becomes a tool for learners to obtain the approval they crave (Stobart, 2008, p. 164). This is supported by Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 96) who criticize feedback about the *self,* i.e., personal approval, as often not being efficient for increasing learning achievement. According to them, praise towards the self is only beneficial towards achievement if it is given

in relation to specific processes involving the tasks being undertaken and how the pupils work with their own learning processes and strategies (Hattie & Timperley, 2006, p. 96). In other words, feedback needs be given in relation to something specific and learning oriented. Further, praise may increase self-efficacy if it is related to goal-oriented results (Hattie & Timperley, 2006, p. 97).

This does not mean that praise and encouragement should be avoided when giving feedback, as most students do experience praise positively (Hattie & Timperley, 2006, p. 97). It is important to create a learning environment that supports learning as an incremental, goal-oriented process, rather than result-oriented process, as it can promote motivation, endurance, and better learning strategies among students (Federici & Skaalvik, 2013, p. 61). Giving both emotional and instrumental support to students by showing care and respect, as well as giving feedback and instruction results in a better teacher-student relations which in turn leads to more positive attitudes towards learning and achieving goals as well as promoting self-efficacy among students (Federici & Skaalvik, 2013, p. 59). Praise and encouragement can be part of this equation, but for them to lead to improvements in learning, and to lessen the negative impact, praise must be given by relating it to pupils' learning processes, task management, self-regulatory behavior and individual goal-oriented results, rather than them being empty words of affirmation, or only focused on results such as grades and comparison between students, classes or schools (Hattie and Timperley, 2007, p. 96; Stobart, 2008, p. 164; Federici & Skaalvik, 2013, p. 61).

2.5 Summary

Providing appropriate formative assessment practices that reflect a process-oriented view of learning may lead to increased learning, motivation, self-efficacy, and reduced anxiety. These effects may also influence pupils' willingness to speak. If assessment can promote a view on learning as being process-oriented, in which competence is built incrementally, focusing on short-term goals while having the teacher inform pupils of why assessment is carried out, anxiety related to the performance of oral communication may be reduced. If pupils feel that the teacher's assessment is meant to aid them, rather than judge or create unnecessary high expectations for their results, this can lead to the pupils feeling more comfortable in speaking situations, which may reduce their test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Through providing the pupils with evidence of their current competences, as

well as how they can improve them, the pupils may become aware of competences they may not realize they had. Thus, pupils may become more willing to speak if the teacher helps them perceive themselves as more competent (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 549; Ghonsooly et al., 2012, p. 208; Yashima, 2002, p. 62; Öz et al., 2015, p. 274).

3. Method

In this chapter, the research methodology will be presented. The aim of this project was to uncover lower secondary EFL teachers' perspectives on formative assessment and its role in relation to lower-secondary school pupil's WTC. As the project aims to uncover teachers' thoughts, feelings, and experiences in relation to the topic, a qualitative approach is used. The study involved conducting semi-structured interviews with three EFL Norwegian lower-secondary school teachers. This chapter overviews the choice of method, informant selection process, interview guide development, data collection, analysis, validity and reliability and ethical considerations.

3.1   Qualitative method

For this project, I have chosen to use a qualitative method to gather data and analyze the research question, which focuses on exploring teachers' perspectives on formative assessment and how it can influence pupils' willingness to speak English in the EFL classroom in Norway. Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012, p. 12) consider qualitative research to be a method that allows to gain insight into human experiences, learning processes and social behavior. It seeks to capture people's unique perspectives and stories, allowing researchers to gain a deeper understanding of people's lives (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012, p. 12). Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research seeks to understand from within life itself, rather than from a distance, and allows for a more nuanced and detailed perspective of what is being researched (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012, p. 12). As such, the qualitative method appears well-suited for this study because it allows the exploration of experiences and perspectives of EFL teachers and capture nuanced attitudes and beliefs related to the topic of formative assessment and pupils' willingness to speak.

3.2   Semi-structured interview

Three interviews were conducted with three EFL lower-secondary school teachers. According to Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012, p. 19), the aim of interviewing is to understand human experiences seen from the interview subject's own perspective. However, I needed to be aware that as an interviewer I would not be able to fully understand the subject's own experiences, nor would I be completely neutral as I would interpret from my own understanding (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012, p. 19). Still, the aim was to get as close as possible to an understanding of

the subject's experience. I would use this understanding to formulate a theoretical third person perspective on the views and perspectives of the subject (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012, p. 20).

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather perspectives from the teachers. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015, pp. 156-157) consider semi-structured interviews to include more open-ended questions and allow the possibility to switch between questions during the interview, depending on the given answers. This interview form allowed me to explore a predetermined set of themes without restricting the possibility of new ideas and thoughts emerging during the interview. Semi-structured interview is also a suitable research method in this project as the less rigorous and demanding structure allows for more freedom for the subjects to tell their own narratives, perspectives, and thoughts (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012, pp. 28, 32). Letting the interview subjects verbalize their own perspectives, thoughts, and narratives about formative assessment and pupils' willingness to speak gave me valuable insight into how the teachers perceive these themes. The semi-structured interview has more of a conversational tone than the structured interview, but also has more structure and direction than an unstructured interview, ensuring that the data that are collected remain relevant to the research topic.

Before the interview, I designed an interview guide which included specific topics and questions related to the research question. The questions were open-ended, with subsequent follow-up questions that could be asked if the answer from the participant needed more specificity. What questions were asked depended on the participants' responses, as he or she sometimes touched upon several themes spanning across different questions. The participants were encouraged to talk about topics that appeared outside the questions as well, if I found these new topics and ideas relevant to the research. Making the participants feel heard and valuable is also of importance. As long as I ensured the key questions pertaining to the research question were properly addressed, these small digressions were welcomed.

3.3   Selection of participants

For this research, three participants who had several years of experience with teaching English in lower secondary school were selected. The reason for this selection was that experienced teachers would have had the time and opportunity to work with formative assessment and experience pupils' oral engagement and willingness to speak over several years. This may increase the probability of the participants having more reflections and perspectives on the topic. Since the informants had to fit this criterion, the researcher used the method of convenience sampling through contacting the participants through the researcher's network. Johnson and Christensen (2012, p. 230) define convenience sampling as the process of sampling participants who are easily recruited and willing to participate in a study. It is a non-probability sampling method and would therefore not be generalizable for the population. However, considering the nature of this study, which is limited in scope and resources, I perceive the method of convenience sampling as appropriate because it allowed a selection of participants who fit the criteria. Further, the study's aim is not to generalize for the entire population of lower secondary EFL teachers, but to gain insight into certain teachers' perspectives through qualitative inquiry. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015, p. 148) suggest that the number of participants may influence the quality of research, depending on the scope, resources, and time available. They suggest that having a lower number of participants may be advantageous as it could allow for more time for preparation and subsequent analysis of the interviews, which could result in increased research quality (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015, p. 148). The number of participants were limited to three, because I wanted to prepare well for the three interviews and ensure there would be enough time to do a thorough analysis, without loss of quality. The educators were contacted through the researcher's network who further recommended teachers that they believed could contribute to the study. These teachers were then contacted via e-mail and asked to participate. They received information about the study as well as what their participation would involve so they could make an informed decision regarding participation. They were also informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

3.3.1 Description of participants

Out of the three teachers in the study, two were men and one was a woman. Each teacher had more than five years of experience in teaching English in lower secondary school. The characteristics of the teachers, including how many years of experience they have in teaching English, what subjects and grade they taught are listed in the table below (see Table 1). To preserve their anonymity, different pseudonyms were used for each teacher.

Pseudonym	Lars	Julie	Jakob
Years of experience in teaching English	23 years	5 years	10 years
Grade level	8th -10th grades	8th grade	8th-10th grades
Subjects	English, Spanish, and social sciences	English, German, and social sciences	English, English specialization, religion, and social sciences

Table 1. Overview of participant characteristics

As seen, the teachers have varying amounts of experience. When comparing Lars and Julie, for instance, they have 18 years of difference in experience. This heterogeneity in experience levels is relevant to mention, as it may help explain how certain differences in experience may lead to different perspectives on teaching and views on formative assessment and willingness to speak among pupils. There is more homogeneity between the subjects the teachers taught. All the teachers teach social sciences, and both Julie and Lars teach foreign languages. The difference in gender and years of experience is regarded as positive in this study, as it allows for diversification among the research subjects and therefore may lead to insight into different perspectives.

3.4 The interview guide

This research was conducted using a semi-structured interview, and therefore an interview guide needed to be developed by the researcher before conducting the interviews. The interview guide was developed with the research question in mind, which provided a framework for what questions the participants would be asked. As all the participants were Norwegian, the interviews were carried out in Norwegian to reduce potential misunderstandings. Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012, p. 27) suggest that while an open and to a certain degree, naïve attitude when conducting an interview is often recommended, the

researcher should still be well prepared. Before performing a semi-structured interview, the researcher should develop a theoretical understanding of the topic which would lay the foundation for the development of the interview guide and would influence how the researcher interacts with the participants (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2012, p. 27). As such, theories pertaining to this project were considered when developing the interview guide. These theories include factors influencing WTC, such as self-perceived communicative competence (MacIntyre, 1998; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Yashima, 2002; Öz et al., 2015) and anxiety (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 195; Horwitz el al., 1986). Additionally, theories on formative assessment were considered, and the development of questions pertaining to formative assessment was guided by Black and Wiliam's five key strategies for conceptualizing formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8). This includes establishing and clarifying learning intensions and criteria for success for the pupils, facilitating classroom situations, tasks or discussions that can illuminate pupils' current competences, the provision of feedback for advancing learning, peer-assessment, and self-assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8). The theories and sources gathered in this thesis have laid the foundations for asking well informed questions and follow-up questions.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) recommend seeing the interview consisting of questions in two different dimensions, a thematic dimension, and a dynamic dimension. The thematic dimension aims to define "what" the purpose of the interview is. It pertains to the research question of the study and underlying topics. The dynamic dimension of questions, however, considers the interpersonal relation between the interviewer and the participant, and are different units of questions related to the thematic questions. They should be short, easy to understand and not contain advanced academic terminology (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 163). Based on their recommendation, two different versions of the interview guide were created, one consisting of thematic research-based questions and one consisting of questions to be asked during the interview so both dimensions are taken into consideration (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 163) (See Appendix #1).

3.5   Data collection

The three interviews were conducted physically at the participants' preferred locations. These were quiet locations, so the teachers' answers that were recorded in the application "Nettskjema

diktafon" were clear, audible, and easy to transcribe. Nettskjema diktafon was used because it ensures the confidentiality of the recorded material where only the researcher has access to the data. The teachers had received information on the purpose of the study beforehand, and they all had signed a consent form for participation before the interview was conducted. During the interview, the interview guide was used for guidance. The interviews lasted between 45-60 minutes and the transcription of the audio from the interviews was finished two weeks after the interviews had been conducted. The transcription included every word the teachers said, long pauses were marked with "…" and I included non-verbal communication at specific times when the teachers used body language to make their point. This happened two or three times.

3.6   Thematic analysis

When analyzing the data, the method of thematic analysis was used. Thematic analysis is a systematic method in which one identifies and organizes data to uncover themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 79-80). Themes can emerge as patterns of meaning across the data, which enables an analysis of data across different interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 79-80). This enabled me to organize the data to illuminate shared experiences as well as possible differences in the teachers' experiences.

When analyzing the data, I followed a six-step process that is recommended when performing a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87):

1. Familiarizing myself with the content
2. Generating codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining themes
6. Producing the report

I familiarized myself with the content through transcribing and reading the transcriptions, and then started generating codes and coloring the participants' answers based on these codes. These answers were then inserted into a table consisting of two columns: one for the participants' answers and the other for the codes. The different codes were separated by rows.

During this process, different themes emerged which encompassed several codes, and the data correlating to those themes were combined. The themes were reviewed when the coding of each interview was completed, and subsequently organized into a new table consisting of themes and answers from all the participants so the findings could be compared. The most relevant findings were then divided into main themes and sub-themes which are reported in the findings section.

3.7 Research validity and reliability

To ensure this project remains credible, research validity and reliability must be considered. Reliability concerns the ability to replicate a study and receive equal results (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, p. 223). It is about the research's dependability and if it has been carried out in a reliable way (Thagaard , 2018, p. 187). It is important that the researcher considers his or her own subjectivity when conducting interviews and analyzing data (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, s. 224). I have presented the methodological process in this chapter to provide a clear overview of how the study was carried out, so that others can replicate and reflect on the research (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, p. 224). It is relevant to mention, however, that qualitative studies are not easily replicated, as the specific relationship between interviewer and participant, as well as their interpretations during the interview can lead to different answers if retested (Silvermann, 2017, p. 397). To ensure reliability, I have reflected upon how I as a researcher may influence the participants' answers. Therefore, I only asked follow-up questions in cases where I needed to clarify answers or receive additional information. These questions were carefully planned throughout the interview to avoid answers biased towards my inclinations. Moreover, while this research aims to uncover teachers' beliefs about the relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak, I had to make sure that I remained neutral and objective when interpreting and discussing the participants' responses, being open to the possibility that there might *not* be a relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak.

Validity in research refers to how valid the research is, in other words, the extent of how the results measure what they are supposed to measure (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, s. 223). To ensure the validity of this study, the research question was used as a guideline to define what scientific method would be appropriate, and the method was chosen with this in mind (see Chapter 3.1). Further, the interview guide and relevance of the questions were discussed with

my counselor, to ensure that they are appropriate for the research. They were also developed with the theory in mind (see Chapter 3.4). By using open-ended questions, I allowed the participants the chance to provide nuanced responses to capture their experiences and perspectives. During the analysis of the data, I focused on remaining objective, so that I could extract the participants' own experiences and thoughts on the subject. I was cautious and aware that there could be a possibility that I misinterpreted their statements. To validate my interpretations during the interviews, I asked follow-up questions to ensure correct interpretation. However, it must be mentioned that due to human error and inherited biases, the results could never be a direct and true interpretation of the participants' responses. This must be considered when discussing the implications for further research.

3.8   Ethical considerations

In any research project, there are ethical considerations that researchers should be aware of. In this project, the participants were interviewed, recorded and their statements were quoted directly as well as interpreted in the study. To ensure the protection of each participant's privacy it was important to keep their identities hidden (Thagaard, 2018, p. 24). Therefore, each informant was given a pseudonym, both during transcription and in the thesis itself (more in chapter 3.3.1). Further, the recordings were stored safely in Nettskjema Diktafon where only the researcher had access to the recordings. Since the interviews were recorded, the research project had to be accepted by NSD (now Sikt), and as such they had to be informed of the purpose of the project as well as what sort of information would be gathered.

Additionally, all the participants have a right to receive information about the research project to ensure that they have understood what it entails, what their participation would involve, and how the data would be used (NESH, 2016). This is done to ensure that the participants can make an informed decision if they want to participate or not, also called an informed consent. The participants were also informed that they could remove themselves from the study at any time (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, s. 104). The participants in this study received an information letter and signed a consent form before data collection to ensure that their rights as participants were protected.

4. Findings

In this chapter, I will present the teachers' perception of their pupils' WTC, their views on formative assessment and how they believe formative assessment should be practiced to promote WTC. This chapter will create the groundwork for discussing their views in relation to the research literature. The teachers' quotes are included to highlight specific perspectives.

4.1   The teachers' experiences with pupils speaking English in class

Regarding the teachers' experiences with their pupils speaking English in school, all the teachers reflected that they regard their pupil's oral skills to have improved over the years, however, there are some differences in experiences among the teachers:

> Lars: "From my own experiences in my classes I find they are good at participating and talking in English. I have experienced that some pupils switch to Norwegian, but the pupils have gotten very good at English. They have evolved a lot the last 15 years. They are much better at speaking and much more secure in speaking."

> Jakob: "Despite that pupils' oral skills have improved, the differences between the weaker and the strongest pupils have increased a lot, I mean, the weaker pupils talk to a much lower degree now. There is even a minority who does not speak no matter how much support they get."

Lars had the most positive attitude towards his pupils' talking in class and experienced little reluctance among his pupils, although some pupils had the tendency to switch to Norwegian at times. On the contrary, Jakob accentuates how low-achieving pupils talk even less than before and that there is now a larger gap regarding oral participation between the low- and high-achieving pupils.

Julie sees her pupils generally as competent English speakers and equates this to them being exposed to English a lot outside of school. Her impression is that most pupils enjoy speaking English and are better speakers than writers. She experiences that not all her pupils enjoy talking English and mentions a minority of them to be quite reluctant and shy.

4.2 Factors influencing pupils' willingness to speak

4.2.1 Classroom environment and feeling secure

Regarding factors that the teachers believe influence willingness to speak, all the teachers agree that an important factor is the classroom environment and pupils feeling secure in that environment.

> Lars: "When the classroom environment is safer, and the instruction you can achieve with good methodology is better… then there will be a safe class who have received good English instruction, and I believe most, maybe all will dare to say something in English out loud during class. The relation between pupils and teacher is also important for feeling secure enough to talk. They need to trust you as a teacher and believe that you want the best for them, that you support them."

> Julie: "Some of it has to do with the classroom environment, how secure you are in relation to the other peers in class. It probably contributes a lot. They are very concerned about how others perceive them, so they are afraid of saying something wrong, unless you establish a classroom environment where that is okay and there is room for trying out new things. I experience that more pupils talk then."

> Jakob: "For individuals, especially the weaker ones, feeling safe socially is important. They should feel that it is safe to talk English in class. Also, it's about how they perceive themselves in relation to their teacher. The teacher grades them, the teacher can also be scary."

Julie points out that pupils often are influenced by how they are perceived by their peers and that fear of making mistakes can lead to reluctance. As such she believes a secure classroom environment where there is room for making mistakes can lead to more speaking. Lars mentions the teacher as an influence on the pupils, and that if he is to expect them to speak, the pupils must feel that they can trust him. Jakob adds that pupils may be afraid of their teacher, that the teacher's role of evaluator can make pupils reluctant to speak.

4.2.2 Pupil's perception on own abilities

Jakob mentions that the social aspect influences how much the pupils talk, and that even reluctant speakers can speak surprisingly well if they are put in the role of "experts" when aiding pupils in lower grades:

Jakob: "When you put a low achieving 10th grade pupil to aid a low achieving 8th grader, he perceives himself as the more proficient one. It has to do with the social aspect. The 10th grader suddenly has the role of an expert, and he has no relation to the 8th grader. This becomes a non-threatening situation where he appears to be the more proficient one and experiences mastery just by being in that role. It affects his self-image."

This idea of self-image influencing speaking is in accordance with reflections made by the teachers. They say that most pupils are better at speaking than what they believe they are and that their perception of their own abilities influences their WTC:

Julie: "There are some who think or believe they that they don't master the language, so they give up sometimes. My feeling is that they can talk."

Lars: "If they experience mastery and they feel they are proficient then it is easier for them to talk, but much of it has to do with feeling insecure, that they actually are better than what they think."

4.2.3   Group sizes and pairing of pupils

Both Lars and Jakob mentioned that group sizes had a big impact on the ability to conduct playful speaking activities. They both mention using play to make speaking seem less serious and for building relations between pupils.

Lars: "They may have low self-confidence in English, but relations built on play, especially in 8th grade, you can get to know the pupils and they learn to not take themselves too seriously either... that they can play around with the language and build up that security in talking."

Jakob: "Group sizes have a huge influence. Dividing the class into two does a lot. Having English oral activities in full classes is quite hopeless. I use a lot of play activities for minimizing the fear of speaking. Doing this in a big group… it leads to chaos. The idea is to gradually warm up the pupils for speaking, one word at a time. It can be as simple as throwing a pen to each other and saying what they had for breakfast."

Julie also mentions that she uses warm-up activities in the beginning of class to get the pupils ready for talking. She uses dilemmas with relevant and fun topics that the pupils will discuss and believes by having the pupils discuss things that are not as academic, or personal, makes speaking more accessible.

Additionally, all the teachers believe that evaluating which pupils should be put together as learning partners influences their willingness to speak. They all agree one should pair pupils up with someone who has a similar level of competence.

> Julie: "Who they sit next to influences speaking a lot, how they work with their learning partner. Pairing two reluctant pupils who know each other makes speaking easier for them, because the bar is lowered. They will to a higher degree allow themselves to try and fail."

> Lars: "You should pair pupils with someone who is good for each other. If there is a pupil who is very competent in English, and maybe overly confident, you should not pair him with the most silent and reluctant girl. Especially in 8th grade. In supportive and safe classrooms, you can pair most pupils with each other."

> Jakob: "For certain pupils, especially the weakest ones, it is important to feel secure socially and that their partner's speaking does not go over their heads. The stronger pupils also need someone who can challenge them. This can also be done by simplifying their language. You can pair a middle-achieving pupil with a high-achieving, but not a low-achieving with a high-achieving. It is very socially dependent too."

It seems that the teachers all agree that it has a lot to do with how the pupils feel socially next to another person. By pairing them up with someone who they believe will support them or allow them to make mistakes, they might be more willing to talk. We may infer that they believe the differences in competences may lead the more reluctant and less competent pupils to feeling overwhelmed or insecure in relation to more competent pupils, or not being able to comprehend them.

4.3 Formative assessment

4.3.1 Teachers' beliefs about the role of formative assessment

Regarding what the teachers believed was the purpose or role of formative assessment, the teachers show that they regard formative assessment as advancing pupils' learning and development. It is done by making pupils aware of what competences they currently possess, as well as helping them develop through giving feedback to increase their competences.

> Lars: "Formative assessment is about informing pupils about where they are, as often as possible, so that they can develop going forward. It is about the pupils knowing what they should learn and developing abilities for self-reflecting over their process, which can increase learning. I believe the most important assessment being made is the way pupils assess themselves."

> Julie: "It is connected to self-regulation. Formative assessment is about the pupils knowing where they are and what needs to be done to develop themselves further. You focus on feed-forward, giving them feedback that can increase their competences. It can be self-assessment, peer-assessment, and modeling by showing previous assignments."

> Jakob: "The purpose of formative assessment is that it should lead to continual learning for the pupil. It is not so important for me that the pupils know what level the pupils are at, such as through knowing what grade they are at. If you set a grade the pupils may believe they are done. It should be a continual learning process and feedback should happen often."

Based on the data, we can infer that the teachers agree that formative assessment is about the learning process, discovering how the pupils can be aided at the competence level they currently are at. Jakob mentions that grades are not as important for formative assessment, which we will come back to later when presenting findings concerning process-oriented and result-oriented views on learning and assessment.

4.3.2 Feedback practices

Lars mentions that the feedback given to the pupils on speaking performances should be connected to something specific. He believes in positive reinforcement through focusing mainly on what the pupils master, as well as giving information on one area pupils should work with going forward. He illustrates the importance of providing encouraging feedback when he worked with a smaller group of pupils:

Lars: "I have received feedback from a teacher that the pupils said they felt seen. Especially one pupil had gotten very inspired when I gave her the belief that she could talk. To be there with the pupil is important. "You are good at English, you can say this, and you can say that, you have a lovely th-sound." You encourage more of what they already are good at, and they speak more. You always have to connect it to something concrete; it has to make sense – it makes your feedback more believable. It leads to more motivation and feeling of mastery."

Further, he believes listing up many things that the pupils must work with can be demotivating. Therefore, he only focuses on one thing at a time. After oral assessment-situations, such as group conversations on a topic, he gives pupils a short oral assessment in which achievements are mentioned, as well as one area to work on. He can help pupils with this area by suggesting things to do like watching movies or reading more to boost vocabulary.

Julie and Jakob believe in the same approach, that pupils should be encouraged through positive and concrete feedback and not be given too many areas of improvement. What sort of feedback is given also depends on the level of competence the pupils have. Julie adds that giving them feed-forward in the form of how to improve can be difficult at times:

Julie: "To make sure that the pupils know what to work with, to be specific enough can be challenging. For example, a type of feedback can be that they should develop their vocabulary… but what should they do then? It's very broad. They can read more or watch movies with English subtitles and all that… but to make the feedback specific and clear enough for the pupils is challenging."

Julie also mentions the challenges of returning to the feedback, that one should work with it continuously to make progress. She believes the feedback often gets lost when new feedback is given. The idea that feedback should allow for a continual improvement process is something Jakob also highlights.

Jakob accentuates that lengthy written feedback is hopeless for encouraging speaking and emphasizes that feedback should be a conversation between pupil and teacher.

Jakob: "Giving them lengthy written feedback on speaking is hopeless. Have a conversation about the conversation. Short and concrete. You master this now, next time work on this. You should simplify the formative assessment. Also, the dialogue is important. I can ask the pupil "How did

you think it went?" or "How did you feel today?" and based on what they answer I adjust the assessment. There's no reason for me to comment that the pupil stumbled in his words if he is sick. You need to know where the pupil is. Know what his window of tolerance for receiving feedback is that day, and what they need help with. You cannot meet another person with an assessment form, that's not how it works. Relation. Meet them where they are."

Jakob emphasizes the importance of being a supportive teacher who tries to aid pupils at the current level they are at, and who considers how much feedback the pupil is able tolerate or handle that day. He believes that feedback should always be adjusted in relation to whom the feedback is given to, or else they will not be open to the feedback. In his opinion, meeting pupils with lists of criteria and overly large expectations is not practical, and that doing so disregards the relationship between pupil and teacher.

4.3.3   Feedback on mistakes

Regarding feedback given on pupils' speaking mistakes, such as grammar mistakes or mispronunciation, the teachers are careful with correcting such mistakes. Julie believes that correcting mistakes of reluctant speakers can influence willingness to speak negatively:

> Julie: "I may sometimes correct the pupils who are secure and good at speaking. For the two reluctant girls I mentioned earlier, I will not correct anything. I could join in on the conversation and aid them in finding the right words if they struggle, but those who already are afraid to talk English and additionally get corrections... I believe it makes them want to talk less."

Jakob adds that he rarely sees the pedagogical relevance of giving such feedback:

> Jakob: "I very seldom mention it. There's no reason to lecture them in grammar unless we recently had a class about that specific mistake that was made. I believe it does not teach them anything when they converse. In a conversation, even between native speakers, there are loads of grammar mistakes anyway, it's a part of it and you should accept that. It is much more relevant to work with grammar when they are writing. It will translate to speaking."

The teachers agree that they should be careful when giving feedback on mistakes. Lars avoids individual corrections, especially of pronunciation and intonation, because he believes it affects the pupils on a personal level. He may mention specific things he noticed during class and bring

it up in plenary, to avoid having a negative influence on pupils' individual performances.

4.3.4 Process-oriented versus result-oriented view on learning

One of the themes that emerged when analyzing the interviews was teachers' beliefs that formative assessment should support a process-oriented view on learning, and its importance. Julie and Jakob mentioned how their pupils were often focused on what their grades would be. They said they needed to remind their pupils of the reasons why they have formative assessment, that it is meant to increase their competences over time and aid in their continual learning. Julie's belief in a process-oriented view on learning is evident in her reasoning:

> Julie: "Everything we work with is very process oriented. The pupils are quite focused on grades, even though they know they won't get any. I believe this focus on grades goes against the goal of formative assessment. They become more result oriented. I talk to the pupils about the reasons of having formative assessment, that it is for learning, and that grades do not count until 10th grade. I tell them that this is all about trial and error. I believe that reminding them that the formative assessment situations are for practice and improvement leads to more speaking, if everything feels like summative assessment, they will be afraid of making mistakes. I experience that they stress less when they do not receive grades."

Jakob comments on the idea of process-oriented learning by describing how he works with formative assessment situations:

> Jakob: "We have group conversations about news or literature. These conversations are repeated throughout the semester. They receive feedback each time on how they can improve, and they work on their abilities to communicate and converse with others. At the end of the year, I can tell them that "you are at this level based on the last conversation we had". I focus on seeing how their competences develop, not what results they get each time they perform. I establish this at the start of the year, that they won't receive grades until the end of the year. Few pupils will be interested in doing these assessment situations more than once if they got told what their level or grades were."

Jakob believes pupils knowing what their competence levels all the time is unnecessary. He sees that he as a teacher should inspire them to improve through giving them feedback, scaffolding to help them improve incrementally through a continual learning process, which he believes is the purpose of formative assessment. He believes that if pupils receive continual grading on the work they do, they will feel that each work is completed, and will not do further

work to improve. Because of this, he usually sets up summative assessment by the end of the year, while the other assessment situations are formative, and aim to develop the pupils' competences through giving feedback on how they are doing, what they should work with going forward, as well as giving them resources to reach their goals.

> Jakob: "I think it's okay, especially if you have the class for three years to have a three-year perspective, and you can bring your pupils into this three-year perspective. "Now you are **here**. In two years, however, you may be **there.**" You're allowed to say that to a pupil. Not everything has to happen until Christmas."

Jakob further mentions that formative assessment can be made too complicated for the pupils and focusing on complicated competence aims with the pupils may hinder the learning process as it becomes too academic, pedagogical, and difficult for the pupils to grasp. Jakob believes that the pupils should be allowed to see their progress in a long-term perspective, that not everything has to happen overnight. He thinks that focusing on proficiency or competence levels when formatively assessing the pupils is unnecessary in relation to the pupils' learning process.

4.3.5   The use of goals and criteria in formative assessment of speaking

Considering the use of goals and criteria when using formative assessment of speaking, the teachers all mentioned how the use of criteria lists for formative assessment is prevalent in the field of pedagogy. However, they believe that their use, especially the idea of exposing the pupils to such lists could in fact go against the aim of formative assessment. Lars and Jakob both considered that the use of such lists could be overwhelming for the pupils:

> Jakob: "I remember that in Oslo they spent a lot of time crossing off on these incredibly long lists of criteria. I feel I was abusing the pupils with these lists. Lengthy, complicated lists of aims and criteria. Seriously, that's not fair. Nobody understands those, and no one will actually respond to them. Those lists are for the teacher to use, for summative assessment."

> Lars: "They (lists of criteria) can be alienating for the pupils because they contain so much. There is a lot of text. As a teacher you should understand those, they are quite handy to use when you are an English sensor in exams, to have it as a tool. But their relevancy for an 8th grader who is learning English…"

Further, they see that translating those lists for the pupils would make them more relevant. Simplifying and translating the language of criteria allows the pupils to understand them. Jakob believes that criteria lists and competence aims are the teacher's tools and not something the pupils have to be exposed to all the time:

> Jakob: "The pupils should be in a learning process; they should be given information on how to progress. They do not understand "speak coherently with their learning partner". If you put up those criteria lists and start talking about goals and what sort of competence we are trying to achieve in a very complicated way, I think it makes them feel like everything they do is being evaluated and it becomes this bureaucratic process. I use fewer goals in formative assessment, and I do not use levels of achievement related to those such as low, middle, or high. Those are for my own professional judgement."

When asked if he believed goal setting could lead to willingness to speak, Jakob did not believe it did; he mentioned that many pupils speak because they must, but still do not like it. His view is that goal setting can provide direction and some security for pupils, but that overly ambitious goal expectations will not provide anything constructive.

The idea of setting smaller goals for the pupils is something Julie also mentions. She believes that co-creating goals with the pupils and involving them in the process of creating questions can inspire them and makes them more responsible when working with tasks:

> Julie: "Before a larger assessment they participate in creating the criteria, and I ask them what I as a teacher should be looking for when assessing. They can mention criteria such as "I should try to speak with correct grammar" or "I have to give examples"."

She believes her pupils are good at mentioning the right goals and criteria they should work towards. However, she says they need to be taught how to correctly choose goals and criteria that fit the assignment or assessment situation and that they improve over time. She experiences that not all her pupils understand the criteria or how to apply them. Jakob says his pupils always partake in developing goals and criteria, but believes he must provide options for the pupils:

> Jakob: "We always create the criteria together. But it's my responsibility to come up with alternatives. In the ideal world the pupils will be able create the criteria themselves. That is not true, they will mostly ape what the teacher has shown them before. Therefore, it's my job to provide

them with different kinds of criteria that they can choose among, so that they actually have the freedom to make up their own mind about those options and what applies to them the most."

Lars mentions that he does not usually focus much on the criteria. He believes focusing on fewer elements of criteria in formative assessment situations makes assessment more manageable. He accentuates the importance of making competence aims and criteria more accessible:

> Lars: "You need to break down the goals. It makes it easier for the pupils than listing up complicated criteria. I believe teachers should explain why we are working with the activities we are working with. To create short-term goals and one long-term goal is important. When the pupils know what we are working towards and why, it makes them more engaged."

Julie thinks using goals in class can contribute to more willingness to speak if done correctly. However, she believes she could be better at connecting such goals to speaking:

> Julie: "I could be better at creating more goals for speaking during class. Goals are often connected to the subject theme that we are working with. Still, if they have a reading activity, one of the goals I create in relation to the speaking activity could be that the pupils work with retelling what their learning partner has read using their own words. In those situations, I always say "the goal is to be able to use your own words to retell something that has been read"."

4.3.6 Self-assessment

Julie views self-assessment as an important part of formative assessment and she explains how they work with the assessment practice regarding assessment on pupil work, in which self-assessment plays a big part. She believes her pupils must be taught to self-assess, and models for the pupils by using criteria lists to exemplify. She describes the importance of creating a dialogue and mentions that the pupils are good at evaluating themselves:

> Julie: "For speaking, I believe they should think about what they master and what they need to have focus on going forward. Often, they write about what they thought they did well, what could be different or what they think they should work with, and then I comment on what they have written. Then they comment back and set goals for themselves based on our correspondence. I believe the dialogue in self-assessment is very important. If they write something that does not get any response, they probably think no one sees it. Also, I experience that the pupils often mention areas of mastery and improvement that I also had in mind. They often match my own comments."

As mentioned earlier, despite Jakob's earlier self-assessment practices using forms of criteria for modeling and instructing his pupils for self-assessment, he believes the use of criteria lists and teaching the pupils the language of assessment is not conducive to learning process, that it complicates the learning process. Jakob criticizes the idea of teaching the pupils the "language of assessment". He believes he should translate this language for his pupils using his own professional competence. He portrays self-assessment as a way for preparing the pupils to receive feedback and that the dialogue is important for knowing what to give feedback on:

> Jakob: "The purpose of self-assessment is to open the pupil's mind. To prepare them for feedback. It's about us understanding each other. The pupils assess themselves, which gives me feedback on how they understand themselves, which in turn allows me to adjust my feedback. If I ask the pupil "How did you think the conversation went?" and they say, "I was really scared, I couldn't speak a word.", there won't be a section in the self-assessment form that says "I was really scared". So, in this situation we try to find a way to make the pupil feel safer next time, and it becomes a common project between us. A form does not capture this. You need to know where they are. You need to know their window of tolerance, what they need help with. And you must ask: "How can I help you?" That's self-assessment."

Lars mentions that constant assessment may be detrimental, that it may lead pupils to lose their interest in learning. He considers that in a class of 30 pupils, it is not realistic that they become over-assessed by the teacher, but the problem may come from the way the pupils assess themselves:

> Lars: "It could become a problem if you always assess yourself. I believe that self-assessment is what you learn the most from, but if the feedback you give yourself always is negative, it can make you lose your desire to learn."

4.4 Beliefs on the relationship between formative assessment and WTC

At the end of the interview the participants were asked how they viewed formative assessment in relation to WTC, and based on their reflections, were asked how they thought formative assessment could influence WTC. Jakob and Julie clearly agreed that having a process-oriented view on learning positively influences speaking among their pupils:

Julie: "Formative assessment is good for establishing a view of learning as process oriented. Especially how we do it here through reminding the pupils that formative assessment is for practice. They may be afraid to talk and make mistakes if the assessment were summative. I believe formative assessment will make it easier for them to talk because of this, as we try to make speaking seem as harmless as possible."

Jakob: "As long as formative assessment supports the view of learning as process-oriented, and not a grade-giving, criteria- or result-oriented process, it will be good for influencing pupils to speak more."

Lars believed other elements of teaching were more important than formative assessment regarding pupils' WTC. He mentioned that an enthusiastic teacher who varies teaching methods that involve student-active learning in a supportive classroom environment may be more significant for increasing pupils' WTC than assessment and feedback.

4.5 Summary

While the teachers acknowledge that pupils' English proficiency has increased over the years, they consider pupils' willingness to speak to be heavily influenced by their classroom environment, social relations, and beliefs about their own competences. They reckon formative assessment practices can help pupils to both become better speakers and increase their willingness to speak, but that the teacher must consider each individual pupil, their current level of competence and emotional state when providing formative assessment. They believe in supporting pupils through feedback by accentuating their strengths and not overwhelming pupils with complicated language of competence aims. They believe that the dialogue between pupil and teacher is important to provide appropriate feedback, support, and assessment. Formative assessment is perceived as enabling a view of learning as process oriented. Conveying this view to the pupils can lead to less stress and more willingness to speak through trial and error.

5. Discussion

The aim of this thesis is to research teachers' attitudes towards and beliefs about formative assessment and its role in influencing pupil's willingness to speak English in the classroom. In this section, the findings of the study are discussed in the light of the research literature on formative assessment and WTC. The discussion provides the basis for implications the results of the study may have for the practice of formative assessment in EFL classes to encourage speaking.

5.1 Fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived communicative competence

While Lars' and Julie's experiences with their pupils speaking English in class have generally been positive, Jakob draws attention towards how the differences between pupils have increased. He suggests that low-achieving pupils talk even less than before. Julie adds that a minority of her pupils are quite reluctant and shy. When asked what they believe influences pupils' willingness to speak they all regard the classroom environment as being a big influence on the pupils feeling secure enough to speak. Julie specifies that pupils may be concerned about how others perceive them and that they may be afraid of saying something wrong. Jakob adds that feeling safe socially is important, and teacher-pupil relationship also influences them.

Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128) regard fear of negative evaluation as one of three performance anxieties, and it is an apprehension about how others might evaluate or perceive one's performance. Julie's and Jakob's pupils could experience fear of negative evaluation when speaking in front of their classmates or teacher, and this may influence their willingness to speak, as anxiety will influence the pupils' state communicative self-confidence, which in turn influences WTC (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 569). Further, Jakob's reflections on the increasing gap between low- and high-achieving pupils' speaking frequency in class may indicate that the lower achieving pupils become more reluctant to speak because in relation to higher achieving pupils they may feel that their own competences are lacking. They may feel they are being judged or evaluated by more competent fellow pupils, which could lead to increased amounts of anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128).

All the teachers believe that pairing pupils up with someone that is at approximately the same competence level can boost willingness to speak. MacIntyre et al. (1998, p. 549) consider that perceived competence can fluctuate between speaking situations that have different competence requirements. If the pupil is paired up with a learning partner with a higher level of English competence, his or her comparison toward the other, or the more advanced language the learning partner could lead the pupil to perceive their competence as insufficient in that specific situation. The teacher's evaluation of the impact on right pairings is crucial, considering that, if paired to an equal, the pupils could perceive themselves to be competent enough to speak in that situation, which could lead to more WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 549).

Further, the teachers reflected that pupils' beliefs in their own abilities influence their willingness to speak. From their own experiences, the teachers feel the pupils are competent enough, but pupils still may believe otherwise. While there are no additional data on the pupils' actual competence levels, nor their own beliefs about their competences, the teachers' reflections still point to the idea that self-perceived communicative competence has an impact on pupils' WTC, and they may therefore be right in their assertions (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 549; Ghonsooly et al., 2012, p. 208; Yashima, 2002, p. 62; Öz et al., 2015, p. 274). Additionally, Jakob's method of assigning his lower-achieving pupils the roles of "experts" where they aid pupils in lower grades, and his experience of how much this influences pupils' self-image and speaking reveals that he may understand how self-perceived communicative competence influences WTC.

5.2 Teachers' views on formative assessment practices and beliefs

The teachers' beliefs on formative assessment show that they weigh formative assessment a little differently. They all agree that formative assessment is aimed to advance pupils' learning and development through making them aware of their current competences and providing feedback on how to proceed. Lars and Julie consider the development of pupils' self-reflection and self-regulation to be an important part of formative assessment, while Jakob accentuates that formative assessment should lead to a continual learning process in which feedback happens often. These beliefs reflect the views of formative assessment shown in the curriculum for the English subject, which states that "formative assessment shall help promote learning and develop competence in the subject" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019) as well as

Assessment Reform Group (2002) and their definition of formative assessment as the process of "…seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there".

5.3   Teachers' views on criteria and goal setting

As the literature suggests, clarifying learning intentions and criteria for success creates a trajectory for learning development, which could both be used by the teacher for creating progression in a specific competence and for knowing how they can aid and scaffold the pupils in their learning process (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p. 8; Chvala & Graedler, 2010, p. 81). Chvala and Graedler (2010, p. 81) believe that curriculum aims should be divided into manageable short and long-term goals or criteria, and suggest dividing criteria into different proficiency levels, using analytical tables that explain what each criterion signifies. They also recommend making criteria clear for pupils. While Lars and Jakob believed that lists of criteria are useful for assessment purposes, they both considered the downsides of exposing the pupils to such lists. They believe it can be overwhelming and alienating for the pupils, and that simplifying such lists by translating criteria to a language the pupils understand would be more beneficial for their learning. Jakob mentions exposing pupils to such lists may make pupils feel like they are always being evaluated. As established earlier, feeling evaluated, either by the teacher or peers may have a detrimental effect on pupils' willingness to speak due to anxiety originating from fear of evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Jakob's reflection demonstrates an understanding of the importance of pupil's emotional state and that exposing pupils to overly complicated and lengthy criteria may influence their willingness to speak. Further, Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 88) suggest that goals with excessive difficulty may lead to less exerted effort on part of the student, leading to a decrease in motivation. Jakob and Lars are considering the negative impact criteria lists can have on their pupils, both regarding the excessive difficulty of the assessment language and overwhelming expectations of how much they must learn. Additionally, Jakob highlights that while goal setting can provide pupils with a sense of security and direction, he does not believe it will lead pupils to becoming more willing to speak.

Lars shares a similar view and believes that focusing on fewer criteria makes the assessment more manageable. He mentions that creating short-term goals and one long-term goal is important so that the pupils know what they are working towards and why, which is more constructive than using complicated lists of criteria. This view is also supported by Gamlem

(2021, p. 32) who emphasizes that creating smaller goals in class can give pupils a sense of goal-oriented direction and has a motivational effect. Julie shares this view and adds that she believes setting goals for speaking activities in class can influence pupils' willingness to speak.

Gamlem (2021, p. 30) states that dialogue between student and teacher is important for clarifying goals and criteria, which makes it easier for the pupils to relate the goals and criteria to their own learning process. None of the teachers mentioned specifically that they discuss the criteria and goals with the pupils; they do, however, as Lars and Jakob showed, attempt to make the criteria more relevant for the pupils, and as such they are considering the importance of having the goals and criteria relate to their pupils' understanding and learning process. Additionally, Julie stated that she collaborates with the pupils in creating assessment goals and criteria and that she aids her pupils by modeling appropriate criteria for them to increase their own understanding of the criteria. This could imply that she considers the importance of her pupils' understanding what the goals and criteria are for. Additionally, Julie believes that co-creating goals and criteria, as well as involving the pupils in creating questions for speaking activities inspires the pupils and makes them more responsible. This reflects Slemmen's (2017, p. 105) suggestion, that involving pupils in defining goals and criteria can lead to more ownership of their own learning process.

To summarize, all the participants believe that using lists of criteria is relevant for their own assessment practice. However, they highlight that exposing pupils to excessive and complicated lists of criteria can be detrimental for the pupils' learning. They believe in making criteria accessible, by creating smaller goals and using their own pedagogical competence to relate the criteria to their pupils' learning process. This is done by clarifying goals and co-creating criteria with the pupils. Nevertheless, the teachers disagreed on the role of goals and criteria in promoting pupils' willingness to speak. Importantly, the participants often refrained from talking about the relationship between formative assessment and WTC, which may indicate that they do not consider the use of criteria and goal creation to be highly relevant for willingness to speak. However, based on how fear of evaluation may have a detrimental influence on willingness to speak, their critique of an excessive use of complicated lists of criteria which could lead to unrealistic expectations is an important finding. Such use may have implications for pupils' WTC if it leads to an environment where the pupils feel constantly evaluated, which may spike their fear of negative evaluation, resulting in anxiety and

subsequently, less willingness to speak (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128; MacIntyre, 2006, p. 569). Seen in relation to the affective filter hypothesis, pupils experiencing a state of anxiety during speaking may also influence their language acquisition negatively (Krashen, 1982, p. 32.) These findings may therefore have implications for both WTC and language acquisition among pupils. If teachers consider the possible detrimental effects the use of criteria may have on the pupils and evaluate how criteria should be presented and used to lessen pupils feeling overwhelmed and constantly evaluated, the learning environment may be permeated by less anxiety and thus both WTC and language acquisition may increase (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128; MacIntyre, 2006, p. 569; Krashen, 1982, p. 32).

5.4 Teachers' belief on pupil self-assessment

The teachers' experiences with and views on self-assessment differed. Black and Wiliam (1998, p. 85) consider self-assessment to be an essential component of formative assessment, since formative assessment relies on pupils' abilities to reflect on their own learning processes. Julie reflects this view by considering self-assessment to be an important part of formative assessment. She sees it important to establish a dialogue with her pupils when they work with self-assessment practices and generally experience that her pupils are good at evaluating themselves. Her reflections reflect an understanding of the importance of self-assessment for providing the pupils with skills for self-reflection, which could lead to a promotion of self-regulation and learning (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009, p. 13; Stobart, 2008, p. 149). Further, her reflections on pupil's abilities for assessing their own work correspond with the research literature (Burner, 2018, p. 250; Joo, 2016, pp. 77, 80) She further mentions using criteria to model for her pupils on how to assess, which is a method recommended by several researchers for improving self-assessment practices among pupils (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009, p. 15; Ross, 2006, pp. 8-9).

Despite Jakob's earlier practices with using self-assessment, he believes the use of criteria lists and teaching the pupils the language of assessment is not conducive to their learning process. He emphasizes how important the dialogue is when formatively assessing his pupils and sees self-assessment as a way for the pupil and teacher to understand each other, so that the teacher can adjust feedback to fit the pupil's situation. He believes self-assessment can also include the pupil's emotional state, such as "I was really scared, I couldn't speak a word". When receiving such information, he can adjust the feedback and remedy the pupil's fear of speaking. Jakob

has a clear understanding of the self-assessment theory and what literature often suggests as appropriate but criticizes certain practices and questions what pupils gain by applying some of the recommendations if they result in overwhelming the pupils. These recommendations include criteria-referenced self-assessment and teaching pupils how to apply criteria, as well as the view of self-assessment as forming the basis for self-regulated learning (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009, p. 12-13; Stobart, 2008, p. 149; Ross, 2006, pp. 8-9). It must be made clear, however, that is uncertain to what degree he believes self-assessment may, or may not be facilitative for self-regulation, based on the data from the interview. However, he is concerned about his pupils' well-being and aims to meet them halfway by adjusting his feedback practices to fit their experience of speaking, which he believes to be more relevant for their learning process. He does consider the importance of self-assessment for providing pupils with opportunities to become aware of current competences (Stobart, 2008, p. 149), but also keeps in mind that the pupils should receive differentiated instruction adjusted to their abilities (Opplæringslova, 1998), as well as considering Vygotsky's view on social learning and the zone of proximal development when aiding the pupils (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 86). These are important factors to consider, as one of the main aims of formative assessment is for the teachers to receive information that can help them adjust teaching so as to advance pupils' learning (Assessment Reform Group, 2002). Additionally, Jakob's reflections on willingness to speak show an understanding that emotional factors may influence pupils' speaking, and that by gathering information on the pupils' emotional states and thoughts about speaking, they can work together to remedy anxiety or fear of speaking. He considers that working on speaking proficiency and competence without addressing such issues is not an appropriate way to work with formative assessment. This is reflected in Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, as feelings and emotions, anxiety being one of them, can influence the process of input comprehension and language acquisition, as well as how anxiety decreases WTC (Krashen, 1982, p. 21; MacIntyre, 2007, p. 569).

5.5 Teachers' beliefs on feedback practices and their influence on WTC

When analyzing how the teachers believe they should give feedback to the pupils, their ideas reflected how feedback can be connected to willingness to speak. The research revealed that this was the area in which the teachers showed the clearest connection between formative assessment and willingness to speak. All the teachers agreed that feedback should be adjusted in relation to the pupils' current competence level, which is in accordance with pupils' right

for differentiated instruction, as well as the notion of learners' zone of proximal development that is important to consider when adjusting practices for each individual pupil (Opplæringslova, 1998; Vygotsky, 1986, p. 86). The participants believe positive feedback should be given, using concrete examples to make the feedback believable and relevant, as well as one area of improvement to help the pupil to move forward. They agree that providing pupils with too many areas of improvement is not conducive to their learning process, as this may cause the pupils to lose motivation. These reflections are supported by Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 88), as they found that goals of excessive difficulty led to less exerted effort and a decrease in motivation, as well as Krashen (1982, p. 31) who considers a lack of motivation to hinder language acquisition.

Lars mentioned that when aiding a smaller group of pupils and providing feedback on specific things they mastered, encouraging them to see their strengths led them to believe in themselves more, and subsequently he experienced that they spoke more when he did so. As mentioned earlier, the teachers noted that their pupils could be reluctant to speak, even though the teachers felt they were capable, that their beliefs of their own competences often were lower than what their competences were. This can indicate that the teachers' reflections are in accordance with the theory on how self-perceived competence has an influence on WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 549; Ghonsooly et al., 2012, p. 208; Yashima, 2002, p. 62; Öz et al., 2015, p. 274). Further, through encouraging pupils by providing positive feedback, the teachers highlight competences that the pupils may not be aware they possess. Considering the theory and research on the influence self-perceived communicative competence has on WTC, this could imply that they are attempting to change their pupils' perceptions of their self-perceived competences to increase willingness to speak. Further, high self-confidence is considered by Krashen (1982, p. 31) to be conducive to language acquisition, and thus, increasing pupils' self-perceived competence through making pupils aware of their current abilities could lead to a positive spiral of learning where pupils experience that they improve, seek input more often, which in turn could lead to additional acquisition and higher self-perceived competence. Additionally, providing the pupils with visible evidence of learning has been shown to facilitate feelings of worthiness and meaningful experiences in the classroom (Sandvik & Buland, 2014, p. 134). Moreover, Federici & Skaalvik (2013, p. 61) underline that emotional and instrumental support of pupils through showing care and respect, as well as giving feedback and instruction can lead

to better teacher-student relations, which can result in more positive attitudes towards learning and achieving goals and promote self-efficacy among pupils.

However, Stobart (2008, p. 165) has criticized how praising pupils on their abilities rather than effort and progress towards goals can lead to pupils becoming dependent on receiving approval, and how learning can become a means of seeking this approval. Further, Hattie and Timperley (2007, pp. 96, 97) emphasize personal approval as not being efficient towards learning achievement unless such feedback is given in relation to specific processes in tasks being undertaken and how the pupil work with their learning processes. The teachers all considered that the positive feedback they deliver always should be connected to something specific that the pupils have mastered. According to the research literature, their approach should be conducive to learning, and reflects an understanding of the ineffectiveness of providing empty words of affirmation (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, pp. 96, 97).

Regarding providing pupils with corrections of oral mistakes, the teachers' reflections showed that they consider that such feedback should be approached with caution. Lars and Jakob described how they avoid giving such feedback to the pupils, especially correcting them individually. Lars could mention specific things he noticed in plenary but sees individual corrections to influence his pupils negatively. Jakob does not see the purpose of correcting pupils' speaking mistakes unless they are connected to grammar they have been working with recently. This is supported by Hattie and Timperley (2007, p. 87) who consider unrelated feedback outside of specific goals to be inefficient for learning. Julie said she would sometimes correct pupils who are secure in speaking, but never reluctant speakers as she believes correcting pupils who already are reluctant will make them want to talk less.

Research suggests that oral corrective feedback has a positive impact on learning in L2 classrooms and includes such forms as giving implicit feedback through prompts as well as explicit, instructional feedback (Lyster & Saito, 2010, p. 290; Li, 2014, p. 197; Li 2010, p. 344; Ellis, Loewen & Erlam, 2006, pp. 364-366). Additionally, there has been shown to be a discrepancy in attitudes between students and teachers regarding correcting oral mistakes, where most students believed the teacher should do so (Schultz, 1996, p. 347). The teachers in this study were apprehensive of correcting their pupils' mistakes, which confirms Schultz' (1996, p. 347) and Ellis' (2009, p. 10) findings. This implies that teachers either may not be

aware that the use of both implicit and explicit oral corrective feedback has been proved effective, or that they see possible detrimental effects of oral corrective feedback, such as anxiety or reduction of WTC (Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013, p. 30). The teachers are considering their pupils' emotional states and may see that being evaluated and corrected all the time can lead them to be less willing to speak. Ellis (2009, p. 12) proposed that the teacher should monitor how much anxiety feedback causes and adapt strategies according to student responses. Julie's approach of considering which of her pupils she should correct, based on their security in speaking English, is in alignment with this view of monitoring and adapting corrections. Further, Zhang & Rahimi (2014, p. 435) suggest that a remedy for the detrimental effects oral corrective feedback may have, includes informing the pupils of its significance and benefits, and negotiating with the pupils agreed-upon goals that the corrective feedback should have. This could be an approach the teachers could make use of if they should consider implementing more oral corrections in their teaching practices.

5.6   Teachers' beliefs on supporting a process-oriented view on learning

Fedirici & Skaalvik (2013, p. 61) see it as important that the learning environment supports an incremental, learning and goal-oriented process, as opposed to a result-oriented process, since it can promote motivation, endurance, and better learning strategies among students. When interviewing the teachers about formative assessment and its relation to willingness to speak, they often mentioned that formative assessment should help support a process-oriented view on learning. In several instances, this view was mentioned in relation to how they carry out formative assessment practices. Julie notes that everything they work with is process-oriented, and that while her pupils are focused and interested in knowing what their grades are, she believes grading goes against the goal of formative assessment. She reminds her pupils of the purpose of having formative assessment, that it is for learning, practice, and improvement, and that it is a trial-and-error process. Her experience is that pupils' stress decreases when they do not receive grades, their willingness to speak is higher.

Jakob's beliefs are also connected to this idea, as he mentioned that continual grading of pupils' work can lead them to believe their learning process is finished. He points out how he repeats formative assessment situations, such as pupil conversations about news or literature, so that the pupils can continuously work on improving their speaking abilities, but that they will not receive grades until the end of the year. His belief is that focusing on proficiency or competence

achievement levels, i.e., "low", "middle", "high" when giving feedback to pupils is unnecessary. Additionally, he mentions that he can establish a three-year perspective for his pupils' learning, encouraging them to see learning as an incremental process.

Both Julie and Jakob believe in creating a learning environment that supports incremental and process-oriented learning and de-emphasizes results-oriented learning by using grades less. This approach for formative assessment situations may have implications for pupils' WTC, as through teachers' attempts to de-emphasize the importance of grades, their pupils' test-anxiety may be lowered in formative assessment situations. Julie believes that her pupils may be afraid of making mistakes if formative assessment situations feel like summative. This is supported by Horwitz et al.'s (1986, p. 127) view of foreign language anxiety, as students who receive test results below what they expect of themselves may consider these results as a show of failure. Further, they suggest that being tested in oral communication can activate both communication apprehension and test anxiety simultaneously (Horwitz el al., 1986, p. 127). Less focus on grades may be beneficial for reducing test-anxiety, and Julie's beliefs reflect this, as she considers that a process-oriented and less result-oriented learning process may reduce stress and increase speaking, allowing her pupils to see their learning as a trial-and-error process.

Further, MacIntyre et al. (1998, p. 549) consider perceived competence to fluctuate, where competence requirements the learner is unable to meet can influence it negatively. By de-emphasizing proficiency and competence levels and establishing long-term perspectives for his pupils' learning, Jakob's approach may allow pupils to see that their competences can be improved incrementally. This can reassure pupils that they do not have to improve everything for each formative assessment situation, and may have implications for their WTC, as it can communicate to the pupils that showing gradual and incremental improvements in their speaking competences is sufficient. If the expectations for improvement are lowered to a reasonable goal reflected in their current level of competence which the teacher has assessed, they may see themselves as capable enough to speak in that situation, increasing their willingness to speak (MacIntyre, et al, 1998, p. 549).

5.7   Implications for further research

Through researching the teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of formative assessment in relation to WTC, the teachers, despite being critical of certain formative assessment practices, all considered formative assessment in general to be conducive to learning and considered formative assessment to be an assessment form that, if practiced in appropriately, could influence pupils' WTC positively. Even though the teachers tended to talk about formative assessment in general, and not necessarily always connect formative assessment to WTC, there emerged some findings which may have implications for further research on the relationship between formative assessment and WTC. Since the perspectives are limited to three teachers, the findings are not generalizable for the population of Norwegian EFL teachers. Additionally, they cannot be confirmed because of the nature of this qualitative study, as data on lower-secondary EFL pupils and in-class data on oral participation would have to be accounted for.

The main points presented here are areas of topics that has appeared through the research done in this thesis and are suggested as hypotheses that could be used in further research, such as a quantitative, action-research or qualitative studies that can be done on more Norwegian EFL teachers and/or lower-secondary EFL pupils in Norway:

1. Formative assessment may support pupils' WTC if it remains learning- and process-oriented as this may reduce pupils' test-anxiety through reducing the emphasis on grading and results, allowing a view of speaking as a trial-and-error process. Minimizing pupil exposure to criteria and proficiency achievements when formatively assessing and giving feedback for learning may also have implications for self-perceived communicative confidence, which may increase WTC.

2. Presenting pupils with complicated lists of criteria when giving feedback in formative assessment situations may not be conducive to learning and may lead to fear of negative evaluation among pupils, increasing anxiety and reducing their WTC.

3. Beliefs about self-assessment practices among Norwegian EFL teachers may differ. Some teachers may believe following self-assessment practices as they are recommended in the research literature (such as modeling criteria lists and spending

time teaching pupils how to assess themselves) can overwhelm the pupils and not be conducive for learning.

4. Norwegian EFL teachers may see pupils to have a better competence basis for speaking than what the pupils themselves believe, which may indicate that Norwegian EFL pupils' self-perceived communicative competence is low, and that teachers are aware of this. Concrete feedback on evidence for speaking proficiency is used by all the teachers to increase confidence and willingness to speak among their pupils, this may be the case for other teachers in Norway.

5. Norwegian EFL teachers may be hesitant to correct oral mistakes individually for pupils, despite the literature suggesting that correction of oral mistakes can be beneficial for learning and that pupils expect, and even prefer to be corrected. Norwegian EFL teachers may believe correcting pupils who are reluctant to speak could reduce their willingness to speak further.

5.8   Pedagogical implications

As a final word, I wish to suggest an idea that emerged during the research on WTC and formative assessment. The concept of WTC (MacIntyre et al, 1998) shows variables influencing willingness to speak, which are interrelated and fluctuating. When teachers are considering how to increase willingness to speak in their classrooms, this model can be used as a pedagogical tool to create an overview of what influences willingness to speak so they know how to adjust their instruction and facilitate for a classroom environment that supports WTC. Upon having conducted this research project, I have reflected on how I could contribute to the field and want to suggest that formative assessment could be an additional variable within a revised model of WTC (MacIntyre, et al., 1998). If further research on the influence of formative assessment on WTC is conducted, and we can conclude that there is a strong correlation between formative assessment and WTC, recommendations for how formative assessment should be carried out to increase WTC can be included in such a revised model. This can have pedagogical implications as the revised model could be used to increase EFL teachers' competence for facilitating for WTC among EFL pupils through providing an overview that teachers can return to when they are considering how to conduct and provide instruction, support, assessment and classroom management to increase WTC.

6. Conclusion

This thesis had as its aim to uncover teachers' perspectives on the relationship between formative assessment and willingness to speak among pupils in the Norwegian EFL classroom. Through qualitative inquiry, three teachers were interviewed and asked questions pertaining to how they experienced their pupils' willingness to speak, their view on various formative assessment forms, how they conducted formative assessment practices and their beliefs of how such practices may influence willingness to speak. The findings from the interviews were discussed in relation to literature pertaining to formative assessment and WTC. The focus area has been on the two most immediate factors influencing WTC, namely self-perceived communicative competence and anxiety. Additionally, the implications of affective factors influencing language acquisition, by view of Krashen's affective filter hypothesis were considered.

The findings revealed that the teachers see their pupils' willingness to speak as being heavily influenced by their classroom environment, social relations, and beliefs about their own competences. By considering each individual pupil, their current competences and emotional states while providing feedback, the teachers believe that formative assessment practices could help them become better speakers and increase their willingness to speak. Two of the teachers were skeptical towards certain formative assessment practices that included a heavy focus on criteria, high expectations and complicated language connected to competence aims. They believed such practices could impact their pupils' learning negatively. Overall, the teachers believed that conveying a view of formative assessment as being for learning, through incremental gains in learning and competence could lead to less stress and more willingness to speak as it would allow the pupils to see learning as a trial-and-error process. Further, as the teachers saw that through providing encouraging feedback on pupils' current accomplishments when speaking, and providing situations in which they could feel competent enough to speak, their pupils' willingness to speak would increase.

Through considering the literature on self-perceived communicative competence, language anxiety and the influence of affective states on language acquisition, it has been suggested that if formative assessment is conducted in a way that emphasizes an incremental, process-oriented view of learning, through creating appropriate goals adjusted to the pupils' competences and not emphasizing too many areas for improvement, it may lower the pupils'

expectations of themselves and allow them to see their current competences as adequate for their own learning process. Through adjusting goal-difficulties to the pupils' level of competence as well as providing supportive feedback on specific achievements for talking, the pupils self-perceived communicative competence may increase. Further, through lowering expectations, encouraging and conveying a view of learning as a trial-and-error process, the pupils may experience less anxiety which in turn would increase their WTC. Through increasing confidence and reducing anxiety, which may be accomplished through such formative assessment practices, pupils may also increase their rate of language acquisition through a lower affective filter, and as such this could create a positive spiral for learning as well as for their willingness to speak.

Because of the limited scope of this research, with a limited number of teachers' perceptions as its focus, further studies done on Norwegian EFL teachers' perceptions as well as an inclusion of the perception of lower secondary pupils must be conducted to confirm the claims or suggestions appearing in this study. This could be done through quantitative, action-research or qualitative studies.

It has been suggested that the concept of WTC could be used as a pedagogical tool for teachers to assess what influences their pupils' willingness to speak so that they can adjust their teaching practices, support and instruction to increase willingness to speak. Further, it was suggested that it could be revised so that formative assessment could be included as a factor, giving an overview of what kinds of assessment practices could be conducive to increasing willingness to speak.

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List of appendices

Appendix 1: Thematic and dynamic questions for the semi-structured interview

Research questions (thematic)	Examples of interview questions (dynamic)	The aim of the questions
How do teachers experience their pupil's willingness to speak in their EFL classes?	"How do you experience your pupils' oral contribution in your English classes?" "Have you experienced that your pupils avoid talking English in your classes, and if so, how do you experience this?"	To uncover how the teacher experiences willingness to speak among their pupils. This sets up a subsequent discussion for talking about formative assessment and its role in influencing willingness to speak.
What do the teachers believe influences willingness to speak?	"Why do you think your pupils choose to avoid speaking English in your classes?" "Do you discuss this with your pupils?" "What measures do you take to increase oral participation in class?"	To open a discussion on what factors may influence willingness to speak. The answers form the foundation for discussing formative assessment and its role in influencing willingness to speak.
What is the teachers' view on formative assessment and its use in assessing oral competences?	"What do you believe is the purpose of using formative assessment in teaching?" "How do you use formative assessment for increasing your pupils' speaking competences?" "Are your pupils included in the process of creating goals and criteria in relation to their speaking?" "How do you deliver feedback related to pupils' speaking performances?"	These questions are asked to gather the teachers' perspectives on formative assessment, what methods they use and how they believe formative assessment should be practiced for aiding pupils and furthering their competences in speaking English.

What are the teachers' perspectives on the role of formative assessment in influencing willingness to speak among pupils?	"How do you believe goal-setting influences pupils' willingness to speak English in class?" "How do you believe this kind of feedback can influence pupils' willingness to speak?" "How do you believe … (reflection made by the participant) influences willingness to speak among pupils?" "How do you believe this form of self-assessment influences willingness to speak?"	These questions were asked in relation to the teachers' beliefs about formative assessment in relation to speaking, often as follow-up questions to uncover how or if they believed the various formative assessment practices would increase willingness to speak among pupils.

Table 2. An overview of the thematic, research-based questions and questions asked in the interview. The questions were translated from Norwegian to English.

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

"Teachers' perceptions on the influence of formative assessment on willingness to speak in Norwegian EFL lower secondary pupils" ?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke læreres perspektiv, erfaringer og meninger om sammenhengen mellom formativ vurdering i Engelsk og elevers talevegring/villighet til å snakke muntlig Engelsk på skolen.

I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Dette er en masteroppgave gjort i sammenheng med grunnskolelærerutdanningen 5.-10. på OsloMet universitet. Formålet med prosjektet er å utforske læreres perspektiver og erfaringer om elevers talevegring/kommunikasjonsvillighet i Engelskfaget knyttet til formative vurderingspraksiser.

I engelskfaget står kommunikasjon og interaksjon som viktige elementer i opparbeidelsen av språkkompetanse i engelsk. Elever som vegrer seg for å snakke engelsk og/eller velger å ikke delta muntlig i timen vil kunne miste muligheten for å teste, utvikle og få erfaring med å kommunisere i Engelsk. Vi ønsker at elevene skal kunne oppleve at de kan bidra muntlig i klasserommet og utvikle sin kompetanse igjennom kommunikasjon. Hensikten med denne studien er å få innblikk i hva som kan gjøres for å redusere eventuell talevegring hos elevene for å øke muntlig aktivitet.

Igjennom prosjektet ønsker jeg å få innsyn i læreres meninger om rollen til formativ vurdering i utviklingen av muntlig kompetanse og hvordan dette kan praktiseres for å påvirke elevenes villighet til å kommunisere muntlig i Engelsk. Sammenhengen mellom formativ vurdering og talevillighet har ikke blitt forsket på i utbredt grad i Norge, dermed sees prosjektet som å være relevant for å skape bevissthet rundt temaet. Belysningen av temaet fra en kvalitativ synsvinkel har som hensikt i å bidra til forskning på talevegring/talevillighet i Engelskfaget.

Forskningsspørsmålet jeg skal undersøke er som følger:

«Hva slags rolle mener norske ungdomsskolelærere at formativ vurdering har i forhold til elevers talevillighet i Engelsk?»

Spørsmål knyttet til temaet omhandler:

«Hva er læreres erfaringer av å drive formativ vurdering av muntlige ferdigheter i Engelskfaget?»

«Hva er læreres erfaringer med talevegring blant elever i Engelskfaget?»

«Hva mener lærere er forholdet mellom formativ vurdering og utvikling av taleferdigheter i Engelsk?»

«Hva mener lærere er forholdet mellom formativ vurdering og elevers mulige talevegring i Engelsk?»

«Hvordan mener lærere at formativ vurdering burde praktiseres for å øke elevenes villighet til å snakke engelsk på skolen?»

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

OsloMet er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Du har blitt invitert til å delta i denne studien fordi prosjektet undersøker perspektiver og meninger fra engelsklærere som har erfaring med å undervise på ungdomsskolen. Jeg ser etter informanter som har erfaring med å undervise, veilede og vurdere elever i Engelskfaget.

Dine perspektiver, erfaringer og meninger er viktige for å belyse temaet, og det er bakgrunnen for at du har blitt utvalgt.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Dersom du deltar i denne studien, så vil du bli intervjuet i en periode på 45-60 minutter. Det vil bli stilt spørsmål til deg om dine erfaringer med undervisning i Engelsk knyttet til elevers muntlige ferdigheter, formativ vurdering og talevegring/talevillighet blant elevene dine.

Opplysningene som blir samlet om deg personlig er begrenset til hvilket klassetrinn du har undervist på og hvor lenge du har undervist i Engelskfaget.

Det vil bli gjort taleopptak og eventuelle notater under intervjuet. Taleopptaket vil bli transkribert og eventuelle personidentifiserende opplysninger vil bli utelatt fra transskripsjonen.

Det er frivillig å delta

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

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

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

Det er kun jeg, Tore Martin Austheim og min veileder Valeriy Tuyakov som har tilgang til opplysningene. For å sikre konfidensialiteten vil det gjøres tiltak for å hindre at uvedkommende får tak i dataen. Ditt navn og kontaktinformasjon vil erstattes med en kode og opplysningene knyttet til koden vil oppbevares kryptert og uavhengig av forskningsprosjektet. Lydinnspillingen gjøres igjennom

mobilappen «nettskjema – diktafon» som er en skybasert tjeneste som krypterer og lagrer dataen sikkert etter endt intervju. Etter at intervjuet er transkribert, vil lydinnspillingen bli slettet. Eventuelle personidentifiserbare opplysninger fra intervjuet vil anonymiseres i løpet av transkripsjonen.

Som deltaker vil du ikke kunne identifiseres eller gjenkjennes i publikasjonen av mastergradsoppgaven.

Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?

Prosjektet vil etter planen avsluttes 14.05.2023. Datamaterialet med personopplysninger vil bli slettet ved utgang av prosjektet.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

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

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:
- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger vi behandler om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om deg som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger

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

- Masterstudent: Tore Martin Austheim, E-post: s313373@oslomet.no, tlf; +47 993 99 080
- OsloMet ved Valeriy Tuyakov, E-post: valeriyt@oslomet.no, tlf; +47 672 36 974

- Vårt personvernombud: Ingrid S. Jacobsen, E-post: personvernombud@oslomet.no

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til Personverntjenester sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:
- Personverntjenester på epost (personverntjenester@sikt.no) eller på telefon: 53 21 15 00.

Med vennlig hilsen

Valeriy Tuyakov   *Tore Martin Austheim*
 (Veileder)   *(Student)*

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet *Teacher's perceptions on the influence of formative assessment on willingness to speak in Norwegian EFL lower secondary pupils*, og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- ☐ å delta i intervju
- ☐ at stemmen min blir spilt inn på lyd
- ☐ at Tore Martin Austheim kan bruke informasjonen hentet fra intervjuet til prosjektet sitt

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

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix 3: Assessment letter from SIKT

Sikt

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

Referansenummer	Vurderingstype	Dato
764507	Standard	15.02.2023

Prosjekttittel
"Teacher's perceptions on the influences of formative assessment on willingness to speak in Norwegian EFL lower secondary pupils"

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet / Fakultet for lærerutdanning og internasjonale studier / Institutt for grunnskole- og faglærerutdanning

Prosjektansvarlig
Valeriy Tuyakov

Student
Tore Martin Austheim

Prosjektperiode
23.01.2023 – 14.05.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger
Alminnelige

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

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 14.05.2023.

Meldeskjema ↗

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

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

Deltagerne/Informantene i prosjektet er lærere, og har taushetsplikt. Det er viktig at du/dere gjennomfører intervjuene og datainnsamlingen på en slik måte at det ikke registreres taushetsbelagte opplysninger. Vi anbefaler derfor at dere minner informantene om taushetsplikten før dere gjennomfører intervjuene.

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

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

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

Lykke til med prosjektet!