

MASTEROPPGAVE

Adapting Poetry to the Screen: Student Reflections on Filmmaking's Potential for Motivation and Learning in the English Classroom

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Abstract

This master thesis in English didactics explores if and how filmmaking could have a more important role to play in the English classroom in the years to come. In the theoretical framework, concepts like digital competence, communicative competence and composite texts are seen in relation to the ability to create digital media products. Previous research studies on digital storytelling, animation and filmmaking are reviewed and discussed in order to investigate student motivation and learning. The research part of the thesis describes a three-week filmmaking project in a VG1 English class (upper secondary school) in Norway that took place during the autumn of 2014. The students were regular students at the general academic program, attending the obligatory English course. The process of making films based on a poem by Charles Bukowski, proved to be a highly motivating activity for the students. The study concludes that filmmaking can be used pedagogically in the English subject in areas like digital competence, writing, vocabulary, oral skills, creativity, collaboration and project-planning.

Keywords: digital storytelling, animation, filmmaking, film, movie, digital competence, digital skills, literacy, 21st century literacy, multiliteracies, English didactics, composite texts, film-poem, poetry, digital poetry, video poetry, literature, adaptation

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Aim of the Study

This study is about filmmaking's potential in the English classroom. It has at its core a classroom case study of a filmmaking project I developed and executed with my VG1 English subject class during the autumn of 2014. The project involved student-made film adaptations of Charles Bukowski's poem "Roll the Dice" (1999), shot on cell phones and uploaded to *YouTube*. The focus of the present research study has been to learn more about how the students themselves perceived the project.

My research questions are:

- To what extent do the students reflect on filmmaking based on poetry as an engaging and useful way to learn within the frames of the English subject?
- What can be learned from the students' reflections in terms of further developing filmmaking as an approach for the English subject?

The data consists of an anonymous questionnaire and a written evaluation assignment that all the students completed at the end of the project. The study is thus both quantitative and qualitative. In analyzing and discussing the data, I will draw on relevant theory as presented in the theoretical framework.

1.2 Why Filmmaking?

As society changes, the way schools teach has to change as well. English teachers need to keep updated on new methods and approaches that could provide useful in their classrooms and prepare their students for their future lives. One of the most central trends in today's society is the continual development of media and digital technology (Vestli 2014, p. 3). It is argued that one of the most central questions facing language teachers in the years to come is how we will face this challenge (ibid.). There seems to be a general consensus that educating with the future in mind means making sure that students acquire competence in using this technology for a variety of purposes. In the newest public report on education, NOU 2015: 8 "Fremtidens skole" (*The School of the Future*), this point is highlighted. The report also states that in order to stay relevant, the school subjects need to renew themselves, focusing on four main competence areas: subject-specific competence; learning to learn; creativity and

innovation; collaboration, participation and communication (NOU 2015:8, 2015, p. 7-8). Based on the research I have done for this thesis and the results from my own case study, I want to argue that filmmaking can be used pedagogically in ways that relate to those four competence areas, as well as being a useful tool to develop the students' competence in using digital technology.

During the last decade, a wide range of research studies have shown that filmmaking, animation and digital storytelling can be highly motivating activities for children and youth (Bailey, McVee, Shanahan, 2008, Curwood & Cowell, 2011, Chen & Li 2011, Gutierrez, 2013, Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford, 2014, Hodges, 2011, Shoonmaker & Wolf 2004, Mølster & Wikan 2012, Limoncelli, 2009, Miller 2007). One reason for this may be their familiarity with digital media: Norwegian youth spend almost eight hours each day consuming media like television, video games and film (Erstad, 2010, p. 39-41), most of it probably in English. For them, the connection between film and English is a natural one. How do we meet them half way by giving them an opportunity not only to consume, but to produce their own media products?

Since filmmaking is a process that can involve a range of activities from idea development, scriptwriting and planning to problem-solving, acting and digital media production, it has a significant learning potential. Filmmaking is particularly relevant as an approach in the English subject, as the process of making a film requires the learners to use the language for a purpose. However, the amount of research on filmmaking in the English classroom is very limited. Due to this fact, the present study will attempt to explore how and why filmmaking may be used in the English classroom in the years to come.

1.3 Outline

In the theoretical framework, the connection between the English subject and filmmaking will be discussed more in depth. First, some of the central cultural and educational policies concerning youth and filmmaking in Norway will be presented and discussed. Secondly, a theoretical discussion of how the concepts *literacy*, *digital skills/competence* and *communicative competence* can relate to filmmaking. Thirdly, a proposition of how filmmaking can be a context for English language learning. Following these chapters, relevant research studies connected to filmmaking, digital storytelling and animation will be reviewed. The case study will be presented, analyzed and discussed in chapters 3-6.

1.4 Definitions

Filmmaking: In this thesis, filmmaking means the process of creating a digital film or video (a digital story with *moving* images).

Animation: the process of making a film by using “a series of drawings, computer graphics, or photographs of objects (such as puppets or models) that are slightly different from one another and that when viewed quickly one after another create the appearance of movement” (Merriam-Webster, 2015). Two educational animation projects will be discussed in this thesis; one from Australia and one from Norway.

Digital storytelling: an umbrella term for the process of telling a story using digital media. Digital storytelling (DST) is a genre that seems to be increasingly popular as an educational tool (The Norwegian Center for ICT in Education, 2015). The digital storytelling projects referred to in this paper are different from a traditional film in that it only includes *still* images. The still images are combined with a spoken narrative (a voice-over) and a soundtrack. New technologies are used to edit and share the story with an audience, e.g. the classmates (Normann 2011, p. 1). Digital stories are typically made individually and often have a personal approach (e.g. first person narration).

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Cultural Policies: Stimulating Young Filmmakers

During the last decade, increasing numbers of young people have gone from being consumers to being producers of film (Erstad, 2010, p. 88, Haugsbakk, Svoen & Bjørgen, 2015, p. 31). This trend is a result of what has been called a “democratization” of the tools of production (Erstad, 2010, p. 14). Due to the technological development, everyone with a cell phone now has the equipment they need to produce a short film. The trend may also be a result of educational and cultural policies launched to inspire children and youth to make films (ibid., p. 88). The youth film festival *Amandusfestivalen*, established with public funding in 1988, is today Norway’s largest film festival and film competition for young filmmakers (Filmport, 2015). At the festival, young filmmakers can compete in the genres fiction, animation, documentary, extreme sport and music video (Fritze & Haugsbakk, 2015, p. 85). It is also possible to receive a prize for best manuscript (ibid.). Whether as a result of these initiatives or of the increased availability of equipment, both the quantity and quality of films sent to this festival have increased significantly the last decade (Erstad, 2010, p. 88, Fritze & Haugsbakk, 2015, p. 85). From 20 films in 1987, the festival has received between 200-300 films each year the last decade (Fritze & Haugsbakk, 2015, p. 86). There are also a number of regional initiatives aimed at promoting young adults’ interest and skills in filmmaking. For instance, *Mediefabrikken* (The Media Factory) in Akershus County say that their goal is to help develop and challenge young people with an interest in film (Filmport, 2015). Finally, *The Norwegian Film Institute* offers workshops in stop-motion animation for school-classes and teachers (Norwegian Film Institute, 2015). These initiatives indicate that policy makers perceive film and filmmaking as important cultural expressions that young people should have the opportunity to learn more about.

2.2 Educational Policies: Digital Competence across the Curriculum

Despite a lack of research on filmmaking in the English subject in Norway, there is reason to believe that it is gaining ground. This assumption is in part based on conversations with a range of teachers of English, indicating that teachers have started to use various types of small-scale filmmaking in their classrooms. Moreover, research studies and articles about *digital storytelling* (DST) and *animation* show that these approaches have been tried out in the English subject at both secondary school and in higher education (Jamissen, 2015, p. 213,

Normann, 2012, Mølster & Wikan, 2012). The increasing popularity of student-made media products in the English classroom is connected to the educational reform that was brought on by the national curriculum *Knowledge Promotion 2006* (LK06). According to LK06, students need to learn how to communicate through a variety of text types, including digital and composite texts (English Subject Curriculum, LK06, 2013). These text types include pictures, audio and film (Svoen & Gilje, 2012 in Haugsbakk, Svoen & Bjørgen, 2015, p. 31). There have been a strong political will to ensure that all students are digitally competent, learning to produce digital media products in a creative and critical manner (Mølster & Wikan, 2012, p. 121). These changes have required an increased focus on students as media producers in the English subject (Skulstad, 2012, p. 326). The importance of teaching students how to use digital tools and media is also endorsed in NOU 2015:8 (NOU 2015:8, 2015, p. 26).

The positive attitude towards technology in the classroom stem from international and national debates about what competence will be needed in the future. In particular, how concepts like literacy, text and communicative competence should be defined (Jamissen, 2012, p. 213, Erstad 2010, p. 99, Skulstad 2012, p. 326). Traditionally, literacy has been used about the ability to read and write. However, since the 70s, arguments have been raised that literacy needs to be seen as the overall ability to communicate within a specific cultural context “with the tools available at that time” (Erstad, 2010, p. 96). What this means is that the ability to read, write and express oneself orally in the 21st century, needs to include the ability to do so through a variety of digital media (Erstad 2010, p. 99, Skulstad 2012, p. 326). Because film is an important communicative “tool of our time”, students need to learn how to create and communicate through the film medium. Film is becoming increasingly common for a range of communicative purposes that used to be done in print-media. A job applicant today might for instance be asked to present himself or herself in a video application rather than a print-application. In other words, it is not sufficient to teach students how to read and write print-texts or to communicate face-to-face. They also need to be able to communicate using digital tools and media for communicative purposes. Rather than one type of literacy, the 21st century is believed to call for *multiliteracies* (Miller 2015, p. 61 referring to the New London Group, 1996, Alvermann 2002, Buckingham 2003, Cope and Kalantzis 2000, Gee 2003, Jewitt & Kress 2003, Lankshear & Knobel 2003). According to Ola Erstad, having the ability to be creative producers of media products is an important competence in our culture (Erstad, 2010, p. 113). He connects this ability not only to what he refers to as *digital competence*, but also to *communicative competence* (ibid.), a central concept in second language teaching. In

his view, digital competence should not be understood only in an instrumental sense, e.g. the ability to use a computer to find information on the Internet (ibid., p. 16). Rather, digital competence is a cultural and critical communicative competence, involving the ability to create digital media products collaboratively (ibid., p. 105).

In LK06, the term *digital skills* is preferred over *digital competence* or *multiliteracies*. Digital skills are seen as part of a competence that concerns the students' abilities to master digital technology in its many forms (Framework for Basic Skills, 2013, p. 12). Digital skills involve the ability to “use digital tools, media and resources efficiently and responsibly, to solve practical tasks, find and process information, design digital products and communicate content” (ibid.). Furthermore, the ability to design digital products is defined as “being able to use digital tools, media and resources to compose, reapply, convert and develop different digital elements into finished products, e.g. composite texts” (ibid.). The ability to communicate means “using digital tools, resources and media to collaborate in the learning processes, and to present one's own knowledge and competence to different target groups (ibid., p. 12). According to *Framework for Basic Skills* (2013), digital skills should be seen as a natural part of learning both in and across the curriculum (ibid., p. 6). In the English subject, digital skills are defined in the following manner:

[...] being able to use a varied selection of digital tools, media and resources to assist in language learning, to communicate in English and to acquire relevant knowledge [...] gathering and processing information to create different kinds of text (English subject curriculum, LK06, 2013).

In other words, digital skills in the English subject not only entails the ability to use digital tools and media as tools to require and process information, but also as tools to develop language skills and create digital and composite texts. In the program subject *International English*, one of the competence aims states that students should be able to use digital tools in a “creative manner” in “communication and presentation of his or her own material” (English subject curriculum, LK06, 2015). One way of concretizing these parts of the curriculum may be to ask students to create digital films to communicate and present relevant topics. In that way, the students would practice their ability to communicate in a medium that is becoming increasingly relevant. Gavin Dudeney agrees when he writes that, “Students have to learn not just to understand but to create multimedia messages, integrating text with images, sounds and video to suit a variety of communicative purposes and reach a range of target

audiences” (Dudenev 2013: 13). Ability to do so is not only an essential skill for the future; it is also a potential enrichment for learning (ibid., p. 5).

2.3 Film as “Unserious Entertainment”

Despite these changing trends and revisions of the curriculum, it is argued that more could be done in order to integrate not only film, but digital tools and media in general, in schools (Langset, 2014, p. 52, Erstad, 2010, p. 69, p. 211, Handal, 2014, p. 54). Some experts point to the extensive experience and interest many children and young people today have in digital tools and media and claim that this potential is not sufficiently exploited (Langset, 2014, p. 52, Hobbs 2011, p. 2). Visual media are important sources in children and young adults’ identity formation and in their everyday lives (Braathen & Erstad, 2000, p. 14). According to Lars Thomas Braathen and Ola Erstad, the Norwegian school system has had problems coping with this, resulting in a lacking on attention the relationship between film and pedagogy (ibid., p. 10). Our culture, they argue, has taken a “visual turn” that is not being reflected in the way we teach (ibid., p. 21). In fact, Erstad claims that new media is marginalized in the Norwegian school system due to the stronghold of print culture (Erstad, 2010, p. 69). Books and writing, he explains, are usually associated with “adult life” and high culture, while film, music and TV are considered “unserious entertainment” (Braathen & Erstad, 2000, p. 21). This creates an attitude towards film as a mere supplement to a printed text, rather than as media in its own right (ibid.). In an attempt to change the reluctance towards new media, Braathen and Erstad want to encourage a debate about how and why film and other media may be used for the purpose of learning (ibid., p. 14). In Erstad’s view, this is one of the most exciting and important debates facing the educational system in the years to come (Erstad, 2010, p. 12).

2.4 Bridging the Gap

A much used argument against integrating digital tools and media in education, is the claim that this is something that the students already know (Ottestad, Throndsen, Hatlevik & Anubha, 2014, p. 40). Anyone dealing with youth today knows that they are usually very active users of media and technology. Indeed, youth are often innovators in driving the digital development (Erstad 2010: 34). Yet, a large study refutes the idea that Norwegian youth are so tech-savvy that they know all there is to know about technology (Ottestad, Throndsen, Hatlevik & Anubha, 2014, p. 40). They usually have competence and experience in some

fields, but need help in others. According to Erstad, the school's job is to build on and challenge their digital competence (Erstad, 2010, p. 17). In order to do this, teachers need to have knowledge about their students' digital lives and competences (ibid., p. 34). Teachers need to understand how youth learn when they use media at home and what they need to learn at school (ibid., p. 16).

The International Computer and Information Literacy Study 2013 (ICILS) is the first international comparative study of students' digital skills (Ottstad, Throndsen, Hatlevik & Anubha, 2014, p. 8). In the Norwegian report from the study, worry is expressed about the fact that 25 % of the students lack the necessary digital knowledge and skills "to thrive in a world that is becoming increasingly digitalized" (ibid., p. 38). According to the report, the situation is serious because digital competence is "a pre-requisite to function in their professional lives and as active participants of our society" (ibid., p. 40). Norwegian youths' use of digital tools and media in their spare time is both varied and frequent (ibid.). Yet, when asked what they use their computer for, they report that it is primarily used for listening to music (91%), watching downloaded videos (75 %), reading news (67%) and playing computer games (47%) (ibid., p. 27). The problem, according to both this report and Erstad, is that very few of them are actually producing content themselves; a necessary step to develop the literacies needed in today's mediatized society (Ottstad, Throndsen, Hatlevik & Anubha, 2014, p. 40, Erstad, 2010, p. 105). When asked about their media production outside of school, only 9 % report doing this at least once a week (ibid., p. 25). Slightly more, 15 %, report producing media products at least once a month. However, the large majority reports doing this less than once a month or never (76 %) (ibid.). When the participants' abilities to "use digital tools and media to communicate a message" are tested, the score is very low (ibid., p. 10), suggesting that they lack both experience and competence in this area. This research study thus refutes the claim that Norwegian youth know everything about technology. Teachers may assume that the majority of their students have competence and experience in consuming but not producing media content. If digital competence for all is a national goal, teachers need to discuss how they best can help their students in developing this competence.

2.5 The Teach – Not the Tech

As pointed out by Steffan Handal in an interview in *Aftenposten Oppvekst*, digital tools and media should not be used for their own sake: “reasonable use that fosters learning is much better than a lot of uncritical use” (Langset, 2014, p. 54, my translation). Handal’s comment points to the importance of pedagogical use of digital tools and media. It is a widely held belief today that learning is a process that requires activity from the student and is not something that can happen automatically (Nordahl, 2005, p. 141). Rather than focusing solely on the technology itself, the focus should be shifted to how it facilitates activity and learning in those who use it (Hobbs 2011, p. 8). A wide range of research studies indicate that technology does not lead to increased learning in itself. Rather, the important factors are the pedagogic facilitation, teacher competence, organizing and planning (Watson, 1993, Dwyer 1994, Harrison, Comber et al, 2002, Dons & Bakken, 2003, Erstad, 2004, referred to in Mølster & Wikan, 2012, p. 121). It is the teaching – not the technology – that is the crucial factor.

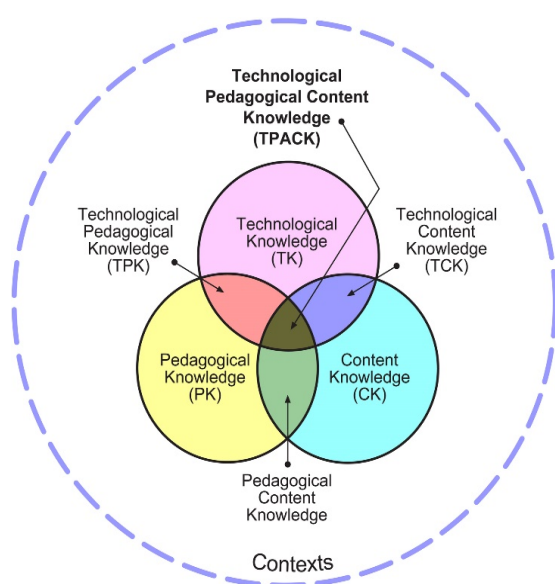


Figure 1 Mishra & Koehler's TPACK Model (2006).
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www.tpack.org.

Mishra and Koehler’s Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Model (figure 1) is an attempt to illustrate how the fields of technology, subject content and pedagogy need to overlap in order to create successful integration of technology in the classroom (Mishra & Koehler 2006, referred to in Normann 2011, p. 21). Teachers need to have more than content knowledge about their subject and general pedagogic knowledge. They also need to have enough technological knowledge to assess how digital technology can be used to foster learning in their particular subject. Finding filmmaking’s role

in the English classroom would mean placing it in the very middle of the model, where technological, pedagogical and content knowledge merge. With the revision of LK06, all teachers became responsible for teaching the students to develop their abilities to use digital tools and media in their learning. These changes in the curriculum support the idea that all English teachers need to have not only content and pedagogical knowledge, but also

technological knowledge. In the following chapter, an attempt will be made to exemplify one possible approach to integrate the areas of technology, pedagogy and content knowledge in the English subject through filmmaking.

2.6 Filmmaking as a Context for English Language Learning

It is a characteristic of today's foreign and second language didactics that it is not primarily dominated by one learning theory, but rather by a range of different approaches and trends (Skulstad, 2012, p. 4). As language development is a complex process, second language acquisition (SLA) research, "does not provide a magic solution that can be applied instantly to the contemporary classroom so much as a set of ideas that teachers can try out for themselves" (Cook, 1994, p. 10). One such "idea" might be to use filmmaking as an approach in the English classroom. As filmmaking does not appear to have a strong tradition in the English subject in Norway, a model (figure 2) has been made for the purpose of the present study. The figure is meant as a starting point to think about how and why film can be used in the English subject. The issue of digital skills in the context of filmmaking in the English subject has already been discussed in the former chapter. In terms of the *content* of student-made films in the English subject, it seems likely that a range of topics could be presented through the film medium. Working on film adaptations of literature is an example that may strike some teachers as familiar. In allowing the students themselves to make the adaptations, a new approach to this topic can be made. Moreover, students can be asked to make short films explaining e.g. the art of small talk. Many of the traditional role play-activities in English textbooks can just as easily be transformed into a small filmmaking activity. In doing

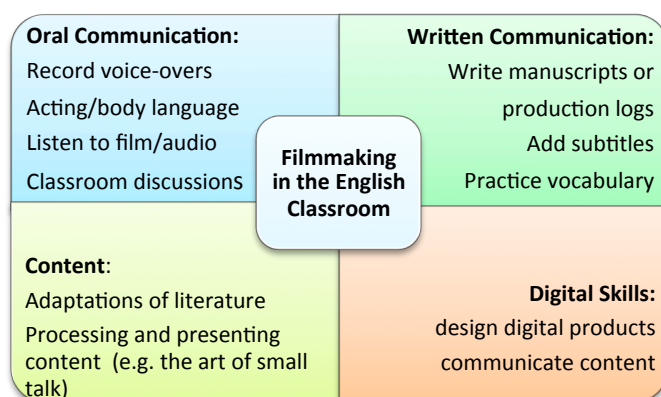


Figure 2 Filmmaking in the English Classroom

so, the focus on body language and communicative competence can be kept.

A range of language activities can be integrated in the process of making a film. Oral communication skills may be focused on by allowing the students to engage in classroom discussion in English. They may discuss ideas and manuscripts; watch and listen to film

clips in English; discuss their own and others' films and participate in structured

conversations with the teacher, to mention some examples. Secondly, the films the students make may require them to act, thus practicing their awareness of body language and its importance in communication. As actors, the students may also speak English either as a part of on-screen dialogue or off-screen narration. Off-screen narration, or voice-over, can be recorded and added to a film as a part of the editing process. The classroom activities are part of what is called *oral interaction skills* in *The Common European Framework for Languages* (CEFR) while the latter are connected to skills in *oral production* and *aesthetic use of language* (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 67). Written communication skills may be focused on in two main ways. Firstly, by allowing the students to write manuscript, project descriptions, production logs, project reports or other relevant texts. Secondly, written communication skills can be in focus when the students add subtitles and other text-graphics to their film during editing.

The hypothesis presented here is that the processes of filmmaking can offer the students a chance to use the English language for a purpose. According to SLA research, using the target language for a purpose is beneficial for language acquisition (Gass and Selinker, 2001, p. 259). In line with this, Aud Marit Simonsen recommends “activities where students are encouraged to interact and cooperate in L2 and to express meaning, personal opinions, and feelings” (1998, p. 86). A variety of meaning-focused theories and methods have developed during the latest decades, highlighting the importance of exposure to adequate, comprehensible input in context (Blair and Rimmereide, 2009, p. 165). As a part of the shift towards meaningful learning, motivation has come increasingly in focus (ibid.). When the learner feels safe and is engaged in meaningful learning activities just above her prior linguistic level, language acquisition is believed to occur (ibid.). Could filmmaking offer a motivating context for young people today to learn English? And if so, what could they learn from filmmaking that is relevant for the English subject?

2.7 Filmmaking and Motivation

Motivation is often highlighted as the key finding in research on filmmaking in education (Shoonmaker & Wolf 2004, p. 17, Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford, 2014, p. 219, Yuan & Chen 2011, p. 77, Emet, 2013, p. 362, Mølster & Wikan 2012, p. 128, Gutierrez 2013, p. 4). Motivation is crucial for learning because it is what makes the learner engage in the learning activity (Simonsen, 1998, p. 101.) In general, willingness to put in the necessary effort and to show resilience suggests that the students are motivated for a learning activity (Woolfolk

2004, p. 275). In other words, the link between motivation, effort and resilience is close. According to Vivian Cook, motivation is “undoubtedly” a reason why some second language learners succeed more than others do (2013, p. 136). Investigating how filmmaking can be used to create engagement in the classroom is therefore of immense importance both in terms of the students’ general learning and their language acquisition. In the following section, I will summarize some of the literature on the field of motivation and filmmaking in school.

Michael Shoonmaker and John M. Wolf have done a multi-years research project on outcomes and effects of digital storytelling projects in urban, public schools in the United States. One of their main arguments for their method is that the students seem motivated: “kids love making movies, even when it requires lots of work and commitment” (Shoonmaker & Wolf, 2014, p. 17). They explain children’s interest in filmmaking with arguments about a human “storytelling instinct” (ibid., p. 5). The human mind is constructed to “spin stories” and arrange reality into stories, making it into “an organic moviemaking machine” (ibid.). In other words, an idea humans are instinctively drawn to storytelling, be they oral tales around the fire or digital stories. In addition to the storytelling instinct, Shoonmaker and Wolf contend that children today are especially motivated to make *digital* stories for three reasons. Firstly, children enjoy filmmaking because it is action-oriented and hands-on. Secondly, they enjoy it is because it is something new and different. Finally, the familiarity of the medium, i.e. their experience as consumers of film, makes filmmaking appeal to them. They explain the last point by maintaining that filmmaking connects the students’ out-of-school competences and interests in films and digital media to the classroom (ibid., p. 21-23).

Renee Hobbs is also concerned with media’s potential to engage American students in classroom learning. Like Shoonmaker and Wolf, she argues that there is a need to connect the students’ out-of-school culture to the classroom: “In order to reach today’s learners, educators need to be responsive to students’ experience with their culture – which is what they experience through television, movies, *YouTube*, the Internet, *Facebook*, music, and gaming (Hobbs, 2011, p. 7). In making this comment, Hobbs expresses a belief that young people today are motivated by working with media in the classroom because it is familiar and interesting to them. One of the ways to create that bridge between the classroom and the students’ culture, she claims, is by allowing them to create their own digital media products (ibid., p. 2). If Hobbs is correct, making a film would be a motivating activity for many young learners today.

Shoonmaker, Wolf and Hobbs thus seem to argue that filmmaking is connected to *internal* rather than *external* motivation (Woolfolk 2004, p. 275). In pedagogic psychology, internal motivation concerns activities which are seen as rewarding in themselves, while external motivation is created by factors such as a reward (e.g. a good grade) or fear of punishment (ibid.). At school, both internal and external motivation plays a role, and often the two are intertwined (ibid.). Internal motivation is seen as central by humanistic, cognitive and socio-cultural learning theories (ibid., p. 282). By connecting the students' interests in film and media to the learning activities, internal motivation can be stimulated, which in turn is believed to foster effort and thus learning (ibid.). Studies from Australia and Taiwan also lend support to the claim that filmmaking can lead to increased internal motivation. These studies will be discussed in the two next paragraphs.

An Australian study found that a Claymation (animation with clay figures) project led to increased engagement and collaboration among their adolescent low-level English language learners (Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford, 2014, p. 219). Their students, who often faced “significant challenges in achieving sufficient English language skills to engage successfully with the literacy demands of mainstream classes” (ibid., p. 219), benefited from the Claymation project (ibid.). Rather than focusing solely on the students' linguistic abilities, the project used a *multiliteracies approach*. The approach is described as being student-centered, collaborative and active, drawing on a range of design elements: linguistic, visual, special, audio, aural, tactile and gestural (ibid., p. 220-221). Students were found to use these elements in the process of creating their films: oral discussions, storyboard sketching, writing captions and designing the set (ibid., p. 227). As a result, students gained confidence and started collaborating more with their classmates (ibid., p. 227). The study also notes students' pride in the finished products (ibid., p. 224). In contrast to Shoonmaker, Wolf and Hobbs, these authors do not focus on the students' interest in film or storytelling, but rather on the pedagogy of the project. Firstly, they focused on the fact that the student-led approach promoted learner agency. Secondly, on the fact that the multimodal approach led to student ownership of the work, causing engagement and collaboration. Ownership was especially visible during the second Claymation project, where students took charge of decisions and divided roles and responsibilities between them (ibid., p. 225). Thirdly, they focused on the fact that the combination of many modes for making meaning allowed students to use their respective strengths, e.g. in drawing a storyboard, thus increasing their participation (ibid., p. 228).

Cheng-Ting Chen and Kuo-Chen Li in Taiwan found that students were highly motivated by their filmmaking project (Chen & Li, 2011, abstract). After two years of using the approach with students, they found that despite the fact that the project required much effort and time from the students, “the results brought them the excessive fun and sense of accomplishment” (ibid., abstract). The authors also contend that the filmmaking project helped the students to build friendships with each other (ibid., p. 77). Chen and Li seem to agree with Hobbs when they claim that their students’ motivation is connected to “meaningful integration of interesting technologies” in the curriculum (ibid.).

The integration of interesting technologies in the curriculum is found to be an important motivational factor in a Norwegian study as well (ibid., p. 131). In their study on digital storytelling and animation from a lower secondary school in Norway, Terje Mølster and Gerd Wikan found that when the students worked creatively with digital tools as active “producers of knowledge”, the potential for learning increased (Mølster & Wikan, 2012, p. 120). Students and teachers agreed that digital storytelling and animation was “highly motivating” (ibid., p. 130). In addition to motivation, the project also led to increased mastery, effort and collaboration (ibid., p. 128). Many of the students put more effort into both planning, manuscript and product even though they considered these approaches to be both time-consuming and hard work (ibid., p. 129). An English teacher in the project commented that when her students made digital films, they were more motivated and more willing to experiment (ibid.). Furthermore, she observed that students that she had considered reluctant readers, sought out texts in English on the Internet to help them in their filmmaking. In line with Hobbs, this study found that the students felt self-confident when working with digital tools (ibid., p. 131). Students who usually struggled at school seemed to take on a different role when they were given the opportunity to create digital products (ibid., p. 130). Another result is that these approaches led to “authentic collaboration”, as each student needed to do her part in order for the product to be finished, e.g. planning, research, scriptwriting and editing (ibid., p. 133). According to Mølster and Wikan, the collaborative approach worked particularly well due to the fact that the students had different talents that were needed in the group (ibid., p. 134). The students learn from and with each other, which is a central tenet in socio-cultural learning perspectives (ibid.). In effect, the individual student became more visible in the class community (ibid., 134). This study supports the findings from Australia that group work centered on the joint effort of creating multimodal products increase collaboration, self-confidence and a sense of ownership (Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford,

2014). Mølster and Wikan believe that it is important that the students are given the opportunity to be producers of knowledge; to make digital products in groups. Furthermore, to have the opportunity to share their products with a real audience, i.e. their classmates. Mølster and Wikan believe that this approach to learning makes it possible to develop a “community of learners” that can have positive effects on learning (ibid., p. 134, referring to Lave and Wenger 1991).

As a contrast to this study, Anita Normann’s study from another Norwegian lower secondary school found that there was no direct correlation between digital storytelling and increased motivation (2011, p. 68). In this study, the students attribute motivation primarily to variation in working method (ibid.). This finding corresponds to Shoonmaker and Wolf’s argument about the novelty of film being motivating (2012, p. 21-23). However, Normann’s material shows that there are learner differences concerning this issue; students who favor creative, open and challenging tasks see digital storytelling as both motivating and useful for their English acquisition (ibid., p. 71). The less motivated students report enjoying working on the computers, but are not interested in digital storytelling per se, and do not see a link to their English acquisition (ibid., p. 72). It should be emphasized that the students in this study worked alone with their digital stories, making the approach different from the collaborative approaches in the other studies. This may be an important factor in terms of student motivation. Lending support to the idea that collaboration is a factor in student motivation in this context, is the fact that some of the students say that their motivation and effort increase because they know they will share their stories with their classmates at the end of the project (ibid., p. 83).

One important conclusion to draw from Normann’s study is that there is reason to be careful in claiming that young people in general find all forms of technology to be interesting. In a classroom setting, a range of factors influence the degree of engagement an individual student may have. Nonetheless, there seems to be ground for assuming that many young people would enjoy collaborative filmmaking. This assumption is based on the research studies presented above, suggesting that the related genres of digital storytelling, animation and digital filmmaking can be used in ways that foster student motivation, mastery, effort and collaboration. In the studies, the students’ motivation is attributed to a range of different factors; variation; challenging, creative tasks; interest and competence connected to digital tools and media; a “storytelling instinct”; a student-centered, collaborative approach and the

multimodality of the medium. Being aware of the range of factors that may trigger student motivation may help in designing a filmmaking project for the English classroom.

2.8 Filmmaking and English Language Learning

As discussed above, a range of language learning activities may be integrated into a filmmaking project. These include scriptwriting, writing production logs, reading about film theory, acting, recording voice-overs and listening to film clips. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to measure or draw conclusions about the effect a filmmaking project has on English language learning. Rather, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate which elements of a filmmaking project *may* be particularly useful in terms of English language learning. Due to a lack of research studies about the connection between filmmaking and language learning, the literature review in this section will be limited to investigating how voice-overs, storyboards and scriptwriting may be used in a filmmaking project in the English subject.

2.8.1 Voice-Overs

The voice-over is a central element in both Normann's digital storytelling project and in the filmmaking project that the present study builds on. In Normann's study, each student made his or her own digital story including photographs and a recording of their own voice in English. In the filmmaking project, each group had to make a voice-over of the poem that the films were based on. All of the students in Normann's study agree that digital storytelling helped them develop their oral skills in English (Normann, 2012, p. 81). The students explain this by pointing to the usefulness of hearing their own voices recorded as voice-overs (ibid.). In the students' minds, listening to their own voice made them conscious of their own strengths and weaknesses in terms of pronunciation. When they noticed mistakes, they could make a new recording with improved pronunciation. Some of the students argue that working with voice-overs therefore represents a new way of practicing their oral skills because a regular presentation in front of the class did not allow them to make improvements (ibid., p. 82). As in Mølster and Wikan's study, Normann also found that the students were motivated by the fact that they had to share their stories with their classmates at the end of the project (ibid.). One of Normann's students explains that he has to practice more when he works on recording his voice than in everyday informal conversations. Having a target group in mind helps the students to think about how their story communicates with an audience (ibid., p. 83). Knowing their classmates will listen to their recording later seems to put an "extra challenge

on the shoulders of the storytellers” (ibid.). Some students reflect on increased self-confidence as a result of hearing their own English pronunciation. However, some students also express reluctance towards listening to their own voice, making them reluctant towards using digital storytelling in their English classes (ibid.). Normann argues that their reluctance is increased by the fact that their classmates will hear their recording, creating a negative pressure to perform for some of them (ibid.). Class environment and teacher support is therefore emphasized as being important in voice-overs to work with oral skills (ibid.).

The students’ reflections on the usefulness of hearing their own voices is in line with SLA theories that emphasize the importance of raising awareness about one’s own language skills (Cook 2008, p. 82). Furthermore, proponents of the audio-lingual method saw a close link between being able to hear a pronunciation mistake and not making it (ibid). If these assumptions about language learning are correct, producing voice-overs may be a useful tool in developing oral skills in English. Normann points out the possibility of using digital storytelling more instrumentally to develop oral skills. This can be done by decreasing the focus on the content (the story itself) and increasing the focus on specific points of language (ibid., p. 95). This could perhaps also allow for improved facilitating in terms of providing support to those who feel insecure in their oral production. If these students were provided with feedback and an opportunity to improve their voice-overs before showing it to the class, their fear of sharing their stories may decrease.

2.8.2 Scriptwriting and Storyboards

A storyboard is the cartoon-like sketches used to plan each scene of a film. It is a tool used to plan the combination of all the different elements of the story, e.g. the shots, angles, action and dialogue. Consequently, the process of storyboarding is an essential step in any film production. Used at school, storyboarding can help the students to plan their story before they start writing the manuscript itself. For some students, visualizing the scenes while they write might have a function as a form of scaffolding that helps them in their writing process (Gutierrez, 2013, p. 5). As in a real film production, storyboards could very well be used as tools to plan the elements of the story in combination with scriptwriting. In figure 3, a photograph of a student-made storyboard is included as an example.

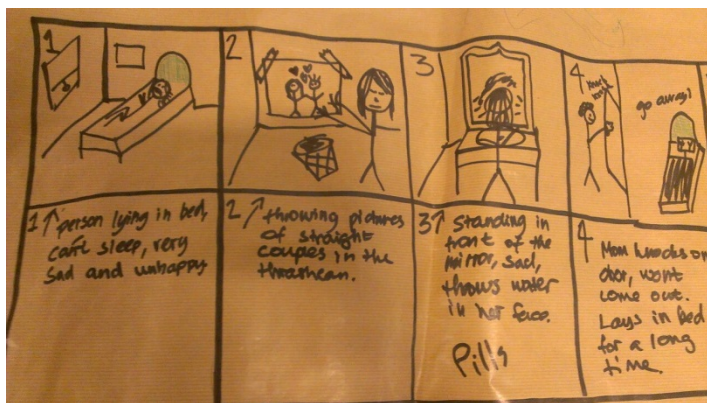


Figure 3 Storyboard for the film *Anxious Youth* (2014).

In addition to a storyboard, a written manuscript is essential in a film production. A manuscript usually includes written descriptions of everything the actors and directors need to know in order to shoot the film, for instance, the characters' appearances, actions and dialogues. Gutierrez emphasizes that scriptwriting is

typically “hidden” from the audience; actors and directors tend to get all the attention, while the scriptwriter rarely receives much fame (ibid., 1). Consequently, many students may not have thought about the importance of the script in making a film. In Gutierrez' view, scriptwriting is an engaging way to work with writing skills in school (ibid.). Since manuscripts are not one genre, a range of text genres can be practiced as a part of writing manuscripts as it includes descriptive, creative and narrative writing (ibid.). The fact that they are writing for a multimodal medium, means that they also need to consider the visual and aural aspects of their writing (Lund 1998, p. 80). Making manuscripts and storyboards may therefore be particularly useful in teaching the students to think visually when they read and write. As Lund (1998) points out: “the story is neither in the words nor pictures but in the conjunction” (Lund 1998: 80). This means that students practice both their writing abilities and their multimodal meaning-making skills when they write manuscripts.

The students in Normann's study were asked to write manuscripts of 150-300 words. In contrast to the typical film manuscript presented above, the manuscript in a digital story typically only includes the monologue that the student will record as a voice-over. Furthermore, a digital story manuscript is typically written individually by each student. In that sense, the writing process is quite different from what it may be in a filmmaking project, where collaboration is more typical. The students in Normann's study did not see manuscript writing as a particularly useful language learning activity (Normann 2011, p. 84). Highly proficient students in particular said that the limitations on manuscript length in this specific project (150-300 words), prevented them from showing their English skills (ibid.). Reluctant writers, however, tended to see the limited length as an “easy solution” that helped lower their anxiety and motivation to perform (ibid.). Despite these students' differing opinions, Normann contends that writing a short manuscript is in fact a rather challenging task, as it

requires the writer to express herself with economy (Normann, 2011, p. 84). The same point is put forth by Lund (1998): “since the visual dimension takes care of some of the description, writers must work to eliminate redundancy and to achieve a succinct, conversational style, with active verbs and short, declarative sentences” (Lund, 1998, p. 80). In other words, students are expected to revise their texts in order to improve their quality. One way of doing so is by asking the students to listen to their story after they have recorded the voice-over. According to the students themselves, listening to their own writing in this way helped them to notice their own writing mistakes (Normann 2011, p. 84). She refers to Jason Ohler, who points out the beneficial connection between digital storytelling, writing, reading, listening and speaking (ibid., p. 85).

Writing a manuscript can be a challenging task, as it requires precise descriptions and explanations. At the same time, it can be a writing task that students perceive as engaging due to the fact that they write with a specific purpose and audience in mind; making a film to share with their classmates (Gutierrez 2013, p. 3). Having an audience in mind is believed to be an important part of successful writing (Kvithyld, 2011, p. 15). Students have to make sure they communicate their story in a way that is clear to their audience. This may help to raise their audience awareness (Normann 2011, p. 83).

Gutierrez recommends using “children’s media interest” to engage them in writing manuscripts for films, podcasts or other media products. Allowing children to write manuscripts for their films can be that “magic engagement pill” that teachers tend to look for, as “the joy of writing, and reading, come vibrantly to life” (2013, p. 3). His conviction, he explains, comes from his extensive background in working with scriptwriting and children. In his experience, children tend to “love it” (ibid., p. 134). In contrast to this, other studies have found that students did not particularly like writing manuscripts (Lund 1998, p. 82). In one study, it was observed that students were reluctant and felt anxiety to let themselves or the teacher down (Mansur 2011, p. 3). The different results might be due to a range of factors like the students’ age, interests and writing skills. Gutierrez has not done systematic research, and so does not establish who the children who “love to write manuscripts” are. In Lund’s study, the participants are described as “‘at risk’ urban high school students” without previous filmmaking experience (ibid., p. 81-82). It should also be mentioned that the study is already quite dated (1995) in terms of saying something about children and youth’s interest in filmmaking. Consequently, it is possible that Gutierrez’s experience from the latest decade is

more representative than Lund's research project. Interestingly, Lund did find that her students came to see the usefulness of writing and preparing for their films (ibid.), which might create increased engagement for the *next* filmmaking project.

2.8.3 Student-made Adaptations of Literature

For English teachers, the tension between the “old” world of high literature and the “new” world of digital tools and media might feel as a conflict. However, there are ways of combining the two that could prove valuable. During the last years, digital media productions based on poetry have received increased attention. This is of interest to English teachers because despite the fact that poetry is a central part of English language literature, many students struggle with making meaningful connections to it in the classroom (Reinartz & Hokanson 2001, p. 28, Pike 2000, p. 41). This lack of interest can have many reasons, but one of them might also be due to weaknesses in the way poetry is taught (Curwood & Cowell 2011, p. 112). “Too many of us”, Jen Scott Curwood and Lora Lee H. Cowell claim, “never really take a hard, honest look at how we teach poetry” (ibid.). What they suggest, is to teach poetry in combination with digital media production (ibid.). They are not alone in doing so. Over the years, a large amount of research has suggested that using digital media to interpret literature can increase students' interest and learning (Jølle & Sjøhelle, 2010, p. 233, Hestnes, 2010, abstract, Normann, 2010: abstract, Braathen & Erstad 2010, p. 71). The positive results may be influenced by the fact that the field of film pedagogics has followed much of the same development as the field of literature pedagogics; from a focus on the text itself to a focus on the reader's- or viewer's- response (ibid., p. 74-75). In these student-centered classrooms, film may offer an indirect experience and thus a “safe detour” to raise difficult issues with a class (ibid.). Engaging students in discussions about film is easier than engaging them in discussion about literature, Braathen and Erstad argue (ibid.).

Research studies on poetry in particular, suggest that combining poetry with digital media production can be rewarding for the students (McVee, Bailey & Shanahan 2015, Goodwyn 2013, Hughes & Jones, Emert 2013, Parker 1999, Cliff 2005, Gourley 2001, Burn & Durran 2007, Cook 2010, Bryer, Lindsay & Wilson 2014, Curwood & Cowell 2011, Reinartz & Hokanson 2001). As working with poetry and digital media production is an art form, it typically comes in a range of forms and under different names (e.g. *digital poem*, *video poetry*, *poetry-film* and *filmpoem*). In the following, the term “filmpoem” will be used. Alastair Cook writes this about filmpoems:

The combination of film and poetry is an attractive one. For the poet, perhaps a hope that the filmmaker will bring something to the poem: a new audience, a visual attraction, the laying of way markers; for the filmmaker, a fixed parameter to respond to, the power of a text sparking the imagination with visual connections and metaphor (Cook, 2010)

What Cook makes clear is the idea that the film is not meant to be a copy of the poem, but rather to bring something new to it. Interpreting a poem for the purpose of adapting it to the screen thus follows much the same process as that of a director wanting to adapt a play to the stage. Rather than striving to copy a former production, she aims at re-interpreting it in ways that can become meaningful to the audience in that specific context. Similarly, all the actors bring something of themselves into the work that distinguishes it from former productions. Consequently, film-poems should not be seen as an attempt to copy the literary text, but rather as a new piece of art inspired by it; an adaptation that is “separate from the original poem” (ibid.). By creating a film-poem, the students have to make their own multimodal interpretation of the poem. They thus create something new, inspired by but not identical to, the poem. In doing so, they not only construct but also add new meaning to the text (Wolf, 2004, p. 251).

Glynda A. Hull and Mark Even Nelson have studied how meaning is transformed from a poem to a film. In their study (2009), they found that the film not only enhances the poem’s meaning but rather that “the meaning that a viewer or listener experiences is qualitatively different, transcending what is possible via each mode separately” (Hull & Nelson 2009, p. 251). They refer to films as having “layers of meaning” derived from the richness of modes. For instance, how music adds “an important emotional element” to the film and thus the poem (ibid., p. 252). Learning how to make good modal choices develops the students’ ability to “make meaning more clearly and creatively” (McVee, Bailey & Shanahan 2015, p. 116).

Cook argues that reluctant readers might benefit in particular from working with film-poetry: The film is a separate work from the text itself and this in turn may open up poetry to people who are not necessarily receptive to the written word. Poetry often tries to deal with the abstract world of thought and feeling, rather than the literal world of things. The *Poetry-film* is the perfect marriage of the two (Cook, 2010). The fact that a film is multimodal means that students with talents or interests in other fields than the linguistic (e.g. music and art rather than reading and writing) might benefit particularly from making film-poems (Hull & Nelson

2005, p. 252, McVee, Bailey & Shanahan 2015, p. 112). This approach to working with poetry in the classroom is quite different from a traditional written poem analysis. Rather than having one mode of expression, the linguistic, students can share their interpretations through the multimodal medium of film. The same point is held forth by Gutierrez, who maintains that filmmaking is especially beneficial to understanding poetry, as it makes the inherent “visual and aural aspects of poetry more explicit” (Gutierrez, 2013, p. 106). When the students can see their film on the screen, the poem’s meaning becomes more visible and interesting to them (Bryer, Linday & Wilson 2014, p. 243). Studies have found that low-proficiency learners of English (e.g. immigrants to English-speaking countries) in particular have benefited from working with digital media production in the classroom, as it allows them to use a variety of modes to communicate meaning, rather than being limited to the linguistic mode alone (Emert 2013, abstract, Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford, 2014, abstract).

These results are in line with Gabrielle Cliff Hodges’ encouragement to English teachers: “English teachers who integrate the study of language, literature, drama and media, and who draw on related disciplines such as music and art, provide a rich variety of perspectives from which their students can study and produce texts” (Hodges 2005, p. 70). Hodges found that combining poetry and filmmaking helped facilitate the reading process (ibid., p. 80). Using videocameras as “notebooks” to gather ideas for a possible film encourages close reading of the poem. Hodges explains this by pointing out that the students had to make connections between the poem and images they wanted to shoot in their film. This started a process of reflection on the connections between both poetry and film. Furthermore, the students also reflected on the importance they themselves had as readers in this process. Hodges refers to this process as a “formative experience” that was seen as highly motivating by her students (ibid., p. 80). By working creatively, the students were forced to choose symbolic images and music that best expressed their interpretation. In this way, the process of interpreting the poem became more tangible, helping the students to express the meaning and mood of the poem. Gathering images for a film thus functioned as a tool to “fill in the gaps” (i.e. interpret) in the poem with concrete images.

Another study found that making film poems helped students to relate personally to the poem through the process of making the film (McVee, Bailey & Shanahan 2015, p. 118). One of the participants says that “the longer I worked with the poem [...], the more the poem meant to me personally” (ibid., p. 128). From being fearful and negative towards the poem, due to

anxieties about a “correct interpretation” (ibid.), students started considering how they could communicate their own interpretations through the film in ways that would be understood by the others (ibid.). In the process, students tended to develop a sense of ownership and pride in their filmpoems (ibid., p. 118). A participant explains this as going from “reading” to “interacting with” the poem, making it her own (ibid., p. 134). Self-expression is also one of the main findings in Curwood & Curwell’s study (2011). Through making a filmpoem, the students were given the tools to “simultaneously explore and express their identity to an audience” (ibid., p. 119).

2.9 Chapter summary

To sum up, research has found that filmmaking (or digital storytelling) is highly motivating for students who tend to make great efforts even when the process is demanding. This is explained by the action-oriented nature of filmmaking and to the fact that youths today are interested and familiar with media. Filmmaking in schools is still something new and different, making the element of variation a relevant motivational factor. Students typically describe filmmaking as fun, emphasizing a sense of ownership and pride. Through filmmaking, students learn about themselves and how to collaborate better. Further, filmmaking is said to inspire language production and acquisition both in terms of oral and written communication. Finally, positive effects are seen in students’ engagement with literature when using filmmaking or digital storytelling to communicate their interpretations.

3. Developing a Film poetry Project for the English Classroom

In order to learn more about the potentials filmmaking could have in the future language-learning classroom, I developed a film poetry project for a VG 1 English class. Facilitating, organizing and planning are as important in working with filmmaking as in any other situation at school (Mølster & Wikan, 2010, p. 121). However, as there is no established method for using filmmaking in the English subject in Norway, the didactic design behind the film project will be explained thoroughly.

3.1 Participants and Roles

As recommended by Braathen and Erstad (2010, p. 76), a constructivist view on learning was fundamental to the development of this project. Many media educators recommend using ICT

in general and filmmaking in particular in ways that allow the students to be active producers rather than consumers (Engen & Haug, 2012, p. 122-123, Braathen & Erstad 2010, p. 75-77, Hobbs 2011, p 12). This project was designed so that the students would collaborate in groups while the teachers functioned as “guides on the side”. The teacher thus takes a “Socratic role”; creating a friendly classroom environment that can stimulate student reflection, association and discussion about literature and film (Braathen & Erstad 2010, p.80).

The project took place with my VG 1 class as a part of their regular English lessons at the general academic program at upper secondary school. In addition to the students, the class’ Norwegian teacher and a media professional participated in parts of the project. The media professional had 10 years’ experience from casting and producing for TV production companies in Norway participated in developing the project with me. She was present at the first and last classroom sessions, and collaborated with me in giving feedback on the students’ project descriptions, storyboards and films. The Norwegian teacher contributed in planning parts of the project with me. She also agreed that two 90-minute Norwegian lessons could be used for the project. In these lessons, the class worked on the project, in English, with both the English and Norwegian teacher present. The class’ Norwegian teacher mentored the students (also in English) in understanding the poem and participated in providing feedback on their films. According to Braathen and Erstad, Norwegian and literature teachers are in a particularly good place to teach film due to the many connections between film and literature (Braathen & Erstad, 2010, p. 81). The plan was that all three of us would assist the students in developing their stories and reflect on the choices they made.

Rather than a narrow focus on subject and competence aims, larger interdisciplinary projects might provide the teacher and students alike with the support and time they need in order to gain the most. Filmmaking and multimodal texts appear to have received more attention in the Norwegian subject than in the English subject (see e.g. Liestøl, Hagerjord and Hannemyr 2009). Norwegian is the primary literacy subject, and explicitly aims at fostering students’ ability to create a variety of digital, multimodal texts in various media (see Appendix 2). These aims are also expressed in the English subject curriculum, and thus make collaboration particularly interesting.

3.2 Student Competence and Equipment

As a part of the preparations for the project, students were asked what filmmaking experience and equipment they had available. The feedback showed that a few of them had some experience with filmmaking either from lower secondary school or from spare time activities. The majority, however, had no previous experience. In terms of equipment, the majority of the students had the free and easy-to-use film editing software *iMovie* on their Macs, and they all had cell phones with a video camera application. In order to plan the project according to their present *zone of proximal development* (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 32), a small “pilot project” film assignment was given as homework to the class (see Appendix 6). The films they handed in suggested that they had basic skills in shooting and editing. Based on this, it was decided that it was not necessary to teach filming or editing at school. Instead, the students had to learn this by experimenting, learning from each other and using resources on line (see *Vimeo’s Video School 101*).

3.3 Learning Aims

In creating the project, emphasis was placed on using filmmaking to create a space where the students could express themselves creatively, and gaining hands-on experience with using digital media to communicate something that felt personally meaningful to them. These goals were inspired by the Common Core part of the curriculum and a belief that students should be given the chance to grow as human beings during their education, preparing them for life outside of school. As a part of this, all students should have the opportunity to develop their creative abilities (Core Curriculum, 2005, p. 11). In addition to the general learning aims, the following statement from the purpose-section of the English subject curriculum is highly relevant: “[...] English as a school subject is both a tool and a way of gaining personal insight. It will enable pupils to communicate with others on personal, social, literary and interdisciplinary topics [...]” (VG1, English curriculum, LK06).

The project was based on the following competence aims from the English subject curriculum for VG1:

- Discuss and elaborate on different types of English language literary texts from different parts of the world

- Discuss and elaborate on English language films and other forms of cultural expressions from different media
- Produce different kinds of texts suited to formal digital requirements for different digital media (VG1, English curriculum, LK06).

In addition, the project aimed at facilitating language acquisition through learning English in the context of producing a film. Skills in reading, writing, orality and vocabulary were in focus through a range of activities integrated into the project.

3.4 Content

The films were to be adaptations based on the poem “Roll the Dice” (Appendix 1) by American writer Charles Bukowski (1920-1994). The poem was chosen, based on the assumption that the students would find this particular poem inspiring, and also open enough to allow for a variety of personal interpretations. The films had to be 2-3 minutes long and include both a voice-over and text graphics of the whole poem. Apart from these requirements, the students were free to develop their own films the way they wanted to.

3.5 Reader Response Approach

The reader response approach was used as the theoretical foundation for the poetry interpretation in this project. A central tenet of this approach is that a literary text does not have a meaning in itself. Rather, meaning is constructed as a transaction between the text and the reader (Birketveit & Williams, 2013, p. 9). What this means, is that rather than asking the students to arrive at the “correct interpretation” of a poem, the aim is to allow them to interact with it on a personal level, exploring what it could mean *to them* (ibid., p. 19). The hypothesis was that reader response approach would serve as a useful starting point for making films since it would allow the students to express their own interpretations of the poem.

Moreover, both the national curriculum and authors of English didactic literature argue that part of the goal of using literature in an educational context should be personal enrichment, new insights and the pleasure of reading for its own sake (Probst 1994, p. 47-49, Møller, Poulsen & Steffensen, 2010, p. 18). Yet, the importance of using a balanced approach when using reader response with students is also pointed out. Students should not just be asked to talk about their “feelings” in reaction to a text or be told that any interpretation is as good as another (Wolf, 2004, p. 34-35). Interpretations need to be justified by returning to the text

itself (ibid.). When making poetry adaptations, the poem should not just serve as an inspiration for a film, but be the basis of an adaptation (Gutierrez, 2013, p. 114). This point was explained to the students when they received the instructions.

3.6 Structure

On his webpage, “The Director in the Classroom”, Nikos Theodosakis suggests following these five “steps” for a filmmaking project at school:

1. Development (developing the idea and the project)
2. Pre-production (planning, storyboarding, writing the script, planning a shooting schedule)
3. Production (the actual video production and gathering of sound and images)
4. Post-production (editing the video, adding the audio, creating titles, effects, finishing)
5. Distribution (showing it to an audience, local, global and all points in between) (Theodosakis, 2006)

In order to merge the filmmaking approach with that of a creative response to the literature-approach, Wolf’s six steps were used:

1. Reading the text
2. Responding to the text
3. Discussing
4. Creating
5. Critiquing (own and other’s art)
6. Understanding (Wolf, 2004, p. 243)

As a synthesis of Theodosaki and Wolf’s suggested steps, the following week-by-week schedule was developed for this specific project:

<p>Week 1: Pre-Production (4 x 90 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the project and to poetry interpretation using the reader response approach • Reading the poem “Roll the Dice” using reader response approach • Interpreting the poem first individually and then in groups • Watch and analyze the film-poems “All the Way”, “The Gun” and others. Listening to poetry recitals and monologues focusing on modes of expression¹ • Reading about film theory and storyboarding (Appendix 4) • Developing the idea for a film in groups by negotiating the poem’s meaning, brainstorming, storyboarding and writing project descriptions and planning a shooting schedule with allocated roles (producer, actor etc.) (Appendix 7) 	<p>Skill in Focus:</p> <p>Listening</p> <p>Reading poetry</p> <p>Writing, reading, listening, speaking (recital/performance)</p> <p>Listening (pronunciation, tone of voice), digital competence/multiliteracies</p> <p>Discussing, writing, digital competence/multiliteracies. Writing, vocabulary.</p>
<p>Week 2: Production (2 x 90 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving written feedback on storyboards and project descriptions from the teachers • Studying film theory, analyzing film clips, working on vocabulary on <i>Memrise</i>². • Producing a film by shooting and editing it out-of-school. Adding soundtrack and voice-over, creating text graphics and credits (listing roles, e.g. <i>producer, actor</i> etc.). 	<p>Reading, discussing</p> <p>Reading, making notes, discussing, vocabulary, multiliteracies</p> <p>Pronunciation, tone of voice, spelling, vocabulary, multiliteracies</p>
<p>Week 3: Post-production & Evaluation (4 x 90 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening the films in class using the projector in the classroom. Each group presents their film and can ask the class to offer feedback on specific features, e.g. the voice-over • Feedback from classmates: students write a note with a “wish and a star”. The group collects the notes and reads through them. Discusses what revisions they want to make. Teachers are available for advice. • Make final cut at home and publish on <i>YouTube</i> (unlisted, not public). • Written evaluation assignment (individually, 2 x 90 minutes on different days) → data for this study • Conversations with teacher in groups as an assessment of oral skills and to evaluate the project (25 minutes). • Anonymous questionnaire → data for this study 	<p>Listening, discussing</p> <p>Revision competence, digital competence.</p> <p>Writing structured texts, vocabulary</p> <p>Interaction (keeping a conversation going), politeness, vocabulary</p> <p>Evaluate own learning</p>

¹ See them here: <https://vimeo.com/78472610>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmARjBaHHSs>, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvSO5_BI4MI

² See the vocabulary learning game here <http://www.memrise.com/course/374920/1as-learning-hub-2014-2015/8/> or Appendix 3.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants and Context

The project described above took place at a suburban upper secondary school in a high-income area outside of Oslo. The school identifies as attracting relatively high-achieving students and has a high percentage of student graduation. Norwegian Social Science Data Services have approved the research project (Appendix 9).

At the time of the project, 25 students were part of the class. Later on, they were all asked to participate in the study in terms of allowing me to use the data that had been collected. All 25 gave their permission that the anonymous questionnaire could be used for the purpose of this study. The students chose which parts could be used for the purpose of this study and not. In consequence, parts of the analysis are based on data from 22 rather than 25 participants. The participants and their parents have given written informed approval (Appendix 10).

4.2 Data

The primary data sources for this study are:

- a) Anonymous questionnaire (25 participants)
- b) The participants' written evaluations (22 participants)

In addition, my field notes and the students' finished filmpoems were used to supplement the interpretation and discussion of the data.

4.3 Anonymous questionnaire

In order to gather anonymous data material from the project, a short digital questionnaire was given to the class. The questionnaire was anonymous to allow them to answer honestly.

Although short, the questionnaire is the only data source that is anonymous, partly quantitative and not a part of a student assessment. As such, this data source plays a central role in the process of *triangulation*.³

Another central purpose of the questionnaire was to gather measurable *hard facts*. For instance, the number of hours they report having spent working on the project outside of

³ The process of checking the results of a study by using two or more methods or sources of data

school. This information would be useful in order to seek for connections between different variables like motivation, mastery, attitudes and effort. The aim was to obtain answers to the same questions from all the participants in order not only to describe, but also to compare the different responses in a quantifiable manner.

The questionnaire was available on the class' digital learning network *It's Learning* and needed to be completed during the evaluation week. It was important to make sure the questionnaire was completed in connection to the project in order to minimize the risk of the participants forgetting the details (Bell 2010: 144).

4.4 The participants' written evaluations

In order to gather qualitative data about each participant's experience of the project, a writing assignment was given during the evaluation week. In this assignment, they were asked to write a 2-page long evaluation of the film project. They were encouraged to share their personal opinions, experiences and reflections about all steps in the process; both what they learned and enjoyed and things they found challenging (appendix ___). To help them structure their texts, they were asked to organize them into the sub-chapters of pre-production, production, post-production and evaluation and to comment on each of these. The evaluation had to be in English and was to be handed in for grading by the end of the week. In addition to 3 hours at school, they were free to work on the evaluation at home during the evaluation week. It should be emphasised that during the evaluation week, the students also had the chance to discuss the project orally in groups with the teacher, making them better prepared to write about it.

4.5 Method

As this study is based on the real-life classroom project described in chapter 3, it falls under the research category of *classroom research*. More specifically, it belongs to the growing field of *educational design research* in that it concerns itself with *developing, implementing and evaluating* pedagogic design for the purpose of developing both practical solutions and contribute to knowledge for the future (Bjørndal 2013: 245). It is particularly useful in order to try out innovative approaches in the real context of the classroom in order to evaluate and improve the pedagogic design (ibid.).

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to gather and analyse the data. While the questionnaire contains some close-ended questions that have been analysed quantitatively, it also contains open-ended questions that have been analysed qualitatively. In addition, the participants' written evaluations have been treated solely as qualitative material.

The quantitative parts of the study have been analysed by sorting it according to the topics *motivation* and *learning*. Based on this categorization, interpretations have been made by drawing on former research and theory. Triangulation has been used between the two data sources in order to ensure that the interpretations are valid and reliable.

Qualitative research methods are often critiqued for not being scientific because the results cannot be validated objectively (Gentikow 2013). Some researchers question single-case studies like this, as generalizations are not always possible (Bell 2010: 9). Yet, it has been pointed out that the merit of educational research design studies depends on the degree to which a teacher in a similar situation can base her pedagogic choices on the findings: *relatability* rather than *generalization* (ibid.). In that regard, also single-case studies can be of value. In other words, this study aims to be relatable to teachers interested in exploring filmmaking as an approach in school, rather than suggesting objectivity.

4.6 The Teacher as Researcher

My dual role as a teacher and researcher in this study poses a challenge. The challenge is primarily connected to the danger of influencing the results (Gentikow 2013: 49). The likelihood that I have influenced the participants and therefore the results by my presence during the project is relatively significant. Another teacher attempting the same research project will quite possibly get different results based on our different personalities and behaviour.

Self-reflexivity is important to solve the problem of the researcher influencing the analysis (ibid., Brekke and Tiller 2010, p. 56-57). The ability to reflect on what happens in the classroom is an important part of any teacher's competence (Holten 2011, p. 50, Normann 2011, p. 27). This has often been referred to as *the teacher as researcher* in pedagogical literature (Stenhouse, referred to in Brekke & Tiller 2010, p. 69). Reflection on classroom teaching and learning enables a teacher to move her or his perspective from old ways of thinking and teaching to new insights, thus facilitating positive change and development (Holten 2011, p. 50, referring to Durkheim, 1956).

5. Results

5.1 Questionnaire

In this section, the results from each question in the anonymous questionnaire will be presented with tables and comments. At the end of the chapter, the main findings will be summarized.

5.1.1 Question 1: Did you enjoy the project?

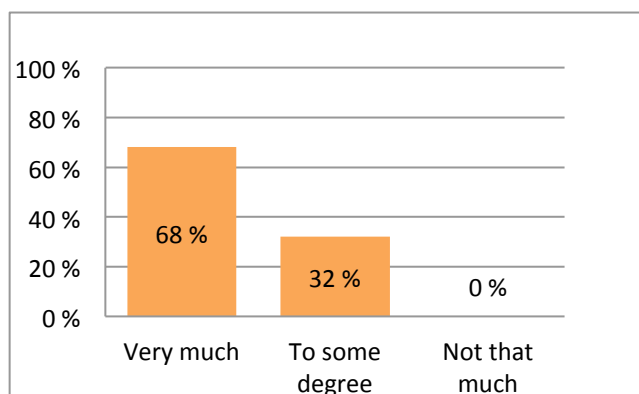


Figure 4 did you enjoy the project?

To investigate the participants' overall satisfaction with the project, this multiple choice question with the three alternatives was asked. As can be seen in the bar chart, a large majority of 68 % ticked off the "very much" alternative, while the rest of the participants settled for "to some degree". The results regarding their overall satisfaction with this project can thus be said to be positive.

5.1.2 Question 2: What did you enjoy most about this project and why?

The second question was asked in order to pinpoint what aspects of the filmmaking project the participants found particularly engaging. To allow for personal answers, it was framed as an open question. What is interesting to note is the diversity in the participants' answers, suggesting that they have enjoyed different parts of the project. Even so, it is possible to categorize and summarize the main tendencies in their answers into the following table:

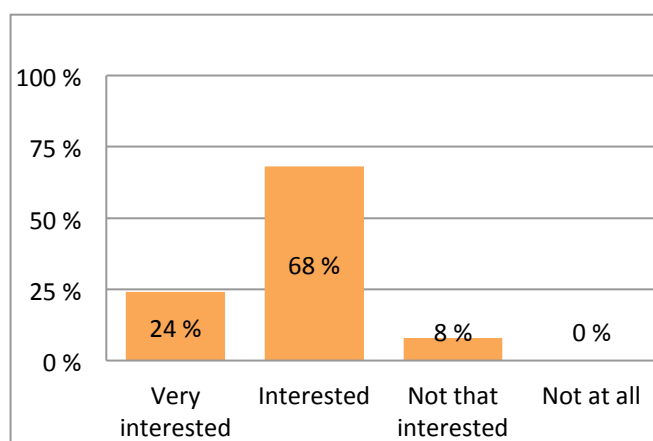
Filmmaking	Creative Freedom	Practical Approach	Collaboration	Variation
Editing the music and the voice-over when we recorded it. It was real professionalism!	The freedom we got to interpret the poem [...]	I enjoyed the fact that it was a more practical project	To be in a group and decide things together	What I enjoyed most about this project was to do something else beside to just sit on a desk and listen to the teacher talking
[...] filming and putting on music	[...] how great the result gets	That we got to use ourselves as a tool	Teamwork	It was fun to try something new
Filming and making something that I'm proud of	It was fun to have the freedom to do almost anything you wanted	That I learned how to guide actors [...]	[..] to make our own groups	What I enjoyed from this project is that it was like not all the other things we at school
shooting the film!!	[...] make something of our own.[...]. To find ideas		The group was what I enjoyed most. I had a great time shooting the video with these guys	
To make a product such as a film from scratch	[..] that the task was so open			
That we had a chance to make a film of our own choice	[..] that we could choose ourselves how the film would be [...]. to see a project that you are happy with			

Table 1 What did you enjoy about this project and why?

The table shows that the majority of the participants felt particularly motivated by the opportunity to make films and the creative freedom on the project. The most central tendency that the participants express, is that filmmaking offered them a chance to make something “of your own” “from scratch” and that the process of doing so was enjoyable. They bring up

different aspects of the film production, such as shooting and editing, and point out how these activities were enjoyable to them. For some participants, finding a suitable soundtrack was particularly enjoyable, for others it was developing the idea. For others, shooting the film was the most enjoyable part of the process. Despite the different emphasis in terms of which parts of the process were more enjoyable, they all appear to share a sense of pride and ownership of the final product. This can be seen in their positive attitude towards the opportunity to share their films with their classmates. In addition to the focus on filmmaking and creative freedom, a number of the participants mention the collaborative approach; the variation from the regular way of learning; and the practical approach as something they enjoyed.

5.1.3 Question 3: How interested would you be in working with film again (at school, outside school or as a profession?)



Figur 5 How interested would you be in working with film again?

This multiple-choice question was framed to investigate the participants' motivation for filmmaking on a more general note. Again, the large majority of the participants confirm a strong motivation to work with filmmaking, with a soaring 92 % answering either "very interested" or "interested". This suggests that their motivation lies not only with this filmmaking project in particular, but also with filmmaking in general.

5.1.4 Question 4: How many hours did you spend on shooting and editing the film?

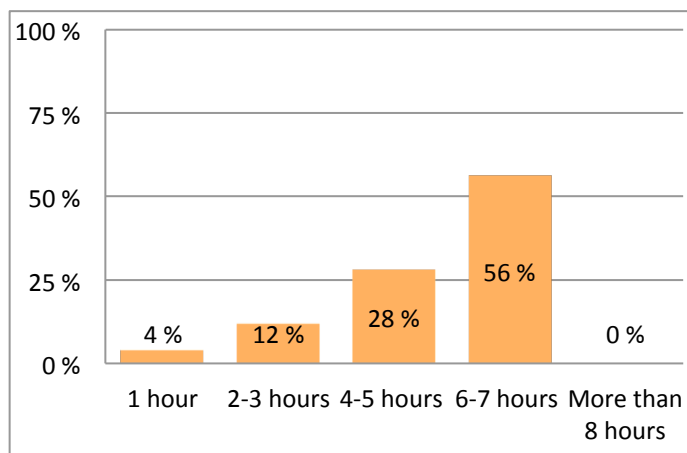


Figure 6 How many hours did you spend on shooting and editing the film?

This multiple-choice question was asked in order to know more precisely the amount of time the participants spent on shooting and editing the film. As these parts of the project had to be done during the participants' spare-time, it was important to know how much time it actually took them. This information is interesting for two reasons. First, with more information about how much time shooting and editing typically takes students at this age, it would be easier to make an appropriate time schedule for a film project. Since this project did not include any instruction in editing and did not give the participants any lessons at school to work on neither shooting nor editing, it was important to know if this approach was too demanding on the participants. The results show that the large majority of them, 84 %, report having spent between four and seven hours on shooting and editing the film. Of these, as much as 56 % of them spent over six hours on the project outside school. At the other end of the scale, we find the 16 % that spend as little as one to three hours on the film project during their spare time.

In sum, the results show that there is a significant variation in the amount of time spent on the project outside of school. This can be explained by the different roles they had.

5.1.5 Question 5: Did you feel you had enough time to meet the deadlines (storyboard, project descriptions and the film itself?)

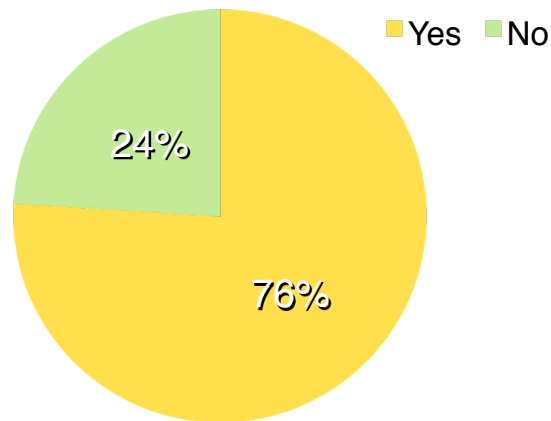


Figure 7 Did you feel you had enough time to meet the deadlines?

After having gathered information about how many hours of their spare-time the participants had spent on the project, this yes/no question was asked to investigate if they felt that they had been given enough time. Considering the fact that most of them had spent between four and seven hours on shooting and editing the film outside school during a regular school week, it is interesting to see that most of them consider having had enough time. In cross-checking the answers from this question with the answers on question 4, there is no direct connection between having spent more time and being less pleased with the time frame or vice versa. In other words, the 24 % that did not feel that they had enough time consist both of people who spent few hours on the project and of people who had spent many hours on the project.

5.1.6 Question 6: In which areas do you feel you have developed?

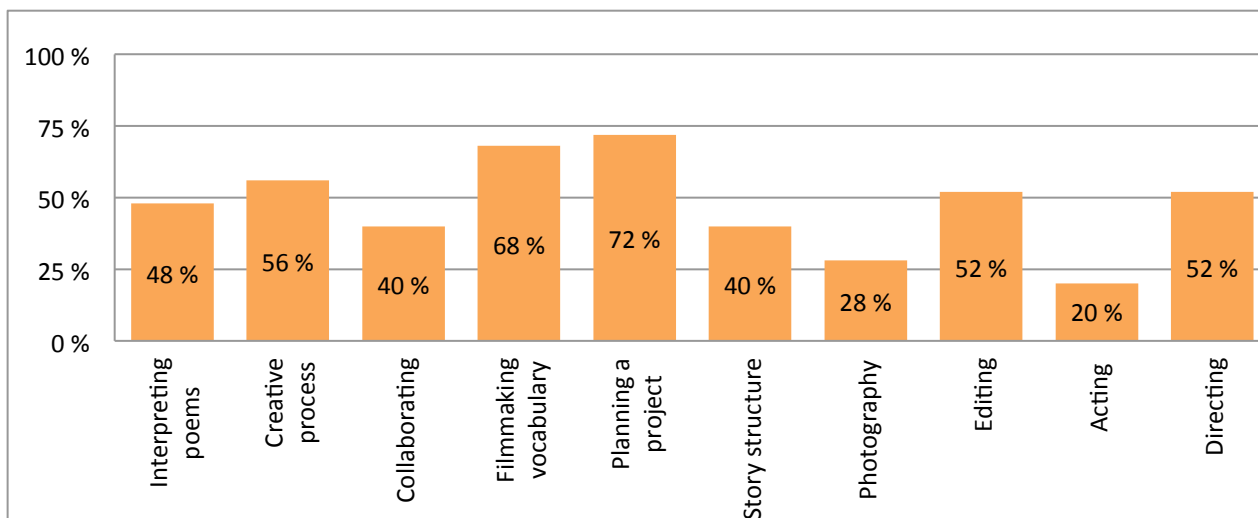


Figure 8 In which areas do you feel you have developed?

This question concerns the perceived learning outcome of the project and was designed as a multiple-choice question with a limited number of options. More than one answer could be chosen. Their answers show that they have different opinions in terms of what they feel they have learned during the project. While a few of them have ticked off “photography” and “acting”, the highest ranked alternatives are “planning a project”, “filmmaking vocabulary” and the “creative process”. This may be due to their different roles; only a few of them were actors while they all participated in the creative process in some way or the other; in planning and in practicing vocabulary. Between 40-52 % of the participants, agree to having learned the digital skill of editing; the “film-skills” of acting and directing; the “literature skill” of interpreting poems; the practical skill of collaborating or the literacy skill of “story structure”. This indicates that the participants view the filmmaking project as involving learning in a relatively broad sense. However, only half of the participants report having learned how to “interpret poetry” from this project. Considering the fact that the project is designed to be a creative approach to poetry interpretation, this issue will be central in the discussion in the next chapter.

5.1.7 Question 7: Give us your ideas! How could filmmaking be used in school (in any subject!) as a way to learn?

Finally, this open question was framed to investigate the participants’ general perceptions about filmmaking’s potential as a tool for learning in school. Overall, they appear to be very

positive towards using filmmaking as a way to learn. Some of the suggestions include making a film about “youth handling economy” in Social Science or to “illustrate historical events” in History class. Their answers reflect a view of filmmaking as a useful tool to *process, present* and *share* knowledge. Points are made that film can be useful due to their ability to “share a story or message” from an “insider perspective”, and to “grab the audience’s attention”. Some also argue that since filmmaking is such a demanding process, it leads to deeper learning than a presentation. Despite the generally positive attitudes towards filmmaking, two of the participants are more disinterested, writing, “I don’t know” and “I haven’t thought about it”.

5.1.8 Summary of Results from the Questionnaire

The participants’ answers indicate that they find filmmaking to be both engaging and educational. Despite individual differences, the central tendency among the participants is that filmmaking can be a useful and engaging way to learn in school. Filmmaking seems to be attractive to the participants because it gives them a chance to be make something together. They enjoy both the creative freedom in general as well as the hands-on filmmaking activities like shooting and editing. Filmmaking can be a way of developing skills in a range of areas from language to project planning. It can also be a way of processing and presenting material. In contrast, there is no mentioning of writing project descriptions, sketching storyboards or analyzing film clips, thus indicating that these parts of the project were not central in their engagement. In short, their motivation seems to lie in the action-oriented parts of the project, taking place outside the classroom, than with the more traditional reading, writing and oral activities in the classroom.

5.2 The Participants’ Written Evaluations

5.2.1 Motivation

In the following section, the findings that are believed to be connected to the participants’ motivation are summarized. In the hand-out, these two bullet points deals with motivation:

- First reaction to the project and the poem?
- How did you like working like this?

Along the lines of the questionnaire, their reflections on motivation in this data source can be placed in the following categories. Firstly, motivation connected to creative freedom. Secondly, motivation connected to the actual making of the film. Thirdly, motivation

connected to the sharing and receiving feedback on the films. Finally, motivation connected to collaboration and variation.

5.2.1.1 Creativity and Freedom

As in the results from the questionnaire, the participants' enthusiasm for filmmaking is also evident in the written evaluations. Thinking back on the first day of the project, many of them explain how they were looking forward to having a film project in English class. In the words of one of the participants: "I got excited, because making something and being creative is something I really like". As this comment illustrates, some of the participants enjoy filmmaking because it is a creative approach. However, not all participants appreciate the creative aspects of the project. One girl writes that she found it "a little bit boring to be on set" because she is not "so creative". This suggests that even though many young people might enjoy the chance to be creative filmmakers, it does not necessarily apply to everybody.

Even though many of the participants express excitements towards having a filmmaking project, they are not as enthusiastic about having to base their films on a poem. When reflecting about their first impression of the project, the vast majority of them write that they were "disappointed" or "skeptical" to working with poetry. This attitude suggests a lacking interest towards working with poetry at school. However, when they realize that they can interpret the poem the way they want to, and consequently make the film they want to, their mood changes again. The freedom they get in solving the task seems to bring their motivation back again: "The fact that the task was such an open task and we were so independent really helped bringing out the inner filmmaker in us". As in the questionnaire, the participant quoted above and other participants emphasize the openness of the task, the freedom and independence of the approach, as motivating. Their comments indicate that for some of them, the challenge they were given was motivating.

5. 2.1.2 Making a Film

The participants write enthusiastically about the shooting phase of the film project. During this phase, the groups went around to different locations in order to get the footage they needed. An example of how this experience is described is: "the atmosphere on set was great. We all worked well together and often had to stop recording because we would all burst into laughter". The fact that the shooting happened in the students' own time, meant they were free to control the time themselves and could do things at their own pace. This informal and

relaxed atmosphere is highlighted by one of the boys who explains that they “had a great time on the set [...] improvised, and we didn’t stress”. Many of the participants share stories of their experiences from set that seem to illustrate quite well the playful atmosphere. One example is from a group that wanted to have a fighting scene as a part of their film: “When we had come to the scene where I get knocked out it was fun, because we could smear jam on us. And [one of the boys] had forgotten paper so that was a little problem. But we managed to get [the jam off by using] some leaves”. This way of “playing around” is probably rather seldom for students at levels beyond primary school and thus exemplifies the variation that filmmaking offers.

Acting was a new experience to the participants. Those who were chosen to be actors in the films, all write about this as something they enjoyed. A boy writes: “It was very fun being on set, putting on the poker face and not trying to smile or get out of character [...]. I like acting a lot, more than I thought I would, and when I saw the scenes on the camera screen, I thought I did a good job”. The other actors join him in his response; even though they have no previous experience with acting, they found it to be enjoyable and feel pleased about the results. This suggests that they might have learned something new about themselves and that they were challenged in an area that was new to them. Their sense of accomplishment is palpable in their writing.

It is important to highlight that the “fun” on set did not seem to get in the way of taking the production seriously. They express being pleased with the collaboration in the groups, sticking to their assigned roles when useful while being flexible when needed. Although there are individual differences, in general they seem to be dedicated to the challenge of making a good film. One of the boys wanted to make each scene perfect: “You really got that ‘it has to be better’ feeling when you’re on the set. However, you just have to go on with it, and rather focus on the next scene”. For this participant, filmmaking is both challenging and rewarding; there is a pressure to keep time limits and to know when “enough is enough” in terms of perfectionism. He seems to find this challenge motivating. His comment also reflects a sense of ownership to the product.

In terms of motivation for editing, the participants seem to be somewhat less enthusiastic. A central tendency is that this was fun but very time-consuming and challenging. Yet, there are also reflections about the positive challenge concerned in the creative choices involved in the

editing process: recording a voice-over, editing the scenes and finding the perfect soundtrack. Their choices here seem well thought-through as they reflect on the emotional effects of these multimodal elements on the viewer.

5.2.1.3 Sharing and Collaborating

All the participants appear confident that they have made good films and enjoy the opportunity to share them with their classmates during the screening session with feedback. Interestingly, many of them even feel that *their* film was the best one. When they talk about what makes their particular film good, many explain that their film is “different from the others”. They express pride in the fact that their group has succeeded in making a unique film based on their unique interpretations of the poem. Perhaps as a result of this, many of the participants report having looked forward to this session with both excitement and nervousness. The actors and voice-over actors report feeling extra nervous since they were more “exposed” during the screenings. Yet, it does not appear to have been necessarily negative nervousness, but rather more of an excitement suggesting that they cared about their classmates’ responses to their work. Two comments illustrate a typical tendency among the participants:

I was really excited to show our film-poem to the class, since I was quite proud of what we had produced.

All the hard work had paid off and we received very good feedback from the class and teachers. We were happy!

The participants’ feelings of ownership and sense of accomplishment are clear. When they are given the chance to share their work with the class, their confirmation is seen as rewarding. It is also interesting to note the sense of community these participants seem to experience, with both their groups, and the class as a whole. This connects with the next finding: the importance of collaboration.

Collaborative learning seems to have been considered useful at many different stages of the project. During the pre-production phase, many of the participants found it helpful to be able to share different thoughts in groups and in the class in order to understand the poem. As one boy notes: “Listening to other’s interpretations can help you a lot”. During the production phase, they helped each other both by staying in their allocated roles but also by contributing where it was needed.

I enjoy working in groups, so I was expecting this to be a fun project [...]. When it comes to big projects, I prefer to work in groups. It makes it easier to shake off the tunnel-view you may get when working alone

In contrast to this, most of the groups chose to let the person with previous editing experience do the editing alone, thus delegating rather than collaborating. Collaboration was not seen as useful as “only one can have his hands on the keyboard at once [any one time]”. Yet, the participants point out that they had agreed on how they wanted the film in collaboration and they express gratitude to the person taking on the job of editing the film: “we could have never done it without” that person as they did not have any experience themselves. As an improvement of the project, it is suggested that they should learn more about editing at school.

Those groups that chose to sit together during the editing mention having learned a little bit about software like *iMovie* and *Logic Pro X*. One of the groups also made their own name, *Basement Production*, and the “producer” reports having ensured his group with both Coca-Cola and snacks, “like a proper producer should”. This playful team spirit is characteristic of the majority of the participants’ evaluations.

5.2.1.4 Variation

Some of the participants write that they liked that this project was different from what they usually do at school. As was the case during the shooting phase discussed above, the project as a whole is considered to be different from their regular experience at school:

I have enjoyed every second of this project. It has been incredibly fun to work with something different and not the typical ‘school work’.

It was very interesting to try a different kind of learning process than what I am used to.

These comments show the appreciation for doing something different, and also for trying another “learning process”. The latter comment puts focus on filmmaking as a way to learn, and learning as a process, indicating an attitude towards filmmaking as a serious activity. Filmmaking offers variation, but not *from learning*; to learn in a different way.

5.2.1.5 Chapter Summary

A key finding in connection to motivation and filmmaking is that there is little focus on the digital or technical aspects of the project in itself. In writing about what they enjoyed, focus is

on creativity, an open task, independence, filmmaking, sharing, collaborating, challenge and variation. One boy's comment illustrates this attitude well: "I really enjoyed doing this type of project since it's something different and you have the chance to be creative".

5.2.2 Language Learning

As in the questionnaire, participants were also asked about their perceived learning outcome in the written evaluation assignment:

- Your personal learning outcome: what have you learned about creative work, collaboration, filmmaking, poems, yourself, English etc.?

An important difference between the questionnaire and this assignment, was that they here got a chance to answer the question more freely. While the questionnaire did give a general picture, e.g. that project planning and vocabulary was the two most important learning outcomes, their own texts should arguably be given more weight as they explain more in-depth how they think about this issue.

An example of how this question is answered differently in the two data sources concerns vocabulary. While vocabulary was ranked as a learning outcome by 68 % in the questionnaire, it is barely mentioned in the written evaluations. A possible explanation for this contradiction is that when they write, they focus mostly on the aspects of the project which they feel enthusiastic about; things to do more with making the film than learning English. This interpretation is backed by the fact that there is little mention of any of the traditional language learning activities (reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary or grammar) in any of the data. In answering the question about what they learned, two comments touch on the language-issue:

I don't think I learned that much English, but that was maybe not the main point of this project

[...] I also think it's a good way to learn English. Instead of just reading English and doing tasks in class, but actually having to go through this whole process.

The first comment indicates that this boy might have been insufficiently challenged in terms of English acquisition during the film project, but that he himself finds it acceptable. Nevertheless, for a teacher it is important to ensure that the students are learning English, regardless of the fact that they might also be learning other things. It is hard to say from the

data how many participants improved, or felt they improved, their English. However, the second comment do suggest that some of them appreciate learning English in the context of making a film rather than the traditional textbook-centered work.

As previous research suggested that students found producing voice-overs for digital stories a useful way to develop their oral skills (Normann 2011), it is relevant to investigate if the same is the case when making film-poems. This seems not to be the case as very few of the participants mention oral skills in their texts. Those who do mention oral skills, do so in relation to making the voice-overs:

I was the voice-over in our film, so I feel that it gave me practice in speaking English considering I had to read the poem over and over again to spell [pronounce] everything right.

This participant saw recording and listening to her own pronunciation multiple times as a useful way of developing oral skills. One of the groups used a 12-year old younger sister as their voice-over. They write about the challenge of teaching *her* how to pronounce the poem the correct way, something that can point towards raised awareness and listening practice.

Another interesting finding related to oral English is what the participants write about the tone of voice. They are conscious in what tone of voice they use for their film, in order to communicate the intended feeling. The group behind the “out of the closet film”, *Anxiety Youth*, writes this to explain why they chose to make the voice-over themselves even though the story featured a younger boy:

The reason we decided to have an older person as a voice over is to always have a person in your head giving you advice and inspiration. We used a tone of voice that was very dark and mystic at the beginning but fading more lighter [becoming more positive] as the song did too [also became more positive].

Despite these comments, the participants’ main focus seems to lie more with making films than with language learning.

5.2.3 Poetry

As this particular film project had poetry as its starting point, one of the questions on the writing assignment was framed in order to learn more about what they thought about this, and what they had learned in terms of poetry:

- One important thing you have learned about poetry

Even though only 46 % of them ticked off the “poetry interpretation” alternative in the questionnaire, most of the participants express that they have learned something about poetry interpretation when asked again in the writing assignment.

Many describe being confused about the meaning of the poem at first, because it was “very deep” and had “hidden meanings” and “metaphors – if they’re metaphors”. However, the project helped them to grasp the meaning of the poem. They mention different aspects of the project in explaining what helped them in understanding. For example, hearing “Roll the Dice” recited, watching “Roll the Dice” adapted to the filmpoem “All the Way”, storyboarding and the whole process of making the film. This is what they say about this project’s effect on their skills in poetry interpretation:

I have learned that it doesn’t matter if you don’t understand it immediately. If you read it a few times, you understand it gradually

It’s up to yourself how you see the poem. Maybe you have been through something in the past that makes you have another view

Personally, when I first read the poem, I imagined it to be a bit darker, but I learned that listening to the others’ interpretation can help you a whole lot

What these comments illustrate is that many of the participants appear to have found the film project useful in terms of grasping the poem. The first comment points to the importance of reading a poem multiple times before you understand it. It might be that because of the motivation for making the film, they were more willing to make that effort. Moreover, the comments show an understanding of the basic idea behind reading from a reader response approach; that the poem will be interpreted differently by different people without that being wrong. Many of them write about how different their own interpretations were from the others’, and how their understanding changed and deepened as a result of fruitful discussions in groups. For instance, from seeing the poem as being about suicide, to agreeing that it was more inspirational and positive. Many of them mention getting the chance to discuss the poem in groups as beneficial. They seem to appreciate this approach to reading literature, reflecting on how it allowed them to be creative in constructing their own meaning and consequently their own films. In writing about their film’s message, the majority appears passionate and conscious in their choices:

We think this poem is trying to tell the reader that no matter what you go through to achieve something, never give up [...]. We came up with the idea of filming an athlete failing, then rising up and succeeding his goal

I wanted to capture that feeling you get when you are sitting in the locker-room and you are for an example on down and you have to go deep inside of you to perform your best

There's a lot of pressure on students at this time. It's not really accepted to get bad grades and therefore we chose the setting where our character is trying to fit into this environment

We agreed to the gay topic [a boy coming out of the closet], not only because it did qualify to the poems structure, but also because it is an important issue [...]. It is hard to be different, and we tried to express that [it] is okay to be you and to be confident

Based on comments like these it appears as though many participants have been able to connect the poem to their own lives and draw on that as an inspiration. Even though most of the films deal with social issues, some of the films are more directly inspired by popular culture, like for instance the TV-series *Prison Break*. Being able to produce such different films, based on the same poem, suggests that they have been willing and able to put an effort into their interpretations. This in turn supports the argument that this way of working with poetry is seen as rewarding. Yet, it is possible they would still have preferred a film project without poetry. How deep their interest in the poem really is, is hard to say. It does seem to have served as an inspiration and useful starting point for their films. Yet, their enthusiasm seems more connected to their film-poems than with the poem itself. One student, however, explicitly states appreciation of the poetry-part of the project: "Interpreting a poem is something I had never done before, which made this a unique experience".

In sum, those participants who mention poetry interpretation in their writing say that they have improved this ability through the project. Rereading, visualizing, discussing with others and making personal connections are examples of reading strategies they refer to. However, it should be noted that not all of them refer to poetry interpretation, making it hard to conclude that this approach worked for everybody.

5.2.4 Communicating a Story through Digital Media

Some of the participants point out their improved ability at communicating through the film medium. Some of the skills involve improved competence in using the editing software *iMovie* and the music production software *Logic X Pro*. In addition, one of the participants reflects on the communicative competence connected to making a film. He has learned about “[T]elling a story through pictures [...] and putting them [the pictures] together so that the message of the story comes out”. His comment suggests that he sees filmmaking as a form of visual storytelling, which can also be inspired by the fact that this was a term that was used by the teachers in introducing filmmaking to the class. His comment also reflects an awareness of the audience: it is crucial that the “message” of the story “comes out” to those watching. Other participants focus on “the viewer”, reflecting on how they will react to their creative choices: acting, voice-over, soundtrack, angles, shots and storyline. They are intent on getting the audience’s attention: “We chose to start the movie with a close-up of the actor. It will make the viewer feel sympathy for the boy, and follow the story through”. This girl shows an awareness of how the quality of their storytelling is crucial to keep the audiences’ attention. To her, this is important because they believe in the message they want to share: their storytelling has a *purpose*. Having a real *audience*, their classmates, appears to have been useful for the participants’ development of a quality film. One of the groups made a *Prison Break*-inspired film about a man breaking out of prison, but failed to tell the story in a clear way:

We were surprised by the results [the feedback]. The crystal clear image my group and me had in our heads was shady and unclear to the audience [...]. It was not clear to the audience that he was in prison. Therefore we fitted the actor with an orange t-shirt and orange trousers. Now he looked like a real inmate!

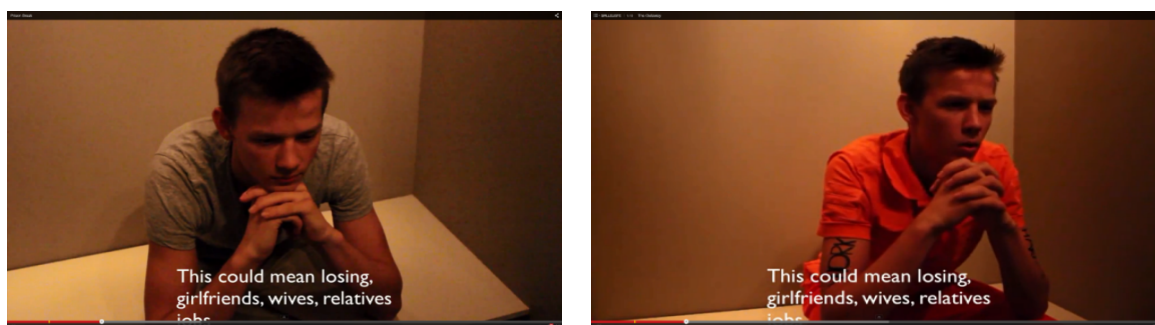


Figure 9 Still images from the film *The Getaway* (2014) before and after the changes in costume were made. Published with the filmmakers’ approval.

The other groups had similar experiences, finding it useful to screen the film to the class because it helped them to improve it:

[...] I think it helped a lot screening the film to the class because then we could get feedback from the viewers on things we hadn't noticed to make the film better. The voice-over was a bit loud; the text graphics was too big [...]. We also needed to change the end, to make the storyline be better suited to the poem's message

Communicating the story in a way that their audience would understand is experienced as a challenge. By receiving feedback from others, their attention is drawn to elements that need to be improved. Rather than being embarrassed, many participants express gratitude for having the chance to improve their films through feedback and revision. In sum, the participants reflect on having developed both digital and communicative competences connected to telling a story through digital media.

5.2.5 Real-life Learning and Career Choice

Finally, the participants make many references to having learned practical skills like collaboration, planning a project, problem solving and dealing with time constraints. Some of the responses will be shared below in order to illustrate the breadth of learning experiences the participants feel they have had:

I've learned that actors can be a bit of a handful sometimes!

It's never as easy as it looks to run in the woods with a camera trying to film someone!

[...] preparing was the most important part of the project. The importance of having a well-written and detailed storyboard turned out to be essential for a successful result.

We were able to further develop it [the film] into something better because of our different opinions. And to me that only shows that it is always good to get someone else's opinion.

Whatever you are doing, a little practice beforehand really helps.

I also think it could be a good thing, to deal with time-pressure.

[One of the girls] got sick [...] but this is stuff you have to be prepared to handle in real-life.

What the participants seem to point out is that the project was valuable for purposes that are transferrable to “real life”. They were able to reflect on the importance of collaborating, listening to others, being patient, preparing, finding solutions and accepting responsibility. Three of them even consider following filmmaking as a career path: “I would love to work with movies when I grow up, something I couldn’t imagine before I started this process”. This suggests that the project has had a personal impact that goes beyond measurable learning outcomes for the English subject.

6. Discussion

In the present chapter, the findings presented in chapter 6 will be discussed in an attempt to answer my two research questions. In discussing the research questions, the findings from the classroom study will be contrasted with the theory discussed in the theoretical framework. Where needed, I will also draw on other relevant learning theories or research studies. As the present study belongs to the field of English teaching, focus will be given to how the results could be of use to teachers and students of English.

6.1 To what extent do the students reflect on filmmaking based on poetry as an engaging and useful way to learn within the frames of the English subject?

The findings in this study suggest that the vast majority of participants found filmmaking based on poetry a highly engaging and useful way to learn in the English subject. This interpretation of the data is supported by triangulating the results from the questionnaire, the written evaluations and the field notes. The majority writes enthusiastically about the project and says that they would be interested in working with filmmaking again. These findings are consistent with previous studies that found that filmmaking could increase student motivation (Shoonmaker & Wolf 2004, p. 17, Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford, 2014, p. 219, Yuan & Chen 2011, p. 77, Emet, 2013, p. 362, Mølster & Wikan 2012, p. 128). What causes this strong motivation?

The participants in the present study tend to see filmmaking as a highly engaging activity. This is consistent with arguments about today’s children and young adults being interested in

media, filmmaking and digital technology in general (Shoonmaker & Wolf 2014, p. 17, Hobbs 2011, p. 7, Braathen & Erstad, 2000, p. 14, Yuan & Chen 2011, p. 77, Mølster & Wikan 2012, p. 128, Gutierrez 2013, p. 4). Yet, the results in the present study challenge the idea that youth find filmmaking interesting primarily because it involves technology, as suggested by Yan and Chen (2011, p. 77). My own findings indicate that it is what they can *do* with this technology that makes it interesting. For the majority, filmmaking was enjoyable because it gave them an opportunity to be creative as scriptwriters, actors, directors, camera assistants and editors. For some of them, the project made them discover new talents and possible career choices within the media industry. This lends support to Braathen, Erstad and Hobbs' argument that integrating media in the classroom can help to create a bridge between the school and the students' own lives (Braathen & Erstad, 2000, p. 14, Hobbs 2011, p. 7). Critics might point out that filmmaking in school is just "a fad" that causes motivation only because it is new and exciting, and that variation is the only factor making it so appealing to students. Indeed, the students in Normann's study did not see digital storytelling as engaging in itself, but as a way to vary the lessons (ibid., p. 68). In contrast to this, the participants in the present study see filmmaking as an engaging activity in itself; they enjoy making the films! Could it be that the creative, action-oriented and collaborative approach in this filmmaking project was more appealing to students than the individualized digital storytelling project Normann studied? There seems to be grounds for making such a claim.

Firstly, the creative approach is central to the participants' engagement in the project. The vast majority of the participants show a strong sense of enthusiasm towards "getting up from the chairs" and "making something together". These findings support previous studies that emphasize that children and young people tend to enjoy the creative, hands-on and collaborative aspects of filmmaking (Shoonmaker & Wolf 2014, p. 5, 21-22, Hobbs 2011, p. 12, Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford 2014, p. 224-228, Mølster & Wikan 2012, p. 134). When one of the boys writes that, "I feel like I pushed my creativity to the fullest, and I really enjoyed that", it is an indicator that the creative element of filmmaking was essential to his motivation. The participants in the present study are not alone in enjoying creative approaches in school. Anne Bamford's research study from 2012 found that Norwegian pupils in general enjoy the opportunity to be creative in school (Bamford, 2012, p. 42). In Normann's study, only the high-proficiency students enjoyed creative, open and challenging tasks like digital storytelling (Normann 2011, p. 71). As the majority of the participants in the present study can be considered high-proficiency students, it may be that proficiency is a relevant factor in

determining student motivation for filmmaking. However, this explanation would be in contrast with the findings in Hepple, Sockhill, Tan and Alford's study where low-proficiency students expressed a strong engagement for working creatively with filmmaking (Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford 2014, p. 224). Even though many factors influence student motivation, it is clear that the participants in this study found the creative, open and challenging task they were given to be highly motivating.

In addition to the creative aspects of the project, participants emphasize the collaborative approach of the project as having been both motivating and useful. This finding is consistent with other studies from both Norway and abroad, emphasizing the positive effects of using a collaborative approach when creating digital media products (Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford 2014, p. 224-228, Mølster & Wikan 2012, p. 134, Normann, 2012, p. 83). An example of this is the strong sense of ownership and pride connected to sharing the films with the class during the screening session. According to constructivist learning theories, it is important for the learner to have the opportunity to make meaningful artefacts to be shared with others (Mølster & Wikan, 2012, p. 124). In this context, the films are the artefacts that they share with their classmates. There is a broad consensus in pedagogic research that a sense of agency and ownership is crucial for motivation and learning as it leads to internal motivation (Lillemyr 2007: 140). According to Reeve, Deci and Ryan (2004, referred to in Lillemyr, 2007, p. 151), internal motivation is among other things supported by freedom in how to solve a given task, supportive feedback and recognition of the learner (*ibid.*). The participants in this study are clearly motivated by the fact that their classmates will see their films, and many of them feel a great sense of relief and reward from receiving the positive feedback from their classmates. These results are consistent with the findings from both Mølster and Wikan and Normann's studies, where the students were greatly motivated by the fact that they would share their products with the class. In Normann's study, the pressure to perform was negative for some of the students, meaning that they were reluctant to share their voice-over with their classmates (Normann, 2012, p. 83). Similarly, the present study found that the students that were actors or had made the voice-overs express being nervous to share their films. However, an important difference between the two studies lies in the fact that the films were a collaborative project and only a few of the students functioned as actors or voice-over actors. In other words, it may be the many learners would be more reluctant to show a product that they had made alone than something they had made with a group. Another benefit of the collaborative approach was that the participants could contribute in different ways, focusing on what they

were good at, e.g. poetry interpretation, acting or editing. This finding confirms previous studies that found that filmmaking can lead to authentic collaboration (Mølster & Wikan, 2012, p. 133, Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford 2014, p. 224-228). A final benefit of the collaborative approach was that the feedback helped them to notice elements in their film that could be improved. This suggests that filmmaking can be a way to raise the students' text and revision competence.

The participants seem to think of this filmmaking project primarily as a project that can help them learn *in a broad sense*. 72 % think they have improved their skills in project planning; 56 % that they have learned more about the creative process; and 40 % have improved their collaboration skills. Moreover, they reflect on having learned something about problem-solving and time management as a result of the project. Since this project was relatively ambitious, it demanded much of them; they had to make a film in just one week with little experience. It is clear that this provided them with a chance to have fun but also to learn something about how to handle unforeseen problems and keep deadlines. They appear to be proud that they tackled these challenges together as a group and see that they learn something that can be useful "in real life". Again, the argument that film can be a way to connect the classroom and the students' own lives, seems accurate (Hobbs, 2011, p. 7, Shoonmaker & Wolf, 2014, p. 21-23).

Moreover, the participants seem to feel that filmmaking is a useful tool to learn in *any* subject at school. It was suggested that filmmaking can be a useful way to process, present and share content knowledge and that making a film could lead to "deeper learning than a presentation" because you have to understand the topic more in-depth, and be able to communicate knowledge to an audience. This is in line with Mølster and Wikan's finding that students found that they remembered better something they had made a film about (Mølster & Wikan, 2012, p. 129). The point being made seems to be that because making a film involves so many decisions concerning story, acting, music etc., it is more demanding than traditional ways to learn. According to learning theories, active processing is the most important factor for learning (Nordahl, 2005, p. 141). Did the participants think that filmmaking helped them to understand Bukowski's poem better?

Previous research studies have shown both engagement and learning often increased when students get the opportunity to use digital media as a tool to interpret the literature (McVee, Bailey & Shanahan 2015, Goodwyn 2013, Hughes & Jones, Emert 2013, Parker 1999, Cliff

2005, Gourley 2001, Burn & Durran 2007, Cook 2010, Bryer, Lindsay & Wilson 2014, Curwood & Cowell 2011, Reinartz & Hokanson 2001). The results from this study show that while most participants are able to point out something they learned about poetry interpretation in their written evaluations, only 48 % chose poetry interpretation as a learning outcome in the questionnaire. It is hard to know why from reading the participants' evaluations, but it might mean that even though most participants found that the project has taught them something about poetry interpretation, this aspect of the project is not regarded as the most important simply because poetry is not that important to them. It might also be that they do not feel they have learned "poetry interpretation" in the traditional way, and so are unsure of the usefulness of the approach. However, in reflecting about what they have learned about poetry interpretation, it does become clear that they have found parts of the project useful. For example, some say having learned the importance of reading the poem many times, not being anxious about finding the correct meaning and discussing with classmates. In this regard, it is the reader response approach, and the group work, that are seen as beneficial by the participants in this study. Some, but not all, the participants seem to have found filmmaking in itself useful in understanding the poem. In the words of one of the boys:

When you interpret a poem or a text, you often [sit] with a hundred different ideas and you cannot find a way to arrange them all. It is often hard to make your ideas to something concrete. This project help on the ability to make your ideas something concrete, which is an important ability not only in English but in all subjects.

For this boy, the usefulness of filmmaking as a way to work with poetry lies in it as a tool to make abstract concepts concrete. His experience echoes those found in other studies as well, where the process of using images or film helped the students to connect the abstract world of poetry with concrete images (Cook, 2010, Hodges, 2005, p. 80). As pointed out in previous studies, the multimodality of the medium seems to facilitate the meaning-making process (Gutierrez, 2013, p. 106, Hepple, Sockhill, Tan & Alford, 2014, Jamissen, 2015, p. 213).

Not only can filmmaking be a tool to understand poetry or content matter, it also seems to have given the participants an arena to express themselves creatively. As argued earlier, a film-poem should be seen as a separate work of art inspired by the poem. In the process of interpreting and producing their own films, many of the participants seem to have found and valued the opportunity to express themselves creatively on issues that mattered to them. The openness of the task was essential in providing them with the opportunity to spread a message about something they cared about. The idea that filmmaking can be used to stimulate young

people to express themselves creatively and thus develop as human beings, have been emphasised in previous studies on filmmaking (McVee, Bailey & Shanhan 2015, p. 118, Curwood & Curwell 2011, p. 119, Limoncelli, 2011: abstract, Curwood & Curwell, 2011, p. 119).

Approximately half of the participants think they have improved their skills in editing, directing or story structure. The latter point may be connected to what some of them explain as the ability to “communicate a story through images”. According to Erstad, these abilities are part of the students’ *digital competence* (Erstad, 2010, p. 105). Being able to use digital tools in a “creative manner” to “process and present” material, to “assist in language learning” and to “communicate in English” is also part of the English curriculum (English subject curriculum, LK06, 2013).

6.2 What can be learned from the students’ reflections in terms of further developing filmmaking as an approach for the English subject?

Based on the participants’ reflections, I suggest that the following elements be kept in a similar project:

- 1) Collaborative approach
- 2) Creative, open and challenging task
- 3) Screening session with feedback before the final revisions
- 4) Focus on relevant vocabulary and expressions

It is also crucial that both the teacher/s and the students plan and organize all phases of the project thoroughly. Yet, more needs to be said about the language learning potential of this project. One of the aims of this thesis project was to explore how filmmaking could be used as a way to contextualize language learning. It is therefore important to draw the focus back to language learning and ask: did the project improve their skills in written or oral English? The results suggest that at much as 68 % of the participants feel that they have learned vocabulary through the project. This can be explained by two factors. Firstly, that the application *Memrise* was used to practice a set list of filmmaking vocabulary and poetry interpretation expressions. Secondly, that the vocabulary was actively in use during various stages of the process. In terms of vocabulary, the contextualization seems to have functioned well. Yet, there is remarkably little focus on reading, writing, speaking and listening in the participants’

reflections. This classroom study does not attempt to draw any conclusions regarding the participants' language learning. After all, the participants have read advanced texts in English, interacted in English, listened to recitals and film poems in English and written various texts in English during the project. It is likely that they have improved their language skills to some extent. However, as a result of my own reflections as both teacher and researcher, I choose to take my suspicions concerning their language learning seriously. Based on the participants' reflection, I suggest that the following elements be expanded and improved in a similar project:

- 1) Scriptwriting
- 2) Voice-over
- 3) Editing

One important improvement of the project could be to integrate scriptwriting to a larger extent. In Normann's study high-proficiency students did not feel challenged enough when they were restricted to a short manuscript (Normann 2011, p. 84). For the participants in the present study, the short project description they were asked to write together may not have felt particularly challenging. The focus on scriptwriting can be increased by reading example manuscripts in English and by challenging the students to write longer and more demanding manuscripts. By reading other productions' manuscripts, perhaps from films or series the students are familiar with, students can learn the craft of scriptwriting while learning English. As all text competence concerns being able to consider the *purpose, audience* and *form* of a text (Kvithyld, 2011, p. 15), the students' attention could be brought to the deep links that exist between film and print-texts. In this way, they may be able to transfer their enthusiasm and insights concerning how to communicate a clear story through a film, to improving the way they write.

Few of the participants reflect on oral communication as being a learning outcome of the project. This is in contrast with Normann's study where all students saw digital storytelling as a useful way to develop their oral skills (Normann, 2011, p. 81). The difference can be explained by the fact that all students had to make voice-overs in Normann's study, while only a few made voice-overs to the films. Yet, those who did make voice-overs had the same thoughts about this as the students in Normann's study: they saw it as a useful way to develop their skills in both pronunciation and tone of voice. In doing so, they are showing what the curriculum calls "insight into one's own language learning" and the ability to "evaluate own

language usage and learning needs and to select suitable strategies” (English subject curriculum, LK06, 2013). By allowing all the students to record voice-overs of their own voice, listen to it and make improvements, they can develop their oral communication skills. Constructive feedback from classmates and the teacher can be of great value in this process. The teacher can also ask the students to focus on a specific language issue, e.g. the pronunciation of /th/.

Even though half of the participants reflect on having improved their skills in editing, they also say that this responsibility was typically given to one person: the person that already had some editing experience. As was found in ICILS 2013, the majority of Norwegian youth lack experience and competence in producing digital media products (Ottestad, Throndsen, Hatlevik & Anubha, 2014, p. 25). If developing digital competence for all students is a goal, all students need to be involved in the editing process. To do so, the following change could be made in the schedule: collaborate with the Norwegian teacher on a one-day workshop in basic storytelling and editing. The teachers could use their text, film and literature competence to help the students to tell clear stories. The students with editing experience could help both their own and other groups with the more technical aspects, e.g. editing in *iMovie*. Furthermore, the students can watch English-language videos about how to edit on the Internet, e.g. *Vimeo Video School 101* or Apple’s instructional *iMovie* videos. Finally, one may investigate if national or regional film organization like *The Norwegian Film Institute* or *Mediefabrikken* would be able to offer any help in organizing an editing workshop.

7. Conclusion

The present study has shown that filmmaking can be a highly engaging activity for young people. All the participants report having enjoyed the project, and the majority would like to work with filmmaking again. They seem to have enjoyed the opportunity to work collaboratively on a creative, open and challenging task. Filmmaking gave them a chance to create something together that they felt proud of and that gave them a sense of agency and accomplishment. Making film poems also gave them a chance to express themselves creatively about an issue they found interesting; a challenge many of them seemed to appreciate. These findings confirm previous research from similar projects.

Filmmaking is seen as a useful way to learn in all subjects at school. This is because it requires them to process the content more, and to think about how they can communicate their knowledge to an audience. In line with previous studies, the process of making a film seems to have helped the students to make an abstract poem into a more concrete story thus unlocking some of its “hidden meaning”. Through many re-readings and choices of music, acting, story and tone of voice, students’ understanding of the poem deepened. At the same time, some of the students reflected on the fact that filmmaking helped them develop their ability to create and communicate through digital media, an essential part of digital competence.

Finally, the participants see filmmaking as a way of gaining real-life experience with issues like time-pressure, project planning, problem solving, creativity and collaboration. Filmmaking is seen as a way to learn things that will be useful later in the students’ lives. For a few of the students, filmmaking gave them a chance to discover new talents and interests, causing them to consider a career within the media industry.

Regardless of the limitations of this single-case study, there appears to be grounds for claiming that filmmaking should come to play a more important role in the language classrooms of the future. The findings in this study exemplify a way of renewing the English subject that is in line with the recommendation in NOU 2015: 8. Through filmmaking, the students develop their subject-specific competence (e.g. poetry interpretation); learn to learn (e.g. planning a project); practice their skills in creativity and innovation (making a film-poem); and improve their skills in collaboration, participation and communication (communicate a story through digital media in collaboration with classmates) (NOU 2015: 8., 2015, p. 7-8). If this report is an indicator of educational changes, filmmaking may have an important role to play in the future English classroom.

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Appendix 1: “Roll the Dice” by Charles Bukowski (1999)

<p>if you're going to try, go all the way. otherwise, don't even start.</p> <p>if you're going to try, go all the way. this could mean losing girlfriends, wives, relatives, jobs and maybe your mind.</p> <p>go all the way. it could mean not eating for 3 or 4 days. it could mean freezing on a park bench. it could mean jail, it could mean derision, mockery, isolation. isolation is the gift, all the others are a test of your endurance, of how much you really want to do it. and you'll do it despite rejection and the worst odds</p>	<p>and it will be better than anything else you can imagine.</p> <p>if you're going to try, go all the way. there is no other feeling like that. you will be alone with the gods and the nights will flame with fire.</p> <p>do it, do it, do it. do it.</p> <p>all the way all the way.</p> <p>you will ride life straight to perfect laughter, its the only good fight there is.</p>
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Appendix 2: Norwegian subject competence aims in focus (vg 1).

- kombinere auditive, skriftlige og visuelle uttrykksformer og bruke ulike digitale verktøy i presentasjoner
- bruke ulike estetiske uttrykksformer i sammensatte tekster
- skrive kreative tekster [...] med bruk av ulike språklige virkemidler
- [...] følge regler for personvern og opphavsrett
- tolke og vurdere sammenhengen mellom innhold, form og formål i sammensatte tekster

Appendix 3: Memrise Filmmaking Vocabulary List

interpretation, tolkning

interpret, tolke

agree, enig

disagree, være uenig

grasp the meaning, forstå meningen

editing, redigering

evaluate, evaluere

screening, visning

enthusiasm, entusiasme

early in the process, tidlig i prosessen

our first thought, vår første tanke

visual, visuell

visualization, å se for seg

storyboard, lage storyboard

filmmaking, å lage film

filmmaker, filmskaper

filmpoem, filmdikt

close-up, nærbilde

director, regissør

producer, produsent

expression, inntrykk

build-up, bygge opp

shooting, filme

narrative, fortellende

turning point, vendepunkt

association, assosiasjon

voice-over, stemmen som leser

tone of voice, tonefall

duration, varighet

effect, effekt

shot, bildet

total, hele scenen

Appendix 4: Materials and equipment

The following material and equipment were used during the project:

- A big roll of brown paper and black felt pens for the first brainstorming session in class.
- Storyboard templates (can be found online)
- Handouts from the book *Film Art: An Introduction* by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson and *Digital Storytelling: Capturing Lives, Creating Community* by Joe Lambert.
- Per group: Mac with *iMovie* (free software for Mac) and cell phone with video recording app.
- Projector (classroom).
- Memrise Vocabulary App

Appendix 5: a selection of my students' filmpoems

Please do not publish or share the links. The participants have given their permission for sharing them in this thesis only.

“Anxious Youth”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smHBBj0t1YM&feature=youtu.be>

“The Struggle for Success”:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y__uE9rYcdI&feature=youtu.be

“The Getaway”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h557wYa3AU&list=UUQIIIEYn4rKTvVJGxt50VCHA>

Appendix 6: Pilot Project Film Assignment

Visual Storytelling: Group Activity!



Visual storytelling: telling a story using images instead of words. E.g. films and photographs.

This task is meant as a preparation for the Visual Storytelling Project we will have after the Autumn Break (week 41-43).

The task:

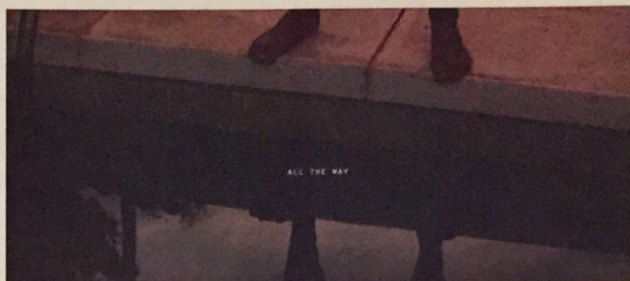
Form groups of 3 (One of you need to have iMovie on their computer).

Make a 2 minute video describing your morning routine of getting to school:

Inspiration: [Dexter's morning routine.](#)

- Each person uses her/his cell phone to record their journey to school (parts of it). Try to capture what is typical about it! What is the setting and the people? How can you share your personal experience? You can film people, places, buses, skies, faces..... Close up, far away...? Have in mind when filming, what images will *best* show your morning? Your sleepy face in the mirror, the angry bus driver, your breakfast etc. The more you can show, not tell - the better!
- When everyone has filmed their morning, send all the clips to the person with iMovie. Work together to put the clips from everyone's mornings together to a short film. Do you have the same morning routines or are they completely different? The video should be maximum 2 minutes long.

Appendix 7: Hand-out about Project Description (written assignment)



PROJECT DESCRIPTION VISUAL STORYTELLING

Task: Poem film based on Charles Bukowski's "Roll the Dice"
Deadline: Friday, October 10, midnight

A project description should include:

1. Description of the film.

Must answer these questions:

- *How did the group interpret the poem? Explain the process of the group finding one common interpretation. Did you agree, disagree etc.*
- *How will you visualize your interpretation of the poem in the film?
Ex. With a narrative story or mix of symbolic pictures? Describe your story.*
- *Explain **how** you will use images, voice over, graphics, and music.
Ex. "We are going to use images of flying birds."*
- *Explain **why** the usage of the different devices (images, voice over, graphics, music).
Ex. "We are going to use images of flying birds to symbolize the feeling of freedom."
"We are going to have a child read the voice over because it creates a contrast to the images and the poem. We want to create a contrast because..."*

*Remember: Everything is allowed but you need to have a reason **why** you are making the choices you do in the film.*

2. Storyboard

Use the template you've received earlier this week to show how you are planning to visualize the film.

*Be sure that you draw as close to the visual image you want for each frame.
Ex. Close up of a hand holding a phone, total of landscape etc.*

*Remember, a storyboard is a pre-visualization of your film. The more work you put into the storyboard, the easier the filming and editing will be.
Keep it simple! Ask often, "Is this necessary in order for the viewer to grasp our vision for the film?"
Less is more.*

3. List of group members and each persons responsibility

Send project description to: linda.brede@gmail.com

Appendix 8: Hand out about Written Evaluation Task (basis for the data collection)

Written Evaluation Task Week 43

Graded individually: 1-6.

Task: write a 700-1000 words long **personal essay** describing your experience and what you have learned from the visual storytelling project. A good grade requires:

Structure and formal requirements:

- A short **introduction** (introducing the project and what you will write about: "In this essay, I will.....")
- **Main body** of the text organized in four paragraphs using the headlines "pre-production", "production", "post-production" and "evaluation".
- A short **conclusion** (summing up the main things you have learned/enjoyed)
- **Title:** "Project Report on" + the name of your film.
- Your **name in the header** (sett inn topptekst).
- Font: Times New Roman, letter size 12.

Content:

- **Explaining** what you have learned, done and experienced using **concrete examples** from *your* group and what *you* think about it. It could also be things that didn't work out – this is usually what we learn from! The main point is that you show ability for **independent reflection** (to think and learn from it).

Language:

- A text that is **easy to read & understand**
- Using **filmmaking vocabulary**
- **Correct spelling and grammar**
- Use of **linking words** (Access page 48).

Deadline: Friday at 15.30 in the folder "Written Evaluation Task" on ITL.

Some ideas to help you get started:

Pre-production

- First reaction to the project and the poem

- One important thing you have learned about interpreting poems
- Working in groups: explain your different visualizations and why you chose the one you did.
- Describe your filmpoem: the title, the plot, main shots, music, voice-over, setting, atmosphere and message.
- Three important things you have learned about filmmaking

Production

- Shooting: explain the experience of being on set. What went according to plan and what did not? Was the storyboard and project description helpful? Did you stick to the assigned roles (producer, director, actor etc.)?
- One important thing you learned from shooting

Post-production:

- Editing
- Screening and feedback: how did you like showing it to the class? What was the feedback and will you change anything?
- Do you think you'll be happy with the final product?

Evaluation

- Your personal learning outcome: what have you learned about creative work, collaboration, filmmaking, poems, yourself, English etc.?
- How did you like working like this? What did you like and what could be better?
- Would you like working with film, TV or something creative later on?

Feel free to write more or less about these + write about other things that are relevant as well!

Appendix 9: Approval from Norwegian Social Science Data Services

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS

NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Harald Hårfagres gate 1
N-5007 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
Fax: +47-55 58 96 50
nsd@nsd.uib.no
www.nsd.uib.no
Org.nr. 985 321 884

Eva L. Björk
Avdeling for økonomi, språk og samfunnsfag Høgskolen i Østfold
Remmen
1757 HALDEN

Vår dato: 03.02.2015

Vår ref: 41753 / 3 / MSS

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 21.01.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

41753	<i>Filmmaking in ELT</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>Høgskolen i Østfold, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Eva L. Björk</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Ragnhild Stige</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 01.10.2015, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Marie Strand Schildmann

Kontaktperson: Marie Strand Schildmann tlf: 55 58 31 52

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no

TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no

TROMSØ: NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@sv.uit.no

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 41753

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er noe vagt formulert med tanke på at henvendelsen gjelder tillatelse/samtykke til at data som innhentes som del av den planlagte undervisningen skal benyttes/inngå i ditt studentprosjekt. Det må formuleres eksplisitt at aktivitetene gjennomføres og datamaterialet innhentes som del av undervisningen, men at det er helt frivillig om man samtykker til at det også kan inngå i studentprosjektet ved Høgskolen i Østfold.

Vi ber også om at det påføres at det ikke vil ha noen følger for den enkelte dersom man velger å ikke delta.

Revidert informasjonsskriv skal sendes til personvernombudet@nsd.uib.no for utvalget kontaktes.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Høgskolen i Østfold sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 01.10.2015. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da lagres videre til undervisningsformål. Dette vil ikke være meldepliktig til personvernombudet for forskning, men det bør undersøkes hvorvidt behandlingen kan utløse meldeplikt til Datatilsynet eller internt ombud ved Fylkeskommunen. Opplysningene som har vært anvendt til forskningsformål skal anonymiseres jf. de opplysningene som gis i informasjonsskriv til elevene/foreldre.

Appendix 10: Invitation to Participate in the Research Project

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet ”Filmmaking in English Language Teaching”

Bakgrunn og formål

Studien er en del av masteroppgaven min ved det fagdidaktiske masterprogrammet «Fremmedspråk i skolen – studieretning engelsk» ved Høgskolen i Østfold, våren 2015.

Formålet med studien er å undersøke mulighetene som ligger i filmskapning som arbeidsmetode i engelskfaget i skolen. Fokus er på vg1, der læreplanen fastslår av elevene skal arbeide med film, kunst og litteratur, i tillegg til å utvikle digitale ferdigheter, ferdigheter i å skrive ulike type tekster (inkludert digitale) og arbeide med ulike typer media. Videre er arbeid med film i skolen ofte knytta sammen med høy elevmotivasjon. Kan det å skape film bidra til *både* engasjement og læring?

Metoden er aksjonsforskning, det vil si at læreren forsker på det som skjer i klasserommet. Mine egne elever er derfor naturlige deltagere gjennom et forsøksprosjekt som kombinerer filmskapning og poesi.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Deltagelse innebærer deltagelse i vanlig undervisning. Forskningsprosjektet vil foregå ved analyse av de tekster og produkter (filmene) elevene lager i løpet av prosjektet, i tillegg til analyse av gruppesamtaler (opptak gjøres på telefon og lagres trygt). En enkel spørreundersøkelse vil også være en del av materialet. Til sist vil også observasjoner av klassen under arbeid utgjøre material.

Samtykke til å delta/på vegne av ditt barn medfører godkjenning til å bruke deler eller hele materialet beskrevet ovenfor. Se skjema under.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Etske retningslinjer for både lærerprofesjonen og forskning vil sikre personer som deltar.

Tekster, transkribering av samtalene og spørreundersøkelsen vil bli anonymisert. Deltakerne vil kunne gjenkjennes der hvor stillbilder og/eller linker til filmene publiseres med oppgaven, og hvis lydopptak av samtalene publiseres, men dette kan man reservere seg mot om ønskelig.

Materialet oppbevares trygt på digitale plattformer som krever innlogging (it'slearning osv.).

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes juni 2015.

Jeg håper å få tillatelse til å beholde materialet til videre utvikling av prosjektet i undervisningsøyemed.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert

Dersom du har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med Ragnhild Stige, telefon 99 29 05 27 eller ragnhild.stige@stabekk.vgs.no. Veileder Eva Lambertsson Björk kan også kontaktes på telefon 69215294 eller epost eva.l.bjork@hiof.no.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

Navn på elev:

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og godkjenner at min sønn/datter _____ deltar.

(Signeres av foresatte, dato)

Vennligst marker i rutene i hvilke punkter du gir din tillatelse til:

- Jeg samtykker til at de skriftlige innleveringer brukes (anonymisert).
- Jeg samtykker i at spørreundersøkelsen brukes (anonymisert)
- Jeg samtykker i at transkribert og anonymisert tekst fra lydopptakene av gruppesamtalen brukes
- Jeg samtykker til at stillbilder fra filmene kan brukes
- Jeg samtykker i at filmene kan brukes i sin helhet gjennom at det linkes til YouTube.
- Jeg samtykker til at materialet kan tas vare på for videre revidering av undervisningsopplegg

Jeg samtykker i at lydopptakene av gruppesamtalen kan publiseres sammen med oppgaven (at en internettlenke til podcast av lydopptakene legges ved oppgaven som lytteeksempler).