MASTER'S THESIS

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Diversity in EFL classrooms – Teachers' beliefs and self-reported practices.

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Abstract

In an ever-globalized world where borders between countries and identities seem to blur in the digital space, the previously so seemingly homogenous Norwegian society grows more diverse by the day. This diversity, both from immigration, continuing acceptance of differences, and the global discourse, calls for more awareness in society. Since schools are a part of society, and Norwegian children are known worldwide for their advanced use of the internet, and as such meet the entire world from the comfort of their own homes, there is a need for this awareness to be fostered in schools. Furthermore, as the language most Norwegians utilize in communicating with these people from all over the world is English, the English subject gets a specific role in this task.

However, the studies done on language teachers about their understanding of diversity are few and far in between. Therefore, this master's thesis will be treating how eight teachers of English as a foreign language in Norwegian lower secondary and middle schools understand the term diversity and how these same teachers facilitate for diversity learning in the classroom. This was done through individual, semi structured, interviews with the teachers and a following analysis loosely based on critical discourse analysis.

The analysis showed that the teachers spoke about the term in quite a similar way, highlighting concepts of diversity as something "big" that included people being "different" and often times connected it to the aspect of ethnicity. This shows a shared discourse occurring within the group despite no communication between them about the project beforehand. However, this discourse group splits in two quickly when discussing their experiences with diversity in the classroom. This split seems to be consistent with the ethnical makeup of the schools they worked in, as the teachers who worked in schools with a high percentage of immigrants focused more on the ethnic perspectives, while teachers who worked in schools with less immigrants showed more focus on the different abilities of their students.

The findings of this thesis therefore show that teachers do by and large share a common discourse related to diversity. However, there are two main groups of understanding which seem to be based on the ethnic makeup of their workplace. This is also the case for how they report to work with the term, both when working with diversity as a theme and the diversity that naturally exist in their classrooms.

Sammendrag

I en stadig globaliserende verden hvor grenser mellom land og identiteter ser ut til å viskes ut i det digitale rommet, blir det tidligere så tilsynelatende homogene norske samfunnet mer mangfoldig for hver dag som går. Dette mangfoldet, både fra immigrasjon, identitetsforskjeller, og den globale diskursen, krever mer bevissthet i samfunnet. Siden skolen er en del av samfunnet, og norske barn er kjent over hele verden for sin avanserte bruk av internett, og som sådan møter hele verden hjemmefra, er det behov for at denne bevisstheten fremmes i skolene. Ettersom språket de fleste nordmenn bruker for å kommunisere med disse menneskene fra hele verden er engelsk, får engelskfaget en spesifikk rolle i denne oppgaven.

Studiene som er gjort på språklærere om deres forståelse av mangfold er imidlertid få og langt imellom. Derfor vil denne masteroppgaven behandle hvordan åtte lærere i engelsk som fremmedspråk på norske mellom- og ungdomstrinn forstår begrepet mangfold og hvordan de samme lærerne hevder å legge til rette for mangfoldslæring i klasserommet. Dette ble gjort gjennom individuelle, semistrukturerte intervjuer med lærerne og en påfølgende analyse basert på kritisk diskursanalyse.

Analysen viste at lærerne snakket om begrepet på ganske lik måte, og fremhevet begreper om mangfold som noe «stort» som inkluderte at folk var «annerledes» og ofte koblet det til aspektet etnisitet. Dette viser en delt diskurs som oppstår i gruppen til tross for ingen kommunikasjon mellom dem om prosjektet på forhånd. Imidlertid deler denne diskursgruppen seg raskt i to når de diskuterer sine erfaringer med mangfold i klasserommet. Denne splittelsen ser ut til å stemme overens med den etniske sammensetningen av skolene de jobbet på, ettersom lærerne som jobbet i skoler med høy andel innvandrere fokuserte mer på de etniske perspektivene, mens lærere som jobbet på skoler med færre innvandrere viste mer fokus på elevenes ulike evner.

Funnene i denne oppgaven viser derfor at lærere stort sett deler en felles diskurs knyttet til mangfold. Imidlertid er det to hovedgrupper av forståelse som ser ut til å være basert på den etniske sammensetningen av arbeidsplassen deres. Dette er også tilfelle for hvordan de rapporterer å jobbe med begrepet, både når de jobber med mangfold som tema og det mangfoldet som naturlig finnes i klasserommene deres.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Aim & Research question

The aim of the following study is to explore teachers of English as a foreign language's beliefs and self-reported classroom practices around the term diversity. The focus on diversity is chosen as a backdrop for this thesis due to the importance put on the term in the white papers for Norwegian schools; The curriculum (LK20) and the Education act (1998). Both of these documents state that diversity is an essential part of the school system in Norway, meaning we ought to be aware of the term. Furthermore, the English subject has a special role in identity building, making the subject paramount in dealing with diversity. This is due to identity and diversity being so closely related, as you cannot have one without the other. As such, the thesis attempts to answer the following question:

- How do teachers of English in Norwegian schools understand the term diversity, and how do they facilitate for this in their self-reported classroom practices?

This twofold question will be answered through semi structured interviews with teachers of English in primary and lower secondary schools around Norway. Due to the nature of semi structured interviews, these were chosen as method to get the most in depth answers from the teachers. The reason for choosing to interview teachers stems from a want to understand their understanding of a central term in the curriculum. This is important as the teachers are the ones who must bring this term to the classroom, making their understanding of the term essential. The interviews were then analyzed by looking at the answers these teachers give through aspects of critical discourse analysis such as binary opposition and discourse patterns across the different schools. This gives an overview over how teachers communicate and shows tendencies of when teachers share a pattern for communication and when there are differences in their beliefs. The analysis will be connected to theories and previous research on the theme of diversity, intercultural competence, and literacy.

1.2 Background

In an ever more globalized world, teaching children and teens about diversity proves more important than ever. Studies show that generations Z (Late 1990's to early 2010's) and Alpha (Early 2010's to today), who are currently attending schools, are more aware of the societal issues that exist in the world than any generation before them (Yurtseven & Karadeniz, 2020). They are, furthermore, also more inclined to share their own views and issues on social media (UNICEF, 2017), something that brings with it more opportunities for starting discourses on

themes that at times might be challenging. Knowing that students spend about one third of their time in school, this awareness for societal issues needs to be met by teachers and the school in form of giving the students resources for dealing with, and knowledge about, diversity and culture. Because of this, there is a need to examine how teachers understand diversity, and how they work with it in the classroom both in terms of content of the education and the different students. While diversity is a trending term in society, how teachers in Norway see the term is not discussed accordingly, making this study of English teachers' beliefs and self-reported practices around diversity an important addition to the discussion.

Since the 1970's Norway has had increasing numbers of immigration (Myhre & Tønnessen, 2021), something which has been evident in bigger cities for many years already, but now is also starting to become increasingly visible in more rural areas (Thorsnæs, 2021). This has shown to be a challenge for some schools as textbooks are written for the middle class, white, Norwegian students and seems to treat minorities as "the other" (Midtbøen et al., 2014), meaning that these students go through school being marginalized by the very nature of the syllabus. This is also the case for national minorities which have always been here (Eriksen, 2018; Midtbøen et al., 2014), as well as with other marginalized groups.

This "us vs. them" way of thinking about other cultures, however, does not seem to be the case for the LK20 curriculum. According to the core curriculum in LK20, the school is to treat every student equally (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017). The emphasis on treating students equally was also present in the previous LK06 curriculum but has undergone a change and become much clearer with the arrival of LK20. To ensure that the students get treated equally the curriculum further expresses that the teachers must see and care for every student as the individual they are (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017). Furthermore, as part of the core values it is stated that "School must consider the diversity of pupils and facilitate for each pupil to experience belonging in school and society" (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017), which strengthens the importance for students to be seen for who they are in the school setting.

If, then, the textbooks are insufficient at making the students feel seen (Midtbøen et al., 2014), teachers are required to make sure the classroom practices still cater for diversity. Diversity is furthermore supposed to have a stronger foothold in the Norwegian school as solidified in the subject specific curriculum for English, where it becomes evident that the subject is given a

special role both for cultural understanding and identity development (The Norwegian directorate of Education, 2020). The curriculum aims to give students an intercultural understanding that is to help them in communicating with people locally and globally (The Norwegian directorate of education,2020). Moreover, it is explicitly stated that this learning takes place in the meeting with texts, and how text is to be seen in a broad sense encompassing spoken, written, digital, and printed texts among other (The Norwegian directorate of education, 2020).

Furthermore, young people spend large parts of their free time online on different games and webpages. In fact, globally, Norwegian teens are characterized by their high amount of time used on, and sophisticated usage of, the internet (Amundsen, 2018). Common to many of the pages they use is that they are international and have a chat function (Bufdir, 2021), meaning that many of the teenagers will be communicating with people from other countries and cultures. Because of this, young people will undoubtedly also meet diversity in these forums and as such should be able to effectively communicate these kinds of themes through the English, as well as the Norwegian, language. As a matter of fact, around 65% of all webpages are in English while less than 1,4% are in Norwegian (Ibrahimova, 2021), which further establishes the need for incorporating diversity into the English subject. Additionally, human beings build their own identity through communicating with others (Hoff, 2018). As such, the amount of time they spend on these pages and games would imply that much of their own identity building will also be built through the interactions they make there.

Despite this new focus put on diversity in the LK20 (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017), and how many places the students are likely to meet diversity in their everyday life, to my knowledge, teachers' perceptions of diversity have received limited attention so far. Teachers' attitudes are important because they either very explicitly or rather implicitly guide how they teach about the issues in question (Borg, 2006).

This thesis is built up by six chapters, with following subchapters that goes into more detail of some of the aspects. After this initial introduction, the thesis will move on to a presentation of theoretical frameworks and previous research in chapter 2. In this chapter there will be a focus on diversity in a school setting, intercultural competence, the case for literacy in the school, and finally, theories around critical discourse analysis will be demonstrated. In chapter 3 there will be an outline of the method chosen, guiding the reader through the choice of respondents and the process of the interviews and analysis. The chapter is then concluded by discussing

the quality of the study. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the analysis starting with the teachers' notions of the term diversity both in an isolated sense and in the school context, before moving on to the self-reported practices connected to diversity in the EFL classroom. Following this, chapter 5 consists of the discussion of the answers from the analysis in chapter 4. Here, the findings will be seen in relation to the theoretical framework and previous research highlighted in chapter 2 and the research question. Lastly, chapter 6 will be presenting the conclusion from the discussion, the ethical considerations of the study, and recommendations for further studies.

2.0 Theoretical frameworks and previous research

The following chapter will present the relevant theoretical frameworks around diversity and its place in the classroom. Firstly, the chapter introduces the main term, diversity, as to make a reference frame for the rest of the thesis, before it moves on to present theories around intercultural competence and literacy and how this connects to diversity. All of these three theories will be seen through previous research connected to the classroom and as such show the pedagogical importance of these terms. Furthermore, there will be a short section dealing with previous research on teacher cognition and the importance of understanding the attitudes of the teachers and how this affects their practices. Lastly, the chapter treats critical discourse analysis as the analysis of the findings will be done by looking at aspects of CDA such as binary opposition and shared discourse patterns.

2.1 Diversity in the schools

To better understand the need for diversity in the schools, it is of utmost importance to give a good explanation of what diversity means. Different dictionaries have their own definitions of the term, but they all have some common ground. In this thesis the Cambridge definition (n.d.) will be used as it defines diversity as "the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something; a range of different things or people". The reason for favoring a definition like this, is that it does not specify ethnicity or culture, but rather encompasses all the ways in which people can be different. This thesis will therefore look at diversity in this broad sense of having different people in a certain space, the school.

The Cambridge definition correlates well with how teachers have different interpretations of the term. For instance, we speak about ethnic and cultural diversity, which are often lumped together, socioeconomic diversity, and even sexual diversity. While all of these are important, there is a clear tendency of people mainly referring to the cultural and ethnic diversities when using the term (Lund, 2018). This can, in turn, signalize that more importance is given to where a person is from, and what culture they belong to, rather than for instance their cognitive or socioeconomic status in terms of diversity. Furthermore, Burner et al. (2018) highlights that the differences in understanding of diversity have made scholars object to the place it has gotten in the official documents surrounding schools.

From previous studies one can see that there is a focus on the cultural aspect of diversity (Burner et al., 2018; Lund, 2018). Such as the study by Lund (2018), where she found that teachers seem to find the term diversity too imprecise, and as such resort to using the term

"multicultural" (flerkulturell) instead as that is more tangible. In Lund's (2018) study the teachers reported that they could pinpoint exactly what the term multicultural encompassed, multiple cultures in the same space, while diversity seemed more like an abstract idea which they could not tell exactly what entailed. When this is seen in connection with Burner et al. (2018) much of the same ideas are shown, however some of the teachers further reported that they struggled with the term when seen in isolation. They did, nevertheless, list what they felt was included in diversity, showing a tendency to relate the term to multicultural aspects such as religion and culture (Burner et al., 2018)

The Norwegian ministry of Education has, additionally, stated that a school being multicultural does not only entail that there is a certain percentage of students with immigration backgrounds (The Norwegian department of education, 2017). It also encompasses the schools working towards seeing diversity as an everyday occurrence (The Norwegian department of education, 2017). Further, this view should be implemented in their work with school development. Despite this favoring of the word multicultural, schools are diverse spaces not only in terms of culture but also because of the different prerequisites for learning and background of all the students and teachers. In fact, some scholars view this diversity within the society as the raw material for education, and that the teachers are very much part of this diversity themselves and therefore cannot remove themselves from it (Spernes, 2017).

Since the ministry of education does not only view diversity in the schools to be a matter of ethnicity (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017), it is valuable to look at some other types of diversity that are prevalent in the schools. One of the most obvious ones, that exists in any classroom no matter how small or seemingly homogeneous, is the diversity of skills within a classroom. Teachers are obligated by law to accommodate to all students so that they have a favorable learning outcome, no matter their background and academic level (Education act, 1998). This means that teachers must cater to all students' individual needs, making all education that follows these laws diverse in nature. Something to keep in mind, however, is that these differences in skills and prior knowledge of the students might become even more visible in the English classroom, as students who score lower on the oral skills might struggle speaking in class, something that would not be the case in other subjects that are taught in their mother tongue.

2.1.2 LGBT+ as diversity

Since the late 1990's the curriculum for Norwegian schools has put importance on the theme of homosexuality (Røthing, 2008). This continues into the the new curriculum, LK20, as sexuality and gender identity are specifically mentioned as aspect in the health and life skills portion of the core curriculum (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017). While this is not necessarily connected to the English subject, it concerns the identity of the students in the classroom and therefore important to consider in all areas of teaching.

Nevertheless, there is quite a significant lack of research on how teachers view sexuality and sexual identity. One study from Vietnam shows that the teachers interviewed did not view having LGBT+ students as an issue but were reluctant to include materials that in their view promoted LGBT+ ideals into the classroom (Tran-Thanh, 2020). Clark et al. (2009) further stated that teachers in the USA also had shown reluctance to using LGBT+ texts and material in their classrooms, not because they did not believe in the case, but rather that they believed schools should be neutral places. It is also well known that some states and school districts in the US have banned teaching about sexuality and sexual identity from their schools (Wong, n.d.), showing that in many places there are issues with bringing these questions into the classroom. Despite this, there has been a continuing work the last decades to show the value of these texts in the classroom (Clark et al., 2009).

Seen from a Norwegian perspective, the most prominent scholar dealing with LGBT+ issues in schools is Åse Røthing, whom in a 2009 book together with Stine Helena Bang Svendsen states that the textbooks used are not satisfactory (Røthing & Bang Svendsen, 2009). In the same book the pair further emphasizes the heteronormative approach taken by the textbooks, and as such problematizes the lack of LGBT+ mentions in the materials used in schools (Røthing & Bang Svendsen, 2009). Furthermore, in a 2008 article Røthing addresses how teachers sometimes have the best intentions in mind, but still perpetuates the idea of homosexuality being problematic and different (Røthing, 2008).

2.1.3 Diversity in the Official Documents

Furthermore, diversity is, as previously stated, specifically mentioned in both the general part and the subject specific part of the new curriculum (The Norwegian directorate of Education, 2020; The Norwegian ministry of education,2017). This clearly shows that this is a theme that is important to bring into the classroom, and the fact that it is mentioned in the subject specific curriculum for English shows that it is expected that teachers work with it in this

subject as well. For instance, one of the competence aims in the English curriculum states that the students should be able to "explore and describe ways of living, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity in the English-speaking world" (The Norwegian directorate of education, 2020). As a matter of fact, diversity is even mentioned in the Education act (1998), where it is stated that "Education and training must provide insight into cultural diversity and show respect for the individual's convictions". This shows that teaching about cultural diversity is imposed by law. While there is no mention of other kinds of diversity explicitly, the law does state that all students are to be treated equally no matter the circumstances (Education act, 1998).

However, research on diversity in Norwegian schools show gaps between what is written in the official documents and what is practiced in the classrooms (Burner et al.,2018). This, however, does not only relate to the question of diversity, but seems to be apparent in everything that relates to the classroom. This is due to the fact that teachers have to interpret the curriculum, and as such there are as many ways of understanding the curriculum as there are teachers in the schools (Imsen, 2016). This is connected to Goodlad's (1979) 5 faces of the curriculum, which deals with the steps or "faces" of the curriculum from the ideological plane to what is experienced in the classroom.

2.2 Intercultural Competence and its Place in Schools

While it is important to know what diversity means and how it is connected to the classroom, effectively discussing it calls for a well-developed intercultural competence. This theory centers around there being certain aspects of culture that one needs to have a good understanding of to effectively communicate across cultures (Byram, 2021). These aspects involve interpersonal communication, morals, values and what is generally important in the different cultures. The goal of intercultural competence is then to be "… able to act as a mediator between people of two or more different cultural and linguistic contexts, using one's intercultural skills and attitudes" (Byram & Wagner, 2018, pp. 145). This means that one should be able to use knowledge of ones own culture to understand and communicate effectively with others across cultures (Huber & Reynolds, 2014).

With the spread of international and intercontinental travel, both physical and digital, these competences have become paramount for everyone (Byram, 2021) and as such has a place in schools. As people have a tendency of making their ways what is considered normal in their own eyes, Byram (2021) claims that it is important to teach people to look beyond their own

worlds. This way people become aware of differences, and through this awareness also acquire the necessary competences to act respectfully. The larger goal then, is to become a 'global citizen' which includes intercultural competence requiring "(…) individuals to develop their capacity to build common projects, to assume shared responsibilities and to create common ground to live together in peace" (Huber & Reynolds, 2014, pp. 21). Because of this, intercultural competence is a key element in developing democratic citizenship in a diverse world (Huber & Reynolds, 2014).

The major issue when dealing with intercultural competence is then what culture means. Just as with diversity, there are a plethora of different ways of seeing culture one of which this thesis will be adopting. As a matter of fact, culture is sometimes seen to be one of the most complex terms in the English language, as it is so hard to give an exact definition (Byram & Wagner, 2018). In intercultural competence culture is seen as being more than just the ways of living within different countries, religions, or ethnical groupings (Huber & Reynolds, 2014). This view sees culture as ways of living and thinking for a group of people in a certain setting or place as it also encompasses sexuality, socioeconomic groups, and the likes (Huber & Reynolds, 2014). This is a much wider understanding of the term compared to only looking at religious or ethnic backgrounds.

2.3 The Importance of Literacy

While diversity is important to the learning environment, so is making sure the students develop the skills to effectively talk about the theme. As a matter of fact, there is no way of evading literacy when working with language, especially not when the curriculum states that learning of English should happen specifically through text (The Norwegian directorate of education, 2020). Literacy, then, is a term that encompasses virtually all skills that are connected to working with texts, in a broad sense, and through this also the understanding of them (Blikstad-Balas, 2021). These skills include reading, writing, listening and understanding texts. The United Nations define literacy as not only the skills of reading, writing and counting, but also as "a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication" and asserts its importance in intercultural relations and through that diversity (UNESCO, n.d.). This shows how everything one does in a classroom, then, can be seen as literacy as the main goal of all language education should be communication in various forms, such as speaking, reading, listening and writing.

As literacy is closely related to texts, having a good understanding of what a text is also proves important as it serves to further solidify what literacy encompasses. While there are a multitude of different definitions of what a text is, such as the Cambridge dictionary (n.d.) which defines text as "the written words in a book, magazine, etc., not the pictures" or "written or printed material". This can be seen as somehow contradictory, as printed material can be pictures as well as the words on the page, however, the general idea seem to largely encompass written words. Nevertheless, my thesis will be referring to text the same way the subject specific curriculum does; "… texts can be spoken and written, printed and digital, graphic and artistic" (The Norwegian directorate of education, 2020). The curriculum (2020) further explains that text can be both pictures, words and sound that come together to create meaning, something that in turn opens up to understanding all communication that happens in the classroom as texts. As such, we can see that to be able to communicate about diversity and develop intercultural competence, literacy is key.

2.3.1 Critical Literacy

Another aspect of literacy, which is especially important when dealing with societal issues and diversity understandings, is critical literacy. This deals with the fact that all texts are inherently positioned and as such is trying to make the reader believe that the message of the text is the correct one (Janks, 2018). In critical literacy one examines both what the writers did include and, maybe more importantly, what was not included (Janks, 2018). This is because what is not included in the text might be something the writers are trying to avoid or that they simply do not view as important enough (Janks, 2018). For instance, studies show that middle school textbooks in social studies, while treating the subject of national minorities such as the Sami people, omit the question of the mistreatment these peoples met at the hands of the Norwegian authorities (Midtbøen et al., 2014). When asking yourself why they do this, it is important to take into account that curricula are political documents, and as such course material is also politically positioned as they are to reflect the current curriculum. This shows that it is vital that the students get this education as well, as critical literacy is leaning towards the need to learn about all aspects of an issue, not only the favorable sides.

Hillary Janks (2018) wrote that we live in a post truth world, where even the leader of the free world can flat out tell a lie and be believed by millions. Critical literacy should, thus, be an integral part of education because there is a need for examining what is being said. In some ways this has been a practice in schools for a long time as «kildekritikk», but critical literacy takes the issue a little further. You do not only look at whether the source is reputable, but

also look at the material from all points of view, as Even the most reputable sources are in some way, shape, or form positioned and try to position the reader to agree with them. As Norwegian youth spends a groundbreaking amount of time online (Amundsen, 2018), it is furthermore important to equip them with a skillset that allows them to do so in a safe and informed manner. Additionally, it is a necessary part of the diversity education since it at times can include sensitive subjects which needs to be treated cautiously, and as anything else in society it is inherently political and as such needs to be viewed from all points of view.

To effectively work with diversity in the classroom, there should be an element of critical literacy present. This is due to the fact that, in the English classroom, diversity is to be met mainly through text (the Norwegian department of education, 2020). As every text is positioned and as such tries to convey a certain message, this will also be the case for the texts used in the classroom. Because of this, students should learn how to read the texts through a critical lens, but more importantly, teachers should first read the texts this way to make sure the texts are conveying the message they want them to. What this means is that critical literacy is important for both students and teachers to work with texts of all kinds, also when it comes to diversity to make sure there will be as little stereotyping and misrepresentation as possible.

2.3.2 Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors

As the subject specific curriculum for English states that diversity learning should happen through literature, while also focusing on the importance of the students developing their own identities, it is important to examine how this can be done in the classroom. While literacy gives an answer to why it is important, the metaphor of texts as mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors can provide a valuable insight into how it can be done.

Throughout her career, Rudine Sims Bishop, coined the metaphor of texts as mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors for fostering multicultural understanding (Möller, 2016). Her ideas have also become quite influential in the field of literature teaching, something that Karla Möller (2016) attributes to the accessibility of the metaphors. As Möller (2016) points out, by looking at texts as windows, mirrors and sliding glass doors, Bishop makes a complicated idea easier to understand, and through this making it even more meaningful. While Bishop mostly directed her writings toward the multicultural, her metaphors also work for other kinds of diversity, such as disability and sexual identities (Clark et al., 2009).

By using texts as windows, Bishop (1990) means that the readers will be able to look into a world that might be familiar, but which also can be new and fantastic. The same window that the text works as will also be a sliding glass door which invites the reader to partake in this world no matter how similar or different it might be to the outside world that they live in themselves (Bishop, 1990). This means that with a little help from imagination the reader will be able to transport themselves to the universe of the text they are reading, and through this experience the unknown and expand their understanding of the world (Bishop, 1990). However, just as when it is dark or foggy or the light shines just right you can see your reflection in the window, the reader sometimes can also see themselves in the text as if in a mirror (Bishop, 1990). As readers we often strive to find books and other texts that provide this mirror function, we want to be represented in the texts we read (Bishop 1990; Gultekin & May, 2019). However, this has been challenging to people who are part of marginalized groups, and especially for non-white students (Gultekin & May, 2019; McNair, 2016). Most children and young adult literature centers around middle class, white, children (McNair, 2016) and if these characters are in any sort of romantic relationships there is a major probability that these are straight relationships (Pugh & Wallace, 2006). When this is seen in relation to textbooks used in Norwegian schools seeming to cater to the middle-class white students (Eriksen, 2018), it is evident that teachers need to at least consider these questions when working with texts in the classroom.

While these metaphors for texts are widely used and, as such, influential in working with literature, using it is not necessarily straight forward. One of the dangers with using texts to fit this metaphor uncritically, is that you risk misrepresenting entire cultures, countries or gender identities. In an article Gultekin and May (2019) problematized using texts as mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors uncritically, and called it using text as fun-house mirrors, blind spots, and curtain. Here the idea is that some texts can be full of stereotypes or misconceptions and as such have a distorted image of how certain cultures might be (Gultekin & May, 2019). When you are at a carnival and go into the fun-house, the mirrors there might make your head look huge, while the rest of your body is comically small. The same can be the case for some texts, they might make one part of the culture stand out and be enormous while other parts become almost invisible in comparison (Gultekin & May, 2019). With blind spots Gultekin and May (2019) mean that by showing some sides of a story, or a culture, there are other parts that are not shown to the world. Sometimes, then these blind spots might mean that some students do not get to experience texts as mirrors, because their experiences are

within the stories that have not been told. Lastly, the curtains, while similar to the blind spots, serve to protect marginalized groups practice from outside exploitation (Gultekin & May, 2019). The curtains are "used" to prevent outsiders from seeing traditional practices and sensitive subjects (Gultekin & May, 2019). This proves, then, that while it is important that teachers provide all students with some way of seeing themselves, and others, in texts they work with, it is also important that the teachers know enough about the texts to know whether they are good and sufficient portrayals of groups of people (Möller, 2016).

2.4 Teacher Cognition

Since this thesis will look at teachers' own thoughts and beliefs of their work and how they claim to incorporate diversity in the classroom, an important term to look at is teacher cognition. Put briefly this is the self-reflection of teachers about their own work, both in terms of knowledge and beliefs, and how these can be understood (Borg, 2006). Through the years there has been a change in how teacher cognition has been seen, from the 70's where the effectiveness of the teaching was key until today where the mental lives and the knowledge the teachers have is more important (Borg, 2006, Burns et al., 2015). The change has led to teacher cognition focusing on the personal knowledge that the teachers have obtained from practical experiences and formal education (Borg, 2006).

Teachers have "memorized" scripts for classrooms that they almost perform for the students, since these scripts have been created throughout their years of teaching, they are also hard to go away from and teachers show reluctance from giving them up, even when studies show their methods are at best ineffective (Borg, 2006). This shows a resistance to break with the established beliefs one might have and can thus signify that some teachers will not change their practices due solely to outside forces. While coming from the outside, studies have shown that novice EFL teachers abandon what they have learned in school after a time in the workforce (Borg, 2006). Although the new teachers had been very true to what they learned in their teacher training at first, different factors, such as class sizes, the motivation of the students, and the culture of the school (Borg, 2006). However, according to Burns et al. (2015), language teachers are very well positioned to be able to renew themselves and take in newer knowledge.

2.5 Critical discourse analysis

When it comes to choosing a theory to go with my analysis, the best fit would for my thesis was to draw from aspects of critical discourse analysis (CDA). This is because discourse analysis focuses on unveiling how the position of the writer or speaker in a discourse has on

the contents of it, and how the social world is affecting the answers (Gee, 2014). This serves to examine the current discourses that exists in a group, so as to show what is generally seen as important to the group in question (Gee, 2014). There are two types of discourse analysis, critical and descriptive (Gee, 2014), but to be able to fully understand what this entail it is important to also look at what discourse is.

According to Bergström and Boréus (2005), discourse is a collection of statements connected to a certain social context, as well as the rules and norms of what can and cannot be said in the context. That means that discourse is not only what is being said, or written, but also the framework of behaviors in the given group which participates in the discourse. Gee (2014) defines discourse as parts of language which have close relationship to the syntax, or the structure of the language if you will. What this means, is that language is built up by many different components, and when all of these come together discourse is created, just as a painting is created through the use of many different colors and brushstrokes (Gee, 2014). He also defines it as "language-in-use" which treats, not only how the language is built up, but also how and when it is used (Gee, 2014). This goes to show that analyzing discourse is very important when working with the teachers' understanding of a term and how they make sense of their classroom practices related to issues of diversity.

That brings us back to the two different types of discourse analysis. The descriptive approach aims at describing how language works to create an understanding, while the critical approach aims to give these descriptions of how and why language works, but also take the step into the discourse and intervene in it (Gee, 2014). Gee (2014) makes a case for all discourse analysis being critical as there is no way to completely remove social and political aspects from discourse. This means that there is no way of understanding discourse without examining the outside factors, and further that discourse is only understood when the text exists in a community (Gee, 2014). Since school, teaching and even language is inherently political and very much connected to society, there is a strong argument that the most fitting form of discourse analysis for this thesis is a critical one.

When working with a critical discourse analysis, one does not simply look at what has been said in the interview, but also what has been omitted (van Dijk, 2006). This is because what the respondents choose not to talk about might signal what is important to them just as much as what they do say (van Dijk, 2006). The idea behind this is rooted in dual opposition which means that two different ideas are put against each other or are opposites (van Dijk, 2006). An

example of this in play would be how some teachers might focus on ethnical diversity, while others focus on skill-based diversity. This idea of opposition strongly correlates with the critical literacy that is mentioned previously in this chapter as they both deal with how discourse, or literature, is positioned in the social and political landscape (Gee, 2014; Janks, 2018).

From a methodological point of view, this theory fits well within the critical realist ontological standpoint where reality is understood through a critical lens (Moon & Blackman, 2014), as well as grounded relativism, which is the belief that there can be several realities which are grounded in a basic fellow understanding (Moon & Blackman, 2014). Here one can see the criticality of critical realism meeting the fellow understanding (i.e. discourse) of the grounded relativism. On an epistemological level, what best fits with the critical discourse analysis is the Constructionism, which deals with the belief that knowledge is created in the interplay between subject and object, meaning that the subject is the one who creates the knowledge through the object (Moon & Blackman, 2014). Finally, there are aspects of symbolic interactionism which is when the researcher creates meaning and understanding through communication with the person they are interviewing (Moon & Blackman, 2014). Here one believes that everyone has a conscious mind and can change their behavior through communication and interaction (Moon & Blackman, 2014).

3.0 Scientific design and method

The focus of this chapter will be to explain the methods of both data collection and data analysis. It begins with the research design where the type of material and the selection of the participants will be presented. Moving on from this, there will be a section which treats the method of analyzing the data from the data collection, which serves to showcase how the analysis took place. To conclude the chapter, there is a section on the quality of the study that treats the questions of validity and reliability, as well as discussing how my previous knowledge could have affected the study.

3.1 Research design

As the research question of my thesis is «How do teachers of English understand the term diversity, and how do they facilitate for it in their self-reported classroom practices?" a qualitative approach would fit the best (Johannessen et al., 2021). This is because the question asks about the teachers' understanding of a certain term, something that cannot be quantified. I look at it in a qualitative perspective, as it is more important to see how these teachers understand the term diversity and how they facilitate for it in the classroom. Additionally, there was quite few respondents meaning that since I wanted to get the most out of their answers, the most appropriate type of data to gather was qualitative (Johannessen et al., 2021).

3.1.1 Semi structured interview

I conducted eight semi structured interviews with as many teachers of EFL in middle and lower secondary schools throughout Norway. This means that I conducted interviews where there was a premade list of questions to ask in the interview, but which I could divert from to ask follow-up questions that come up naturally as the interview progressed. As such a semi structured interview works more like a conversation between the researcher and the respondent, where the respondent is the most active part and the researcher helps guide the conversation through the questions they ask (Johannesen et al., 2021). Since this opens for the respondent talking freely within the frames of the interview, the method also allows the respondents to elaborate more on interesting ideas that they might have, or to even bring up information that the researcher had not anticipated and as such enrich the work (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2014).

3.1.2 Selection of respondents

The eight teachers – T1-T8, see table 3.1, I interviewed were all female of an age span from 29 to 58 years old. 2 of them worked in a middle school, 2 worked in a lower secondary, and 3 of the respondents worked in a school that had both lower secondary and middle school and taught in all those grades. T3 worked in a lower secondary school but had experience with all grades. The geographic location of the respondents was spread throughout the country, with both large and small schools ranging from some of the largest schools in the country to smaller 1-10 schools included. One of the teachers had been my practice teacher early in my studies, however, I do not believe this interfered with the result of my study.

Teachers 1-8	Age	Grades taught
T1	41	1-10
T2	40	1-10
T3	30	1-10
T4	39	1-7
T5	51	8-10
T6	29	1-7
T7	58	1-10
T8	56	8-10

Table 3.1

When searching for respondents my criteria was that I wanted teachers who taught English in local lower secondary (grades 8-10) schools for my interviews. To get in contact with these teachers I initially contacted the principals of several schools around the district to enquire whether they could forward the message to their teachers. As time went by, this strategy showed not to be fruitful, and I decided to widen the scope some more and changed my criteria to also encompass teachers of middle school (grades 5-7) as well as contacting people I knew to be English teachers and asked them to please forward the enquiry to their colleagues and others they might know who were English teachers. This showed to be working better, and I soon achieved contact with some interested teachers.

While also opening for more potential respondents, including teachers of grades 5-7 also gave a new insight into the fact that I had probably underestimated the abilities of the students in these grades. Originally, I had chosen to interview teachers at the lower secondary schools

because of an idea that the older the students are, the more we can expect from them which is even indicated in the subject specific curriculum as the aims for the students go from "explore" to "explore and explain" in relation to diversity (The Norwegian directorate of education, 2020) when one moves from grade seven to ten. However, it is important to acknowledge that the students at middle school also have an online presence, they also engage in conversations on a global scope and as such should also be taken seriously when dealing with their knowledge of diversity. Furthermore, one should also consider that there is no magic that happens over summer between 7th and 8th grade that makes the students equipped to deal with diversity suddenly. It is a gradual process that starts already in the 1st grade, and as such it is also interesting to see the teachers at middle schools' thoughts on the theme as well.

Even if asking teachers directly helped with getting more informants, there was still a need for more. To get in contact with more teachers I employed two new strategies both of which showed to help considerably. Firstly, I was tipped about one of the lecturers in the English department had many contacts who worked as English teachers, so I asked her to spread the word of my project resulting in several teachers showing interest in my study. Secondly, I posted in two different online groups for teachers asking for EFL teachers that would be willing to participate in an interview online. Through these efforts I found informants from different schools in different municipalities all over Norway, and as such it is fair to assume that there was a heterogenous group of teachers, even if all were female. It is important to note, however, that as I did not interview more than 8 teachers, the sample size was too small to make any generalizations (Johannesen et al., 2021). Nevertheless, this study provides a valuable insight into the way teachers of English view diversity.

3.1.3 Conducting and processing the interviews

Before conducting the interviews, I obtained informed consent from the informants. This was done by presenting the teachers with an information sheet which stated why they were chosen for the project, what the project was about, as well as their rights as participants. Furthermore, I repeated the rights of the participants before the interview to make sure that they were aware of their rights before consenting to the project.

In the information sheet the teachers were presented before consenting to the interviews, I stated that the interviews would take up to 45 minutes each. However, I allocated an hour for every interview as to make sure the teachers were comfortable, and we could exchange some

words both before and after the interviews (Kvale, 2007). This also served as a buffer in case a respondent was late, or the interview took longer than anticipated, as it did do on one occasion. The interviews were conducted during the daytime, some of them during work hours, and some during the easter break as that fit best for these respondents. All the teachers were interviewed once, something that resulted in transcriptions that totaled 32.537 words and spanned over 49 pages giving me a vast data material to work from as can be seen from table 3.2.

Information about interviews				
Teacher	When	Where	Length of interview	Length of transcript
T1	March 2022	Their place of work	31 minutes	4635 words
T2	March 2022	Their place of work	29 minutes	4341 words
T3	April 2022	Zoom	32 minutes	4116 words
T4	April 2022	Zoom	23 minutes	2691 words
T5	April 2022	Zoom	52 minutes	5974 words
T6	April 2022	Zoom	25 minutes	3383 words
T7	April 2022	Zoom	32 minutes	3884 words
T8	April 2022	Zoom	29 minutes	3513 words

Table 3.2

Due to many of the teachers living in vastly different areas of Norway from me, the interviews were conducted both in person and online. Two of the teachers were interviewed at their place of work, while the 8 others were interviewed over Zoom as shown in table 3.2. The reason for meeting two of the teachers at their place of work was because it was relatively close to where I live, but moreover, it fit their schedules better to do it this way. They could come and do their interviews in the free hours they had in between classes, while also being in

a room and location where they were used to being, something that could potentially ease them and make them more comfortable (Kvale, 2007). This was also the case for the people who were located other places in Norway. While we did lack the possibility to be in the same room and share that atmosphere, the teachers were in their "own" spaces and therefore could potentially be more at ease.

The interviews consisted of four main sections of questions which progressed gradually from background information, through their understanding of diversity, to finally applying their understanding to the classroom setting. These categories were:

1. Background information
2. Understanding of Diversity
3. Diversity in the EFL classroom
4. Use of text to promote diversity

In the first section the questions were directed at information such as how long they have been working as teachers, what degree they have, and what subjects beside English they teach. Their degree shows how much formal education the teachers had and will also show whether they have specific training in the English subject. Lastly, what other subjects they teach, might influence their ability to work with cross curricular subjects or might even mean that they see certain areas or themes being meant for certain subjects. The latter can for example be seen in how teachers connect talking about religion to solely be connected to the KRLE subject.

The next three sections intertwine, and together create the main part of the interview. The first section treats the teachers' perceptions of the term diversity, so as to establish an understanding of their point of view which would help with the interpretation of their answers when conducting the analysis. A potential result here, is that all the teachers potentially could have extremely different views on the term diversity. This will, however, be discussed in more detail in the analysis.

The second section treats the teachers' self-reported practices around questions of diversity in the EFL classroom. This means that the questions will center around whether the teachers have experience with diversity in meeting students, how they have reacted to it and worked with it, and how they plan on working with it.

The third section treats the teachers' reflection around the use of texts to deal with aspects of diversity. Here I asked the teachers more specifically which texts they would personally use to work with diversity, and how they would work with the text to promote this. The reason why I choose to incorporate texts into the interview is that the subject specific curriculum for English states that the subject is to incorporate diversity through working with all kinds of text (The Norwegian directorate of education, 2020).

After the interviews were conducted, they were transcribed and translated into English. However the analysis started at the same time as the first interview, since I know what I am working with it would prove impossible for me not to take mental notes of what they said as the interviews went on (Johannesen et al., 2021). For the more formal parts of the analysis, this started after I had transcribed the interviews and read through them to find examples of how the teachers used language to develop their meanings, and through that examined their answers. The reason why I had to translate the interviews is because I conducted them in Norwegian as that was the best way to ensure that there was as little miscommunication as possible. This, of course, builds on the idea that 7 of the teachers, as well as me, are native speakers of Norwegian, and as such will be somewhat better at, and more comfortable with, communicating in Norwegian. The teachers are also probably better acquainted with terminology connected to school discourse in Norwegian, something that will further make their answers more precise. Additionally, a researcher from a higher educational institution might be seen as elevated over the teachers, in this case using English could create an imbalance in the power structure and as such create a block between the researcher and the informants (Kvale, 2007). One of the teachers was a native of an African country, and had British heritage, meaning that she would probably be able to express herself better in English, however I did not have information about this before the interview and as such had not prepared to conduct it in another language and therefore carried on in Norwegian.

While there are many reasons as to why conducting the interviews in Norwegian was a good thing, this also opens to two possible stages of losing the meaning the teachers would like to present (Aase & Fossåskaret, 2014). Firstly, I transcribed what the teachers answered from a sound file, and as such I was not able to see any face movements or body language which could have helped give meaning to what they say. This, in turn, further leads to the possibility of me misinterpreting what they truly mean. Secondly, some of the meaning might be lost in translation when I translate from Norwegian to English. However, the analysis was done

mainly on the Norwegian material, and as such there is not much possibility for this to affect the results.

3.2 Conducting the analysis

To analyze the interviews, I looked at them through a lens of discourse analysis, as the main goal of the study is to examine the teachers' ideas and self-reported practices. The reasoning behind the choice of critical discourse analysis is that the interviews do appear in form of spoken text and the way the teachers speak about their work is important to be able to answer the research question. This is to say, as everything that happens in the school is a social construct and very much shaped by the social structure that exists around the schools, such as curriculum and schools, such as the curriculum and the discourses that are prevalent in the society, discourse analysis will be a good fit for looking for this in the answers the teachers give (Gee, 2014).

As previously explained, I transcribed the interviews so that I had all the material in writing before I started the work on analyzing the answers. To get an overview of all the interviews, they were all printed and read through numerous times before I started on breaking them down. The first step of breaking down the interviews was by highlighting all the different words and phrases the teachers used to define or describe the word diversity in yellow. This way I could easily go through the interviews and find common, or varying, ways of describing it between the teachers, so as to better draw lines and see tendencies in the data. The next step was highlighting words and phrases connected to classroom practices in pink, so as to differentiate between the definitions of diversity and the classroom practices. Other important ideas that did not fit in either category was marked in green and commented briefly in the margins. Through color-coding the data I was able to 1) distinguish the different types of answers and what they corresponded to in terms of my research question, and 2) easier identify similar or differing views on the same themes and as such unravel tendencies in the data material.

When this was done I saw that the answers the teachers gave generally fit into 5 categories: how they understood the concept of diversity as a whole, Ethnic diversity, skill-based diversity, (Sexual) identity diversity, and diversity in their self-reported practices. To sort the answers into these categories, I wrote down the categories, gave them all a number and started going through the interviews while numbering every single highlighted part. In this way I

knew exactly what quotes belonged where and could easily sort through them when conducting the analysis.

The quotes were then analyzed using several techniques, all of which are connected to critical discourse analysis in that they are all connected to how teachers use language to convey their meaning (Gee, 2014). The first way in which I analyzed the answers was by looking at how many of the teachers expressed the same, or very similar, ideas about diversity. This gave me a pinpoint as to how the term was understood in isolation, as well as it showing whether the teachers all agreed or if someone had their own way of seeing it. This was done with all the different categories as this was the most important aspect to examine in this study. While what they all agreed on was interesting to look into, more attention was given to the instances where one or more teachers did not agree with the rest, or where none of the teachers spoke in the same manner about a concept.

3.3 Quality of the study

All research projects should have a certain level of validity and reliability. What this means is that the research should measure or explore what it claims to explore and get the same result if one were to do the research once more (Johannesen et al., 2021). These two will then determine the quality of the study. If a study does not measure what it says it will measure and does not get the same results if it is copied at a later time, the study will be of low quality (Johannesen et al., 2021). In fact, no study that does not measure what it aims to can be a high-quality study. However, since quantitative and qualitative methods are inherently different, there are also differences in how we measure this quality (Johannesen et al., 2021).

3.3.1 Validity

In qualitative studies there often is no definite answer to the research questions, and as such it might be hard to ensure validity (Johannesen et al., 2021). What we then can look at is the internal and external validity of the study. This means that one looks at whether the findings from the investigation coincides with the theory presented in the thesis for the internal validity (Johannesen et al., 2021). For the external, we take a look at previous research done on the same theme and see whether the findings coincide with this (Johannesen et al., 2021). What is most important here, is that the researcher is clear on why theory is chosen for the study, as well as how all steps of the research has taken place (Johannesen et al., 2021). In short one can say that the two major components to ensuring validity in qualitative studies is to ground

the work in previous studies and relevant theory, as well as being transparent regarding the process.

3.3.2 Reliability

Just as the validity, reliability can be divided into internal and external reliability. External looks at whether the study can be reproduced by doing it more times, while internal looks more at the results within the study (Johannesen et al., 2021). Additionally, there are four reliability factors which all should be considered when doing an interview study. The first of these factors are subject reliability, which is about the respondent's mood, when the interview takes place, and all things that could affect their answers on a personal level (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The respondents are after all human beings and as such, if they are in a bad mood, that might reflect negatively on their answers. The second factor is the observer reliability, does the researcher affect the informants' answers in any way? (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This could for instance be if the researcher asks leading questions or gives indications that some answers are more valid than others. In turn, this can turn the interview into a conversation where the respondents are trying to guess what the researcher wants to hear instead of what they truly think about the subject. The third factor treats the question of clarity of the questions and is called instrument reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). If the questions are not clear enough for the respondents, one might risk misunderstandings and as such not get answers that answers the questions of the study. This shows that sometimes the reliability can affect the validity, as a misunderstanding of the questions might result in measuring something you did not initially plan on measuring. The fourth, and last, factor is the situational reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Here we look at the situation the interview is conducted in, and how that might affect the outcome of the interview (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Instances of this might be if the teachers are not used to being interviewed, that might affect how secure they are with answering questions. Also, the physical room where it happens can have a lot to say, as windows and the like can be distracting and thus take away from the interview.

In his book doing interviews (2007) Steinar Kvale highlights different ways in which the interviewer can affect the interview. Some of these ways include the specificity of the questions, knowledge of the theme of the interview, and the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee (Kvale 2007). If the questions are not specific enough one might risk the responses being irrelevant to the study (Kvale, 2007), while if the questions are too specific there is a risk of leading the response too much. As such there is a need for a

"perfect" balance between specific enough to get relevant answers, while trying not to be too specific as to not lead the respondent too much. Furthermore, a interviewer with a well developed knowledge on the theme of the interview will generally be more keen to details, than an interviewer with less knowledge (Kvale, 2007). This means that even if two researchers share one interview guide, they might get different results as one can derive more information as they know the subject better (Kvale, 2007). Additionally, the relationship between the researcher and respondent might affect the interview as the knowledge in the interview is created through conversation. If one person in a conversation was changed, the dynamic between the two will undoubtedly be changed as well and as such the answers might differ substantially (Kvale, 2007). These aspects go to show that no two qualitative projects will ever be copyable to get the same results.

3.3.3 My role as researcher

For the sake of transparency, it is important to acknowledge that the researcher also brings in their own views and previous knowledge into their studies. In an interview study, this is also the case for the data collection, and not solely for the analysis. When I sit in an interview, I create meaning together with the respondent and as such my previous knowledge might be reflected in how I respond back at their answers. Therefore, I tried to not indicate through words what I felt about the answers, however, small gestures and uncontrollable reactions might have occurred even without thinking about it.

Furthermore, my own belief about diversity is important as it could affect the way in which I understand the answers given by the teachers. Personally, I believe that diversity is a very important part of society and as such schools. My main understanding of diversity aligns with the one presented in chapter 2.1, but I tend to focus more on the sexual and gender identities of students, as well as the socioeconomic sides of diversity as that is what I am most used to meeting in my everyday life. There could be a risk of my preconceived notions coloring the results, however I have been working hard on removing myself from the discussion as I try to focus on the notions of the teachers.

This prior knowledge that I had before going into the interviews did give me an idea of what I thought the result would be. For instance, due to my prior meetings with the school system both as a student teacher and a student myself, have shown me that there seems to be a large emphasis on ethnicity in terms of diversity. This means that I went into the interviews believing that all the teachers would be speaking about this aspect, and much of the theory I

had read up on previously also revolved around this. While this was mostly based on previous experiences, it is reflected in previous research as well as can be seen in chapter 2.1. However, after conducting the interviews I had to read more up on other aspects as they did not solely focus on ethnicity, but also included sexuality and mixed abilities The following chapter will showcase the answers the teachers gave and through this I will demonstrate whether my initial assumptions were correct.

4.0 Analysis & Findings

This chapter will present the findings from the analysis of the interviews. This analysis will be done by employing the aspects of critical discourse analysis discussed in chapter 2.4. The analysis will be divided into categories based on the answers given by the teachers in the interviews, from their notions of diversity as a big term, through diversity being seen as a natural part of the classroom, to how the teachers report to work with diversity in the classroom, before finally analyzing what the teachers mentioned less or not at all.

This section, then, aims to analyze the teachers' answers through the lens of critical discourse analysis (CDA). Here, how they state their opinions, i.e. what words they chose when reflecting on diversity and what they focused on, becomes important to understand their views on, and understandings of, the term diversity. The section builds on Gee's ideas of discourse being political and as such positioned, and that how language is used is important to discover larger discourses (Gee, 2014). Furthermore, the section will also focus on van Dijk's (2006) view of binary opposition, which deals with how everything has an opposition. To better understand this idea of opposition one could look at the example of the teachers mentioning that they view a certain text as being "good", there is an indication that they find some texts to be "bad". In this thesis I will be using binary opposition to look at both what teachers emphasize when speaking about diversity, but equally important is what they deemphasize (van Dijk, 2006). These aspects from CDA will be seen in a bigger context of how the teachers share a discourse that may go beyond the individual schools and teachers.

4.1 Teachers' notions of diversity

In this section of the analysis I will be looking at the teacher's notions of diversity, first as an isolated term, before looking at the answers the teachers gave when connected to the school context and further the teaching practices. At the end I will summarize the findings of the section and highlight the ideas and notions the teachers have in common, as well as what oppositions exists in their answers.

4.1.1 A 'big' term

The opening question of the main part of my interview dealt with the teachers' understanding of diversity, something that could be said to be the most important question of the entire study. Their definitions of the term varied, but most found it difficult to explain. Teacher 2 for instance did not find the task of defining diversity an easy one.

I find it very difficult to define, to define the concept of diversity when it stands alone. It is a kind of concept that I think that in a way must be put in a kind of context. But there is a kind of variation in the concept, I think. It has something to do with the fact that something is varied, or unlike (ulikt), or different (forskjellig). And that is what is in the concept, but it is a bit difficult to give a precise definition of what diversity is when it stands by itself.

The teacher found it difficult to give a precise definition of diversity when used in isolation, outside of a context. Nevertheless, she had ideas of what diversity included, such as the notion of difference and variety. While T2 was the one who most explicitly stated the difficulty she had with the definition, 4 of the teachers (T1, T3, T4 and T6) expressed some reluctance to give a clear definition in their answers and resorted to using "Big" (stort) to explain the term.

yes, I think that… it is kind of a big concept. You can kind of think of diversity in relation to different cultures, different identities, eh, different countries of origin, where one comes from

Another teacher seemed to share that notion explaining that "the concept of diversity is really very big for me then" (T3) and a third teacher exclaimed that "it's quite big" (T4). The teachers' notions of diversity as 'big' seemed to indicate that the teachers were not confident in their own understanding of the term. Additionally, some of the teachers added intensifiers such as 'very' or 'quite' in front of 'big' further indicating that they might see the term as overwhelming and hard to grasp. Nevertheless, the usage of 'big' was in all three cases followed up by lists of what diversity could include, and as such they explained what they believed to be a part of diversity, ranging from "difference" to a list of the way in which human beings could potentially be different.

4.1.2 Diversity meaning difference

Many of the teachers tied diversity to the cultural differences in the classroom context. One teacher (T6) for instance, said that diversity "is about the fact that in a class community you have many people with different backgrounds and different prerequisites" What differentiates her from the other teachers who expressed a similar sentiment, is that she gave a definition of diversity which included the abilities and background of her students. In her definition she uses words such as "different" and rather than listing all the ways one can be different she suffices with the words 'background' and 'prerequisites'.

Adding to the notion of diversity being synonymous with difference teachers 5, 7, and 8 all gave explanations of diversity relating to the difference between their students. This can be seen how teacher 7, for instance, explains diversity the following way "I think it is that we have various students in the class. (…) first and foremost, there is a lot of cultures, many different countries". All but T7 used 'different' or 'difference' to initially describe what diversity meant. This can be seen in the previous answer shown from teachers 1, 2 and 6, and is further shown in this answer given by T5 "I think it is that we have different students in the class". This shows that the teachers see diversity and difference as synonyms, something that further implies that the teachers might be substituting diversity for a word that is easier to understand.

The ways in which the teachers explained how people could be diverse, i.e in what ways people are different from each other, were very alike, as they all focused on ethnicity and background initially. About half the teachers continued speaking about ethnicity throughout their interviews. An example of this is teacher 6 whom, upon asked her specific experiences with diversity, started her answer by stating that "we have students who are first generation or second-generation immigrants for example", as well as teacher 3 who stated that

> (…) with an enormous diversity, among other things with ethnicities considering that there are many workers there from, among others, Portugal, and Lithuania and Russia, so then there has been a fairly large diversity, with both language and backgrounds.

These quotes show that these teachers, had experienced having students of multiple different nationalities in their classrooms and as such focused more on this aspect when answering questions of what diversity they had seen in their classrooms. What this then demonstrates is that as these teachers were met by this kind of diversity more in their work, they were more inclined to talk about these aspects of the term. As a matter of fact, T8 even stated that she would probably be seeing diversity to be more about ethnicity herself if she had been working for a school that had more ethnic or linguistic diversity.

> So I probably think that our diversity, and the understanding of it, is narrower because we do not have the factor in everyday school life where there actually is someone who does not speak the same language as you. (T8).

4.1.3 Diversity - Natural in the classroom

As indicated above, some of the teachers immediately connected diversity to the classroom to be able to define it. For instance, T7 stated that "diversity it is… you really see it in my

classroom, I have a fairly diverse composite group to put it that way". Furthermore, teacher 8 expressed that "Yes, if I see it quite simply in a school context. Then I mean that diversity is about the individual, that meaning each individual that we have in the class, and what prerequisites they have". What is interesting with these two quotes, along with how the teachers seem more secure in their answers, is that they are both referencing the school setting. This is interesting because it shows that they might not be speaking of diversity as a whole, but rather the diversity they meet at their job.

This can be connected to how teacher 1 talked about how there was always an aspect of diversity in the classroom "We do have diversity in a classroom anyway though, even if we do not come from different countries". The idea of diversity always being present in the classroom was also something that many of the other teachers mentioned throughout their interviews. For example, teacher 3 stated that there would "naturally be a diversity in the classroom" as all the students were different and as such would bring difference into the classroom. This again shows that many of the teachers share similar ways of viewing the term, demonstrating what seems to be a shared discourse that goes beyond the individual schools.

Having diversity in the classroom was presented when teacher 1 was talking about how her school was very homogenous in terms of ethnicity. However, she insisted they still had diversity despite of this. While some of the teachers did stay on the theme of ethnicity when speaking about diversity, around half of them moved on to speaking of other ways in which their students could be seen to be diverse, albeit somewhat reluctantly in some of the cases.

> Me: (…)do you have any experiences with diversity in the classroom? In your own class?
>
> T2: do you mean in relation to ethnic diversity then or?
>
> Me: I want to know what you mean.

This small snippet of the interview with T2 shows that upon being asked her experiences, she seemed to assume that I wanted to know about ethnic diversity. This somewhat coincides with Teacher 1's ideas around diversity as she explains the school she works at as "We are pretty homogenous actually, there is not a lot of immigration here, they end up in another school. But at the same time, we do have students who some of them are very weak and some are very strong". There seems to be a sort of bargaining where they try to convince either me or

themselves that while they do not have much ethnic diversity, there still is a diversity in their classroom. This can further be seen in how T8 speaks about her classroom in terms of diversity in the following excerpt.

> With us it is the case that we are not an integration school, so we do not have many of foreign origin, so we do not have that diversity, at least not In the classes I have, it is not. We do not have any bilinguals in my class, so I do not get that diversity. But we get a diversity of skill level then you can say.

However, when they got past this initial hurdle they have created, they almost did not mention ethnicity in terms of students at all for the remainder of their interviews. What seems to be important for the teachers when they spoke about the skills of the students, is that they mention the more skilled students as much, if not more, than the students who are less skilled. For instance, T2, when speaking about how she accommodates for the different skill levels in the classroom, says that "it will be a little bit to find a middle ground, and it probably harms the strongest I think", which shows that she gives thought to all the students and reflect on the hardships that might be encountered by all students.

Additionally, A third aspect of diversity that around half of the teachers mentioned explicitly was the different sexualities and gender identities of the students in their classroom. In the case of one of the teachers this was mentioned fairly early in the interview when asked to elaborate more on her understanding of identity. This teacher started by saying that "Especially in today's society then, where there is so much, before you were a girl or a boy, but that is no longer the case now". The teacher then showed how there has been a change in how society had talked about identity, and how she has seen that in her classrooms as well. Another of the teachers (T2) explained that she had had students who were gay, but focused more on how the other students had reacted to these kinds of themes instead of how she viewed it herself. "There have been students who have changed school because it has been difficult to be a different (sexual) orientation here. That was probably not the whole reason, but it was a contributing factor". While teacher 2 had experiences with this mainly happening in the lower secondary, teacher 6, who works in a primary school also stated that she had had experience with trans students. This goes to show that although teachers 1,2,3 and 5 all had worked with lower secondary, this also is something that had occurred in the primary schools.

4.1.4 Summary of teachers' notions of diversity

What can be seen from the answers to the question of how the teachers understood the term diversity, is that especially two words were central: 'big' and 'different'. Firstly, half the teachers mentioned diversity to be a big term, some of them even adding intensifiers such as 'very' and 'quite' to emphasize their feelings. This can indicate that these teachers were overwhelmed by the term diversity and as such were reluctant to give a clear definition of diversity. This can be seen in opposition to the teachers who gave a definition without mentioning their feelings around the term in relation to the perceived size of it. Secondly, the word 'different' was mentioned by seven of the eight teachers, showing that most of them explicitly seemed to see diversity as demonstration of differences.

To add to that, the teachers further focused on three main aspects of diversity when speaking about how they had met it in the school setting. The first of the three main aspects was ethnic diversity, which all the teachers initially mentioned as ways in which students could be different. However, after a short while half the teachers directed their attention towards the second aspect, the mixed abilities of their students, albeit somewhat reluctantly in the start. There was a notion of the teachers convincing either me or themselves that this aspect was as valid as ethnicity, which was surpassed quickly as the teachers largely continued on the path of skill-based diversity for the remainder of their interviews. The third aspect of diversity that the teachers focused especially on, was the sexual diversity that they sometimes met in school. Here, the teachers seemed to focus more on how other students reacted to these kinds of differences, rather than how they met this themselves.

As the teachers spoke mainly either about ethnicity or skills, there was a notion of opposition between these two aspects (van Dijk, 2006). The opposition could be explained by the ethnic makeup of the schools the teachers worked in, and as such the differences in discourses. This is because the teachers who worked in schools were there was a lot of immigration spoke more about ethnicity, while the teachers who did not meet much immigration in their daily life focused on the skills of their students. Thus, there is evidence of two different discourses based on what kind of diversity they met the most in their classroom. The idea of visibility could furthermore explain why some teachers mentioned sexual diversity, since it was visible for them it was added to their discourse patterns.

4.2 Working with and within diversity

In the previous section there has been a focus on how the teachers understood diversity in isolation, and what diversity they met in their classrooms. However, it is also important to look at how they work with diversity in the EFL classroom. Therefore, this section will treat just that and see their answers in relation to how they understood the term diversity from the previous section.

> I think it has a lot to do with respect, I think, to teach them respect, but that's when you work on it together with the students. At the same time, we work in a way within that diversity too (Samtidig så jobber vi jo på en måte sammen med det mangfoldet da)

These are the words of T2 on what she felt was important when working with diversity in the classroom. As can be seen, she highlighted both the factor of working with diversity as a theme and with the diversity that was in the group itself. Here, she also mentioned the importance of respect when dealing with differences among people, something she came back to several times in her interview. The importance of respect was also supported by teacher 7 who not only mentioned it in terms of teaching the students respect, but also how we as teachers needed to show respect to the students. "And you must actually show the respect that is required In that context», in this quote she is speaking about how teachers must show the students respect when they are voicing their own opinions, to further help them develop their own identity.

4.2.1 A subconscious practice?

When teacher 1 was asked about how she included diversity in the classroom, she explained that "we do it without thinking about it (…) It's not something we think about, it's so natural" indicating that diversity was always present in the classroom through her use of the word "natural". This is also supported by teacher 3 when she said that "it becomes in a way natural enough that it becomes a thing even when we teachers are not aware of it (..) I think maybe it is a bit automatic".

While these teachers maintained that there was something natural or automatic about diversity, they did speak quite a bit on differentiating their assignments and texts. Which indicates that not all of the work with diversity was as automatic and subconscious as the teachers claimed it was. Nevertheless, several of the teachers did mention that diversity was in everything in the EFL classroom as they were learning about many different peoples and places throughout the subject. An example of this is when T1 said the following "It is present

in everything". Something that could indicate that the "automatic" part of diversity in the EFL classroom was connected to diversity as a theme and not the diversity within the class.

4.2.2 Finding texts for the classroom

One of the ways in which some teachers made sure of differentiation in the classroom was to use texts outside of the textbooks provided by the schools. When asked about the reason behind choosing not to use the textbooks, one of the teachers (T3) specifically mentioned how the books were outdated making it harder for the students to identify with the texts.

> …Because sometimes the textbooks are outdated, poorly worded (…)the students are concerned with that it should be interesting, it should be fun, they do not like being bored, I guess that's what I have tried to focus on their interests

Teacher 4 also mentioned how the textbooks oftentimes does not offer texts on the subjects they want to teach about; "we had the Middle Ages right after Christmas, then I did not find much in the textbooks about exactly that", and that this made her look to other texts that were more interesting for the students, as well as it fitting the theme.

While teacher 6 was more concerned with the representation the students met when reading the textbooks:

> I think it is important with representation, it should not just be Ola and Kari somehow. It must show greater cultural diversity. Also that one talks about different cultures as well. (..) I think it can be opened up for, in a much larger way to talk about other cultures where English is important. And maybe focus on why we speak English, why everyone learns English. Because it is also an important factor in diversity.

Further, teacher 1 stated that "it is about the buildup of the book" showing that there was not necessarily something wrong with the content, but rather how it was presented. The above excerpts show that the teachers had several reasons as to why they did not use the books, all of which made them look elsewhere to find texts for their classrooms.

What the teachers used instead of the textbooks varied significantly. Where one used books and movies that they, themselves, enjoyed and had a good knowledge of, such as Harry Potter, others worked theme based and found texts the students would enjoy based on these themes. From the following excerpts one can see that these four teachers all had very different ways to work with texts in their classrooms:

T3: I have used Harry Potter a lot, it is my big area of interest and there I have lots of resources for both how to use film and book.

T2: But, tried to find texts from... really rather thought that now I will have this theme where can I find text, think a little more theme-based.

T5: I have also used a magazine called The Week, and there is a junior version of an adult magazine called The Week that you buy in England that summarizes the week's news.

T7: But I'm the kind of person who has no books, and often the students write texts themselves and then we work from there.

While they had various places where they got texts from outside of the textbooks, everyone stated that what they value the most when choosing texts for the classroom was that the texts would be both interesting and accessible to the students. This way they assumed that the students would be more inclined to work better with the texts and through that absorb the messages of the texts better, as can be seen in, for example, teacher 8's example of what she valued when she chose a text, or more accurate when she helped the students find their texts:

So we try to persuade them to find some other texts. But it is difficult, because they do not want to read, it is not interesting. "I cannot read" "Yes, you can read". If the topic is interesting... but I try to get them to choose topics that are interesting to themselves

4.2.3 Assignments for fostering diversity

As shown in the start of this subchapter, teacher 2 highlighted how teachers did not only work with diversity in the material, but also the diversity within the group. One way, then, of dealing with diversity within the materials that teacher 1 utilized in her work, was that she would work with different English-speaking countries and look at the diversity within these countries. For instance, they would listen to how the people in the country spoke, what kind of food they ate and how they celebrate holidays, as well as treating the subject of native peoples when that was appropriate such as in the United states or Australia.

We do have writing assignments that treat… especially indigenous people are important things to work with then. Also around Christmas I think it's a bit nice to do a quiz about how Christmas is celebrated in different countries, because it is… of course we have movies from different places that we work with.

All these peculiarities connected to the different countries were then often compared to Norway as to make it more tangible for the students. This way of working with diversity by comparing countries to one another was also present in other classrooms, something that can be seen in Teacher 7's answer on the same question "We have also had this journey around the world then, in English, and explored the English forms of English. The difference between England, to America and India". This shows that comparison was sometimes used by the teachers to highlight differences and through that diversity.

> I have the very talented students in English, and they have simply gotten, I mean… I try as best I can to create open assignments, so that the students can work at the level they have, I have also had to… to those who are very talented… I have had to set other criteria so that they will also experience that they learn something.

Another way of working both with the material and the diversity in the classroom, is what teacher 6 explains in the previous excerpt. Here she is speaking about creating open assignments where the students get to work on their own levels, and while none of the other teachers used the term "open assignments" the layout seems very alike what, for example, teacher 8 spoke about when she said the following:

> In general in the English subject... I have to think that everyone should be able to achieve something within the topic I put up to. (…) I think that everyone can achieve something, that is, everyone has an opinion about something . Everyone should be able to write a few sentences if not an entire text.

This shows that both these teachers, and most of the others as well, found it important that the students could at least achieve something, whether that meant writing a few sentences or it meant writing an entire text.

Additionally, Teacher 2 had one assignment that she had the students do which invites to reflection on diversity without that explicitly seeming to be the point.

> They got a newspaper or a weekly magazine. The task was at least something like "The Earth goes under and only 8 people have managed to survive" so they should go to the newspaper and cut out these 8 so that humanity would rebuild as soon as possible. They had to have some examples of who you should include.

This had led to discussions of what age ranges were desirable to build up the earth again, as well as genetical differences, sexuality, life skills, and the like, and through that created a

discussion on diversity. Also this assignment was one of these "open assignments" where the students could do it completely to their own level, showing that these kinds of assignments seem to be popular among these teachers.

4.2.4 Summary of self-reported practices

What seems to most important to the teachers when talking about classroom practices, was that the main way in which they met diversity in the classroom was through using different texts. While some of the teachers still used the textbooks, the consensus in the teacher group seemed to be that the textbooks were insufficient at meeting the needs of their students. They highlighted how what was most important when choosing texts was that the students found the books interesting and that they were accessible language wise. This, along with the idea of working theme based in the EFL classroom seemed to be a shared preference for the teachers and as such shows that also in their self-reported practices the teachers had a shared discourse about diversity and its importance in the EFL classroom (Gee, 2014).

However, there was some tension in that the teachers put the textbooks and texts from outside sources up against each other, with most teachers favoring the latter (van Dijk, 2006). Another opposition can be found in how some of the teachers spoke about diversity being 'automatic' while the same teachers spoke a fair amount about how they worked a lot with differentiation between their students.

4.3 What was not discussed

While the interviews highlighted three important parts of diversity, there were aspects that was very briefly mentioned (i.e. when listing types of diversity) or not mentioned at all. As the approach used to analyze the material is a critical discourse analysis, also what is not mentioned becomes significant. For instance, there was little to no mention of physical disability among students. This is due to the teachers focused more on the skills of the students in the different subjects rather than their physical abilities.

Another aspect that was not at all mentioned by any of the teachers, is the diversity in the teaching staff. One of the teachers briefly mentioned that one of the staff at her school was from another country, and one of the teachers herself mentioned she had another cultural background, but this was never mentioned in terms of diversity. The teachers did focus on their own views of diversity, but when asked about diversity in the schools they worked the sole focus was on the students and not on themselves or their colleagues.

5.0 Discussion

In the following chapter there will be a discussion in which I will be connecting the findings of the analysis in chapter 4 with the theories presented in chapter 2, and through this answering the research question: *how do teachers of English in Norwegian schools understand the term diversity, and how to they facilitate for this in their self-reported classroom practices?* The discussion will be further be divided into subchapters corresponding with the findings of the previous chapter. To begin with, the chapter will be looking at diversity as a "big" term, before moving on to the different foci of the teachers and how they claim to accommodate for diversity in their classrooms. This will all be connected to previous research on the theme, theories that relate to the theme and findings as well as the curriculum. Lastly, the chapter will treat the question of weaknesses in the study, to further ensure transparency in the work.

5.1 The different understandings of Diversity

In asking about their general understanding of the term diversity, many of the teachers showed a sentiment of diversity being big and overwhelming when seen in isolation. This can be seen in relation to a research project conducted by, among others, Tony Burner on teacher's understandings of diversity, where they found that the teachers struggled with defining the term when seen in isolation (Burner et al., 2018). Further, then, this shows that these teachers' explanation of the term also fits within previous research done on the school setting. What this then means is that a sense of overwhelm when faced with curricular demands seems to be prevalent in the teacher discourse.

While not always using the exact same words, the interviewed teachers tended to express a similar understanding of the term. For instance, they used words like "big", "different", and "multicultural", across the board showing that these ideas existed in different places at the same time. These words being used by different teachers, in different locations, and of different ages, demonstrates what seems to be a common discourse pattern between English teachers in Norway. While we do have this fellow discourse pattern that all the teachers seem to adhere to, there are also two main discourse communities that exist within this pattern: the teachers who did and did not meet a lot of immigration in their classroom. These latter communities will be discussed further in the continuation of this chapter.

While the teachers differed a substantial amount in what they emphasized when thinking of diversity, it is valuable to see these differences. For instance, the teachers had differing views

on what was the most important part of diversity, as around half of the teachers spoke mainly about ethnic diversity, while the other half spoke about skill-based diversity. Additionally, the teachers who spoke mostly about skill-based diversity initially spoke about ethnical diversity, showing a tendency among the teachers to favor ethnicity when speaking about diversity. This idea strongly correlates with Lund's (2018) research done on Norwegian teachers where they found diversity to be less tangible, they favored the use of the word "multicultural' instead. Adding to this idea, Burner et al.'s (2018) research on teachers understanding of diversity also showed that teachers seemed to favor multicultural ideas when explaining what diversity consisted of.

Despite the curriculum (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017) only mentioning diversity in terms of differentiated education once, three of the teachers mainly talked about this after the initial focus on the cultural aspect. These three teachers all worked at schools that they classified as homogenous or "not an integration school", meaning that they had few if any students of different ethnic backgrounds. The focus on differentiated education, instead of ethnic diversity contrasts with the studies on diversity done by Lund (2018) and Burner et al. (2018), showing the what the teachers of this study found important does not necessarily always coincide with former research. However, as half of the teachers did focus on it, it shows an important discourse that teachers, seemingly especially coming from schools with less ethnic diversity, spend a large amount of time working on.

As for the case of sexual identity as diversity, there were varying degrees of how much the teachers emphasized this. Some of the teachers did indicate that this was becoming more prevalent with today's teens. Four of the teachers further mentioned that they have, or have had, LGBT students. Even though Røthing & Bang Svendsen (2009) problematized the textbooks used in the classroom in terms of representation of homosexuality, none of the teachers mentioned this group of students when talking about the representation in texts used in the classroom. One of the teachers (T5) even stated that she had never had to adapt any education due to LGBT students. This shows that the teachers seemed to downplay the issues connected to these kinds of diversities, rather than promoting it in their discourses.

While issues related the pupils' mixed academic abilities were forefronted in many of the teachers' reflections, physical disabilities were rarely mentioned or absent. While one of the teachers did mention wheelchair users very briefly, and another teacher mentioned there being an employee from another country at the school, both of these were merely mentioned in

passing. If this is seen in relation to statistics, about 17% of the Norwegian population have a physical disability (Bufdir, 2022), something that does not correlate with the teachers not mentioning this aspect of diversity more than once. This, then, goes to show that as none of the teachers spent time on the matter, it is safe to assume that this is not something that is mentioned a lot in teacher discourse, at least not where these teachers work.

5.2 The self-reported practices in the EFL classroom

Connecting their answers further to the English classroom, there is still an evident tendency of the teachers putting cultural and ethnic diversity up against skills-based diversity. While some of the teachers focused more on the theme of diversity in the EFL classroom, others focused more on how to make the education more accessible to all of their students, while a few gave about equal importance to the two. This by and large reflects the answers they gave in the portion that treated their understanding of the term. This subchapter will therefore be looking at all of these aspects and how they specifically connect to the question of diversity in EFL teaching.

One of the main questions designed to uncover how they worked with diversity in the classroom was "what is important to you when choosing texts for the English classroom?". The teachers all mentioned especially two things when talking about their practices of choosing texts: accessibility and interest of the students. One of the main concerns the teachers had when dealing with accessibility seemed to be finding good texts that were at an achievable level for the students, especially when they did not view the textbooks to be a good fit for their classrooms. What this suggests is that concerns for the students' mixed abilities were forefronted in the teacher discourse. This could also be connected to the question of interest as one of the main reasons they did not choose to use the textbooks, that are written to be at an accessible level for the students' age groups, was that the students seemed not to be interested in the texts that were presented in these books. While the teachers built this one their experiences in seeing what the students responded well to, this does coincide with previous research done on reading habits (Birketveit et al., 2018). For instance, it is proven that people are more likely to read if they are reading about something that interest them (Birketveit et al., 2018).

These practices correspond to the core curriculum and subject specific curriculum for English. This is due to these documents and the practices all highlight the importance of the identity of the students through putting importance in how the interests of the students was important to

the choice of the texts (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017; The Norwegian directorate of education, 2020). The core curriculum further treats the importance of adapting education to the individual students (The Norwegian ministry of education, 2017) making the practices of the teachers in alignment with the white pages of schools in Norway. While this might seem like the teachers are following the curriculum well when dealing with these issues, previous studies by for example Goodlad (1975) shows that this is not usually the case. However, the laws and regulations around differentiated education seems to be important to the teacher discourse and as such they do spend a good amount of time on this aspect.

While the teachers had quite different ways of going about including the interest of the students in the classroom, one of the teachers made sure this was done by writing her own texts for the students to read. However, while she felt like her students should meet an array of different people in the texts they read, she found it difficult to incorporate all the different ethnicities and sexual identities that she might have in a classroom. This was due to the fact that she was scared of misrepresentation of groups that she might not have a strong knowledge of. The ideas of this teacher seems to strongly coincide with the "windows, mirrors and sliding glass doors" analogy (Bishop, 1990), but also the fear of creating the funhouse mirrors and blind spots which Gultekin and May (2019) problematized. This means that the teacher stated that she found it important that students should be able to use texts as mirrors, in that they see themselves in them (Bishop, 1990), as well as windows to the world where they can see different realities (Bishop, 1990). What this shows is that while not directly communicated, there are ideas that are deeply imbedded in our consciousnesses that then is brought into the discourses one is a part of. However, the issues of misrepresentation were not fronted by any of the other teachers, something that means it cannot be said to definitely be part of the teacher discourse.

Respect was a word that many of the teachers used when speaking about what they found important when working with diversity. Here, both respect for the students and the respect between the students was highlighted, meaning that they both expected respect in the conversations between the students, but also how the students could expect respect from their teachers. The notion of respect being important is also prevalent in intercultural competence where both Byram (2021), and Huber and Reynolds (2014) argue that through understanding and respecting one's own culture, one is better equipped to understand others, and that this is largely dependent on respect between human beings.

6.0 Conclusion

In the following chapter I will be presenting the ethical considerations and a summary of the thesis. The ethical considerations are important to show any limitations the study might have, as well as giving recommendations for further studies on the theme of teachers' understanding of, and discourse around, diversity. Further the summary will end in a conclusion which answers the research question: How do teachers of English in Norwegian schools understand the term diversity, and how do they facilitate for this in their self-reported classroom practices. This conclusion then draws on the findings of the analysis, as well as the discussion of these findings.

6.1 Ethical Considerations

From an ethical point of view, there are some details that should be discussed. First, since my project includes recordings and transcriptions of interviews, I had to get a confirmation from NSD (Norsk senter for forskningsdata) that my work follows the ethical framework set by them. This was obtained before conducting the interviews, and all the work done has followed the regulations of this confirmation.

Furthermore, there is always a chance that the answers found are not true to reality, even more so with a qualitative study where there are no hard facts, and every aspect is dynamic and ever changing (Johannesen et al, 2021). Since there were only 8 teachers interviewed for this thesis, there is no basis for generalization as the sample was too small (Johannesen et al., 2021). As a matter of fact a little more than 0,1 permille of all teachers in Norway took part in the study (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2021). This number is probably higher for English subject teachers, but not significantly as to be able to generalize the findings. It is also of importance here to remark that none of the 8 respondents were male, something that is somewhat disproportionate in the school as one in four teachers is male (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2021). However, the answers do give an insight into how teachers think around the word diversity and as such is a valuable asset to the field.

Another aspect in which there is possibilities for misrepresentation is the fact that the study only shows the self-reported practices of the teachers. Here, there is a possibility of the teachers sharing idealized practices and not necessarily what they do in the classroom (Johannesen et al., 2021). Obtaining knowledge of what is done in classrooms could only be achieved by observing the teachers in the classroom over time, something that would be too time-consuming for a thesis of this size. This is always a risk with any interview study as the

respondents might answer what they think the researcher want to hear, however, as the findings of this study closely reflect findings of earlier studies on the theme there is no reason to believe this has happened in this case.

Lastly, it is important to keep in mind that the interviewer is a part of the conversation and meaning making in the interview (Kvale, 2007). This means that while I can try my best, I will never be able to stay impartial in the conversation (Kvale, 2007). I, as the researcher, go into the interview with my believes and such a seemingly small thing as a smile or nod could indicate to the respondent that they are answering something that I deem to be "good" and a frown could indicate that I do not agree with the respondents (Kvale, 2007). However, as discussed under the heading of reliability of the study, I went in with a belief that the teachers would all only be speaking about ethnical diversity. As that was not the case, I would assume that I did not guide the teachers too much in their answers and as such the answers presented are what the teachers wanted to say.

While there were not enough respondents to see clearly whether age, location, education, or years worked had a definite effect on how the teachers answered the questions of the interviews (Johannesen et al., 2021), there are certain tendencies that should be discussed. Among others, the teachers generally seemed to agree on the essence of diversity being connected to cultural difference, while it was also not unlikely that the ethnic makeup of the individual schools were reflected in their views on diversity. However, as stated previously, these are tendencies in my findings and cannot be generalized for the entire teacher population (Johannesen et al., 2021). That means that, while the teachers in this study showed agreement or disagreement around certain parts of diversity, this might not be the case for all EFL teachers in Norway.

As for further studies, I would recommend to interview more teachers as that would enhance the potential for making generalized assumptions based on the answers given. Furthermore, I would also bring male teachers into the mix, as to see whether that would have any effect on the answers. Lastly, I did feel that the interviews done in person were easier to analyze as I had seen more of the teachers' body language and as such could make more notes of this.

6.2 Summary and conclusion

This thesis investigated teachers' discourses around the term diversity, and how it can be introduced into the EFL classroom. The answers were found through a series of semi structured interviews with eight teachers of English from 7 different schools around Norway.

The interviews were later transcribed and analyzed to find shared ideas and discover how the teachers spoke about the term diversity. After this their answers were discussed drawing on theories and previous research on diversity and other relevant fields.

Through the analysis, which drew on aspects from critical discourse analysis (Gee, 2014: van Dijk, 2006), it was evident that the teachers seemed to have a shared understanding of what diversity entailed even though they did not necessarily express it in the same ways. Words such as "different" and "big" proved to be at the center of this understanding, as multiple of the teachers used these exact words to describe diversity. Different was used by and large as a substitute for diversity, which shows the teachers might have needed to simplify the term in order to talk about it. Most of the teachers were also quick to mention matters of ethnicity and oftentimes put this first when listing the various ways in which a person could be diverse, before moving on to other things such as skills and identity. Even teachers who spent most of their interviews speaking about skills diversity started off speaking about ethnicity. This shows that there seems to be a fellow discourse between teachers when it comes to diversity that sees diversity as first and foremost including ethnicity and multiculturalism (Lund, 2018).

 While there seems to be an agreement between the teachers in the initial stages, there also were indications on the student body of their schools having a say in what the teachers focused on. Here, the teachers fit into two different groups depending on what kind of diversity they were most exposed to in their work life: The teachers who worked in schools with a lot of immigrants, and the teachers who worked in schools with an ethnically homogenous student group. While the first group spoke mostly about the ethnicity and multicultural parts of diversity, the second one initially spoke about ethnicity and multiculturalism, but quickly redirected their attention to the different skills of their students. What can be understood form this is that while there seemed to be one overreaching discourse among all the teachers of initially seeing diversity as something big and largely focusing on ethnicity, also the level of immigration seemed to create two different discourses.

Further connecting their answers to the EFL classroom, the teachers were asked question on how they worked with diversity in the subject. Here, the teachers were still somewhat split in between skills-based diversity and ethnic diversity in that some of the teachers focused more on how they worked with the different skill-levels of their students, while others put importance on working with diversity as a theme mainly focusing on different countries. This

can then be connected to the previous statement of the discourse patterns being different based on the level of immigration the teachers met in their everyday life.

When speaking about how the teachers worked both with and within the diversity in the classroom, a word that was present in most of the interviews was "respect". They were speaking about the importance of both respecting one's students, as well as teaching the students to respect other people. When speaking about this, the teachers also touched upon intercultural competence (Byram, 2021; Huber & Reynolds, 2014). This was done through the way they insinuated that teaching about respect was done through learning about their own cultures and then comparing this with the other cultures they met in the classroom.

Another aspect that was mentioned by various teachers, although not always explicitly, was critical thinking and through that also critical literacy (Janks, 2018). While one teacher used fake news to inspire her students to discover the truth and look at texts from a critical lens, and through this teaching them not to take everything at face level, other teachers let students find their own texts to work with themes and as such had the students practice critical thinking when choosing these texts. While they had different ways for reaching the goals, they were in on an aspect that is highlighted throughout the curriculum, as well as in society as a whole in the "post-truth" world that Janks (2018) speaks of.

Connecting to this, there seemed to be an agreement also surrounding the role of text in teaching students about diversity. From using the textbooks, through finding texts elsewhere, to writing their own texts, the teachers had their own ways to make sure the texts were deemed good enough for the students. There were three aspects that was important to the teachers when choosing texts for their classrooms: difficulty, theme, and interests. All three of these can be connected to different understandings of diversity highlighted by the teachers in their interviews. While difficulty is connected to the skill-based diversity of the classroom, theme was more connected to cultural and ethnic diversity as the themes the teachers mentioned were oftentimes different countries. Interest, then, was connected to an aspect of diversity that was mentioned by less teachers: the identity diversity between seemingly homogenous students. The teachers highlighted the importance of students being interested in what they read, something that was achieved best through the students seeing themselves in what they read, like in a mirror (Bishop, 1990). However, they also mentioned how it was important that students were exposed to texts that showed how people were different to

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themselves and through that learn about diversity, as if the texts were windows to the world (Bishop, 1990).

It is evident that there are aspects of many different theories and analogies connected to diversity in the answers given by the teachers, even if they might be subconscious for the teachers. As they state, diversity is something that is prevalent in everything and not something they necessarily think about when designing classes. This then supports that there seems to be some ideas that are shared between teachers of English when speaking about diversity, but also some other themes such as the usage of text in the classroom. While there were not enough respondents to be able to generalize, this shows a tendency of a discourse pattern between the teachers, which sees diversity as something "big", that includes "different" humans, and can be worked with through "respect". It is also likely that the ethnic makeup of the schools in which the teachers work have an effect on what aspects of diversity they focus on, but that the ethnic diversity is at the forefront for most teachers regardless (Lund, 2018).

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