Connecting English learning in and out of school

Teacher beliefs, student perspectives and bridging activities in the English classroom

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Abstract

As Norwegian adolescents today continually increase their English learning out of school through technology and online use, it creates new ground for interpreting learning in sociocultural contexts. The aim of this study is to investigate teacher beliefs and student perspectives on English learning in and out of school. The over-arching research question of the study is: *What characterizes bridging activities in English lessons in two vocational classes?*

I order to answer my research question, I have employed three methods of inquiry, using data collected and made accessible through the VOGUE project: (i) a semi-structural interview with the teacher, (ii) video recordings in combination with my own observations of four double English lessons in two vocational classes at an upper secondary school, to see how *bridging activities* appear in the English lessons. Lastly, I investigate the four focus students' perspectives on their English learning in and out of school, through (iii) analysis of student surveys, logs outside school, and semi-structural student interviews.

The findings unveil an English teacher that actively wishes to engage in her students' interests out of school, and strategically connecting their English learning from out of school to her lessons. Through this, there is an increase in both student and teacher empowerment, and it opens up for learner autonomy in agency within the classroom. This is also shown in the classroom video material and through my observations. Furthermore, the teacher is found to encourage and facilitate for an environment where mucking around and exploring the English language increases their horizontal English learning, not only their vertical. The four focus students in the study are shown to have affiliations towards gaming, social media and entertainment out of school, dividing them into two categories based on their English use through these activities. Additionally, which category they belonged to, implied an effect of their English learning in school, further providing evidence of a stronger connection in the English learning in and out of school.

Implications for this master thesis are that there are many benefits to building the English lessons actively and strategically on the student's English competence from out of school. Additionally, mucking around can have positive effects to the class environment, and the threshold for speaking and engaging in discussions in English during the lessons.

Sammendrag

Norske ungdommer fortsetter å øke måten de lærer engelsk på utenfor skolen, gjennom teknologi og internett-bruk. Dette danner derfor et nytt grunnlag for å tolke læring i sosiokulturelle kontekster. Målet med denne masteravhandlingen er å undersøke lærerpraksis og elevers perspektiver på å lære engelsk i og utenfor skolen. Hovedproblemstillingen i oppgaven er: Hva karakteriserer koblende aktiviteter i engelsktimene til to yrkesfaglige klasser?

For å svare på problemstillingen, har jeg tatt i bruk tre metoder, der jeg benytter data som er samlet og gitt tilgang til gjennom VOGUE-prosjektet: (i) et semistrukturert intervju med den aktuelle læreren, (ii) videoopptak i kombinasjon med egne observasjoner av fire dobbelttimer i engelsk i to yrkesklasser på en videregående skole, for å se hvordan disse koblende aktivitetene kommer fram i engelsktimene. Videre undersøker jeg fire fokuselevers perspektiver på egen engelsklæring i og utenfor skolen, gjennom (iii) analyse av elevspørreskjema, logger fra utenfor skolen, og semistrukturerte elevintervjuer.

Funnene viser en engelsklærer som aktivt ønsker å engasjere seg i elevenes interesser utenfor skolen, og som strategisk kobler måtene de lærer engelsk på utenfor skolen, til timene sine. Gjennom dette vises det en økning i både elevenes og lærerens myndiggjøring, og det åpner opp for elevers autonomi og innflytelse over egen læring i klasserommet. Dette er også bekreftet i videoopptakene og gjennom egne observasjoner. Videre vises også læreren å oppmuntre og tilrettelegge for et klassemiljø hvor det å leke med og utforske det engelske språket utvider den horisontale engelsklæringen deres, ikke bare den vertikale. Det kommer fram at de fire fokuselevene i studien har tilhørighet til gaming, sosiale medier og underholdning utenfor skolen, som deler dem i to kategorier basert på engelskbruken gjennom disse aktivitetene. I tillegg indikerte kategorien de tilhørte en effekt på engelsklæringen deres i skolen, som igjen beviser en sterkere kobling i engelsklæringen i og utenfor skolen.

Implikasjonene for denne masteroppgaven tydeliggjør at det er mange fordeler med å aktivt og strategisk bygge engelsktimene på elevenes engelskkompetanse de har bygd utenfor skolen. I tillegg kan utforsking og lek ha positive effekter på klassemiljøet og terskelen for å snakke og engasjere seg i diskusjoner på engelsk i engelsktimene.

Acknowledgements

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1.0 Introduction

> Languages increasingly go online, and with English as the dominant online language, we are witness to adolescents entering and residing in a communicative space much richer in complexity than the traditional textbook can offer. […] designing technology-based activities conducive to learning English is found in the interaction between students, teacher(s) and digital resources. (Brevik, Lund, Skarpaas, Røkenes, 2020, pp. 56-58)

Learning English in a sociocultural context, no longer refers to the social conditions of mainly student–teacher interactions within the English classroom, nor does it refer mainly to the cultural conditions of the classroom and the school, and their inherent norms and rules. In this MA study, I argue that adolescents live a large part of their lives through technology; learning English largely through gadgets, and their online spaces are imperative for their contact with the society and culture surrounding them in these virtual spaces. I will even go so far as to state that the virtual spaces of adolescents today create fundamental conditions for how they observe and understand the world – through languages and artefacts that they identify with. There are both negative and positive sides to this, and society seems to be quite divided on the matter. However, I argue that if a teacher ignores or distances oneself from these online spaces and the cultures that have arisen from adolescents' online lives and use, they are really missing out; not only missing out on all the *fun*, but also on all *essentials*. Games, TV series, video clips, GIFs[1], memes[2], movies, streams, forums and wholesome cultures; the information and knowledge one can seek is limitless. Seeing these artefacts as resources and building upon them in the classroom, I believe will have numerous benefits for students and teachers alike.

This complex communicative space therefore constitutes the inspiration for my study, as I am not only interested in how teachers might facilitate for the students' languages and interests in the classroom, but also how adolescents interact with and *learn* English out of school. Their English competency, greatly developed because of their high amount of online use, inspired this study to a large degree. When I was given the opportunity to become part of the VOGUE research team gathering precisely these kinds of data from a group of adolescents seemingly very active in their online spaces outside of school, as well as their teacher's engagement in their out-of-school activities, I became motivated to write my MA study on exactly this topic.

[1] GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) is a graphic image format allowing for the creation of animations.
[2] A meme is an idea, behavior, or style that spreads by means of imitation from person to person within a culture and often carries symbolic meaning representing a particular phenomenon or theme (Wikipedia.en)

1.1 Context and relevance

The English subject in Norway undergoes a big transition. Firstly, due to the development of English in Norway over the last decades, and secondly, due to the new curriculum implemented in schools gradually starting this year (2020), English is part of a Norwegian context with adolescents as the focal point. The use of English in Norway today underscores how high the average proficiency is – particularly among adolescents. English didactic research has shown that English is more than a foreign language to them, in transition of becoming a second language as it might be part of their identity and feelings, reflecting who they are (Brevik & Rindal, 2020).

Both the current and the new curriculum underscore the relevance of English skills, whether oral, written, or digital skills (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [UDIR], 2017). The new curriculum introduces three core elements in English: Communication, language learning, and encounters with texts in English. UDIR states the relevance of the English subjects and its central values:

> Through working with the subject, the goal is for all students to be confident speakers of English, using English to learn, communicate and form new bonds with others. Knowledge about and an exploratory approach towards languages, patterns of communication, ways of living, mindsets and social conditions open up for new perspectives on the world and on oneself. (UDIR, 2020, my translation)

In comparison to the current English curriculum (UDIR, 2013), the new curriculum to a larger degree encourages students to become active learners of English, connecting their own learning of the language to the bigger picture, as well as being aware their own methods of language acquisition both in and outside of school. I therefore argue that within this context, teaching students how to connect their own English learning *out* of school to their learning *in* school, becomes an important aspect of the new English subject. The new core curriculum additionally states that school should "give students historical and cultural insight that will provide a good foundation in their lives and help each student to preserve and develop her or his identity in an inclusive and diverse environment" (UDIR, 2020, my translation). An "inclusive and diverse environment" is easily interpreted as a direct appeal to teachers to design their English classes into such a learning environment. Building their English lessons on how their students learn English out of school would then be a significant leap towards an environment of this kind. As this MA study focuses on these aspects - the bridging of adolescents' English learning in and out of school; involving teacher and student interaction, I believe the examination of such bridging has something to offer the new English subject

1.2 The VOGUE project

I was lucky enough to be invited by Lisbeth M. Brevik, Associate Professor and PhD coordinator at Department of Teacher Education and School Research at the University of Oslo, to become a team member in the VOGUE project (*Vocational and General students' Use of English in and out of school*). The VOGUE project combines data from more than 90 upper secondary schools in Norway, aiming to understand how languages are used differently in and out of school, both from qualitative and quantitative data, involving data collected in the classroom (video and screen recordings, student surveys and texts), outside the classroom (student and teacher interviews, teacher surveys), and from the students' lives outside of school (language logs, screen recordings). The VOGUE project's information page at the University of Oslo describes its aim as follows:

> VOGUE is a research project that follows upper secondary students over time to investigate their use of English in and out of school - specifically for online gaming, surfing the internet and social media use. Research ethics in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) is a particular focus, because student data are collected both inside and outside the classroom. (UiO, 2020)[3]

Through the VOGUE project, I was allowed to head a data collection team in September 2019. As a result, I was granted access to the data collection site in question, the participants and the data sources, as well as getting acquainted with GDPR to a large degree over the span of the data collection period.

1.3 Research questions

This MA study investigates how a teacher actively engages in and connects the online lives of adolescents to her English lessons, and the students' views on this connection and on their own English learning. From a unique set of primary data sources following the teacher and two of her English classes for three weeks, through not only their English lessons, but also the students' lives, habits and exposure to English *out* of school, I look at how the connection between English learning in and out of school is made. I argue that there is a need to examine how English teachers believe the implementation of English learning out of school could be executed in the classroom, and to learn about students' own perspectives on this implementation and on the development of their English competency. I will operationalize the term *bridging activities* (Thorne and Reinhardt, 2020) in my study, as these are activities that bridge and connect the

[3] http://www.uv.uio.no/ils/english/research/projects/vogue/index.html

two contexts of learning. Based upon the contextualization above, my overarching research question is: *What characterizes bridging activities in English lessons in two vocational classes?*

To answer the overarching research question, I have formulated three sub-questions:

RQ1: *What are the English teacher's beliefs regarding her students' English learning out of school, and the implementation of such learning?*

RQ2: *In what ways does the teacher implement and bridge students' use of English out of school in the English lessons?*

RQ3: *What are focus students' perspectives on their use of English in and out of school?*

The methods I have deployed in order to answer the overarching research question and the three sub-questions are (i) a qualitative teacher interview to answer RQ1, (ii) video recorded observation data to answer RQ2, and (iii) a combination of quantitative student surveys and language logs, and qualitative student interviews in order to answer RQ3. The participants in my study comprise one English teacher and the students in her two English classes. The two classes are both in the vocational programs at a large vocational upper-secondary school in Norway. From these two classes, four focus students were selected, in order to look at their perspectives on English use in and out of school, and in turn to answer RQ3. This quite small sample of my MA study might restrict its findings to have any significant effect in the English didactic field. However, as a mixed methods study, which has its main focus on the examination of student and teacher participants and following two classrooms over three weeks contributes with in-depth knowledge of what seems to be an English teacher's unique lesson design.

1.4 Thesis outline

Following this Introductory chapter 1, I present the theoretical framework and overview of relevant prior research, in chapter 2. In chapter 3, the methods I have deployed for gathering and analysing the data material, will be accounted for. In chapter 4, the findings of my study is presented, framed by theoretical concepts from chapter 2. In chapter 5, I discuss the findings in light of theory and prior research, followed by further didactical implications of my study. In the last chapter, chapter 6, I offer some concluding remarks and suggestions for further research.

2.0 Theory and prior research

In this chapter, the theoretical framework for my study and review of relevant prior research will be presented. Due to the focus on learning and development in different contexts, meaning English learning in and out of school, learning in a sociocultural context is applicable to the study. Thus, discussing Vygotsky's (1978) theory on learning and development comprises my first section (2.1). Here, I bring to light the zone of proximal development. Next, I connect Vygotsky's theoretical perspectives to Gee's (2017) more recent theory on teaching and learning in a high-tech world, in which he builds on Vygotsky's theory, towards language acquisition through online and digital use (section 2.2).

In this framing of English learning in and out of school, I start by addressing Gee's (2017) concepts of *affinity space* (2.2.1), *activity-based identities* (2.2.2), and *mucking around* (2.2.3), and consider how the application of these concepts to social contexts online and elsewhere might contribute to an understanding of how adolescents identify themselves as users and learners of English. I define English use out of school in terms of Sundqvist and Sylvén's (2016) *extramural English* (2.2.4). Acknowledging that languages increasingly go online, I then use Brevik's (2019a) three *language profiles* to categorize how activity-based identities in English connect to adolescents' use and learning of English out of school (2.2.5). Finally, in this section, Thorne and Reinhardt's (2008) notion of bridging activities are addressed and teacher beliefs on how to facilitate such bridging (2.2.6).

Lastly, there will be a section where I have conducted a review of prior research relevant for this study (2.3). Within a sociocultural framing of English learning in and out of school, it is of utmost importance to address research on adolescents' use of English outside school (2.3.1), including MA theses related to the subject of English didactics (2.3.2), before I conclude with the relevance of these studies for my study (2.3.3).

2.1 Sociocultural theory

Vygotsky (e.g., 1978) presented the argument that language is personal and at the same time a *social* human process involving interactions with others. He demonstrated that elements such as reflection and elaboration of experiences occur in the relationship between the individual and society as a dialectical process, which combines and separates different elements of human

life (Vygotsky, 1978). He did not view these positions as polarizations, but mediated and regulated through language. Language is developed in interaction with others, making his theory of language development relevant for my emphasis on learning in contexts both *in* and *out* of school. Vygotsky (1978), because he viewed learning as a social process, emphasized dialogue in these interactions, and the different roles that language plays in instruction and in mediated cognitive growth. Further, he underscored the role of *tools* in history as an important aspect of human development, as it mirrored human transformation of nature:

> The effect of tool use upon humans is fundamental not only because it has helped them relate more effectively to their external environment but also because tool use has had important effects upon internal and functional relationships within the human brain. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 133).

Tools, in this context, thus signify two meanings – language, as the language is something humans use in their comprehension and processing of their environment, and artifacts, in this context the computer and online resources – as they mirror the external environment of contemporary culture and society, in addition to history.

Brevik (2015) builds on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, arguing that as learners in a classroom, students that are actively participating in the learning environment will mediate the knowledge they are processing and public meaning-making to his or her individual consciousness, and so reposition themselves within the practices they face. According to Brevik (2015), Vygotsky emphasized that the language learner is not passive, nor receptive of knowledge – he or she actively engages in the task, which in turn allows them to "relate the public meaning-making to their personal experiences and interests" (p. 23). In relation to such integration of knowledge and development of language, Vygotsky's concepts of internalization and externalization are relevant. Whereas the process of *internalization* is a criterion for becoming an *active learner* in a social context, *externalization* occurs when the learner, from their prior knowledge and understanding, recognizes an opportunity to act (Brevik, 2015). Being an active learner does however not denote that a student has the sole responsibility for their learning – it means the teacher in the Vygotskian classroom designs a learning environment where students can be actively involved, giving them tools to use that enables their learning (Claxton, 2007). These processes are part of the mediation process, meaning that a child's language development happens first in a social context, then individually, where the learners processes the input of the artifact before producing language themselves (Lantolf et al. 2015).

Vygotsky's argument that the most important forms of human cognitive activity develop through interaction, often in social environments, emphasize the importance of instruction and mediation (Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner, 2015). Lantolf (2000) argued that the role of mediation is to establish the contact between an individual and the surrounding world. Lantolf et al. (2015) suggest computers as an example of material artefacts that mediate learning, as well as physiological and symbolic tools, such as language and literacy. These artifacts act as a buffer between a person and the environment – they *mediate* the relationship between the individual and the social-material world (Lantolf et al., 2015). Drawing this perspective back to Vygotsky's (1978) argument on *"*the effect of the tool through human history and development*"* (p. 133), indicate that both language and computers act as material artifacts – and therefore as tools that help *regulate* a person in different environments. According to Lantolf et al. (2015), the concept of *other-regulation* describes mediation by people, and how the concept of high *self-regulation* can be the process of a learner's greater voluntary control over thought and action, as well as becoming more proficient in using a language. They argue that if a person is proficient in a language, they are also self-regulated to a higher degree within the use of that language as a tool in social-material environments.

Vygotsky (1978) focused on development, and therefore also on how the mediational process can be developed with assistance from someone or something else. According to Lantolf (2000), this mediational process might be an instructor of sort; however, it might also be the integration of an artifact. Such assistance, however, is easily available in the classroom. Vygotsky stated that for any mediation to result in development in the individual, it must be sensitive to the individual's own *zone of proximal development (ZPD)*, presented in Figure 2A:

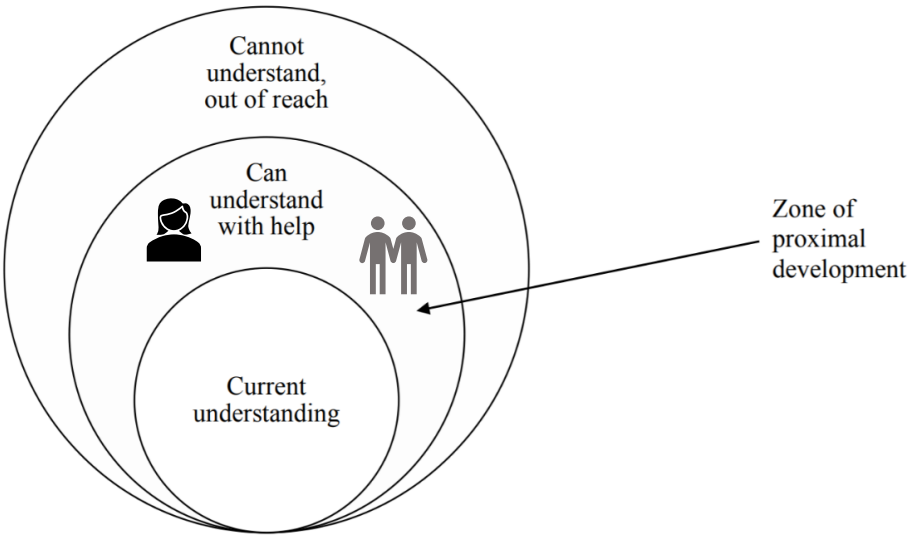

Figure 2A: A model of ZPD, based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978, p. 86).

In Vygotsky's (1978) definition, the ZPD is the "distance between the actual development level in independent problem solving, and the level of potential development determined through problem solving with adult guidance or collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Drawing on Vygotsky's theory of ZPD, Lantolf (2000) underscores the role of others:

> The ZPD is an extremely fruitful concept for understanding and more accurately assessing the full extent of development of an individual or group. It claims that if all we know about individual or group performance is what can be done without assistance, we only know part of the picture. (Lantolf, 2000, p. 80)

Based on the importance of more competent others, it is clear the ZPD takes place in a social context, where the individual receives assistance in some form. The concept of the ZPD underscores the role of an experienced learner, functioning as the fundament for learning in a social context (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, due to the view of learning as rooted in social processes, the ZPD emphasizes dialogue and language as part of the process from current understanding, to something understood with help from more experienced peers, or a teacher. Figure 2A illustrates this social relationship, with peers (in grey) and the teacher (in black) placed within the ZPD. This social relationship illustrates the process of development – as the teacher and peers represent the more experienced other, helping the students develop from their current understanding and into the ZPD, where they can understand with help.

In relation to my MA study, where English learning in and out of school is the main focus, the ZPD brings to light the importance of continuous dialogue between the students and the teacher. It can be challenging to adapt any teaching situation to all students in a classroom, aiming to help them develop within the ZPD. Therefore, to develop their students' English competence, the teachers should not only be concerned with identifying their students' strengths and weaknesses when it comes to English learning, but also each individual student's developmental potential. In turn, the English teacher also needs to identify where each student's ZPD is, and how to draw them towards it (Hedegaard, 2005; Lyons, 1984).

Vygotsky's (1978) view of learning in social contexts is relevant for this study, as it constitutes a theoretical framework for analysis concerning how to understand the learning of English. I argue that the Vygotskian concept of the *active learner* plays an important role in how I view the fundamentals of English learning, as this is something exhibited not only in the classroom, but also in adolescents' spare time. The *ZPD* is one of the theoretical lenses used within this framework. I look at what artefacts might be relevant and who the more experienced other

might be, to help draw the English learner into the ZPD. Within the context of English learning in school, both the teacher and peers, as well as the teacher's instruction and teaching that might help the students enter the ZPD. In the context of English learning out of school, it is however less certain who or what the experienced learner might constitute. In my study, I analyze both these contexts. In the next sections, I will therefore look in more detail into what constitutes English learning out of school, where I develop the theoretical foundation for data analysis of my study. I also look at how teachers might bridge these two contexts – English learning in and out of school – to increase the students' English learning.

2.2 Teaching and learning in a high-tech world

Since Vygotsky's sociocultural theory centers around the role of *tools* in learning, and since tools can be both language and material artifacts used by humans to regulate the environment surrounding them, I draw on tools as an analytical lens in my study. Thus, language as a tool acts as something that an English learner will adapt and adjust to their audience and situation, and for instance, the computer will then also become a tool for a learner to regulate the environment and their own learning. In this section, I discuss how Gee (2017) interprets and makes use of Vygotsky's theoretical framework. Gee (2017) offers a contemporary lens on the mediation of language, and how a language learner might use material artifacts such as computers as tools for regulating the environment around them. He argues that online language use can enhance language acquisition, and that the use of a computer mediates and regulates humans' internalization of the environment. In Gee's (2017) interpretation of Vygotsky's theory, he gives examples of learning within the ZPD, such as "socialization within families, and communities, parenting, laboratories" (2017, p. 84), including what he names *distributed teaching and learning systems* as examples of learning in the ZPD. He emphasizes how the ZPD can be reached through affinity spaces and activity-based identities, while mucking around in and out of school, in line with interests and language profiles.

2.2.1 Affinity spaces

Young people that have gained an affiliation with something, such as an online game or fan fiction, can join interest-driven collaborative groups, often on the Internet (Gee, 2017). He calls the spaces where gamers or fans find each other, *affinity spaces*, as these spaces invite an affiliation with, for instance, gamers and gaming, and people can come to them and experience

a shared interest for gaming. Like physical space he says, "the affinity spaces can be mapped out and labelled, they are nested into one another, and they constitute the geography of development" (Gee, 2017, p. 120). A person developing an affiliation with something will move between different spaces, both digital and physical ones. Here, he builds upon his own experiences, as he himself developed towards someone having a strong affiliation towards the gaming culture, and he discusses how he moves between different affinity spaces where he meets and interacts with people that share the same interest and perhaps even passion for the subject of gaming (Gee, 2017). For gamers specifically, their gaming room at home is an affinity space connected and nested into the many interest-driven sites where they discuss and learn. The gaming rooms of friends, LAN-parties, gaming stores and conventions are just a few of the affinity spaces gamers move between (Gee, 2017). This concept is particularly relevant for my MA study, as I investigate how adolescents move around online, and how, through these affinity spaces, they are exposed to English.

These affinity spaces are sites or forums where participants of specific communities can offer and receive guidance and instruction from one another. Typically, the people offering instructions and guidance are what Vygotsky would define as "more capable peers", having a larger repertoire of experience, knowledge and time used on the different artefacts or sites. These people will also, according to Gee (2017), often incorporate the norms and values surrounding their common interests, named *judgement systems*, into these affinity spaces. Thus, he offers another view of the type of interaction someone can involve themselves in to learn and develop mediation within the ZPD; arguing that adolescents *do* learn by simply visiting and maneuvering these sites and spaces online, whether chatting or reading. This in turn, will lead to being influenced by the norms, values and skills of the peers that they interact with in these spaces. Ultimately, the sites also teach them self-evaluation on how to approach and develop their competence, and if they choose to utilize the sites enough and over a longer time span.

Gee (2017) connects the judgement systems that learners meet online, through distributed teaching and learning systems, to the judgement systems people meet through social interaction. He states that, within the guidance and instruction of actions the learner cannot yet do on their own, "the adult will impose their interpretations, values and norms onto the child by modeling and using them in the cooperative action" (Gee, 2017, p. 85). This process will act as an internalization that occur over time for the learner, from the social context over to the individual context (Lantolf et al., 2015). The process is what Gee (2017) refers to as a socialization or a

colonization, and it happens within the classroom as well, when the teacher gives instruction and guidance to the students, constituting the classic version of ZPD.

In Gee's (2017) version of ZPD, occurring virtually and physically, the distributed teaching and learning systems, "make teaching ubiquitous as the teaching and learning are no longer restricted to schools and classrooms" (p. 87). This is due to several reasons, one of them being how teaching and learning are organized here – there is not only one mentor or teacher on these sites, but for different activities and skills, different people and sites can be approached. Across affinity spaces, these act as *surrogate teachers* and mentors (Gee, 2017), ultimately replacing the classic concept of the one-on-one interaction between a teacher and a student in school with interaction through a screen, often outside of school. These sites also distribute knowledge and transforms it, and Gee (2017) states the inefficiency of distributing knowledge in classrooms in comparisons to these sites, as the classroom is often not part of the affinity spaces that "owns" the knowledge being taught. These sites might, however, do so and the access to them are therefore consequential, as they contain tacit knowledge (Gee, 2017).

2.2.2 Activity-based identities

Gee (2017) states that relational identities are often imposed on or assigned to people, in terms of classifications (such as gender, sexuality, age, religion). Relational identities, therefore, do not apply to affinity spaces at all. A person visiting certain affinity spaces and developing an affiliation with them, will over time form an *identity* leaning towards the specific interest, according to Gee (2017). He explains this with reference to gamers and fans, which he argues are activity-based identities, not relational identities. This identity is then connected to the interests of the individual, by free choice, and is what Gee (2017) labels an *activity-based identity.* This type of identity is not something that defines a person from within, however, it is unstable and flexible:

> Such identities change in history as groups change their activities, norms, values, or standards. Some activity-based identities go out of existence and new ones arise. Activity-based identities are for people to identify with something outside themselves, something that other people do and are (Gee, 2017, p. 105).

Gee (2017) draws further on activity-based identities when discussing development – in terms of cognition, feeling and valuing. He considers activity-based identities to be a connection with social groups who share an affinity in the same activities and values. He states that, "activity-based identities are another form of collective intelligence, perhaps the most important form in

today's world" (Gee, 2017, p. 90), and argues that when a person takes on an activity-based identity, they are part of a network of people who develop and transform ways to do certain things and solve certain sorts of problems effectively. Finally, Gee (2017) emphasizes that activity-based identities not only involve entertainment, but also learning and teaching practices (for instance watching YouTube tutorials) both in the virtual world and in the physical world, and will be stronger through the experience of mucking around.

2.2.3 Mucking around

Gee (2017) introduces the concept of mucking around to emphasize the importance for a learner to be allowed to spend time – or *muck around* – as part of second language acquisition. He connects this concept to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory on how *play* will mediate development, describing how teachers might be successful in their instruction and teaching in the classroom, when encouraging students to try, and fail, and try again. However, Gee (2017) argues that this process is exactly what happens outside the classroom, when adolescents spend time in their affinity spaces, developing their activity-based identities. Here he leans towards Goto's (2003) theory on *horizontal learning,* underscoring the importance of allowing a learner of a second language time to "explore the lay of the land, try out various possibilities and taking risks, without worrying about ratcheting up a skill tree" (2017, p. 43). He further states how a learner then will be ready on their own account to increase their skills, in this context within language learning, arguing how schools tend to forget about this, instead stressing vertical skills in the student's development. Vertical skills are defined as learning being developed by reaching levels upwards in regard to knowledge acquired (Goto, 2003).

In relation to the development of a child's talk, Gee (2017) exemplifies horizontal learning with what he calls *nurturing experimental talk,* emphasizing how children learn to think and reflect on experiences through nurture and interaction with adults, and how children and adults build conversation through reflection and emotional thinking. Adolescents can also expand their experiences and play through talk, texts and media, for instance through different sites on the internet and online video games. Gee (2017) argues that when instructors and adults integrate these virtual experiences, "they engage in one of the most crucial aspects of child development" (p. 48). Moreover, when adolescents have experiences that are mindful and focused, these meet one of the criteria that Gee (2017, p. 20) refers to as a *+experiences*:

1. The learner must have an action to take in the experience, such as having a goal or an expectation to fulfill
2. The learner must emotionally care about the outcome of the experience
3. The learner must have someone or something to help them know what to pay attention to in order to carry out the action successfully

If these criteria are met and experienced, the experience will ultimately, according to Gee (2017), contribute to learning and development. Using the notion of horizontal learning in the classroom by allowing students time to muck around could help, "involve teachers and mentors designing good +experiences and meaningful play opportunities for the child, allowing time for horizontal learning at each level of learning, and lots of nurturing experiential dialogic talk with adults or more advanced peers" (Gee, 2017, p. 47), thus echoing what adolescents experience when using English based on their interests.

2.2.4 Extramural English

I use the term *extramural English*, as this offers opportunities for categorizing the amount and quality of English use and exposure out of school. The term *extramural* has been used since the 19th century, meaning "outside the walls" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). More recently, Sylvén (2006) framed the use of English outside the school environment as *extramural exposure to English,* and Sundqvist (2009) later proposed the term *extramural English*, meaning the English adolescents encounter outside the classroom. Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) argue that such contact with English is not initiated by the teacher or any kind of mentor or English instructor, but must be "initiated by the learners themselves" (p. 6). Extramural English is used to refer to a range of activities in English outside school, including watching movies and series, listening to music, reading books, blogs or news online, and producing written or oral texts.

To illustrate how adolescents, spend time in front of screens when not at school, they introduced the extramural English house. In this house, the first floor consists of rooms with activities such as watching TV, listening to music, and watching films. The second floor consists of rooms where activities such as reading English books and gaming online occur (Figure 2B):

Figure 2B: The extramural English house (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 139)

They argue that it takes effort and higher English competency to climb up the stairs towards the second floor and partake in activities here, in comparison to the first floor, which involves passive and receptive activities and is available for anyone (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). They do, however, suggest that English use might be active on the first floor, for example through singing or acting out scenes from movies or series. Active and passive learning are therefore key concepts of how adolescents learn from activities in the extramural English house (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). They underscore how previously, the access to English was more similar among adolescents, composing a more homogenous classroom in the way how different students within a classroom learnt English. The teacher was the one in almost sole control of students' access to English learning and English input, therefore also constituting the main English influence for many adolescents. Today, however, there is a significant difference, in seeing how much students engage in extramural English activities at home and elsewhere – learning English through different channels, different affinity spaces and different activities (2016).

2.2.5 Three language profiles

Using a sociocultural framing to the learning of languages, Brevik (2019a) has identified three language profiles among adolescents, relating to their English use outside of school – namely gamers, surfers, and social media users (see also Brevik, Garvoll, & Ahmadian, 2020, p. 196):

> *Gamers*: Predominantly boys who identify as frequent gamers due to their online gaming (typically three to eight hours per day). They use mainly English to read and respond to in-game instructions and

> to participate in oral and written chat with a network of Gamers. On their own or with others, they engage in quests, solve problems, and learn gaming strategies (e.g., YouTube tutorials).
>
> *Surfers*: Predominantly boys – but also some girls – who are moderate gamers (less than three hours per day) and who identify as internet Surfers due to the extensive amount of time they spend online to find authentic sources of information, mainly in English (e.g., YouTube instructions), actively surfing looking for opportunities to use English.
>
> *Social Media Users*: Predominantly girls who are non-gamers (but typically have gamed before) and identify as Social Media Users due to their engagement with English through social media platforms and media-service providers (e.g. Netflix), binge-watching several episodes of a series in one sitting.

Drawing parallels between Brevik's (2019a) language profiles and Gee's (2017) notion of activity-based identities, this means that gamers are "into" gaming, identify themselves as gamers, and are recognized by other gamers as a gamer. They are labelled gamers not only because they know about gaming, but because they game themselves, to such an extent that they identify as gamers. Then there are other adolescents who love gaming as a voluntary activity, but who do not identify as a real gamer. According to Brevik (2019a), these might be surfers, who sometimes game but who spend more time on other activities, and who – if they wanted to – could commit more time to gaming and be a real gamer, or who might have done so in the past, but now prioritize other activities over gaming. These adolescents might identify as surfers because of what they do on the Internet, for instance, a shared belief in the value of authentic information, or they might identify as social media users, because they share an interest in various types of social media engagement, such as binge-watching of TV series (Brevik, 2019a). The language profiles are research-based explanations by adolescents themselves, concerning the role of interest and their extensive use of the English technology and other English tools in their spare time. In Brevik's discussion of these profiles, she first and foremost underscores the importance of individual differences within the use of English activities outside of school to explain the variety of proficiency in English reading and literacy, as well as adolescents' interest for English. As I investigate differences among adolescents' use of and exposure to English in and out of school, I use these profiles as an analytical lens, as the individual differences among them are highly relevant for my study. Moreover, they form an interesting backdrop for how to bridge adolescents' activity-based identities outside school with English instruction in the classroom.

2.2.6 Teacher beliefs in regard to bridging activities

Within the sociocultural framing of students' English learning in and out of school, teacher beliefs on how to facilitate for possible connections between these contexts, become important. Teacher beliefs – or teacher awareness – are two terms addressed in this MA study, as I investigate how the English teacher views the bridging of these contexts. Relating this to teacher empowerment, I draw on the concept of bridging activities (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008), which might act as opportunities to increase a teacher's sense of empowerment and professionalism (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005), as well as learner autonomy and agency among the students in the classroom.

Several studies have found teachers to have an influential role in educational processes (Borg, 2006; Calderhead, 1996; Carter, 1990). However, as digital competence plays a larger role in education, teachers also affect how students learn English and by developing their digital competence in English, language as social practice is highly relevant for teachers (Brevik, Lund, Skarpaas, & Røkenes, 2020). Teacher beliefs about such practices will therefore influence their instruction, practice, and digital teaching. Borg (2006) brought forward teacher cognition as an aspect related to the terms of teacher beliefs and awareness, stating that similar labels might be used in the lack of a shared terminological framework. This is confirmed by Kagan (1990), who stated teacher cognition can imply everything from

> teachers' interactive thoughts during instruction; thoughts during lesson planning; implicit beliefs about students, classrooms, and learning; reflections about their own teaching performance; automatized routines and activities that form their instructional repertoire; and self-awareness of procedures they use to solve classroom problems. (Kagan, 1990, p. 420)

In line with this understanding, the focus of my study is to deploy and operate the expression *teacher beliefs* and connect it to how it may affect the practice of connecting students' English learning in and out of school, if they know their students well (Brevik & Rindal, 2020). Research has found that teachers' beliefs usually reflect "the nature of instruction that the teachers provide in practice" (Kagan, 1992, p. 78). Further, she states that teacher beliefs can be defined as unexpressed and often unconsciously held assumptions or speculations regarding their students, classrooms, teaching methods and practices (Kagan, 1992). Teachers seem to obtain ideas from practice rather than theory, both in their own and their fellow teachers' practices (Zahorik, 1987). Additionally, Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) argue that teachers might increase their students' sense of empowerment, with the help of building on their student's interests (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). Learning more about their students' background, interests and English exposure outside school, the teacher becomes empowered. Students'

activities outside school are no longer unknown territory, but something a teacher can build on in his or her lessons, teaching material and assignments (Brevik, 2019a; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). A known method in practice is *critical participatory looping*, where the teacher actively uses reported students' interests and English use outside school as a fundament for group and plenary feedback (Murphey & Falout, 2010). Additionally, students become empowered when teachers acknowledge their interests and activities out of school by making them aware of this importance also within the classroom (Brevik, 2019a). This is done via mapping learner interests, meaning the teacher can deploy different methods, such as interviews, written assignments or language logs or dairies to get an overview of their students interests outside school, their English use, their digital use, and so forth (Brevik, 2019a; Murphey & Falout, 2010; Sundqvist and Sylvén, 2016).

Thorne and Reinhardt (2008) defined a model where teachers might successfully build on their students' interests out of school and digital-vernacular expertise, and develop and increase their awareness of informal digital language conventions as *bridging activities*. Such practices involve teachers analyzing language conventions to bridge classroom activity with the wider world of mediated language use. They deployed bridging activities as a pedagogical model for meeting advanced language competence developed through online use, such as instant messaging and synchronous chat, blogs and wikis, remixing, and multiplayer online gaming. Their model is relevant for this study, in referring to analyses of classroom teaching:

1. to improve understanding of both conventional and internet-mediated text genres, emphasizing the concept that specific linguistic choices are associated with desired social-communicative actions;
2. to raise awareness of genre specificity (why certain text types work well for specific purposes) and context-appropriate language use;
3. to build metalinguistic, metacommunicative, and analytic skills that enable lifelong learning in the support of participation in existing and future genres of plurilingual and transcultural language use;
4. to bridge toward relevance to students' communicative lives outside of the classroom; and
5. to increase student agency in relation to the choice, content and stylistic specifics of the texts contributing to the language learning process.

Thorne and Reinhardt (2008, p. 566)

According to Thorne and Reinhardt (2008), the ultimate goal of bridging activities is to "foster critical awareness of the anatomy and functional organization of a wide range of communicative practices relating to both digital and analogue textual conventions" (p. 567). By successfully implementing bridging activities in the classroom, teachers will not only enhance students' English learning, but also their digital competence and their English learning *through* digital competence, in line with Brevik et al.'s (2020) account of how teachers' professional digital competence influences teaching. The notion of bridging activities contributes to the Vygotskian classroom, where students are active learners – actively engaging in the task, which in turn allows them to "relate the public meaning-making to their personal experiences and interests" (Brevik, 2015, p. 23). Bridging activities that help link classroom teaching to students' existing competence and their interests out of school, thus opens up for *internalization* and *externalization* (Vygotsky, 1978).

2.3 Review of prior research

In this section, I present prior research that have inspired this MA study. These are studies relevant for English learning, primarily regarding adolescents' use of English outside school (2.3.1), and MA studies examining adolescents' perspectives on their language identities (2.3.2). Acknowledging that Scandinavian adolescents have high competence in English, and that this situation sets them apart from most other countries concerning English use (Rindal, 2020), I have chosen to focus on Scandinavian research to limit the scope of my review.

2.3.1 Studies on English use outside school

In the Norwegian context, Brevik, Olsen, and Hellekjær (2016) conducted a pioneering study that provided insight into more than 10,000 upper secondary school students' reading proficiency across English and Norwegian (16-17 years old). They examined whether there was a connection between reading proficiency in the two languages – and if the latter had an effect on the former. Their findings suggested a significant relationship between students' reading proficiency in these languages. In a follow-up study, Brevik and Hellekjær (2018) sampled participants from the previous study and identified a group of 463 students with the unusual combination of being poor readers in the first language (Norwegian), but good readers in the second language (English). They analysed the participants' reading proficiency, strategy use, and interest in the English language, finding that these adolescents used relevant reading strategies and reported high interest in English.

Based on these studies, Brevik initiated the VOGUE project in 2015, in order to further investigate the connection between upper secondary students' reading comprehension and their use of English outside school. In the first case study, Brevik (2016) found that five focus students, boys only, proved to be more proficient readers in English than Norwegian, and also acknowledged higher motivation for the English school subject compared to the Norwegian school subject. Combining reading tests results, a survey and interviews, all five selected English as their preferred language out of school, and argued that their English proficiency was a result of extensive online gaming. Brevik (2016 thus developed the Gamer profile. In the second case study, Brevik (2019a) combined reading test results, surveys, language logs, interviews and focus groups among 21 upper secondary students. She confirmed the findings in the previous study (Brevik, 2016) and identified three language profiles, based on their use of English outside school; Gamers, Surfers and Social Media Users. An important finding concerned the difference between genders and their use of English while carrying out different English activities outside of school. Whereas the social media users comprised predominantly girls, gamers and surfers comprised predominantly boys. Brevik (2019a) also reported findings that suggest these adolescents saw their high proficiency in English as not being developed in the classroom; instead, they developed their competence based on English activities outside of school – predominantly for online gaming with a network of gamers.

In Sweden, Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) have investigated the use of extramural English among students in primary and lower secondary school. They also found that digital gaming played a more prominent role for English learning than other types of activities (see also Sundqvist, 2009, 2011). Their findings centered around the connection between digital gaming and vocabulary development, and they argue that this type of extramural English activities were more conducive to English learning in comparison to other activities, e.g. TV series and movies, and listening to music. They also investigated oral proficiency among lower secondary students, which is relevant to my study. They found a significant correlation between amount of extramural English activities, oral performance, and vocabulary proficiency. Sundqvist and Wikström (2015) also investigated Swedish lower secondary learners, and how gaming out of school affected vocabulary proficiency. They deployed data sources such as language diary, questionnaires, student texts, vocabulary tests and grades, dividing the participants into non-gamers, moderate gamers, and frequent gamers. They found that the frequent gamers, used more advanced English words in their texts and received higher grades in English, compared to the other two groups.

Although these are Swedish studies, the results can be compared to the Norwegian studies referenced above, due to a shared high English proficiency among Scandinavian adolescents (Rindal, 2020). The identified connection between the use of English in and out of school make the reviewed studies highly relevant for my study.

2.3.2 MA studies examining students' language identities

Although few Norwegian studies have examined students' language identities (for an exception, see Brevik, 2019a), two MA studies are relevant in this respect. Both studies were part of the VOGUE project, and both studied the connection between upper secondary students' use of English in and out of school (Ahmadian, 2018; Garvoll, 2017).

In Garvoll's MA study (2017), she studied five focus students' English use in and out of school, who were part of a voluntary reading project at their vocational school. She used a portion of the data collected for Brevik's (2019a) study. Over four months, she followed the five focus students though their daily use of English in the reading project at school and outside of school, combining test results, surveys, language logs, focus groups, and interviews. The participants' confirmed Brevik's (2016) prior findings of the importance of using English for online gaming to develop English reading proficiency. In addition to their use of English for social media activities, listening to music, watching TV series and movies, reading the news and other texts online, and gaming, she found that their voluntary use of English included the reading of books at school, through the reading project in which they participated. Based on these findings, she confirmed Brevik's (2016) Gamer profile, and her findings indicated additional profiles that were tentatively labelled the Surfer and the Social Media *Consumer*, which along with Brevik's research contributed to the development of language profiles as analytical tools.

In another MA thesis, Ahmadian (2018) further investigated the language profiles among ten female vocational students. She combined classroom observations, student interviews and language logs, and examined whether there was a connection between the way in which the girls in three different vocational classes used English out of school, and how and to what degree they spoke English during English lessons. She found that there was a close relationship between oral activity in English lessons and their use of English outside of school. She found patterns in line with Brevik's (2019a) research regarding the language profiles; tentatively

labelled the Surfer and Social Media *Prosumer*, which contributed an important nuance to Brevik's (2019a) Surfer profile, namely that girls also identify with this profile. Another contribution was the connection between oral activity and English use out of school. As I apply Brevik's (2019a) language profiles to my study, these MA studies are highly relevant.

2.3.3 Relevance for my study

In this chapter, my aim has been to show that Vygotsky's (1978) theory regarding learning in a sociocultural context underscores how language can be used as tools, in learning how to regulate one's environment, and how dialogue and social interaction constitute learning and development. In my study, it is therefore important to investigate how language functions as a tool for the teacher in the English classroom and for the focus students in my study. It is also relevant to examine how students learn through the social context of virtual and physical realities. Of particular relevance for my study are the concepts of *teacher beliefs* (Kagan, 1990; Borg, 2006), *affinity space*, *activity-based identities*, and *mucking around* (Gee, 2017), *extramural English* (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016), *language profiles* (Brevik, 2019a) and *bridging activities* (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008) all are important analytical lenses for my study.

Firstly, I am interested in identifying the teacher's reported beliefs regarding the bridging of students' English use in and out of school. In this endeavor, I will mainly draw on the concept of *teacher beliefs*; aiming to analyze how her teacher beliefs might affect teaching design concerning students' interests and their use of English across contexts.

Secondly, I am interested in examining instructional practices in classroom video recordings, explicitly looking for connections between students' English use across contexts. Here, I will operate the concept of *bridging activities* in analyzing the teacher practices and instruction. In addition, observing the conversations in the classroom opens up for consideration of the concept of *mucking around*.

Thirdly, I am interested in studying the connection between students' reported English use outside of school and their actual use of English in the classroom. It is therefore crucial to use the concepts of *affinity space*, *activity-based identities*, *extramural English* and *language profiles*, aiming to analyze how students learn English in and out of school.

I will elaborate on the methodological choices I utilize in the following chapter.

3.0 Methodology

In this chapter, I will present the methodology that I have deployed in order to answer my overarching research question: *What characterizes bridging activities in English lessons in two vocational classes?* First, I present the VOGUE project, which my study is part of (3.1), before I describe the research design I have chosen (3.2). Then, I present the sample and the sampling procedures I used in the selection of participants (3.3). Next, I address the data collection procedures and the data material (3.4), before I outline the data analysis (3.5). Last, research credibility and ethics will be discussed (3.6).

3.1 VOGUE project

I was invited to become part of the VOGUE research project in 2019, through the MA course EDID4102 – English in and out of school, a subject for students taking their master's degree in English didactics at the University of Oslo. The VOGUE project was initiated in 2015 by the project leader, Lisbeth M Brevik, aiming to investigate vocational students' use of English in and out of school, specifically for online gaming, surfing the internet and social media use. The research team has collected both large-scale data and case study data, and for the school year 2019–20, Brevik initiated a new case study. Drawing on prior VOGUE studies (Brevik, 2016, 2019a; Brevik, Olsen & Hellekjær, 2016; Brevik & Hellekjær, 2018), Brevik sampled a large vocational school with a wide range of study programs. The study received approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), and all participants provided written informed consent. Brevik recruited two newly educated teachers who taught two English classes each. All four classes were selected by Brevik for participation, and most students were willing to participate. During the school year 2019–20, the VOGUE research team followed the four classes in two grades (vg1 and vg2, ages 16-18), and collected qualitative data (observation, video and screen recording, student work, student and teacher interviews), and quantitative data (surveys, logs, test scores and grades) in and outside of school.

My role as part of the VOGUE project was as responsible for the team collecting data in the two vg2 classes in the autumn of 2019. Prior to the data collection, all members of the VOGUE data collection team signed consent forms agreeing to strict confidentiality regarding the project. My particular responsibility concerned data collection through classroom observation,

collection of video recordings from English lessons and student surveys. As team leader for the data collection in the two classes, I was responsible for storing the video recording equipment, finding available rooms for interviews, bringing the data from the school to the Teaching Learning Video Lab (TLVlab) at the University on a daily basis, immediately after the data was collected, as well as being the primary contact for the other MA students who were part of the vg2 team. These two classes subsequently became the sample from which I selected the participants for my own MA study. Thus, I have chosen to focus on the two vg2 classes that I followed and the data that I was responsible for collecting. In addition, I have included student and teacher interviews, to capture rich information about students' use of English in and outside school.

3.2 The research design

For my MA study, I have chosen a *mixed methods* (MM) research design, including quantitative data (student surveys), and qualitative data (student and teacher interviews, student logs, classroom observation and video recordings). I highly value the teacher's beliefs and the students' perceptions of both themselves and the English classes they partake in, as this constitute a major part of my research question. I therefore find that Alise and Teddlie's (2010) and Creamer's (2016) analysis of prevalence towards MM research design in the educational field aligns well with the reason for my choice of method. Creamer (2016) finds that "it is an approach more likely to be utilized in applied disciplines, like education and the health fields, that value perceptions of patients or clients, than in «pure» fields that are more theoretically driven" (p. 2). Below is Table 3A presenting an overview of the research design:

Table 3A. Overview of the research design for my MA study

Research question	**Research design points of mixing**	**Data material**	**Data analysis**	**Analytical concepts (Full overview in 3.5)**
What characterizes bridging activities in English lessons in two vocational classes?	Mixed methods design. Mixing during data collection, data analysis and drawing conclusions	*Quantitative data*: Student surveys *Qualitative data*: Teacher interview Video recording Observation	Direct content analysis of surveys, interviews and video recordings	1: Accommodations for language learning 2: Connections to personal experiences 3: Classroom discourse 4: Mucking around

		Student interviews Language logs		

Table 3A offers a brief overview of my research question connected to the research design and methods I deploy, as well as the data material and analysis I have used to answer the main research question, including analytical concepts. As indicated in Table 3A, the MM approach was used to answer my research question, through mixing at three points in time; first, mixing at data collection, then mixing during the analysis of the data, as I collate the answers from the teacher interview and the video recordings and, and position them to the student surveys, logs and student interviews, and finally mixing during the process of drawing conclusions (Creamer, 2016). These points of mixing will be elaborated in the data material section (3.4) in the data analysis (3.5), and the research credibility section (3.6).

My first unit of analysis is teacher beliefs of own practice and instruction. My second unit of analysis is the classroom instruction, and my third unit of analysis is language use among adolescents; specifically, their language use across contexts, both at school and outside of school. I was interested in observing their actual language use as well as their reported language use, and comparing these sources of information. For this reason, I selected the teacher interview to get insight into the teacher's beliefs regarding her teaching design and practice, and the video recordings to observe how she implemented her beliefs in the classroom. I also selected the student surveys, logs and interviews to collect information about the students' reported language use, and comparing these data sources with the video recordings and classroom observation to observe their actual language use in the classroom. In addition, being interested in capturing different perspectives on their language use, these data sources would also capture the perspective of myself as an observer and the perspectives of the students through their reports. These considerations align with a "mixed methods way of thinking" (Greene, 2007), meaning that the mixing of the different data helps identify different perspectives and diverse voices in the research process.

3.3 Sampling

In this section, I will elaborate on the sample, in terms of one teacher (*n*=1) and her students in two vg2 classes (*N*=33), including the sampling procedure of focus students (*n*=4).

3.3.1 VOGUE Sampling procedure

The VOGUE project used purposeful sampling in the sense that the school and the teachers were recruited on the basis of previous findings in the VOGUE project; specifically, selecting a large vocational school and English classes with male-dominated study programs (Brevik, 2016, 2019; Brevik & Hellekjær, 2018). By using purposeful sampling, a common principle used in qualitative as well as MM research, VOGUE aimed to "purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). I will start out by explaining why the specific teacher was chosen for participation in the VOGUE project. The project leader for the VOGUE project, Lisbeth M. Brevik, used the following sampling criterion to select the teacher; that the teacher should be concerned with students' use of English in and out of school. Thus, the teacher was selected *because* of her focus on the bridging of English learning in and out of school. The research site was a large vocational school that offered a range of vocational programs. The choice of classes related to the English classes of this teacher in the 2019–20 school year. The research site and participants for this study was therefore determined by the purposeful sampling strategy, which also aligned with the aim of my MA study.

3.3.2 Sampling of focus students

In deploying purposeful sampling, I found that Patton's (2002) account aligned with my intent; specifically, to identify focus students that could offer information-rich cases that I could study in depth concerning their use of English in and out of school:

> The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for studying depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations (Patton, 2002, p. 230)

Information-rich cases was therefore a criterion for selecting focus students in the two participating vg2 classes. In collecting consent for the different data sets, there was a large variation to which students consented to providing what data material. Since the purpose of my study was to find evidence of the students' self-perception of their own interaction with the English language both in and out of school, it was fundamental for my study to select focus students who had participated in all or most of the chosen data sources. This was the student surveys, logs and the student interviews, chosen to gain access to student perception. I also needed focus students that I was able to observe closely in the video recordings, to identify their actual language use. My first selection criterion (1) was students who had agreed to being video

recorded. Being able to study video recordings from an authentic classroom situation, therefore gave me the in-depth understanding of their language use and perceptions of bridging activities in the classroom. The second criterion was (2) to select students who had participated in the interviews. My third criterion was (3) to select participants who had provided answers to at least one of the following data sources; the survey, language log 1, or language log 2.

The sampling procedure of the focus students occurred after the data collection was complete, a necessary decision to ensure that the focus students had indeed provided the required data sources, and not only consented to do so. As Firebaugh states, the "representativeness of the sample is more important than the size of the sample" (2008, p. 137). His account aligns well with my intent for selecting focus students. As I was interested in selecting focus students that represented different perspectives and uses of English outside school, my fourth selection criterion was (4) to select students that through the data fit decidedly could be categorized as belonging to different language profiles, either as a *Gamer,* or a *Social Media User* (Brevik, 2019a). I believed that based on these profiles, I would obtain variations and contrasts in their perspectives on English learning in an out of school, as the two profiles represent a contrastive use of and exposure to English out of school (Brevik, 2019a). As these profiles are based on Brevik's (2019a) language profiles, my sampling is theory based, meaning the profiles represent theoretical constructs for my phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002).

Moreover, I was also interested to select focus students who identified themselves towards the English language and the Norwegian language, respectively, also to obtain variation. Thus, my fifth (5) selection criterion was language identity, which made me look through the answers from the following survey question: *Which language is most "you"?* as I believed this would contribute to the focus students having different perspectives on their English learning, aligning with Firebaugh's (2008) third principle of sampling, namely collecting a sample that "permits powerful contrasts for the effects of interests" (p.139). Finally, aiming to identify focus students, I was initially open to the number of students to select. However, based on Firebaugh's (2008) and Patton's (2002) principles of purposeful sampling, I considered it more important to select a few that represented distinct profiles, instead of a larger number where the differences might not be as pronounced. This acknowledgement also made me add a sixth selection criterion, namely (6) that if possible, I wanted an equal number of focus students from each of the two classes. Finally, (7) gender was not a criterion per se, as there were only two girls across the two classes, both in 2A. However, if all other criteria were equally fulfilled for boys and

girls, I would select one boy and one girl from class 2A. Using the seven selection criteria, the VOGUE project leader and I identified four focus students that aligned with all criteria. Table 3B is an overview of the focus students' profiles from the data sources in for my study. Their representation of the profiles will be further analysed in chapter 4, where I present my findings.

Table 3B: Overview of selected focus students, and what out of school use they represented

Pseudonym	Gender	Class	G	SMU	Identified language
Simen	Boy	2A		**x**	Norwegian
Gina	Girl	2A		**x**	Norwegian
Mats	Boy	2D	**x**		English
Elias	Boy	2D	**x**		English

Note. G=Gamer. SMU=Social Media User.

Firebaugh (2008) argues that an essential point during the sampling procedure is the demand placed on data by the need to examine alternative explanations, which confirms my decision to sample the focus students across data sources and classes. He also states the importance of choosing *strategic comparisons*, relating to the inferences that arise when comparing across different data, and in turn composes an important part of my study (Creamer, 2016). The strategic comparison is the reason for my choice of not only selecting data sources, but also participants, as comparison across interviews, surveys and logs will give a fuller view of each focus student, and also across the four focus students. In the following, I detail the data sources selected not only for my focus students, but for all participants in my MA study.

3.4 Data collection and material

In this section, I will briefly explain the VOGUE standards and procedures employed to collect the data I have chosen to use in my study. I will also include certain aspects of the collection process I believe is of importance to the result of the study. I choose to include this information to give the reader some insight into the data collection process, as this will give a broader overview of the data collection as a whole when discussing aspects such as internal and external validity later in this chapter (3.6), as well as when elaborating on my own observations and experiences of the participants and classes as part of the three-week data collection process. Giving the reader insight into the process as a whole also contributes to the openness and transparency of my study – thus increasing its legitimacy (Befring 2015).

3.4.1 Data collection procedure

The data collection was initiated in August 2019, with three weeks of preparations at the University of Oslo before we entered the research site. I was part of the group, that together with the project leader, gave information and gathered consent forms among the teachers and students in all four classes before data collection. The school year started late August, and our data collection was conducted from the beginning of September, just as the students and teachers were about to settle in. Being responsible for video recording two of the classes, I was able to receive first-hand knowledge about the participants and their lives at school, leading to sequences of interaction and interpretation that sometimes present unpredictable and emergent meanings and outcomes (Emerson, et.al. 2011). I chose to appear not simply as a fly on the wall, but instead actively socialize and converse with the participants, aligning with Emerson et. al.'s (2011) approach to research, who stated that such socialization heightens the researcher's sensitivity to social life as a process. I will draw on these considerations in my discussions of research credibility (3.6).

According to Silverman (2011), the focus of qualitative research, which constitute the largest part of my study, often is authenticity; observation, video recordings and interviews all allow for this, and they are all among the primary methods that most often occur in qualitative research. He further states the importance of not choosing too many data sets to answer a research question, when wanting to describe and interpret different sides to a phenomenon. However, I believe the methods and material I have chosen, constitute a well-constructed entity where the mixing of the data itself creates an important aspect of answering my research question. Creamer (2016) states that connections in between the different data create, "the meta-inferences that are drawn by considering the results from the qualitative and quantitative analysis together" (p. 7–8), and the mixing of the data I have chosen therefore also rely on each other in order to draw reliable conclusions. Hence, this logic of mixing is central to the purpose of my study and for understanding its conclusions (Creamer, 2016).

3.4.2 Teacher interview

The VOGUE project collected teacher interviews from all consenting teachers at the research site during the school year 2019-20. I selected the teacher interview as a main data source, aiming to answer RQ1: *What are the English teacher's beliefs regarding her students' English learning out of school, and the implementation of such learning?* In the two English classes I

have selected for my study, there is one female teacher – Shirin – teaching both classes. The teacher interview allowed detailed, systematic investigation of Shirin's reported perspectives on language use in English lessons, along with explanations of her motivation. The interview was semi structured (Creswell, 2014), based on an interview guide with pre-defined questions, allowing for follow-up questions formulated by the interviewer during the interviews. I selected six of the questions, relevant for RQ1, shown in chapter 4.

Strict VOGUE standards and procedures were followed before, during and after data collection. The interview design relied on two audio recorders simultaneously recording the interviews; a small dictaphone on the table; additionally, a second device was used, in terms of the UiO-designed Nettskjema dictaphone application, which transfers and stores the recording securely on the University of Oslo's server. The recordings were instantly encrypted with no opportunity to play the audio recording directly from the phone. It is a secure and efficient way to collect audio data. The two-device design provided reasonably good audio recording of the interaction, including back-up. These procedures and the teacher interview guide were developed by the VOGUE team for the VOGUE project, including several MA students, and piloted before data collection. The interview was conducted in Norwegian, in a semi structured manner, allowing for a comfortable, deeper and more flexible conversation about her teacher practices (Richards, 2015). The teacher interview I am deploying in my thesis, was conducted and transcribed in its entirety by other members of the VOGUE team.

3.4.3 Video recordings

The VOGUE project chose to collect video recordings to gain insight into naturally occurring English instruction, focusing especially on teachers' and students' use of English. The VOGUE team collected four subsequent video-recorded English lessons from four different classrooms during two weeks in the school year 2019-20, totalling 16 lessons. I selected the eight video recorded lessons in vg2 as a main data source, aiming to answer RQ2: *In what ways does the teacher implement and bridge students' use of English out of school in the English lessons*? I have chosen to use the video recordings as a main data source, to search for evidence of how bridging activities are implemented in Shirin's lessons, and how students respond to these activities (RQ3).

The VOGUE team selected the frequency of observations to maximise the likelihood of reliable estimates of teacher practice (Cohen, Schuldt, Brown, & Grossman, 2016). Video recordings allow detailed, systematic investigation of complex educational situations (Blikstad-Balas, 2017; Klette, 2009). This study's video design relied on two cameras simultaneously recording the same lesson. A small wall-mounted camera at the front of the classroom faced the students and another faced the teacher; additionally, the teacher wore one microphone, and another was fixed to capture the students (Brevik, 2019b; Brevik & Rindal, 2020; Klette, Blikstad-Balas, & Roe, 2017). This design provided reasonably good video and audio recording of whole-class discourse and teacher–student interactions. According to Blikstad-Balas (2017), video recorded data make it easier to capture certain patterns and detailed data of a classroom lesson, compared to observation of a lesson. The researchers can also review the material as many times as they want and will be able to capture and interpret body language and facial expressions in addition to verbal utterances (Blikstad-Balas, 2017).

Strict VOGUE standards and procedures were also followed here, before, during and after video recording. I filmed all eight lessons in the two classes over the course of three weeks, each lesson lasting for 60 minutes. During filming, I was sitting in the very back of the classroom, watching the video and audio recordings in real time. I was therefore able not only to hear whole-class interaction, but also the teacher and individual students during more quiet conversations, as well as some pair or group conversations in the classrooms. I transferred the recordings to the secure VOGUE area at the TLVlab on a daily basis. I will deploy extracts from the transcripts of these video recorded lessons in my findings (4.0), as these act as more accurate accounts compared to field notes I have taken during the observation.

3.4.4 Observations

A small portion of my data are my own observations and field notes from the video-recorded lessons. I chose to use observations and field notes as a secondary data source, aiming to gather contextual information in answering RQ2 and RQ3. I chose to conduct my observation as a participating observer, engaging in conversation and chatting with them during recess and at other times when not filming. Due to my presence in the classroom I got to know the students during the weeks of data collection, in addition to the information they gave in the other data sources. Fangen (2011) identified two different manners of observation; one concerns the presence of the observer when the participants perform certain tasks typical for the environment

they are part of, whereas the other one concerns observation by following the participants around on different arenas in their everyday life. Being present and observing the participants both in and outside of class, during recess, I would argue gave me an opportunity to experience both these manners of observation, although only within the context of the school. Being a participating observer, gave me advantages that align with Fangen's (2011) list of benefits; I got authentic first-hand experiences while being present in the participant's real life at school. This presence also gave me the opportunity for a broader view of interpretations concerning the students' use of English and to exclude irrelevant aspects of the data material. I will therefore use some of these observations and experiences to draw conclusions and to widen the discussion of the findings from the material (Fangen, 2011).

3.4.5 Student surveys

The VOGUE project chose to use a piloted student survey (Brevik & Rindal, 2020; Klette et. al., 2017), which was given to all the students that consented to the survey in these two classes at the end of the last filmed lesson. The aim of collecting the student survey was to capture their experiences of their English lessons. Because self-perception of English use both in and out of school is a focus in my study, I chose to include Part B of the student survey as a main data source. I selected two of the questions, aiming to answer RQ3: *What are focus students' perspectives on their use of English in and out of school?*

Q11. Which language is most "you"?

Q14: How would you describe yourself? (please explain why)

- Would you identify as a Gamer?
- Would you identify as a Surfer?
- Would you identify as a Social Media User?

Grønmo (2015) argues that closed questions are easier to answer for the respondents, in addition to assisting in clarifying the questions themselves. Conversely, an advantage with using open questions is the possibility of receiving nuanced differences in the answers from the respondents (Grønmo, 2015). An important factor that contributes to selecting the survey as a data source in my study, is that the answers provide an evident insight into their own perception regarding their English use in and out of school, which I was then able to triangulate with the answers provided about the same issues in the language logs and the interviews.

In line with the VOGUE standards and procedures, I distributed the survey on paper and the teacher was asked to leave the room, as to not see the questions nor the students' answers. These surveys had a very high percentage of participants willing and consenting to answer them. Handing them out at the end of their last video recorded English lesson was a contributing factor to this, as some of the participants that did not consent to this at first, changed their mind and filled in the survey as I handed them out. The survey consisted of two parts, A and B. Part A contained 41 closed questions about their English instruction, on a scale from "Not at all" to "All the time". Part B consisted of 14 questions about their English use and identity outside of school, using a combination of open and closed questions.

3.4.6 Language logs

The VOGUE project used a validated language log (Brevik, 2016, 2019a) to students' self-reports on their use of English in and outside school on a daily basis for the duration of two weeks in September 2019. In April 2020, the language logs were repeated, collecting unique data from when the students attended school from home during the Covid19 pandemic during spring 2020. As the language log collect data on the students' use of and exposure to English out of school, it was highly relevant for my study, and I chose to deploy the language logs to supplement the student surveys and interviews, pertaining to the RQ3: *What are focus students' perspectives on their use of English in and out of school?*

The language log provided information about the specifics of the participants' exposure to English and their use of technology outside school, providing a richer image of how they spent their time online, interacting with English during the day. This information included details on how many hours they had been in contact with English, and what activities, such as gaming, surfing, or spending time on social media. Answers given in the language logs often provided additional contextual information to the answers they gave in the student interviews, and offered the opportunity to triangulate the data. I selected three questions from the language log for my MA study, shown in the Appendix, due to length.

Following the VOGUE standards and procedures, the language log was sent digitally to all consenting participants, via the secure UiO Nettskjema. They received a reminder each morning for the two weeks of data collection, and their answers were immediately and securely transferred to one of the University of Oslo's server. The data were instantly encrypted, thus offering a secure and efficient way to collect survey data.

3.4.7 Student interviews

The VOGUE project collected student interviews from consenting students at the research site during the school year 2019-20. These interviews allow detailed, systematic investigation of their reported language use in and outside of school, along with explanations, and also of their actual language use in the interviews. The interview was semi structured (Creswell, 2014), based on an interview guide with pre-defined questions, allowing for follow-up questions formulated by the interviewer during the interviews. I selected the interviews with the focus students as a main data source, aiming to answer RQ3: *What are focus students' perspectives on their use of English in and out of school?* I selected 10 of the questions, relevant for RQ3, shown in chapter 4.

I have chosen to deploy student interviews as a method for my study, complimenting the other data material. Dalen (2011) states that individual interviews can elaborate on how the participant relates and perceives their own social reality and everyday life, where the concept of perception is essential. This perception has been important in my study, in triangulating them with the surveys and language logs, as well as the video recorded lessons. Additionally, Patton (2015) states that interviews might allow the researcher greater access to the participants' thoughts and feelings, which are important aspects within their perspectives of their own English learning and of the English lessons. Due to the nature of my research questions, the focus students' perspectives on bridging activities and their own account of their English use in and outside of school are best found in the answers they have provided during these interviews. As I chose four focus students only, the advantage is also that it allowed me to focus on depth, not width (Silverman, 2011).

The VOGUE standards and procedures for the student interviews were similar as for the teacher interview; relying on the combination of a small dictaphone on the table and the UiO-designed Nettskjema dictaphone application, transferring, encrypting, and storing the recordings securely on the UiO's server. The interview guide was developed by the VOGUE team, including several MA students, and piloted before data collection. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian, allowing for the students' use of any language, and a comfortable, deeper and more flexible conversation (Richards, 2015). The student interviews I am deploying in my thesis, was conducted in its entirety by other members of the VOGUE team, and transcribed in full by myself and other team members.

3.4.8 Overview of participants and data sources

Below, Table 3C shows an overview of the focus students and the teacher participating in my study, and their pseudonyms. Additionally, it shows the data I have deployed in my study, that they partook in. This is done in order to summarize the information in this section.

Table 3C: Overview of teacher and focus students and their participation in data sources

Pseudonym	Class	Present in following video recordings	Interviews	Surveys	Language log Sept. 2019	Language log April 2020
Simen	2A	Lesson 1-2 and 3-4	X	X	-	-
Gina	2A	Lesson 1-2 and 3-4	X	X	X	X
Elias	2D	Lesson 1-2 and 3-4	X	X	X	X
Mats	2D	Lesson 3-4	X	X	X	-
Shirin	2A/2D	All 8 lessons filmed	X	-	-	-

Note: All interviews lasted for an average length of approx. 20 minutes.

3.5 Data analyses

In this section, I present the procedure I have used to analyze the data material. As my goal is to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon being studied, I use theoretical groundwork for the analyses. I used direct content analysis, often used both in qualitative and MM research (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In the following, I outline my steps of analysis.

3.5.1 Step i: Teacher interview

As I wanted to investigate the teacher's beliefs regarding how to bridge students' English learning in and out of school, analyzing the teacher interview was my first step. I used the full transcription of the teacher interview, and deployed content analysis, using three theoretical concepts (Table 3D) as analytical lenses. In Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) account of this approach, they state that the coding categories are derived directly from the text data, in this case the teacher's answers in the interview. I used the three analytical concepts below, to identify relevant responses in the interview. I highlighted responses in the transcripts in three different colors to identify each concept and selected extracts to represent Shirin's beliefs.

Table 3D: Analytical concepts used in the analyses of teacher interviews

Analytical concept	Explanation
Bridging activities	Teachers successfully building on their students' interests out of school, and develop and increase their awareness of informal digital language conventions (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008)
Student and teacher empowerment	Teachers increasing their students' sense of empowerment, with the help of building on their student's interests. When learning more about their students' background, interests and English exposure outside school, the teacher becomes empowered. (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005)
Mapping learner interests	Teacher deploying different methods, such as interviews, written assignments, language logs or dairies to get an overview of their students interests outside school, their English use, their digital use etc. (Brevik, 2019a; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016)

3.5.2 Step ii: Classroom video recordings

The analysis of video recorded lessons was my second step. In the video recorded data comprised eight video recorded lessons from the two classes 2A and 2D. In my analysis, I have used four theoretical concepts (Table 3E) as analytical lenses. I used the videos as well as the full transcription of these, and deployed content analysis. The analytical concepts were relevant to this study, being particularly suitable to deploy in looking for how the teacher brought *bridging activities* (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008) into her English lessons.

Table 3E: Analytical concepts used in the analysis of video recorded lessons

Analytical concept	Explanation
Bridging activities	This concept focuses on when teachers successfully building on their students' interests out of school, and develop and increase their awareness of informal digital language conventions (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008)
Connections to personal experiences	This concept focuses on the extent to which new teaching material is connected to students' previous knowledge, to develop skills, strategies, and conceptual understandings within a knowledge domain in order to meet the lesson's goals (PLATO 5.0; Grossman et al., 2013)
Accommodations for language learning	This concept attempts to capture the range of strategies and supports that a teacher might use to make a lesson accessible to non-native speakers of English, including strategic use of other languages and terminology, and differentiated materials (PLATO 5.0; Grossman et al., 2013). Here, I looked for how the teacher made the lessons accessible and responded to the students' language needs, by adapting to the individual student's language

	proficiency, modifying responses to her students using English or Norwegian in helping them.
Classroom discourse	This concept attempts to focus on the opportunities students get for extended English talk with the teacher or peers, and the extent to which the teacher and other students pick up on, build on, and clarify each other's ideas (PLATO 5.0; Grossman et al., 2013). Here I looked for how the teacher encouraged and facilitated for elaborated and focused discussions in both classes, additionally finding examples of such discussions among the students only.
Mucking around	This concept emphasizes the importance for a learner to be allowed to spend time – or *muck around* – as part of second language acquisition (Gee, 2017). Here, I looked for how the teacher might be successful in her instruction and teaching in the classroom, when encouraging students to try, and fail, and try again, facilitating for their horizontal English learning.

3.5.3 Step iii: Student surveys, logs and interviews

In the last step, I investigated and analyzed how the students interacted with and learned English outside of school, categorizing them in two groups based on this activity, the Gamer group and the Social Media group. Based on answers they provided in the student survey, the language logs and the student interviews, I operationalize mainly three concepts, shown in table 3F below, in analyzing the students' English activities out of the classroom, as well as their English learning in and out of school. This applies to their online exposure to and interaction with English, and their oral activity in the English lessons.

Table 3F.: Analytical concepts used in analysis of student interviews, language logs, survey

Analytical concept	**Explanation**
Affinity space	This concept focuses on student interests, or affinities (Gee, 2017). Like physical space Gee (2017) says, "the affinity spaces can be mapped out and labelled, they are nested into one another, and they constitute the geography of development" (p. 120). Here, I looked for how the focus student report to move around, and between different spaces based on their interests and their English use out of school.
Language profiles	This concept focuses on students' language profiles (Brevik, 2019a), specifically, the gamer profile (using English while gaming online for several hours each day), the surfer profile (surfing the internet searching for authentic English language information), and the social media user profile (using English on social media platforms). Here, I looked for how the focus

	students identified with one of these language profiles, or none of them, and how these were expressed across data sources.
Extramural English house	This concept attempts to capture adolescents' English use and activities outside of school (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). They argue that it takes effort and higher English competency to climb up the stairs towards the second floor, and partake in activities here, in comparison to the first floor, which involves passive and receptive activities and is available for anyone. Here, I analyze where within the different rooms and floors the four focus students mostly spend time, and how this placement might contribute to their English learning both out of school.

3.6 Research credibility

In this section, I discuss the reliability and validity of my study, along with ethical considerations. According to Johnson and Christensen (2013, p. 278) validity refers to "the correctness or truthfulness of the inferences that are made from the results of the study", and further, that reliability is present "when the same results would be obtained if the study were conducted again (i.e. replicated)" (2013, p. 278) Further, Brevik (2015) argues that the difference between the two concepts can be described as "the trustworthiness of the inferences drawn from the data (validity)" and "the accuracy and transparency needed to enable replication of the research (reliability)" (p. 46). For a study to have validity it must therefore have reliability; but a study can have reliability without having validity, which I discuss below.

3.6.1 Reliability, or repeatability

Johnson (2013) states that a study's reliability is concerned with how and if the results obtained are repeatable. However, qualitative research, which comprises the largest part of my study, is in itself impossible to repeat. As Brevik states, "research where people are involved can never be fully replicated; for instance, the atmosphere in a classroom will never be identically recreated and identical utterances will not be uttered" (Brevik, 2015, p. 46).

Hallgren (2012) states that reliability can be divided into inter reliability and intra reliability. First, intra reliability is concerned with to what degree the study agrees with results of other researchers. Although this is a qualitative study with the main focus on one teacher and four students, I deploy several theoretical concepts based on previous research. Firstly, the PLATO 5.0 manual is deployed in analyzation of the video recorded lessons. This is a heavily validated instrument used for analyzation in both classrooms as a whole, but also in video recorded

classrooms. Therefore, there is high probability of the analyzation of the video recordings are drawn towards the same conclusions by other researchers. Additionally, I deploy analytical concepts such as the extramural English house by Sundqvist and Sylvén, and Brevik's three language profiles. Both are used in previous research, both in research (Sundqvist and Sylvén, 2016; Brevik, 2019) and prior master theses (Ahmadian, 2018; Garvoll, 2017) and my study further confirms these concepts and adding proof of validation to them.

Second, intra reliability measures to what degree there is an agreement among multiple repetitions of one test (Bryman, 2016). In all the data material collected by the VOGUE team deployed in my study, the interviews, student surveys and student logs are piloted and executed in accordance to VOGUE standards. Furthermore, they are accessed by several other members of the VOGUE team, both researchers and MA students, allowing me to discuss my interpretation with my supervisor and project leader, as well as the other members of the team. Additionally, the video recordings can be looked at repeatedly and paused, allowing me to focus on the different segments I have used in my study again and again – the two cameras set up in the classroom along with the two microphones attaching sound further simplified this process, enhancing the quality of the video recordings. I also want to include that I was part of the research team collecting the data, responsible for among other data, video recordings and student surveys. This allowed my full observation of all filmed lessons being deployed in this study as well. This is an advantage in confirming or disconfirming interpretations from the video recordings or remembering what is said and done by the participants outside of the video and sound recorded zone in the classroom.

3.6.2 Validity

In this section I give an account of what strategies I have employed in order to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of my study. Regarding validity, Johnson states for a study to be deemed valid, it has to be plausible, credible, trustworthy, and therefore defensible" (2013, p. 299). The validity does not refer to the data itself, but rather the researchers' judgement and thoroughness through the process and finishing of a study, and if the conclusions and the inferences drawn from the data are trustworthy and defensible (Brevik, 2015). Firstly, transcriptions of the all interviews in the study have been carried out by the VOGUE team, and the logs and surveys are available, adding to the transparency and the descriptive validity of my study (Johnson, 2013), as readers can deem my inferences done from these sources, and decide upon to which degree I have presented analyzations of the transcripts in a trustworthy matter (Johnson, 2013).

Creswell (2014) describes that qualitative validity "means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures" (p. 201), which means that the qualitative researcher cannot rely on the results alone, as well as having to check if inferences drawn from the study might be a wrong. I therefore focus on three aspects: reactivity, triangulation and researcher bias, that might hinder the inferences I have drawn in this study. I offer possible solutions to all.

Reactivity: This regard the influence a researcher might have on a setting or its people in a study (Maxwell, 2013). Firstly, am observer or a researcher present in a setting, as I was during the video recordings of the English lessons being filmed, might affect the participants, according to Kleven, Hjardemaal and Tveit (2014). In turn, this could create an unnatural environment for the participants, preventing them from relaxing and acting as "themselves", affecting the results and inferences drawn from the data. Furthermore, a common threat against the validity concerns video observations also having an effect of this reactivity, when participants' awareness of being filmed impacts their actions in front of camera (Wickström & Bendix, 2000). However, Blikstad-Balas (2017) argues this effect on the participants is overrated, as they often forget that they are being filmed. I argue this accounts for the participations in my study as well to a large degree, even though cameras and an observer were present. As I was observing, I was sitting in the very back of the classrooms in both class 2A and 2D, partly invisible for some of the students. Additionally, the students and the teacher seemed to forget both me and the cameras, especially when focusing on their given tasks, working on their computers or talking to their seated neighbor. I argue that the video recordings to a very large degree depicts the natural environment of both classes.

Triangulation: Triangulation is a validation approach using "multiple investigators, methods, data sources, and/or theoretical perspectives in the search for convergence of results" (Johnson, 2013) As my study consists of a large amount of different data sources; teacher interview, student interviews, video recordings, student surveys and logs, I argue the data sources confirm each other, as answers from interviews, surveys and logs corroborates to each other and to the video recordings. Creswell (2003) state that triangulation could reduce the risk of validity threats. I triangulated answers from the teacher interview to the video recordings, further triangulating answers from surveys to logs, from logs to student interviews, and from student interviews to classrooms, and from there back again to logs, the method allowed me to validate the different data collected from the different methods, to see how this gave a coherent justification when compared to each other (Creswell, 2014).

Researcher bias: lastly, the researcher bias might influence the inferences I draw from my study, affecting the results and validity of my analyzations (Maxwell, 2013). During the process of both data collection and of writing this MA study, I have attempted to minimize researcher bias consistently, expecting unexpected findings, and actively not searching for results that I expected to find (Johnson, 2013). Work ing as a team through the data collection and processing of the material, and with assistance from the project leader (my supervisor), have limited this threat. Further, to ensure external validity, or generalizing validity, which Johnson (2013, p. 291) refers to as "the extent to which the result of a study can be generalized to and across populations of persons, settings, times, outcomes, and treatment variations", it is still reasonable that my findings regarding the students' perspectives are found in other upper-secondary classrooms across Norway. Although the teacher might be a unique example, it is safe to assume that other teachers in Norway might implement similar practices to hers in their own English lessons, and that it may have the same effects on the students learning.

3.6.3 Ethical considerations

Through both the data collection, the processing of the data, and the writing of this thesis, research ethics has played a major role in ensuring the privacy and well-being of the participants. During the data collection period, the VOGUE team received firsthand experiences with how to protect the privacy of teachers and students who participated in the VOGUE research project, in line with the new GDPR requirements. GDPR, or General Data Protection Regulation, is a regulation in EU law on data protection and privacy, with a focus on protection of personal data and the transfer of this. All participants are anonymized by codes in the data sources, and by pseudonyms in this study. All the data after collection at the site, were brought straight to the TLVlab on password-protected devices.

Befring (2015) underscores the right to privacy for all participants, specifically, those who do not want to participate at the data collection site, suggesting that a researcher cannot collect data at all costs. Although all students agreed to being filmed, some students in the two other classes were not comfortable being part of the video recordings, and therefore declined participation. These were then meticulously placed outside the filmed zone in the classroom, and it was noted down whenever these students spoke, or the teacher spoke to them. After bringing the recordings to the TLVlab, the audio was deleted whenever the voices of these students became part of the audio, to ensure their right to not be part of the data.

4.0 Findings

In this chapter, I present my main findings based on the data material. My first main finding, presented in section 4.1, indicated the English teacher's belief in the importance of bridging the students' interests and use of English outside of school with classroom activities and assignments. In section 4.2, I present my second main finding, suggesting that the teacher deployed bridging activities and strategies in her English lessons to a large degree. My third main finding, presented in section 4.3, revealed that how orally active four focus students were in these bridging activities in English lessons, was closely connected to their reported use of English outside of school. Finally, in section 4.4, I present my fourth main finding, acknowledging the importance of affinity spaces for the vocational students' English competence developed in and outside school. The following sections elaborate on these findings, with representative excerpts from self-reports and classroom observations.

4.1 Teacher beliefs: the importance of bridging

In line with the notion of bridging activities (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008), the English teacher, Shirin, acknowledged her belief in the connection between students' use of English in and out of school. This main finding pertains to RQ1: *What are the English teacher's beliefs regarding her students' English learning out of school, and the implementation of such learning?* This finding is mainly based on Shirin's answers in the teacher interview, emphasizing her awareness of the connection between the students' interests in and use of English out of school, when designing her English lessons; aiming to bridge these contexts.

4.1.1 Findings from the teacher interview

During the teacher interview, Shirin was asked questions to elicit her beliefs concerning language use in English lessons and the connection between English use in and out of school. The findings in this section will be presented question by question, with the topic presented in bold to introduce Shirin's self-reports.

Topic 1. About language use in the classroom

Shirin's answers from the teacher interview made it clear how much she focused on the students' prior experience with English. In one of the first questions, she was asked what she thought about the use of languages in the English classroom. Already here, Shirin underscored

the importance of getting to know her students well, even using other languages than English, such as Norwegian or Kurdish, strategically for this purpose:

Interviewer: So, let's talk about languages in the classroom. What do you think about that?[4]
Shirin: I believe that if you use English, then you will learn the language better. However, I have a rule that during the first weeks [of the year] I am more concerned with getting to know the students – and if that is easier in Norwegian, then I do so. […] And then gradually: "Okay, today we will communicate in English only", and then I am very strict about this, or at least I try to be. […] Sometimes I get to use my mother tongue, Kurdish, to communicate with students, who for example have Kurdish as their mother tongue and have not learnt English before, and who also struggle with Norwegian.

Here, Shirin starts by setting the groundwork for believing that students who use English actively in her lessons, might acquire the language more successfully. By expressing this belief, she indirectly gives a reason for her focus on the bridging of English in and out of school. Further, she states how she wants to get to know her students, even using Norwegian and sometimes Kurdish for this purpose. This finding is in line with the notion of teacher empowerment (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005), where a teacher might become *empowered* when knowing her students; thus, their interests and lives are not unknown territory for Shirin, and she might utilize this knowledge in her lessons, which she in turn believes will develop her students' English learning. In her answer above, Shirin explains how she in her lesson design lays the groundwork for students' English use in the classroom, by emphasizing the relation building with her students – no matter the language.

Topic 2. About the bridging of English in and outside school

Shirin was very aware that the students' English skills was developed outside of school, and she stated how she explicitly asks the students about their English use outside of school. From my own observations during the data collection at the school – in recess and prior to and after the English lessons –the fact that Shirin had a great overview of most of her students' interests and experiences with the language became clear to me very quickly. Shirin explained:

Interviewer: Regarding the students' English use out of school. What do you know about that?
Shirin: Well, I usually either interview the students, when I have the time, and then I always ask: "okay, English out of school", and then I try to say that listening to English, watching movies, gaming, and so on, that is all about the use of English, and then I get a lot of answers, either in writing or orally. […] I usually, for instance, buy a game that we use in the instruction, that they can play at home, like vocationally oriented [games]. For instance, in automation, or in electrical engineering, I commonly buy a license for everyone in class, for a vocationally oriented electrical engineering game. And then they can play the game at home, and then we bring it into the lessons, so I try, all the time, to show them that the English language they use outside of school is positive only, that they should just continue doing it and enjoying it. I tell them that they learn much more than they think by using English at home.

[4] The interview was held in Norwegian, transcribed in full and translated into English by the VOGUE team.

Here, Shirin confirmed her intentions of using the students' interests and interactions with the English language in their spare time as a resource when designing her English lessons, aiming to increase both teacher and student empowerment in her classes. Additionally, Shirin makes her students aware of the English language that they interact with at home, doing exactly what research calls for; making the students aware of the learning potential in their extramural English activities outside school. She therefore to a large degree, reported a wish to raise her students' language awareness, which has been found to have a positive effect on students' language development and feeling of empowerment (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). Shirin also emphasized the importance of interviewing her students about their interests, particularly early in the school year, to get to know them. She explained to use both written assignments and oral interviews to elicit information to use in her instructional designs. Such assignments align with the notion of mapping learner interests (Sundqvist & Sylvén 2016; Brevik, 2019a), as discussed in Chapter 2.

Shirin also addressed how she might use games and YouTube tutorials as resources in her English lessons. From my own conversations with the teacher during the weeks of data collection, it became clear that her intentions behind such assignment, was for the students to build on their extensive knowledge about data technology from their vocational studies, as well as their English use and competency developed outside of school. She also mentioned how they might incorporate and work with games and YouTube videos orally in class:

Interviewer:	You mentioned that you among other things, use games, which they [the students] can play at home and at school, and can take with them later. But do you have any other examples of how you plan your lessons, how you build your teaching on, among other things, what they use English for out of school?
Shirin:	Yes, for instance, YouTube, is something that not only I, but also everyone uses YouTube to learn anything [such as] gaming videos, and then I try, for instance: "okay, write about that". […] It all comes down to if you a positive relation with your students, if you know them, because if you don't know, you cannot just guess. […] So I try my best to get to know my students, so that I know what they do at home. Because, in Vg2 we only have two English lessons each week, in grade two. This requires that we try, well, to have them take some notes while watching a YouTube video at home, and then we might work with that orally or in writing: "and then you [the students] can teach me why you watch it". And then they sometimes, do that.

Comparing Shirin's response here to her answer to Topic 1, she further confirmed the importance of having a positive relationship with her students, and that such relations increased both her own and her students' empowerment, while at the same time mapping their interests. Moreover, she also explained how she opened up for critical participatory looping (Murphey & Falout, 2010) in her lessons, when stating how she might use a student's notes in class, from their watching of a YouTube video. This example of a bridging activity allows for feedback

from herself and the other students in class on these extramural English activities, thus increasing learner autonomy and empowerment (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). When asked if it is challenging to map learner interests and bring the students' extramural English activities into the lessons, Shirin acknowledged that although it takes time, she stated that she did *not* find it particularly challenging, and that it was definitely worth it:

Interviewer:	Is this challenging for you as an English teacher?
Shirin:	No
Interviewer:	No. Can you explain why it is not?
Shirin:	Well, I don't know, I believe it is just about…, well I am the kind of teacher who… I have lots of lesson plans and such, well I have a big pile. But I usually start every year by thinking: No! Now I want to get to know the students, and then I try to make something they can be a part of. For instance, if we have an assessment situation, then I often make it together with the students, you know? This might take, perhaps, ten minutes of the lesson, so it might be a little more work, but I really think it is worth it.

Again, Shirin underscores the importance of getting to know her students, in terms of increasing learner autonomy in how she plans assessment situations with the students in her English lessons. In actively using both the students' out of school experiences with English and including them into her assessment design, she deploys a bridging activity in her lesson planning. When asked about the current core curriculum, she draws on the student's interests and how this might play a larger role for the students' L2 motivation than what the curriculum defines as learning goals for adolescents their age. She mentions important factors such as the students' perhaps lack of interest for theoretical learning as well as the fact that all of her students attend vocational studies, many of them due to the former factor:

Interviewer:	To what degree do you find the competence aims in the current curriculum includes this connection between students' use of English in and out of school?
Shirin:	Small […] very small
Interviewer:	What do you think about this?
Shirin:	I think it is sad, somewhat like, first of all, always like that. The students [say]: "so you think because I game it kind of makes me good in English?" The fact that they don't know this, is kind of […] On the other hand, this is just positive, positive, positive! Because even though my students are vocational students, it does not necessarily mean they are super interested in all that, for instance, electronics. It is the way they use English in their spare time, that is interesting for them. If not, they would not use English in their spare time, I think. So yes, I believe it [the lack of connection in the curriculum] is negative.

In this conversation, Shirin emphasized how this lack of explicit connections in the curriculum between the use of English in and out of school, in effect, plays a negative role in how the students assess their English competence. She argued that the competence aims in the current curriculum prevents these students, who have learned English on their own account out of school, from realizing, or even acknowledging, the relevance of their extramural competence

in English. In the final part of her answer, Shirin emphasized that the students would not engage in extramural English were they not interested in the activities that they engage in.

4.1.2 Main Finding 1: Summary

In my first main finding, I have analyzed Shirin's answers from her interview, and found that she, to a large degree and uniquely, emphasizes the importance of getting to know her students, their interests and their use of English out of school. She argued that she actively used this information when designing her English lessons; deploying bridging activities, such as mapping interests and critical participatory looping, that allows for a high degree of student participation in the planning of both lesson and assessment situations (Murphey & Falout, 2010). Hence, based on her self-report, she seems to allow for learner agency in her English lessons by actively focusing on eliciting student information and using this information in designing bridging activities. An important factor here is that this interview took place early in the semester (September), which contextualizes her information in terms of the need to get to know her students. Interestingly, this is clearly observable in the video recordings of her English lessons, which I discuss and analyze in the following section.

4.2 Bridging activities in the English classroom

The data presented and analyzed in this section build on evidence of bridging activities from video-recorded observation the all English lessons in two of Shirin's classes (2A and 2D) during two weeks; totaling eight lessons, four consecutive English lessons in each class. This in turn, answers *how* the bridging appear and is visible in the classroom during lesson 1-2 and lesson 3-4, hence answering RQ2: *In what ways does the teacher implement and bridge students' use of English out of school in the English lessons?*

The video recorded English lessons used for analysis showed that both classes worked with a time traveler project. The students were instructed to create a speech or presentation about technology that have been invented after the year 1805, the year this time traveler travelled from. They were asked to choose the kind of technology they wanted to present. In addition, class 2A was instructed to present to the time traveler a device called Microbit, a small device that can be coded online and utilized for different purposes; e.g., a digital watch or a fitness tracker. Microbit was used as an interdisciplinary vocational element in other subjects (e.g., Norwegian) in addition to English in this class, because this class specialized in data programming. Prior to the video recorded lessons, the teacher had created the Microbit

assignment in collaboration with the students, and this was explained to the VOGUE team prior to the video recording.

I have deployed four analytical concepts in my video analysis; *connections to personal experience* (section 4.2.1), *accommodations for language learning* (section 4.2.2), *classroom discourse* (section 4.2.3), and *mucking around* by looking at the extent to which the teacher included bridging activities in her English lessons and allowed for horizontal learning experiences (Gee, 2017) (section 4.2.3). In this section, I include extracts from the video recordings, which are numbered, enabling me to refer to them in the discussion in Chapter 5.

4.2.1 Connecting the lessons to personal experience

In line with the notion of bridging a new topic to students' personal and cultural experiences (PLATO 5.0), Shirin demonstrated in her lessons how she encouraged students to make their own connections in the observed English lessons. To that end, I observed how Shirin made these linkages by piquing the students' interest in the time traveler project.

With the first main finding from the teacher interview as a basis, showing how much emphasis Shirin placed on getting to know the students and their personal interests and interactions with English out of school, the video recordings confirmed her beliefs. The assignment of the time traveler project was clearly linked to the students' personal experiences, specifically, their interests regarding the technology they chose to present, as they were allowed to choose this themselves. Below I have chosen three extracts (1–3), from class 2A, where Shirin draws heavily on the students' interests. All quotes are instructions or comments by Shirin, either in plenary or to an individual student:

EXTRACT 1

Shirin: [PLENARY] The plan for today is we continue working on the project, Mr. Time Traveler. We will make "Did you know" posters, and you guys will teach *me* about electronics, okay? So that's the plan time wise, for forty-five minutes.

Here, Shirin encourages the students to teach her about their vocational program specialization (i.e. electronics) in the plenary instruction and introduction to the task. This aligns well with the pedagogical model of bridging activities (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008), suggesting how to incorporate students' digital-vernacular expertise. In this classroom context, the students' expertise on electronics from their vocational program, might lead to engagement and a sense of relevance. The video recordings show evidence of Shirin actively engaging the students in

these English lessons through the linkage to their vocational program. Extract 2, from the same lesson and class, shows how Shirin allows for autonomy in their assignment:

EXTRACT 2

Shirin: [PLENARY] These are fun facts that are actually true. I want you to make posters like these [points to the "Did you know?" posters], but your posters need to be about Microbit, okay? And, if you run out of ideas, or if you just don't wanna make posters about Microbit, you can make "Did you know?" posters from technology from 1805 to 2019.

EXTRACT 3

Shirin: [TO STUDENT] If it is difficult or boring, you can find facts about any technology.

The same awareness of students' interests and personal experiences is shown in Extracts 2 and 3, first in plenary to all the students, and then in conversation with a student that had problems finding fun facts about Microbit. Both extracts demonstrate how Shirin incorporates her beliefs in engaging the students' interests in her assignments, bridging the lessons to their personal interests, in how the task at hand might pique their interest in the topic, when they are encouraged to include any technology they might be interested in. Deploying the students' expertise was especially visible in class 2A, where the students were instructed to include Microbit, in their presentations. In turn, I observed how this instruction enhanced the students' empowerment, as they indeed included their interests to a large degree in the task, throughout these lessons (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). This finding confirmed to a large degree Shirin's self-report. In these English lessons, the students were also instructed to give peer feedback on their posters in pairs or groups, and the posters were also discussed plenary. These activities therefore act as examples of critical participatory looping: the students engaged in discussion and talk around what they had chosen to include of technology and how the assignment worked as a bridging activity between their interests in and out of school (Murphey & Falout, 2010).

4.2.2 Accommodations for language learning

Another belief Shirin reported in the teacher interview, concerned her use of languages in the English lessons to create relations with the students, particularly in the beginning of the school year. On the one hand, she wanted her students to speak English only, but on the other, she supported some students' need for other languages if their English competence was not good enough. This self-report was confirmed in the video observed English lessons, as here in the first recorded lesson in class 2A (plenary talk, students not marked with names):

EXTRACT 4

Shirin:	[PLENARY] Okay, so last time I told you that we will try to speak English during this English lesson, okay? And only English. That means, if you communicate with each other about whatever, I want you to communicate in English, okay? […] It's just a rule I have. The first English lessons, we can communicate in Norwegian, Arabic, whatever you want, but…
Student:	Russian!
Shirin:	Russian
Student P92:	[student says something in Russian]
Shirin:	…but slowly we will start to only communicate in English, okay? Because I think that's the best way to learn. I don't know. And as you can hear, my English is not perfect at all. Okay? It doesn't matter what you say or how you say it, the only thing I think is important is that you try. Okay?

In line with the concept of accommodations for language learning (PLATO 5.0), Shirin demonstrated how she varied her language use depending on the student she communicated with. To make the lessons accessible and respond both to their language needs and support their academic development, she used English with most students and Norwegian with others. For instance, in class 2A, lessons 1 and 2 were taught as a double lesson, lasting for 120 minutes. Shirin talked to students, both in plenary and individually throughout the entire double lesson. She spoke English all the time, and to all the students, except to one student (Konrad), hence, demonstrating how she accommodated for language learning, taking into consideration this individual student's language proficiency:

EXTRACT 5

Shirin:	Are you okay?
Konrad:	[nods his head]
Shirin:	*Vet du hva Konrad? Jeg synes du har blitt skikkelig mye flinkere i engelsk i år assa […] og jeg hadde deg i fjor.*
Konrad:	*Det var samme i fjor også*
Shirin:	*Nei, nei, jeg syns du har blitt flinkere… Du skriver bedre og alt.. Det må du […] du har det, jeg mener det, ellers så hadde jeg ikke sagt det. Så bra jobba!*
Mathias:	*Jeg har levert*
Shirin:	Already?
Mathias:	Yes
Shirin:	Okay... then you can start thinking about your presentation, because we will start working on them next week.
Mathias:	Yes
Shirin:	Okay? So look at the ehh assignment on It's Learning… and think how do you want to make your presentation. Do you want to make a movie or a podcast?

Extract 5 shows how Shirin considered the individual students' levels of language proficiency so that all her students could meet the goals for the bridging activity. The extract demonstrates how she effectively modified her response to Konrad by answering in Norwegian, whereas responding to Mathias in English, even when he approached Shirin in Norwegian. Moreover, Shirin placed emphasis on bridging of the English lessons to the students' personal experiences. This was evident in the way she attempted to relate the time traveler project towards relevant terminology, and how she accommodated for language learning through building on the students' expertise (Casper) from their vocational program and/or cultural experiences:

EXTRACT 6

Shirin:	So maybe also include a fun fact about, you know, Bluetooth
Casper:	Yes
Shirin:	Yeah? What is Bluetooth? Is it a tooth?
Casper:	[laughs and shakes his head]
Shirin:	Or is it… What is it? Yeah? Because you need to think that the person travelling from 1805 doesn't know anything about Bluetooth or Microbit or computers... technology in general
Casper:	Okay, I understand.

The video recorded lessons further showed that Shirin handed out differentiated material to the students, specifically, with terminology in both English and Norwegian to make the instruction accessible to all her students, and with illustrations of the Microbit procedure to the students in class 2A. Thus, accommodations for language learning was evident in Shirin's lessons, helping each individual student by accommodating for their level of English proficiency.

4.2.3 Classroom discourse

The third example of bridging activity (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008) I identified in Shirin's English lessons, concerned the concept of classroom discourse (PLATO 5.0); focusing on the opportunities students had for extended about the task. Throughout these lessons, I examined the students' talk with the teacher or among each other, and the extent to which the teacher and the students built on and clarified each other's ideas.

I found that Shirin both allowed for and encouraged elaborated and focused discussions in both classes. She sparked conversations in plenary and with individual or groups of students, relating their discourse to the time traveler project, making an effort not only to include bridging activities between students' English use in and out of school, but also their knowledge. Extract 7, is a conversation initiated by the students themselves, as an elaboration of what to tell the time traveler. The discourse took place between the two focus students in class 2D, Elias and Mats, along with a third student, (Edvard). The entire conversation took place in English and they used their prior knowledge:

EXTRACT 7

Edvard:	Wait, when did slavery end?
Mats:	Just recently. [laughter]
Edvard:	Yeah, the emancipation proclamation ended in 1863, so that means that they probably actually used the cotton gin, so I was actually right!
Elias:	Nah, you're not right. It actually ended officially in 1805!
Edvard:	Yeah but, Abraham Lincoln… Wait what?
Several students:	Wait whaaat [laughter]
Edvard:	But I think Abraham Lincoln signed the emancipation of proclamation in 1863. And then it officially ended in… If I'm not mistaken.
Mats:	Teacher should know?
Edvard:	Because I know Abraham Lincoln was the one that probably stopped it. But it probably didn't. But even though they used the cotton gin probably

Mats: Why are we talking about this?
Edvard: Because I saw this, and I know slavery ended after this […]

Extract 7 illustrates how the students initiated discussions and conversations in English regardless of the teacher's instruction. Shirin was not part of this conversation, but she listened to them; facilitating for and allowing them to discuss the topic on their own, in English. Edvard was the most orally active student in this class (2D), he was an avid gamer and streamer, and he often broadcasted his gaming both live and on YouTube. He spoke English in all his streams, and evidently also here. During my time of collecting data at the school, it became clear that Edvard's streaming and YouTube channel was included in the plenary talk and discussion in class 2D, where Shirin showed his channel as an example of subjects during recess and in other English lessons during the school year (lessons that were not video recorded) with Edvard's consent – which seemed overall positive for the classroom discourse and motivation for learning for all students in 2D.

This conversation was example of meaningful discussion related to the topic of the lesson, and initiated by the students themselves. This developed into a plenary discussion, with Shirin involved. It seemed to result from not only a positive classroom discourse, but also connections to personal experiences and interests. In addition, the students acted as signs of learner agency and autonomy, in how Shirin allowed them to incorporate their own interests in the given assignment – in turn, facilitating for conversations where topics such as these piqued the students' interests. Further, these act as confirmations of Shirin's beliefs in bridging activities in the class towards the students' use of English out of school, as well as creating activities that allow them to incorporate their own interests.

4.2.4 Mucking around

A last and important finding from classes 2D and 2A is the identification of bridging activities that align with the concept of mucking around (Gee, 2017), in both classes, and in all four lessons being video recorded. In these English lessons, I identified how Shirin facilitated students' opportunities to muck around. It comes across as a very fruitful strategy to increase the oral activity in English in these classrooms, allowing for students' trying and failing and trying again. I present two extracts from conversations between Shirin and two of her students – one in class 2A (Extract 8), and one in class 2D (Extract 9).

EXTRACT 8

Elias:	Do you have any tips on procrastination? Or, how not to procrastinate?
Shirin:	Yes, just work.
Elias:	Yeah but, it umm… it doesn't work like that! [laughter]
Shirin:	Stand up, stretch, do some yoga poses. [starts stretching and doing yoga poses]
Elias:	And go home after the stretching? [laughter]
Shirin:	Noo! [laughter] And after the stretching, you will feel much better, and start working. Try it!
Elias:	Okay. Stand up and stretch? [starts stretching and doing yoga poses, attempts to do splits]

Extract 9 is one of many informal but positive experiences in Shirin's classes and in this lesson in particular, where it seemed like the contact between the teacher and the students as well as the environment among the students allowed for admitting that the students were tired or needed time to do something different before continuing with their assignment. A similar situation of mucking around occurred in class 2A, with student Mathias:

EXTRACT 9

Shirin:	What are you searching for?
Mathias:	Eh, parts…
Shirin:	For what?
Mathias:	My car.
Shirin:	Okay, show me!
Mathias:	I uh… kinda maybe broke my glove compartment.
Shirin:	How?
Mathias:	It didn't want to open, so I pulled really hard and then it came out in three pieces. And now it's hold together by three strips and a piece of gaffa tape
Shirin:	Okay, and you want to replace it?
Mathias:	It is quite a good idea, I think, and it's just a big black hole there right now, so it isn't very safe. Or I don't think it's quite legal either, if the Veivesen seizes me. So I think it's a good idea to fix it.

Here, Shirin allowed this conversation about their interests, and also allows for mucking around in terms of letting the student speak incorrectly although Mathias arguably demonstrated some grammatical mistakes. Shirin related the conversation directly towards the student's interests out of school, concerning his car. For both conversations (Extracts 8 and 9), the line can be drawn back to Shirin allowing for more exploration of, and playing with the English language, in how she initiated these conversations with her students. In comparison to the first three sections (i.e., connections to personal experiences, accommodations for language learning, and classroom discourse), these arguably constituted *vertical learning*, in terms of developing their language skills. Conversely, these two final extracts demonstrate how Shirin also enacted *horizontal learning*, in allowing for informal talk about topics irrelevant to the lesson, but in which the students used the English language. Although this opportunity to muck around with the English language contributed in building positive relations between Shirin and her students – it also gave them the opportunity to use the language in situations where they were not evaluated on their English use and where they could play around with the language in conversations both with Shirin and among her students.

4.2.5 Main Finding 2: Summary

My second main finding is that Shirin to a large degree incorporates the students' interests, vocational expertise and personal experiences with English both in class 2A and 2D, evidenced in all eight recorded English lessons. The three concepts of connections to personal and cultural experiences, accommodations for language learning, and classroom discourse, were visible through different bridging activities, such as the time traveler project and Microbit, in which the students used technological terminology combined with their interests and expertise out of school. The students themselves engaged in elaborate and focused discussions using English, in both classes – with each other and with the teacher, allowing for a classroom environment where the threshold for speaking English and initiating discussion was low. The identification of these concepts in Shirin's English lessons constitute vertical English learning to a large degree. Additionally, Shirin facilitated for horizontal learning, initiating risk-free, fun and informal English talk with the students, allowing them to talk about topics irrelevant for the lesson, allowing for exploring and mucking around using English.

4.3 Focus students: perspectives on own English use

The third main finding revealed that how orally active these four focus students were in these bridging activities in Shirin's English lessons, was closely connected to their reported use of English outside of school and identified language profiles. This section pertains to RQ3: *What are focus students' perspectives on their use of English in and out of school?*

The data presented and analyzed in this section build on audio-recorded interviews, surveys and language logs among four focus students in Shirin's classes; two students in class 2A who identified as social media users (Gina and Simen, section 4.3.1), and two students in class 2D who identified as Gamers (Elias and Mats, section 4.3.2). This section is organized by the questions from the student interviews, and the answers are corroborated with reference to their survey answers and the language logs. All of these data were collected in September 2019, whereas the language log was repeated in April 2020. In section 4.3.3, I summarize my findings.

4.3.1 The Gamers

During the individual interviews with the two focus students who identified as gamers, Mats and Elias, they were asked questions to elicit their perceptions concerning their English use in

and out of school. The findings in this section will be presented question by question – in bold – with Mats's (light blue) and Elias's (dark blue) responses below. Each question is marked with G (gamer) plus number, to enable my reference to the questions in the discussion.

G1. Do you consider yourself a serious gamer?[5]

Mats and Elias were both were asked whether they considered themselves serious gamers, which they confirmed, although to varying degrees:

Mats: Yes. I do. Uh, how do I explain it? At least I game a lot, and when I play, I usually play to win. On that note I would say I am a serious gamer. And I try my best when I play with someone else, enabling them to win as well, so like that I would say I am a serious gamer.

Elias: I don't really know.
Interviewer: No, how often do you game, then?
Elias: Only when it suits me, really. I used to game a whole lot before, but not that much nowadays.
Interviewer: Not that much, so not every day?
Elias: A little bit every day.

Whereas Mats replied that he considered himself a serious gamer, Elias was not sure at the time of the interview, but said he did game a little every day. This coincided with their answers from the surveys and the logs, where both identified as gamers, despite the uncertainty Elias expressed. Mats seemed invested in winning when he played games, which was the main reason he considered himself a serious gamer, and interestingly, he revealed in his second log that while he still considered himself a serious gamer, he played less than he had done seven months earlier. However, in the second log, seven months later, Elias confirmed to identifying as a serious gamer: "I am a gamer. This is because this is what I mainly do in my spare time".

G2. Is English important for you as a person – for your identity?

When asked about English being important for their identity, both gamers agreed to this, but again their answers varied:

Mats: Hm, good question. I don't really know. Maybe, because I use a lot of English when I am with others and that does say something about how I am, I would think. This is perhaps because I game a lot and watch a lot of English stuff. So, I would guess people understand that I interact with a lot of English if they talk with me, and I start to speak a little English–Norwegian.

Elias: Yes, I would say that. I use it to socialize and talk with others, that is important for me.

Mats did not directly confirm, but stated he believed English was important for his identity, drawing on his gaming activities and watching English "stuff". He also reflected on how it

[5] In the interviews, the questions were asked in Norwegian, and the students answered in the languages they preferred. The student interviews were transcribed in full and translated into English by the VOGUE team.

affected how he usually talked to others. However, when asked in the student survey, which language he identified the most with, he answered English, further indicating the relevance of English is for his identity. Conversely, Elias very much agreed, also giving a reason.

G3. What do you use English for outside school? Which languages do speak with friends?

When asked what they used English for outside of school, both gamers confirmed using it for gaming and speaking with friends. Sometimes these two uses overlapped. Mats also explained that he sometimes mixed English and Norwegian when talking with friends:

Mats: Yes, I use it for gaming and when I watch TV shows, for example. Movies. When I find and create workout routines, I use English sites instead of Norwegian, because you can find so much more there. I can also add that if I am going to find information, I usually search mostly in English because I usually get a lot more information. […] I speak a lot of Norwegian–English with my friends. We may even speak more English. But of course, it is not fluent English, there is a lot of Norwegian mixed in. I can't think of any specific examples. We use a lot of English phrases and words. So yeah, a lot of Norwegian–English.

Elias: I use it [English] for communicating with people I game with, as well as YouTube and Netflix and stuff like that. […] I speak Norwegian [with my friends]. We might talk English at times, when we are gaming online. […] When I play with my closest friends, we talk Norwegian, but when we communicate with others on the team, we often speak English.

G4. How much use do you think you have from your English use outside of school?

When asked how useful English use outside of school was for their use of English at school, on a scale from 1–10, both gamers gave very high numbers – nine. Mats applied the number to the amount of English he used every day:

Mats: Nine […] because I use so much English, uh, I would think I use English words for several hours, and, all the time. I think it is very useful, and I guess that is why the number is so high.

Elias: Around nine, I guess.

G5. Is the bridging of English use in and out of school important to you? Do you think your English skills is developed outside of school?

In these questions regarding these gamers' views on how important the connection of English in and out of school was to them, and if they believed their competency in English was developed outside school, both confirmed that their English use outside school might be the reason why they experienced it as relatively easy to understand their English lessons:

Mats: I have not really thought about that, so I am not that sure. I guess it is positive, but, it might be negative at times, because I might start speaking English–Norwegian and that kind of gets stuck in

my head, and that might not be very good if you have meetings and job interviews, and you start using English words and such, but you should say it in Norwegian, I guess. […] Outside of school, yes. I would imagine it is because I find many new words, for example, I watch YouTube and TV shows, so a lot of new words that I haven't heard before show up there. I usually don't have to search for and translate the word, because I understand the context from it, I guess. And then learn the word, if it shows up several times, and then I know what it means.

Interviewer: Do you think that is positive or negative?

Mats: I think that is quite positive for me. The English lessons might be easier when my vocabulary is greater, and I know some more English words. And my pronunciation too, because my pronunciation I usually take from videos and stuff like that, that I watch.

Elias: I wouldn't really say that the English lessons are that useful for my English learning. […] The English I use outside of school is important. For my vocabulary, and stuff like that.

Interviewer: So would say you get a greater vocabulary from your gaming?

Elias: Yes, I would say that. Then I get to practice and socialize with English.

Both gamers implied their competency in English was mainly developed outside school. Elias stated this directly, saying the English lessons were not that useful for his English learning.

G6. On a scale of 1-10, how much English do you use in the lessons? How orally active do you find yourself to be in the English lessons?

Regarding how the gamers viewed their use of English in English lessons, both reported being active, and not afraid to participate in class, whether in plenary, in groups, or when it came to asking Shirin questions or speaking with her:

Mats: Nine, I think, but right now we are working on a task, writing a lot. So, I have not talked English that much, but I have been writing it more. And in general, if you are going to talk about the assignment, we can talk about it in Norwegian, but the teacher tells us to speak more English. So perhaps eight, for now, I think. […] Quite orally active in class, I guess, but right now I have not talked that much because there haven't been that many questions. And in the classroom, last year, I was active when no one else was active in class, and it does help on the grade, so I really try to keep active during class.

Elias: It depends on what we are doing. […] I believe I am quite orally active. I think it is okay to speak, it is pretty easy.

On a scale of 1–10 of oral activity in class, Mats replied nine, a very high number, whereas Elias did not reply with a number, instead he stated he was fairly active. This finding was corroborated in the video recorded lessons, which showed that both gamers spoke a lot of English, with the teacher as well as with peers and in plenary.

4.3.2 The Social Media Users

During the individual interviews with the two focus students who identified as social media users, they were also asked questions to elicit their perceptions on their English use in and out of school. Similar to the previous section, the findings in this section will also be presented question by question – in bold – with Gina's (orange) and Simen's (brown) responses below. Each question is marked with S (social media user) plus number, to enable my reference to each question and answer in the discussion.

S1. Do you consider yourself as a serious gamer?

The main reason Gina and Simen were considered social media users, were their answers in the student survey, where both self-identified as such. When asked about identifying as serious gamers, they both rejected the gamer profile:

Gina: No, I don't play enough for that, and I only do it for fun […] I just recently started [gaming].
Simen: No, I don't. I only game very occasionally. […] Sometimes daily during winter, but in other periods not at all, like it was a short period during the summer I did game a little bit, but before that I hadn't played at all, because I took my motorbike out to use in February or March.

Both admitted to gaming occasionally, but very little, sometimes daily during wintertime. Simen reasoned that his lack of gaming in the summertime was due to using his motor bike – implying his affinity for motor bikes over gaming. Gina said she just recently started playing games. Similar to the gamers, their responses also coincided with their answers from the surveys and the logs, where both identified as social media users. In the second log, seven months later, Gina confirmed this self-identification: "I am a social media user. I watch Netflix and Yt a lot".

S2. Is English important for you as a person – for your identity?

When asked about English being important for their identity, Gina immediately concurred, whereas Simen was a bit more reluctant concerning identity, although acknowledging the importance of English:

Gina: Yes, I mean, everything I watch and everything I do, I mean, occurs in English. And it is also important when I am at work, being able to read manuals and stuff like that.

Simen: Identity, I don't know, I do need to know English, and I need it to be able to teach myself stuff, so everything is much easier when knowing English. I mean, English is international. And it is nice to know when I search for parts for my motorbike and stuff like that.

Both social media users reflected on their extensive interaction with English, and its importance in society. Furthermore, Gina seemed to appreciate the language in relation to her future career choices, whereas Simen primarily linked English use to his motor bike affinity.

S3. What do you use English for outside of school? Which languages do speak with your friends?

In contrast to the gamers, who used English the most, both social media users admitted to using English words and phrases at times outside school, although they mainly spoke Norwegian with their friends:

Gina: I use English mainly for YouTube and Netflix outside of school, I guess. […] Some makeup videos, and blogs. […] We [friends] speak mostly Norwegian together, but there might be small phrases [in English]. Mostly when talking about games and such. […] I don't game a lot, but when I do, it is a little English.

Simen: Norwegian! […] Occasionally, we might use some English words, I guess, in the context of motorbikes, then I use it a lot, especially when I look for parts to my motor bike, and reviews and stuff like that. […] I mostly use English for YouTube and Netflix, movies, I guess. Entertainment, basically.

Both Gina's and Simen's responses confirmed their identities as social media users, emphasizing how they used English when watching YouTube, Netflix, and blogs outside of school. In addition, both admitted to using English for infrequent gaming, while acknowledging that English was not their main language identity.

S4. How much use do you think you have from your English use outside of school?

When elaborating on how useful English out of school was to the social media users, they both emphasized its relevance:

Gina: Yes, it is very useful. […] I think it broadens my vocabulary and how well I am able to pronounce words.

Simen: Hmm, I don't really know, I guess it is quite useful, if I wasn't able to speak English it would be very hard for me, I think.

Here, the social media users confirmed the relevance of English, while not being an essential language to them. Gina reported developing vocabulary and pronunciation as main reasons for the relevance of English. Simen was more uncertain, but stated it would be difficult for him, not knowing English.

S5. Is the bridging of English use in and out of school important to you? Do you think your English skills is developed outside of school?

When asked about the bridging of English skills in and out of school, these social media users elaborated the importance of learning English themselves at home:

Gina: Yes, very, otherwise I wouldn't have been able to speak English at all.
Interviewer: No. When did you start with that, teaching yourself English outside of school?
Gina: I guess I started thinking about it when I was in eighth grade, then we started getting grades, and then I found out how bad I was. And none of my English teachers were very good, so it was the easiest method I found, to teach myself English. […] It's mostly vocabulary and pronunciation.
Interviewer: How do you practice pronunciation when you watch YouTube or Netflix?
Gina: I often speak a lot of English to myself at home, to hear how it sounds, because then I can hear if it sounds wrong, kind of. So, if I talk to myself, I use English.

Simen: Yes, I think so. Because I believe it is important to constantly practice some English, then you are more prepared in case you are in a situation where you really need it. For example, when going on holidays and such. […] It mostly affects my understanding of English, I am so used to hearing it now, it is like hearing Norwegian.

Interestingly, Gina stated that she taught herself English, practicing it at home and speaking it to herself after realizing she was not able to speak English as all while attending lower secondary school. Simen acknowledged in this response how much English he understands – "It is like hearing Norwegian". It is clear that even though they both identified towards Norwegian, rather than English, and overall interacting less with English orally in comparison to the gamers, they were both far from passive in regard to their English use. English seemed to be important to them both, although less so than for the gamers.

S6. On a scale of 1-10, how much English do you use in the lessons? How orally active do you find yourself to be in the English lessons?

Regarding their use of English in the classroom, specifically, in the English lessons, they both admitted to not participating very actively:

Gina: Haha, a two, I guess. I do it if I have to, but not otherwise.
Interviewer: Do you find it easy or difficult speaking English in class?
Gina: Uh, pretty difficult. […] I have experienced people laughing at me before. […] I might speak English when I answer a question in plenary, [but I'm] not very active. I don't want to say anything wrong, I guess.

Simen: No, I watch, or, I might use it online a bit, when we don't do that much, or when I am done working on my assignments, maybe. And when we do English stuff, writing, reading, things like that. […] I guess I am doing alright […] It's not very difficult, but sometimes I might forget words.

This might be where the most distinctive difference is, between the social media users and the gamers. While the gamers reported to being comfortable with speaking English in class, the social media users were less so. Gina even admitted to answering in Norwegian when peers spoke English to her in group discussions. She gave several reasons for this, mentioning how she had experienced being laughed at, as well as being afraid of answering incorrectly. Simen stated that he found it easier to speak English in pairs, however, not using it a lot in plenary. Gina was one of two girls only in her English class, and when asked whether she found it easier or more difficult to speak English in class, depending on the number of boys in the classroom, Gina, confirmed that the presence of boys was an issue for her:

Gina: Yes, it certainly does not make it any easier. […] Boys don't always think things through before they blurt out something, even if they aren't trying to be mean. But they might comment on something being pronounced wrong.

In summary, Gina explained complex reasons for not being orally active and speaking English in class. Both social media users expressed an awareness of the importance of learning English, and Gina had taken measures in teaching herself English at home.

4.3.3 Main Finding 3: Summary

My third main finding is that the gamers and the social media users both identify with these distinct language profiles based on their affinities outside of school. Although the gamers were more active in their use of English both in the classroom and outside school, the social media users were not necessarily less active in their interaction with English at home compared to the gamers. They came across as quite interested in developing their English, even if they were less inclined to using English at school, and for both language profiles, there seem to be a connection between their use of English in and outside school.

4.4 The importance of affinity spaces

Finally, I present my fourth main finding, in which I acknowledge the importance of affinity spaces for the development of vocational students' English competence both in and outside school. This section synthesizes the three RQs, pertaining to answer the overarching research question: *What characterizes bridging activities in English lessons in two vocational classes?*

First, I would like to address Shirin's beliefs in bridging activities, as expressed in the teacher interview. Her self-report was corroborated in the video observed English lessons, in which Shirin enacted bridging activities in terms of both vertical and horizontal learning experiences. The video observations identified how Shirin created connections between classroom activities and her students' personal experiences, offering accommodations for language learning in terms of using different languages based on students' needs, and facilitating for classroom discourse where the students were offered the opportunities to participate actively in plenary discussions. The videos also showed how Shirin created space for mucking around; developing the English language though risk-free play with the language. Finally, the focus students' perspectives demonstrated how their self-identified language profiles was connected to their oral participation in the classroom.

4.4.1 Language profiles and affinity spaces

Characteristics of these bridging activities are the respect that Shirin demonstrates concerning her students' affinities and the interest in getting to know her students. My main finding is that the concept of affinity space is key here. Affinity space is what the gamers implicitly refer to when they describe their interests in and use of English outside school, mainly through gaming activities online. Affinity space is also what the social media users implicitly refers to as the context in which they use English at home. Most importantly, affinity space is what enables Shirin to connect these extramural English uses to English teaching in the classroom. This finding aligns with Gee (2017), who emphasized that activity-based identities such as these not only involve engagement in entertainment, but also in learning and teaching practices both in the virtual world and in the physical world – both outside school and in the classroom.

Table 4A shows how patterns in the focus students' language profiles emerged as I synthesized their self-reports across the different data sources. Their English use out of school confirm how they move around in specific *affinity spaces*. These spaces include entertainment *and* learning. For the gamers, their gamer affinity space involves games they play, forums and gaming sites they visit related to these games. For the social media users, their social media affinity space involves YouTube, Netflix, and other internet sites. Table 4A confirms their self-reported profile and although each focus student did not participate in all data sources, the social media user profile and the gamer profile are arguably visible.

Table 4A: Activity-based language identities (from interviews, survey, language logs)

Pseudonym	Language identity (survey)	Language profile (survey, log 1 and 2)	English out of school (interview, log 1 and 2)	Affinity space (outside school)	Affinity space (in the classroom)
Simen	Norwegian	Social media user	YouTube, Netflix, entertainment	Social media affinity space: YouTube, internet, Netflix etc.	Social media affinity space: Microbit internet resource, time traveler narrative
Gina	Norwegian	Social media user	YouTube, Netflix, blogs		
Elias	English	Gamer	Gaming, Netflix, YouTube	Gamer affinity space: Games, forums, games sites	Gamer affinity space: Microbit game, time traveler technology
Mats	English	Gamer	Gaming, movies, surfing		

The two final columns in Table 4A illustrate the affinity spaces identified for the gamers and the social media users outside school, based on their self-reports. It also illustrates affinity spaces relevant for the time traveler project in Shirin's two English classes, clearly bridging their affinity space across contexts. Table 4B illustrates a synthesis of the focus students' log activities, both in September 2019 and in April 2020. Simen did not partake in these logs, and Elias partook only in the first log (September 2019). However, the logs place them further into their affinity spaces, based on their interests: Mats reported gaming a lot in September, playing games such as Call of Duty and Apex Legends, using English through these and other activities for more than 5 hours each day. In the log from April, he still identified as a gamer, however stating he played less in April. Gina used English mostly in the same manner in September and April, however, reading more English news in April.

Table 4B. Synthesis of student logs (September 2019 and April 2020)

Profile	Pseudonym	Log 2019	Log 2020
Social media user	Simen	Not participating	Not participating
	Gina	English activities: entertainment (YouTube, music, movies) Amount: 3-5 hours each day	English activities: reading news, entertainment. Amount: less than 3 hours each day
Gamer	Elias	English activities: reading news, social media, entertainment, surfing, gaming (Counterstrike: GO). Amount: 3-5 hours and 5+ hours each day	Not participating
	Mats	English activity: reading news and instructions, entertainment, surfing, gaming (Call of Duty, Apex Legends) Amount: 5+ hours each day	English activities: reading news, entertainment, surfing. Less gaming in this log (Minecraft through English lessons). Amount: 5+ hours most days, some days 1 hour.

4.4.2 Activity-based identities and the extramural English house

Both tables confirm the two language profiles of the focus students (Brevik, 2019). If transferred to the extramural English house (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016), the two profiles occupy different floors, illustrating different preferences for how they use English in their spare time, and the different rooms they like to spend time in. In Figure 4A below, I have placed the social media users on the first floor, in line with Sundqvist and Sylvén's (2016) argument that the two rooms downstairs contain extramural English activities such as listening to music, watching TV and movies, which are easily accessible, require little effort to participate in, does not require much English proficiency from the learner, and the English use here means learning through passive or receptive methods, as these types of media mainly requires listening to English. The gamers and the social media users in this study reported extramural English activities on the first floor (Table 4A and 4B), confirming how these focus students moved around inside the house. However, the second floor, where reading English texts in books and on the computer, as well as gaming, take place, requires an English learner more confident in their English competency, as well as a willingness to produce English on their own through speaking and writing (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). Using English with friends and a network of co-players, the gamers (Elias and Mats) therefore belongs more explicitly to the second floor, compared to the social media users (Simen and Gina), who spend less time on the second floor. This finding is asserted in regard to the confidence of gamers – *not* in regard to the social media users' willingness to produce and read English on their own. In Figure 4A, I have placed the four focus students in my study accordingly inside the extramural English house, based on their habits of English outside school, and their *affinity spaces*. The gamers are illustrated in blue, and the social media users are illustrated in orange.

Figure. 4A. The extramural English house (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 139), with the two profiles added as illustrations. *Note*: Blue=gamers (Mats, Elias). Orange=social media users (Simen, Gina).

Social media users: Gina stated in the interview that she recently started gaming when borrowing her boyfriend's computer, placing her at times on the second floor. However, Gina also explained how she owed her English competency to her own oral practice at home, mentioning in the interview that she often spoke English aloud to herself. I have therefore placed her climbing up the stairs, in between the first and second floors – due to her oral activity; frequently watching TV series and listening to music, and infrequently gaming and reading the news. She also acknowledged how important the practice of English out of school was to her, as she reported that she had not learnt much in the English lessons through lower and now upper secondary school.

This suggests she is *not* a passive and receptive learner, as the model of the extramural English house would define her as, when placing her on the first floor. The fact that her English competency is largely developed at home and at her own initiative, is arguably another reason for her not to be identified as a passive English learner. In the log from May 2020, she also reported reading English news to a large degree, almost every day. Similarly, Simen's engagement in English through sporadic gaming, frequent use of entertainment, and the development of his vocabulary through his motor bike interests signify that he is a considerably active learner. For these reasons, I have placed both of them deliberately a few steps up the stairs, on their way to the second floor. Therefore, their effort and ways of learning English cannot be defined as passive or receptive – as they engage in these activities actively and willingly. Their oral participation in the English lessons, on the other hand, is less pronounced, and they are very seldom seen nor heard speaking English. Gina's complex reasons for not wanting to speak during English lessons also contribute to this pattern.

Gamers: The main difference between the two language profiles lies both in the oral activity and socialization using English outside of school, and in their oral activity in the classroom. In the video recorded lessons, the two gamers (Elias and Mats) can be seen and heard speaking English numerous times – with the teacher, in plenary and with their peers. This finding in turn, largely coincides with their answers from the student interviews regarding their self-reported use of English in the classroom.

4.4.3 Main Finding 4: Summary

In summary, my fourth main finding is that the two language profiles in my study seem to be characterized by some clear patterns. Based on the focus students' answers in the survey, the social media users mainly identify with the Norwegian language, whereas the gamers identify with English. In the student interviews, the gamers interacted with English orally outside of school to a larger degree than the social media users. That finding does not mean that the social media users' interaction with English outside school happen to a lesser degree or more passively, however, both social media users viewed the connection between English in and out of school as positive and important, and all the focus students acknowledged how useful using English out of school could be for their English learning in English lessons. They actively engaged with English activities in their spare time, arguing that they developed their English competency more from what they had learnt out of school compared to in school. The question remains concerning how large effect their interests, interactions and affinity spaces have on their oral participation in the English lessons, and to what degree Shirin's bridging activities and facilitation for mucking around help them participate and speak more English during the lessons, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

5.0 Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss my three main findings towards theory and prior research from Chapter 2. In the previous chapter, I first found that Shirin's strongly believed in the connection of English use in and out of school, and second, that her reported practice on how to implement these in her lessons was confirmed in the video recorded English lessons. I also identified that she executed these bridging activities in her English lessons based on knowledge about her students' English learning outside of school. Third, I found that the focus students – Gina, Simen, Elias and Mats – identified with two language profiles (i.e. gamers and social media users), and that their perspectives on their English learning was relevant for their participation in the bridging activities in the classroom. In this chapter, I will use Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as a foundation to discuss empirical, theoretical, and methodological contributions of my study.

In the first section, I discuss the notion of students' current understanding, as illustrated in the inner circle of Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD model. My main argument here is that the inner circle is immensely important in mapping students' understanding at the beginning of the school year. Using the focus students as a point of departure, I discuss how teachers can get to know their students' interests, language use and identity by actively using the inner circle as a sort of baseline. Essential here, is the mapping of students' English use outside of school in order to capture their "language foundation" for knowledge and competency in English, defining their place in the inner circle of Vygotsky's model of development and learning (1978).

In the second section, I discuss Vygotsky's (1978) notion of the ZPD, illustrated in the middle circle of his model – in terms of what students can understand with help – both in their spare time and in the classroom. My main argument here, is that in the classroom, the teacher's implementation of bridging activities and facilitation for mucking around contribute to developing students' understanding. Essential here, is that the role of the teacher and more competent peers in the classroom mirrors that of instructors and peers in adolescents' online affinity spaces. The bridging of not only English use across contexts, but also the theories of Vygotsky (1978), Thorne and Reinhardt (2008), and Gee (2017) contribute to strengthening the knowledge about students' learning of English in and out of school.

In the third section, I discuss the notion of what is out of reach in terms of understanding, as illustrated in the outer circle of Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD model. My main argument revolves around the need to believe that students might reach the outer circle – using their language

profiles as basis for this discussion. Essential here, is to address not only students' *use* of English in and out of the classroom, but their *learning* of English across contexts, and to use this connection actively to strengthen the link between teaching and learning.

5.1 The inner circle: current understanding

In this section, I will use Vygotsky's (1978) model of development and learning to discuss how teachers' can actively map their students' current understanding at the beginning of the school year. Using the teacher and the focus students in my study as a point of departure, I have placed them inside the model, where I argue the students were at the beginning of the school year. The teacher, Shirin, is placed within the ZPD, as she here represents the help these students will receive when the English lessons begin. The four focus students, Gina and Simen in orange and Mats and Elias in blue, are placed in the inner circle:

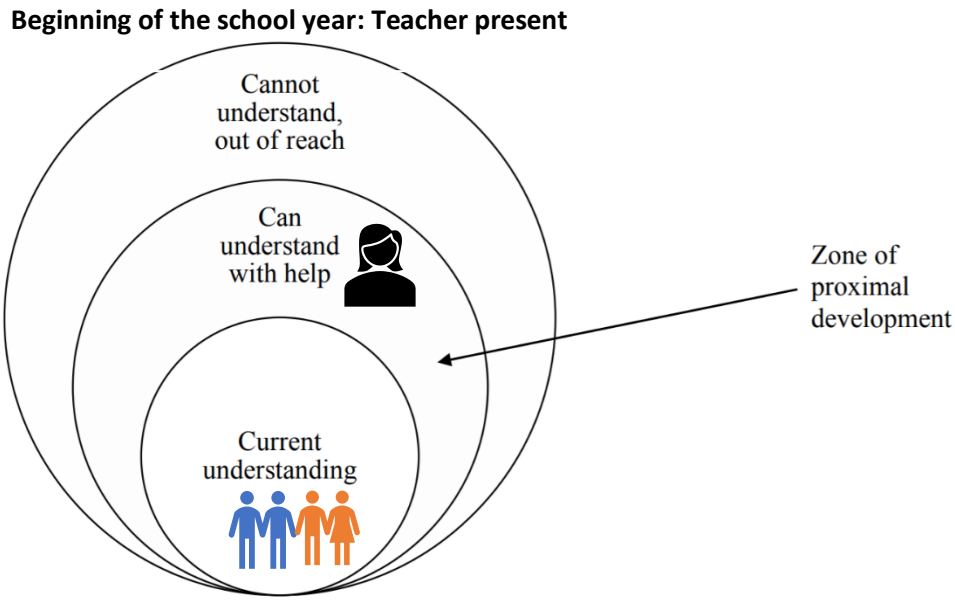

Figure 5A. The four focus students and the teacher placed in Vygotsky's model for development and learning (1978, p. 86). *Note*: Blue=Gamers. Orange=Social media users.

Figure 5A is meant to illustrate the beginning of the school year, and how Shirin through her teacher–student interviews and written assignments – concerning her students' interests in and use of English outside of school – aimed to map the students' current understanding of English. I argue this mapping represents the students' language foundation as they enter upper secondary school, and that although this foundation is developed both on the basis of prior schooling and their English use outside of school, their current understanding mainly relies on their current

use. Therefore, asking students about their current interests and use outside of school (i.e. horizontal learning), is potentially more effective in order to learn about the students' affiliations with the English language, than by mapping their vertical skills (Gee, 2017), for instance through vocabulary tests (e.g., Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015) or reading tests (e.g., Brevik & Hellekjær, 2018). Although I acknowledge the importance of both vertical skills and proficiency tests, what I am suggesting here, is that getting to know the students involves the building of relations through learning about their interests and language identities, which is more in line with Gee's (2017) notion of horizontal learning.

My main argument is that based on Gee's (2017) theoretical concepts of affinity space, activity-based identity and mucking around, teachers could profit from learning how their students spend their time mucking around in affinity spaces that align with their interests, and their activity-based identities. One way of getting to know these aspects of students' language use is to do exactly what Shirin did; encourage the students to share information about the activities they partake in outside of school (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016) and the language profiles they identify with (Brevik, 2019a) – at the beginning of the school year. At this point, they all have developed individual English competencies, based on their current understanding, which makes up the inner circle of Vygotsky's (1978) model of development. Thus, this mapping that Shirin did at the beginning of the school year, was a premise, or point of departure, for the implementation of bridging activities in her English lessons.

The four focus students in this study may have formed activity-based identities through their internet use. For the gamers, such identities apply to their online gaming. When Mats and Elias were asked whether they considered themselves serious gamers, Mats confirmed, while Elias was less certain. However, both explained that they gamed every day, and that they used English a lot while gaming, stating how this helped develop their English competence. Gaming for these the two focus students, and especially for Mats, therefore, might have contributed to the formation of their language profiles towards which they based their identity and affinity. For the social media users, their activity-based identities apply to their activities on social media and the internet (e.g. Netflix, YouTube). For Simen, it was evident that his affiliation and identity leaned towards his motor bike interests, and he also stated that he and his network of friends often used English terminology while talking about their shared affinity – defining his motor bike-related language use as fundamental for his learning of English. For Gina, her interaction with the English language was perhaps less directly evident through her answers

regarding social media use. However, she testified to watching YouTube and reading specific blogs frequently, suggesting an affiliation towards internet use and social media.

For all four focus students, these identities and affiliations created an important foundation for their current English proficiency. In line with Gee's (2017) argument, when a person takes on an activity-based identity, they are part of a network of people who develop and transform ways to do certain things and solve certain sorts of problems effectively. This means that Mats and Elias are "into" gaming, not only because they know about gaming, but because they game themselves, to such an extent that they identify as gamers (Brevik, 2019a; Gee, 2017). Similarly, Gina and Simen are "into" social media use, and are most likely recognized as such by other social media users. Thus, they are labelled social media users not only because they *know* about online forums, Netflix and YouTube videos, but because they *use* these affinity spaces themselves (Brevik, 2019a; Gee, 2017). This further aligns with Gee's (2017) account of how someone will adjust their language towards their preferred language identity and audience. For the focus students in my study, their English language will most likely be shaped by their affiliation, which in turn constitute a starting point for further English learning. I argue that their teacher, Shirin, uncovered this information as a direct result of her engagement in getting to know them and their interests, and how they learn English out of school. Of note, she got to know all her students this way, both the ones she already knew from the previous school year (e.g., Konrad, see chapter 4), and those who were new to her.

Comparing the focus students' use of English to Brevik's (2019a) language profiles, underscores their language identities. Based on her argument that language competence is contingent to individual variation, the focus students' reported activities outside school are indications of their current understanding of English. Both the students and Shirin acknowledged that there were pros rather than cons in their engagement with activities, and that the students would not invest as much in their online gaming and social media use if it was not interesting for them. Thus, I argue in line with Brevik (2019a), that language awareness is demonstrated in their discussion of their learning of English outside school.

Based on this information from the focus students' language logs, surveys and interviews, I found that the activities they reported also helped me place them inside the extramural English house (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). This information was not available to Shirin, but she got similar information from them through her teacher–student interviews. The social media users spent most of their time downstairs – watching YouTube and Netflix. Conversely, the gamers moved around in the house to a larger degree; spending most time upstairs gaming, and in

addition, spending time downstairs by watching YouTube and other forms of entertainment. Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) state that climbing upstairs in the house require more motivation and strength, as well as relying more heavily on their own English skills. However, I argue that first floor activities, such as singing to music and watching movies might indeed develop their skills, if they choose to be productive and active through these activities, which is the reason I have placed Gina and Simen on the stairs between the floors (see Figure 5A).

My argument is that categorizing adolescents as passive or receptive learners, or even arguing they do not learn much while watching or listening to English would be misleading. For Gina, her strategic imitation of oral English through her choice of entertainment, is highly active. Additionally, Gina and Simen would not have stated that they developed their English skills outside school, if they considered their English activities to be passive. Moreover, Shirin stated the same perspective in her interview, that part of what she knows about her students' language use was how they actively developed their English skills through different activities and spaces.

Thus, based on the analysis of the data in my study (student survey, language logs and student interviews), I have contributed methodological and empirical knowledge about how students learn English through activities outside of school, revealing patterns relevant for teachers to map their students' current understanding. In line with Vygotsky's (1978) model, I have also offered theoretical contributions by discussing the students' language affiliations towards Gee's (2017) activity-based identities, Brevik's (2019) language profiles, and Sundqvist and Sylvén's (2016) extramural English house. Gee's (2017) argument that a person might develop an activity-based identity by repeatedly doing certain activities and visiting certain online spaces, and that the participation in affinity spaces might develop a feeling of identity towards the specific interest (Gee, 2017), aligns with my findings. Hence, mapping students' language identities might prove fruitful to uncover their current understanding of English.

5.2 The ZPD: understanding with help

In this section, I will use Vygotsky's (1978) model to discuss how the teacher and more competent peers might contribute to further develop students' English competence. As my findings suggested, there are two parallel learning processes taking place for the students – the learning of English in and out of school. I discuss some implications of learning across these contexts, and what it implies to draw the students into the ZPD circle. Lastly, I discuss some plausible and positive effects if the teacher includes bridging activities in English lessons.

5.2.1 The ZPD in the classroom

Many aspects of how Shirin suggested she wanted to bridge extramural activities to her English lessons constitute a learning environment where the students, with Shirin's help, might reach their ZPD. I found that the video recordings of the English lessons in classes 2A and 2D demonstrated how Shirin mediated her students' language development through play, which was exemplified in Extracts 8 and 9, and also in Extract 7, I argue (see chapter 4). Connecting her instruction to the analytical concept of *classroom discourse*, it is arguable that these conversations played an important role in providing opportunities for *mucking around* during English lessons (Gee, 2017); facilitating students' learning and development in English.

Offering opportunities for classroom discourse and mucking around is, however, not necessarily enough for all students to seize the opportunity to talk. In looking at how much the focus students used on the opportunity during these English lessons, there was a clear difference to how much they deployed this. The gamers, Mats and Elias (class 2D), had several conversations with the teacher – in English – during the video recorded lessons. As for the social media users, Simen and Gina in class 2A, both stated in the interviews that they did not like speaking English during English lessons. Simen revealed that he found it easy to speak English in pairs, but not in plenary, although he liked listening to others speaking English and using English online on his computer. Gina rated her English use during lessons as two on a scale from one to ten, explaining that she did not like speaking in class and that she was afraid that someone would laugh at her English use. She also explained that she was afraid of answering incorrectly and that the large number of boys in her class made her even more unsure, as she was one of two girls only. Thus, despite Shirin providing similar opportunities in both classrooms, the gamers seized the opportunity to participate in classroom discourse and muck around to a larger extent that what the social media users did.

To illustrate how the students were draw into the ZPD, as well as how they use the opportunities for development offered in the classroom, I have placed the students and teacher in the ZPD (Figure 5B). Due to the greater extent of mucking around in the classroom, I have placed Mats and Elias (blue) slightly above Gina and Simen (orange). I argue that although Shirin helped both the gamers and the social media users, the gamers might develop their English competence at school to a larger degree than the social media users do, since the gamers were more active during Shirin's lessons.

English learning in school: Teacher present

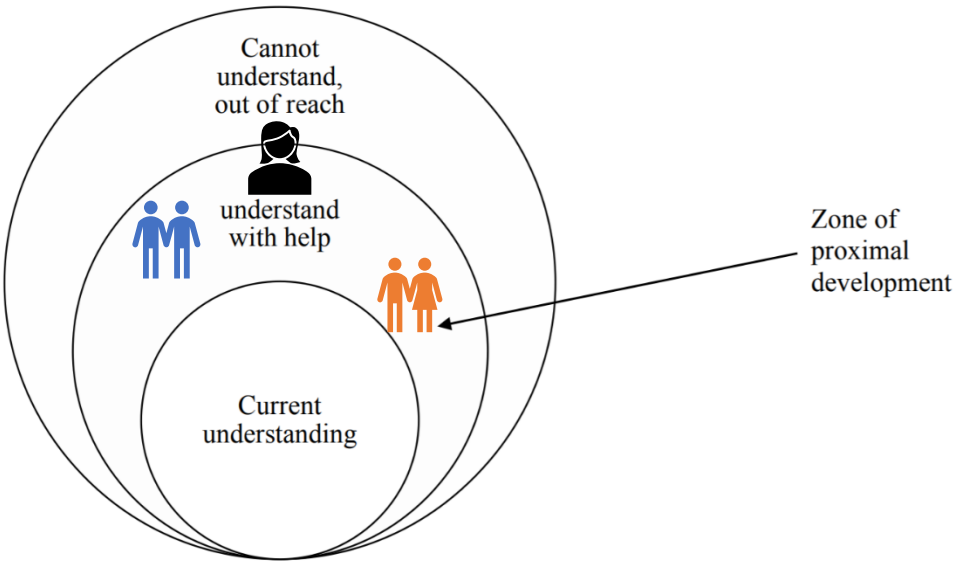

Figure 5B: The focus students and the teacher placed in the ZDP (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) during English lessons. *Note*: Blue=gamers. Orange=social media users.

Connecting this argument to Gee's (2017) theory of how mucking around mediates horizontal learning, indicates the importance of connecting students' language profiles to the bridging activities in the classroom. The notion of horizontal learning further underscores the importance of allowing a learner of a second language time to "explore the lay of the land, try out various possibilities and taking risks, without worrying about ratcheting up a skill tree" (Gee, 2017, p. 43). Furthermore, in both of Shirin's English classes, the students initiated conversation in English themselves, which seemed to support Vygotsky's (1978) notion of students taking on the role of more competent peers. The threshold for speaking and mucking around ultimately appeared low in both classes, with Shirin's contribution. For the focus students, the threshold seemed slightly lower for Mats and Elias, in comparison with Gina and Simen, which aligns with their language profiles (Brevik, 2019a). Their gamers' higher amount of conversations in English and mucking around, places them higher in the ZDP due to their horizontal learning.

5.2.2 The ZPD outside the classroom

Considering the focus students' extramural activities, and how they all stated that their English competence was mainly developed outside school, I argue that they entered the ZPD outside school as well. Gee (2017) relates activity-based identities to learning, through what he names *distributed teaching and learning systems*, which he uses as an example of learning within the ZPD. Adolescents who have gained an affiliation with something, such as online gaming, often

join interest-driven sites on the internet, and Gee (2017) states that these are affinity spaces where people offer and receive instruction from each other. He refers to such interactions as judgement systems, and the more knowledgeable and experienced peers as surrogate teachers.

In the language logs, Mats reported that he often played online multiplayer games, such as *Call of Duty* and *Apex Legends*, and Elias reported to play Counter-Strike: Global Offensive. They confirmed playing online games with other members as a team, where the gamers depend on each other to win, therefore also allowing for instruction and guidance of one another in English, acting as each other's surrogate teachers, or more competent peers. Thus, both Mats and Elias would be placed within the ZPD while being on these sites and during gaming, suggesting how they developed their English competence orally during these activities. Gee (2017) draws parallels between the judgement system learners meet in these distributed teaching and learning systems to judgement systems they meet within the social context of the classroom. In fact, both Mats and Elias stated in the interviews that they used English when gaming, and that the English they used outside of school was useful to them. Elias emphasized how important the use of English during gaming was to him, as it allowed him to socialize and practice English – thus explicitly stating how gaming helped him develop his English skills.

Although the two social media users believed that developing their English competence out of school was important, the question remains if they, in their English-related activities online, were exposed to affinity spaces that included people who offered instructions and guidance to each other. Judgement systems with surrogate teachers that allow for learners of English to interact and socialize, are arguably not present in the shape of a person to communicate with directly, on sites like YouTube and Netflix. However, it needs to be acknowledged that there are in fact people that could act as surrogate teachers for social media users as well, where learning within the ZPD might occur. When binge-watching TV-series (Brevik, 2019b), when adolescents aspire to become like or act as certain characters, surrogate teachers might be found in these characters. A surrogate teacher in the shape of a movie character, might be able to mediate and regulate someone's English learning. This applied to Gina, when she practiced her English proficiency alone while watching series, movies and YouTube tutorials. Even though it did not happen in a social context, she was comfortable doing it. Simen, however, socialized with peers through his motor bike interests – learning English through the judgement systems and surrogate teachers in the same affinity space. Thus, placing focus students within the ZPD out of school would also be accurate, learning English with more competent peers online:

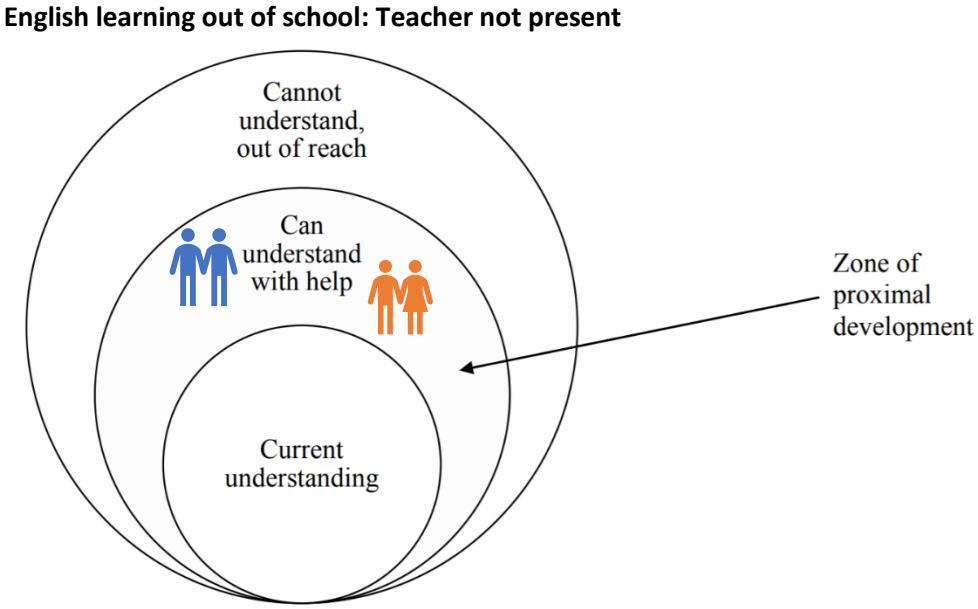

Figure 5C: Focus students placed within the ZPD – when interacting with English outside school (based on Vygotsky 1978, p. 86). *Note*: Blue=gamers. Orange=social media users.

Similar to Figure 5B, I have chosen to place the gamers (blue) slightly higher compared to the social media users (orange) her as well, as the judgement systems and surrogate teachers the gamers meet through their gaming are more apparent. Based on this situation, they might have been more comfortable using English even at the beginning of the school year – as suggested by their extensive English oral participation in the video recorded lessons at the beginning of the school year. Interestingly, in the student survey, the gamers reported English to be the language they identified most with, whereas the social media users selected Norwegian. These language identities might hold ground in their English learning both in and out of school, despite being offered opportunities to participate in classroom discourse and to muck around.

5.2.3 Teacher's role in bridging activities

The findings in the previous chapter demonstrated that there was a uniqueness in the data from Shirin's classes 2A and 2D, in the way she was committed to building upon her students' interests in English lessons and assignments. In section 5.2.1, I argued that she helped mediate the students' learning by allowing for and encouraging the student to muck around, thus helping the students learn horizontally. In this section, I argue that the way she also helped her students learn vertically, developed the students' English competence and knowledge. First, I would like to bring to light what Gee (2017) names *+experiences* (p. 20). For an experience to become a +experience, three criteria are required:

1. The learner must have an action to take in the experience, such as having a goal or an expectation to fulfill
2. The learner must emotionally care about the outcome of the experience
3. The learner must have someone or something to help them know what to pay attention to in order to carry out the action successfully

Through these criteria, the +experience will ultimately, according to Gee (2017), contribute to learning and development. Using the notion of +experiences actively in the classroom could help teachers bridge students' English learning across contexts. In the ZPD circle, teachers are crucial to the first and third criteria, in creating actions and expectations for the learner, and simultaneously helping them carrying out the action successfully, in line with the notion of more competent others. However, I connect criterion 2 to Gee's (2017) notion of affinity spaces, which students might not often find themselves in during English learning in school. If affinity spaces relate to interests, affiliations, and activity-based identities, these are not necessarily offered in the classroom. As the four focus students evidently chose affinity spaces outside of school, the question is how to connect these spaces to learning in the classroom.

I argue the most important and evident intervention Shirin made in her lessons towards this, was to create an affinity space in the classroom by using bridging activities. First, she raised her students' language awareness by mapping their interests out of school in student–teacher interviews. Second, she developed assignments that connected to their interests, such as the time traveler project and Microbit. Third, Shirin increased her own and the students' empowerment in her English lessons, through allowing for learner autonomy and agency. By connecting her lessons and assignments to the students' interests out of school and encouraging the students to muck around during these activities, the students encountered the second criteria for +experiences, due to Shirin's creation of an affinity space in the classroom.

I therefore argue that Shirin during the video recorded lessons, demonstrated how all three criteria for an experience to become a +experience was met in classes 2A and 2D. This was largely due to the time traveler project, in which the students were allowed to bring in their own interests related to technology, as well as building on their own vocational expertise. These artefacts align with Thorne and Reinhardt's (2008) account of how bridging activities might increase the overall quality of English learning in a classroom.

5.3 The outer circle: out of reach?

Drawing on Vygotsky's (1978) notion of mediation of an artifact, meaning how language acts as mediation between the individual and the social world surrounding them, I will argue that focus students in my material mediated their own learning out of school. Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner (2015) state that if a person is proficient in a language, they are also self-regulated in terms of using that language as a tool in social environments, indicating how the students might become increasingly aware of their own English learning outside school. This notion of self-regulation applied particularly to the gamers, through their extensive gaming activity in English out of school, helping them regulate this mediation to a large degree themselves – gaining high self-regulation (Vygotsky, 1978). Arguably, the social media users might mediate their English learning to a lesser extent outside school based on their current understanding, in which they were less active users of English.

If the social environment is the classroom during English lessons, my findings showed that it was less challenging for the gamers to speak English, or at least they demonstrated more active participation in classroom discourse than did the social media users. In turn, it would be easier for the gamers to reach the outer circle in Vygotsky's (1978) model for learning and development, and expand their ZDP upwards and outwards, with the teacher's help. As Thorne and Reinhardt (2008) argue, the ultimate goal of bridging activities is to "foster critical awareness of the anatomy and functional organization of a wide range of communicative practices relating to both digital and analogue textual conventions" (p. 567). Therefore, by teachers strategically implementing bridging activities in a classroom, students could over time be better able to regulate and connect their English learning in and out of school themselves. I believe this is a great opportunity to teach students to acknowledge the value of their English learning outside school – and to become aware of the bridge between their different routes to learn English. The students could even learn how to build these bridges themselves.

5.4 Didactic implications

Through analysis of the rich data material I have used in my MA study, I have found that extensive use of oral English at home is invaluable. Through socializing and practicing with peers in settings where English learners are given the opportunity to increase their oral proficiency, might encourage students also to use English orally during English lessons. The main premise is that the teacher needs to actively encourage and facilitate such language use.

A successful example of a classroom environment where the threshold was considerably low for speaking English and initiating discussion in plenary, with peers and with the teacher, was found in the two classes in my study. The two gamers were great examples of students finding it easy to contribute to oral discussions in class. Viewed from an English didactic perspective, introducing bridging activities in the same manner as Shirin did, would be a desired situation for English teachers. Shirin could be a model for how to successfully create a safe and playful environment for students to increase their English proficiency – both horizontally and vertically. I argue that teachers should aspire to create these types of environments, to ensure English learning – allowing for playing around with a language and lowering the threshold of speaking English in class should be a pedagogical aim.

Further, this study evidently shows a teacher who actively engaged in how and to what extent her students used English in their spare time, thereby learning about their students' language profiles (Brevik, 2019a). I argue that teachers *should* get to know their students' engagement with English out of school, as adolescents argue that the development of their proficiency in this language relates to such use to a large degree (Brevik, 2016; 2019a). Mapping student interests though teacher–student interviews and by designing assignments that involve affinity spaces could in turn result in students' increased interest in the English subject. Teacher empowerment would also be a positive side effect, as building on students' expertise in their lessons allows for English lessons of high quality (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). This effect could result from teachers knowing their language profiles and identities, such as students identifying as gamers, surfers or social media users (Brevik, 2019a), or being able to place their students on the different floors of the extramural English house (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016), and getting an overview of how and when students participate in affinity spaces (Gee, 2017).

Lastly, I hold that teachers should give their students assignments that directly or indirectly relate to their interests and interactions with English out of school – where the time traveler project emerges as a great example. Such assignments allow students to draw on either historical artifact that present certain eras or societies, or technology that they feel comfortable learning and talking about. As this was an assignment that resulted in an oral presentation or recording of themselves, it allowed the students to play around, or muck around, while practicing and using their own interests as a premise for their final product.

6.0 Conclusion

In this final chapter, I summarize my findings and offer some concluding remarks on my study, along with some contributions. Finally, I offer some suggestions for further research (6.1).

In this MA study, I have aimed to answer the overarching research question: *What characterizes bridging activities in English lessons in two vocational classes?* I have used an extensive amount of primary data to answer the question (teacher interview, observations and video recordings of English lessons, student survey answers, student interviews and language logs) collected during three weeks at the research site – a large vocational upper secondary school. In addition, the language log was repeated seven months after the initial data collection. My main methodological contribution is the mixing of these data in order to bring various perspectives and voices into my data analysis, in addition to answering the research question using both qualitative and quantitative data.

The three sub-questions are answered through four main findings, which in turn, contributed in answering my main research question:

RQ1*:* *What are the English teacher beliefs regarding her students' English learning out of school, and the implementation of such learning?*

RQ2*:* *In what ways does the teacher implement and bridge students' use of English out of school in the English lessons?*

RQ3*:* *What are focus students' perspectives on their use of English in and out of school?*

My *main finding 1* is that the English teacher, Shirin, strongly believed in implementing the English skills her students had acquired outside school into her English lessons. Her main priority in the beginning of each school year was to create good relations with the students, to learn about their current understanding of English, to facilitate for bridging the English lessons to their interests, and in turn develop their English learning. Shirin accommodated for English learning to a large degree in her lessons, through differentiating her teaching material to the vocational classes, and taking into consideration how they learnt English in their spare time. This is shown in the oral assignment the students were given during the weeks of data collection in these classes, as well as being very visible through her positive contact with the students. Main finding 1 thus answers RQ1.

In *main finding 2*, my analysis using analytical concepts from the PLATO manual, suggested that bridging activities the English lessons in classes 2A and 2D aligned with connections to personal experience, accommodations for language learning, and classroom discourse. This was done through positively and successfully carrying out bridging activities that strengthened the students' English learning in the classroom. Additionally, these bridging activities differentiated contributed to a positive classroom environment in both classes. An interesting finding here was that students mucked around and explored the language with their peers and the teacher, and the teacher encouraged such playful, horizontal learning to a large degree. In turn, this lowered the threshold for speaking English in plenary, in groups, and with the teacher. The situations in which the students were mucking around, embodied the teacher asking about their interests, what they were doing on their computers, and other topics both relevant and irrelevant to the topic of the lesson. Main finding 2 thus answers RQ2.

In *main finding 3,* I found that four focus students interacted with English to different degrees in their spare time. The two focus students who identified as gamers used English extensively at home, for online gaming with a network of gamers. The two focus students who identified as social media users also used English online, but did not socialize or practice their English orally to the same extent as the gamers. Instead, they reported listening to English while watching series, movies and YouTube tutorials, "receiving" English to a larger degree than the gamers. Nonetheless, this difference did not indicate that the social media users were passive learners – in fact, they both stated that they developed their English competence through these out of school activities. Interestingly, I found great overlap between the focus students' use of English in and out of school. Both gamers reported that they used English extensively outside school and that they found it easy to speak English in the classroom, which was confirmed in the video recordings. Conversely, both social media users reported that they seldom spoke English outside school and that they found it less comfortable to speak English in class. These self-reports were also recognized in the video recordings, as the social media users rarely talked in plenary or to the teacher in these lessons. This might be due to their smaller degree of English oral activity and socialization outside school. In *main finding 4*, I identified the value of affinity spaces, which Shirin designed and facilitated during all video-observed English lessons. Affinity spaces are relevant examples of how to bridge students'' language learning across contexts. Perhaps even more importantly, the focus students and their classes exemplify how well bridging activities facilitates for English learning. The teacher Shirin is a unique and positive example for how many opportunities there are for an English teacher to build upon the

students' out of school-competency in English, and how a teacher can create and establish a wholesome environment where the students feel comfortable speaking English to her and with each other. Main finding 3 and 4 combined, answers RQ3.

6.1 Suggestions for further research

There is limited research on how teachers in Norway actively build upon the students' competency in English from out of school, and the role their interests play for the development of their competence. Additionally, there is not much research on how adolescents interact with English out of school in Norway. I therefore offer some specific suggestions below, on how these two aspects might be investigated.

Firstly, I argue that teachers' beliefs about students' interests and interactions with English must be investigated to a larger degree, as well as if and how teachers implement their beliefs in the classroom. This might contribute to trends, guidelines or even regulations in how to implement the English adolescents meet outside of school into the classroom, which I argue could increase English learning in Norwegian classrooms. I also argue that it would be interesting to examine how and to what degree teachers allow for exploring, playing and mucking around with the English language–and if teachers facilitate for such experiences.

Secondly, I argue that adolescents' interactions with English out of school must be further investigated in the Norwegian educational context. Some studies show that adolescents interact with social media, gaming, and online surfing for several hours every day, but few studies have investigated the specific details of how such interaction lead to their learning of English. This needs to be further known, enabling researchers and educators to better know exactly *how* they learn English through these interactions.

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Appendix: Language log questions (Norwegian)

Om din bruk av engelsk utenfor skolen

13. Gjorde du noe av dette I GÅR? Du kan sette flere kryss:

Du må velge minst ett svaralternativ.

a) Leste nyheter på engelsk

b) Leste en bok/tegneserie på engelsk

c) Leste noe på Internett på engelsk

d) Leste og/eller skrev fan fiction på engelsk

e) Brukte Facebook på engelsk

f) Så på TV-serie/film på engelsk

g) Lyttet til musikk på engelsk

h) Så på og/eller lyttet til Youtube-klipp på engelsk

i) Så/leste blogg(er) på engelsk

j) Gamet/spilte onlinespill på engelsk

k) Lagde digitalt materiale på engelsk (f.eks. blogg eller videoklipp)

l) Snakket engelsk med norske venner

m) Snakket engelsk med venner/familie i utlandet

n) Brukte engelsk til noe annet

o) Brukte IKKE engelsk utenfor skolen i går

14. Hvor mye tid brukte du på engelsk utenfor skolen i går? (Hvis 0 timer kommer du direkte til spørsmål 17)

a) 0 timer

b) Mindre enn 3 timer

c) 3-5 timer

d) Mer enn 5 timer

17. Spilte du online spill i går?

a) Ja

b) Nei

17. a) Skriv navnet på spillet her: