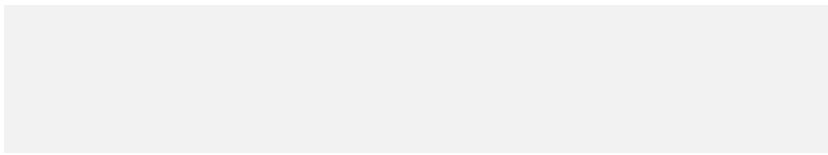# MASTEROPPGAVE

Reading comprehension

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Abstract

Thesis: Reading comprehension

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Purpose: Developing reading comprehension and strategies

Theory: Reading comprehension theory from different language researchers

Method: Qualitative research of classroom practices through the means of a survey

Result: The results may be said to be divided as to how teachers focus on reading in their teaching. The teachers in the survey focus well on some elements of reading comprehension and teach according to what research suggests, mainly in vocabulary teaching, but according to current research several ought to revise and improve their reading instruction, especially the pre-reading phase of reading, as many failed to focus on pre-reading activities. Further, these respondents ought to vary their post-reading activities more, should they be up to par with current research findings. Overall, the explicit reading instruction and focus on reading strategies ought to be further implemented by many of the respondents.

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1. Introduction

Reading is basic to all learning, both in learning in general and in acquisition of languages. Society is highly dependent on knowledge and information. There is a constant overflow of information from numerous sources; the traditional: books, newspapers and magazines, and more modern, digital sources (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:168). It is vital to be able to navigate in these sources and search out what is needed. This requires multiple skills, as the ability to navigate in the text overflow, to read multi-medially, digitally, and intertextually, in addition to the mere comprehension of the written text and its words, phrases, structure, and genres. In a knowledge society it is necessary to acquire the ability to understand, integrate, and combine information from multiple sources (ibid). Evidently, the requirements for readers today are enormous.

Putting letters and words together to form words, phrases, and sentences is what reading is all about, but one must also comprehend what is learned – to fully understand a text one has to interact with the text and add meaning to it. Astrid Roe states that "reading comprehension is to make meaning of what we read" (2014:24). Vivian Cook further claims that reading occurs in context, and that the meaning of a text is derived from the previous knowledge stored in the reader's mind and the processes through which the reader tackles it (2008:121). This shows that it is not enough to decode the letters and words, one has to add knowledge and meaning to what is read. But how to make meaning of what is read, and how can teachers help students comprehend what they read?

Being a teacher is complex and many-sided, and unpredictability is high. Teachers have to make their teaching both interesting and relevant for their students. In order to reach the students and actually teach them something, it is vital to teach in a relevant manner, opening up for student participation, and consider all the different individuals in the classroom. For the students to be able to read with comprehension, the teacher has to inspire the students and make them realize the relevance and benefits of reading. Teachers have to reflect upon many aspects, as needs, motivations, characteristics, and resources of their learners to be able to meet their learners in the best possible manner (Council of Europe, n.d.).

This master thesis discusses how to facilitate and ensure reading comprehension in the teaching of English, and what it means to be able to read with comprehension. I will focus on different reading techniques developed to increase reading comprehension, as well as look into certain aspects that often cause problems for reading comprehension. This will be compared to how English teachers at three different schools in Vestfold, one upper

elementary and two lower secondary, deal with reading comprehension and their use of and focus on reading techniques and strategies.

The research question in this master thesis is "Do teachers of English focus on reading strategies and comprehension in their teaching?". To be able to answer the research question, I have conducted a survey of classroom practices by the means of a questionnaire regarding reading comprehension that will be explained in the following. The thesis consists of theory related to reading comprehension in combination with the surveys and the results. The research method and the survey will be accounted for, and the results from the survey are discussed and compared to reading instruction research. Finally, the results are summed up.

2. Background

2.1. Literature review and key concepts

That it is important to focus on reading comprehension is, as will be shown in the following, beyond doubt. It is crucial to make the students realize that reading, and reading with comprehension, is of vital importance not only in school, but in everyday life. Whether it is the need for learning something new, increasing knowledge, or searching for information, one has to be able to read with comprehension (Maagerø & Seip Tønnessen, 2006). The ability to read includes several aspects and components that all ought to be focused upon.

In the following, I will look into what reading comprehension is, what to focus upon concerning reading comprehension, and how it may be increased by focusing on comprehension of words, concepts and phrases. Further, I will discuss why reading should be in focus in all teaching, as reading comprehension is at the base of all learning and understanding in every subject, and essential in students' progress and development. I will introduce, briefly, one reading strategy: the reciprocal reading model, and I will look into the importance of vocabulary knowledge, motivation and oral and writing skills on reading comprehension. The following key concepts, relevant for reading instruction, will be explained: paratext, multi-modal reading, digital reading, multiple texts, morphological knowledge, sayings, idioms and metaphors, and schema and script.

2.2. Reading comprehension

Reading is a complicated skill that demands considerable time and practice to develop (Lundahl 1998:175). The ability "to read" involves more than merely decoding a text. In addition to the practical skill of putting letters together, turning them into words, one is also supposed to understand what is read: one has to combine decoding; the ability of putting words together, with comprehension; the result of interpreting linguistic elements (ibid). Philip B. Gough and William Tunmer (1986) explain reading comprehension as the formula:

"Decoding (D) x Language Comprehension (LC) = Reading Comprehension (RC)". (www1).

The multiplication relates to the fact that everything that is done to facilitate reading will multiply the result, in addition to alluding to that if one of the elements is missing, the result will be zero. Hence, if there is no understanding of what is read, there is no actual reading; there is no reading comprehension. When this first goal of reading is achieved, one has to add

further elements to the reading process in order to become a proficient reader. The next steps on the way to full reading ability are motivation, empathy, and metacognitive ability (Kverndokken 2012:28). When a reader manages all these elements, he/she reads with high proficiency.

According to Ivar Bråten & Helge Strømsø, reading is often described as an interactive process, where comprehension is a result of joint efforts from the author and the reader (2007:196). The author has to formulate the content so that it is interpretable, whereas the reader must mobilize the skills and knowledge needed to comprehend the text – a joint venture. However, the reader is the one most likely to spoil the process; fail to understand, give in, and stop reading. Hence, the reader is considered to be the one most responsible for gaining comprehension. This questions the interactivity of reading (ibid).

Reading strategies and learning strategies are tightly intertwined, and what is considered vital in learning processes is further applicable to reading comprehension (Roe 2014:84). Hence, many researchers refer to the two concepts as one and the same (ibid.). If one fails to understand the content of texts or tasks, learning and fulfilling of tasks will be difficult, if not impossible. As the students grow older, the requirements for reading with accuracy and proficiency steadily increase. In lower secondary, the subjects become harder than in elementary school, and the amount of theory to be read is vast. This is further fortified in higher education. Nowadays, many students face several years of higher education, and good reading strategies are essential (Roe 2014:88). To be able to read with fluency and accuracy and to understand what is read is essential in all learning.

Louise Rosenblatt argues that comprehension is a result of a transaction between the reader and the text, and explains reading a text as:

> *"an event involving a particular individual and a particular text, happening at a particular time, under particular circumstances, in a particular social and cultural setting, and as part of the ongoing life of the individual and the group"*
>
> (1985:100, in Lundahl 1998:194).

This quote portrays well the full challenge of reading, and it shows the immense variety of elements that are vital in understanding texts.

2.3. What distinguishes high proficiency readers?

Roe states that reading and learning is highly intertwined, and consciousness in the learning process, knowledge about learning strategies, and abilities to use the strategies adequately are considered vital. She further emphasises the importance of a high metacognitive ability, motivation, and self-regulated learning (2014:84). It is important for learners to supervise

their own learning process, to want to learn and see the necessity of it, and to be in charge of and responsible for the process of learning new material. Hence, it might be valuable for teachers to be able to distinguish the learners with good opportunities to become high proficiency readers from those who are likely to struggle more with reading comprehension.

In distinguishing proficient readers, the concepts "strategies" and "skills" are important. Mary Beth Allen and Maureen McLaughlin (2002) divide the concepts and explain "strategies" as more complex than different, individual skills, or techniques. The reason is that the strategies demand that the reader uses more methods or techniques than using specific skills does. Peter Afflerbach, Scott Paris, and David Pearson (2008) sum this up by stating that skills become strategies only when one comprehends how and when they function, when one realizes their limits, and when one is capable of choosing the appropriate method. One might claim that reading strategies are all the different methods one uses to increase comprehension, whereas skills are the small steps and ways into understanding.

Competent, high proficiency readers are distinguished by being able to steadily increase their competence regarding independent use of strategies. A strategic reader is, according to Pearson (1993; in Roe 2014:87), someone who possesses various tools to be able to solve any problem that might arise while reading. In addition, they have a good metacognitive competence, ascertaining that they supervise their reading and are conscious of which strategies they ought to use when, and if, comprehension fails (Roe 2014:87).

As the need for good reading strategies are even more crucial in higher education, Muskingum College in Ohio, USA, has published excessive information about reading comprehension, reading strategies, and what signifies proficient readers versus poorer ones in order to prepare their students for college life. In teaching reading, it might be valuable to have an understanding of how proficient, independent readers go about approaching a new text to be able to sort out what ought to be focused upon in reading instruction. Some of the elements explaining what is significant for proficient, independent readers as opposed to poorer; more dependent readers are put together in a table found on Muskingum College's web site (Cook (1989), from Muskingum College 2016):

PROFICIENT OR MATURE READERS	POOR OR IMMATURE READERS
BEFORE READING	
• Activate prior knowledge • Understand task and set purpose • Choose appropriate strategies	• Start reading without preparation • Read without knowing why • Read without considering how to approach the material
DURING READING	

• Focus attention, anticipate and predict • Use fix-up strategies when lack of understanding occurs • Use contextual analysis to understand new terms • Use text structure to assist comprehension • Organize and integrate new information • Self-monitor comprehension by knowing comprehension is occurring and knowing what is being understood	• Read to get done • Are easily distracted • Do not know what to do when lack of understanding occurs • Do not recognize important vocabulary • Do not see any organization • Add on, rather than integrate, new information • Do not realize they do not understand
AFTER READING	
• Reflect on what was read • Summarize major ideas • Feel success is a result of effort • Seek additional information from outside sources	• Feel success is a result of luck • Stop reading and thinking

All these elements of how proficient versus poor readers approach reading may be relevant and fruitful in reading instruction, and ought to be considered by all teachers of reading in all subjects. It differentiates in a visible manner the different phases of reading, and portrays effectively how all phases; pre-, during, and post-reading, offer different elements of importance in reading comprehension visualizing that all phases ought to be considered.

2.4. Why focus on reading comprehension and strategies

A focus on reading comprehension has long been a topic of concern. Formerly, the teaching of reading equalled the teaching of new learners in lower elementary, and the view was that reading did not have to be taught explicitly when the pupils knew how to read – when the letters had opened up and shown the meaning behind the ramble of letters. Many teachers seem to have taken for granted that the pupils' reading comprehension will increase automatically as they get more practice (Roe 2014:12). However, researchers are now convinced that readers who receive specific and systematic reading instruction turn out as better readers than those who do not (ibid). The focus on reading strategies arouse from this knowledge. The results from the PISA- and PIRLS-tests confirmed this belief and made clear that Norwegian students did not read as proficiently as one had imagined (ibid). The tests further conveyed that Norwegian students; and boys in particular, paid little attention to using reading strategies, compared to students in other countries. A focus on reading comprehension in general and reading strategies specifically was necessary and systematic teaching of reading and reading strategies was needed. As a result, The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training developed a description of reading and what it means to be a proficient reader in lower secondary (Udir 2016). Here it is stated that, as mentioned in the

above, pupils develop good reading comprehension over time when teaching is of a high quality and focuses on reading explicitly and systematically (Udir 2016). The specific aims for reading in English will be listed in the following.

In recent years, the need for good reading comprehension has steadily increased, and the demands on our ability to read have never been higher. Hence, the need for focusing on reading strategies and techniques is evident. Many pupils struggle in learning to read, and especially in understanding what is read. The aim for the teaching of reading is to be able to read fluently with a good comprehension, as this is at the base of all acquisition and learning. Both to read with fluency and to comprehend what is read ought to be in focus and practised long after the first teaching of reading has finished and the pupil is able to read.

All elements in a text, as composition, structure, and content, are essential and equally important in understanding the content of a text. Knowledge of language and vocabulary is vital, and highly decisive for a good reading comprehension. A good comprehension of concepts, words and phrases is connected to and important in gaining motivation to read on, as the reader tends to lose coherence and continuity as well as interest in what is read if he/she struggles with understanding what is read; if he/she meets too many unknown words or phrases in what is read (Roe 2014:56). As the pupils get older, the amount of difficult words, concepts and phrases increases. This may distort comprehension and understanding. This is further fortified by the fact that the language the students meet in texts in school often has little in common with everyday language. In meeting many difficult and unfamiliar words and phrases, the students may lose patience with their reading and experience feelings of failure (Udir 2016). Hence, reading comprehension ought to be in focus in teaching.

The pupils are to acquire technical aspects of reading and spelling, gain experience, and relate to the content and semantics of the language: comprehending vocabulary, syntax and text (Hagtvedt 2009:196). Knowledge about different genres facilitates reading various types of texts. Hence, reading texts in a range of genres is important. Knowledge of structure, literary devices, and genres facilitates reading and makes the content more accessible. Meeting different genres continuously and teaching genres explicitly will open up different types of texts for pupils and make them easier to understand. Therefore, it is vital to work determinedly with pupils' focus on form (Kverndokken 2012:148). It is further claimed that receptive as well as productive skills are strengthened when pupils acquire knowledge of different genres (Maagerø, in Bjorvand & Seip Tønnesen 2002:39).

2.5. Reading strategies

Reading strategies are the different methods and efforts a reader knows and is able to use in order to comprehend (Roe 2014:84). Efficient readers have many strategies at hand, and they know how to use them effectively and expediently (Aamotsbakken, Askeland, Bakke, Mortensen-Buan, & Skjelbred 2012:13). Expedient use of reading strategies is the ability to use different kinds of activities and reflections before, during, and after reading, in addition to be able to taking a metacognitive approach to one's reading and understanding before, during, and after reading. To supervise reading will be vital for learning to take place (ibid.) As reading is not merely decoding of letters into words, but adding meaning to the words and combining them into full texts, in collaboration with the reader, it is imperative that the reader knows how to attach a new text to fully comprehend it.

These methods are often divided into three phases: pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activities (Kulbrandstad 2003:185). A summary of the methods is as follows:

Pre-reading activities are done before reading commences and draw the reader's attention to different elements of the text; the paratext, or to the text's structure, in addition to expressing a purpose for reading, and awakening the reader's prior knowledge and anticipation about the text. According to Bråten (2007), prior knowledge is the most important element of all in comprehending a text, in order to build new information on knowledge one already has. Ways of drawing pupils' attention to prior knowledge may be writing mind-maps, key words, or having conversations about the topic in question. As reading in English will most likely include encountering new vocabulary, identifying new words and phrases is an important pre-reading activity (Udir 2015, www4).

Activities during reading might be note-taking, systemizing information in for instance writing down key words or using different forms of visualizing concepts or words, and underlining. It is important to read actively, make assumptions, and, if necessary, adjust these assumptions while reading. Of high importance is further the reader's ability to monitor his/her understanding of what is read, and, if necessary, implement means of increasing understanding if comprehension is lacking through re-reading, re-thinking, or merely asking for help; using a metacognitive ability. This element is, as explained in the above, one of the things that separates good readers from readers with a poorer overall reading comprehension. In addition, when reading in English, identifying new words and concepts, searching for words one does not understand might be valuable and ought to be in focus.

Post-reading activities are all the things a reader does to gain understanding and knowledge of a topic, as writing mind-maps, key words, summaries, texts, questions to the texts, or answering questions to the texts. Drawing lines to other topics and adding the new knowledge to already existing knowledge or one's own experiences are further elements of importance in integrating new knowledge, as are making presentations, discussing the topic, and evaluating the text's content and structure (Udir 2015, www4). It is vital that the teacher ascertains that students are active in all these phases of reading, in addition to be given the opportunity to reflect upon his/her learning (ibid).

Using reading strategies implies an active, cognitive engagement to deal with challenging reading tasks (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:182). Bråten & Strømsø divide the reading strategies in two categories: surface strategies and deeper strategies. The surface strategies include repeating by for instance re-reading or memorizing literally, as opposed to the deeper strategies which intervene in the text so that it changes, as in organizing it differently, elaborating it by integrating it with the reader's prior knowledge, and actively supervise comprehension and regulate the strategies accordingly (ibid, 183). The deeper strategies are supposed to influence reading comprehension more than the surface strategies, both in reading single texts, and especially in reading multiple texts (ibid).

2.5.1. The reciprocal reading model

As the name may reveal, the reciprocal reading model focuses mainly on the collaborative elements of learning, making it connected to socio-cultural learning approaches. When reading and writing are described as social practices, the importance of reading, writing, and texts in school and in society is regarded (Lundahl 1998:182). In the following, I will explain this reading method further. The model may be seen in appendix 1.

In reciprocal teaching, the teacher and the students start reading a new text by discussing the different paragraphs, and the teacher and the students take turn in functioning as teachers (Lundahl 1998:209). This highlights the students as important and in charge of their own learning. Further, the teacher explains the different steps in the method, the idea being that the students will, eventually, be able to use the method on their own (ibid). The elements in the model are *predicting, questioning, summarizing,* and *clarifying,* not necessarily in this order; the different elements may be combined, used in a consecutive order, or as one finds appropriate.

To predict what is to come in a text is a two-fold reading approach: it might be used as a preparation to reading; to consider or guess what the text is going to be about based on the

title, pictures, and words one sees at first glance etcetera, but it might also be used as a strategy while reading. To predict and have expectations of what one is going to read about, whether based on prior knowledge or on what one sees or reads, is known to facilitate learning. These expectations will prepare the reader for what will come, making the reading more focused, motivated, concentrated, and active (Roe 2014:94). One might imagine that it will be easier to understand and remember what is read when one has an idea of what the reading will be about. This is comparable to how difficult it is to understand, and remember, a text with a topic that is totally unfamiliar. Such texts will most likely have to be read more than once to make any sense, even for more experienced readers. Hence, the importance of prior knowledge, predictions, and expectations are valuable in both understanding and learning, as well as for motivating students to continue reading.

Questioning oneself whilst reading is considered beneficial in supervising the reading. Efficient readers keep questioning their reading as they read. This is not always done consciously, but in different ways they enter into a dialogue with the text and adjust their interpretations as they read and learn. The questioning may happen before, during or after reading (Roe 2014:96). Hence, questioning may be considered to be beneficial pre-reading, as a way of predicting what is to come, during reading as monitoring, and post-reading, as a means of summing the text up. Making one's own questions to a text may also be fruitful in gaining reading comprehension and understanding of a text, and is a means that is suggested by many researchers of reading, as, for example, Ivar Bråten (2007) and Kåre Kverndokken (2012). They stress the importance of students creating their own questions to a text. Reflecting upon what ought to be asked about in a text will most likely increase learning, in addition to a heightened metacognitive awareness, reflection, being able to draw lines and conclusions, and interpret.

The questioning as a predictive or post-reading activity may be carried out by the means of a KWL-form (see appendix 2). In this form, the students are to answer the questions: "What do I know? What do I want to find out? What did I learn?" As seen, the questions are applicable to other parts of the reciprocal reading strategy: prediction, questioning and summarizing/clarifying and may hence be useful in gaining reading comprehension.

Clarifying means to clarify problems that arise during reading. To be able to do so, it is necessary to implement remedial actions to avoid breakdown of understanding (Roe 2014:99). To be able to know, use, and to understand the need for different means for impeding understanding is vital, and one might imagine that this is a crucial division between high and low proficiency readers, as referred to in the above. Low proficiency readers might not

understand that comprehension is lacking, and just keep on reading without understanding, whereas high proficiency readers monitor themselves and stop themselves in their reading, go back, question the content, re-reading words, phrases or paragraphs, or use other means of getting back on track with the text. This requires conscious and concentrated readers who steadily monitor their understanding and comprehension (ibid.).

Summarizing is an effective post-reading activity, referring to drawing out the main content or message in a text, and, preferably, re-writing it with one's own words. The main issue is to separate what is important in a text from the less important content and to make this into a new, shorter version of the text. Many students struggle with this and need help and practice in accomplishing it (Roe 2014:114). In addition to writing new, shorter versions of a text, there are various other ways of summarizing the content of a text. Writing key-words, creating a mind-map, collecting words and/or phrases in lists according to content or filling out the last column of a KWL-form (www2) might be of use in remembering a text, as well as being useful in repeating it. Mind-maps are often especially helpful as visualization techniques. These are all examples of easier ways of summarizing a text, that might be more approachable for the majority of students than writing summaries.

Students learn in different ways, and it is important to ascertain that teaching includes various ways of learning, considering the different learning styles. Visualization is one way of doing so. Catherine Doughty & Jessica Williams state that contextualized explanations, as different forms of visualizations, are helpful in language acquisition (2008:255). Susan M. Gass & Larry Selinker further claim that input enhancement, as drawing attention to a form by highlighting etc. facilitates learning (2008:388). One might imagine that the use of mind-maps is a similar way of highlighting important elements that ought to be beneficial for comprehension and learning.

2.6. Other elements that influence reading comprehension

2.6.1. Vocabulary

According to Cook, knowing a word means knowing

> *"its spoken and written forms, its grammatical and lexical properties and its meaning.*
> *It impinges on all areas of language acquisition and is not just learning sets of words*
> *and meanings" (2008:52).*

Prior knowledge may be, as seen in the above, the most important element in reading comprehension, but in second language acquisition this is outranged by understanding vocabulary. To be able to read with fluency, one has to know 95-98% of the words (Lundahl

1998:212). When readers have sufficient reading fluency, they have the capacity to relate what they read to prior knowledge, as opposed to readers with poorer fluency who will most likely lack the capacity to relate the text to what they already know, as they struggle with understanding the different elements. Likewise, if fluency is lacking, there will be little mental capacity to use on reading strategies (Bråten 2007).

Patricia Carell (1983) states that an L2 learner needs to be supplied with the vocabulary that the native speaker takes for granted, and that teaching ought to increase the learner's background knowledge. She suggests using pre-reading activities which develop background knowledge (in Cook 2008:123). Teachers, researchers, and educationalists all share the belief of the relation between concepts, language, and learning (Aamotsbakken et al 2012:68). This makes focusing on words, phrases, and concepts essential in all teaching. When teaching focuses on increasing the students' vocabulary, the students' reading comprehension will increase (Roe, 2014). How readers understand vocabulary influences reading comprehension. This is considered to be due to the fact that reading automatically and with fluency releases mental resources that the reader might use on understanding the text (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:177). Hence, reading with sufficient fluency will most likely lead to comprehension, whereas where fluency lacks, comprehension is hindered.

Awareness of the use of systematic teaching of concepts has increased in recent years. Lack in vocabulary might influence, and damage, pupil's development. A good vocabulary and knowledge of words and concepts is essential for learning and understanding, and is at the base of reading comprehension. In addition, basic knowledge of vocabulary facilitates acquiring new vocabulary, as concepts and words often build upon each other in a hierarchical manner. Knowing basic vocabulary makes it possible to build new vocabulary on concepts and words that one already knows, and the vocabulary increases. According to Jørgen Frost, to know a word means to be able to find synonyms and antonyms to the word, to be able to define it with words, to place it in a semantic category, and to use it both orally and in writing (2009:244). This relates to Cook's definition above.

Pupils' vocabulary knowledge differs widely, as they are exposed to different degrees of input, and they learn at different speed. Bråten claims that pupils will acquire a developed vocabulary when engaged in different activities, for instance using information found in the text that has been read, in conversations, in finding antonyms and synonyms, and in giving examples that illustrate a word's meaning. He further emphasises the importance of an engaged teacher in learning new vocabulary, in presenting and helping the pupils to choose new words to focus on (2007:57). Even if Bråten's claim is mainly related to acquiring

Norwegian words and vocabulary, it might well be transferrable to acquiring vocabulary in L2, English, as the processes are similar. Texts contain both new and previously introduced vocabulary and terms, and both types ought to be focused upon. New words are often explained, but the same terms might be used in another text later on in the same book, unexplained. As some, or many, pupils might have forgotten the meaning of the word, repetition is needed (Maagerø 2006:80). Kverndokken discusses this further and claims that many students might have come upon subject specific terms many times, but are still not able to explain the meaning of the words (2012:126). He suggests that this may be due to the fact that pupils, on many occasions, work alone with the text (ibid). Clearly, this does not provide learning.

Understanding concepts and motivation are tightly linked, as students are more motivated for reading when they understand the meaning of words and phrases (Roe 2014:107). Pupils struggling with understanding a text's content tend to lose interest and motivation. The comprehension is missing. Roe claims that understanding of vocabulary, terms and concepts motivate reading (2014:56). If this is not met by the teacher, it will mean that the pupils learn less. In addition, discussions and oral interaction will be harmed, because not all pupils will be able to follow the teaching due to poor comprehension. Focusing on understanding concepts and words by working with them practically and in combination with different topics is useful. A focus on reading strategies and introduction of concepts are of vital importance. In this way, it is easier for the pupils to remember and relate the terms and concepts to the topic. It is crucial that the strategies are connected to challenges the pupils might meet in the text, and that they might help them solve these challenges and open up the text and its meaning (Andreassen 2014:234). Hannah Nash & Margaret Snowling support this in claiming that working with concepts and experiencing them in use will add authenticity to the learning process, which in their opinion facilitates learning (in Frost 2009:223). In addition, research shows that learning is facilitated through experience (Frost 2009). Conversations in the classroom are further important for increased knowledge of vocabulary. Hence, working with words and concepts is vital (Mortensen-Buan, in Maagerø og Seip Tønnessen 2006:180).

There is a clear connection between pupils' vocabulary and their reading comprehension (Baumann, 2009). A good vocabulary will ascertain reading development which will lead to increased reading comprehension. With good, or sufficient, reading comprehension, the pupils may increase their knowledge. Hence, a focus on vocabulary might reduce the differences in vocabulary, and in turn in reading comprehension, between pupils.

This will contribute to reducing differences between the pupils' level of knowledge and eventually their future educational possibilities.

2.6.2. Motivation

Motivation is essential in learning and reading. Some researches even claim that motivation and engagement are vital parts of the ability to read; the reading competence (Roe 2014:38). Hence, working with student motivation is essential in good reading instruction (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). To increase motivation, it will be essential to ascertain that students connect what they read to reality (www4). In addition, it will be vital to provide motivating material, give specific reading instructions, and model how to read a variety of texts.

Motivation influences what one does and how it is done. Further, it supplies energy to the process and influences our engagement (Bråten 2007:75). Students with high motivation invest more effort and concentration in the reading than students with low reading motivation, and they portray more perseverance and ability to handle and overcome challenges in the reading process, resulting in reading excessively more than readers with low motivation (ibid). As excessive reading facilitates decoding and understanding of vocabulary, it gives knowledge and gives experience in using different reading strategies, it is evident that excessive reading influences reading comprehension. In turn, excessive reading is influenced by motivation, and the three components are interdependent. High motivation for reading leads to excessive reading, and the reading itself helps developing the components that are parts of a good reading comprehension (Wigfield & Tonks 2004, in Bråten 2007:76).

Students' engagement in reading may be divided in a cognitive dimension, a social dimension, and motivation, and the purpose of the reading is of importance (www4). The cognitive dimension ascertains that the reader chooses the correct strategies in order to comprehend the text. The social dimension includes the social aspect of reading and learning, as reading is a personal experience where the motivation ought to come from within the reader, but the knowledge ought to be developed in interaction with others. Hence, the teacher ought to explain why the students are to read the text in question. Further, the students' attitude to reading is important for reading comprehension, and is intertwined with motivation, in addition to other factors. Students who have an inner motivation for reading, read, and like reading, all types of texts, including more difficult material that gives insight (Guthrie, Perencevich, Wigfield 2004a, in Bråten 2007:74). It will be of importance to increase student motivation in the reading process, as for instance in choosing a varied and differentiated material in a variety of genres and text types. Using material appropriate for the

students' level of understanding, teaching them different reading strategies, and giving feedback that emphasises progress rather than comparison to others are vital (Bråten 2007:76-77).

Further connected to motivation as important in reading comprehension is the expectation to be able to manage. A student's expectation to his/her reading influences the approach to reading and tends to influence the result of the reading. Expectations of managing are related to how the student values his/her reading comprehension and whether he/she will be able to solve specific tasks related to the reading, and is mostly based on prior achievements (Bråten 2007:73-74). Hence, readers with good experiences of reading will build on these experiences and will be expecting to manage well in further reading situations. They will not be hindered by encountering difficulties, as they will expect to understand with time and effort. They are acquainted with various reading strategies that they are able to use when needed. Readers with bad experiences, however, will tend to predict not to be able to comprehend the text, make little or no use of reading strategies, and give in. Encouragement and positive feedback from others, as parents, teachers, and other students, are of significance for a student's expectations of managing reading (Bråten 2007:74).

There is a tendency that reading motivation declines throughout the school years, and many students lose the enthusiasm and self-confidence that most young learners have towards reading (Bråten 2007:76). Hence, focusing on elements of the reading process that might provide motivation will be of crucial importance, as focusing on vocabulary and different reading strategies, and giving positive feedback. How teachers display themselves as readers if also of importance. A teacher who portrays him/herself as a reader, exposing for the students both what he/she prefers to read or not to read, as well as how to go about reading will be fruitful (Kverndokken 2012). In this way, the teacher will be a role model as a reader. It is further vital to create a "culture for reading" in the classroom (www4).

Teachers have to consider the different kinds of learning styles and intelligences to promote learning. Involving students in the teaching and allowing participation in what is taught is useful for acquisition. Openness in teaching will most likely reduce stress and anxiety in students and have a positive effect on affective factors and motivation, all known as important factors in successful language learning as stated by Ulrika Tornberg (2000:18). It is vital for teachers to teach languages in a way that will provide learners with relevant information at the correct time and ascertain that all students feel safe and included in the classroom to avoid negative affective influence. Student involvement and participation may be effective in this.

2.6.3. Metaphors, sayings, and idioms

Other aspects of language that cause problems for comprehension are metaphors, sayings, and idioms. These concepts are parts of a language where explicit knowledge of the concepts often is necessary for comprehension. The concepts may not be interpreted from translating the words literally, and it is often not possible to guess the meaning. This makes idioms, sayings, and metaphors difficult for young pupils, and for learners of languages.

Metaphors are the basic forms of a language. The world is understood through metaphors, because everyday life is permeated metaphorically in language, thought and action; metaphors are something one lives through (Kjeldsen 2009: 245, 256). Aamotsbakken et al explain metaphors as a way of winking at the reader (2012:71), alluding to the fact that metaphors contribute to a vivid language. Texts that have metaphorical expressions in the title may be perceived as especially hard (Askeland 2006, in Maagerø & Seip Tønnessen, 2006). If comprehension is lacking already at the start of a text, the pupils lose valuable background information, vital for comprehension. Hence, it will be crucial for the pupils' understanding that the teacher explains metaphorical expressions. Some of the challenges with metaphors are that context and the words' different meanings and use are important in understanding the expressions. They get force and meaning by referring to contexts that are intertwined with the word, but absent in use: metaphors are transactions between contexts; a basic, linguistic principle (Kjeldsen, 2009). Comparison is an important part of metaphors, but without the comparing word. This might make understanding the concepts harder, as the pupils will have to put together different elements without being given any signals for it.

Every culture has metaphors, sayings, idioms, and idiomatic expressions, but meaning and construction may differ. The language may be simple and the words familiar, but still give no meaning if they are interpreted literally (Roe 2014:57). Anne Golden (2005) claims that metaphorical expressions ought to be a part of texts in schools, and that it is crucial for understanding that the teacher explains the metaphors carefully for pupils to understand.

One way of teaching comprehension of idioms and metaphors is to use redundancy in the dialogue in the classroom. Teachers, who use a rich vocabulary in dialogues with pupils and offer different kinds of support in understanding the words, will contribute to linguistic learning. Broad and varied support over time is influential for learning (Aukrust, in Bråten 2007:111). Encountering words in a variety of occasions will increase vocabulary, including understanding of metaphors, idioms, sayings, and other culture specific words. Such words ought to be explained in numerous and easy understandable ways. When children meet many words which are being interpreted and explained, they will most likely gain a thorough

vocabulary over time (Aukrust, in Bråten 2007:117). One might also imagine that understanding of metaphors, sayings, and idioms will increase by extensive reading in different genres, as reading is essential in acquiring vocabulary.

2.6.4. Grammatical and morphological knowledge

According to Sol Lyster, knowledge about how words are constructed and a consciousness about the principles for constructing words influence reading and promote reading development. She adds that working with morphological elements in a language will promote reading comprehension (2011:93). Without sufficient knowledge of words; their construction, grammar, semantics, and different morphemes, gaining a good reading comprehension and an increased vocabulary may be challenging. Working with and focusing on these elements may increase reading comprehension.

Morphemes are the smallest elements in a word that give meaning. According to Ingebjørg Tonne (2015) morphemes are divided in three groups: root morphemes, derivative suffixes, and inflectional suffixes. A root morpheme carries meaning in itself and has a lexical content, relating to elements or circumstances in the world: it is the primary lexical unit of a word. Derivative suffixes have more grammatical meaning and give meaning to a root morpheme by adding a prefix or a suffix to a word, as –ional to the verb inflect = inflectional. Inflectional suffixes have a clear grammatical function, like –er in warmer and –est in warmest. Explaining and focusing on these different elements in reading instruction and/or grammar might facilitate understanding as well as increase reading comprehension. Lyster (2011) suggests to focus on these elements and how they may change a word's meaning, as in adding «un-» or «-ness» to –friendly, to realize how different elements and grammatical aspects influence a word's meaning. One might add to this awareness rising that suffixes relate to grammatical meaning, whereas prefixes tend to change the meaning of a word. This increases linguistic knowledge and awareness, and the pupils will most likely benefit from this way of working in gaining increased reading comprehension, in addition to grammatical knowledge. Hence, a focus on these elements will be fruitful.

2.6.5. The impact of oral and writing skills on reading comprehension

Not only different reading strategies facilitate reading comprehension. A focus on oral and writing skills is also considered vital in increasing reading comprehension, as everyone learns in different ways. Liv Marit Aksnes (2007) claims that both speaking and writing increase understanding. Learning also happens through other means than merely reading.

Writing is essential for learning, thinking, and comprehension, and to develop and implement understanding and knowledge. Through writing, one gets a reflective, critical, and creative perspective on the learning process (Lorentzen 2008:11). By writing down their thoughts about a topic, the pupils put words on what they think or know, and they may discover that they lack knowledge. Writing down thoughts and meanings clarify the thoughts and give a deeper perspective (Hoel 2008:45). To put one's own words on a topic is useful and clarifying, and one becomes aware of what one does not yet know and still has to learn.

Writing is one route into reading comprehension, especially if the writing is meaningful (Lunde Nilsen, in Tonne 2015:218). It ought to have a purpose. To write in all subjects is important, and teachers have to implement writing in their teaching. One writes to learn, to put knowledge into words, and to understand what one does not yet know. Reading and writing influence each other, give linguistic competence and influence further linguistic development (Tonne 2015:243). This shows that writing is a part of learning to read. Writing is a communicative activity where the writer puts his/her thoughts across to a receiver (Skjelbred 2008:170). To express one's own thoughts about a topic will implement learning, and make us conscious about the topic. Writing is a cultural memory which gives opportunities to create testable knowledge, it democratizes and informs, and it increases both cognitive ability and critical thinking (Berge 2014). By writing, one learns wider and deeper, and the written text is useful for repetition. Through writing, one gets a reflective, critical, and creative relationship to what is learned, which increases understanding, insight, and knowledge. Writing and reading are tightly intertwined (Lorentzen 2008:11).

To learn a subject is to become acquainted with the language of the subject and how it is used (Skjelbred 2008:171). To know a subject demands knowledge of the subject's vocabulary, metaphors, and expressions, and one has to be able to express oneself in the subject through subject specific words, expressions, and ways of writing. The importance of writing might best be seen in that writing now is implemented as a basic skill in all subjects in the Knowledge Promotion (LK 06, Lorentzen 2008:10).

The pupils' comprehension will increase if they have to put words on their thoughts. Lack of knowledge is quickly discovered if one has to put words on a topic. To formulate thoughts is a way to explore, discover, and understand topics. Through dialogues, thoughts and arguments are developed in a joint effort (Aksnes 2007:13). Having to search for subject specific words and phrases will make pupils conscious of them. Both in note taking and in conversations, the language will help elaborate what one already knows as well as realizing what one does not yet understand. Working with oral skills is crucial for the pupil's overall

learning process. Human communication is related to the relationships between writer and reader, and between speaker and audience, and the social aspect in writing and speech is vital (Aksnes 2007:13).

Reading texts aloud may lead to experiencing new elements of a text, and words may be easier to understand when they are spoken aloud (Aksnes 2007:29). Teachers ought to be aware of the pupils' phrasing, as a good phrasing may show what, or whether, the pupil has understood. Phrasing is the ability to read expressively, with a good rhythm, meaningful intonation, and with relevant pauses (Aksnes 2007:49). Good phrasing is a more obvious sign of comprehension than errors in reading and fluency, and it gives the listener a better experience. One might also imagine that different ways of reading aloud, as focusing on a variety of and change of moods, pitch, sounds, exaggerations, and intonation might help to comprehend the meaning of texts.

Atle Skaftun states that written and oral texts are intertwined. Students listen and speak, read and write, and learning takes place in and through language. Oral interaction is based on writing, and the other way round (2014:514). Hence, focusing on writing and on oral skills is equally important in reading comprehension as focusing on reading skills.

2.6.6. Multimodal texts

The ability to read non-continuous, multimodal texts; to read non-linearly, is highly necessary in our multimodal society. Non-continuous texts have to be read differently from continuous texts, as they contain various elements that offer meaning in addition to the main text. To manage to read multimodal texts is a necessity, as these are the type of texts used on the Internet, in magazines, newspapers, and in school textbooks. This way of reading is advanced and demands a high and varied reading ability, and it has to be taught in schools (Lundahl 1998:174).

Textbooks are highly multimodal and present their material through a variety of modalities in addition to the main text. The textbooks' multimodality requires a variety of reading strategies (Aamotsbakken et al 2012:43) The extensive use of photos, drawings, models, tables, captions, tasks, summaries, lists, margin texts, or texts in different frames demands a functional and multimodal reading ability (www4). It is vital to teach students to regard and consider these different types of texts in their reading, in addition to teaching them how to read and interpret the different modalities. Reading multimodal text with comprehension will depend on the reader's ability to comprehend and interpret the different elements and put them together to reveal the meaning (ibid).

2.6.7. The importance of paratexts

Related to a text's multimodality is the term paratext. In addition to the running text; the main, verbal text that offers information about the topic in question, there are many other elements in a text or a book that convey meaning and ought to be focused upon. Main titles and subtitles, paragraphs, the front- and back pages, pictures, illustrations, tables, symbols, words that are underlined, italicized, or spaced out, explanations of vocabulary, table of contents, introductions, and other elements not belonging to the main text are all vital parts of a text that need to be considered and taught. The paratextual elements in a text are supposed to help the reader comprehend the text, but students will need specific teaching in comprehending and using paratexts (Bakke 2012:43). Further elements of importance in paratexts are year of publishing, where the text is published, and sometimes why (ibid).

The concept "paratext" was introduced by Gérard Genette in 1987:

> *"Paratexts are those liminal devices and conventions, both within and outside the book, that form part of the complex mediation between book, author, publisher, and reader: titles, forewords, epigraphs, and publishers' jacket copy are part of a book's private and public history."*
> (Genette 1987, translated by Jane E. Lewin (1997)

It is evident that if focus is mainly on reading the main, running text, important elements of and information about the text will be overlooked, often leading to lack of comprehension. Reading is a process where the reader, the writer, and the text work together to give full meaning to a text. Hence, teaching pupils the importance of considering other elements of a text is vital. It will further be relevant and helpful to explain the structure of a text book and where one may find different elements, such as vocabulary lists, grammar sections, tables of content, etcetera.

Research shows that many students do not pay enough attention to the paratextual elements of texts, as headlines, key words, and photos, and they often merely look quickly through the text in search for answers (Mortensen-Buan, 2006). They tend to read to be finished, not to understand, and many students do not realize the importance of the other elements of a text to fully comprehend the topic. The teacher will have to lead the pupils and model reading a text repeatedly, in order to ascertain that they all know how to get to work on a new text. As giving the students writing frames and modelling how to write and structure a text will benefit students' writing, modelling reading will likewise be important to acquire sufficient reading comprehension (Kverndokken, 2012). In this model reading, the importance of paratexts and how to interpret them will be vital, both in portraying for the students how to read the text and show them the relevance of the different items.

2.6.8. Reading digitally

Reading digitally requires further competences from the reader than merely understanding: it is also vital to be critical of sources, have abilities to search relevantly, to navigate multi-medially, and to cope with various links, text layers and the structure of digital texts. Reading digitally demands a lot from the readers in planning, evaluating the sources, and concentrating on the task, but nevertheless these skills are the ones that the students ought to acquire (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:196). Even if reading digitally demands a lot from the readers, it is also motivating. In addition, it tends to offer a redundancy in the topics presented, as they are often multi-medial, consisting of text, photos, films, and maybe even verbal speech. The different modalities are called modal affordances, and they all offer different things to the readers (Løvland 2006:110). The different modal affordances used in web sites may open up the topic to more pupils than merely text and pictures, as is the case in textbooks. However, this multimodality and use of various affordances might cause the opposite for poorer readers, and the differences in reading comprehension between proficient readers and low-proficient readers may be further fortified, due to the challenges of reading digitally (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:205). This shows the importance of teaching how to read digital texts.

2.6.9. Reading multiple texts

The curriculum states that the students are to "read, understand and evaluate different types of texts of varying length about different topics", and "to meet a variety of texts that will stimulate love of reading and experiences, and to understand and acquire knowledge" (Udir 2016:10) This means that it will be vital to use different types of texts in the teaching of English, in addition to the textbook, to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

Reading multiple texts is a necessity in obtaining a functional reading comprehension in the knowledge society, and working with multiple texts gives a broader understanding of a topic than merely reading one text (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:173). They further claim that there is reason to believe that both prior knowledge and reading strategies have a positive effect on reading multiple texts (ibid, 177). It is evident that if a reader struggles with reading fluently and with understanding the different words, multiple texts will cause further problems in comprehending what is read. Reading multiple texts will therefore be challenging, and will have to be used with care and taught explicitly.

2.6.10. Schema and script

Related to the importance of background knowledge are the terms "Schema" and "script". Schema is the background knowledge on which the interpretation of a text depends, whereas

script is "a predetermined stereotyped sequence of actions, defining a well-known situation" (Schank & Abelson, 1977, Cook 2008:123). Knowledge of schemas and scripts is especially important for L2 learners in understanding, and is related to possessing sufficient background knowledge to be able to understand texts, conventional situations, and cultural phenomena. Cook claims that the importance of background information through scripts and other mental structures is of vital importance, even more so than the reading itself (2008:124). She states that L2 learners have "cognitive deficits" in reading caused by difficulties with processing information in an L2, not by lack of language knowledge (ibid). This deficit may be helped out by different pre-reading activities, including explaining different elements of the text as genre, text type, place of publishing etcetera in addition to focusing on vocabulary.

2.6.11. Adaptation of teaching

Research shows that it is important in teaching to consider several elements, as individual differences, learner aptitude and the relationship between different learning styles and the teacher's approach (Gass & Selinker 2008:392). All students have different learning styles that need to be considered in teaching. This is confirmed by Tornberg (2000), who states that it is important for teachers to be aware of these differences as well as providing various kinds of input to make teaching more obtainable for students.

Learning styles take place inside the student and ought not to be confused with teaching styles, which are various types of methods of teaching languages where focus is put on different elements of teaching and learning a language (Cook 2001). These teaching styles differ as to where the main focus in teaching a language lies and have to be considered by the teacher, whereas the different learning styles are the ways students learn the best. The learning styles, according to Joym Reid (1987), are: visual (reading or watching), auditory (listening), kinaesthetic (activities and movements) and tactile learning (touching and experimenting). These learning styles can be found in Howard Gardner's (1993) seven intelligences: lingual, verbal intelligence; mathematic, logical intelligence; social intelligence and intuitive intelligence (Tornberg 2000:19).

Stephen Krashen's "affective filter hypothesis" (1982) shows the importance of students feeling included in class. If the filter is up, input is prevented from passing through, and there can be no acquisition (Gass & Selinker 2008:402). If a learner's level of anxiety is high, it will affect and impede learning. It is therefore vital for teachers to include all to avoid anxiety. All learners have to invent strategies to be understood, and if the learners' affective filters are up, they tend to be less willing to make up for the shortages they have in L2. In order to make

up for a shortage in L2 and avoid misunderstandings, as lack of vocabulary, a good language learner needs the ability to rewrite, paraphrase and transfer (Tornberg 2000:57).

Current research on SLA states the importance of students' involvement in their learning. L2 learners, except from young bilingual children, have fully formed personalities and minds which have profound effects on their ways of learning, and on how successful they are (Cook 2001:8). This has to be taken into consideration by the teachers. To open up for classroom discussions, arise the learners' consciousness, and to allow for student involvement and participation take care of this. Consciousness-raising helps learners draw attention to different aspects of the foreign language, and this, combined with language awareness, might help them in their acquisition of the new language. Language awareness is supposed to facilitate L2 learning (Cook 2001:39).

2.7. What the curriculums say

In this section I will account for what the curriculums for basic skills and English say about reading and reading comprehension. I will refer to the curriculums for year 10. Below, I will highlight the most important elements related to reading. The curriculums may be seen in appendix 3.

2.7.1. Reading as a basic skill

When LK06 was introduced in 2006, the five basics skills reading, writing, oral skills, digital skills, and numeracy became parts of all subjects that were to be considered by all teachers in all subjects (Udir 2016). Until then, many had been apt to consider the teaching of reading comprehension the responsibility of the teachers of L1. However, reading being introduced as one of the basic skills to be focused upon in every subject opposed this. Reading is important and has to be considered by all teachers (Kverndokken 2012:26). In LK06's; reading as a basic skill, these are the most important elements related to reading:

- *create meaning from text*
- *read texts on screen and paper with concentration, endurance, fluency and coherence*
- *engage in texts, comprehend, apply what is read and reflect on text types and their functions*
- *process and comprehend texts based on prior knowledge and expectations*
- *use different meaning-making strategies and decoding strategies in which letters are contracted to words, words to sentences and sentences to texts - comprehension and decoding*
- *read and relate critically to a wide variety of text types and subject-related texts.*
- *use reading strategies adapted to purpose and text type.*

(Udir 2016:8)

2.7.2. Competence aims for English

The curriculum for English has its own competence aims for reading and how to gain reading comprehension. The most relevant competence aims for English after Year 10 relevant for reading are as follows:

- *choose and use different reading strategies that are suitable for the purpose*
- *understand a general vocabulary related to different topics*
- *understand the main content and details of texts one has chosen*
- *read, understand and evaluate different types of texts about different topics*

<div align="center">(Udir 2016:10)</div>

3. Methodology

In this section, I will explain what kind of research I have performed in addition to explaining the reasons for my choices. I will present my participants briefly, account for my questionnaire, and explain how I performed the survey.

3.1. The research method

What I hope to obtain from my project is insight into pedagogical practices in teaching, which in turn may contribute to improving these practices. The goal for my study is to investigate how reading comprehension is focused upon in classrooms; to contribute to a fuller understanding and acquire knowledge for the sake of knowledge – basic research of classroom practices. Classroom research opens up for better evaluation of existing research and tries to understand what goes on in a classroom setting (McKay 2006:2-3). I aim at answering my research question by the use of qualitative research. I chose this method because it presupposes that classroom learning must be studied holistically, as reality is many faceted (McKay 2006:7). Then, I will share my findings with the participants: "If knowledge is worth having, it is worth sharing" (Cameron, Frazer, Harvey, Rampton & Richardson 1992:24).

As suggested by Sandra Lee McKay (2006), I began my research process clarifying my own beliefs about L2 teaching and identifying a concrete problem. My motive was to gain insight into L2 teaching to be able to contribute to a first step towards improving it. On a personal level, I wanted my own reflections about L2 learning and teaching to be developed further and compared to current research. McKay fortified this thought, claiming that reflection in the teaching process is not enough and that reflection should provide the basis for research (2006). The importance of reflection in the teaching process is also stated as valuable by Tornberg (2000).

I chose to conduct a survey in order to collect the information needed. I designed a questionnaire to be answered by my co-workers and teachers of English at other schools in the district. The questionnaire will be explained in the following.

In my thesis I present secondary data to give an overview of current research on reading comprehension, as well as primary data; my own survey and findings. The secondary data provide insight into the current state of affairs (McKay 2006:5). I realize that my study is quite limited with only 13 respondents. However, through the qualitative approach my results

will serve to shed some light on current practices in Norwegian schools and therefore have a research value, despite their limited scope.

3.2. The survey

The questionnaire is designed to be relevant and quick to answer, my respondents are all busy. I chose to use 9 fairly simple questions in my study to make it easy for the teachers to answer. This is also the reason why the questionnaire is in Norwegian and not in English, as would otherwise have been preferable. However, as I am convinced that other teachers also feel the need for investigating these matters, I felt certain that they would all oblige. McKay (2006) confirms this need for the participants to gain some benefits of participating in the project, in this case increasing their own understanding of L2 teaching and learning. The questionnaire is rather structured and controlled in form, but it contains some open-ended questions. The benefit of using open-ended questions is that it opens up for different answers and thus yields more information. The drawback may be that such answers are more time-consuming to categorize and analyse, but anyhow I found them useful and relevant for my survey. However, the main part of the questions were close-ended questions that were to be a) evaluated on a scale from 1(low importance) to 8 (high importance) and b) singled out. For some questions I asked the respondents to elaborate their answers. This was done to ascertain that they had an opportunity to explain the reasons behind their choices and to give them a chance to add information that I did not ask for, and they considered important.

Prior to conducting the survey I asked all headmasters for permission to conduct my survey. Furthermore, I took care to ascertain both participants and headmasters that all respondents were to have full anonymity. The participants work at upper elementary and lower secondary schools in Vestfold. There was no selection, as I invited all English teachers at all three schools to participate. All respondents are female, between 28 and 60 years old, with varying teaching practice at different upper elementary and lower secondary schools, differing from 2 to 28 years of teaching experience.

I have few respondents to my survey, a total of 13. This may be considered too few respondents to give valuable results. However, as I did not make a selection, but involved all teachers of English at the schools in question, I would claim that the respondents give a representative sample of how reading is focused upon. Involving all English teachers at the schools, I used a sample of convenience: it was the participants I was able to get access to. In

addition, in qualitative research, the number of participants is purposeful and limited (McKay 2006:7).

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 4, and the results will be summarized in the following.

4. Results

4.1. Results from the survey

13 respondents answered the survey. Even if the number of respondents is limited, the results give a good impression of how reading strategies are dealt with at the specific schools.

4.2. Specification of the results

Beneath, I will present my results, the discussion that relates these results to current research presented above will be presented in section 5. The questions will be presented one at the time. In addition there will be an overview and a partial summary of answers (all translated by me from Norwegian to English). There is a discrepancy between the number of respondents (13) and the answers. This is because respondents could choose several options, and that some questions/parts of questions were not answered by some of the respondents.

4.2.1 Question 1: How important do you find the following elements in working with reading comprehension in English:

(You are to rate the statements from 1 to 8, 8 being very important and 1 of little importance).
   a. *I translate the text into Norwegian for the students*
   b. *We go through the text, new words/vocabulary, and the content together*
   c. *The pupils ask about difficult words*
   d. *The pupils work alone with the text and use a dictionary if necessary*
   e. *The pupils work with the text in pairs/groups and use a dictionary if necessary*
   f. *We listen to the text, or I read it for them*
   g. *The pupils read the text by themselves*
   h. *The pupils read it aloud in full class*
   i. *We take an overview of the text and talk about what it might be about*
   j. *We discuss what we already know about the topic in question prior to reading*

Table 1: (The figures are the sums of individuals giving the rating 1, 2, 3, etc.)

Rating →		*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
	a	2	2	5		2	1		
	b					2	2	1	8
	c				2		4	2	4
Answers	*d*		4	1	1	5		1	
	e		2		1	4	2	4	
	f				1	1	4	5	2
	g	2	3	3	1	1	1	2	
	h	2	1		3	3	2		2
	i	1		1			3	3	3

	j	*1*		*2*			*2*	*2*	*5*

Is there anything you would like to elaborate?

- The answers will depend on which year the students are in, the size of the group, and if there are especially weak/strong students in the group.
- A: It depends on the text and the level of the students.
- C: It is important, but my experience is that many of the students do not do this. In addition, there are often word lists following the texts we read, and many pupils look at these.
- D: Important for strong students, but I very seldom dare to let them do this on their own. Many do not use the dictionary, but use the context to create meaning from the content.
- I use many of the methods alternating, whereas some of the methods are used all the time.
- Proficient readers may be challenged to use d), but weaker readers tend to fall out and do not cope with this way of working. We read a lot aloud, but in pairs/small groups, very rarely in full class. Reading silently is used mostly for excessive reading.

4.2.2. Question 2: How do you prepare reading a new text with your pupils?

9 respondents answered this question, whereas 4 did not. The answers are as follows:

- I ask whether anyone in the class is familiar with the topic.
- I always give the text we are to read as homework before the session we are to read it, using adapted texts if possible, so that the pupils will have some knowledge about the topic and might prepare questions to texts and/or new words. Where possible, I tip the students that they may listen to the text on Fronter, to get support in their reading. In class I have many methods of starting a new text. I try to vary, but this depends on the text type: factual or fictional, and the purpose of the text.
- We look at words in the text.
- We tend to discuss new topics, not texts. We activate prior knowledge of the topic together and take notes on the blackboard.
- Before reading we spend some time talking about the topic, repeating what they already know and have learnt about. Then, we look at the title and pictures, if there are any, to see if they may give some tips, before we go on to actually reading the text.
- We take a «BISON» view of the text (pictures, title, out spaced words, word list, texts to pictures – the paratext). If it is a suitable text (mostly for factual texts), the students write key words or mind maps about what they know about the topic beforehand, before discussing it in full class and writing the words on the black board. Then we talk about what we know about the topic and link it to other topics we have worked with. If it is a fictional text, I often make the students guess what the text is about.
- We look at the ingress, pictures, talk about what the text may be about and what the students know about the topic already, listen to the cd, look at difficult words.
- We take an overview over the text, talk about what the text may be about and what the students know about the topic already, listen to the cd, look at words.
- We associate on the title, search for words from the text that they are to investigate prior to meeting the text, we talk about the topic, maybe drawing a mind-map on the blackboard, I ask them whether they have read any texts earlier with a similar topic, show a film about/with a similar topic.

4.2.3. Question 3: How do you normally let your pupils work with texts after reading:

(You are to rate the statements from 1 to 8, 8 being very important and 1 of little importance).
a.   Work with tasks to the text
b.   Write a summary of the text
c.   Write questions to the text
d.   Write key words to the text
e.   Make a mind map of the text
f.   We discuss the text
g.   Relate the text to other or similar topics
h.   Reflect over the content orally
i.   Reflect over the content in writing

Table 2: (The figures are the sums of individuals giving the rating 1, 2, 3, etc.)

Rating →		*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
	a			1	3	1	3		5
	b				3	2	4	4	
	c	1	3	1	1	1	1	3	2
Answers	*d*		3		2	1	8		1
	e	1	2	1	3		3		1
	f				1	4	4		4
	g		1	2	1	3	1	1	4
	h		1	1	1	1	4	1	4
	i		1	1	1	2	4	2	2

Is there anything you would like to elaborate?

- I frequently combine several of these methods, and I find it hard to grade them. One method may be useful for one type of text, and another can be useful for reaching a goal successfully.
- I use many of them methods alternating, and some of the methods all the time.
- We often write texts reflecting on topics we work with, but not always. I prefer the options from b-i in the list to doing tasks to the text, but this depends on the text and the tasks. I often ask the students to write about the text/topic with their own words, using new vocabulary.
- I hope some of the tasks related to the text involve reflection and longer writing tasks.

4.2.4. Question 4: Which type of texts do you use in English:

(Several answers possible)

Table 3:

a. Fictional texts:	*11*
b. Factual texts:	*10*
c. Texts from the textbook:	*11*
d. The pupils read texts on the Internet:	*11*
e. A combination:	*12*

Is there anything you would like to elaborate?

- I use mostly factual texts, but I use the textbook if the texts are good and relevant for the topic. We read on the Internet, but we are critical to the sources and consider this in our reading. Mostly, we read a combination of the text types mentioned.
- I take care when using texts from the Internet, both regarding sources and reliability and level.
- I rarely use the textbook.
- I combine the 3 choices I have made (a, c + d). Sadly, I do not use factual texts much. I ought to…

4.2.5. Question 5: How do you work with vocabulary

(Several answers possible)

Table 4:

a. Write down and practise new vocabulary:	5
b. Use new vocabulary in sentences and texts:	10
c. Talk about new vocabulary:	8
d. I do not focus on vocabulary:	3

Is there anything you would like to elaborate?
- We focus extensively on vocabulary from time to time; to make them aware that this should be done continuously at home. Preferably some words every day. It is too time consuming to be doing this frequently at school. I write on the schedule that they are to write and practice vocabulary. When we have the time for it, they test each other orally and give me their score.
- I work according to the idea that words are best learnt in context. Sometimes I do regular glossary tests, but I always add some phrases/idioms as well.
- I have too little focus on this on a regular basis, sadly.
- I ought to focus more on practising new words in order to increase the students' vocabulary. They are not good at investigating words they do not understand. The best way to learn new words in this case, might maybe be to force them?
- I do not focus much on vocabulary, but we go through the hardest or unknown ones orally. Except from that, I tell them to work with vocabulary the way they want to.
- I try to work excessively with concepts, vocabulary, and words.

4.2.6. Question 6: Do you go through with the pupils how they may best read a new text? If yes, how?

Few respondents paid sufficiently attention to explaining how to read a new text. 9 respondents answered this question, whereas 4 did not. Of those who answered, several admitted to paying too little attention to pre-reading, while others mentioned focusing on vocabulary. The answers are as follows:
- I ask them to learn the vocabulary to the text
- No, not particularly
- In their own work, they are encouraged to use different reading strategies. Sometimes they are asked to read by using a specific strategy.
- We go through the theory together.
- Sometimes, but I ought to pay better attention to this. Sometimes we use the BISON-method, sometimes we start with the ending, but mostly we start from the beginning, stop where the paragraphs end, discuss them, and move on.

- I have sometimes asked the students to describe the main character and the words that have been used for this, but this is too unstructured.
- Yes, but in other subjects. We use different reading strategies suitable for the genre.
- I merely give them tips of what I myself find relevant (which is mainly diving into it with open arms without knowing much in advance). Otherwise, we focus a lot on reading and different ways of reading in all subjects.
- I teach them how to use the BISON-overview, ask them to guess what the text may be about, what they know about the topic, and relate it to other topics. I further ask them to be conscious about what they do when they do not understand, and to take notes/write key words while reading. I advise them to be "logged on" as they read – to be awake and pay attention. Sometimes I show how I read myself and what I do before I start reading, I model the reading.
- I ask the students to underline the words they not understand. Talk about them with the teacher or in full class later on.
- I ask them to underline the words they do not understand.
- I have done so on some occasions, but I must admit that I do this on a more regular basis in teaching Norwegian.

4.2.7. Question 7: Do you combine vocabulary learning and grammar? If yes, in what way*?*

6 respondents answered negatively on this question, whereas 7 claimed to be combining vocabulary learning and grammar. The answers are as follows:

- We look at for instance past tenses of verbs, and homonyms (they're/their).
- No, I merely explain the meanings of the words. Maybe the type of word (i.e. verbs)
- Yes, frequently. During reading, post-reading, and pre-reading.
- We look at grammatical expressions in sentences in the text we are working with.
- Very little.
- Very little, as I do not focus much on grammar, but on using the language orally and in writing instead.
- We look at different elements of words as derivative and inflectional suffixes and prefixes, different endings, and homonyms.
- Yes, we search for and find grammatical examples in the texts or the textbook
- Yes, we search for examples in the texts we read.
- I will claim that I do it by using the correct grammatical expressions and explaining where they come from or how we may understand them, in addition to comparing with Norwegian or other languages that they know.

4.2.8. Question 8: Do you use English, Norwegian, or a combination in the teaching of reading?

Table 5:

English	3
Norwegian	0
A combination	10

The respondents who used only English did not state why. Some of those using a combination explained doing so from a wish to involve all students; "no child left behind".

4.2.9. Question 9: What do you consider is the biggest challenge in the teaching of reading in English?

Most respondents, 12, answered this questions and clearly had a lot on their mind. The common challenges were too little time and vocabulary/comprehension. 1 respondent did not answer.

- Vocabulary, too little time, and the difference between spelling and pronunciation.
- Too little time.
- Getting all students to reflect over what they have read IN ENGLISH! The strong students tend to be the ones to participate (which is good!) but I would like to have more participants in the discussions – preferably everyone! Finding fictional literature for the weakest students that they like! Especially the boys. Easy Readers tend to be too banal and easy.
- Reading comprehension, providing the students a meta-perspective view on their learning process, vocabulary learning.
- We use the Internet in searching for information about topics, and many of those texts are too difficult for many students (English speaking countries, UK, Native American etcetera).
- The pupils are impatient and do not bother to look up words they do not understand.
- Too little time for English.
- The students lack motivation for homework.
- Reading comprehension due to vocabulary knowledge and intonation (even if they read silently).
- Both my students and I prefer factual texts to fictional texts, as literary analysis is vaguer than finding specific information. Hence, the biggest challenge is to make them engaged in fictional texts, and to make them understand that watching YouTube, gaming, or reading on the Internet are just as relevant as reading books. Getting them to like using English to search for information on the Internet is also difficult.
- Too little time. Many students lack motivation, give in quickly if they do not understand, and read to be done. I try to focus on using motivating material that may be interesting for both girls and boys on different levels of acquisition, but it is difficult when time is lacking.
- Finding texts that are catching.
- Adapted and catching texts, that there is only one teacher present when going through new texts.
- Finding good authentic texts, not in the textbook, use the Internet relevantly, so that the reading/search will be useful and not only superficial and scrolling around, but that they actually learn something.

5. Discussion

In the above, I have given an overview of relevant current research in reading comprehension and I have presented the findings of my survey. Below, I will discuss my findings and relate them to the research results presented in my overview.

5.1. Discussion of the findings

In this section, I will provide my interpretation of the results.

5.2.1. Question 1: How important do you find the following elements in working with reading comprehension in English:

(You are to rate the statements from 1 to 8, 8 being very important and 1 of little importance)

> a.   *I translate the text into Norwegian for the students*
> b.   *We go through the text, new words/vocabulary, and the content together*
> c.   *The pupils ask about difficult words*
> d.   *The pupils work alone with the text and use a dictionary if necessary*
> e.   *The pupils work with the text in pairs/groups and use a dictionary if necessary*
> f.   *We listen to the text, or I read it for them*
> g.   *The pupils read the text by themselves*
> h.   *The pupils read it aloud in full class*
> i.   *We take an overview of the text and talk about what it might be about*
> j.   *We discuss what we already know about the topic in question prior to reading*

Many researchers, as Bråten (2007), Kverndokken (2012), and Roe (2014) state the importance of pre-reading activities, in addition to making concepts and words concrete and understandable for the students as crucial for pupils' learning. Hence, they claim that teachers ought to focus on pre-reading activities. Preparing to read new texts through the means of various pre-reading activities to activate prior knowledge, focuse on paratextual elements, identify and clarify structure and vocabulary, create anticipations to the text, and clarify the purpose of reading would most probably increase students' reading comprehension, which in turn will lead to increased learning.

The results and scores spread out in a puzzling way, showing that there is little unity among the respondents about how to prepare reading in English. Some questions, however, received clearer answers: 1 b: "going through the text, new words and content in class" received an overall high score; divided between 5 and 8, where 8 respondents gave this question a full score. In view of previous research claims, these results are satisfying. Most of the teachers also open up for questions from the students about difficult words; question c. This is also satisfying and a useful teaching method according to research. In addition, it

ascertains student involvement, which is known to be good for both motivation and learning. The discussion of these answers will continue beneath.

In section 2 the importance of vocabulary knowledge was discussed, and its importance was evident – reading comprehension is highly influenced by the readers' vocabulary knowledge. Automatic, fluent reading allows the reader to focus on understanding the text (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:177). Pupils with good vocabulary knowledge have a higher reading proficiency, and they learn more of the content. This is elaborated on by for instance Roe (2014), who claims that students' reading comprehension will increase when teaching focuses on vocabulary. As seen in section 2, identifying new words and concepts belongs to the important pre-reading activities. Hence, making the students search for words and phrases they do not understand will be of vital importance when reading in English.

The result for focusing on vocabulary knowledge is in accordance with what research suggests. Many of the respondents pay attention to the relevance of vocabulary in their pre-teaching of texts, which is strongly stressed in research literature. The choices of many of the teachers in the survey; b: "going through the text, new words/vocabulary", and c: "going through the content together and opening up for questions about difficult words from the pupils", are, according to what research suggests about vocabulary learning and the relevance of vocabulary knowledge, relevant teaching methods that ought to increase learning and comprehension. Option a, however, where the teacher translates the text for the students, was not highly valued by any of the respondents. One might argue that this is a good sign, as this method is now considered fairly outdated, as the students ought to be in charge of the reading and learning process and search for meaning themselves instead of being "fed" by the teacher.

Question g; "The pupils read the text by themselves", was not highly valued by any of the respondents. One might believe that this result is satisfying for overall learning and comprehension, as learning is considered to happen in collaboration with others. However, for students to read by themselves has its values, as in giving extensive reading training. In order to become a proficient reader, and to be able to read with comprehension, fluency, and speed, it is necessary to practise. Reading alone gives extensive reading training, it is less time consuming, and it is valuable in all reading instruction, in combination with other elements.

Reading texts aloud may, as seen in section 2, increase learning and comprehension. By reading texts aloud, new elements of a text may be experienced, and the words may be easier to understand when they are spoken aloud (Aksnes 2007:29). Hence, letting students read the text aloud ought to be beneficial for reading comprehension. Further, fluency in reading, in addition to good phrasing – or the lack thereof, may be a sign of understanding/lack of

understanding, as argued by Aksnes (2007). The fact that many respondents gave fairly low positive responses to this question; h, goes against Aksnes' findings; which point out the benefits of reading aloud for students' learning. However, the question did not divide between reading in full class or small groups. This might have given a different turnout.

Research shows that it is important in teaching to consider several elements, as individual differences, learner aptitude and the relationship between different learning styles and the teacher's approach (Gass & Selinker 2008:392). All students have different learning styles that need to be considered in teaching. This is confirmed by Tornberg (2000), who states that it is important for teachers to be aware of these differences as well as providing various kinds of input to make teaching more accessible for students. One might argue that reading aloud in full class will not benefit all students, as many students are shy and often do not want to expose themselves, but reading in pairs and/or small groups may be beneficial for students' learning and acquisition. The survey did not open up for differentiation between reading aloud in full class and in small groups/pairs, but a few teachers commented that they preferred letting students read aloud in small groups/pairs, hence ascertaining adapted learning.

"Listening to the text from a CD or reading it for the students"; f, as many of the respondents claimed to be doing in their teaching, is beneficial for acquisition, according to research. The listening may make the content, the text, and its form easier to understand for the students, in addition to giving them valuable listening activity and an exposure to the language that ought to influence the students' language acquisition positively. Listening activities combined with reading gives a redundancy in input, which is beneficial for learning and comprehension. Kverndokken (2012) strongly recommends using redundancy in classrooms to promote learning. Even if listening to the same text that one reads does not give a redundancy in amount of vocabulary, it will most likely provide a redundancy in combining listening with reading. This will expose the students to the text in different manners, hence considering the different students' various ways of learning; adapted learning.

Student activity in learning is known to be vital in the learning process, and the teachers that let their students work together, using a dictionary to make a text understandable may be said to be teaching in a socio-cultural manner, where student cooperation is of high importance. This makes their choice of teaching method a relevant one, as opposed to the teachers that let students work alone with the text. In the light of current research it is positive that not many respondents indicated that they let their students work alone, as this is not considered to increase or give learning, as opposed to collaborative work, which facilitates

learning. Interaction is beneficial for students' comprehension and learning (Gass & Selinker 2008).

The options i: "We take an overview of the text and talk about what it might be about" and j: "We discuss what we already know about the topic in question prior to reading" regard the importance of pre-reading activities, in addition to activating prior knowledge. The importance of prior knowledge for students' reading comprehension is put forward as very important, maybe even the most important element of all reading strategies by many researchers, for instance Bråten (2007). This shows that the teachers who have marked these two options with a high score focus on reading strategies that are relevant and beneficial for students' comprehension. Preparing to read a new text; the pre-reading phase of reading, is essential.

Even if the CEF has decided not to take a stance for which teaching method is the best, researchers agree upon the importance of exposure to comprehensible input for language learning (Council of Europe, n.d.). In addition to input, active participation in communicative interaction is considered necessary in learning a language. Today, most teachers are aware of the fact that to facilitate learning, substantial contextualised and intelligible language input in combination with opportunities to use the language interactively will facilitate learning. Hence, a combination of conscious learning and sufficient practice are by many considered important in language learning (Council of Europe, n.d.). Current research on SLA states the importance of students' involvement in their learning (Cook 2001:8). This has to be taken into consideration by the teachers. Consciousness-raising helps learners draw attention to different aspects of the foreign language, and this, combined with language awareness, might help them in their acquisition of the new language. Language awareness is supposed to facilitate L2 learning (Cook 2001:39). These aspects of language teaching and reading instruction are addressed, for instance, when teachers open up for questions from students, making them work collaboratively with mind maps on the black board or allowing discussions in pre-reading activities, as some teachers claimed to be doing. Such practices vouch for good reading instruction and student involvement. Classroom discussions and student participation might increase student involvement and are therefore valuable in language classes.

As seen, many of the respondents fail to focus on pre-reading activities, some focus to a certain degree, whereas some pay much attention to pre-reading, making their teaching methods very relevant for increasing their students' reading comprehension.

5.1.2. Question 2: How do you prepare reading a new text with your pupils?

Only 9 respondents answered this question, something that may indicate that pre-reading activities are not much in focus. Some of the respondents offered much input, whereas others mentioned attention to new vocabulary. Those focusing explicitly on pre-reading, excluding vocabulary, were even fewer. It seems like focusing on reading strategies is not part of English teaching, or of little importance. Through the basic skills introduced in the LK06, as explained in the above, all teachers are teachers of reading. No teacher can overlook the responsibility of reading instruction, independent of which subject they teach (Roe 2014:14). Many studies of Norwegian classrooms, however, have shown that students are often left alone with their textbook and their tasks (Skjelbred 2012:5). This leads to poor understanding and learning. As highlighted by research, it is vital for teachers to lead their students in their reading and in helping them to understand and to learn. Teachers ought to model for the students how to work with and activate prior knowledge, to ascertain that all students understand why they are to read the text, how to do it, and what to focus upon while reading.

As seen in the above, pre-reading activities are of crucial importance for reading comprehension. Even proficient readers may need help in starting reading a text (Lundahl 1998:206). Hence, it will be vital for the students' reading comprehension that the teacher clearly models how to read a new text, and that he/she leads the students through it, using different reading strategies, and various methods of scaffolding, as explained in section 2. Effective scaffolding techniques for reading a text may be to activate prior knowledge, explanations from the teacher in seeing the point of reading the text, focusing on the text's totality and structure, and listening to the text; activating both reading and listening skills, explaining vocabulary, reading the text aloud in pairs, discussing content, words and phrases, illustrations, and looking at word lists (Lundahl 1998:206). Further, Lundahl suggests the use of reading material that is known for the student from the mother tongue or from films. It is also interesting to note that he points out that the teacher ought to use different reading strategies, according to the needs of the students, hence ascertaining adapted teaching (ibid). The collaborative aspect of learning, seen for instance in the reciprocal teaching method as explained in the above, might be of value in a collaborative learning process, as Lundahl further points out as relevant in the teaching, and scaffolding, of the reading process.

I believe many of these elements are part of the teaching which some of the respondents claim to do. However, as there were several respondents (4) that did not answer this question, one may fear that these elements of teaching are not addressed by these teachers. This adds to

the impression that some teachers focus little, or do not focus at all, on reading instruction, except from focusing on vocabulary. Several researchers recommend that teachers of English implement these aspects and elements of language learning in their teaching, to ascertain that the students get all the help they may need in approaching a new text. Depending on the text, pre-reading activities further ought to focus on conventional aspects and relevant background knowledge needed for understanding a new text, in order to interpret and comprehend it.

According to research, it is important to have anticipations of the text one is about to read, in addition to paying attention to what one already knows about the topic in question in order to be able to add new knowledge to knowledge one already possesses. The students ought to prepare reading a new text by looking at the paratextual elements, take a quick glance through it to get an idea of what it will be about, and to anticipate its content. A rule of thumb is to notice all elements that differ from the normal (Aamotsbakken et al 2012:43).

Research shows, however, that students do not make use of the help such paratextual elements offer (ibid). The teacher will be of crucial importance in explaining how to take advantage of these elements, and in portraying how to read a new text. Not always, but from time to time, the teacher ought to model reading a new text for the students, clearly portraying and explaining how reading is done, what it is important to focus upon, and how. Research recommends teaching the students how to reflect about how they are to read a new text, why they are going to read it, and which strategies they ought to be using in reading it (www4). These are all elements of importance before reading commences, in order to facilitate reading comprehension. Further, one ought to ask the students to monitor their own understanding during reading, and to give them tools to ascertain that they understand when comprehension fails, as looking words up in a dictionary, go back and re-read a paragraph, ask a classmate, etcetera. This is what high proficiency readers do while reading, as seen in the above, as opposed to the readers with less proficiency, who tend to keep on reading to be done, without monitoring their own comprehension and implementing means of heightening understanding when comprehension is missing. As seen, some of these aspects are met by some teachers.

5.1.3. Question 3: How do you normally let your pupils work with texts after reading:

(You are to rate the statements from 1 to 8, 8 being very important and 1 of little importance)
> a. *Work with tasks to the text:*
> b. *Write a summary of the text:*
> c. *Write questions to the text:*
> d. *Write key words to the text:*
> e. *Make a mind map of the text:*
> f. *We discuss the text:*

> g. *Relate the text to other or similar topics:*
> h. *Reflect over the content orally:*
> i. *Reflect over the content in writing:*

Is there anything you would like to elaborate?

As explained in section 2, there are several relevant methods for working with a text after reading it to increase comprehension. Writing summaries, asking and answering questions, comparing to other topics, prior knowledge or own experiences, making presentations, writing texts, key words or mind maps, valuating the text's content and structure might all be valuable elements in implementing new knowledge. The different methods singled out as used by the teachers in the survey spread out and showed that the teachers use many of them. However, the answers show that many of the respondents do not vary their methods much. It might be argued that all teachers ought to vary both their teaching methods and the different ways of working with reading and texts after reading. When using all the elements as listed above, one ascertains that the different learning styles are considered, the teaching will focus on oral, writing, and reading skills and the students will receive help in structuring the new information, which will most likely facilitate learning. Using a variety of post-reading tasks will be preferable, as suggested by research. Hence, varying between all these ways of working ought to be considered beneficial for learning.

Different elements from reciprocal teaching, with a focus on concepts would, according to research, be advisable. Clarifying the content, elements, and vocabulary in the text that has been read ought to be beneficial for the learning process, as seen in section 2. It is the task of the teacher to follow students in the clarifying process, but it might be advisable to pay special attention to the weaker students and the readers with lesser reading comprehension, as these students often lack ability to monitor their own understanding. Lower proficiency students further tend to avoid asking for help, and it will be vital for these students' learning that the teacher seeks them up and makes sure that they understand so that learning will take place.

According to Carl James (1998), working with tasks gives valuable practise of elements that are to be learnt. James further explains the importance of practise to make knowledge turn from declarative to procedural - knowledge that the student has and is able to use in a correct way. The knowledge is made implicit (ibid). Declarative knowledge is the ability to describe elements or knowledge, whereas procedural knowledge deals with what one is able to do without careful thinking: what one manages automatically. To practise elements is important and may lead to that explicit information might result in implicit knowledge, declarative knowledge may become procedural and make information automatized (Gass &

Selinker 2008:387). In this context, practice is not merely repetition and other drill exercises, but meaningful interaction between the learner and the language (ibid).

Going through the text and its content in collaboration, both in the pre-reading and the post-reading activities, involving both the teacher and the students in finding important elements of the text to use in summaries, mind-maps etcetera, in addition to finding new words, involves the students in the teaching and promotes learning (Tornberg 2000:123). Obviously, the interaction amongst the teacher and the students when working is useful. Interaction between students is needed to facilitate learning, and interaction is what makes learners aware of problems in their language (Gass & Selinker 2008). It would have been interesting to find out how teachers let their students work with tasks; alone or in collaboration, but this was not asked for in this survey. This matter could clearly be investigated more.

These results differ widely as well. The options that received the highest score were: a. "Work with tasks to the text"; which 5 respondents found useful, and d. "Write key words to the text"; selected by as many as 8 respondents. It might be claimed that the immense variety in answers shows that there is a great variety in how teachers let their students work with tasks after reading. This is satisfying in that it offers variation and takes care of adapted learning, but it might be a sign that many do not realize the benefits the different methods have to offer in the learning process. One might have hoped that options b, c, e, f, g, h, and i had received a higher amount of answers, as they are all known to facilitate learning and comprehension.

5.1.4. Question 4: Which type of texts do you use in English:

(you might give several answers)
a.   *Fictional texts:*
b.   *Factual texts:*
c.   *Texts from the textbook:*
d.   *The pupils read texts on the Internet:*
e.   *A combination:*
Is there anything you would like to elaborate?

The main part of the respondents used a combination of the text types. A number of respondents from lower secondary preferred using other types of texts than the textbook, without stating why they avoided the textbook. One used factual texts very rarely, and several teachers mentioned the challenges of reading texts on the Internet, as they were both difficult and unreliable.

One of the goals in the teaching of reading is to make the students motivated for and engaged in reading, so that they meet the texts with expectations and interest, and that they actually choose to read, even if not forced (Roe 2014:39). The aim is to create readers who read for joy and for increasing knowledge: to read for pleasure and for utility. In addition, it is vital to get the students to understand the importance of reading and that, sometimes, reading is necessary for them, even if the text is not interesting (ibid). Using motivating materials in the teaching of reading is vital, Hagtvedt (2009) and Kverndokken (2013) claim. Students who merely meet texts from textbooks at school may get the impression that reading at school does not have anything to do with real life (Roe 2014:83). This shows that not only is it vital to use texts in different genres in the teaching of English, it is also important to consider what type of texts and/or content might be considered motivating and interesting for the students.

Some teachers claim that they prefer using other texts than the textbook, and that they do not use the textbook much. Using other texts and material can, as seen, be fruitful, but it might be wise to use the textbook in addition to other texts. Skjelbred claims in her article that the textbook as a central text in teaching in school has been given a new importance with LK06 (2012:5). She continues by stating that in the textbook, the students meet subject-related texts, offering practice of reading, and that well developed textbooks may help teachers to achieve the curriculum's aims of reading (ibid). In addition, the textbook provides graded, adapted material, which will most likely be conceived as more accessible and understandable for students, making the reading more motivating. Students with low self-esteem when it comes to the ability to read might find it easier to cope with an adapted text from a textbook than other types of material. Especially authentic texts are often hard to understand, which may lead to students losing motivation in reading. Students who believe they will succeed in reading have a better chance of actually succeeding than students with low expectations of their own achievements, independent of skills (Roe 2014:41).

Even if the textbook is challenged by many other kinds of material in the teaching of English, it still clearly has its place in the classrooms. Reading the same book, or text, will offer a feeling of solidarity among the students, in reading and experiencing the same things, at the same time (Kverndokken 2012). This will give the students common frames of reference for discussions and reflections. In addition, in the textbook the students meet texts that are significant and important for the subject (Aamotsbakken et al 2012:13). As seen in section 2, the teacher has to work explicitly and systematically with teaching how to read texts. The textbook will provide additional support in thematising how reading ought to take place, in visualizing and highlighting different elements, and in offering other kinds of

reading support (ibid). Hence, it will be important for teachers to continue using the textbook, but to include other sources of information as well.

Using other types of material, however, may facilitate reaching other aims: "to stimulate the joy of reading and experience" and "extensive reading to promote comprehension of language and linguistic competence" (Udir 2016). One might imagine that these aims will be easier to fulfil through the use of other material than the textbook. The students may read novels, short stories and /or articles of their own choice to promote both extensive reading and the joy of reading, as material one chooses oneself tend to be more motivating. Different types of digital texts, comic books, newspaper, and magazines are other examples of texts that ought to be considered motivating for the students. Using material that is motivating for the students is vital in increasing reading comprehension. It might further influence the reader's inner motivation and expectation of management, brought forth as important in gaining reading comprehension in section 2. When reading is perceived as self-chosen and self-managed, not forced upon, one tends to be more motivated for reading (Guthrie et al 2004a). Hence, the approach towards the reading process will be positive and facilitate understanding.

Presenting topics in various ways might facilitate understanding (Bråten & Strømsø 2007:204). As seen in section 2, reading multiple texts, including texts of different genres, is essential for gaining a deep and reflective understanding of topics. Hence, it is vital for teachers to use other material than the textbook in teaching. However, as reading in this multimodal and complex manner is difficult and most likely requires more of the reader than reading merely the textbook, it would be crucial for the teacher to model and go through how to read different kinds of texts. Today, the ability to read multimodal and complex texts is necessary, and therefore a part of the curriculum. In developing this ability, most students have to be taught systematically and explicitly how to read these types of texts (Aamotsbakken et al 2012:5).

The competence aims state that the student is to be able to "read, understand and evaluate different types of texts of varying length about different topics" (Udir 2016:10). This shows that it will be necessary to use other kinds of texts in the teaching of English, in addition to the textbook, in order to reach the competence aims. Sometimes, exposed to certain motivating material, students show real engagement, whereas the same students may tend to show little interest in reading (Bråten 2007:75). Accordingly, using a variety of texts and text types will be beneficial for students' motivation, as this will ascertain that more students encounter motivating material. As motivation varies both within a group of students and also for individual students, it will be important to vary the material - in order to give all

students a chance to benefit from motivating reading – to read what they actually like and find interesting. To read in different genres, to read multiple texts, and student motivation are important elements in reading comprehension. This ought to inspire teachers to use a variety of texts in their teaching. Aamotsbakken et al further state that, in order to ascertain adapted teaching for all, it will be necessary to use a variety of extra material in teaching, as the textbook is made for the "average" student (2012:6). As there are many students that may be considered "non-average", needing more or less challenging material or a different kind of texts, it will be vital to use different material in addition to the textbook in all teaching.

5.1.5. Question 5: How do you work with vocabulary

(You might give several answers)
      a.   Write down and practise new vocabulary:
      b.   Use new vocabulary in sentences and texts:
      c.   Talk about new vocabulary:
      d.   I do not focus on vocabulary:
Is there anything you would like to elaborate?

As seen in 2.5.1., vocabulary knowledge is of high importance in reading comprehension. To comprehend a text, readers ought to know 95-98% of the words (Lundahl 1998:212). If readers encounter several words that are unknown to them, reading comprehension will be severely damaged. This will influence motivation for reading. Hence, focusing on learning vocabulary is of high relevance and importance. In addition, repeating words and concepts will be vital, as students may forget the meaning of new vocabulary and need to be reminded of the explanation (Maagerø 2006:80). One might argue that all focus on vocabulary is good, as long as vocabulary stays in focus. Current research in language acquisition, however, states that using new vocabulary in sentences and texts (b), is the most effective method in integrating new words, making it an integral part of students' knowledge; they know the word when they are able to use it (Lundahl, 1998; Tornberg, 2000). Accordingly, the teachers that answer positively to any of the answers that imply a focus on vocabulary may be said to teach in a manner that would satisfy current research, whereas the 3 teachers who do not focus on vocabulary might want to reconsider their choices, if they want to be up to par.

Roe states that when working with texts, it is vital that the teacher is aware of the importance of working with vocabulary, and that the teacher continuously considers which concepts, terms, or other content related aspects might cause trouble or misunderstandings (2014:15). Subject specific words will be vital to focus on. In addition, vague words cause problems for L2 learners and have to be considered (Cook 2008:122). Research shows that using elements from the reciprocal teaching model and focusing on concepts will be fruitful in

acquiring words and phrases. Making word lists, mind maps, and using new words and phrases in one's own text and/or questions will be useful. Kverndokken suggests using the method «scanning» in this work: prior to reading, the pupils alone, or jointly, localize difficult terms in a text, write them down and go through them (2012:126). This method may also be used during reading or listening. Maagerø supports this idea, and adds that it is easy to believe that the pupils understand more than they do (2006). Her fear is shared by Aamotsbakken et al, who claim that pupils are often exposed to difficult language too soon, leading to students and teachers not understanding each other (2012:68). Hence, the importance of working with vocabulary is fortified.

This shows that teachers have to be aware of the fact that in any class there are most likely several students who struggle with understanding, maybe even with comprehending words and phrases that the teacher is convinced that everyone understands. Vocabulary may be focused upon in full class, but it might also be useful to confront students alone or in small groups to make sure they understand, as many students fear exposing themselves as ignorant. Further, as less proficient readers often do not monitor their understanding, or realize that they do not understand, a varied, heightened and repetitive focus on concepts will be essential. Lack of comprehension influences reader motivation, a crucial factor in reading comprehension. As reading motivation is known to influence both present and future reading processes, it will be crucial to ascertain that motivation for reading is facilitated. One way of doing so may be by focusing on vocabulary knowledge.

In focusing on vocabulary, research further recommends that teachers have to consider the importance of sayings, idioms and metaphors and how these often differ from the students' mother tongue(s). These are special utterings that have to be taught specifically to give meaning. One example may be "It's raining cats and dogs", in addition there is a multitude of expressions that have to be introduced in order for the students to be able to use idiomatic language in their own production of texts, as well as understanding it when they encounter them in reading.

5.1.6. Question 6: Do you go through with the pupils how they may best read a new text? If yes, how?

Teachers have specific competence in reading and understanding texts in their own subjects, and students are dependent on support from their teachers for comprehension (www4). According to Skaftun, teachers, through their professionality, ought to model how to read a text and portray different ways of reading and relating to a text for the students (2010b). This

will most likely lead to increased reading comprehension. The teacher therefore ought to draw the students' attention to the fact that different types of texts need different reading strategies, and hence have to be focused upon differently, according to type of text and the purpose of the reading. Knowledge of this, and of how different text types are structured, will increase comprehension and ascertain a more focused reading (Anmarkrud, 2007). In addition, professional conversations between teacher and students about texts might influence and increase students' subject specific reading ability (www4).

As many of the teachers in the survey did not answer this question, one might fear that many teachers fail to address this aspect of English teaching. Hence, students' reading comprehension, and in turn learning, may suffer. A few teachers mentioned activating prior knowledge about the subject for this question as well as for question 2. As explained both in section 2 and for question 2, this is a highly relevant method for increasing reading comprehension, and might therefore be a valuable way of teaching. One might also imagine that, in activating prior knowledge, teachers do pay attention to pre-reading activities, and this in itself might be considered to be beneficial for students' reading. In activating and discussing prior knowledge, the students might glance through the text as they follow the teacher, thus getting a first impression of the text. Pre-reading activities may also include focusing on paratextual elements. Focusing on paratexts further increases reading comprehension and is beneficial. Current research suggests that teachers ought to teach specifically and explicitly how to read a new text by considering the paratext, the structure, new words and phrases. However, even if a teacher does not pay much attention to pre-reading activities, it might be argued that some focus on these activities will be better than none and anyhow beneficial for students' reading comprehension. This is in accordance with Gough & Tunmer's formula for reading comprehension (1986), explained in the above, which shows that everything that is done to facilitate reading will multiply, and benefit, the result.

5.1.7. Question 7: Do you combine vocabulary learning and grammar? If yes, in what way?

Merely 7 of the respondents answered positively to this question: 5 from lower secondary and 2 from upper elementary. That not more of the respondents from lower secondary answered positively is regrettable, as focusing on the different elements of words is vital for reading comprehension. All teachers, 2, from upper elementary, on the contrary, claimed to be doing this, and from their explanations it seems like they do combine grammar and vocabulary learning. Current research points out the benefits for students' reading comprehension when

reading instruction focuses on different elements of words. For instance, drawing students' attention to the different morphemes in words and how they influence a word's meaning is beneficial, as seen in section 2. Focusing on how prefixes or suffixes may change a word's meaning will be relevant for comprehension. 2 of the respondents claimed to be focusing on morphological elements, highlighted as important for reading comprehension in research. Some mentioned that they taught and dealt with homonyms, but none mentioned focusing on "false friends". According to research, all focus on linguistic structures and elements will enhance linguistic awareness, which in turn will increase reading comprehension. It may seem like the teachers in the survey are not fully aware of current research and the benefits of combining grammar and vocabulary teaching.

To acquire and to know a word does not merely mean to know its translation to the mother tongue, in isolation from other meanings. To truly know a word is to acquire a complex range of information about its spoken and written form, how it is used in grammatical structures and word combinations, and various forms of meaning (Cook 2008:51). This means that combining grammar teaching with vocabulary training is useful. Ellis (1995a) and James (1998) claim that grammar teaching may be based on interpretation and explanation and that reception facilitates noticing elements that are to be learnt. Hence, drawing attention to certain forms, as for example morphemes, is relevant, as are teacher-led explanations as they may all facilitate pupils noticing elements. Research suggests that teachers ought to provide explanations for their students; as explanation and focusing on different elements are essential for learners of a foreign language in, among other, raising their consciousness of the L2 and their own knowledge / lack of knowledge.

One might use different kinds of visualization techniques to facilitate learning, as underlining, drawing, highlighting, as well as developing metaphors to clarify the elements taught. These are all examples of how teachers may use different methods for drawing pupils' notice to what is taught in order to facilitate reception and give valuable redundancy to students' input. These methods further make teaching differentiated and adapted to all learners. The importance of highlighting the forms that are being focused on is confirmed by Gass & Selinker, claiming that input enhancement, as drawing attention to a form by highlighting or colouring it, is considered to facilitate learning (2008:388). Doughty & Williams state that contextualized explanations are helpful in language acquisition (2008:255). One might imagine that merely drawing attention to elements will be helpful.

James claims that learners need explanations, and that this is best mediated by teachers and teaching materials (1998:260). This fortifies the need for explicit explanations from

teachers in language classes. James does not indicate how such explanations ought to be performed, but considering the number of students and time allotted for each subject, teaching from the blackboard may be an effective way of providing explanations for all students simultaneously. However, it is evident that the teacher needs to be aware of the interaction with the class and open up for questions. This is in accordance with what Ellis (1995a) and James (1998) claim: that teaching may be based on interpretation and explanation and that reception facilitates noticing L2 elements and structure. Therefore, teacher-led explanations may be of use in teaching, as they may facilitate pupils noticing elements. All respondents open up for questions and interact with their students. This approach is considered important in learning and ought to facilitate language acquisition.

To compare L1 to L2 in order to understand how L2 is structured, combining prior knowledge with what one needs to obtain is considered crucial in learning a language. Comparing the rules of a foreign language with a language one already knows facilitates understanding. A contrastive view on L1 and L2 gives students important insight into how the languages are structured and how they differ from each other (Tornberg 2000:29). Recent research shows that working contrastively and comparing L1 to L2 is an efficient way of working with a foreign language. The contrastive aspect facilitates the understanding of how the L2 is structured, and a deeper knowledge of one's own language arises the knowledge of how L2 is structured (Tornberg 2000:121). James (1998) claims that learners should be aware of the forms they use in their L1. The contrastive aspect helps students see how L1 is structured and how it differs from L2 and builds language awareness (Tornberg 2000:117). Only 1 respondent mentioned using the comparative aspect L1-L2 in teaching. The low amount of positive responses to the question may be due to that this was not asked for explicitly, and that it therefore is difficult to remember such an element as important.

5.1.8. Question 8: Do you use English, Norwegian, or a combination in the teaching of reading?

Former language teaching theories have insisted that L1 should be avoided as much as possible in classrooms (Cook 2001:180). Recent research shows that there are many reasons why L2 ought to be used frequently and to a large extent, as exposure to L2 facilitates learning (Cook (2001), Gass & Selinker (2008), Tornberg (2000)). Following this, L2 ought to be used to a large extent in language classrooms. However, it seems that some use of L1 has its advantages as well. Many researchers claim that L1 might well be used in language teaching (Cook (2008), Gass & Selinker (2008), James (1998), and Tornberg (2000)). The

teacher may use L1 to convey meaning of sentences or words and for explaining grammar, to organize and manage the class, to give instructions about activities or testing and in tests. Students may use L1 in classrooms as part of learning activities and classroom activities (Cook 2001:185). Allowing use of L1 in student participation might increase student involvement in class. Cook (2001) states that the first language actually should be recognized in language teaching, and that teachers should consider how to make systematic use of both languages rather than exclude L1. It is an illusion that permitting merely L2 in classrooms forces students to avoid L1, as it will not disappear, merely be made invisible. She continues by saying that teachers ought to make systematic use of L1 in the classroom (Cook 2001:233). That the learners' L1 is always present in the students' minds at this level of acquisition is evident, and the L1 could be used for positive purposes, instead of ignoring it. In all aspects of language learning, L1 has an important part (Gass & Selinker 2008:462).

Most (10) respondents used a combination of L1 and L2 in the classroom, only 3 respondents preferred using L2 at all times during class. The outstretched use of L2 was based on a view that the pupils ought to be exposed to the L2 as much as possible and that it was important to practise language and terms; to increase vocabulary knowledge. The respondents using partly L1 did so from the wish of involving all students. It was evident that the need for involving all students in their teaching was so vital for all teachers that they sometimes used L1 in explanations, except from 3. To ascertain that all students understood and followed the teaching was of high value to most respondents. The combination of using L1 and L2, often starting off with the use of L2 and then repeating with L1, serves a two-fold cause; repetition of the taught items and explanations in two languages. There is a risk that the 3 teachers using L2 in all explanations might lose some students on the way, as the way the instruction is provided might be above the students' current level of knowledge and hence will not be understood. The results show that most teachers take care to ascertain that their learners follow the teaching by using a combination of L1 and L2. This has hold in research, stating that L1 might be used for instance in explaining and instructions. However, this questions the use of merely L2 in explanations, as some of the respondents claimed to be doing.

It is interesting to note that the two respondents from upper elementary school claim to be using English all the time in reading instruction classes. This is positive in that it will give the students a lot of input and exposure to the target language, but negative in that it may be a danger that students will fall out and not understand. Of the respondents from lower secondary, only one claimed to be using only English, whereas the rest used a combination. From what was referred to in the above from research on L1 versus L2 in classrooms, a

combination may be said to be the best and the most effective, in combining exposure to the target language to ascertaining that everyone understands and follows instruction.

5.1.9. Question 9: What do you consider is the biggest challenge in the teaching of reading in English?

Earlier in this thesis, I have shown that few of my respondents show interest in explicit reading instruction in English. However, as all respondents but one answered this question, it might seem like they are concerned about reading instruction in English. They clearly seemed engaged in the topic. This is a good sign, and a good point of departure for introducing reading strategies and focusing on reading comprehension in their teaching. I will go through some of what was mentioned as challenging by the respondents, in addition to adding some elements of reading instruction that might be considered difficult, but still of high importance.

Some respondents stated that there was too little time to be able to read enough as challenging, and they elaborated this by stating that they were aware of the positive outcome on students' ability to read with comprehension through extensive reading. They are right. Research shows that extensive reading is beneficial for the development of reading comprehension, as well as for the development of cognitive ability (Lundahl 1998:211). As excessive reading is important, stories are considered useful (ibid). Reading extensively has many advantages, in addition to promoting overall reading comprehension: it offers incidental vocabulary learning, it gives knowledge of the world, and it increases understanding and empathy for others (Kverndokken 2012, Lillesvangstu 2007).

Julian Bamford & Richard Day describe 10 principles for extensive reading:

1. The reading material is easy
2. A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics must be available
3. Learners choose what they want to read
4. Learners read as much as possible
5. The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding
6. Reading is its own reward
7. Reading speed is usually faster than slower
8. Reading is individual and silent
9. Teachers orient and guide their students
10. The teacher is a role model of a reader   (Day & Bamford 1998, in Lundahl 1998:212).

This list has many interesting aspects, and it touches upon several of the aspects mentioned as challenging in reading instruction. Number 1, which advises the use of easily accessible material, questions the use of authentic material. However, it will be essential to differ between extensive reading, preferably done at home, and reading for knowledge, mostly done in class. It further fortifies the importance of using a variety of material, to be chosen by

the readers themselves, hence making the material motivating. Reading for pleasure, part of the competence aims, is highlighted, as is the importance of the teacher as a guide in the reading and as a role model. Kverndokken further confirms the importance of the teacher portraying himself/herself as a role model and a reader (1989:5). This fortifies what has been brought forth elsewhere in this thesis: that teachers are of crucial importance in the students' reading process, both as teachers and guides, as motivators, as role models, and readers.

The respondents' worries about having too little time for reading sufficiently is relevant. They state, as explained in the above, that extensive reading is highly beneficial for students' learning both on a personal level and in their reading comprehension, but the time available in school for extensive reading is too little. Hence, to accomplish extensive reading, some of it has to be done at home. However, one might argue that a steady focus on the benefits of reading, reading as much as possible in school, and a positive attitude towards reading in general, will most likely lead to more reading, and in turn a higher degree of reading comprehension in the students. Kverndokken (2012), Lillesvangstu (2007), and Lundahl (1998) state the importance of reading for pleasure, with no pressure, commitments, or obligations after reading. Teachers in general may want to consider this, as many teachers tend to finish up reading by asking students to write texts, answer questions, or have presentations about the read material. It might be an idea to reconsider this eagerness of testing, and to allow for "silent reading" without obligations. In addition to relieving the students' amount of work, it will save time in class.

Reading is a personal experience, and everyone has their own views on both reading and learning. "Good teaching of reading ought to create a culture for reading in the classroom" (www4). Might this be one of the biggest challenges in the teaching of reading in English? One way to facilitate a positive culture for reading in classrooms might be to use "literary talks" in the classroom when working with texts. "Literary talks" is a concept developed by for instance Marianne Lillesvangstu, Elise Seip Tønnessen, & Hanne Dahli-Larssøn (2007), where the dialogues and interaction are of vital importance for interpreting and working with texts. In these talks, authentic questions ought to be used. Authentic questions are questions where the teacher asks because he/she does not necessarily know the answer, but wants to listen to the students' thoughts and opinions. The answers ought to be met with "high valuation" and "retake" (Lillesvangstu et al. 2007). This means that the teacher has to take into consideration what the students say, use it in further teaching and discussions, and clarify it (ibid). Originally, these "literary talks" were intended for fictional

texts, but might well be transferred to factual texts as well, in order to increase student participation and motivation in class.

Explanation of L2 elements and raising language awareness are considered beneficial (Cook 2001). Students' acquisition will benefit from good classroom discussion and dialogue between teacher and students. As has been shown, all respondents in my survey consider these matters in their teaching. They provide comprehensible input and open up for questions and discussions, hence arising students' involvement, attention and awareness.

6. Conclusion

There are many elements that ought to be in focus in the teaching of reading. In this thesis, I have discussed some aspects that ought to be considered in reading instruction according to current research.

My aim for this paper was to investigate how reading instruction and reading comprehension are focused upon and taught at upper elementary and lower secondary school, and the research question was "Do teachers of English focus on reading strategies and comprehension in their teaching?". I chose qualitative research as my method of investigation because I wanted to investigate classroom practices. The reflecting aspect upon teaching has been vital, as there are many suggestions as to how, when and if to teach, but rather few clear answers. One might consider that reflection upon one's practice is vital in order to teach languages as efficiently as possible. The reflective aspect is relevant in all teaching, and in all subjects.

As seen in the above, current research on reading instruction and language teaching states that it is important to teach reading systematically, to teach pupils to consider all aspects of a text, and to use different reading strategies in order to get sufficient reading comprehension. Reading in itself is hard, but it is even harder in another language. Therefore, there are certain elements that need to be in focus when teaching to read in English, as focusing excessively on vocabulary. Included here are the culture specific sayings, idioms, and metaphors that research suggests ought to be taught explicitly in order to be understood by the students, in addition to making them able to using them in their own language production.

Few respondents in my material focus sufficiently on reading strategies in the teaching of English. They do not pay enough attention to all elements of good reading instruction. To be up to par with current research on language acquisition and reading instruction, one might have hoped for a higher amount of answers relating to using pre-reading activities, activating prior knowledge, and prediction, and that more teachers used these methods on a regular basis in their reading instruction in English. It is to be hoped for that they will see the importance of these elements and include them in their teaching.

In this thesis, I have shown that current research confirms the need for explicit reading instruction in order to achieve sufficient reading comprehension. There are many elements to consider in the instruction of reading, but most of them are relevant for all subjects, and learning them and implementing them in teaching will not be too time-consuming. Focusing on vocabulary is of high importance in the teaching of English, and ought to be focused upon in

English teaching as well as in other subjects as there will always be unfamiliar words, phrases, and concepts in all subjects.

Learning languages is hard, and it is vital that teachers help their students in every possible way. I am convinced that by adhering to current research, and following the LK06's requirements for language learning (Udir 2016), English teachers in Norway have a good chance to promote reading comprehension through offering students the best possible teaching methods.

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – the reciprocal reading model (www2):
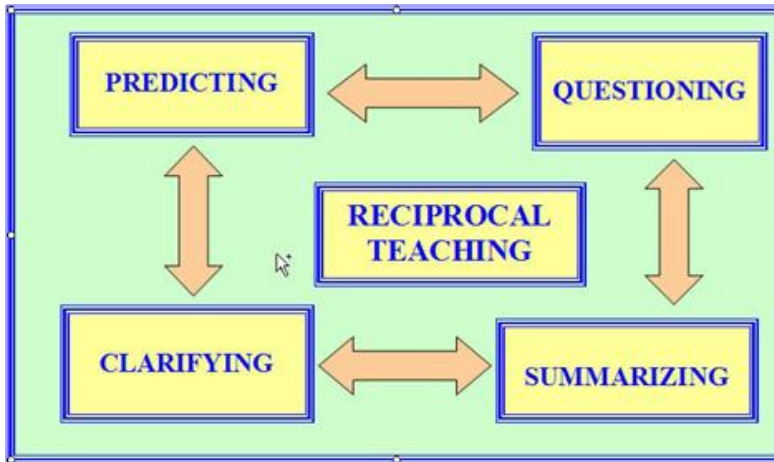
Appendix 2 – a KWL-chart (www1):

Appendix 3

THE KNOWLEDGE PROMOTION:

Reading as a basic skill - What is reading?

- *Reading means to create meaning from text in the widest sense. Reading gives insight into other people`s experience, opinion and knowledge, independent of time and place.*
- *The reading of texts on screen and paper is a prerequisite for lifelong learning and for active participation in civic life.*
- *To read involves engaging in texts, comprehending, applying what is read and reflecting on this. In the context of this Framework, texts include everything that can be read in different media, including illustrations, graphs, symbols or other modes of expression.*
- *Knowledge about what characterizes different types of texts and their function is an important part of reading as a basic skill*

  Sub-categories:
- *Understand means processing and comprehending texts based on prior knowledge and expectations. This implies using different meaning-making strategies in order to understand increasingly more complex texts. This presupposes decoding strategies in which letters are contracted to words, words to sentences and sentences to texts.*
- *"Find" means finding information which is explicitly or implicitly expressed.*
- *"Interpret" means drawing conclusions based on more than one text.*
- *"Reflect" and" assess" means relating independently to texts, from commenting on text content to relating critically to a text and substantiate one's own opinions, analyses or evaluation.*
-
  How is reading developed?
- *The development of the functional ability to read is an interaction between processes of comprehension and processes of decoding. Basic reading instruction involves mastering the reading of screen and paper texts with concentration, endurance, fluency and coherence. The functional ability to read is developed through knowledge about and experience with different subject-related texts. This involves being able to deal with a wide variety of text types and relate critically to different types of information and increasingly complex reading tasks.*
- *Reading development requires using appropriate reading strategies to find and process information. Functional reading is therefore characterized by the use of reading strategies adapted to purpose and text type.*

(Udir 2016:8)

The competence aims for English after Year 10:

Language learning
The aims of the studies are to enable pupils to
- *use different situations, working methods and learning strategies to develop one's English language skills comment on own work in learning English*
- *identify significant linguistic similarities and differences between English and one's native language and use this knowledge in one's own language learning*
- *select different digital resources and other aids and use them in an independent manner in own language learning*

Written communication
The aims of the studies are to enable pupils to
- *choose and use different reading and writing strategies that are suitable for the purpose*

- *understand and use a general vocabulary related to different topics*
- *demonstrate the ability to distinguish positively and negatively loaded expressions referring to individuals and groups*
- *understand the main content and details of texts one has chosen*
- *read, understand and evaluate different types of texts of varying length about different topics*
- *use own notes and different sources as a basis for writing*
- *write different types of texts with structure and coherence*
- *use central patterns for orthography, word inflection, sentence and text construction to produce texts, use digital tools and formal requirements for information processing, text production, and communication*
- *be familiar with protection of personal privacy and copyright and chose and use content from different sources in a verifiable way*

<div align="center">(Udir 2016:10)</div>

Appendix 4

Spørreundersøkelse om leseopplæring i engelsk

Hei!

Jeg holder på med en mastergrad i fremmedspråk med fordypning i engelsk, og jeg er nå i gang med en masteroppgave hvor jeg skal skrive om leseopplæring i engelsk. I den forbindelse lurer jeg på om du kan svare på denne undersøkelsen om leseopplæring i engelsk på ungdomstrinnet. Undersøkelsen er helt anonym og skal ta ganske kort tid å besvare. Undersøkelsen kan enten leveres på papir til meg, eller sendes meg på mail: elinjh@live.no. Dere får både digital utgave og på papir, så velger dere selv hva som fungerer best. Og bare ta det når det passer! På forhånd tusen takk for hjelpen!

Med vennlig hilsen
Elin Jorde Hansen
Mobil: 928 43 180

1. **Hvor viktige er de følgende punktene i arbeid med leseforståelse i engelsk:**
   (Du skal gi hvert enkelt utsagn poeng fra 1 til 8, der 8 er svært viktig og 1 lite viktig)
   a. Jeg oversetter teksten til norsk for elevene:
   b. Vi går igjennom teksten, nye ord og innholdet i teksten felles i klassen:
   c. Elevene spør om vanskelige ord:
   d. Elevene jobber alene med teksten og bruker ordbok ved behov:
   e. Elevene jobber i par/grupper med teksten og bruker ordbok ved behov:
   f. Vi lytter til teksten fra CD eller jeg leser den høyt for elevene:
   g. Elevene leser teksten hver for seg:
   h. Høytlesing i klassen:
   i. Vi tar et overblikk over teksten og snakker om hva den kan handle om:

   j. Vi snakker om hva vi allerede vet om dette temaet før lesing:

Er det noe du vil utdype?

2. Hvordan forbereder du lesing av en ny tekst med elevene?

3. Hvordan pleier du å la elevene jobbe med tekster etter lesing:

 (Du skal gi hvert enkelt utsagn poeng fra 1 til 8, der 8 er svært viktig og 1 lite viktig)

 a. Jobbe med oppgaver til teksten:

 b. Skrive sammendrag av teksten:

 c. Skrive spørsmål til teksten:

 d. Skrive nøkkelord til teksten:

 e. Skrive tankekart til teksten:

 f. Snakke om teksten muntlig:

 g. Finne sammenhenger med andre eller lignende temaer:

 h. Reflektere over innholdet muntlig:

 i. Reflektere over innholdet skriftlig:

Er det noe du vil utdype?

4. Hvilke type tekster bruker du i engelsk: (flere svar er mulig)

 a. Skjønnlitterære tekster

 b. Saktekster

 c. Tekster fra læreboka

 d. Elevene leser tekster fra Internett

 e. En kombinasjon

Er det noe du vil utdype?

5. **Hvordan jobber dere med nye ord: (flere svar er mulig)**

   a. Skriver ned og øver på nye gloser

   b. Bruker nye gloser i setninger og tekster

   c. Snakker om nye ord muntlig

   d. Har ikke fokus på gloseøving

   Er det noe du vil utdype?

6. **Går du igjennom med elevene hvordan de best kan lese en ny tekst? Hvis ja, på hvilken måte?**

7. **Hender det at du kombinerer ord- eller begrepslæring og grammatikk? Hvis ja, på hvilken måte?**

8. **Bruker du engelsk, norsk eller en kombinasjon i leseopplæringen?**

9. **Hva mener du er den største utfordringen i leseopplæring i engelsk?**

10. **Til slutt litt om deg selv:**

   - **Kjønn:**
   - **Alder:**
   - **Hvilke andre fag underviser du i?**
   - **Hvor lenge har du undervist?**