

Reflection Paper

When I first started working on my master thesis, I was determined I wanted to focus on features that benefit the individual student. The Norwegian Education Act states that each student has the right to adapted education, however, I thought “how is that possible within the same classroom?” and realised that we have not really learnt a lot about adapted education, nor differentiation, in English teaching through the University College. For that reason, I wanted to focus my master thesis on differentiation in the English language classroom in Year 5-7. Gladly, every interviewee in this thesis differentiates to some extent and have opinions about how to make sure each student feels welcome in the classroom.

As a result of the Covid-19 situation, all the universities and university colleges in Norway closed, and finding theoretical framework became a bit of a challenge. I had to spend more time searching for the right articles and texts, but was able to find relevant theory in the end. In addition, I had to change the method of my project. The original plan was to observe the interviewees’ classrooms, but because every school closed, I had to make an online survey. However, as the survey only received twenty replies, I suspect many English teachers were busy tackling the distant teaching situation, and for that reason, did not have time to respond to the survey. Not being able to complete the observations raises questions of how reliable the results of the interviews are. I wanted to compare the interviewees’ descriptions of differentiation to what I could observe.

If I were to complete the same study again, I would change the interview guide slightly by removing the question about textbooks and rather ask “how do you use the results from the national tests in Year 5 to ensure differentiation according to each student’s readiness and ability?” As the theoretical framework showed, the results of the national tests are rarely used to increase adapted education for each child, and hence, nor differentiation. It would be interesting to examine whether students’ results of progression are different if teachers valued the insight that the national test provides.

Yet, overall, I did learn a lot from this research. I learnt that by changing the complexity of the questions the teacher asks in the classroom is a simple way of differentiation, and that differentiation happens when the teacher is conscious about the students’ readiness, abilities and interests. Also, changing the approach towards the learning objective, by explaining the content through the students’ interests, may provide positive motivation for the student because s/he sees the relevance of the content and subject. Aspects I will remember to use in my teaching practise is to acquire as much knowledge as possible

about the students in my classroom. Having great knowledge about the students' preferred learning styles and interest are helpful when differentiating. Additionally, it is important to remember that differentiation is always possible by asking the right questions.

MASTEROPPGAVE

Differentiation in the English Language Classroom

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Abstract

The Norwegian Education Act, § 1-3, states that student's education shall be adapted according to the student's readiness and abilities. In order for teachers to be able to adapt their teaching, they must differentiate in the classroom. The purpose of this master thesis is to view how teachers differentiate English language teaching in Year 5-7, and furthermore, to focus on their understanding of the term differentiation. To examine these issues, the study is based on a qualitative research method, with an interview guide to provide the interviewees with a similar framework. The interviewees in this research are two males and two females; they work as English teachers in Year 5-7 and at four different schools in east Norway. In addition, the thesis includes a brief survey that investigates how teachers differentiate English language teaching during home- and online-schooling. The results state indications of how differentiation can be integrated into the language classroom by changing the way teachers think. The results also show findings of how teachers use students' academic levels to provide adequate tasks and materials.

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1. Introduction

This thesis focuses on how teachers differentiate their teaching in the English language classroom to enable each student to fulfil his or her learning potential and stay motivated to learn. In order to provide each student with adapted education, teachers must differentiate their teaching practise (Haug, 2013, p. 421). Differentiation is a strategy to facilitate education to suit each students' various academic needs. Further, Idsøe (2015) claims that “differentiation is to attend to the learning needs of a single student or a small group of students rather than teaching a single class as if all students are equal” (my translation). The Primary Professional Development Service¹ (PPDS) (p. 8) clarifies that “differentiation requires the teacher to vary their approaches in order to accommodate various learning styles, ability levels and interests.” In other words, being proficient in pedagogical differentiation in the classroom is an important competence for the professional teacher. Taylor & Francis Books (2018, 1:48) presents Hattie’s research that asks the question of “what works best?” and aim at providing children with “the benefit of a great teacher, by design and not by chance.” However, Hattie’s findings estimate that how teachers think about what they do is the key to great results in the classroom. On that note, this study investigates how a limited number of teachers differentiate their English teaching in Year 5-7.

1.1 Background

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2020 a) claims that “English is a central subject in cultural understanding, communication, formation and identity development” (my translation). Further, the curriculum states that the subject is to prepare the students for education, society and a working life where English skills in reading, writing and oral communication is necessary. Additionally, youth and young adults are being exposed to English outside of school, by for instance music, television, advertisement and newspapers. This suggests that the preconditions for the English language classroom are changing and consequently, demand a modification in how English teachers plan their lessons. PPDS (p. 3) stresses “no two children are alike”, and clarifies that “based on this principle, differentiated teaching and learning is key to ensuring that children have multiple options for taking in

¹ The PDST is funded by the Teacher Education Section (TES) of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and is managed by Dublin West Education Centre. Retrieved from: https://www.pdst.ie/about_us

information and making sense of concepts.” However, how to in the easiest way for the teacher, and in the best way possible can this be done? It is challenging to create a teaching plan that provides every single student with an optimal learning and development lesson (Haug, 2013, p. 416). In other words, the teacher’s education skills are significant to ensure students’ learning outcome and well-being. Therefore, “each time you have an English lesson you are the adult responsible for making that time valuable. To do so you need language and text skills, intuition and sensitivity, leadership skills and professional training. You also need a plan” (Munden, 2015, p. 72). This whole extract is simply saying that teachers need to see each and every student and his or her needs. How do the students in your class learn? How are their language skills? How can you differentiate the students learning process to uphold their motivation and eagerness to learn?

The importance of differentiation is to recognise the diversity in the classroom and making adaptations to each student. PPDS (p. 3) says “watering down the curriculum [...] can have a long-term effect of increasing the achievement gap between children with learning difficulties and others.” Idsøe (2015) claims that the overall goal with a differentiated classroom is to achieve maximum student development and individual success. It is stated by the Norwegian Education Act that adapted education should happen daily in heterogenic groups to safeguard equivalence and social connection (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 8-2). Heterogenic groups are meant to give the students’ progress, development and achievement. Also, § 1-3 (Opplæringsloven, 1998) states that the education is to be adjusted to abilities and the precautionary statements for each student. Overall, the school’s agenda is to safeguard the learning needs for each student, no matter their learning level or potential (UDIR, 2019 b).

1.2 Aim of the master thesis and research question

The aim of this master thesis is to investigate and establish an overview of how teachers differentiate their language classroom to make sure that each student fully achieves his or her potential.

I wanted this paper to focus on differentiation in English language teaching rather than adapted education because adapted education is often thought of as level adjustment (Vold, 2018). However, differentiation is a term that I think should be brought more into the light in teaching because teaching is about knowing your students. Vold (2018) describes a situation a teacher trainee met during practice placement. The teacher trainee had to figure out how to motivate a student in a French class. The trainee sat down and talked to the student and discovered that the student had an interest in video games. Then, the trainee suggested to

change the language in the game to French, and that way, the student acquired many new words and became motivated to learn French.

The point is to meet each and every student personally. PPDS (p. 8) highlights that “the greater the variety in the methodologies adopted by the teacher, the more pathways and entry points into learning s/he provides for the children.” Therefore, I wanted to investigate how teachers differentiate their English teaching in Year 5-7.

1.3 Key terms

‘Differentiation’ is in this paper used to refer to how the school should provide the individual student with an offer that is adapted as far as possible to each student’s prerequisites (Store Norske Leksikon, 2018). Differentiation do also refer to teaching methods that are being used to achieve adapted education by adjusting the content, work methods and organisation (Solberg, et. al., 2017, p. 70).

1.4 Overview of the study

This study is divided into five chapters, including the introduction. The second chapter is the theoretical framework, which focuses on earlier research on differentiated teaching in the language classroom and official Norwegian documents to view teachers’ official guidelines. The thesis includes the renewal of the English subject curriculum that is partly integrated in school today but will be fully integrated on August 1st, 2020. The third chapter explains the chosen method for collecting data. Next follows the fourth chapter, which presents the results from the data collection and an ongoing discussion throughout the chapter in relation to the theoretical framework. The final chapter presents my conclusion to the research question:
How is English language teaching differentiated in Year 5-7?

2. Theoretical Framework

The following chapter presents the theoretical framework for this research and includes research from Norway and other countries that are studying differentiation in English language classrooms. The theoretical framework is divided into seven sections: 2.1 Pedagogical differentiation, 2.2 Organisational and pedagogical differentiation, 2.3 Students with special needs, 2.4 The importance of good relations, 2.5 Planning differentiation, 2.6 Motivation and proficiency, and 2.7 Teaching English in a multilingual language classroom.

Despite the fact that English has become a world language and the importance of comprehending the language has increased, the time available for English lessons is limited in the Norwegian classrooms. In Year 5-7, students receive 228 hours of English teaching (UDIR, 2020 b). Therefore, it is very important that teachers ensure quality in each English lesson and are coherent when differentiating. Differentiation is a feature of teaching methods, and it is how the teacher uses differentiation that is significant, and not differentiation alone (Haug, 2013, p. 423). The teacher must adapt the learning activities and student work in order to meet the students' needs in education and learning (NOU 2016: 14, p. 66). PPDS (p. 4) evaluates the feature of a differentiated classroom to be "child centred." In other words, the teachers must change their practice from instruction to focus on the child and its learning, and thereby, redefine their role as a teacher.

2.1 Pedagogical differentiation

The white paper Meld. St. 22 (2010-2011) views pedagogical differentiation to be that students get unlike tasks, unlike due dates, and/or that students can choose how to approach learning based on their interests and knowledge of learning strategies. In order for differentiation in the classroom to succeed, the teacher must have good knowledge and classroom management skills (UDIR, 2019 b). Additionally, differentiated teaching is often recognised as adapted education, which is stated in the Norwegian Education Act § 1-3 (Opplæringsloven, 1998). As presented in the introduction, it claims that the education is to be adjusted to abilities and the precautionary statements for each student and the right to receive education customised to their academic level and proficiency. Vold (2018, p. 271) claims that the initial thought to many teachers is that adapted education is based on the pupil's levels. However, Vold (2018, p. 271) clarifies that adjustment and differentiation can be made based on interests, maturity level, preferred learning styles and classroom environment.

To be proficient in differentiating the English teaching, teachers must acquire analytical skills to identify individual learning processes and acknowledge cognitive prerequisites of students (UDIR, 2019 b). In addition, teachers must commit to value each individual student. The Education Mirror (2016, p. 89) argues that 14 per cent of the students report that only a few teachers care, and almost 3 per cent report that only one or no teachers care about them. Further, the Education Mirror (2016, p. 89) states that “13 per cent of pupils believe that only a few teachers are confident that they can do well at school, while almost 4 per cent believe that no or only one teacher is confident that they can do well.” In other words, teachers need to be better at showing consideration to students and emphasising that students can achieve what they are working towards.

In light of the figures presented by the Education Mirror (2016) in the paragraph above, Idsøe (2015) outlines three principles that should be embraced. The three principles establish what to keep in mind when differentiating in the classroom. Overall, the teacher must pay attention to students’ personal requirements because students are different in several ways, and these personal features are highly recommended to be considered when modifying teaching:

1. The students are in unlike degree motivated to do the work of a specific idea or skill.
2. The students are interested in various pursuits and topics.
3. The students have various backgrounds, such as gender, culture, learning styles or intellectual preferences, which shape their personality and learning preferences (Idsøe, 2015).

In addition, Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010, pp. 15) identify three aspects that is necessary to evaluate when differentiating teaching: 1. *Content* is defined as what the students will learn, 2. *Process* is how the students acquire the content and 3. *Product* is determined by “how students demonstrate what they have come to know, understand, and are able to do after an extended period of learning” (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 15). When teachers differentiate their teaching, they should evaluate the best way each student learn and consider whether they like to learn via auditory, kinaesthetic or visual learning styles (Melby-Lervåg, 2018). For that reason, Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010, p. 16) introduce a fourth aspect to acknowledge when differentiating, namely *affect*. Affect is to evaluate “how students’ emotions and feelings impact their learning” (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 16). The overall aim is for every student to achieve the same learning outcome. Therefore, students are

provided with the same content, but the process and product may be different in terms of, for instance, learning styles and ways of presenting the product. Hence, when planning a lesson, the process should enhance creativity and critical thinking, demand problem-solving tasks, group work, different pace and level, and if possible, give room for the students to choose between a few approaches (Idsøe, 2015). As for the result, the product, differentiated tasks should include lifelike issues, require ideal deadlines and involve appropriate assessment and evaluation. Overall, when differentiating a language classroom, teachers must be flexible and open-minded towards learning approaches amongst students. Further, Idsøe (2015) encourages the teacher to strengthen independent and intuitive learning, be accepting, non-judgmental and boost complex and abstract thinking. Moreover, feedback is crucial in teaching. Hattie and Clarke (2019, p. 10) stresses how three questions need to be answered when providing feedback: 1. Where am I going? 2. How am I going? 3. Where to next? However, Hattie and Clarke (2019, p. 5) states that question number three is the most crucial question because it provides students with the competence of “what I must focus on next”.

Bloom’s taxonomy, as modelled in figure 1 (PPDS, p. 10), is a model that provides the teacher with an overview of levels to help understand students’ cognitive process and differentiate the students learning objectives according to the students’ knowledge (Lasley & Munro, 2014). Bloom’s taxonomy was developed in the 1950s by Benjamin Bloom, an American educational psychologist (Lasley & Munro, 2014). Bloom’s taxonomy is a tool that teachers can use to create activities by complexity as it is structured to provide teachers with instructional activities, which they can offer students (Lasley & Munro, 2014).







Knowledge <i>Know it</i>	Comprehension <i>Understand it</i>	Application <i>Use it</i>	Analysis <i>Examine it</i>	Synthesis <i>Create it</i>	Evaluation <i>Judge it</i>
					
<i>Recall for information</i>	<i>Show your understanding</i>	<i>Use what you've learned</i>	<i>Examine critically</i>	<i>Put together in a new and different way</i>	<i>Determine worth or value based on criteria</i>
<i>List, define, name, when, where, state, identify</i>	<i>Retell, summarise, describe, explain, predict, restate, estimate</i>	<i>Solve, use, construct, classify, examine, illustrate, modify</i>	<i>Analyse, compare, distinguish, order, infer, categorise, investigate</i>	<i>Create, design, formulate, invent, imagine, devise, combine</i>	<i>Check, choose, prioritise, critique, hypothesise, judge, debate</i>

Figure 1: Bloom’s taxonomy. Primary Professional Development Service.

Bloom's taxonomy model enables teachers to offer "more time to children who need it, while providing sufficient challenge for all" (PPDS, p. 11), which also is what PPDS (p. 11) claims to be the "key to differentiated instruction." This because Bloom's model makes it clear how teachers should think about the questioning process within the classroom (Lasley & Munro, 2014). Students who need more time to understand a topic might still be working at Bloom's knowledge level, whereas students who do understand the topic may be at the application level. For instance, if a class in Year 5 is reading *The BFG* by Roald Dahl, and the students are asked to write a summary of what they have read so far, the students at the knowledge level may state who the text is about and where the characters are. The students at the application and analysis level, however, will be able to answer questions about what might happen later in the text and make other conclusions. It is worth mentioning that there is a debate whether synthesis or evaluation should be the highest level. Some believe that it is more challenging to create something new, rather than to evaluate something that already exists. Appendix 3 is a table of questions retrieved from the Primary Professional Development Service. The table consists of questions that facilitate each level of Bloom's taxonomy. The table can be portrayed in the classroom both to assist the teacher, but also the students. Students can use the table as guidance to write questions, or to establish an understanding of what level they are belonging to in different topics.

Another way of differentiating English language teaching is tiered assignments. PPDS (p. 13) define tiered assignments as assignments that "involve all children being focused on the same content or curriculum objective, but the process and/or product will vary according to the child's readiness or ability." Tiered assignments are not meant as a method to use in every English lesson, but when it is essential and suitable (PPDS, p. 13). Whenever a new topic is introduced, it is new to everyone. Therefore, tiered assignments should be conducted when students are working individually or in smaller groups. Further, tiered assignments can be visualised as a ladder with three steps. The middle step is the core task, which is where every student start at the beginning of a new topic. Then, when continuing working on the topic, some students may move up to the advanced task, whereas some move down to the modified task (PPDS, p. 13). In addition, flexible grouping is useful to differentiate the English language classroom even more. The class is divided into groups based on their personal features, like interest, learning style, readiness and/or proficiency level. According to PPDS (p. 16), the groups are temporary, which suggests that the students are regrouped when necessary and appropriately. As well as the groups are temporary, it is important that the students are allowed to move between groups if their proficiency level change (PPDS, p. 16).

As a communal understanding in the classroom, the groups are different to each other to properly challenge and assist learning to every student in the classroom.

The topic of this paper is to investigate how teachers differentiate English teaching in Year 5-7. It is therefore relevant to establish an understanding to what extent teachers have qualifications and study credits in English, and whether this influences differentiation. According to § 10-2 (Opplæringsloven, 1998), the school is required to set teachers with the right qualifications in the subjects they are teaching. The Directorate for Education and Training (Education Mirror, 2016, p. 42) reports that 48 per cent of teachers in primary school do not have the necessary qualifications to teach English. In addition, as earlier identified, children are being exposed to English outside of school to a greater extent than earlier. Hence, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2019 a) emphasises the need for better English skills, which implements the prerequisites for being a teacher of English and also imposes new requirements to be employed as a teacher, depending on whether the position is at primary or secondary level.

2.2 Organisational and pedagogical differentiation

As introduced in the introduction, § 8-2 imposes teachers to divide students into other groups as needed. However, the groups are not to be divided based on the students' academic level, gender or ethnic origin, and must be of educationally and securely appropriate size (Opplæringsloven, 1998). If the law claims teachers not to make groups based on academic level, then how are teachers meant to differentiate appropriate lessons to suit each group?

One of the main arguments to divide the class into other groups during English lessons is to increase differentiation when practicing oral skills (Solberg, et al., 2017, p. 71). Having the students organised in smaller groups gives each student a greater opportunity to talk more and talk without the pressure of having many other students listen. However, how the students are divided into groups is essential to how differentiation will be practised. Solberg (2017) argues that if the class is divided into heterogenic groups, differentiation is considered based on content and product, whereas if the class is divided into homogenic groups, differentiation is about the learning process and learning environment. In other words, differentiation is similar in heterogenic groups as it is in a full class, while homogenic groups are better differentiated.

Organisational differentiation refers to "how the students are grouped to that their subject needs and levels can be addressed properly" (NOU 2016: 14, p. 69). How teachers group students are very important, as groups are part of agreeing to students' achievements.

Hence, the teacher must know the student's characteristics and analyse what the group dynamic will look like, because the group must be of positive outcome where student's motivation for learning is strengthened. Further, if students are organised in groups according to their academic level for that particular subject or theme, the students must be assessed on a regular basis in order for the organisation of those groups to be flexible and as limited in time as possible (NOU 2016: 14, p. 70). In contrast, pedagogical differentiation is what teachers are expected to complete in the classroom today (Haug, 2013, p. 423). According to Haug (2013, p. 423), it is the teacher's ability to differentiate the teaching within the frames of the classroom that is key to make the group work and having each student use their full learning potential.

2.3 Students with special needs

As earlier identified, the Education Act, states that "all education must be adapted to each student's abilities and aptitudes" (UDIR, 2020) (my translation). In other words, every student is different and learn differently, hence, teachers must adapt their teaching to fit every student. Further, § 5-1 in the Education Act (Opplæringsloven, 1998) specifies that special needs education is entitled to those who do not benefit adequately from ordinary education. Special needs education is recommended to be provided for within the students' ordinary class as much as possible and whilst it is satisfactory (UDIR, 2020). The Education Mirror (2016, p. 36) specifies that "almost three times as many pupils receive special needs education in Year 10 as in Year 1". It is established that one reason for the increase in special needs education in higher years is because of the academic demands that becomes more difficult each year of schooling. Therefore, it can be argued that in Year 5-7, students should strive to acquire good learning strategies to keep up their motivation.

Based on statistics from GSI (Grunnskolen Informasjonssystem), 9.08 per cent of students in Years 5-7 receive special needs education the schoolyear of 2019/20. Slightly above 67 per cent of these are boys, whilst close to 33 per cent are girls (UDIR, 2020 e). When discussing students who receive special needs education, we have to consider students who have ADHD, Asperger's, Tourette's syndrome, dyslexia, or other challenges. Special needs education has traditionally been based on analysing the difficulties an individual student has and then has been diagnosed without looking at the environment surrounding the student. However, this has started to change and has resulted in measures for students being diagnosed after looking at the environment around the student, whether this influences the

student's behaviour or whether any differentiations can be made (Fylling & Handegård, 2009, p. 8).

Hattie (2012, p. 72) states that “teachers talk between 70 and 80 per cent” on average during lessons. In addition, as the students get older, the more the teachers talk. Hattie (2012, p. 72) argues that too much teacher talk is disengaging, whilst, in contrast, presents that “challenging, relevant, and academically demanding” instructions result in greater engagement, less teacher talk, but most importantly, special needs students benefit greatly. It raises the question if teachers were to differentiate as much as they should, would the number of students receiving special education be lower? Or is there a chance that some students actually should be recognised as students with a higher learning potential (discussed in section 2.6), rather than being in need of special education?

2.4 The importance of good relations

Building strong relationships in the classroom requires the teacher to collect knowledge about the students and understand that “differential treatment may be equal treatment” (NOU 2016: 14, p. 9). To be able to differentiate teaching amongst students in the classroom, teachers need to build a proficient learning environment. A good learning environment can be described in five key factors:

1. The teacher's ability to manage classes and schemes of work
2. Positive relationships between pupils and teacher
3. Positive relationships and a culture for learning among the pupils
4. Good school and home cooperation
5. Good leadership, organisation and culture for learning in the school (Education Mirror, 2016, p. 89).

Then, the teacher's relation to the students are of great importance when it comes to differentiation. Building a good relation between the teacher and student, demands a good classroom leader because it enables the teacher to ensure that the class work together as a group and also manages to see and meet each student individually. The relation between teacher and student influences the student's learning outcome and behaviour. The relation is important to emotionally and academically support the students (UDIR, 2016). Further, Fedrici and Skaalvik (2013) find that emotional support and the feeling of belonging is important for the students to be motivated. Hence, the quality of the relation between teachers

and students is significant on behalf of the students' learning outcome and the whole experience of school.

The Education Mirror (2016, p. 88) claims that "the classroom environment has an impact on the academic performance of the class." In other words, the environment in the classroom is very important. When students feel safe and secure in the classroom and with their peers, they also achieve better. Further, the Education Mirror (2016, p. 89) presents the fact that 94 per cent of the students have good friends at school. However, this suggests that 6 per cent do not have close friends at school or anyone they trust. Friends and students' social needs are significant in education because as their needs are fulfilled, it becomes more valuable working with peers and focusing on learning potential (Education Mirror, 2016, p. 89). As a result, to promote learning, differentiation can be done when dividing the students into groups where they feel safe and comfortable to try new things with friends. Therefore, it is important that the teacher knows which students work well together (Munden, 2015, p. 41) to be able to choose who will work together accordingly.

The PPDS (p. 4) argues the importance of teachers knowing their students to enhance differentiation. Knowing your students means you should know "their interests, preferred learning styles, current level knowledge and skills" PPDS (p. 4). Brevik and Gunnulfsen (2016, p. 230) enhance that as long as the teacher "sees" the students, acknowledges what they can achieve and acknowledges their interests, it is easier to discover when students feel unsafe or unsecure in the learning environment or the learning experience. To retrieve the student's interests, teachers can have informal conversations or conduct short surveys. Therefore, spending time getting to know your students and building relations are crucial to be able to differentiate according to their learning experience (PPDS, p. 4).

The relation between teacher and student, and between peers, is not only required to ensure quality in learning and making friends, it is also stated by the Norwegian Education Act in § 9A-2 (Opplæringsloven, 1998), which reads: "All students have the right to a safe and good school environment that promotes health, well-being and learning" (my translation). In addition, § 9A-4 (Opplæringsloven, 1998) states that everyone who works in school is obligated to make sure that each child has a good psychosocial school environment. This means if a teacher suspects that a child is being bullied, discriminated against or being a victim of violence, the teacher is obligated to let the headmaster know. It is also important for teachers to know how the child's personal life is. Maybe some parents are going through a divorce or there are other big changes that might make an impact on the child, and thereby, their achievements in school. As Tomlinson and Imbeau argue, teachers need to consider the

affect and whether “students’ emotions and feelings impact their learning” (2010, p. 16). Any stress that is caused by unsecure psychosocial school environment or challenges at home may be reasons for measures, for instance in terms of differentiation. In addition, Brevik, Flognfeldt and Beiler (2020, p. 49) state that the subject renewal, which is valid from August 1st, 2020, clarifies that “all students should experience belonging and respect, and that the differences between them are appreciated” (my translation). In other words, identity and development are central features to the new English subject.

2.5 Planning differentiation

Brevik and Gunnulfsen (2016, p. 215) clarify that research has shown that even though differentiation is an aim, it is rarely obtained. This is arguably because teachers do not see the need for or have the necessary knowledge of how to differentiate. Hence, differentiation demands planning. As established in the introduction, Munden (2015, p. 72) enhances the importance of planning and argues that the teacher is responsible for making sure that each lesson is valuable time for the students. Therefore, it is important that the teacher has a plan for the lesson in order to have the opportunity to use the time wisely to differentiate. In other words, the teacher’s role is to identify the student’s strengths and needs for development, then design a lesson plan that facilitates those needs and requires students to participate actively (Brevik & Gunnulfsen, 2016, p. 217). In addition, when teachers plan their lessons, they must consider those students who may already have several learning experiences with a topic, like students with higher learning potential (UDIR, 2019 b). Overall, a prepared lesson will give the teacher more time to concentrate on classroom management, and students will recognise a routine and feel safe in the learning environment. Thus, if questions, incidents or other issues build up, the teacher may need to put the planned lesson aside and rather solve the situation arising.

When planning differentiation in the language classroom, PPDS (p. 4) claims how the organisation of the classroom is a factor to enhance differentiation. An organised classroom is the exploitation of the physical environment, but also a room to facilitate working stations and independent learning. Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010, p. 19) argue how the physical learning environment is important, but also the emotional climate. Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010, pp. 19-20) clarify that “students learn best when they feel safe, respected, involved, challenged, and supported.” In other words, as presented in section 2.1, the group composition is significant to differentiation pedagogy to make a safe learning environment available to the students. Therefore, when organising the classroom, many teachers tend to place students in

pairs and entitle them learning partners or study buddies. PPDS (p. 17) refers to learning partners as peer tutoring, which is beneficial for both parts. PPDS (p. 17) justifies peer tutoring and explains:

When a child teaches something to other children, it reinforces their own learning and leads to mastery of a concept. Children can become ‘resident experts’ for particular concepts or skills and get valuable practice in re-teaching the concept to peers. The learner also benefits as they are getting individualised instruction that is tailored to their needs.

This extract is coherent with Banks et. al. (2005, p. 233) who stress teachers’ responsibility when planning and conducting differentiated teaching: “All teachers must be prepared to take into account the different experiences and academic needs of a wide range of students as they plan and teach.” In other words, when teachers place their students in pairs or groups in the classroom, it must be planned according to who can motivate and help each other.

2.6 Motivation and proficiency

“The most important strategy for getting tweens talking is to **motivate** them, and for this to happen they must be confident that they will not be judged or laughed at” (Munden, 2015, p. 39). Students motivation can be strong, or it can be weak. Motivation can vary from time to time and differ in various situation and activities (Haukås, 2018, p. 288). Hence, teachers need to create a “supportive atmosphere” where any negative remarks are intolerable (Munden, 2015, p. 39). Negative response kills motivation, whereas positive response produces motivation. Therefore, teachers should strive to encourage the students to value their mistakes and see them as an effort to learn. Munden (2015, p. 26) states that even though students know more English, reports show reluctance to speaking English from around the age of ten. Hence, PPDS (p. 21) emphasises the importance of giving the students time to think before they answer, especially if it is an open question. Also, the more the teacher knows his/her students’ proficiency in the subject, the teacher differentiates the questions by complexity to create a space where every student has the possibility to answer questions (PPDS, p. 21). It corresponds to what Brevik and Gunnulfsen (2016, p. 231) express about how “the students’ potential expands through a combination of facilitation in terms of differentiated teaching and from actively participating in self-regulated activities” (my translation). The overall intention, nonetheless, is always to contribute learning efficiency and motivation.

There is a lot of focus on the students that do not benefit from “normal” classroom lessons, and these students are often provided with adapted education to fit their needs. As

much as these students need the extra care and consideration, it is important to consider what happens to the students that have a much higher learning potential than the “in the middle” students (Idsøe, 2015), and how are they challenged to expand their learning outcome? Teachers are “obligated to provide individual students with differentiated instruction to high achieving students, students with special talents and students with potential to achieve on the highest level” (NOU 2016: 14, p. 7). Idsøe (2015) argues that lack of differentiated teaching for everyone, may result in behavioural issues and lack of interest and motivation. Hence, it is crucial that teachers expand in the students interests and know their academic level to adjust their education accordingly (UDIR, 2019 b). Further, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2019 b) states that “by giving the students complex and especially challenging tasks in the areas they have a special talent for, they will want to learn and develop an inner motivation” (my translation). Students with a higher learning potential can be very emotional, have low self-esteem and be insecure, which may make them socially vulnerable. As a result, their development of social skills may be inhibited as they search for someone that is like-minded (UDIR, 2019 b).

Based on generalised statistics, girls do better at school than boys (Munden, 2015, p. 28). However, the English national test in Year 5 shows that boys score on average one point more than girls, whilst they perform equally well in Year 8 (Education Mirror, 2016, p. 74). The purpose of national test is to “evaluate and improve pupils’ basic skills in reading, numeracy and English. Teachers should use the results to support their pupils, to provide formative assessments, and to give their pupils adapted education” (Education Mirror, 2016, p. 74). However, Gunnulfsen and Møller (2017, p. 16) found that the results of the national tests are not used to enhance individual learning, and therefore, nor differentiation. Because the national tests are in Year 5, teachers have great opportunities to use the results of the national test in English to adapt and differentiate their English teaching to sufficiently suit and enhance each students’ English skills during Year 5-7.

To differentiate the learning activities, boost student’s effort and possibility of achieving high proficiency in the subject, and one way of differentiating is to value students’ interests, for instance, media and ICT. Munden (2015, p. 25) claims “there is a drop in interest in reading books, which seems to set in already around the age of nine, especially for boys”, which suggests embracing other resources than books in teaching. Using technology in teaching gives flexibility and “can facilitate the teacher to design a differentiated learning environment” (PPDS, p. 19). Teachers need to have reflective and creative professional skills to be able to implement ICT in teaching and must design efficient and differentiated learning

spaces that offer learning for each student (Wastiau, 2014). Further, PPDS (p. 19) states how ICT is a tool the students can use to explore, investigate and present their *product* (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 15). As a result of the Internet being mostly text-based, students who use the Internet on a regular basis, has proved to achieve better in school than those who do not use the Internet (Munden, 2015, p. 25). In fact, Brevik, Flognfeldt and Beiler (2020, p. 50), argue that by allowing students to draw on their own experiences with digital tools, despite it being the virtual or the real world, the students can apply their competence from home into relevant school contexts.

A challenge for teachers is to find relevant literature and assignments for students who need linguistic facilitation. They require a simpler language, but the solution is not always to use texts or assignments from the years below, because the content of those texts is not adapted to the students' age (UDIR, 2015). Two of the aims in the new English subject curriculum (UDIR, 2020 c), is for the apprentice to “read and distribute content from various types of texts, including self-selected texts” and “read and listen to nonfiction texts, children's and youth literature in English and write and talk about the content” (my translation). Therefore, as it is challenging to find literary texts with a vocabulary that is suited to each student, Munden (2015, p. 328) exemplifies to use picture books in Year 5-7. Picture books allow for differentiation because it is easier to find books with the right amount of text and still be able to work towards the aims of the curriculum. Munden (2015, p. 328) enhances how picture books are not as intimidating as books with just text from top to bottom. It is important that the school library has enough books that concerns students' interests and are suited to their age. As stated above, teachers cannot hand out texts meant for lower years, therefore, the school library should strive to include picture books meant for the targeted reader and which include topics of students' interests.

2.7 Teaching English in a multilingual language classroom

In the Norwegian school, there is an increasing number of students with a different mother tongue than, or in addition to, Norwegian. This is a result of globalisation and more refugees fleeing their countries for different reasons (Burner & Carlsen, 2019, p. 35). In fact, Haukås and Speitz (2018, p. 50) argue that every student in the Norwegian school is plurilingual because they learn Norwegian Bokmål and Norwegian Nynorsk, and also English. No matter what language students speak at home, the teacher should embrace and include all the languages in the classroom. Munden (2015, p. 57) clarifies that “for most pupils in Norwegian schools, English is their L2; for minority language students it is usually

their L3.” Students who speak or learn three languages are called multilingual as it enhances their competence for practicing several languages in their daily life, despite how much competence they might have in the different languages (UDIR, 2015). For instance, students can use their English skills to communicate amongst each other if a student is from, for example, Spain. Norway and Spain are both countries in the expanding circle, according to Kachru (1985, in Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 3), who identifies the spread of English into three circles: the inner, the outer and the expanding circle. The inner circle represents countries that speak English as their first language, the outer circle are countries that speak English as a second language, whereas the expanding circle is identified as countries who use English to communicate across borders for business and travels. Also, Munden (2015, p. 59) clarifies that most speakers of English live in the expanding circle. The language is more used as a communication tool between other countries in the expanding circle than the inner and outer circle. For that reason, students who learn English today do not need to strive to sound like a native speaker of the inner circle, but rather keep their focus on speaking, listening, being understood and realise that communication is what matters, not perfection (Munden, 2015, p. 65).

Teachers have traditionally been teaching in the targeted language, which suggests that in the English lessons, English is the language that is used. However, *translanguaging* refers to “the use of different languages together” (EAL_Jorunal, 2016). This is coherent with one of the aims of the new English subject curriculum, ENG 01-04, after Year 7: The aims are to enable the student to “explore and discuss some linguistic similarities between English and other languages the learner knows and use this in their own language learning” (UDIR, 2020 c) (my translation). In other words, translanguaging is about being able to communicate, and not about the targeted language itself. Hence, using translanguaging in a differentiated classroom, teachers provide students with the possibility to explore all the languages available and let them use their experiences in language learning. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2020 d) states that every student shall experience that knowing several languages is of value, both in school and society. In fewer words, as Burner and Carlsen (2019, p. 35) exemplify this, teachers should draw on the entire language repertoire present in the classroom. According to them, multilingual learners are also better equipped to see interrelationships between languages, are more creative, use more suitable language learning strategies and acquire new languages easier compared to monolingual learners (Burner & Carlsen, 2019, p. 35-36). In addition, multilingual students have better cognitive skills than monolingual students when solving tasks outside of the language

classroom (Haukås & Speitz, 2018, p. 51). Despite the fact of embracing every language and culture present in the classroom, Burner and Carlsen (2019, p. 35) state that students multicultural background is rarely considered in the English language classroom, and their mother tongue language is not valued.

When teaching multilingual language learners in the classroom, the teaching methods are of significant value, hence, differentiation is important. This can, however, be challenging and demanding (UDIR, 2015). Further, the ability to differentiate the teaching for multilingual language learners may not only depend on the individual teacher's competence and capability. However, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2015) claims that "all teachers should have knowledge of teaching methods and activities that are language and subject-developing and know how to use diversity as a resource in the language classroom" (my translation). Such knowledge could be knowing the principles of translanguaging (EAL_Journal, 2016).

When preparing English lessons in favour of the students who learn English as a third language, teachers should think of language perspective. This suggests being conscious of what work methods may promote a student's language and learning outcome (UDIR, 2015). The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2015) claims that too much individual work with not much assistance from the teacher is not favourable. The reason for this is that "it is important to develop a professional learning community where all students can be linguistically active, so that the minority language students are included and experience greater learning benefits" (UDIR, 2015) (my translation). Therefore, when a differentiated teaching plan is being developed, teachers may want to create or find cooperative tasks that students can do in heterogenic groups or with their study buddy. Students find it easier to share their ideas and thoughts if they have discussed an issue in smaller groups (UDIR, 2015). Discussing in smaller groups is beneficial to all students, but especially to multilingual students because it lets them participate without having to speak in front of the whole class at once.

3. Method and Material

The present thesis focuses on four selected interviewees and how they approach differentiation in the English language classroom. In addition, the thesis includes data from an anonymous survey with twenty replies concerning how teachers differentiate in a distant teaching situation and online classes. As a consequence of the low numbers of interviewees, the results of this study cannot be generalised (McKay, 2010, p. 14). The research question of *how English language teaching is differentiated in Year 5-7* is not an attempt to define a reality, but rather to investigate a set time, place and context (McKay, 2010, pp. 4-5). Further follows 3.1 Justification for choice of method and interviewees, 3.2 Completion of data collection, 3.3 Analysis of data collection, and 3.4 Reliability and validity.

3.1 Justification for choice of method and interviewees

This thesis is based on a qualitative method with a low number of interviewees. The low number of interviewees was determined by the goal to study “a particular time, place, and context” (McKay, 2010, p. 5). To collect the data for this thesis, I decided to use observation and interviews. For the observations, I made an observation guide (appendix 1) that provided support when collecting information about what might be perceived as of differentiation in the classroom, like grouping, different tasks and instructions. However, as a result of the new coronavirus that causes the Covid-19 disease² and the closure of all schools (Børresen, 2020), it was not possible to complete the observations. Therefore, as a substitute for the observations, a brief survey was made to collect more data. The survey includes questions about the respondents’ gender, age, how long they have been teaching English, how well they think they differentiate and finally, an open question: “How do you ensure differentiation in English teaching in a distant teaching situation?”

To ensure the same questions for all the interviewees, an interview guide (appendix 2) was prepared (McKay, 2010, pp. 51-52). McKay (2010, p. 52) states that an “advantage of this approach is that the same content is covered with each respondent, which makes it easier to compile the data.” In addition to the interview guide, the interviews were open to include other questions if any occurred during the interview. The interview guide was designed to

² The new coronavirus, named SARS-CoV-2, was transmitted to humans in the end of 2019. The coronavirus can cause Covid-19 disease, a lung infection (Norwegian Institute of Public Health, 2020) Retrieved from <https://www.fhi.no/en/op/novel-coronavirus-facts-advice/facts-and-knowledge-about-covid-19/facts-about-novel-coronavirus/?term=&h=1>

study the interviewees' background and their perceptions, attitudes and approaches towards differentiation in the English classroom.

The four interviewees chosen for this thesis, are two males and two females; this to make it possible to see if there are any differences between how male teachers and female teachers differentiate. They are all from four different schools in east Norway and work as English teachers in year 5-7. To safeguard anonymity, the interviewees are referred to as 'interviewee 1', 'interviewee 2', 'interviewee 3' and 'interviewee 4'. The male interviewees are both in their mid-forties, have 30 credits in English and have been teaching English for ten and twenty years. One female interviewee is in her late thirties, has no credits in English and has been teaching for seven years, whereas the other female is in her mid-fifties, has 30 credits in English and has been teaching English for two years. One of the female interviewees is the executive English teacher at her school and was asked to participate in this study for that reason.

Having four interviewees from different schools allows the researcher to examine how they encounter differentiation in their classroom in a broader spectrum than collecting data from teachers at the same school. As earlier clarified, the low number of interviewees cannot work as a generalisation (McKay, 2010, p.14), however, it is possible to investigate whether they differentiate methodically, as a habit or to what degree they find it challenging.

3.2 Completion of data collection

As clarified in the section above, the original plan was to meet the interviewees face to face when completing the interviews. But, due to Covid-19², everyone was entitled to stay home and away from other people. For that reason, the interviews were conducted via phone. The interviews were completed without much disturbance, however, the visual observation of the interviewees was not possible to obtain for this research. As much as possible, the interviewees retrieved the same procedure of the process, like receiving the premade interview questions addressing differentiation in the English language classroom the week before the interview. As a result of the interviewees working from home and suddenly having their daily life turned up-side-down, they were not able to prepare well in advance of the interview, which also resulted in all of them preferring to complete the interview in Norwegian. All four interviewees argued they felt more secure to give proper answers and reflections about the topic in Norwegian. Because I was not able to meet the interviewees in person, they signed the consent declaration electronically. The consent declaration describes

that the data is to be collected by using tape-recorder during the interview and how the data will be dealt with afterwards, such as being transcribed, analysed and colour-coded.

All four interviews were similarly carried out. As a result of completing the interviews over the phone, the visual representation of both the interviewees and the interviewer were lost, and also the personal connection between the interviewer and the interviewees. In addition, considering the circumstances with the children and/or a partner at home, some disturbances may have made the interviewees unfocused. It is, therefore, relevant to consider if the answers and reflections are fulfilled. Jacobsen (2015, p. 157) argues that when conducting individual interviews, it is significant to maintain a communal understanding between the interviewee and interviewer. The interviewee is allowed to talk freely but is also confident that the interviewer is interested and acknowledges what the interviewee is saying. Since it was not possible to show this by nodding, it was done by saying “mhm”, “yes” or other (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 157). Every tape-recording was transcribed immediately after the interview session.

The survey was published in various Facebook groups where English teachers were encouraged to reply to it. Its introduction included a short description of the aim of the survey, that is was constructed as a substitution to classroom observations and a special thank you to each respondent for making time to complete the survey. However, it only received twenty replies, which is understandable due to the fact that teachers experienced an increase in workload as a result of online classes (Sjøli, 2020). The online survey was meant to investigate how teachers ensure differentiation in a distant teaching situation. The questions of the survey were half structured and half non-structured (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2014, p. 86). The questions were the same for every respondent, but three of the six questions were alternative-answer questions, whereas the other three were fill-in and short answer questions (McKay, 2010, pp. 37-38). The respondents of the online survey were asked about gender, age, how many years they had been teaching English, what Year they were teaching now and how *well* they thought they were differentiating their teaching. In addition, the short answer questions were to establish an overview of how the respondents would ensure differentiation in English during online teaching and they were also able to add any other comments if desired.

3.3 Analysis of data collection

McKay (2010, p. 55-56) claims that the advantage of tape-recording the interviews “is that this preserves the actual language that is used.” Therefore, when transcribing the tape-

recordings, it may “result in a great deal of data, some of which may not be valuable” (McKay, 2010, p. 56). Because neither of the interviewees were prepared, though they had received the interview questions beforehand, they used pauses, incomplete sentences and some hesitation when answering the questions. As the researcher, I interpreted the hesitation and pauses as time for the interviewee to think about the question. Consequently, though at risk of losing some nuances of meaning, the pauses, incomplete sentences and hesitation were excluded throughout the transcriptions.

The transcriptions were reviewed several times to look for patterns, analysed and colour-coded (McKay, 2010, p. 159) according to pedagogical differentiation in the English language classroom, relations and groups, and multilingual approach. The findings and results are presented in chapter 4.

For the survey, the alternative-answer questions and the fill-ins are viewed as statistics, whereas the short answer questions are analysed according to how teachers differentiate their distant teaching during the spread of Covid-19². The statistics and short answer questions is presented in chapter 4.4 – Online survey.

3.4 Reliability and validity

When conducting a qualitative research, the researcher must evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the research, and whether it is reliable or not. The research’s reliability is determined on to what degree the results can be trusted (McKay, 2010, p. 14). As clarified in the section above, the interviewees were not well prepared in advanced of the interview, which resulted in the interviews being completed in Norwegian. Therefore, since the tape-recordings are in Norwegian, the transcriptions of them are also in Norwegian. Thus, as the transcriptions are in Norwegian, the data and results presented later in the research are translations of what the interviewees said in Norwegian. The translations are by the researcher of the study; hence, another researcher may have translated the transcription differently by choosing other words or interpretations. Further, as the study is only conducted by one researcher, the coding of the transcriptions might have been influenced by intra-rater reliability (McKay, 2010, p. 159).

As the present thesis include oral interviews, the interview questions that were prepared in advanced of the interviews were structured, but also open for non-structured questions if needed (McKay, 2010, p. 17). McKay further states that the “advantage of interviews is that they allow the researcher to study individual teachers in much greater depth” (2010, p. 17). This was highly beneficial in this research because it provided the

opportunity to evaluate the credibility of the interviewee. Considering the fact that only one person has conducted this research, questions whether another researcher would conclude with the same results must be taken into account. Another researcher would perhaps interpret both the interviewees and their answers differently. This raises the question of the research's validity.

McKay (2010, p. 13) claims that validity can be achieved by “carefully recording and analysing all of the data gathered and presenting it in a fair and unbiased manner.” To analyse and present the data without being biased includes that my previous knowledge of differentiation in the English language classroom do not interfere when analysing the interviewees' responses. Because the theoretical framework was retrieved prior to the interviews, my understanding of the topic may influence the ability to critically reflect around the information from the four interviewees. In addition, as the interviews were completed over the phone, it can be argued whether the interviewees' answers would be different if there had been a face-to-face conversation in their classroom or their office. The fact that the interviews were conducted over the phone suggests that I, as a researcher, lost the opportunity to see if the focus of the interviewee was only on the questions, or if other factors made the interviewee less focused, and thus did not give complete answers.

A weakness with this study is the lack of observation. The data collected is only based on what the interviewees chose to say. Despite the fact that theory is the basis of practice, the theory can in practice be carried out in different ways.

Lastly, looking at the respondents replies, which are attached in appendix 4, it is reasonable doubt to indicate that not every respondent read the entry post for the survey or the short answer question about how they differentiate in a distant teaching situation. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.4.

4. Results and discussion

This chapter presents the findings retrieved from the four interviews. The results of the research are presented and discussed in relation to the theoretical framework presented in chapter two. This chapter is divided into four sections: 4.1 Pedagogical differentiation in the English language classroom, 4.2 Relations and groups, 4.3 Multilingual approach and 4.4 Online survey. The results are presented in the order of the interview guide (appendix 2). The first section aims at providing the four interviewees' understanding and thoughts about differentiation in a pedagogical context and what challenges the interviewees see regarding differentiation. The second section discusses how relations and groups affect the classroom and its environment. Then follows a section about differentiation concerning the multilingual student. The last section includes findings from the online survey. The statistics and short answers will be presented and discussed according to the same theoretical framework as for the interviewees.

The following presentation of the results and discussion involves how teachers differentiate their English language teaching in Years 5-7.

4.1 Pedagogical differentiation in the English language classroom

To assess the four interviewees' understanding and thoughts about differentiation in a pedagogical context, they were asked how they would define the term and present their thoughts about it. Interviewee 1 defines differentiation as an academic offer to every student, despite what academic level or other needs the student might have. As for what interviewee 1 thinks about differentiation, the reply is that differentiation is something that is necessary and a demand and a need the students have. In interviewee 1's words: "they must simply meet the aims." Interviewee 2 describes differentiation as a way to adapt the lesson according to several groups, but also clarifies that: "ideally, you should think that it is adapted to the individual, and that is ambitious and nice, but utopian." Hence, interviewee 2 enhances that differentiation is according to groups and view the individual as part of that group. Interviewee 3 states in few words that when differentiating, interviewee 3 bases it on knowledge of the students and knowledge of their total situation. Further, interviewee 3 enhances how English-speaking children learn English, and hence, how interviewee 3 thinks Norwegian students should learn English, namely by engaging the pupils in playing activities. Lastly, interviewee 4 defines differentiation as adjusting learning activities in the classroom to ensure that tasks are appropriate to each student, and exemplifies differentiation as

adjustments in dissimilar lesson plans, variation in amount of work and time spent working with the tasks. Interviewee 4 thinks of differentiation as something essential in order for every student to accomplish learning and feel achievement at their level. However, interviewee 4 emphasises that: “it can be difficult to implement in reality and it must not be at the expense of the learning of the overall class.” In fewer words, what all the interviewees have in common is that differentiation has to be practiced individually in each classroom and in each group of students. As an overall interpretation of the interviewees’ understanding and thoughts about differentiation, they have a communal understanding that differentiation is required by the Education Act § 1-3 (Opplæringsloven, 1998), but it is difficult to obtain throughout every English lesson.

After establishing the interviewees’ perception of differentiation, it is interesting to investigate how they approach it. The interviewees were asked “how well do you think you differentiate your teaching?” Interviewee 1 states that based on the premise of the stronger and independent students, interviewee 1 is able to differentiate “pretty good” (interviewee 1’s words) as long as the tasks are available through various channels. Various channels indicate for example Teams and/or Office, and interviewee 1 also mentions how digital tools can be used to differentiate, as exemplified in PPDS (p. 19). In contrast, interviewee 1 claims that: “as a rule, in a plenum situation, you fail almost every time.” Further, interviewee 1 explains how plenum situations are challenging to differentiate because instructions must be given in a way that everyone understands, and therefore, as interviewee 1 states it: “you must trust that the students who understand are able to close their ears and keep working.” Nonetheless, interviewee 1 argues that a challenge with differentiation is to actually get the content and process right. As Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010, p. 16) state, content and process must be differentiated according to the students’ needs, interests and preferred learning style. In addition, interviewee 1 argues it to be a challenge to see each student individually, despite the fact that this is in the job description. Interviewee 1 describes it this way: “There are some things that are easy to say but quite difficult to put into practice when you have a wide span of language skills in the student group” and stresses how there is a big gap between the strongest and the weakest students. What interviewee 1 does to differentiate adequately to suit the student’s prerequisites is to be consistent in the themes of grammar and literature but adjust the tasks up or down two years. Students who have great knowledge and skills may work with materials for Year 7 or 8, whereas students who need to practice more will work with materials for Year 4 or 5. However, as stated by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2015), the solution is not to use materials from different years because the

content of the materials may not be adequate to the students. Moreover, when it comes to literature, interviewee 1 finds it challenging to find authentic English literature that capture students' attention and their reading level; whether they have acquired good or not so good vocabulary, the texts still need to be appealing to ten- and eleven-year-old children.

Interviewee 2 were quick to respond that “I don't differentiate well enough, because we have several big challenges in our Year and simply don't have enough resources to do it better.” However, overall, interviewee 2 is satisfied with what they manage to achieve. Interviewee 2 views the gap in English skills between peers as challenging and recognises a difference in English skills between students who play online games like Roblox, and those who do not play games. Interviewee 2 sees gaming as something valuable and clarifies that there is a difference in vocabulary knowledge between students who play games and those who do not. To ensure differentiation, interviewee 2 has two English lessons in one week, where students who need adapted education is in a smaller group outside the classroom during one of those lessons. The rest of the class is offered differentiation at two levels: students who struggle a bit and those who know more. Interviewee 2 explains how an English lesson usually begins with a communal introduction for the whole class before they go into groups. Having a communal introduction and providing the students with differentiation at three different levels is coherent with PPDS' (p. 13) tiered assignments method, as it involves that every student is provided with the same learning aim, but the process varies based on the students' readiness and/or ability.

According to interviewee 3, English as a foreign language has changed. Interviewee 3 states that Fremmedspråksenteret has researched how English is to be used in Norway, and states that “Fremmedspråksenteret found that students used to learn to speak English with an American accent or as Received Pronunciation, whereas today, English is seen as a language tool, a communication tool, without much focus on intonation.” The way interviewee 3 defines English as a language in school agrees with Kachru (1985, in Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 3), who argues that in the expanding circle, which includes Norway, English is used as a communicative language for business and travels. Therefore, interviewee 3 conveys that students should learn simple phrases that imitate situations students may experience, like “please say that again” and “speak more slowly, please”. Students who master daily situations also learn how to speak and act when travelling or meeting foreign language speakers at home. Additionally, interviewee 3 focuses on using body language while speaking, and speak as much English as possible, but allows Norwegian input when needed. Interviewee 3 clarifies: “allowing the students to use Norwegian words when they don't know the English

words keep the flow going, and speaking is very important for their progression.” This allows the students to use skills from other languages they know and is recognised as translanguaging (EAL_Journal, 2016). As Munden (2015, p. 59) states, English language learners should not struggle to sound like native speakers of English, but focus on gaining communicative competence. Acquiring English as a communication tool is interviewee 3’s aim for the students and the reason for interviewee 3’s mantra that they repeat at the beginning of every English lesson. The mantra is 1. Pay attention, 2. Try to understand, 3. Try to put what you understand into context. Interviewee 3 makes it clear that “working with everyday phrases allows the person to carry out simple conversations and say 'hello, nice to meet you, I live there, now I have to go, goodbye'.” This way of viewing the aim of the English subject is coherent with Brevik, Flognfeldt and Beiler (2020, p. 49) who clarify that the subject renewal highlights identity and development as central features.

Further, interviewee 3 is not satisfied with the school’s differentiation in the English language classroom and expands that “going into teaching English, I had many ideas I wanted to explore. But because of the vast number of situations that elevate in the classroom, a lot have been put on hold.” Many of the delays are because interviewee 3 turns all focus towards students who need extra care and attention to build confidence in school, like what working methods and learning strategies these students prefer. When interviewee 3 were asked about challenges faced when practising differentiation in the classroom, the response was:

I think one thing about differentiation and that is that you need to be alert that students shall increase their academic level, right, and this has been highly discussed in our classroom. We highlight how English is not just a subject, but also a tool, and how some are good at speaking while others are good at writing.

In other words, interviewee 3 claims that a challenge with differentiation is the fact that it is not enough time to differentiate adequately. As a respond to the lack of time, interviewee 3 is consciously in contact with the students and their guardians to make sure they know what each student can manage and what needs to be practiced more. By academic level, interviewee 3 refers to the three levels the class is divided into based on what they know and can accomplish. This is coherent with tiered assignments (PPDS, p. 13), where interviewee 3 has level two as the core, level one is moderate and level three is advanced. What level the students are at is not kept secret, and it is a communal understanding amongst the teachers and students they are not “stuck” at the same level for ever. When discussing differentiation according to academic levels, interviewee 3 clarifies that: “being open about what level the students are at is about clear classroom management. I usually say, ‘we are a group of different students and we are going to help each other be good’.” Interviewee 3 also states

how it motivates the students to know they can change the level throughout the year. In addition, interviewee 3 recognises that English is a subject that surprisingly many students feel unsure about, despite whether they are at level one, two or three; however, the shared wish is to perform well. Therefore, interviewee 3 encourages students to try various levels depending on the theme for each topic and talk afterwards about how the student liked it in order for the student, and the teacher, to get to know their preferred learning styles and methods.

As interviewee 1, interviewee 3 wishes to use authentic texts in the English classroom. Interviewee 3 claims that English books only cost around 40-70 Norwegian kroners, and is thereby much cheaper than Norwegian books. Interviewee 3 argues for literary books for students at Year 5-7, and states:

If I can say a few words about books as a resource, it is that using picture books in English is highly recommended. That way the students get pictures as support to the text. It was a big discovery for us to see how many books there exist in English for students who are in the sixth and seventh year. The text is a bit youthful, but then, you have the pictures with you all the way and it helps for faster understanding of the text.

However, picture books in English that are available in Norway are not as suited to the younger readers and might seem childish, whereas non-picture books are too difficult for other readers. As interviewee 3 values the use of picture books in teaching for Year 5-7, interviewee 3 suggests asking the librarian at the school to order several books from England or America that correspond well with students reading skills and interests. Additionally, picture books can be used to differentiate reading because picture books are not as scary to the weaker reader as a whole page of text can be (Munden, 2015, p. 328). Furthermore, Munden (2015, p. 25) finds that the interest in reading books falls around the age of nine, especially for boys, and gives reason to explore other options for reading, like blogs or other online sources. In this case, Munden (2015, p. 25) clarifies how the Internet is mostly text-based and consequently, results in greater achievement in students who use the Internet regularly. Interviewee 3 concludes that “many students read a lot of comic books online, which help them develop their reading skills.” In addition, interviewee 3 is the only interviewee who works at a school where they have iPads 1:1 and have access to different apps and Salaby.no on a regular basis. However, interviewee 3 claims at the academical levels of the apps to be most relevant for Year 1-4. Thus, as a result of the outbreak of the Covid-19², interviewee 3 informs that other publishers have granted free access to students who work from home.

Lastly, interviewee 4 is partly satisfied with how differentiation is managed and states: “sometimes I plan differentiation in advance of the lesson and other times I differentiate

during the lesson.” Interviewee 4 explains how they differentiate, and it matches tiered assignments (PPDS, p. 13). However, interviewee 4 does not always decide what tasks different students should do, but lets the students choose tasks themselves. A challenge interviewee 4 faces is the lack of time to differentiate during one English lesson. As clarified in the introduction, students in Year 5-7 only have 228 hours of English teaching through the three years (UDIR, 2020 b), which the interviewee does not think is enough time to ensure that the students become confident English language speakers. Thus, the greatest challenges interviewee 4 faces are the insecurities of the students and how they do not want to stand out from the rest of the class. Interviewee 4 argues there is a distinction in the class, where students who master a topic do not mind doing more tasks that are more difficult, but students who should have simpler tasks do not want it. Interviewee 4’s students have laptops contributed by the school where they use It’s Learning as their learning platform. This learning platform provides the teachers with the chance to differentiate tasks and assessments accordingly. In addition, interviewee 4 uses OneNote, which works as a digital notebook and lets the students write homework or hand it in orally via the voice-recorder function in the notebook. Interviewee 4’s interpretation of digital tools shows knowledge of how to, and as much as possible, make differentiation a reality.

Research presented in chapter 2 indicates that, on one hand, more boys receive adjusted education than girls (UDIR, 2020 e), yet, on the other hand, boys score on average one point better than girls in English (Education Mirror, 2016, p. 74). The interviewees were asked how they view the English skills in their class and whether they recognise any differences between boys and girls. Firstly, interviewee 1 states there is no recognisable difference between boys and girls and continues: “It’s pretty coincidental, I feel, whether it’s the girls who are the strongest or if it’s the guys who are the strongest, or the weakest.” However, interviewee 1 underlines that in the language subjects, it tends to be the boys who are more eager to participate and that boys are more self-assertive and perky than what girls are.

Looking at differences between boys and girls in interviewee 2’s classroom, we will see that the situation is quite different. Interviewee 2 has only four girls in the class, which results in interviewee 2’s statements to be based mostly on past experiences. Up to present time, interviewee 2 has experienced that girls are usually more hardworking, more diligent and careful when they work, but girls are not as quick to pull off orally. Interviewee 2 clarifies: “Girls are not very good at showing what they can verbally, but they are very good

at working when writing. And then the guys are the opposite. It's a little difficult.” Yet, interviewee 2 concludes it to be more about personality than it is about gender.

Like interviewee 1 and interviewee 2, interviewee 3 has the same experience. Interviewee 3 states: “There are almost more boys in our Year who are good at English, because they perform well in many other subjects too” and argues it to be a result of gaming. Interviewee 3’s knowledge is that students who play online games must communicate in English, both verbally and written, which is good practice.

Lastly, interviewee 4 believes that despite gender, the students are able to understand a text through context, even though they do not necessarily know every word. Further, when asked about differences between boys and girls, interviewee 4 states: “whether there is variation in English skills based on gender or whether variation is due to personality is uncertain.” Thus, interviewee 4 adds:

Several girls are reluctant to speak English loudly in class, they are afraid to pronounce the words incorrectly. Most students have the words and pronunciation in place, they have the knowledge, but they do not dare use it orally in class. Therefore, I experience that the girls prefer to work in smaller groups rather than in the whole class. The boys may seem more confident at this point, they are not so afraid of throwing themselves into a conversation in front of the class, they seem less anxious to fail.

Interviewee 4 argues the boys’ confidence to be a result from playing English games. In addition, interviewee 4 interprets boys to throw themselves into things without thinking much about it, whereas girls fear to fail and, therefore, are more restrained. A method interviewee 4 uses to have the girls speak during lessons is correct reading. This method let all the students read aloud at the same time so they can hear their own voice without it becoming frightening or embarrassing. While the students are reading, interviewee 4 walks around the classroom, listens and talks with students if necessary. As well as practising correct reading, interviewee 4 divides the class in smaller groups of students whenever there are tasks that demands oral communication. Interviewee 4 estimates that smaller groups are a form of differentiation to ensure that students who find it difficult to speak in front of the whole class get to speak where it feels safe and comfortable, as the Education Mirror (2016) stresses to be highly important for further progression.

As presented in section 2.5, differentiation in the English classroom must be planned. All the interviewees were asked how the school management assist in practicing differentiation, and three out of four agreed that the school management is available, but only if they ask. Interviewee 1 and interviewee 2 agree that their schools do not emphasis how English is one of the core subjects, and then, rather forwards Norwegian and mathematics.

Interviewee 1 states: “I do not feel that the English subject is a priority on the unit where I work. But this is perhaps because there has been a focus on developing mathematics and reading skills.” This suggests that interviewee 1 would like the school to offer more time to English to rise as a subject, but they are not there yet. Continuously, interviewee 1 explains that the administration has imposed intensive courses and systematic ways of working to better equip maths- and Norwegian teachers, which makes it clear that English as a core subject is neglected. Interviewee 1 adds, “It's not that they counteract it or anything like that, but it's not where the main focus is.” Further, interviewee 1 presents the idea that the priority at the school may be different from August 1st when the new curriculum will be fully introduced and that a feature of the new English subject curriculum is that interdisciplinary is important in English teaching.

Further, interviewee 2 elucidates how the school management is helpful if asked, but that they are mostly assisting if there are issues with parents or other legal guardians. The daily and weekly differentiation in the classroom is mainly discussed between interviewee 2 and colleagues.

Interviewee 3, who are the executive English teacher at the school, explains the contact between the principal and the interviewee, and that they have an open conversation about English. To be able to spend more time developing English skills among colleagues in the same way as what happens to teachers of Norwegian and mathematics, interviewee 3 wishes to include days in the half-year plan that are reserved for elucidating English and use that time to discuss how to teach the English subject more interdisciplinary. Further, even though interviewee 3 takes it into own hands to share knowledge with colleagues working in different years, the feedback is that the teachers are busy and will not make time for this unless it is specified by the management. Also, interviewee 3 articulates:

I have been around talking to the different years several times and what I have discovered is that they say: ‘English yeah nah, it is he or she who has English and they are not here now’. However, that is completely wrong because everyone should be able to teach English just as everyone should have ICT skills. Everyone should have an idea of how to use English in art or physical education.

In other words, interviewee 3 indicates that other teachers do not take responsibility for making sure that English is recognised as a core subject, nor that it is used interdisciplinary, which is in contrast to the intentions of the new English subject curriculum. However, interviewee 3 has several suggestions for how to make sure English is used interdisciplinary, and especially during physical exercise. Interviewee 3 gives example of several activities that can be done in English, like relay activities, stations where the students

count in English and mimic plays where the instructions are given in English. Another way that English could be used interdisciplinary, is as a third educator. Interviewee 3 is passionate about the development that has happened concerning glossary learning in the English language classroom. Interviewee 3 argues:

Some years ago, students learnt one word at a time, whereas today the students learn phrases. It makes a huge difference to progression, because you're not just going to learn 'door', but you're going to learn 'can I open the door' and 'is the door locked?'. Students are learning useful, everyday phrases.

Hence, interviewee 3 wishes to appeal to the use of a third educator that showcases useful phrases around the school. It can be notes and instructions in the gym lockers that read "remember to switch off the water in the shower" or "close the door". In fewer words, a third educator can be posters on the wall that are visible so they can be used all week and everywhere. Visible phrases can be argued to be a form of differentiation in school because students who know the phrases see them as repetition, whereas students who do not know them well are able to rehearse and will unconsciously store the knowledge in their long-term memory. It can be stated that posters are a form of implicit learning and the school management should highlight this way of providing daily English input to students.

In contrast, interviewee 4 states that in their school, they have talked a lot about adapted education whilst planning and during shared time with colleagues, and clarifies that differentiation is a subject that is discussed regularly. This indicates that this school views English as a core subject on equal terms with Norwegian and mathematics.

4.1.1 Adapted education and students with special needs

Adapted education and differentiation are provided to students with special needs. Short instructions and clear explanations are keys interviewee 1 uses when differentiating and creating lesson plans to students who are entitled to receive special education, coherent with § 5-1 (Opplæringsloven, 1998). In general, interviewee 1 states when differentiating on behalf of students with special needs, interviewee 1 makes use of their individual training plan.

Interviewee 2 clarifies:

It's important to adjust along the way and have a plan. It is also important to have a thorough individual training plan, but it is essential to be present and see the student and to be able to adjust tasks up or down in the moment.

Nonetheless what the individual plan states, interviewee 1 argues that it is important to provide individual weekly schedules that one can write on immediately and make adjustment throughout the week.

As presented in the section above, interviewee 2 has an extra resource to use in one English lesson each week. However, during the other lesson when all the students are in the classroom, interviewee 2 has to differentiate more. Interviewee 2 differentiates by including three academic levels instead of two and does also include more speaking. This is since interviewee 2 has experienced that verbal tasks usually result in greater participation from students.

With special needs students, interviewee 3 shows a clear passion about making sure that these students are motivated to learn and feel seen. Interviewee 3 declares that a form of differentiating to special needs students, and other students who struggle in the subject, is to cheer so credibly and individually that they will believe in themselves. If the students believe in themselves, interviewee 3 states they can “move some mountains” and develop in the subject. Interviewee 3’s engagement in each student ensures that the students believe in themselves and indicates that interviewee 3 takes time to get to know each student on a more personal level than just “school life”. Getting to know the students is time well spent (PPDS, p. 4) and Vold (2018, p. 271) states that differentiation can be done by making use of the students’ interests, preferred learning styles and maturity level, and thereby, providing special need students with great content, process and product opportunities (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 15).

When differentiating on behalf of students with special needs, interviewee 3 states that Salaby.no is a useful online source. Salaby.no provides tasks that are suited to each Year, and whenever a student struggles with a topic or grammar in Year 5-7, the student can do tasks on a lower Year, like Year 3 or 4. Interviewee 3 justifies it by specifying that “we use the intended Year that matches the students level. The students use headsets to have the tasks read out loud by Salaby.no. Another student working on the level intended for Year 6 can help the other students if needed.” However, it can be argued that students who spend much time working independently will not receive enough stimuli for development. Considering interviewee 3’s statement, it indicates that individual work often results in the student sitting alone with a headset and the computer/iPad. Thus, interviewee 3 clarifies that s/he consistently spend 10-12 minutes on each activity during lessons to ensure variation and differentiation, and to include something that is preferable for every student in the class.

Interviewee 4 provides personalised weekly schedules to students with special needs. In addition, interviewee 4 either reads the text or uses other resources like an assistant or the teaching compact disc to read the text to those students who need it. Overall, interviewee 4 reduces students' amount of work and provides other options for how to present the product, which is coherent with Tomlinson and Imbeau's views (2010, p. 15)

4.2 Relations and groups

Throughout the interviews, there were no questions about relations between peers and teachers. However, going through the transcriptions it was visible that three out of four interviewees value getting to know their students. From the transcriptions, it was possible to indicate how the interviewees work on building a good classroom environment and creating strong relations between teacher and students and peers. The classroom environment is considered remarkable as to how the teachers can divide students into groups and decide how they will be seated in the classroom.

When interviewee 1 was asked about dividing the class into groups and considering differentiation, interviewee 1 specified that with the current class, for reasons that cannot be revealed, interviewee 1 is not able to make groups. Therefore, what interviewee 1 reports is from experiences in former classes. However, interviewee 1 clarifies that it all depends on what the project is and what the aim is. Interviewee 1 argues that:

If the students are to work together for a long time to end up with a product, then it is important to have a heterogeneous group where various students are represented. Thus, on the contrary, if the project is short-term and the aim is to work out some deeper knowledge of a topic or some grammar, then it might be more important to have groups at similar levels to be able to differentiate the material to each group.

Interviewee 1's indications of how to divide the students into groups based on the project and overall aim are coherent with Solberg (2017), who argues that differentiated teaching is practised different in heterogenic and homogenic groups. On one hand, in heterogenic groups, differentiation is based on students assisting each other to create a product. On the other hand, in homogenic groups, differentiation is about the learning process. Hence, in homogenic groups, students are more similar in learning styles and working methods.

Building a good classroom environment and creating valuable relationships between peers have been important to interviewee 2 during the last year. Interviewee 2 became the class tutor the autumn of 2019 and has only known the class for less than a year. Considering this fact, interviewee 2 has not managed to spend enough time getting to know the students on

a personal basis. When interviewee 2 was asked about the students' interests, the answer was: "I haven't taken that interview round with them." According to PPDS (p. 4), spending time getting to know your students is crucial; however, what is portrayed by interviewee 2 indicates that this has not been a priority.

Interviewee 2 states that the students have expressed a fear of the English teaching, and the class has worked systematically to overcome this fear. Hence, interviewee 2 stresses that the main task is to ensure a sense of security in English, in order to make the students dare and want to speak and learn more English. Interviewee 2 highlights: "It is important to preserve a safe feeling while at the same time give challenges to those who are far ahead." Because interviewee 2 is focused on building a classroom environment where every student feels safe and confident, the students are grouped with study buddies. However, when the students need to be grouped otherwise, interviewee 2 mixes the different groups and does not set any fixed groups over time, but rather emphasises different formations. Interviewee 2 explains:

Sometimes it is good that there is a slightly different level between students so they can help each other. Also, it is clear that there are some who work better together than others, and that must also be borne in mind. So, both level and how students fit together, their personalities, must be considered when creating groups.

Furthermore, interviewee 2 is concerned that every student can work with any other student, and they are not allowed to say no. However, interviewee 2 focuses on building a strong classroom environment before mixing students together.

Interviewee 3 has much experience in building relations between peers and teacher. As earlier stated, interviewee 3 likes to encourage the students by referring to them as a group who help each other get better. Interviewee 3 stresses the value of having different people in society who can do different jobs and tasks and uses that to motivate differences and cheer on each other in the classroom. Having a communal understanding of differences and valuing those differences make the students lower their shoulders and relax. Further, interviewee 3 states the importance of keeping colleagues up to date. Interviewee 3 suggests: "I would like to have an English cafe, where in a way we can be a little informal and where people can bring what they are wondering about right now." Interviewee 3 compares the idea to how teachers are doing it digitally now as a result of the Covid-19². As a resource, teachers are helping each other by sharing ideas and lesson plans on Instagram and Facebook. Interviewee 3 states: "We should continue this sharing culture as a café within the school once in a while."

Further, interviewee 3 argues how stability with language teachers is actually very important and discusses how English subject teachers do not always have much knowledge

about the students and, therefore, spend more time to get into a routine and figure out how to differentiate properly. In contrast, as the main teacher, you benefit from knowing the students on a daily basis and are better able to implement English “now and then” and groom the targeted language into other subjects throughout the week. In other words, interviewee 3 reinforces the worth of being able to differentiate during every lesson, even though the subject is not English. Interviewee 3 is fond of ensuring that students read English books that are self-chosen and uses this as a way to implement English whenever there is some spare time. Also, this meets an aim in the English subject curriculum that states “read and distribute content from various types of texts, including self-selected texts” and, in addition, reading is highly relevant in the subject renewal (UDIR, 2020 c). Allowing students to choose books freely, only on the condition that they understand the overall context of what they read, is extremely important to ensure reading progression.

Whenever interviewee 3 divides the class into other groups for a project, the students are often put together according to their academic level. However, interviewee 3 explains that whenever the students are seated in pairs in the classroom, they are seated as study buddies. Importantly, interviewee 3 emphasises that they have a communal understanding that they are learning partners, and therefore, should assist each other if necessary. Interviewee 3’s perception of learning partners is coherent with PPDS (p. 17), which reviews learning partners as peer tutoring and argues it to be beneficial for both students because the students experience the concept of re-teaching. Additionally, interviewee 3 is conscious about making sure that the most advanced students keep developing their skills and do not always help their peers. Interviewee 3’s insight of peer tutoring indicates updated knowledge on recent research, which is also clear in this given explanation:

We try to explain to parents and guardians that research shows that when a student gets to explain to another student then the first student develops cognitively. This is because when re-teaching, the student explains the situation and why it is so.

If, and when, parents disagree or have questions relating to what the teacher is doing and why, interviewee 3 clarifies that s/he tuns to research. In addition, interviewee 3 highlights that just like the advanced students help students at core or moderate levels, it is just as important that students at moderate and core levels help students who are at an advanced level. Research is not only useful for information to parents and guardians, but also to some of the students, who interviewee 3 refers to as the “maths guys.” Interviewee 3 determines how the maths guys are interested in knowing why or what they learn and is therefore presented with research and statistics to motivate them. This corresponds well with

creating relations where the student's interests are valued, as students are interested in various pursuits and topics (Idsøe, 2015).

In addition, as another result of the Covid-19², interviewee 3 explains how they use the Teams platform to communicate with students and how Teams makes it easier to differentiate according to each student at their individual level. Before online teaching, interviewee 3 used to speak with one student at a time in the corner of the classroom or the hallway, however, the talk was easily interrupted. Therefore, interviewee 3 states it has been positive to experience how ICT is helpful in order to see each student more clearly and better differentiate to their needs.

According to views presented in the Education Mirror (2016, p. 88), relations amongst peers in interviewee 4's classroom are recognised as good. The Education Mirror (2016, p. 88) argues that students who feel confident in the classroom environment and with peers, achieve better. Interviewee 4 specifies: "There is a good social interaction in class, where everyone can work with everyone." Whenever interviewee 4 uses groups in teaching, the groups are randomly put together by the interviewee, who rarely uses the same groups over a longer period of time. However, despite the fact that the groups are randomly selected, interviewee 4 does ensure that the groups are somewhat heterogenic, and not grouped only based on academic levels.

4.3 Multilingual approach

Another issue concerning differentiation is how teachers differentiate to ensure quality education for students who are multilingual and multicultural.

Interviewee 1's immediately responds: "it is a challenge, absolutely." What interviewee 1 experiences is that students who know their mother tongue language well have none or any special issues with learning either Norwegian as a second language or English as a third language. This observation by interviewee 1 corresponds with Burner and Carlsen (2019, p. 35-36) who argue multilingual learners to be better equipped to see interrelations between languages and therefore acquire new languages easily. However, in contrast, students who do not know their mother tongue language well do not have the foundation to learn neither Norwegian nor English easily. Interviewee 1 compares the way of working for multilingual students as they do for students with individual training plans, where differentiation is done by trying to be present and by adjusting from the moment you see them master, and then continue building on that. Some examples of differentiation that interviewee 1 makes use of are short and clear instructions and explanations and the use of the flipped

classroom methodology. Whenever interviewee 1 uses the flipped classroom methodology, it is emphasised that it is about being thoughtful when choosing themes and material, such as movies and types of tasks, differentiated tasks that one can give feedback on and where-to-next feedback, as Hattie (2018) stresses to be very important. Interviewee 1 clarifies that the students are in the classroom during the English lessons, but in addition, some of them receive language teaching outside the classroom, in order to learn their mother tongue language.

Another issue interviewee 1 has experienced is that some students see themselves as low in rank and lie about what mother tongue they have. So, when a mother tongue teacher is present to assist the student, the teacher does not understand because they do not speak the same language. This may indicate there is discomfort in the relations amongst peers in interviewee 1's classroom.

In the light of multilingual students, interviewee 2 states:

We have students who speak three languages, but it is not something ... like I have never experienced that there has been any need to do something special about English or differentiate teaching for them. No, I don't really have anything to say about how differentiation in English would better suit those students.

In other words, interviewee 2 tries to think of how the multilingual students have been recognised and received differentiated teaching, but concludes there has not been any differentiation to benefit the students who learn English as a third language. This indicates that interviewee 2 teaches English only as a targeted language and lacks the knowledge of translanguaging or decides not to use it. As established in section 2.7, *translanguaging* is “the use of different languages together” (EAL_Journal, 2016), and if interviewee 2 does not explore other languages in the classroom, the interviewee does not meet one of the aims of the curriculum: “explore and discuss some linguistic similarities between English and other languages the learner knows and use this in their own language learning” (UDIR, 2020 c) (my translation). The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2020 d) stresses how multilingual students should experience the value of knowing several languages, however, Burner and Carlsen (2019, p. 35) find that this rarely happens. In the event of interviewee 2's words, it indicates interviewee 2 is a teacher who does not fulfil this requirement, which is a harsh statement, but considering the findings, this is the result.

When discussing multilingual students, interviewee 3 immediately refers to the head start Norwegian children have compared to children who are born outside of Norway and mentions social radius as an important factor. Interviewee 3 states that the social radius for children is often established before starting Year 1, but children born in other countries have their whole social radius in the country they were born. Further, children who have played

together for a longer period of time, have developed matching vocabulary. Interviewee 3 argues the leap in vocabulary and social skills to be crucial after the age of eleven and states: “before the child turns eleven years old, there is a greater chance the multilingual students are able to develop the same vocabulary as the rest of the class.” However, that is in Norwegian, so interviewee 3 cannot even imagine what multilingual students experience if they come to Norway after the age of eleven and must learn English as a third language whilst they learn Norwegian as a second language. Interviewee 3 emphasises how English should be a language that children play with as they play with Norwegian, and lack of playing activities in English slows down the process of developing language skills even further.

Multilingual students need extra motivation to achieve well in English. Interviewee 3 states:

We must, in a way, make it superfluous that we have a lot of faith in them and try to move our faith into the student's head and make them say: ‘my teacher believes in me, my teacher believes I can be good’.

Interviewee 3’s statement conveys how to ensure the students know teachers believe in them. As the Education Mirror (2016, p. 89) reports, 14 per cent of the students claim only some teachers care and 13 per cent feel that only some teachers think they can do well in school. Then, interviewee 3 implies the understanding of providing multilingual, and bilingual, students with motivation. However, interviewee 3 affirms that multilingual students differ according to where they are from and their parents’ English skills. For instance, on one hand, interviewee 3 discusses how students from Germany and Iceland have been very good at learning both Norwegian and English, and Asian students whose parents use English in business are fast learners. Yet, on the other hand, interviewee 3 confirms how some students come from backgrounds with almost analphabetic parents who have not been able to learn Norwegian, nor English, when they moved to Norway. To make sure that students who are not able to receive language help at home, interviewee 3 uses the mother tongue language teacher available at school to ensure that important messages are given, and also to go through the weekly schedule. Interviewee 3 argues that having the mother tongue language teacher there to provide students with assistance have been a success. It has motivated the students and made sure the students feel that they are seen and are important to the teacher and peers.

Burner and Carlsen (2019, p. 35) argue that teachers should welcome every language present in the classroom, despite what mother tongue the students have. Interviewee 3 explains how students from other countries with another language get to experience that they are a language resource in the classroom. For instance, one way to make sure the foreign

language is used in the classroom, interviewee 3 explains how short videos where they speak, for instance, Arabic, have been used, and then a student who speaks Arabic has been asked to translate some of the content and to summarise what they have heard. Interviewee 3 states how impressed everyone in the classroom gets when a student can speak Arabic, and uses this to motivate other students by expressing how much Norwegian the student has learnt since s/he came to Norway, and has learnt to speak Norwegian so well because they keep using the language throughout the day. In addition, interviewee 3 emphasis the advantage multilingual students have by stating: “after all, when knowing three languages you have already come so much further in not being scared and not lose courage. You are role models in language learning.” This statement identifies with Burner and Carlsen (2019, p. 35-36) who argue multilingual learners to be more sustained to acquire new language easier than monolingual learners, and to see interrelationships between languages. For this reason, interviewee 3 tries to make sure that multilingual students have days where they feel victory and feel special.

One experience that interviewee 3 had about a year ago is highlighted. There was a multilingual student who struggled hard when learning Norwegian and struggled even more when learning English; this resulted in him/her being somewhat depressed. For that reason, it was crucial that interviewee 3 and the student had time to bond and work on something the student found really useful. Some of the things the student thought of were the seasons of the year, the clock and to say where someone or something was. Whenever there were time and extra resources available in the classroom, interviewee 3 used picture books and other aids to work with the student. Interviewee 3’s interpretation of making sure this student acquired relevant knowledge and prevented the student from going into a depression indicates that the interviewee sees each student and value their interests and presence in the classroom. In addition, it corresponds with what the Norwegian Education Act § 9A-2 and § 9A-4 state about students’ well-being and psychosocial environment (Opplæringsloven, 1998). Interviewee 3 concludes that after a few months, the student was able to unwind and be confident that they could achieve learning together.

Interviewee 4 affirms that s/he has not had students who learned English as a third language in years, and therefore, does not have any comments.

4.4 Online survey

The online survey was an ad hoc solution instead of doing observations in the interviewee’s classrooms; this due to the lockdown of schools caused by Covid-19². After one

week, the survey had twenty replies; these will be presented and discussed in this section and is also attached in appendix 4.

4.4.1 The survey questions

The questions of the survey were formed to establish an overview of the respondents and, therefore, the respondents were asked to answer: 1. What gender are you? 2. How old are you? Further, to determine the credibility and validity of the respondents' answer, they were asked: 3. How many years have you been teaching English? 4. What Year do you teach? It is of interest to know how many years the respondent has been teaching English and compare their answers to other respondents of the survey. Then followed an alternative-answer question: 5. How well do you think you differentiate your teaching? This question was meant to analyse how teachers evaluate their skills in differentiation because Brevik and Gunnulfsen (2016, p. 215) state that research shows that differentiation is rarely obtained. The second last question was: 6. How do you ensure differentiation in English teaching in a distant teaching situation? In this question, the respondents were able to clarify what they do to differentiate in a distant teaching situation. Lastly, the respondents were encouraged to include any other comment about differentiation if they sought to.

4.4.2 The survey's respondents

Out of the twenty replies on the survey, 85 per cent of the respondents are female, whilst 15 per cent are male, as seen in figure 2. The respondents' age ranges from 18 years old and up to 55 years old (see figure 3). The 18-year-old respondent claims to have been working as an English teacher for seven years, which results in his response to be removed from the analysis. The two second youngest respondents are both males and 24 years old and have been working as English teachers for one and two years. The remaining respondents are all females, with an age span of thirty years (see figure 3) and working experience from one year to 25 years (see figure 4). Indications based on the answers of question 4, and presented in figure 5, suggest that two of the respondents are English

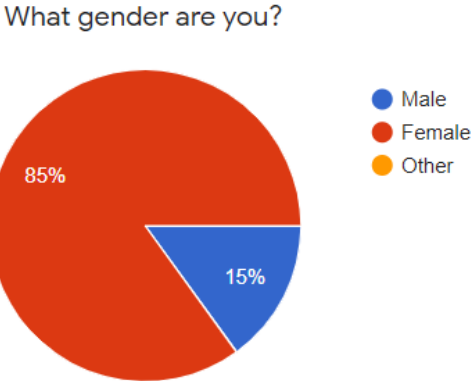


Figure 2: Respondents' gender.

subject teachers because they state they teach in Year 5, 6 and 7. Further, two respondents did not state any specific year they teach, five respondents state they teach Year 5, ten state they teach Year 6 and one states to teach Year 7.

How old are you?

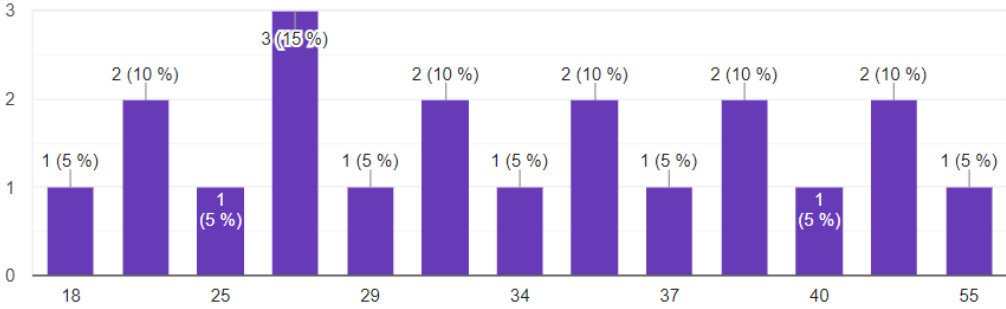


Figure 3: Respondents' age.

How many years have you been teaching English?

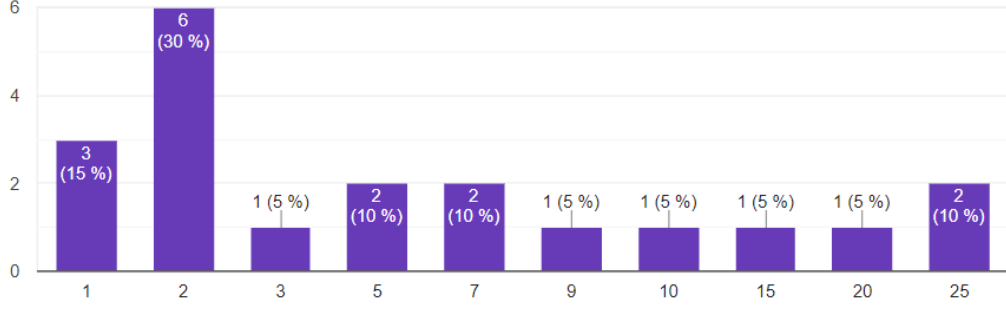


Figure 4: Respondents' working experience.

What Year do you teach?

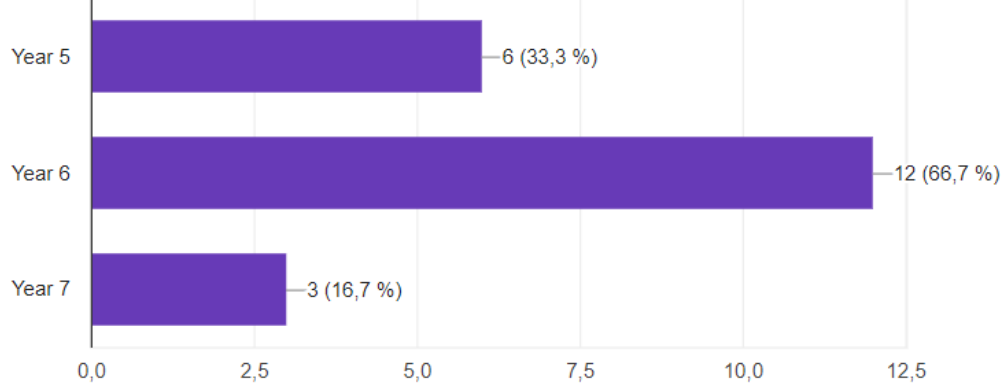


Figure 5: What Year the respondents teach.

4.4.3 Results and discussion

It was important for this research to establish the respondents' own perception of how well they think they differentiate their teaching. Figure 6 presents how teachers evaluate their own differentiation in their teaching. It shows that 60 per cent claim they

How well do you think you differentiate your teaching?

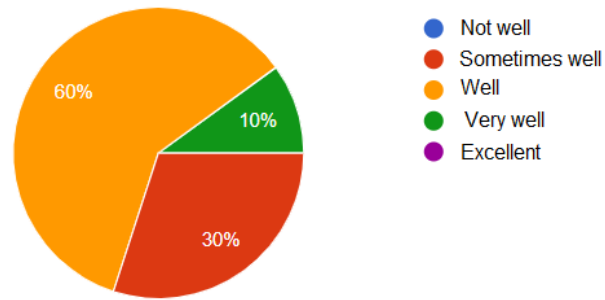


Figure 6: Respondents' perception of own differentiation.

differentiate well, which is in contrast to Brevik and Gunnulfson (2016, p. 215) who state that research shows that differentiation is rarely obtained. On one hand, only 10 per cent claim to differentiate very well, whereas on the other hand, 30 per cent think they sometimes differentiate their distant teaching well.

The 7th question was a long-answer question where the respondents were able to explain how they ensure differentiation in English in a distant and online teaching situation. Six of the nineteen respondents to the survey state to sometimes differentiate well. The teachers explain that they differentiate according to academic levels and in the activities they use. These respondents have in common that, in addition to students who struggle in the subject, they also keep in mind differentiation on behalf of students who master the subject well and give them more challenging tasks. A respondent explains how she suggests alternatives to various books, and where to read books online. This is in accordance with Munden, who states that if there is a decrease in interest towards reading books in paper, digital books may be more appealing (2015, p. 25). In addition, this teacher asks the students to record a sequence and upload it to Flipgrid in order to hear how the students speak English. Also, the respondent clarifies that she finds it more difficult to differentiate through a distant teaching situation. The last respondent that states he sometimes differentiates well claims to provide his students with tasks that he determines as not too easy, nor too difficult, and argues that "this is because I cannot physically help them when I cannot teach them, as I would have done in a 'normal' classroom situation." This respondent's take on differentiation in a distant teaching situation indicates that he feels comfortable in knowing his students and is therefore able to give the students tasks at their academic level and desire.

Eleven of the nineteen respondents answer that they think they differentiate well. The first respondent that states to differentiate well is a 25-year-old female who has only been teaching English for one year. Despite her short work experience, her response to the question indicates that she has knowledge about how to differentiate according to Tomlinson and

Imbeau's (2010, p. 15) concept of content, process and product. The respondent explains that they were working on writing crime stories, but some students found it scary, so in order to make sure those students still completed the task, the teacher differentiated the content to something less scary and doable. The teacher also differentiated the process as some students find writing difficult and tiring and are for that reason allowed to record their stories. In addition, the respondent has knowledge about Bloom's taxonomy, but she does not mention the model by name. However, the way she describes how the students are provided with different varieties of the same task is coherent with several of the levels in Bloom's taxonomy. In addition, the respondent highlights how the students are able to call if they need help with something.

In contrast, the second respondent states that she has been working as an English teacher for 25 years, but her response to differentiation is weak compared to the respondent above. The second respondent just simplifies that she pays more attention to "those students" and provides them with level-based assignments. "Those students" is interpreted as weaker students and students that have special needs education, but as Idsøe (2015) argues, it is just as crucial that every student receives differentiation and adapted education. For instance, students with higher learning potentials, and students who feel they are not challenged enough at school, may develop behavioural issues and lack of interest and motivation (Idsøe, 2015). Therefore, as another feature of differentiation, a respondent focuses on providing a variety between auditory, kinaesthetic and visual learning styles (Melby-Lervåg, 2018), reading, writing and ICT activities, and allows the students to evaluate the tasks and make suggestions going further, to ensure that they are happy with the content and subject.

Further, a female respondent who has been working as an English teacher for 15 years argues how she tries to present the students with open tasks that can be both easy and complex in order for every student to show their competence in the subject. Also, she sees the value of reading and finding books that suit each students' reading level and stresses the importance of always adding sound to the homework, so the students are able to have the homework read out loud. Lastly, the respondent highlights the value of knowing your students, and states: "Know what they are interest in, what their skills are, what they need to practise more. Encourage them to work hard and do their best, but most importantly, have fun and laugh!" This respondent's understanding of differentiating teaching corresponds with Fedrici and Skaalvik (2013), who state that the emotional support and the feeling of belonging is crucial in order for the students to be motivated to learn. In other words, a proficient and comfortable classroom environment is vital.

Another respondent that reports to differentiate well has been working as an English teacher for two years and differentiates according to the principles of tiered assignments (PPDS, p. 13). She specifies that she has three different levels, where the core level is the original teaching plan, the moderate is intended to students who need to practice basic skills, whilst the advanced level is meant for students who need more challenging assignments. Tiered assignments seem to be the most common way of differentiating when analysing the respondents' answers. The respondents provide their students with tasks based on their knowledge of the students' level of linguistic proficiency and confidence. Overall, the respondents that state they differentiate well explain that they differentiate the process by adapting the complexity and amount, whilst guiding the students through the learning process.

There were only two female respondents who claim to differentiate very well. One is 36 years old and have been teaching English for ten years. When she elaborates on how she ensures differentiation during distant teaching she states that she designs four levels of tasks and assignments. It can be compared to tiered assignments, but she does not explain what the fourth level is, if it is below core or above advanced level.

The second respondent to report that she differentiates very well is 37 years old and have been teaching English for 2 years. This respondent is familiar with Bloom's taxonomy and states she often uses this model as a starting point when preparing a lesson. She argues that she designs differentiated tasks with different levels of complexity to best suit her students. In addition, she states that she is fond of tasks that is "self-differentiated", for instance, when students write about themselves, a diary entry or write about something they find interesting. Open-ended tasks without many guidelines enable the teacher to create an overview of students' vocabulary, grammar skills and what the students need to focus on to develop further in their language learning.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to investigate how practising teachers differentiate their English teaching in Year 5-7. In addition, the thesis examines how teachers differentiate English through online teaching. The research question is: *How is English language teaching differentiated in Year 5-7?* The theoretical framework about differentiation in the classroom, the qualitative research method and the online survey made it possible to conduct an answer to the research question. However, because there are only four interviewees and nineteen countable respondents on the survey, this study cannot be a generalisation of reality (McKay, 2010, p. 14). Furthermore, as the original plan of conducting observation in the interviewee's classroom fell through because of the Covid-19² situation, the online survey was constructed as an addition to the data collection.

As the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR, 2020 a) specifies that English is central in developing cultural understanding, communicative competence and for identity development, making sure that each student is met at his or her learning abilities is crucial. In order to accomplish this need, teachers must differentiate the content and process accordingly (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 15). Considering the fact that the overall aim of the English subject curriculum is to prepare the students for education, working life and being part of society, it is highly important that students receive education that is suited their readiness and skills.

Differentiated teaching is not one specific teaching method, but it is adequate how teachers think about differentiation and how they practise it (Haug, 2013, p. 423). Bloom's taxonomy is one model to use when teachers differentiate. Bloom's taxonomy is a model that provides teachers with different levels of complexity and illustrate students' cognitive process according to the students' knowledge (Lasley & Munro, 2014). However, none of the interviewees mentioned Bloom's taxonomy, and only one of the respondents did. Hence, how the interviewees describe how they differentiate, the concept of Bloom's taxonomy is noticeable in the language classroom. For that reason, it is suggested to keep the model visible in order for the teacher to be reminded to ask questions suited to each students' academic level. A teaching method that is highly used to differentiate teaching are tiered assignments (PPDS, p. 13). Tiered assignments are when teachers create three levels of complexity, a moderate, a core and an advanced level, and group students according to their readiness and abilities for that subject. It is important that the grouping is flexible, and that students can change groups whenever their academic level develops (NOU 2016: 14, p. 70). All the

interviewees and respondents agree that tiered assignments are the most used teaching method in the English language classroom and also, a good method through this distant teaching situation.

Further, to build a valuable and doable differentiated classroom, the classroom environment must be proficient. It is important that students recognise that “differential treatment may be equal treatment” (NOU 2016: 14, p. 9) and value the various kinds of students in the group. The teacher must see each student as an individual in the group and adapt the content and process accordingly. Students are still able to achieve and acquire the same learning outcome, even if they take different paths to get to the finished product. Students’ need for predictability, feeling safe, being recognised and being seen are qualities that are important to emphasise when designing and creating a differentiation-based teaching scheme (Brevik & Gunnulfsen, 2016, p. 229). An important aspect of differentiation is that students’ experience, knowledge and potential are being recognised in the classroom, so the students will find the learning relevant (UDIR, 2015).

There are a variety of students in the classroom, and some of them learn English as a third language. Therefore, it is significant that teachers facilitate activities where students can use languages that they know in order to acquire new languages (Burner & Carlsen, 2019, p. 39). In addition, having students who speak other languages than Norwegian and English, is to be valued as a resource in the classroom. As interviewee 3 states, students who speak other languages can translate a short video clip for the class and receive great acknowledgement for that performance. Exploring and using all languages present in the classroom is seen as *translanguaging* (EAL_Journal, 2016); this method lets the students learn English by using knowledge from languages they are familiar with, whether it is Norwegian, Spanish or Arabic.

Overall, it is important to preserve the quality of the tasks to extend the students’ learning, not the quantity.

5.1 Further research

In an extension of this thesis, it would be interesting to carry out focus group interviews with students to explore their interpretation of differentiation in the language classroom. One possibility could be to conduct focus group interviews with the students of the interviewees of this research and analyse whether the teachers’ views on and implementation of differentiation are coherent with the students’ perceptions. An analysis of students’

perceptions of differentiation might also reveal whether students feel they are able to evaluate the teaching plans and contribute with designing teaching schemes.

A feature of this thesis is the importance of good relations within the classroom. For that reason, further research could be to specifically investigate the English language classroom in Year 5-7 and ask students if they feel confident, have a secure learning environment and if they can use this space to grow their knowledge and identities.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1:

Observation form – Differentiation in the English Language Classroom

How is English language teaching differentiated in Year 5-7?

How is the opening procedure?	
How is the teacher motivating the students?	
How is the relation between teacher and students, and peers?	
Are there tasks that have been adapted to suit the students learning? Do the teacher hand out different or similar tasks to students? Different yet similar?	

<p>What kind of learning strategies does the teacher practise in the classroom? Tactile, audio, visual, kinesthetics.</p>	
<p>How is the teacher encountering the students? Speaking English or Norwegian? What if they do not understand?</p>	
<p>What teaching aids and resources does the teacher use? Books, ICT?</p>	
<p>How is the classroom organised? Learning partner, groups or are the students sitting alone?</p>	
<p>Other...</p>	

Appendix 2:

Interview guide

1. How do you define the term “differentiation”?
2. What are your thoughts about differentiation?
3. How is the English proficiency in your class?
 - a. Are there any differences between boys and girls?
 - b. If yes, why?
4. How well do you think you differentiate your teaching?
 - a. Can you give a few examples?
5. What are the challenges of differentiation?
6. How does the school management assist the teachers in practicing differentiation in their teaching?
7. How do you differentiate according to students with special needs?
8. How do you divide your class into groups? Homogenic or heterogenic groups? Level based groups or coping groups?
9. What textbooks do you use? How does the teacher’s guide assist with differentiation? Do they include texts/material for differentiation? If yes, can you please give some examples?
10. How do you differentiate lessons suitable for students who learn English as a third language?
11. What digital resources do you have available and how do you use it to differentiate?
12. For statistics: How old are you? Are you educated as a subject teacher or a general teacher? How many years have you been teaching English? How many credit points in teaching English do you have?

Appendix 3:

Bloom's taxonomy – a framework for generating questions.

Knowledge (recall) Tell, list, define, name, when, where, state, identify ...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happened after...?• How many...?• Which is true or false...?• What is the name of...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who is the...?• List the colours of the rainbow• Recall the facts• When did...?
Comprehension (understanding) Retell, summarise, describe, explain, predict, restate, estimate ...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is meant by?• Can you describe?• How are these the same/different?• Can you tell me in your own words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you think will happen next?• What is the main idea?• Tell me about the ____'s size and shape.• Can you give an example of ...?
Application (solving) Solve, use, construct, classify, examine, illustrate, modify ...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What would happen if...?• How might you use this?• What information would you need to?• In what other way can you...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What would you do next time?• Why is important?• Show how to...• Where have you seen something like this before?
Analysis (reasoning) Analyse, compare, distinguish, examine, order, categorise, infer, investigate....	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which were facts and which were opinions?• What is the connection between...?• What are the parts of...?• What might have happened if ...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What were the causes of...?• What were the effects of...?• What is the difference between ...?• What do you see as other possible outcomes?
Synthesis (creating) Create, design, formulate, invent, imagine, devise, combine ...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your final conclusion?• Can you design a ... to ...?• Can you see a possible solution?• What other ideas do you have for ...?• Can you think of a new and unusual way to...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How could this be rearranged?• What is your plan for accomplishing this task?• How can you use what you learned to...?
Evaluation (judging) Check, choose, prioritise, critique, hypothesise, judge, debate ...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How could this be improved?• How would you rank these in order?• What is the most important?• In your opinion .../	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which is a better bargain? Why?• What is your top priority?• What criteria did you use?• How did you make your decision...?

Appendix 4:

Respondents' replies

Forskjellige nivåer. Vi jobber innenfor et tema. Denne uken er krim. For enkelte handler dette om å lære seg noen begreper innenfor sjangeren og skrive korte setninger. Andre er på nivået at de kan begynne å skrive en historie. Det er lagt ut skrivestartere for å hjelpe dem i gang. For noen er målet å skrive en tekst med innledning, hoveddel og avslutning. Vi har jobbet mye med personbeskrivelser dette året - så det er nivået over dette igjen. For de sterke elevene som trenger større utfordringer ser vi mer på sjangerkravene og innhold i teksten. De har mulighet til å ringe hvis de står fast. Noen synes at det er skummelt å skrive krim, men da planlegger vi historien sammen slik at den ikke blir skummel, men noe som er gjennomførbart. Det er noen som synes skriving er vanskelig og for disse elevene har jeg laget en oppgave hvor de heller kan lage en film og snakke historien.

Another teacher has the special education students, a different teacher for each grade. They are in the lowest group. We work together planning, but the other teacher has all the contact. Our school district is one to one tablet, showing Showbie. I record PLENTY, so all my students can hear the text and follow along as I read. Keeping things simply and friendly during home-schooling. Using BTN news from Australia, one story and about 6 questions - some students get multiple choice instead of answering with complete sentences. Plenty of pictures and maps on everything I but on Showbie. We also have video contact with chosen students. All my students have been drilled to death, as they, put it in BISON and the use of two columns notes. I use modelling- writing and reading. Maps and charts are excellent.

I make sure I always provide my students with differentiated tasks with different levels of complexity. I often use Bloom's taxonomy as a starting point as to how I design the tasks. F. ex. the easiest tasks are more fact-based and closed (in Bloom's that is referred to «knowledge»). The most difficult tasks are more open and requires more complex thinking (f. ex. reflection and analysis). The mid-level tasks are a mix between the two. I am also a fan of tasks that are possible to do on different levels and where the students respond on the levels, they're at. F. ex. writing about themselves, writing diaries, doing own projects etc.

Different books and text according to their reading level. Always add sound if not available. Various tasks as listening, speaking, videos, games - both analogy and digital.

Trying to give open tasks that can be made easy or complex so that every student can show their competence.
Giving different alternatives to different books. Easy for online books. Then I give 1-3 alternatives with different levels. Also, I give open tasks that definite on its own. Ex. when they post a video post on to Flip grid, I can hear how they speak.
Differentiation in the text's pupils read, as well as glossary words. Further, I make sure to vary between reading, writing, doing and ICT. The pupils are often asked to evaluate the tasks to make sure they are happy with the choices of chores.
Har tre nivåer på oppgavene, de som strever får det mest grunnleggende slik at det kommer på plass. De andre følger mitt opprinnelige opplegg og se som mestrer språket veldig godt får oppgaver som passer deres høye nivå.
I give my pupils tasks that I think are not too easy but also not too difficult. This is because I can't physically help them when I can't teach them, as I would have done in a "normal" classroom situation. Ulike vanskegrad på lekser, ulik vanskegrad på Oppgaver. For sterke elever, mer utfordrende oppgaver som tar de et steg lenger.
Differentiation in task level, amount and guiding. Individual plans for student who needs predictability.
Give tasks based on my knowledge of the students' level of linguistic proficiency and confidence.
Følger tettere opp disse elevene. Nivådifferensiering på tekster og oppgave
Jeg lager 3 differensierte opplegg så elevene kan jobbe på sitt nivå.
Talk often with the kids and altering the program if needed.
I ensure the differentiation through the activities.
Forskjellige arbeidsplaner med nivåer
Four levels of tasks and assignments.