



MASTER'S THESIS

Adapted education for gifted students: a qualitative
study of teachers' experiences, opinions and
perceptions

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I confirm that the work is self-prepared and that references/source references to all sources used in the work are provided, cf. Regulation relating to academic studies and examinations at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), § 12-1.

Abstract in Norwegian

Dette forskningsprosjektet underforsker engelsklærere fra 5. til 10. trinn sine opplevelser og tilnærminger i møte med tilpasset opplæring for gruppen evnerike elever. Forskningsspørsmålene som skulle besvares var: 1. Tilpasser lærere opplæringen for evnerike elever, og hvis ja, hvordan gjør de det? 2. Hva er hovedutfordringene rundt integrering av tilpasset opplæring for evnerike elever? En nettbasert spørreundersøkelse ble gjennomført med 27 deltakere, hvor 14 av deltakerne svarte på hele undersøkelsen. Disse 14 ble inkludert i analysen. Analysen av lærernes svar i spørreundersøkelsen viser at de fleste lærerne tilpasser undervisningen sin for evnerike elever. Basert på svarene i spørreundersøkelsen er metodene som blir tatt i bruk ved tilpasset opplæring for evnerike elever differensiering av læringmateriale, differensiering gjennom høyere forventninger til elevene, oppgaver med vidt perspektiv hvor det er opp til den enkelte elev å finne sitt nivå, alternative internettoppgaver og autonomi over litteraturvalg. Hovedutfordringene ved å integrere tilpasset opplæring for evnerike elever ser ut til å være mangel på tid til planlegging og gjennomføring, mangel på læringsressurser, classesammensetninger av elever på forskjellige nivåer med opptil 30 elever per klasse, oppgavekonstruksjon med tanke på det blandete nivået og elevens bevissthet rundt mål og optimale læringsstrategier.

Abstract in English

This research project explores English teachers from 5th to 10th grade's experiences with and approaches to adapted education for the group gifted students. The research questions were: 1. Do teachers adapt their education for gifted students and, if yes, how do they do it? 2. What are the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students? An online survey questionnaire was conducted in which 27 respondents opened the questionnaire and 14 of them completed it. Only the completed surveys were included in the analysis. The data indicates that most of the teachers adapt their education for gifted students. The methods of adaptation include differentiation of learning materials, differentiation through higher expectations to the gifted students, broader tasks where it is up to each individual student to find their suited level, alternative internet-based tasks and autonomy in choice of literature. The main obstacles to integration of adapted education for gifted students include a lack of time for planning and practice of adapted education for gifted students, a lack of learning resources, the class construction of mixed level groups with up to 30 students per class, construction of tasks that are suited for the mixed level and students' self-awareness of their personal aims and optimal ways of learning.

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List of abbreviations

LK06: The Norwegian national curriculum from 2006 to 2019	10,14,15
LK20: The current Norwegian national curriculum	10, 14
DCSF: The English Department for Children Schools and Families	7, 12, 52
IEP: Individual education plan	46

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1. Introduction

The topic of adapted education has been in the forefront of education in the Norwegian school system for several decades. The Norwegian Education act states that: "Education must be adapted to the abilities and aptitudes of the individual pupil, apprentice, candidate for certificate of practice and training candidate" (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3). Thus, the educational system is legally required to adapt the education in order to boost the students' performances at all levels of ability. This requirement has led to teachers adapting their teachings to comply to every student in their respective classroom, which may in some cases lead to some students being left unchallenged, depending on several different factors, which will be further explored in this study.

This study is going to focus solely on the English subject in the Norwegian school system, whereas earlier studies have focused on adapted education in a broader sense. What I find interesting about this topic in particular and why I have chosen to study it further are my own experiences during my time as a student with English as a second language. I found myself unchallenged in most of the English classes as I would consider myself a "gifted" student according to the DCSF (English Department of Children, Schools and Families), which they define as: "those who have one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their peer group (or with the potential to develop these abilities)." (Bailey, et al., 2012; Department for children, schools and families (DCSF), 2008). However, a standard definition of the term gifted is still lacking, as will be presented throughout the thesis. Therefore, it will be interesting to explore what teachers find to be the biggest obstacles when adapting for gifted students and how they themselves define this student group.

Adapted education's main aim is to integrate all students into a as much as possible similar day to day school life, while also aiming to differentiate in order for students to unlock their true potential. All students in Norway are entitled by law to receive an exclusive education suited to their abilities and potential (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3). Gifted students are as much entitled to an individually tailored education as any other students, however studies show that this student group in many cases do not receive the amount of adaptation that is needed for them to develop further, leading to a higher rate of high school dropouts due to increased frustration and loss of motivation (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 53).

1.1 Research problem and research questions

The gap that exists in the current research which this study is aims to fill is a lack of research focused on teachers' knowledge and perceptions of gifted students as well as a lack of qualitative studies on the topic (Børte & Lillejord, 2016, pp. 28-29). The following research questions have therefore been formulated:

1) Do teachers adapt their education for gifted students and, if yes, how do they do it?

2) What are the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students?

1.2 Rationale of the study

The rationale of the study is the existing lack of research on the topic of adapted education for gifted students. This study therefore seeks to provide value through further study of previously unexplored areas of the topic by presenting a questionnaire to English teachers from 5th to 10th grade in which they are asked several qualitative questions about adapted education and gifted students. The questionnaire is distributed through a Norwegian Facebook group of English teachers consisting of approximately 18 000 members (2022). This is in order to discover how English teachers approach and experience adapted education in their classrooms when faced with gifted students.

1.3 Potential limitations

Potential limitations of the study include the choice of survey questionnaire as a method. This method is chosen due to the potentially larger sample size of respondents through online questionnaire research as opposed to traditional interviews. Other limitations include my own personal interpretations of the research data, as my own experiences will influence how I interpret the findings.

1.4 Thesis structure

The thesis is structured as follows:

1. Introduction, where the topic in general will be presented along with which research questions and aims will be focused on
2. Theoretical background, where the existing theory and research on the topic will be presented
3. Methodology, where the method of the study will be further explored and explained and rooted in earlier methodological research
4. Findings, where the main body of research data will be presented
5. Discussion, where the research data will be discussed
6. Conclusion, where concluding remarks and results of the study will be presented along with recommendations for future research

2. Theoretical background

The following chapter focuses on the theory behind all the concepts that will be introduced and researched in this study. The chapter is structured by first introducing adapted education as a concept, followed by previous research on gifted students and lastly the two concepts combined in the section covering adapted education for gifted students. Throughout this chapter both the terms adapted education and gifted students will be covered by presenting different approaches and definitions of both terms.

2.1 Adapted education

Adapted education as a term has been in use since the Norwegian government introduced the law of adapted education in 1998 (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3). The principle of adapted education states that every student, gifted or not, shall get an education suited for their individual skills and needs (Børte & Lillejord, 2016). However, for this to succeed each individual teacher needs to differentiate their teaching to every student's need which could present some challenges.

However, the clear and shared definition of adapted education is not yet available as there are several different perceptions on what the scope of adapted education really is. This is due to the fact that research carried out in recent years have had different approaches to adapted education, thus leading to a variety of definitions (Mikalsen & Sørheim, 2012). Bachmann and Haug defines adapted education as a non-static term, meaning the definition changes with the discourse in which the term is used and that the discourses must be seen in relation to reform commitments and how the schools meet these commitments. This view on adapted education is also called a wide approach to adapted education, where the main focus is on how the approach to adapted education is defined in local and regional teaching plans. Crucial to this part of the process are the schools' and teachers' competence in the construction of these plans based on the local and individual prerequisites and needs (Bachmann & Haug, 2006). In contrast to the wide approach is the narrow approach, which focuses on the individual, and finding the most efficient way for each one of the students to learn. This approach, however, does not focus on the entire class as a learning community, thus it is narrow.

Having adapted education deeply rooted in the Norwegian law of education (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3), it is a common notion that the principle of adapted education is an individual and legal right. This notion is according to Haug's experiences shared, not only between parents, but also teachers and school administrators (Olsen & Haug, 2020). However, the preparatory works of the law states that: "adapted education shall take place within the community of the classes or groups, and to the extent that the teacher is practically capable of." Thereby cementing the notion that adapted

education is an ambition rather than a right. However, it is the schools' goal to make adapted education as achievable as possible (Olsen & Haug, 2020).

Another approach presented by Dale and Wærness (2005, 2007), who's main focus is on the student, where adapted education must be seen in relation to each individual student's accomplishments of the competence aims. However, with LK20, the new curriculum, there are fewer competence aims in total, and the remaining aims focus on in depth learning, rather than ability to revise and reproduce facts on a test (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Each students' individual ability to develop their understanding and competence in the subjects, depends on what knowledge they have already acquired, prior to the in-classroom education (Dale, Wærness, & Lindvig, 2005). This approach to adapted education focuses mainly on each students' metacognitive strategies, meaning how well the students are able to adapt their strategies to achieve their learning goals. It will therefore be interesting to see what type of approach to adaptive education the teachers in my study will state as their preferred approaches.

Similar to Dale and Wærness is Buli-Holmberg and Ekeberg's (2009) approach. They consider adaptive education as a concept involving both students' learning and teaching. When these concepts are in tune, the teaching will be adapted to each individual student's needs, which means that each student's starting point, strengths and learning styles will be taken into consideration in order to adapt the teaching to the students and the learning situation (Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009). It is therefore stated by Buli-Holmberg and Ekeberg that differentiation of the content is crucial in order to suit every student's needs and abilities in the learning situation. By differentiating the content, the main intent is to preserve every student's needs as well as preserving the diversity of the student group. Thus, maintaining the best possible learning conditions for each and every student (Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009). Buli-Holmberg and Ekeberg's approach to adapted education focuses mainly on mapping out students who are incapable of learning under normal conditions, which in most cases are students in need of either special education or an individual learning plan, thus ruling out the students who need more challenging materials than their peers (Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009). Important to note is that the main focus of most of the books written before 2020 is on the old curriculum, LK06. Therefore, the different approaches may vary depending on each curriculum's competence goals.

Contrasting the other approaches is Repstad and Tallaksen's (2011) approach, which focuses on the teacher, by maintaining that the teacher can contribute towards adapted education by conscious choice of working methods relating to the students' abilities and the content of the subjects (Repstad & Tallaksen, 2011). Their approach is presented through a methodology book, which goes through

different types of activities a teacher can take part in, in order to improve their practice. Also highlighted is the importance of teacher competence in a variety of work methods, in order to be able to find a suited working method for each student, class and subject. Thus, having an ever-expanding toolbox of methods and approaches suited for the different parts of the curriculum and everyday teaching (Repstad & Tallaksen, 2011).

A more holistic approach as mentioned is the approach by Bjørkvold (2010), which initially focuses on the students as a key player where the student's awareness of his or her motivation, what they want to learn and how they want to learn it. This is seen in relation to the teacher, who should make a program with a broad perspective, which gives the students the opportunity to start learning from their own individual starting points, rather than starting collectively at the same point. In this approach, the teacher does not define the level, which leads to the students having to find their own way (Bjørkvold, 2010). In this approach the teacher is not responsible for making differentiated tasks for each student. The teacher is rather encouraged to find tasks that are possible to tackle from different angles, thus resulting in the students being able to solve the tasks in their own way (Bjørkvold, 2010). This does however present some issues as it is very challenging to find such tasks in every subject, especially if you are basing your education on a textbook without differentiated levels of texts.

While having these different approaches in mind, it will be interesting to see which approaches are more prevalent as my research commences.

Adapted education as a concept has been defined in various ways throughout the literature. As recent as in 2019, there were made efforts to change the terminology from adapted education to "universal education" or "fortified education", where the universal part is the part that should affect all students, ensuring quality for all students. The fortified part is meant to inhabit students in need of special intervention within the ordinary part of the education. Special education in this suggestion should be called "individually adopted education" (Olsen & Haug, 2020). The reasoning behind this suggestion is, as previously stated, the lack of a shared definition, which has led to adapted education being interpreted and practiced differently from school to school or teacher to teacher. It lacks both a shared common understanding and a shared common practice, thus suggesting that changing the term to "universal" would lead to less misconceptions and differences in practice (Olsen & Haug, 2020).

For this study, I will be following the most common definition of adapted education, which is: education that is tailored to suit each individual student's ability and prerequisites.

2.2 Gifted students defined by European countries

The term “gifted students” is a widespread concept; however, a shared definition is lacking as each country defines the term “gifted” differently. In England, for example, there is a differentiation between gifted and talented students, where the term “gifted” relates to high ability within academic subjects such as History or English, whereas talented relates to high ability within subject which require visio-spatial skills or practical abilities, such as games, physical education, drama and art to name a few (Bailey, et al., 2012; Gardner, 1984). However, “Giftedness” and “Talent” have a shared definition by the DCSF (English Department of Children, Schools and Families) which is: “those who have one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their peer group (or with the potential to develop these abilities)” (Bailey, et al., 2012; Department for children, schools and families (DCSF), 2008).

This differentiation is however only present in England and Northern Ireland, whereas in the other British countries other terminology is used when referring to the same group. In England and Northern Ireland they are called “gifted and talented”, in Scotland they are called “more able” and in Wales they are known as being both “talented” and “more able” (Bailey, et al., 2012). However, for this particular study I have chosen to use “gifted” as my main terminology as I am focusing on the subject of English, which is considered an academic subject, thus suggesting which terminology is the most fitting. The terms “gifted” and “talented” are also used by the English Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and several other stately funded associations that will be presented throughout this section, which further implicates the validity of this terminology usage (Bailey, et al., 2012; Department for children, schools and families (DCSF), 2008).

Moving on to central Europe, and the German-speaking countries, there are similar definitions of “giftedness”, however there are also variations. Austria, for example, does not differentiate between “giftedness” and “talent”, but rather use “giftedness” as an overarching term, and defines it as: “an individual’s potential for outstanding achievements, which includes logical-mathematical, verbal, and visual-spatial as well as motor, music, and social-emotional skills” (BMUKK, Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, 2009) (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011).

The same definition of “giftedness” is shared by the leading research department of giftedness in Austria, but with further elaboration on the topic: “Giftedness is defined as an individual’s total achievement, including non-cognitive, which may be transformed into actual achievement by an active process of learning and development through the interaction between the individual and her or his environment.” (ÖZBF (the Austrian Center for Gifted Education and Research on Giftedness),

2010). In this case, the term “gifted” is used as an umbrella term, including both “gifted” and “talented” students if seen in relation to the British definitions.

Germany shares a much similar definition to Austria, which states: “Gifted children are children who have the potential for outstanding achievement in certain areas, for example at school, in sports, in music or in art (...) Giftedness may be seen as a high developmental potential.” (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), 2009) (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011). However, education in Germany is the responsibility of each and every state, thus the definitions may vary slightly from state to state. The Karg Foundation, who are a foundation working on the advancement of gifted education and gifted children, have stated that individuals with an IQ score of 130 or higher often are considered to be gifted, however, “individuals with an excellent scholastic performance, high motivation or extraordinary creativity may also indicate giftedness and may also be used as criteria to determine giftedness. (Preckel, Schneider & Vock, 2009)” (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011). Also stated by the Munich Model of Giftedness is a giftedness conceptualized as having potential for high performance, if the surrounding factors serving as moderators for realization are in place (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011) .

Moving on to Switzerland, the educational system differs a lot from that of Norway, as the responsibility for education is carried out by the 23 cantons, the Swiss states, where every canton has its own head of education. They do however coordinate the work on a national level at the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education. (EDK) Through the EDK they finance a special network for gifted children in all the 20 German speaking cantons, which is called the “Netzwerk Begabungsförderung”. Through this network gifted children are provided with information and services through the digital world (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011). They also follow the Munich Model’s school of thought and share the same definition of giftedness. Another Swiss foundation for gifted children, the Stiftung für hochbegabte Kinder, defines giftedness as “a disposition for exceptional performances later on”, adding that it is usually defined by an IQ of 130 or higher (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011). Although they share this interpretation of giftedness with their German counterparts, they too state that a definition of giftedness must transcend cognitive intelligence, linking it to the works of Howard Gardner (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011; Gardner, 1984).

Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences state that a person’s intelligence can not be defined exclusively by standardized tests, but rather that one’s intelligence is divided into different aspects, and multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1984). The notion that a gifted individual’s IQ is usually 130 or higher therefore clashes with Gardner’s theory, because an individual with significant talents within the musical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, personal or spatial intelligence fields will not be picked up if

the determining factor is the IQ score (Gardner, 1984). If an IQ score were to determine whether an individual was truly gifted, one would be left with most of the logical-mathematical intelligent individuals as it is these fields that are usually tested in a standard IQ test. It will therefore be interesting to see if the teachers in my research define gifted students as high achieving in every subject or if they rather look at the potential instead of performance.

It is apparent that the term “gifted” has many different definitions depending on who you ask, similar to “adapted education”. However, it is important to differentiate between students who have already realized their potential and students whose talents are left unrealized. Both groups of students can be considered as gifted, as the most common definition of a gifted student is “a student with great learning potential” (Børte & Lillejord, 2016).

2.3 Adapted education for gifted students

As previously stated, defining both “adapted education” and “gifted students” can be challenging, as the definitions are not set in stone. When these two phenomena come into interplay, it is even more challenging, which has been discovered not only by teachers in their practice, but also by researchers. Some of the main researchers on the field have researched both gifted students and how the education is adapted according to this student groups’ needs (Smedsrud & Skogen, 2016; Idsøe & Skogen, 2011). By using their research as an entry point on the topic seen in the Norwegian context, one should get an idea on how this student group is identified, and how it is approached in the Norwegian school system.

Adapted education’s main goal is to integrate all students into a, as much as possible, similar day to day school life and education. However, adapted education as a theory also aims to differentiate for students to find their true potential academically, thus sparking a dissonance between the integration and adaptation. While comparing the Norwegian Education act to the current and previous curriculum, both LK06 and LK20 states that the school is supposed to be socially, culturally and academically inclusive. However, paragraphs 1-3 in the law of education focuses on adapted education, suggesting that each student should get an exclusive education suited to their abilities and needs (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 34-35; Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3). If this was the case, it is not unlikely that the increasing degree of individualization through academic differentiation might lead to less social inclusiveness, having the individual learning plans act as a social barrier as the academic differences would be much more apparent in the classrooms. On the other hand, by individualizing for each student, they might be able to reach their learning goals quicker, leading to a

feeling of achievement, which may in turn spark both motivation and boost their social confidence (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 34).

The Norwegian Education act as well as the previous curriculum (LK06) both state and commit the school owners to an education that is adapted according to the abilities and potential of every student, which in turn means that this also should be accounted for with gifted students. (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 34) However, neither the Norwegian school society nor the special education training have taken this student group into much consideration, leaving a lot to be desired when it comes to adaptation across the board (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 34).

Delving deeper into adapted education for gifted students, and the three main considerations when adapting your education from Idsøe & Skogen's perspective, the nuances of the terminology start to shine through. As the law states, the adaptation shall be carried out in order to suit the students' abilities and potential. However, when questioning what adapted education really means, three main considerations are often restated as the most important. First, adapting to the students' academic level. Second, adapting to the students' learning capacity, and third, adapting to the students' best way of learning, or their learning style (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 35-40). In addition to these academic considerations, one must also be aware of each student's development of their relational skills, or their "interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence" (Gardner, 1984).

While looking at the academic level of students and adaptation through knowledge of this level, it is important that this knowledge is sampled in one way or another. By mapping out the students' existing knowledge of a topic, the teacher can easily identify what pre-existing knowledge the students bring to class. However, by doing so it might still be challenging to identify the gifted students depending on the method of how it is mapped. For example, if the mapping is based solely of teacher observations in class, while teaching at a level suited for a normal achieving student, the gifted student might lose motivation and feel uninspired as the student is left unchallenged due to input of already existing knowledge (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 35). It is therefore crucial that each teacher carefully maps out the students' pre-existing knowledge in their subjects, thus resulting in a broader understanding of which student is at what level, and how the education could be adapted accordingly.

When taking each students' learning capacity into consideration, it is even more apparent how multidimensional adapted education really is. Learning capacity is partially innate and partially a consequence of experience. The innate part is also partially genetically conditioned and partially affected by the environment during birth, thus making a student's learning capacity hard to map out without previous experience with the student (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 36-37). The teacher's job,

however, is to be conscious of the existence of the differences in learning capacity from student to student. This concept is not as crucial when it comes to clearly mapping out a level for each student. Learning capacity is often connected to previous learning experiences. If a student has experienced positive learning experiences at earlier levels, it is more likely that this student has a greater learning capacity than a student that has had negative learning experiences (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 37). Therefore, the learning experience is a crucial part of strengthening both the students' learning capacity as well as learning potential.

Although these earlier mentioned concepts are taken into consideration, there is still an outlying factor that is even harder to identify: each student's learning style. Learning style is defined as the most efficient manner of which a student learns a topic or subject. This is also tied to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, in which some students learn more through their visio-spatial intelligences, by being exposed to illustrations rather than text, whereas other students learn more through their linguistic intelligence (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011; Gardner, 1984). An individual's learning style is often identified through trial and failure. As an adult, one is most likely aware of which learning style is best suited to gain new knowledge. However, this is not necessarily the case for younger learners as they are not yet aware of which style best suits them, and it is therefore important that each individual teacher diversifies their teaching styles in order to comply to the different learning styles and hopefully raise each learner's awareness of the style in which they are most receptive to new knowledge.

The final aspect of all the considerations is that the education must focus on cooperation and relation skills, meaning that differentiation shall not take place if this leads to segregation of the class. In order to develop a student's intelligence to their full potential, one cannot put interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences on the sideline. By developing these personal relation skills through cooperative exercises, it is more likely that the students will develop positive learning experiences as they are learning together rather than on their own, thus strengthening their learning capacity as their education continues (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 40-41).

2.4 Gifted students and the experiences in Norwegian schools

Although studies on gifted students is a widespread concept, there is a lack of Norwegian academic literature on the field. One of the main reasons could be due to the notion that adapted education should meet the students at a common middle ground, making it challenging for the gifted students to engage in the education, at it is interpreted as more of a routine than a challenge, which in turn can lead to loss of motivation (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 47). The main problem when it comes to

adapting for gifted student is identification. In the European context of gifted student definition, a gifted student is defined as a student with great learning potential. Due to the scarce supply of Norwegian academic literature on the field, Idsøe & Skogen's research is the main source of reference.

Identifying a gifted student can be challenging. Previous research has pointed out a few main characteristics of this student group, for example all gifted students have a shared wish to learn, understand and discover. Their energy can seem rather unusual, as they are extremely passionate in their interests, and express this through continuous questioning and extreme curiosity. These students are also characterized by their exceptional memory and their ability to find cohesiveness through quick rows of association. They ask for logical explanations and can therefore be interpreted as challenging to some. They are often creative and have a well-developed sense of humor. However, there can be a missing correlation between intellectual and emotional maturity, leading to some of them feeling shy, different and unhappy in certain situations (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 48-49).

When discussing what measures can be taken to elevate the gifted students' learning outcome in the Norwegian school, there are a two main factors. One of them being a quicker pace. If a gifted student follows the usual program, he or she will finish the tasks quickly and therefore come to a halt in progression. If the gifted student is then allowed to keep on going forward in the learning materials, he or she will be able to keep working in their quicker pace, thus resulting in a greater learning outcome from each lesson.

The other main factor to consider when adapting for gifted students is enrichment of the ordinary education. If a student completes the ordinary learning materials, he or she must be met with alternative activities. These activities, however, must not feel like repetitive task without meaning, but rather be used to create a deeper understanding of the learned materials, leading to further development of the students' knowledge in their proximal development zones (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49; Vygotsky, 1987). However, it is not to be understated that every student should have these types of activities available to them, as there most certainly are students that feel like they are not adequately challenged while only following the regular learning materials. By presenting additional, meaningful activities, it is likely that more students would feel adequately challenged, thus, potentially leading to a more meaningful school experience and heightened motivation. (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49)

A gifted student being faced with inadequate challenges throughout their education can lead to a series of difficulties and challenges as time passes. Idsøe & Skogen reference a list of challenges as presented by Mønks (2008, p. 69), including: 1. Lack of concentration, 2. Negative school academic

self-image, 3. Low tempo of learning, 3. Problems with acquiring written learning materials, 4. Negative perception of teachers and school, 5. Lack of school motivation, 6. Unsatisfaction with own study habits and results, 7. Too many activities apart from school that negatively affect homework, 8. Too great expectations from peers concerning good academic results, 9. Teachers continuously claiming the achievements are lower than the opportunities, 10. Parents being displeased with the low academic achievement level, 11. Exam anxiety, 12. Bad social self-belief, 13. Feeling of not being accepted by classmates (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 51).

As we can see, the possible consequences of a lack of adaptation are many and it is therefore even more important that the awareness around adapted education for gifted children is raised across the board. Norwegian case studies of the school situation for gifted students within the regular school system show the consequences of enrolling these students in a regular education without much room for adaptation from the schools' side. In a case study of five students, where some of them have had semesters in other countries, the students tell of their experiences with the Norwegian school system (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 51).

The five informants of the case study were all classified as "significantly gifted students", meaning that they were all highly academically developed beyond their peers, with great learning potential. They all tell a similar story, how they with each passing year felt less and less challenged, leading to them in turn losing motivation and "giving up" on school. One of the students was accelerated by skipping from 8th to 9th grade. However, this action did not result in any greater academic challenges, thus giving the same result as before. Two of the students dropped out from high school as a result of their loss in motivation for each passing grade, leaving them frustrated and exhausted by the end of 10th grade. One of the students expressed her disappointment with the Norwegian school system and has made it clear that her children will "definitely not be schooled in Norway." (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 53). The stories of these students may indicate that the notion of adapted education is at times practiced in a suboptimal manner when faced with giftedness rather than academically struggling individuals. This may lead to a higher number of high school dropouts due to the lack of challenges leading to an increase in motivation loss and frustration.

In order to adapt education for these students, the system needs a systematic change, starting with resource management and class construction. A standard 8th to 10th grade class is usually at around 25 to 30 students. Usually there is only one teacher present, meaning that this teacher is responsible for adapting his or her education for each student. An adaptation by variation of teaching styles might be doable, but as previously stated, gifted students need adequate challenges depending on their academic levels, meaning that a variation in teaching style is far from sufficient. Adaptation of

the learning content focused on difficulty, scope and progression could lead to great practical and pedagogical challenges. Due to the mere size of the classes, a structure for a flexible organizational level differentiation is in most cases not doable (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49).

A consequence of suitable adaptation for gifted student, however, is that it could be perceived as unfortunate elitism, pushing the strongest individuals even more forward. This issue is particularly apparent in Norway, as Norway has an unusually strong ideal of “we are all the same”, or in other words Janteloven, which is the notion that no one is better than another, and if you are successful, you should not be proud of it, at least not talk about it. A principal at a middle school tried adapting for a small group of gifted students, putting in extra resources to help them succeed even further. However, this was met with serious backlash, and the notion that “the clever students are self-sufficient”, and in no need of additional adapted education (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 58).

The case study and results show us that the Norwegian school system’s unwillingness to adapt to significantly gifted students, “rooted in a morally or ideologically reasoned attitude that individual adaptation for the significantly gifted could lead to an elitism that may be damaging for the collective and the society. “ (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 59). It will, however, be interesting to see whether my own study of teachers’ views, opinions and experiences on the topic of adapted education for gifted students show the same issues that came to light through Skogen’s case study. The teachers’ perceptions of gifted students and adapted education will also be explored and highlighted to see if there are any differences between the definitions presented in the literature and modern teachers’ own definitions and perceptions. Perhaps the situation may seem different from another point of view.

Another unfortunate aspect when addressing the concept of gifted students is the number of gifted children who have been misdiagnosed with several different conditions such as ADHD, bipolar, OCD, Asperger’s and depression (Beljan, et al., 2006). As gifted children are often extremely intense in many aspects such as emotional response, sibling rivalry, intellectual pursuits and power struggles with authority figures (Beljan, et al., 2006), a teacher might misperceive this intensity as being rooted in something other than the student’s giftedness. Factors in the classroom might exacerbate the problem of misdiagnosis, as gifted students spend from one-fourth to one-half of the classroom time waiting for others to catch up, which leads to increased boredom and restlessness (Beljan, et al., 2006). It will therefore be interesting to see whether any of the teachers in this study report any challenges related to the gifted students in their classrooms.

One of the most common misdiagnoses of gifted children is Asperger’s disorder. Gifted children are often not with their intellectual peers in the classroom, meaning that due to the gifted children’s

accelerated intellect level, they might show a lack of interest in interaction as well as lack of empathy and impatience (Beljan, et al., 2006). Gifted children might also have unusual interests or are in some sense “quirky”, many of them are at risk for being misdiagnosed with Asperger’s disorder. While some of the students might fulfill the criteria for this diagnosis, many of the gifted children do not, as their way of being is only a result of their intellectual level. (Beljan, et al., 2006, p. 84)

3. Methodology

This chapter covers the method used in this study to investigate teachers' views, opinions and experiences with adapted education for gifted students in the English subject. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Do teachers adapt their education for gifted students and, if yes, how do they do it?
- 2) What are the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students?

This chapter is structured by first introducing the materials that were presented in the survey questionnaire followed by a section covering which methodological research theory the research will be based on. Thereafter a section covering potential sampling errors, survey participation incentives and the survey distribution process ensues, concluding the methodology chapter.

3.1 Materials

The data materials of this study were collected through a web-based survey questionnaire that was distributed through a Facebook-group of approximately 18 000 English teachers with administrator's permission. The survey consists of 14 questions, where most of the questions are open-ended, resulting in a large part of the materials collected being opinions, experiences and views on the topic. Therefore, it is fitting to use a qualitative method of analysis when it comes to analyzing the data materials. The survey was posted in the Facebook group on the 3rd of December 2021 and the survey was closed on the 31st of January 2022.

The survey is divided into three parts focusing on one theme per part. The first part consists of 3 questions, regarding adapted education and their approach to adapted education as a concept. The second part consists of 4 questions, regarding gifted students and how the teachers both define and recognize a gifted student. The third part consists of 5 questions where the teachers are asked to explain and elaborate on their experiences with adapted education for gifted students, how they have adapted, what the results were and so on. Apart from these three parts, the teachers were also asked to specify which grades they were currently teaching and were also asked if they had any other comments on the topic they would like to share. These two questions made up the first and last question of the survey.

The first section of the survey explores the participating teachers' approaches to adapted education. In the start of the survey the participants are presented with a multiple-choice question, asking which classes they are currently teaching. This is to see whether there is any correlation between grades and the teachers' experiences. The following question is open ended, asking the participants to, in their own words, define adapted education. After their definition of adapted education, the

participants are asked to explain their approach to adapted education, to see whether they follow a broad or narrow approach to the concept as well as discovering differences in their teaching practices. Concluding the coverage of adapted education is a question of who has the main responsibility for adapted education being carried out at their school, which also could indicate whether their conception of adapted education follows a narrow or wide approach (see section 2.1).

3.2 Reflection on gifted students

The following section focuses on the concept of gifted students and how the teachers define, identify and have experienced this student group in their classes. The first question asks them if they have had students which they would consider to be gifted in their English classes, followed by a follow-up question regarding whether these students were native speakers of English or not. This was to figure out if there was a correlation between giftedness and nativity. However, this question did not indicate any strong correlation between the two and was therefore excluded in the analysis. After this question is answered, the teachers are asked to describe what they would consider a gifted student, how they both define and recognize the student group, followed by a statement of which they are asked to fill out a 5 step Likert-scale ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree. The statement in question is: “Gifted students excel in every subject.” This is to determine whether the participating teachers consider gifted students to be high-achieving in every aspect of academics or if they rather follow a multiple-intelligence standpoint, in which they regard giftedness in one of many intelligences to be sufficient for qualifying as a gifted student. The last statement of this section is “Gifted students should be given differentiated materials.”, where they are also presented with the same Likert-scale. Collecting attitudes towards differentiation can help paint a picture of where the teachers’ focus is when adapting for gifted students.

3.3 Reflection on adapted education for gifted students

The final section focuses on the combination of adapted education and gifted students. The teachers are asked to think about the last time they adapted their education for a gifted student, and to describe what they did. This was to present the teachers with a scenario in which they needed to explain what they did, which is an effective way of extracting more information from open-ended questions (Gideon, 2012; Smyth, 2017). Thereafter they are asked if they saw any change in motivation after adapting their education as well as any change in achievements. These questions are constructed in order to see if the teachers distinguish between the already high-achieving students and gifted students, who are, as previously mentioned, students with great learning potential, regardless of their previous academic achievement. The concluding question of the survey, prior to if they would like to add any additional comments on the topic, concerns what the teachers

deem as the main challenges when adapting for gifted students. The answers to this question could potentially single handedly answer one of my research questions.

3.4 Qualitative analysis

When researching a subject, one must carefully consider which method of research and analysis is most suitable for the topic. As my survey questionnaire is constructed by mainly open-ended questions, it is therefore logical to choose a method of analysis which highlights the survey participants views and values and try to form conclusions based on the information given to you as a researcher. Researching individuals' standpoints and opinions on a topic formulated in their own words, makes for a great setup for qualitative analysis. However, if the main part of information gathered is through multiple choice or Likert-scale questions, it is more logical to choose a quantitative form of analysis, focusing more on the numbers rather than individual standpoints.

3.5 Hermeneutic phenomenology for analysis of qualitative data

Hermeneutic phenomenology is a method of qualitative research which focuses on the researcher's own experiences and conceptions. A hermeneutic researcher is never outside his or her research, not planning ahead with full confidence, but rather always being in the midst of the research, making choices and overweighing the endless possibilities which the data presents (Smythe, Ironside, Sims, Swenson, & Spence, 2008). The theory of hermeneutic methodology was developed by Heidegger and Gadamer, in the belief that in the leeway between structure and freedom there is room to play, and areas that have not yet been explored. It is through hermeneutic analysis that the researcher can apply his or her phronesis to understand the data material, meaning that the researcher must apply knowledge gained through practice in order to understand what others experience. In my case, the phronesis of others is to be analyzed and understood with my own phronesis as a baseline for understanding the experiences and put them into structures for analysis. Phronesis is the term used to describe knowledge that can only be obtained through experience in a field of practice. The participants' knowledge and experience through their practices is to be analyzed by using my own knowledge and experience through earlier practice, thus making it possible to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and phronesis presented through the questionnaire. Hermeneutics are also referred to as the process by which people interpret and make sense of experiences according to their own pre-existing values and ways of seeing the world (Wills, 2001), thus making hermeneutics an integral part of this study, which is centered around interpretation of teachers' lived experiences.

Phenomenology is similar to hermeneutics in the sense that it is focused on human experience and the notion that human experience makes sense and is intelligible to those who live it, while also

considering that the sense of the human experience is an inherent structural property of the experience itself, and is meaningful to those who live it (Dukes, 1984). By combining the idea of hermeneutics and phenomenology, the method of hermeneutic phenomenology is introduced, which is the method of analysis in which the researcher is free to interpret (hermeneutics) the experiences that are presented and lived by others (phenomenology). This methodology should therefore be one of the more feasible methods of analysis while analyzing the data materials from the questionnaire, as the data materials, as previously mentioned, consists mainly of teachers' lived experiences shared through, mainly, open-ended questions.

Qualitative research has previously been regarded by some as an option lacking scientific rigor and open to both bias and fraud (Chapple & Rogers, 1998). However, by underlining the theoretic foundation used to construct themes of analysis while also highlighting the scientific method of which the data was collected and analyzed, the research gains scientific rigor as it is reproduceable, meaning if another research was to follow the same method, they would be left with the same results. This study will therefore implement hermeneutic phenomenology through use of an inductive thematic analysis, where responses will be grouped into themes that are discovered during analysis.

3.6 Facebook distribution and web-based surveys

Facebook is a social media platform, like Twitter and Reddit, where it is easy to reach out to a large amount of people in a short period of time. When looking for participants for my survey, I was already aware that I was looking for English teachers. I therefore contacted the administrator of the largest group of Norwegian English teachers on Facebook and got permission to post my survey in said group. By doing so, I ensured that my survey would reach out to the correct group of research participants. Facebook has also been successful in earlier research when recruiting "hard-to-reach" populations, such as sexual minorities, people with rare diseases etc. (Wright, 2019; Pedersen, et al., 2015). Facebook is also the most used social media platform in Norway, as 65% of adults from 18 and up stated that they check their Facebooks on a daily basis. (Ipsos, 2022) This was confirmed by Ipsos in their Q4 SoMe-report from 2021 where 1552 randomly selected adults were asked about their social media habits.

Web-based surveys are in many ways a great option for gathering data. One of the main advantages to choosing a web-based survey rather than a physical copy is that the researcher and the participants are no longer acquired to be in the same room at the same time, thus making it more convenient for both the researcher and the participants, as each participant fills out the questionnaire when they themselves have time. This method also makes it possible to reach a larger

sample size of people as opposed to traditional interviews and non-web-based solutions (Evans & Mathur, 2005; Wright, 2019). Web-based surveys have also seen participants to be more open and willing to share their inner thoughts and meaning when presented with the anonymity of the internet (Padayachee, 2016; Selm & Jankowski, 2006).

The limitations to this type of data collection, however, is the fact that the researcher is unable to ask follow-up questions based on the respondents' answers, making delving deeper into certain themes presented through the answers not doable unless the follow-up question related to the answers are already a part of the questionnaire. Adding these follow-ups prior to questionnaire distribution could also be challenging as the answers may differ from what the researcher predicts, making the follow-ups not as useful as predicted.

The survey software used to carry out the research was Enalyzer, which is known for its simplicity and aesthetics while serving as a powerful polling software with an in-built data analysis tool for reviewing data. It is also used by large companies like Microsoft and Carlsberg as well as other multinational corporations (Andre, 2021).

3.7 Potential sampling errors

Due to the nature of the methods used to sample opinions on the topic there is always a possibility that several sampling errors may occur. I will therefore go through the most common sampling errors and present what measures were taken to prevent these sampling errors from occurring. As previously stated, a large amount of the Norwegian adult population check Facebook on a daily basis, thus increasing the likelihood of my survey link appearing in their feeds. However, by introduction of a Facebook group as a platform for distribution, the members of the Facebook group might check Facebook less frequently than the average adult population, thus making the group another determining factor for likelihood of survey respondents. This is however an uncertain factor as statistics of Facebook activity for this group in particular does not exist.

3.7.1 Nonresponse

There are several factors that may influence response rates. The five major factors are: sampling methods, contact delivery modes, invitation strategies, the use of pre-notification and reminders, and incentives (Pan, Woodside, & Meng, 2014; Padayachee, 2016). Nonresponse is when participants choose to either open the survey and not fill it out or are presented with the survey link and are not clicking it. This can be due to several factors, one of them being cyber security. If a person is presented with a link through e-mail, for example, they might be skeptical as this is the same platform that they are presented with several forms of spam e-mail and "get rich quick"-schemes. It is therefore encouraged that the researcher presents his or her survey link through a platform that

humanizes the researcher and makes it possible for the participants to have a face to relate the questions to, in order to encourage the sample group to respond. Although there are several factors that affect nonresponse in survey research, the research in regard to nonresponse rates remains inconclusive. Studies show both increased and decreased response rates when focusing on the same factors (Padayachee, 2016).

3.7.2 Low response rates

Another common issue when conducting both online and offline surveys are low response rates. As previously mentioned, there are several factors that lead to low or nonresponse. A common factor to boost response rates is the introduction of complete anonymity (Padayachee, 2016; Selm & Jankowski, 2006). Complete anonymity is achievable by using a survey platform which has the option to choose whether to collect digital trails or not, such as IP-addresses. This was one of the main reasons why I chose Analyzer as my platform, as they give you the option if you want to anonymize your survey or not. By choosing the anonymize-option, it is impossible for the researcher to trace the respondents electronically, thus making the barrier of entry smaller as the respondents do not have to worry about anyone, for example, contacting them about their answers, making it possible for them to respond more freely.

Another factor that can boost response rates is transparency, meaning that the researcher should be as transparent as possible when presenting the survey. This means presenting both the estimated time to complete the survey and all other important factors that the respondents might have questions about. The time required to complete the survey was presented to the participants through the introduction page of the survey as well as in the invitation post in the Facebook group. This meant that all participants were made certain of how much time they needed to invest in order to complete the survey. Including the time estimate prior to participating, the participants were also met with a progress indicator while they were answering the survey questions. This implementation, however, might be double edged, as it may in some instances lead to a higher rate of survey abandonment if the progress indicator indicates that the survey will take longer to complete than the respondent may assume (Manzo & Burke, 2012, p. 340; Couper, 2008). It is therefore important that the estimated time of completion is an accurate estimate, in order to reduce survey abandonment.

When designing a web-based survey it is crucial to create a layout that encourages response. As a researcher you are met with the choice of either choosing to go with a scrolling approach or a paging approach. A scrolling approach means that all the questions are on the same page, simulating the experience of a traditional paper survey (Manzo & Burke, 2012). In this case all questions are answered and submitted at the same time. This approach, however, requires the respondents to fill

out the entire survey in one sitting, leaving little room to answer questions over a longer period of time. This layout also presents all the questions at once, and may for some respondents, lead to an earlier drop out of the survey.

The second option when designing a survey in terms of layout, which is also the method I used when creating my survey, is the use of paging. When using paging as the layout method, respondents are met with one page at a time, making it possible for them to skip back and forth between pages, where each page is individually saved. This method also makes it possible for the researcher to see partially completed surveys and have a look at where the respondents fell off. However, the use of paging requires more complex programming, as answers are constantly being saved and sent (Manzo & Burke, 2012), thus requiring the researcher to find a sufficient software for the task.

There has been little to no research on the effect on scrolling and paging in terms of response rates, and what has been done suggest that there might be no difference at all (Manzo & Burke, 2012). However, it is recommended by some experts that scrolling or paging are to be used under different circumstances. Scrolling is typically best suited for shorter surveys, where the order of which the questions are answered is not a concern, whereas paging is more useful for longer surveys where the order of the questions is an important factor (Manzo & Burke, 2012; Couper, 2008). This resulted in my choice of paging as the layout for the survey, as the questions are ordered in terms of concepts.

Survey response rate was also boosted through means of distribution. When contacting the administrator of the Facebook group of English teachers, attempts were made to have the administrator pin my invitation post, meaning that the invitation would be at the top of the Facebook group regardless of how many other posts came after it. This was, however, not doable as the group is a commonly used platform for English researchers to collect respondents for their research projects, therefore favoring a singular researcher's post was not in question. I did, however, post both my invitation post and a reminder post after a couple of weeks of the survey being active. Reminders are a useful tool to increase response rates and has proven in many cases to boost response rates with more than 20% (Manzo & Burke, 2012, p. 336). Although my survey did not collect the respondents' e-mails, it was still possible for me to make an additional post in the Facebook-group, linking it to my previous post on the topic. This reminder was very useful as it increased the survey participation from 5 respondents to a total of 27, in which 14 completed the entire survey, which was an increase of 540 per cent.

3.7.3 Survey sabotaging

Multiple or duplicated responses as a result of active sabotage might lead to errors in sampling (Sue & Ritter, 2007). However, as this is a qualitative research, duplicated responses are more easily

identified, thus resulting in the likeliness of survey sabotage to be smaller compared to a quantitative study. The survey also requires respondents to fill out several open-ended answers and uncompleted surveys will not be included in the research data. It is therefore unlikely that a significant number of participants would go through these various steps in order to sabotage the survey. It is also reasonable to assume that multiple responses or duplicates usually do not occur on purpose.

3.8 Participation incentives

The following section focuses on the creation of participation incentives in order to facilitate recruitment in a more efficient manner. This section focuses on the incentives that might be relevant for this survey in particular and outline these with intention of discussing how they might interact to lower barriers of participation, while also providing participants with incentives to click on and complete the survey when they are faced with the survey link. The following incentives will be addressed in order to highlight how they might affect respondents to click on the survey link: interest in the survey topic and content of the survey invitation. Lastly, incentives that might affect survey progression and completion will be discussed, focusing on the formatting and design of the questionnaire as well as question phrasing.

3.8.1 Interest in survey topic

According to Albaum and Smith (2012), interest in survey topic is an internal factor that can affect a person's decision to click on and complete a survey. This is also supported by Groves, Presser and Dipko (2004), who argue that interest in the survey topic among the sample group does lead to a higher rate of survey participation. As adapted education is a commonly known factor in teachers' everyday planning, and a constant concept to be aware of, the interest in the topic could lead to higher survey participation. Especially as the angle of adapted education for gifted students is often not the main vocal point while discussing adapted education, which may lead to a lot of information being unshared regarding the topic. I therefore believe that my topic of choice will in some cases lead to increased participation. However, the topic is not the only incentive to participate, therefore it should not dominate the decision as to whether the teachers would like to participate or not (Groves, Presser, & Dipko, 2004). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the topic will not be the only determining factor in their choice of participation, thus not having a substantial effect on the survey results.

3.8.2 Survey invitations

As the survey invitation is the first point of contact between the researcher and the potential respondents, it is important to construct a compelling invitation in order to market the study as a valuable activity for participants to be a part of (Sue & Ritter, 2007). A compelling invitation might therefore influence potential respondents' likelihood of progressing through the survey (Manzo & Burke, 2012; Albaum & Smith, 2012). Appendix B shows the survey invitation that was distributed as a Facebook-post in the chosen group of English teachers. The main goal of this invitation is to capture the recipients' interest by taking a personal approach, through asking for their personal opinions and views on the topic. I also concretized that I was looking for teachers from 5th to 10th grade, making sure that my invitation got to the right people. Personalization of the survey invitation is mentioned by Manzo and Burke (2012) as an effective way of boosting a survey's response rate. Although no participant is referred to by name or title, the reflexive pronoun "yourself" and the possessive pronoun "your" were used, in order to make the invitation feel more personal. The invitation also starts off with "Hello there", which is a relatively oral greeting. This greeting is chosen in order to make the recipients feel more like fellow teachers rather than only potential research participants.

Furthermore, the contents of the survey structure were presented, as the recipients were made aware of some open-ended questions throughout the survey, where they would be asked for their personal opinions. By disclosing this information, the recipients were more conscious of what they might expect after clicking the survey link, leading to more transparency and potentially higher response rate. The estimated time required to complete the survey was also disclosed, which emphasized the ease and importance of participating (Sue & Ritter, 2007).

A handful of other elements that might boost response rate were also included in the survey invitations. Most notable was the promise that the results were completely anonymous and that the information they provided was both safe and confidential. This was also concretized by adding a small paragraph where the participants were encouraged to not share any personal information, such as workplace, name, address and so on. It was also made clear to the recipients that if they at any point did not feel like participating any further, they were free to leave the survey, and that uncompleted surveys would not be included in the final study.

Another participation incentive presented in the survey invitations was that the potential respondents were told that they were free to answer in both English and Norwegian, depending on which language they felt more comfortable expressing themselves. As a result, some responses were

in English, others in Norwegian while some responses were a mix of both, where the respondents used Norwegian terms in an otherwise English sentence.

3.8.3 Questionnaire formatting

Researchers have found that survey formatting affect participations rates in both negative and positive ways (Smyth, 2017; Sue & Ritter, 2007). Furthermore, Smyth (2017) stresses that a good visual design gives respondents a strong sense of where the answers are needed at a “page level”, meaning that by strategically applying visual properties to visual elements on the page, respondents are more easily able to identify where the answers are supposed to be filled in, thus focusing their conscious efforts on answering questions rather than navigating the questionnaire (Smyth, 2017, p. 11). As previously mentioned, web-based surveys that look like paper questionnaires could also have a positive effect on participation (Manzo & Burke, 2012)(see section 3.7.2). Furthermore, Sue and Ritter (2007) also suggest that surveyors should be careful when selecting and using colors for the questionnaires as the colors might generate different associations for people. A correct choice of font is also important in order to secure good readability as well as legibility (Couper, 2008).

All the factors in question were taken into consideration while designing a professional and user-friendly web-based questionnaire before the collection of data commenced. The default layout in Analyzer of black, white and some gray tones was selected in order to make the survey resemble a paper questionnaire. Consistency was also maintained throughout the questionnaire by using the same font for all the questions, which were all in bold. Alternatives in the multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions were presented in standard Roman font for clarity. The same font was also used for both the introduction page as well as the conclusive “thank you”-page (see Appendix A for exact formulations and details). The piloting phase was focused on the discovery of spelling errors and clarity of the content in order to secure a professional impression of the survey.

3.8.4 Survey questions

The manner of which questions are phrased, presented and organized might function as incentives for participants as they progress through the survey questionnaire (Gideon, 2012). This section will present the factors taken into account while structuring and phrasing the questions of the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of mainly open-ended questions, apart from some Likert-scale questions, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, two “yes/no/not sure” questions, one acting as a follow up to the other, and one multiple choice question (see Appendix A for exact formulation and structure of both the questionnaire and its questions).

Gideon (2012) stresses the importance of avoiding jargon and professional concepts when phrasing questions, as this may lead to confusion and alienation of the participants, resulting in non-response.

For this reason, every concept or formulation used in the questionnaire was well thought out and understandable without needing any pre-existing knowledge on the topic. Furthermore, the survey was structured by introducing each concept separately, grouping the questions regarding similar concepts together in a logical manner which contributed to create a clear structure (Gideon, 2012; Sue & Ritter, 2007) (see Appendix A for complete structure). This contributed to create a coherent impression of the survey and potentially preventing break-off rates as participants could proceed through the survey in a logical manner.

Also emphasized by Gideon (2012) is the fact that surveyors should respect the fact that the targeted population consists of busy individuals, therefore long and complicated questions might be considered a burden. His view is that survey questions should be short and to-the-point rather than lengthy and complicated. This is also supported by Smyth (2017) who suggests that the surveyor should use simple and familiar words with complete sentence structures, and using concrete, specific words while avoiding vague words. Although while concise questions are encouraged, both Gideon (2012) and Smyth (2017) also claim that, if necessary, surveyors could present the participants with questions set within specific scenarios. This aspect was taken into consideration while phrasing and designing my question items that were to discover which methods of adapted education the participants had used with gifted students in the past, and the effects of these methods. By doing so, the questionnaire was designed in order to discover past methodological trends of adapted education by the participants, while also gathering retrospective reflections on said trends.

3.9 Survey distribution process

The following section will outline the procedure followed while conducting the survey, with particular focus on the distribution process and Facebook as both a tool of distribution and platform. This section will also outline the process of choosing and contacting the Facebook-group.

3.9.1 Ethical considerations

The collection of data was carried out in accordance with the ethical guidelines presented by The Norwegian Center for Research Data, who confirmed that a formal ethical review was not required, as the survey did not register any personal information that might reveal any participants' identity. Written consent to collect and publish the survey data was also not sought from each individual participant as consent was implied by the participants' choice to take and complete the survey after reading both the invitation letter and the information presented to them in the introduction page.

3.9.2 Piloting phase

Before starting the official data collection, a survey test round was completed, in which one of my fellow students in the same program tested the survey and provided feedback on the survey content and design. According to Wagner (2010), test rounds are to be encouraged in survey research, in order to better enable the researcher in revision of the survey prior to data collection. According to his work, the fresh eyes of survey testers might discover issues that the researcher has overlooked, such as mistyping, awkward wording and ambiguities (Wagner, 2010). The piloting phase of this survey resulted in a couple of alterations in the wording of the questions. The feedback was received through a personal call with my fellow student, in which the feedback was shared.

3.9.3 Selecting and contacting the Facebook group

The Facebook group chosen for this project was selected in early planning of the project. I have personally been a member of the Facebook-group for several years, which is the reason to why the group came to mind when searching for survey recipients. The administrator of the group was contacted through Facebook's messaging service, Messenger, in which a person is able to message another person, regardless of familiarity, as long as the recipient accepts the contact after reading the contents of the message. This contact led to the previously mentioned distribution of the survey in the Facebook group (see section 3.7.2). The result of the distribution was a sample of $N = 27$. The survey completion rate was 52 per cent, equivalent to 14 completed surveys.

4. Findings

The following section will present the results of the survey, focusing on the aspects that are interesting in order to answer the previously presented research questions. This section is structured by first exploring the conceptualization and definitions of the terms adapted education and gifted students, in order to create an overview of whether the teachers share the same definitions and conceptualizations or not. Thereafter, the themes presented by the respondents that may help answer the first research question will be explored, followed by a section exploring themes that may help answer the second question. The research questions I am looking to answer are, as previously presented:

1. Do teachers adapt their education for gifted students and, if yes, how do they do it?
2. What are the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students?

As this study uses a hermeneutically phenomenologically based method, interpretations of the participants experiences based on my own experiences within the practice will be the basis of the analysis. An inductive thematic analysis will be used where themes will be constructed as the data is analyzed. However, the themes that will be explored are loosely based on the grouping of questions within three main themes of the questionnaire: adapted education, gifted students and the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students. The questionnaire was also constructed with the intention of potentially answering one research question at a time, in the same order as previously presented.

4.1 Findings on approaches and definitions of adapted education

In order to find out whether the teachers in this study adapt their education for gifted students or not, it is crucial to create an overview of how the respondents individually define and approach the concept of adapted education. The following section will therefore highlight the different definitions and approaches to adapted education presented in the teachers' responses.

On the topic of adapted education, most of the respondents share the same definition (N = 12), whereas one of the respondents differ from the group. The notion that is shared by a large part of the response group is that adapted education can be defined as *“education that facilitates both mastery and challenge based on the student’s prerequisites”*, which is a direct quote from one of the respondents. This definition highlights the key notion of adapted education and also one of the main

research incentives of this study: that each student has the right to receive education based on their pre-existing knowledge, regardless of the overall level of the class.

Other responses include to *“find the pupil’s potential and challenge the pupil close to his/her potential”* and *“education that presents challenges to all students. Where everyone can achieve something, while still have something to reach for”*. This highlights the importance of mapping each student to be able to find their individual learning potentials, which is followed by adapting assignments, handouts, reading exercises and other materials in order to make it possible for each student to achieve new knowledge by applying their existing knowledge. One respondent did not comment on his or her definition of adapted education.

The outlier in the definitions of adapted education include another view on the concept: *“Nearly impossible with 28 students in each English class, all at mixed levels”*. This definition could reflect the respondent’s personal experience with the practice of adapted education in the English classroom rather than a definition of adapted education as an overarching concept. It also highlights one of the obstacles of adapted education being the sheer size of the student groups assigned to each teacher, possibly making adapted education harder to carry out efficiently. This could be particularly challenging if the student group has not been properly mapped prior to adaptation.

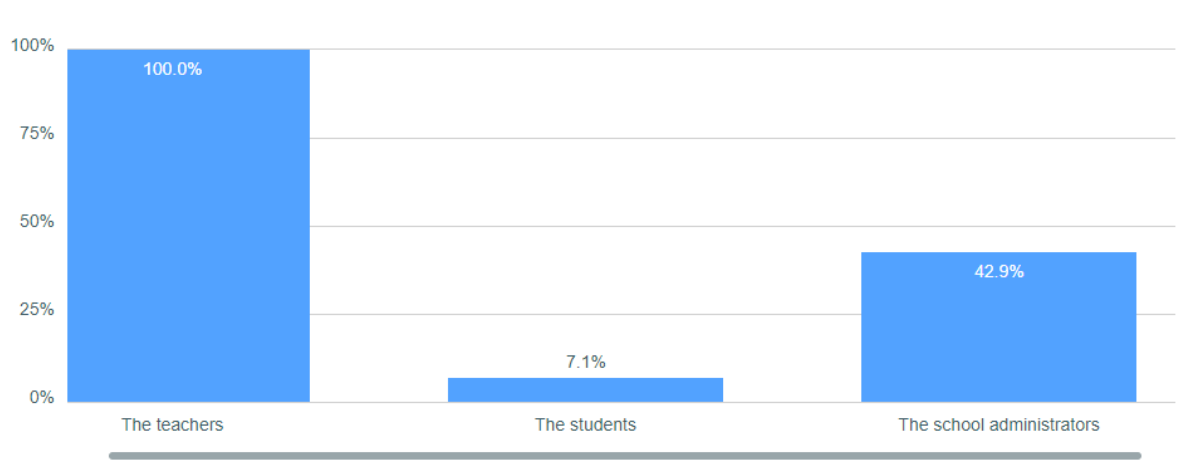
Following the definitions of the respondents’ definitions of adapted education, are their approaches to adapted education. Here the responses vary to a much larger degree than the last question. One of the approaches presented through the responses is: *“wishing for AP classes, like we have in the US. Or at least the chance to nivådele”*, meaning that he or she is implying that there is a wish for differentiation based on level of comprehension. Another respondent describes that they approach adapted education by *“explaining more to some than others, filling the gaps to those who struggle, diving structures and writing frames to pupils, giving tools to use precise language, topic words for the pupils with high potential to evolve, giving more complex reflection tasks...”* (for full quote see Appendix A). This respondent lists specific techniques that are actively being used in his or her teaching practice when practicing adapted education, which gives a very thorough insight into the respondent’s daily practice.

Another respondent states that they find their approach to adapted education as: *“Lacking. Focused more on students with special needs, below grade level.”* This could be in reference to the overarching survey topic of adapted education for gifted students, which to already at this point this respondent is presenting meaningful insight. A different respondent to highlight presents his or her approach to adapted education by explaining that he or she is: *“Trying to have as open tasks as possible so that everyone can achieve something, while at the same time creating space for advanced*

interpretation. Have been practicing differentiated tasks in accordance with difficulty earlier. Experienced through this that way too many students chose the easiest task, thus not being able to show their full competence.” (trans. AHH) This respondent presents another perspective by highlighting an obstacle that was apparent through earlier attempts at different techniques of adaptation.

Lastly, in the question of approach to adapted education, a respondent states: *“I think all students need to find their own way of learning. I can give them tasks to challenge them, but they have to do the work and solve the tasks their own way.”* This response focuses more on the angle of learning strategies rather than facilitation or active adaptation by the teacher. Although the respondents’ approaches and strategies are many and full of variation, the common theme seems to be that most of the teachers consider the main responsibility of adapted education to be that of themselves and their adaptation. The following multiple-choice question also reflects the same sentiment. 100 per cent (N = 14) of the respondents report that the teachers at their school have the main responsibility for adapted education to be carried out, whereas 43 per cent (N = 6) of the 14 respondents report that the school administration also share the responsibility, as the respondents were able to select multiple answers. Only one respondent reports that some of the responsibility is shared with the students. This respondent, however, is not the same as the one in the previous quote, which presents a difference between the respondents’ approaches to adapted education and how it is carried out. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1: Results in question of who has the main responsibility for adapted education to be carried out at their school



While looking through the responses on purely the topic of adapted education, the results are many and different. By connecting each respondent’s response to a theme, it is possible to see a pattern. As previously mentioned, the participants in the study are mostly uniform in their definitions of

adapted education, although they present different approaches as to how they implement adapted education in their personal teaching practices.

4.2 Findings concerning gifted students

This section focuses on the findings regarding gifted students. Based on the respondents' definitions of gifted students it is possible to understand more thoroughly what they define as the group that they are adapting for. Nearly all the respondents, as many as 93 per cent (N = 13), report that they have had students that they would classify as gifted in their classrooms. The presence of gifted students in the respondents' classrooms is a clear determiner to whether the data collected through the survey could be indicative to the state of adapted education for gifted students in Norwegian classrooms. Thus, 93 per cent should be a sufficient degree of presence. However, the high percentage of participation of teachers who have had gifted students in their classroom might be a result of pre-existing interest or experience with the topic.

In the question of whether the gifted students were native speakers of English, 69 per cent (N = 9) answered "No" while 31 per cent (N = 4) answered "Some of them". This result indicates that the number of gifted English students in Norwegian classroom is not heavily influenced by a large number of native speakers. However, native speakers still account for some of the gifted students, therefore it could be assumed that this student group might influence the numbers to some degree.

When asked to elaborate on what the respondents consider a gifted student, the responses are more varied than when asked about adapted education. One of the respondents consider a gifted student: *"A student who is beyond the level the subjects are being taught at their age. A student who comprehends tasks, texts and other materials at a higher level than those of the same age."* This definition of a gifted student might suggest that giftedness is in this case defined by already proven academic achievement rather than potential for academic achievement.

A similar definition is presented by another respondent, who states that he or she considers gifted students as: *"Pupils who communicate easily adapted to form and listeners /readers, mastering formal and nuanced language, pupils who work independently and spend much time voluntarily reading and communicating in English. Pupils who add interesting facts and knowledge to the lessons."* This definition could suggest a notion that gifted students are more actively involved in the class discourse while discussing different topics within the subject, while still defining gifted students as students who already have shown mastery of the language.

On the same topic of what the respondents consider a gifted student, another consideration along the same line as the two previously quoted responses was presented: *"A student that communicates*

to a certain level, both written and orally, where a need for development in terms of spelling, sentence structure, text structure and other aspects is no longer necessary, but rather further development of the already existing high level." This consideration could suggest that the students described are already at a level of comprehension beyond their peers, which is in accordance with the previously presented responses.

A different respondent considers a gifted student to be: *"Above grade level. Reading, writing and speaking English. It would be nice if social skills were there as well."* This response could suggest that the respondent's experiences with gifted students has been positive in the sense that the students are high achieving, while simultaneously negative as the student may have shown a lack of social skills. This response is in contrast with another respondent who notes that he or she considers a gifted student to be: *"A student with a large vocabulary and with great communicative skills."* Communicative skills may, however, be in reference to the communication presented during the English classes, oral and written English. Social skills could be interpreted as a wider term than only communicative skills, for example, how the student interacts with his or her peers in non-academic situations, which is in line with the common misdiagnosis of gifted children, as presented in the theoretical framework of this study (Beljan, et al., 2006).

Also included as one of the respondents' responses is that a gifted student is: *"Someone with so much knowledge that they already fulfill most of the "kompetansemål" and "kjerneelementer"."* In this response, giftedness is linked directly to the fulfilling of competence aims and the core elements of the subject, which also suggests that a gifted student should already display high level of ability and achievement, prior to being deemed as a gifted student.

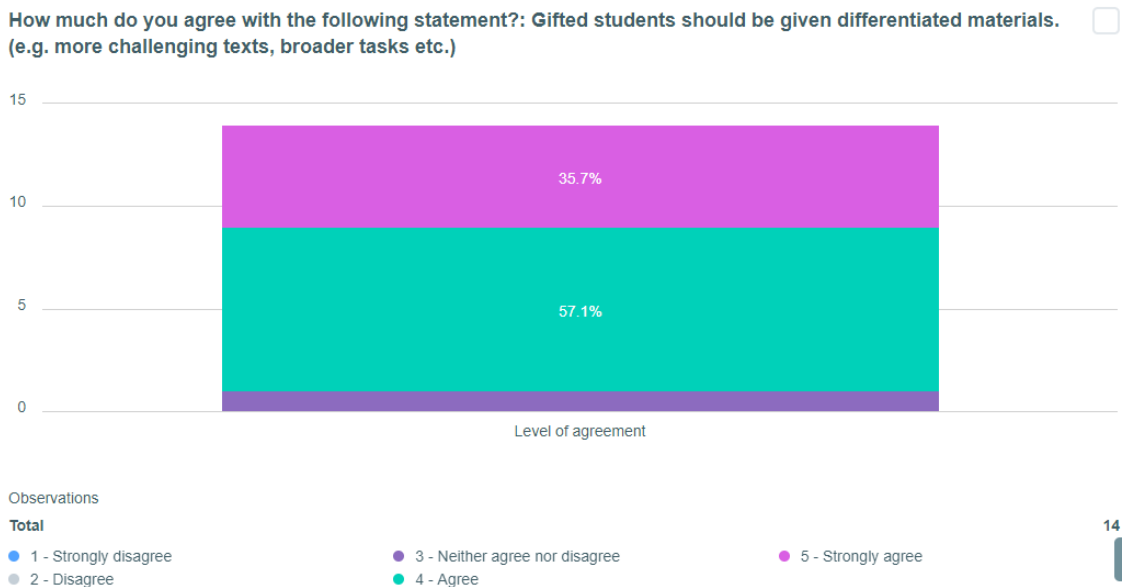
The common notion of all the responses considering gifted students is the notion that a gifted student performs beyond what is expected from a student at any given grade level. A student who already displays both high ability and high level of achievement in the school framework. Although some definitions and considerations vary in terms of wording, they all seem to share a common conception of what a gifted student is.

This shared conception, however, is not as shared when asking the respondents whether a gifted student should excel in every subject or not. When presented with the Likert-scale varying from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree, 36 per cent of the respondents (N = 5) report that they disagree with the notion, 29 per cent report that they neither agree nor disagree (N = 4), while 36 per cent report that they agree (N = 5). This information could give an indication as to which students the respondents deem to be the gifted ones, as some of them potentially rule out the students who only excel in one subject.

4.3 Adaptation through differentiation

The first theme to be highlighted is regarding the respondents who report that they adapt their education for gifted students through differentiation. The opinion on differentiation as a tool within the response group is split. When presented with the statement: "Gifted students should be given differentiated materials.", 36 per cent (N = 5) of the respondents state that they strongly agree, whereas 57 per cent (N = 8) state that they agree. Only one respondent state that they neither agree nor disagree. (see Figure 2)

Figure 2: Likert-scale displaying level of agreement on differentiation



This statistic could be interpreted as a clear indication that most teachers are campaigners for differentiation for gifted students. However, the forms of differentiation are several and varied in terms of implementation in practice.

4.3.1 Differentiation through acceleration

One of the main forms of differentiation that is presented through the responses is acceleration through higher grade work materials, such as textbooks. When asked about the last time they adapted their education for a gifted student, several different answers are presented. One of them being: "I found literature on the same topic from a higher grade level". This can be interpreted as a form of direct acceleration through presenting the student with, in most cases, more advanced and

harder tasks. Another respondent shares a similar story: *“I gave them tasks from the year above and other more complicated books (from the [pupil’s] own interest)”*. In this case it would be interesting to know if the acceleration was done based on feedback from the gifted students and if they were actively participating in the adaptation of their own education. Although similar to the previous example, this response highlights student participation as a factor.

Also, on the same note regarding acceleration as a means of differentiation, a respondent shares that he or she instructed that the student should rather work with texts from a digital source rather than the 8th grade textbook, as the digital source had both more advanced vocabulary and content, as well as more comprehensive tasks. Although this instance of acceleration is not necessarily directly implementing use of higher-grade materials, it could be interpreted that the teacher made a thorough consideration concerning the level of both vocabulary and content of the materials of the book, and thereafter deemed the book to be insufficient in terms of complexity, therefore using the digital materials as a complimentary and more fitting source of content.

Lastly, along the same note on the topic of differentiation through acceleration, a respondent notes that he or she as a means to adapt the education for a gifted student: *“gave the student more challenging things to work with. I also encouraged the student to help fellow classmates when he/she could”*. In this adaptation it is not clearly stated which type of materials the student or students in question were given, although it could be that of a higher grade level. Here the respondent also highlights the encouragement to help fellow students as a form of adaptation.

The efforts to adapt through acceleration of learning materials are very much present in the respondent sample group and seems to be a commonly used method of adaptation. However, it is far from the only form of differentiation presented through the responses. The total number of respondents reporting adaptation through direct acceleration of content for gifted student accounts for 30 per cent of the respondents reporting a presence of gifted students in their classroom (N = 4).

4.3.2 Differentiation through expectation

Another form of differentiation present in the data material is difference in expectation. Some of the respondents note that they have higher expectations for the students who they deem as gifted. The expectations seem to be based on what the teachers know of the students’ abilities prior to the assignment of tasks.

One of the respondents present their last time adapting for a gifted student to include: *“He/she sometimes got some different texts and task. But usually, I try to adapt tasks to the same texts as the other students have. So that they can collaborate with the others. I expect more from them. For*

instant longer answers, more describing texts, more correct grammar and so on. Sometimes they can help others too." In this example, the respondent shares the same notion that the gifted students can act as support for the other students as in the previous example. However, this response clearly indicates differences in academic expectation for the gifted students compared to the rest of the student group. This difference in expectation could mean that the students feel more motivated to develop their English language skills as they should be made aware of the difference in expectation towards them compared to their peers. If this is the case, this could act as a motivator in assessment situations such as written exams.

Along the same note as the previous example, another respondent states that: *"I give tasks where it is up to the students to find their own level to work at and to show what they are capable of. They also know that I know what they are capable of and what I expect from them to be satisfied."* This example highlights a shared knowledge between the student and the teachers as to where the academic level of the student is at. Therefore, while faced with tasks of different levels, the teacher expects the gifted student or students to choose the tasks at the highest level and perform to that level.

4.3.3 Differentiation through alteration

The final form of differentiation based on giftedness in the collected data is differentiation through adaptation of the work materials. This form of differentiation presents the instances in which the respondents report having adapted either the content tasks or the options of choice in terms of novels and other written materials.

One of the respondents reports: *"We were buying English literature for our School Library and I asked him what he would like to read. I also gave him some challenges on the Internet and we talked about what he liked/did not like. To sum up, I tried to give him something to reach for."* This differentiation through presenting a choice of literature as well as actively including the student in the book acquisition process could lead to increased interest in the subject. The teacher also mentions differentiation by assigning extra challenges to the student through the internet, which also could result in more motivation through sufficient challenge complimentary to the level of the student.

Along the same note, another respondent reports: *"Question sets that demand more than a yes/no and trying to find answers in the text."* This type of approach could result in the gifted students feeling more challenged as the tasks are not only centered around reiterating already written texts, but rather forces the students to be more active in solving the questions. However, if the question set is presented to the entire student group, some of the students might find the questions too demanding, which may in turn result in a loss of motivation. This is, however, not clearly stated in the

response, therefore it is hard to determine which group of students were presented with the question sets based on the respondent's answer.

To summarize, the reports of adapted education through differentiation as reported by the respondents are many and have a lot of variety. Some find differentiation through acceleration of grade content to be the best solution, others find differentiation through higher expectations and alterations of tasks and content to be a more natural solution. The differences are many. Therefore, the next section will focus on how these differentiations affect motivation and achievement.

4.4 Adaptation for motivation and achievement

While investigating what effect adaptation had for the gifted students it is important not only to focus on what kind of adaptation was carried out, but also what the adaptation led to in terms of results in both motivation and achievement. This section will therefore focus on both aspects as reported by the respondents through the questionnaire.

4.4.1 Increased motivation from adaptation

The main aim when adapting education is to increase learning outcome as well as motivation. Several of the respondents report an increase in motivation after adapting. This sub section will highlight some of the responses from the survey on the question of how their adaptation from the previous mentioned adaptation affected motivation in the gifted students.

One of the respondents reports that the: *"Students respond very positively. Higher motivation, more active in class."* In this case the adaptation supposedly led to the students feeling adequately challenged through adaptation of tasks and other activities, which in turn led to an increase in both motivation and participation. This could be interpreted as one of the aspects the teachers strive for the most when trying to adapt their education according to each student's level. However, this is the teacher's personal interpretation of motivational increase, thus it is impossible to say for certain whether there was a motivational increase or not, as observed motivation is hard to measure. Another respondent notes that: *"They show more interest for the school work"*, which also shares the same experience as the previous respondent. This enforces the overall narrative that adaptation for gifted students leads to an increase in motivation.

Along the same notion, another respondent shares his or her experience, which includes: *"When students can choose topics that interest them, they very often put more effort in to the work in order to do a good job."* This response presents the notion that students gain more motivation by having a form of autonomy over the content of their education, which is a notion also presented by other respondents in the study.

One of the respondents, a 7th grade teacher, recalls an instance of increased motivation during adaptation and shares the following statement: *“Well, this autumn we had a roleplay set up. It was amazing to see how much effort some of them were willing to put in. This year we focus on learning the irregular English verbs. I can see that it motivates them to compete in Kahoot. When I want them to write and talk their opinion about something I try to choose a topic that I know concern them (like rumours, gossip etc). I think it also motivates them to speak when we play “speed-dating”. It makes it easier to speak as they can steal words from eachother.”* In this case the respondent presents a variety of methods he or she has used during this year’s school semesters. Several of the methods are presented as highly efficient in promoting motivation for the topics and tasks. This response also relates back to the previous section regarding methods used in adapted education for gifted students, as the tasks presented seem to be very broad in nature which could lead to more active participation by the students. Choosing a topic which both interests and concerns the students could also be an efficient way of increasing students’ motivation.

All in all, the number of respondents who report a direct positive effect from adapting their education towards gifted student in terms of motivation account for 50 per cent (n = 7) of the response group.

4.4.2 Decrease and neutrality of motivation due to adaptation

The remaining 54 per cent (N = 7) of the response group report both positive and negative effects as a result of adaptation for both gifted and other students. 43 per cent (N = 6) report motivational effects directly related to the adaptation for gifted students, whereas the remaining 7 per cent (N = 1) report motivational effects in the case of students with other students. This is the same respondent that reported no gifted students in his or her classroom and that response will therefore not be included in this analysis.

One of the respondents report on the question of motivational increase: *“Some students thrive. Some think that it is a bit embarrassing.”* This response could refer to the fact that some students do not want to feel different from the other students by being assigned other tasks and assignments. This could also lead to a loss of feeling of collectiveness in certain classes, depending on how the classes are socially structured. If some students feel embarrassed by having the content adapted to their level, a broader type of assignment might be a possible adaptation in order to adapt the content in compliance to each student’s level.

Another respondent reports: *“Most kids do not do the work. Parents want it more”*. This suggests that the main driving factor behind the wish for adaptation of content for some gifted students are the parents. If the parents of the student are the ones wanting more adapted content for their child,

it is reasonable to assume that the student would not feel as motivated if he or she did not personally wish for greater challenges. Although this is the only respondent reporting of parents being the main driving force behind the wish for more adapted education, it still presents an interesting experience regarding the topic.

On a more neutral note, a respondent states: *“I am unsure whether “the clever ones” achieved more through adapted education, but I rather saw them expressing more interest in the topic, needing to make a greater effort. I am probably more along the line that if the students gain more autonomy in relation to the tasks, they will achieve more”* (trans. AHH). In this case the respondent refers to the gifted students to be “the clever ones”, which can be interpreted as the already high achieving students. This is along the same notion as previous considerations regarding gifted students in the study. More autonomy while doing the tasks can also be placed along the same theme as earlier, regarding broader tasks for the gifted students in which they are more able to find challenges that suit their level.

On the topic of motivation, 15 per cent (N = 2) of the respondents report little to no increase in motivation as the students already were motivated prior to the adaptation. One of the respondents reports: *“Fortunately, my student is already quite motivated, but the student seemed more content”*, presenting an increase in contentedness rather than motivation. This might however, lead to an increase in motivation long term as the student might not be increasingly frustrated by lack of challenge in the day-to-day schoolwork. The other respondent reports: *“No, this was a motivated pupil, just wanted some more challenging tasks”*, which goes along the same line as the previous example, presenting challenges early enough to hopefully stop a buildup of frustration.

To summarize, adapted education has shown differing results in terms of motivation for gifted students in the respondents’ classrooms. However, most of the respondents report an increase in motivation after adapting their education.

4.4.3 Adaptation for achievement level

On the topic of adaptation in terms of achievement level, the responses carry a lot of variety. This sub section will focus on some of the responses on the question of change in achievement level after adapting education for gifted students and highlight what the effects were as presented through the survey participants responses.

In terms of a clear change in achievements after adapting their education, 54 per cent (N = 7) of the respondents report either a clear increase of achievement level or somewhat of an increase. One of the respondent states: *“Yes. When I put away the textbooks and started reading books of their own choice and at their own level, they developed a lot more. Also dropping a lot of presentations in class and had them record them instead and record group sessions or sit down with groups to discuss prepared topics, the development increases quickly if students are willing to do the work.”* This response highlights a change of both content and method to be the main determiner in terms of increasing the achievement level of the gifted students. Although most of the respondents report their gifted students to already be high achieving, this respondent still notices and increase in achievement level through motivational increase which led to developmental increase.

Another respondent reports: *“I have seen students improve and blossom, and that gives me courage and motivation to carry on.”* Here the increase of achievements as highlighted by the respondent leads to an increase of motivation for the teacher, which also could lead to more motivation in terms of planning for adapted education for gifted students. Other respondents who report a clear increase are rather brief in their descriptions with a simple “yes”, apart from one of the remaining respondents who expresses: *“It’s not a solid yes, but I think that my students have a stronger will to succeed (most of them) because they know I believe in them and due to good relations.”* This response highlights one of the aspects which has not yet been taken into consideration on the question of adapted education, namely relations between the teacher and the student. However, relations between the teacher and the students could be regarded as one of the most important aspects when it comes to teaching in the Norwegian classroom, as a teacher with good relations to the class could more easily both inspire and motivate students, which in turn could lead to more learning (Christensen, 2013).

On another note, several of the respondents report little to no change in achievement after adapting their education. 38 per cent (N = 5) of the respondents report along the line of little to no change in achievement to speak of, however, some of them elaborate on the question: *“They have been achieving high grades regardless, but they have expressed that they have felt they learned more.”* This response highlights a theme that has been prevalent in the survey responses, which is the notion that gifted students are always high achieving in terms of academic performance. However, by expressing that they had learned more, it is still reasonable to assume that the students did see changes in their feeling of achievement and their personal motivation for the schoolwork.

Another response, along the same line as the previous example, states: *“Partially, we teach at a very high level, see rather that the weaker students struggle to keep up.”* In this case a negative symptom

of adapting the education for gifted students is highlighted, as the respondent reports instances of the other students struggling to keep up with the increased academic level and content of the education. This could suggest that the level of all the tasks was adjusted to better comply with the gifted students, while failing to meet the rest of the student group at their individual levels, which should be regarded as another important aspect to consider while planning sessions.

To summarize, the effects of adapted education in terms of achievements are similar to the effects in terms of motivation. The results are varied and will probably continue to vary until each teacher discovers which method of adaption best suits his or her students in terms of learning outcome, motivational boost and boost of achievement level, albeit academic or personal.

4.5 Findings on the main obstacles of integrating adapted education for gifted students

This section will focus on the themes that are relevant for answering the second research question of the study (see section 4.1). Different stories and experiences from the respondents will be presented and analyzed in order to gain a greater knowledge on the topic. The response rate on the question regarding the main obstacles of integrating adapted education for gifted students had a 92 per cent (N = 13) response rate, as one of the respondents did not report having had any gifted students in his or her classroom.

The responses to this question had a lot more variety than the previous responses as the teachers identify different aspects to be more challenging than others. One of the respondents states: *"I would like more ideas from books, other teachers and the Internet, because it is not talked so much about adapting for gifted students as for those with challenges. I have to spend a lot of time surfing and thinking to find good ideas. It should have been easier to find ideas for adapted education for both weak and strong students."* This response highlights a lack of resources and materials that are specifically constructed as tools for adapted education for gifted students. The respondent also highlights that there are more accessible materials for adaptation in terms of students with academic challenges, than there are materials for gifted students. Due to this reported lack of resources, it could be reasonable to assume that this could be one of the main factors as to why adapted education for gifted students has not been as much talked about compared to adapted education for students with learning difficulties.

Another respondent shares the same notion, although briefer: *"Finding suitable tasks."* This respondent, however, does not highlight a wish for more ideas from books and other resources in order to get ideas for suitable tasks. Although a diverse access to more resource materials could

always be desirable as different teachers prefer different teaching methods and are therefore in need of resources and tasks that compliments their preferred style of teaching.

Along the same notion a third respondent shares his or her opinion: *“Finding suitable material, finding the time to do individual follow-up as there is not time set aside for gifted learners, as opposed to IEP [individual education plan] students. Making sure the work you give them is at a suitable level. Remembering to look for/make adapted material for gifted students before each lesson.”* This response highlights not only challenges in terms of finding suitable materials, but also a lack of time. The respondent also draws parallels to students who follow an IEP, who always have designated time slots in which their learning materials and individual education plans are planned and organized. This follows along with a similar theme to the first quoted respondent in this section, where the wish for more adapted materials for both gifted students and students with learning difficulties was presented.

Following the same notion of time being one of the main obstacles for integration of adapted education for gifted students are two additional respondents’ opinions, as they state the main obstacles to be: *“Time for planning AND time for feedback”* and *“To find time to do it and to find adequate material”*. In the first quote the respondent also highlights time for feedback to be an important factor as well as time for planning. The capitalization of the word “and” could suggest that the respondent finds both aspects to be equally important, thus capitalizing the conjunction in the sentence to stress equality. However, the main takeaway from the first example is that the main obstacle is the amount of time required for both planning and feedback in order to successfully adapt education for students at all levels. The second example also highlights time as one of the main obstacles, while also presenting obstacles in terms of finding adequate materials that are suited to the gifted students’ levels. This also relates back to the previous examples where the respondents identify a lack of resource materials to be one of the main obstacles to integration of adapted education.

While time and resources are both recurring obstacles presented through the responses, other obstacles are also present. One of the respondents identifies the main obstacles to be: *“Too many students with so many different levels, only two English lessons a week, several on beginners’ level, so in order to reach everyone, there is much to prepare and consider.”* This respondent identifies the mixed level of the classes to be one of the main challenges. A mixed level group of students with different individual needs in terms of adaptation and follow up, combined with limited time both in lesson and planning could lead to great obstacles to integration of adapted education for gifted students. The respondent also highlights that he or she has several students on a beginners’ level in

his or her class, which in turn could lead to significantly less time for adapted education for gifted students, as the beginner level students are more likely to need closer attention and follow up in order to either catch up or keep up with the average level of the rest of the class.

Along the same notion of mixed level groups being one of the main obstacles to adapted education for gifted students, another respondent shares his or her opinion on main obstacles to be: *“Mixed level groups, Norwegian attitude that one shouldn’t obviously excel in school as it stigmatizes the weaker students.”* This response also highlights stigmatization of students with learning difficulties, as active adapted education for gifted students could lead to the differences in comprehension level to be more apparent. Another respondent shares some of the same opinions: *“I wish I had closer connection to teachers on the higher levels and that we were allowed to put students in long term groups based on their skills. I also would appreciate if we had a wider range of books etc.”* This response highlights both the previous challenge of mixed level groups as well as the challenge of limited resources in terms of books and other materials. The respondent also presents a wish for a higher degree of level-based grouping in the classroom in addition to acceleration of the learning materials through access to higher grade level materials and closer contact with the teachers of said grade levels. Both responses present interesting nuances to what could be the main obstacles related to mixed level groups in Norwegian classrooms in terms of adapted education, as well as presenting possible solutions to these issues.

Another obstacle presented through the responses is the issue of task assignment. Several of the respondents identify assigning suitable tasks to be the main obstacle when adapting their education for gifted students. One respondent identifies the main obstacle as: *“To sufficiently adapt the level for the gifted students (to challenge them without having the tasks be too easy/hard). To find tasks/texts that fit their level while simultaneously confine with the content of the rest of the class.”* This response highlights the obstacle of appropriately challenging the gifted students within the topics of the subjects. This could lead to even greater obstacles if the teachers have limited access to more challenging tasks within both digital and physical learning resources at their institutions. It could be a factor that digital resources might have only one difficulty with little to no possibility to differentiate within the resource, apart from adaptation in terms of students with learning difficulties, in which they have the option to read easier formulated texts.

One of the other respondents identifies the main obstacles to be: *“Giving meaningful assignments that still fit in with what the class is doing, but that they feel challenge them. The class feeling is important.”* Here the respondent highlights a sense of community within the classes to be equally important. This could mean that if the content and tasks are adapted for the gifted students, the

gifted students could sense a feeling of being different compared to the rest of the group, which is unfortunate as adapted education should not affect the well-being of students. This also highlights the issue related to promotion of elitism in the Norwegian classroom.

On the other hand, differentiation through different types of tasks might also lead to a sense of unfairness as highlighted by another respondent: *“That you make the tasks too narrow – that it can be experienced as unfair because the tasks are too hard.”* This obstacle can be challenging, especially if the gifted students have not been properly mapped prior to differentiation. The highlighted obstacle also goes along the line of the previous examples concerning the finding of suitable tasks; however, this example concretizes the difficulties presented when constructing too challenging tasks, turning the focus more to the construction process rather than the searching process. Another respondent shares the same notion: *“To not make it TOO difficult. The point is not to assign these students with more work, but rather assign them work that feels meaningful to them, thus leading to more learning.”* This response also highlights the importance of inducing meaning into the tasks and assignments. If the students are assigned additional tasks for the sake of having something to work on, without any clear goal or aim in mind, the tasks could feel repetitive and meaningless, which could lead to an increased risk for loss of motivation.

Lastly, on the note of student activity, one of the respondents identifies the main obstacle to be: *“To get the students to understand that it is up to them to do the work to reach their own top potential.”* This response emphasizes the importance of having the students be made self-aware of their own most efficient ways of learning, as well as highlighting the need for the students to lay down the groundwork in order to reach greater heights of knowledge and competence. This notion also emphasizes that the teacher can take a lot of different measures with the goal to try and assure that every student gets an adapted education. However, adapted education is not possible without having the students both work on and execute the tasks with a goal for improvement and learning in mind. This response is the only response which highlights student participation and motivation to be the main obstacle in terms of adapting education for gifted students.

To summarize, the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students as presented by English teachers from 5th to 10th grade are many and varied. Some identify time and resources to be the main obstacles to adapting their education, whereas others consider mixed level groups to be a greater obstacle. Teachers in this grade group also identify the construction and collection of tasks and resource materials suited for gifted students to be the main obstacle as the supply is, both presented by the respondents as well as experienced through my own teaching practice, scarce. Teachers in the response group also find it challenging to construct and find relevant tasks suited for

the gifted students' levels that fit the overarching topics. The final obstacle presented by the response group is getting the students to understand that some of the responsibility when it comes to adapted education is centered around their contribution and focus.

5. Discussion

The following chapter provides a discussion of the findings presented in chapter 4. The findings will be related to the theoretical background of which this thesis builds upon, which was introduced in chapter 2. The discussion is carried out with the aim to answer the research questions as presented previously in the study. This chapter is structured by covering the two research questions of this thesis, which were first introduced in chapter 1. Therefore, the chapter will be structured in the same order as the research questions were presented, first focusing on the result and theory that can relate to research question 1 (do teachers adapt their education for gifted students and, if yes, how do they do it?) and thereafter focusing on the results and theory that can relate to research question 2 (what are the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students?).

5.1 Discussion on approaches to adapted education

On the topic of adapted education and specifically how the respondents defined adapted education, the data indicates that their definitions are mostly homogenous. Most of the respondents share the definition that is presented in the Norwegian law of education, which reads: "Education must be adapted to the abilities and aptitudes of the individual pupil, apprentice, candidate for certificate of practice and training candidate" (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3). The first response highlighted in the section of the findings which focuses on definition and approaches to adapted education presents a very similar definition by focusing the notion that the education should facilitate both mastery and challenge based on the students' prerequisites. The only clear outlier in the findings on the definitions on adapted education was the respondent who stated that adapted education is nearly impossible with 28 students at mixed levels, which relates back to the preparatory works of the Norwegian law of education which states: "adapted education shall take place within the community of the classes or groups, and to the extent that the teacher is practically capable of" (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3; Olsen & Haug, 2020). The respondent in this example therefore expressed the practical limitations present when trying to implement adapted education in the classroom.

In terms of approaches to adapted education, the findings highlighted in the part concerning approaches to adapted education indicate several different approaches to the concept. One respondent highlights a wish for more level-based grouping of students. This is in line with Dale & Wærness' (2005, 2007) idea that the focus should be on each individual student's accomplishments of the competence aims. If this type of grouping is to be carried out, Dale & Wærness' could be applied in combination with Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg's (2009) approach, which focuses on both the strengths and learning styles of the students while also highlighting the importance of differentiating

the content to each student's level. As expressed in the respondent's wish for more level-based grouping, careful mapping of each student's level should be required, which is also presented by Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg (2009).

The data also indicates a presence of Repstad & Tallaksen's (2011) approach, presented through a respondent describing several methods that are highlighted as being actively used in his or her education. The method include: *"explaining more to some than others, filling the gaps to those who struggle..."* This is in line with Repstad & Tallaksen's (2011) approach because they focus on the teacher's conscious choice of working methods related to the student's abilities and the content of the subjects. Also highlighted by Repstad & Tallaksen (2011) is the importance of teacher competence in the variety of work methods, which is clearly indicated in this respondent's approach.

Present in the response data regarding approaches to adapted education is also more of Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg's (2009) main focus, which is to map out students who are incapable of learning under normal conditions. This is presented through the respondent who described his or her approach to be: *"Lacking. Focused more on students with special needs, below grade level"*. However, it could be argued that Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg's (2009) approach could be applied to not only mapping out the students who are below grade level, but also gifted students as some of the gifted students might struggle to learn under normal conditions, whether it is due to a lack of suitable content or a sub-optimal choice of learning methods.

Raising awareness within the student group as to which learning method is the most optimal to each learner is also presented through the data materials regarding approaches to adapted education. This is in line with Bjørkvold's (2010) approach, where the student is a key player. The student should be aware of his or her motivation, what they want to learn and how they want to learn it, and this is highlighted through the respondent who stated: *"I think all students need to find their own way of learning. I can give them tasks to challenge them, but they have to do the work and solve the tasks their own way"*. Therefore, this response shares a lot of the same sentiment as Bjørkvold (2010) as both this teacher's approach and Bjørkvold's approach regard the student as a key player in their own adapted education.

The data suggests that the group of respondents are very much similar in their approach to adapted education, which also is presented through the reports of who carries the main responsibility for adapted education being carried out at their schools (see Figure 1). By examining the data presented in figure 1, it is possible to connect the response groups' approaches to Bachmann & Haug's (2006) narrow approach to adapted education, which focuses more on the teachers and the students in terms of responsibility. However, the data also suggests that 43 per cent (N = 6) of the teachers share

the responsibility with the school administrators, which in turn can be deemed as having a mixed approach, both wide and narrow. Determination of what kind of responsibility is being shared with the school administrators is however unclear, as a follow-up question to this multiple-choice question was not included in the questionnaire.

The data suggests that the teachers have a relatively shared definition of what adapted education is, although they seem to approach the concept differently. While none of the approaches are significantly more frequently presented than others, the data indicates a presence of all approaches within the group of teachers, while simultaneously presenting which overarching approach, in terms of wide and narrow, the teachers are a part of in their respective schools. All the approaches presented are in many ways similar, while only differing in focus area. Thus, most of the approaches are applied in combination with other approaches, creating a teacher's personalized approach to adapted education which draws inspiration from several sources.

5.2 Discussion on gifted students, terminology and identifiability

This section will highlight the different definitions and what the respondents perceive to be a gifted student, while drawing parallels to the theoretical background which was presented in section 2.2 of this thesis. Differences in definitions regarding gifted students will be highlighted and seen in contrast to the different European countries' definitions of giftedness and seen in relation to the works of Gardner (1984) and the theory of multiple intelligences.

When asked to define a gifted students the data presented several variations. The first response presented in section 4.2 defined gifted students to be students who are above the level of their peers, which is similar to the definition presented by the DCSF as their shared definition for giftedness and talent (Department for children, schools and families (DCSF), 2008). However, this first response's focus could be interpreted as to only being on the students who already have shown proven academic achievement. This group of students can also be regarded as gifted, although several of the European countries define giftedness not only by proven achievement, but also put an emphasis on the individual's potential for outstanding achievements and development of already existing abilities in order to accomplish said achievements (Herrmann & Nevo, 2011; Bailey, et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the data indicates that gifted students are perceived as being more actively participating in the class discourse, as highlighted by the respondent who stated that gifted students add interesting facts and knowledge to the lessons. This is in line with Idsøe & Skogen (2011, pp. 48-49) who identified gifted students to be extremely passionate in their interest while continuously

asking questions due to their extreme curiosity. Therefore, the student presented through the response can be identified as very likely to be gifted based on the respondent's answer.

The data further suggests that gifted students are identified as the ones who excel above their grade level, which was further highlighted by the respondent who stated that a gifted student is: *"A student that communicates to a certain level, both written and orally, where a need for development in terms of spelling, sentence structure, text structure and other aspects is no longer necessary"*. The focus in this response is on the English subject, in which a gifted student is regarded as a student who already shows a certain level of mastery within the subject, displaying a strong linguistic intelligence while simultaneously laying the ground works for development beyond the grade level of his or her peers, thus highlighting the potential for further development (Bailey, et al., 2012; Gardner, 1984; Herrmann & Nevo, 2011). This indicates that the student in the respondent's example is capable of a higher level of learning, thus exemplifying the student's learning capacity to be higher than those of his or her peers, which is one of the main determiners to identifying a gifted student (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 37).

One of the outliers of the examples presented through the data, is the respondent who defines a gifted student as: *"Above grade level. Reading, writing and speaking English. It would be nice if social skills were there as well."* This response indicates that this teacher's perception of a gifted student is a student with a high academic level, but with a lower level of social skills. This is in line with the common misdiagnosis of gifted students, as presented by Beljan, et al. (2006), where a gifted student's interests might be different to the interests of students at the same age. Therefore, gifted students might be perceived as "quirky" due to their accelerated intellect level and lack of interest in interaction with their peers, which could be the case in the example presented by the respondent (Beljan, et al., 2006, p. 84).

The shared conception of what a gifted student is seems to be a student who already displays both high ability and high achievement in the school framework. When asked whether a gifted student should excel in every subject or not, the respondents differed in their responses, ranging from agree to disagree. Approximately one third of the respondents answered agree, another third answered neither agree nor disagree and the last third answered disagree. This result indicates that some of the respondents regard gifted students as only being gifted if they excel in more aspects than only the English subject, meaning that they look for a display of mastery of multiple intelligences rather than only the linguistic intelligence (Gardner, 1984). However, the data presents a clear indication that the term gifted is yet regarded differently depending on who you ask, and therefore both identification and mapping of gifted students could potentially present further challenges in the

future. This implies that further training in both identification and mapping of gifted students is needed, for example through either teacher training or courses.

5.3 Discussion on adapted education for gifted students

The following section includes a discussion of the respondents' reports of their own adaptations for gifted students. Before specifically asking which methods they used the last time they adapted their education for gifted students, the respondents were asked to share their level of agreement with the statement: "Gifted students should be given differentiated materials", in which 13 out of 14 respondents reported either strong agreement or regular agreement. The response group was therefore once again similar in their answers, as none of the respondents reported neither disagreement nor strong disagreement with the statement. This result is however not too surprising as differentiation is one of the more usual methods of adaptation regardless of student level.

One of the respondents who are highlighted in terms of how they adapted their education for a gifted student, states: "*I found literature on the same topic from a higher grade level*". This type of adaptation relates back to Idsøe & Skogen (2011, p. 49) who pointed out two main factors to adaptation: quicker pace and enrichment of the ordinary education. In this case, where the student was presented with materials from a higher grade level, this student's education could be considered as both accelerated through higher grade materials, while also having his or her education enriched as the materials are still on the same topic as his or her peers.

Another respondent along the same line reported that he or she gave the gifted student tasks from the year above and other more complicated materials, from the student's own interest. In this example the student is also accelerated through access to higher grade materials while also being enriched by this same access. Therefore, this is in line with Idsøe & Skogen's (2011) main factors of adapted education for gifted students, while also relating back to the Bjørkvold's (2010) approach to adapted education, as the student in this example was presented as a key player in his or her own adapted education by expressing a wish for higher grade literature and learning materials.

In the next example presented from the findings considering differentiation in terms of acceleration, the teacher in question shares that he or she adapted the education for a gifted student through presenting the student with an alternative learning arena, by using digital learning materials rather than the standard 8th grade textbook, due to the digital source's more advanced vocabulary and content. This instance is yet another example of enrichment, as the teacher actively chose to enrich the content of the student through assigning the student to a different source of learning materials (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49). This is also in line with to Repstad & Tallaksen's (2011)

approach to adapted education as the teacher contributes towards adapted education by consciously choosing working methods and content based on the student's abilities.

In the last example of the findings considering differentiation in terms of acceleration, the teacher highlights that he or she gave the student more challenging materials to work with, while also encouraging the student to help fellow classmates in their work. This type of adaptation is also a form of acceleration through more difficult content, which also relates back to Idsøe & Skogen's (2011, p. 49) two main factors of adapted education which were the introduction of a quicker pace for the gifted students and enrichment of the learning situation through different methods and materials. However, this method of adaptation can also be seen in relation to the theory of the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1987). The gifted student could in this example act as a scaffolding (Bruner, 1978) for the other students while they are working to expand their proximal development zones. Perhaps through this type of work, the gifted students might achieve a deeper understanding of the content, thus cementing the knowledge that they have already acquired. This form of adaptation is also fronting Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg's (2009) approach to adapted education due to the differentiation of the content. Differentiation of the content is crucial in order to suit every student's needs and abilities (Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009).

On the topic of differentiation through expectation as presented through the findings, the differentiation presented here are a bit different, as these examples do not directly differentiate by presenting different tasks to the students, but rather differentiate through higher expectations of the students while answering the same tasks as their peers. This type of adaptation presents the student as a key player and is somewhat in line with Bjørkvold's (2010) approach, where the student needs to be aware of his or her own motivations, what they want to learn and how they want to learn it. It is also indicated that the student in this example is also presented with a broader perspective in terms of tasks, in which the teacher does not define the level by presenting tasks of different difficulties, but rather have the students find their own way (Bjørkvold, 2010). This increased expectation from the teacher is also in line with Idsøe & Skogen's (2011, p. 49) factor of enrichment, as the increased expectation could lead to enrichment of the content produced by the student due to the increased expectation acting as an external factor of motivation.

Along the same notion of increased expectation is the final example presented through the responses. In this example the teacher gives the students tasks where it is up to the students themselves to find their optimal level. This also acts as a form of enrichment (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49) while simultaneously drawing from Bjørkvold's (2010) approach due to the focus on the student as a key player, as well as Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg's (2009) approach to adapted education

due to the adaptation of the learning situation. This could indicate that the students are presented with tasks that enable them to start off at their own individual starting points (Bjørkvold, 2010; Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009) which could lead to an enriched learning situation if the students are self-aware of their learning capacities and preferred learning styles (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 38-39).

In the findings regarding differentiation through alteration, the first respondent reported buying English literature for the school library based on feedback of what the gifted student would like to read, indicating enrichment of the student's school situation by presenting some autonomy over the literary content of the library (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49). The student was also presented with challenges on the internet and the teacher engaged in conversation with the student about his interests (in this example the teacher specified that the student is a "he"). In this example it is indicated that the teacher made use of several different work methods relating to the student's abilities, which is in line with Repstad and Tallaksen's (2011) approach due to the conscious choice of working methods, while also drawing from Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg's (2009) approach as the content was differentiated in order to suit this student's needs and abilities.

When presented with the questions regarding whether the respondents saw a motivational increase or an increase of achievements after adapting their education, the results were varied. One determiner in terms of motivation and achievement with gifted students could be a lack of awareness of inner motivations, learning capacities and optimal learning methods. This could indicate that in order to efficiently adapt education for gifted students, the students must be made aware of their own optimal learning methods as well as their learning capacities (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 37). A majority of the teachers also reported that their gifted students were already displaying academic achievements, which may indicate that the ability to identify students with great learning potential who are yet to display academic achievement is somewhat absent in the research data. This could indicate that there are several gifted students that have not yet been identified due to them not yet displaying academic achievements. Furthermore, there was no clear indication to suggest a correlation between certain methods of adapted education and motivational increase, however, motivation is hard to measure based solely on teacher's observations, thus more research from the students' perspective is required.

Moving on to the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students, several different aspects were uncovered. One of the more commonly expressed obstacles as stated by the teachers, was the access to learning materials. Several of the respondents indicated that they would like more ideas from books, other teachers or the internet in order to properly adapt their education

for gifted students. The results also indicate that there is limited access to materials suited for gifted student, thus indicating that the task of adapting the education for these students is even more challenging and time consuming than perceived. Also indicated by the findings is the obstacle of finding suitable tasks for the students. This is also in line with Repstad & Tallaksen's (2011) approach to adapted education and conscious choice of working methods, only in this instance the teachers do not have sufficient access to suitable tasks and learning materials, which in turn could lead to their toolboxes of methods and approaches being filled to an unsatisfactory level, as the supply of gifted student learning materials is indicated as being too scarce.

Another obstacle as presented by the respondents is the amount of time required to adapt the education for gifted students in addition to the rest of the class. A respondent highlights that there is no time set aside for gifted learners, thus presenting a challenge when each student is in need of individual follow-up while faced with different tasks. The teacher in this example also draws a parallel to students that follow an individual education plan, who have designated time slots for both plan construction as well as mapping them in terms of achievement of individual learning aims. While this is not the case for gifted students, it is heavily indicated through the teachers' responses that setting aside time for both learning materials acquisition in combination with individual feedback presents a great obstacle in terms of adapting education for this student group.

Along the same notion as the previously presented example are the two following examples, which also stress time as the main obstacle when integrating adapted education for gifted students. The respondents highlight time for planning and feedback as some of the main obstacles as well as time to find adequate materials to use while practicing adapted education for this student group. Time seems to be the most reoccurring obstacle as presented by the respondents, while combined with a scarce supply of materials suited for the gifted students' levels. Both these obstacles are presented as being hindering to the process of adapted education as both lack of time and lack of resources could lead to a less enriched school situation while also making acceleration of each student's content suited to their level even harder (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49). These challenges could potentially be solved through a collaboration between the teachers and the school administrators by assigning time slots and resources for adapted education for the gifted students, following a wider approach to adapted education. Each school's needs in terms of time and resources could be considered in the construction of local teaching plans and their approaches to and definitions of adapted education (Bachmann & Haug, 2006).

Apart from time and resources, a third obstacle as indicated by the respondents is the construction of the classes and groups. One of the respondents presents the main obstacle to be the sheer

number of students in the groups combined with the mixed levels, while also only distributing two English lessons a week. Also highlighted is a significant number of students at a beginner's level, which in turn could lead to a need for careful resource management in terms of time and learning materials suited to each student's level. As mentioned in the findings chapter (see section 4.5) this particular response presents another angle to the previously mentioned obstacle of time, as this combination of a large student group paired with a vast amount of beginner level students presents a big obstacle in terms of preparation for each lesson. With such a diverse student group it could also present a challenge in terms of differentiation of content without the students feeling segregated (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 40-41). Finding tasks that suit every individual student's learning style while keeping the feeling of collectiveness intact could therefore pose a great challenge while practicing adapted education (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 40-41). Perhaps Bjørkvold's (2010) holistic approach to adapted education where the students themselves are more active in defining their level and learning with their individual levels as a starting point could be implemented. However, in this case it is crucial that the teacher presents broad tasks that makes it possible for each student to perform from their individual starting points. It is therefore uncertain whether tasks of this nature would be suitable with purely adapted education for gifted students in mind.

Following the same notion as the previous example, another respondent highlights mixed level groups along with the Norwegian attitude that one should not obviously excel in school as it stigmatizes the "weaker" students. This is in line with Idsøe & Skogen (2011, p. 58), and the example of the middle school principal who tried adapting for a small group of gifted students, which was met with serious backlash (see section 2.4). Gifted students are often met with the notion that they are self-sufficient and adapting specifically for this student group could lead to an unfortunate elitism that could damage the collectives in which these students are a part of (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 64-65). However, this notion could be dealt with by implementing Bjørkvold's (2010) approach to adapted education where the student is a key player and responsible for finding their own optimal way of learning from their individual starting points. The adaptation would not be as apparent if the entire student group were working on broad tasks, in which the gifted students were given space to flourish by setting no clear limitations. These tasks could be even more broadened by combining both linguistic and visual input, thus involving both the linguistic and the visio-spatial intelligence of the individual students (Gardner, 1984). By combining Bjørkvold's (2010) approach to adapted education with Gardner's (1984) theory of multiple intelligences it could perhaps be possible to construct tasks that challenge each student at a suitable level without having the adaptation feel stigmatizing, regardless of previous academic achievements.

Another response on the topic of obstacles related to adapted education for gifted students, presents a wish for more closer connection to teachers at higher levels combined with a wish for organizing students into groups based on their academic levels. This respondent also highlights a wish for a wider variety of books and similar materials. Closer connection to teachers at higher levels combined with level-based grouping could make the challenge of adapted education feel more achievable (Olsen & Haug, 2020), as the adaptation could be carried out in these groups rather than adapting for one student at a time. This type of grouping could also make differentiation of the content easier, as each group could be assigned with tasks that suit their pre-conceived academic level. However, if this type of grouping is to be practiced, it is crucial that the differentiation does not lead to any unfortunate elitism (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 64-65) but that the content is adapted to each individual student's needs (Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009). These needs could possibly be easier met if students with similar needs are grouped. By practicing level-based grouping it is also possible to accelerate and challenge the gifted students further by presenting an arena in which the pace of learning is quickened, thus possibly resulting in more challenge and enrichment of the learning situation (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49). As previously mentioned, the respondent also highlighted a wish for a larger variety of books to choose from while adapting for gifted students, which carries the same notion of a scarce supply of learning materials for gifted students. The respondent also indicates that if the connection between teachers at all grade levels was stronger, the supply of gifted learning materials might be vaster as a result of increased collaboration. However, for this collaboration to be possible, a wider approach to adapted education might be a possible solution (Bachmann & Haug, 2006), as collaboration and communication could be strengthened through commitment to a local plan in which these two aspects in terms of adapted education for gifted students were in focus.

Following the findings regarding mixed level groups and level-based grouping, several respondents report the main obstacles to include adapting for the gifted students' levels while still confining with the content of the rest of the class. This response also highlights the previously presented problems related to accessible content for gifted student education. Other respondents also highlight the same issue with finding and constructing tasks that feel meaningful to the gifted students while still working on the same topics as the rest of the student group, stressing the importance of the feeling of being in a collective (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, pp. 58-59). These obstacles are in line with Dale & Wærness' (2007) approach to adapted education, in which the education focuses on the development of the students' metacognitive strategies, with the intent to strengthen each student's awareness of which learning strategies are best suited to achieve their individual learning goals. If the students are presented with broad tasks within the general topic of the class (Bjørkvold, 2010)

while being aware of their best suited learning strategies (Dale, Wærness, & Lindvig, 2005; Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009), the adapted education could be more easily achievable. However, for this strategy to succeed each student needs to be thoroughly trained in applying these metacognitive strategies, which in turn might present other challenges in terms of organizing and following through with the metacognitive awareness training. The importance of the teacher's choice of working methods and content is however not to be understated, as this aspect also plays a crucial part in the wider scope of adapted education and enrichment of the everyday learning situation (Repstad & Tallaksen, 2011; Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49).

In the same vein as the previous examples, a respondent presents the main obstacle to integrating adapted education for gifted students to be the construction of tasks and shares his or her concern that one should not make the tasks too hard or too narrow, as it may be experienced as unfair to the gifted students. This response indicates that Bjørkvold's (2010) approach to adapted education might be a possible solution in order to present the students with tasks that are not narrowed down to each individual student's level, but rather broader in nature, in which the students can tackle the tasks from different angles and perspectives. Rather than accelerating designated students or groups through active differentiation of content, the students are given the tools to accelerate themselves depending on how they tackle the tasks. This obstacle is also presented to be the most challenging aspect of adapted education for gifted students by another respondent, who states that the tasks should not be too difficult, and that the assigned work should feel meaningful to the students rather than only feeling like additional tasks. This also highlights the importance of quality over quantity in task assignment, not only for gifted students, but for the entire student body in order to achieve enrichment through conscious choice of work methods and activities by the teacher (Idsøe & Skogen, 2011, p. 49; Repstad & Tallaksen, 2011).

The final respondent in the question of what the main obstacles to adapted education for gifted students are, presents inducing active student involvement to be the most challenging aspect. Specifically making the students understand that it is up to themselves to do the work in order to reach their top potential. This response also follows the same notion as previous examples, where active student involvement in terms of metacognitive awareness (Dale, Wærness, & Lindvig, 2005) in addition to awareness of their individual optimal learning strategies (Buli-Holmberg & Ekeberg, 2009) are the main focus.

In summary the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students include the amount of time available for planning, the number of resources in terms of learning materials available in order to differentiate for gifted students, mixed level groups where a lot of time and

priority is set aside for individual education plan students rather than gifted students, finding relevant tasks within the sub-topics of the subjects and making the students aware of their own contribution to adapted education through metacognitive awareness and focus.

Possible solutions to these obstacles could be several changes on an organizational level, in which more time and resources are set aside for gifted students. A larger supply of learning materials for this student group would also be needed in combination with alternative assignments designed to the level of gifted students while sharing the same sub-topics as the rest of the class. Class construction could also be looked into, as perhaps level based grouping could lead to further development of the gifted students' abilities. Lastly, the students' metacognitive awareness could be raised through active student participation in the choice of work methods, in which it would be possible for them to explore which methods they deem to be more efficient in terms of their own learning.

5.4 Limitations to the study

As with all studies, this study has its' limitations. One of the main limitations to this study is the chosen data collection method. By collecting data through an online survey questionnaire, the researcher has access to more people, thus hopefully resulting in a larger sample size of responses and opinions. However, the sample size did not turn out as large as previously predicted, as only 14 surveys were completed. The responses are also limited to the content of the questionnaire. Due to the choice of survey questionnaire as a method, it is not possible for the researcher to ask follow-up questions to themes that are presented through the respondents' answers. This is also a limitation due to the use of an inductive method as the themes are explored as they are discovered through the responses, rather than pre-determined or predicted by the researcher. This study also does not seek to answer any pre-formulated hypotheses; therefore, the study is limited by only seeking to answer the research questions regardless of any unforeseen information that might present itself through the questionnaire responses.

Furthermore, the study is limited by the survey questions through lack of correlation between questions relating to the responses. Specifically, the questions regarding motivation and achievement in terms of adapted education, as most of the responses did not link gifted students to other student groups than the already high achieving and the changes in motivation presented a lot more variety than previously presumed. However, as this study seeks to answer only the pre-formulated research questions, further research on this aspect of adapted education for gifted students could be suggested. In hindsight, rephrasing some of the questions in order to further

explore which students the teachers deem as gifted would be helpful. It would also be interesting to know whether the students the teachers deem as gifted have ever received an official mapping of their abilities and potential, in order to gain a greater understanding of which type of students are in question.

This study is also limited by my own personal interpretations of the data materials. My interpretations might be different from another teacher's interpretation, and the responses might be interpreted differently through interpretation of written response materials as opposed to if they were experienced first-hand through, for example, an interview setting or observation of adapted education for gifted students in the classroom. This study also focuses solely on the teachers' perceptions of the topic, thus excluding the students' lived experiences of the previously presented methods and approaches to adaptation.

6. Conclusion

This chapter is focused on answering the research questions of the study, while summarizing the key findings of the study. The research questions are as previously stated:

1. Do teachers adapt their education for gifted students and, if yes, how do they do it?
2. What are the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students?

The chapter is structured in the same order as the research questions are presented, first focusing on question number one followed by question number two. Furthermore, the study's main contributions to the field of research will be presented followed by recommendations for future research.

6.1 Addressing the research questions

In the question of whether teachers adapt their education for gifted students, the data indicates that most of the teachers do. The teachers are also mostly homogenous in their definition of adapted education, which is the same definition presented in the Norwegian law of education: "Education must be adapted to the abilities and aptitudes of the individual pupil, apprentice, candidate for certificate of practice and training candidate" (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-3). This presents the notion that most teachers have the same definition of adapted education, namely education that is adapted to each individual's abilities and aptitudes. The method of which they practice adapted education however presents a lot of variation. 13 out of 14 teachers reported having had gifted students in their classroom in addition to practicing adapted education for these students.

The respondents' definitions of a gifted student carry a lot of similarities, however, the data indicates that teachers define giftedness purely based on prior academic achievement, as the students they define as gifted already have shown high achievement within the school framework. Therefore, there could be several gifted students that are not included in the teachers' experiences with this student group due to this notion. Methods of adapted education for gifted students as presented through the findings include differentiation of learning materials, differentiation through higher expectations toward the gifted students, broad tasks where it is up to each student to find their level, alternative internet assignments and autonomy over choice of literature. Through these responses the previously presented approaches to adapted education as presented in the theoretical background chapter were identified, as all the teachers' method and approaches to the concept could be linked to the approaches that were presented in chapter 2.

On the topic of what the main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students are, the responses present a lot of variety. Lack of time for planning and follow up of adapted education for gifted students was identified as one of the most common obstacles, as some of the teachers expressed a need for more time for planning gifted student activities and alternative tasks. In addition to time, a lack of resources was presented as another main obstacle. The respondents expressed a scarce supply of resources suited for students that are beyond the grade level of their peers, which makes integration of adapted education for these students even more challenging. The data also indicates a wish for closer communication between teachers at higher grade levels in order to gain access to higher grade learning materials.

Another main obstacle as presented through the findings is the class construction of mixed level groups consisting of approximately 30 students per group. The mixed level combined with the sheer size of the student group is highlighted as an obstacle to integration of adapted education, due to the time and resource commitment needed to adapt for all 30 students at their respective levels. Also highlighted as an obstacle is the Norwegian notion that one should not obviously succeed, which might inhibit differentiation and adaptation for gifted students as this student group does not want to feel stigmatized by having specifically suited content to their level, according to the respondents.

Furthermore, task construction is highlighted as an obstacle. Tasks suited for gifted students should not be experienced as additional tasks for the sake of doing something, but rather feel meaningful by being closely tied to the general topic and content followed by the rest of the class. Thus, constructing tasks that suit both gifted and normal level students' levels present itself as one of many obstacles related to integration of adapted education for gifted students.

The last obstacle presented through the findings highlights student participation and awareness of what is required of them in order to succeed. The data indicates that the gifted students could be made more aware of their individual optimal ways of learning in combination with active adaptation from the teacher.

In conclusion, the teachers do adapt the education for gifted students through a variety of methods and approaches. The main obstacles to integrating adapted education for gifted students include time, resources, class construction in terms of mixed level groups, task construction and students' self-awareness of their individual optimal ways of learning.

The main contributions of this study to the field of adapted education for gifted students and English language learning include an overview of which methods are being actively used by English teachers in their practice of adapted education for gifted students in addition to an overview of what these teachers regard as the main obstacles in the integration of adapted education for gifted students.

6.2 Recommendations for future research

Future researchers within the topic of adapted education for gifted students could take a closer look at how the various ways of adaptation affects motivation from the students' point of view. A possible approach to this type of research could be through observation of active adaptation in the classroom in addition to interviews of the students both prior to and after adaptation from the observed classroom setting. Interviews with the teachers could also be included, as this particular study was unable to retrieve additional follow up information that might add nuance to the responses. This was a result of the chosen method of an online survey questionnaire as opposed to doing interviews.

Furthermore, future research could focus on adapted education for gifted students in all subjects, as this study was exclusively targeted at English teachers from grade 5 to grade 10. Methods, approaches and obstacles may vary depending on which subjects the teachers are practicing adapted education in. Future research could also apply a quantitative approach in order to get more statistical data related to the frequency of which adapted education for gifted students is practiced. This study solely highlighted one instance of each respondent's adaptation for a gifted student, thus not discovering the frequency of adaptation in the teachers' regular practice.

Another interesting angle for future research to discover is the definitions of gifted students in terms of achievement level. This study highlighted that most teachers only consider students who already show academic achievement to be gifted, however it would be interesting to see whether this notion is shared by a larger number of teachers and also which structures are in place in order for the individual schools and school districts to define and identify gifted students.

Future research could also focus on which responsibilities of adapted education is shared between the teachers and the school administrators. This study revealed a shared responsibility of carrying out adapted education between the teachers and school administrators, however, which aspects of adapted education that are being shared was not discovered. Thus, future research should focus more on this particular research problem.

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Appendices:

Appendix A: Survey results:

Adapted education for gifted students



April 28, 2022, 10:24
Powered by Analyzer

Analyzer. Know Better

Adapted education for gifted students - response data

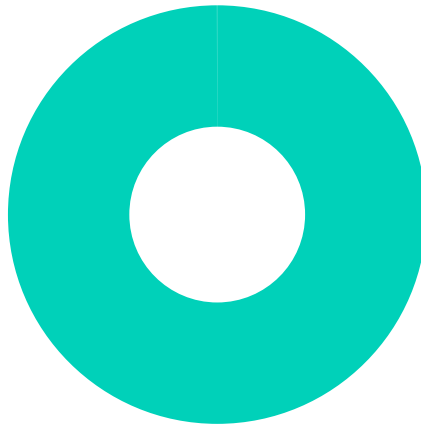
Adapted education for gifted students



April 28, 2022, 10:24
Powered by Analyzer

Analyzer. Know Better

Response status



Observations

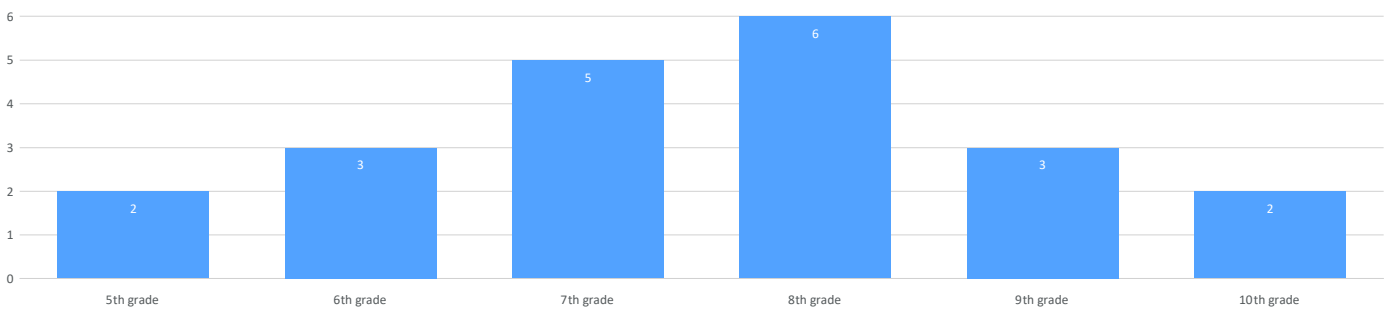
Total Response status: Completed

14

- Not answered
- Refused
- Incomplete
- Completed

0.0%
0.0%
0.0%
100.0%

Which grades are you currently teaching?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

In your own words, how would you define adapted education?

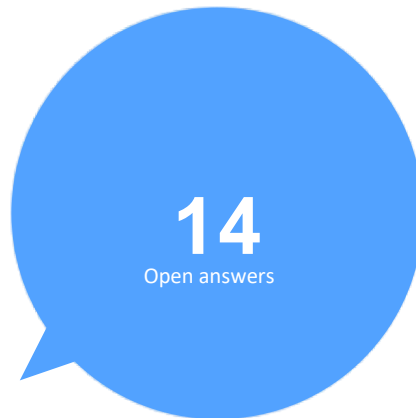


Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

How would you describe your approach to adapted education?

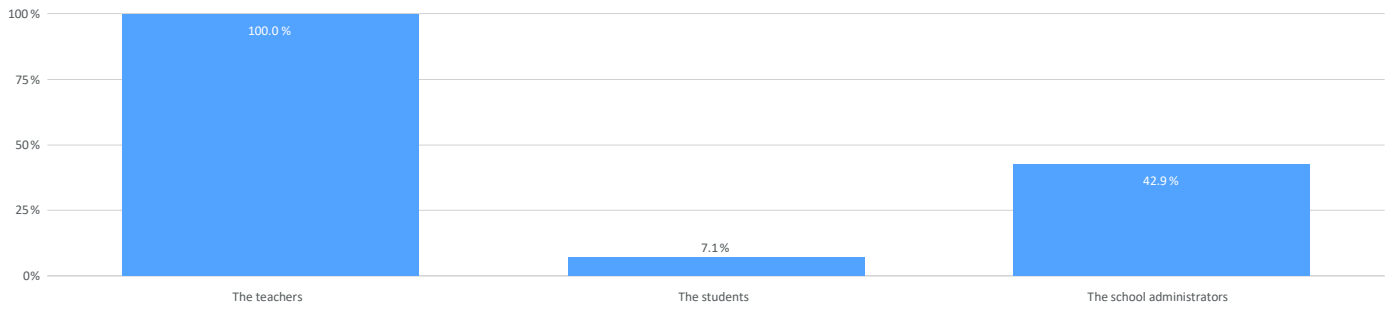


Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

Who has the main responsibility for securing adapted education being carried out at your school?

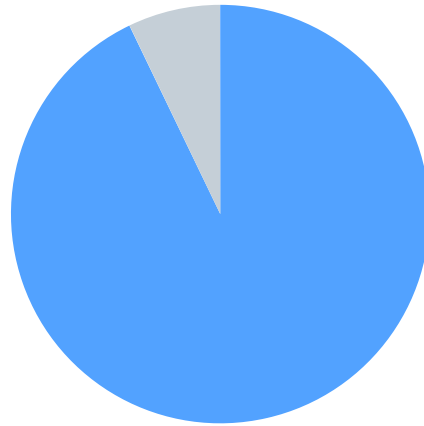


Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

Have you had students that you would classify as gifted in the English subject?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

● Yes

92.9%

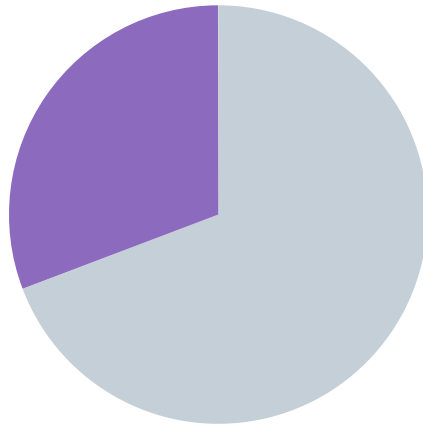
● No

7.1%

● Not sure

0.0%

If yes: Were they native speakers of English?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

13

● Yes

0.0%

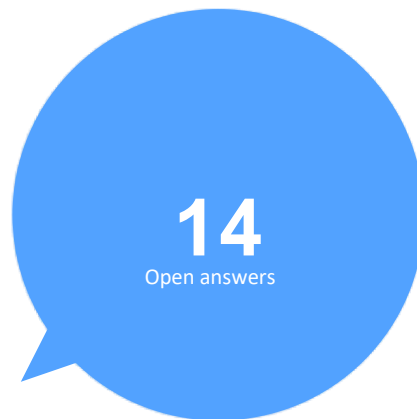
● No

69.2%

● Some of them

30.8%

What do you consider a gifted student?

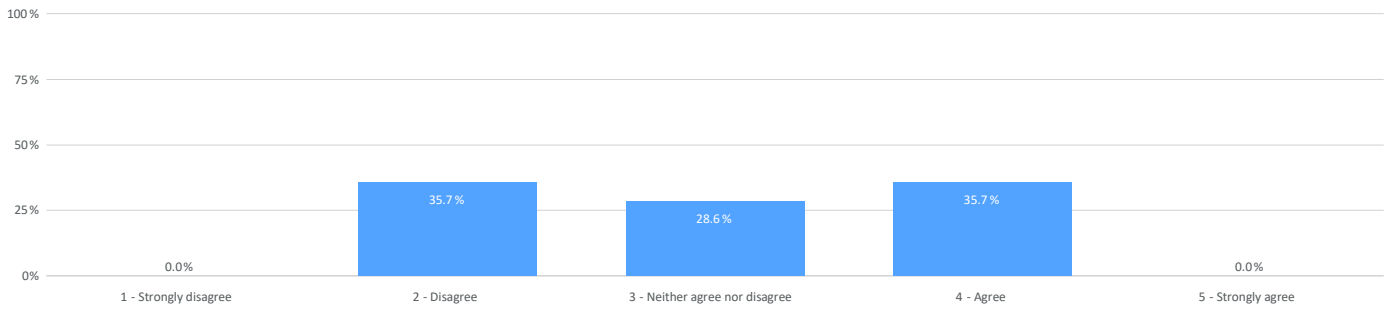


Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

"Gifted students excel in every subject"

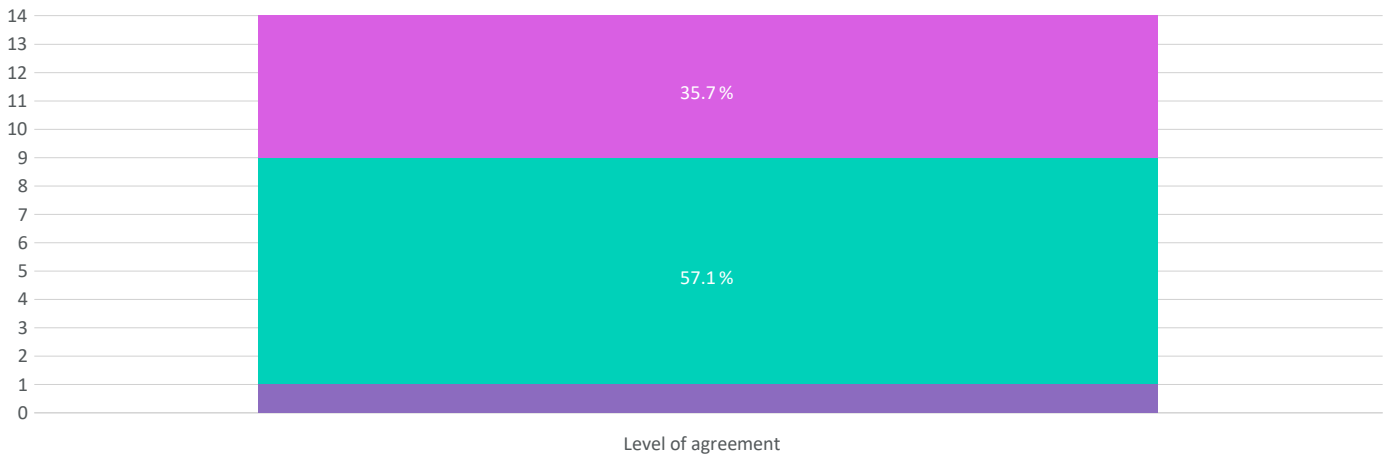


Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

How much do you agree with the following statement?: Gifted students should be given differentiated materials. (e.g. more challenging texts, broader tasks etc.)



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly agree

Think about the last time you adapted your education for a gifted student: can you describe what you did?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

Did you see a change in motivation after adapting your education? Can you give some examples?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

Did you see a change in achievements after adapting your education?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

What are, in your opinion, the main challenges when adapting for gifted students?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

Do you have any other comments on the topic that you would like to share?



Observations

Total Response status: Completed

14

Open answers

Adapted education for gifted students



In your own words, how would you define adapted education?

1. 1 No comment
2. Education that facilitates both mastery and challenge based on the student's prerequisites.
3. Undervisning som gir utfordringer til alle elever. Der alle klarer noe, men samtidig har noe å strekke seg etter
4. Nearly impossible with 28 students in each English class, all at mixed levels.
5. That every pupil is able to achieve within their level, that be high, low or in the middle
6. Teaching/learning that is adaptable to any students at any level, and helps the students to develop in their own pace and in their own way.
7. I would define it as trying to find the right "level" (where to start teaching) for each student based on observations and discussions with him/her.
8. Education that takes into consideration the students' level of skill, interests (including themes that are important for society at the time), and most suitable ways of learning and showing their knowledge/skills.
9. At undervisning blir tilpasset hver enkelt elevs forutsetninger, også vanskegrad.
10. Find the pupil's potential and challenge the pupil close to his/her potential.
11. Education that is catered to the needs of each student (or as close to that as possible)
12. Each student gets attention and lessons at their level and/or just above.
13. Education that meets the student where he/she is
14. Tilpasset opplæring er opplæring som tar utgangspunkt i elevenes ferdigheter, nivå, alder, interesser, motivasjon og andre faktorer som påvirker deres utbytte.

How would you describe your approach to adapted education?

1. 1 No comment
2. I try my best to adapt the education to both strong students and students with challenges. I have a child myself with dyslexia and have felt how important it is. I also have experienced it with my own students how important it is for students to feel safe and learn in their own speed and ways.
3. Forsøker å ha så åpne oppgaver at alle kan klare noe, men samtidig rom for mer avanserte tolkninger. Har drevet med nivå-delte/ulike oppgaver mht vanskegrad tidligere. Opplevde da at altfor mange valgte den letteste oppgaven og ikke fikk vist så mye kompetanse
4. Wishing for AP classes, like we have in the US. Or at least the chance to nivådele.
5. Trying to help pupils where they are. Most do not need much adapting, but some need more challenging, different tasks, easier tasks. It is very much dependent on the pupil
6. I think all students need to find their own way of learning. I can give them tasks that will challenge them, but they have to do the work and solve the tasks their own way.
7. I think I'm creative when it comes to make my teaching understandable for all my students.

8. I try to see my students' needs and what engages them, and vary the way we work. I try to find texts that are suitable for different language skill levels and/or are easily adaptable to suit different students.
9. Alltid i bakhodet mitt når jeg planlegger ny undervisning.
10. Explaining more to some than others, filling the gaps to those who struggle, giving structures and writing frames to pupils, giving tools to use precise language, topic words for the pupils with high potential to evolve, giving more complex reflection tasks, texts adapted to levels, personalised video feedback to each pupil. Personalised interviews / dialogues between teacher and pupil, working in pairs and groups with peers who are at the same level or pupils with different levels.
11. I try to make tasks that are at different levels, so that most students can do tasks that are at a level where they are being challenged, but can also experience a sense of achievement when completing the tasks. For texts I usually adapt more for lower-level students, than higher-level students. Some students might get individually adapted tasks and texts, especially if they are in either end of the scale
12. Lacking. Focused more on students with special needs, below grade level.
13. I screen the students and I am always making notes on how they are doing and what they need more or less of
14. Tilpasset opplæring synes jeg er veldig viktig, og jeg tar det seriøst. Jeg prøver så godt jeg kan å tilpasse undervisningen til alle elevene, uansett forutsetning.

What do you consider a gifted student?

1. 1 No comment
2. A student that can communicate easily about different topics over time. He/she has a good vocabulary and can understand English by reading and listening, even if they don't know all the words. They understand the content. Can also write pretty good and can use the grammar almost correctly.
3. En som har en grunnleggende forståelse for det engelsk språket og kan anvende det på ulike måter. Som har et godt og avansert ordforråd og kan uttrykke seg klart og presist skriftlig og muntlig. Erfaringsmessig er det en elev som leser mye engelsk
4. Natural ability, high level of reflection, Often mature. Mastery of language and desire to learn more
5. Someone with so much knowledge that they already fulfil most of the «kompetansemål» and «kjernelementer»
6. A student that can write about any thing at a high level when it comes to vocabulary, flow and reflection, and can keep a conversation going on any subject at the same level.
7. A student with a large vocabulary and with great communicative skills.
8. Someone with a thorough vocabulary and high level of understanding about the way the language works (grammar, idiom etc), great and «native speaker sounding» pronunciation, uses the language very naturally and easily, and shows a high level of reflection about the themes we discuss.

9. En elev som mestrer å forstå og bli forstått, bruker gjerne avansert språk, tilpasset situasjonen, kjenner til synonymmer og bruker riktige fyllord.
10. Pupils who communicate easily adapted to form and listeners /readers, mastering formal and nuanced language, pupils who work independantly and spend much time voluntarily reading and communicating in English. Pupils who add interesting facts and knowledge to the lessons.
11. A student who is beyond the level the subjects are being taught at for their age. A student who comprehends tasks, texts and other materials at a higher level than those of the same age.
12. Above grade level. Reading, writing, and speaking English. It would be nice if social skills were there as well.
13. A gifted student reads, writes, understands and speaks the language very well.
14. En elev som kommuniserer så godt, muntlig eller skriftlig, at det ikke lenger er snakk om å utvide kunnskaper om rettskriving, setningsoppbygging, tekststruktur og annet, men å videreutvikle det allerede høye nivået..

Think about the last time you adapted your education for a gifted student: can you describe what you did?

1. 1 No comment
2. He/she sometimes got some different texts and tasks. But usually I try to adapt tasks to the same texts as the other students have. So they can collaborate with the others. I expect more from them. For instant longer answers, more describing texts, more correctly grammar and so on. Sometimes they can help others too.
3. Oppmuntret eleven til å utdype og forklare bedre. Snakket om å lese mellom linjene og analysere mer enn det som direkte står i teksten
4. We do as best we can, especially in fagsamtaler, small group that can go indepth in a topic
5. I gave them tasks from the year above and other more complicated books (from the pupils own interest)
6. I give tasks where it is up to the student to find their own level to work at and to show what they are capable of. They also know that I know what they are capable of and what I expect from them to be satisfied.
7. We were buying English literature to our School Library and I asked him what he would like to read. I also gave him some challenges on the Internet and we talked about what he liked/did not like. To sum up, I tried to give him something to stretch for.
8. We had a book project where they each read a novel (I helped many of them when choosing). The tasks we had about the novels were open enough that everyone could discuss the books with each other, but the ones who had more complicated books had a richer vocabulary there, and more intricate themes to explore.
9. Jeg fant litteratur innenfor samme tema fra høyere klassetrinn.
10. In religion lesson : made the pupil make a podcast where he were given keyword that were not limiting so that the pupil could structure and include the answer according to his choice

11. For a topic we were working on (Multiculturalism in the UK) the student worked with text material and tasks from NDLA instead of the students 8th grade english book as the student was able to comprehend material that had a more advanced vocabulary, more advanced content and more comprehensive tasks.
12. Question sets that demand more than yes/no and trying to find the answers in text. Image, describe or how would you change good ending type.
13. I gave the student more challenging things to work with. I also encouraged the student to help fellow classmates when he/she could
14. Elevenene (i 7. klasse) skulle arbeide videre med en tekst de har jobbet med over lang tid, ut ifra fremovermelding de fikk av meg. De sterke elevenene, som hadde redigert teksten sin og levert, fikk i oppgave å arbeide med setningsbindere (linking words) og sterke verb på et ganske høyt nivå.

Did you see a change in motivation after adapting your education? Can you give some examples?

1. Yes, with students with challenges I often see that. When they get some helping phrases on a paper when we have oral communication, or they can read or write shorter, they get more motivated. They usually don't want easier texts, but rather read just a paragraph from the same text. They don't want to be different. Many are embarrassed to get adjustments, so it is important to find out what to do together with the students themselves.
2. Er usikker på om «de flinke» presterte bedre ved tilpasset undervisning, men jeg ser at de gjerne syntes det var mer interessant og måtte anstrenge seg mer. Er kanskje mer med på at dersom de får mer autonomi i forhold til oppgavene vil de prestere mer.
3. Some students thrive. Some think that it is a bit embarrassing.
4. Students respond very positively. Higher motivation, more active in class
5. No, this was a motivated pupil, just wanted some more challenging tasks
6. When students can choose topics that interest them, they very often put more effort in to the work in order to do a good job.
7. Well, this autumn we had a roleplay set up. It was amazing to see how much effort some of them were willing to put in. This year we focus on learning the irregular English verbs. I can see that it motivates them to compete in Kahoot. When I want them to write or talk their opinion about something I try to choose a topic that I know concerns them (like rumours, gossip etc). I think it also motivates them to speak when we play "speed dating". It makes it easier to speak as they can steal words from each other.
8. They show more interest for the school work.
9. Jeg fikk tilbakemelding om «lett» og «kjedelig» engelsk på utviklingssamtalen, men da jeg både tipset eleven om å lese skjønnlitteratur på engelsk og fant vanskeligere tekster til faget, fikk jeg tilbakemelding om at det var motiverende.
10. Yes, the pupils become eager and often want to share knowledge and have conversations with teachers linked to subjects

11. Fortunately, my student is already quite motivated, but the student seemed more content.
12. Most kids do not do the work. Parents want it more.
13. Yes. The student seemed less bored. He/she also liked helping others, and said that this made him/her learn even more.
14. Ja, når sterke elever får en ekstra utfordring blir de fornøyde, takknemlige og motiverte. De smiler og virker gira på å få det til.

Did you see a change in achievements after adapting your education?

1. 2 No comment
2. I have seen students improve and blossom, and that gives me courage and motivasjon to carry on. 3. Ikke egentlig, men mulig at elevene lærte mer
4. Rarely....
5. Partially, we teach at a very high level, see rather that the weaker students struggle to keep up 6. No
7. Yes. When I put away the textbooks and started reading books of their own choice and at their own level, they developed a lot more. Also dropping alot of presentations in class and had them record them instead and record group discussions or sit down with groups to discuss prepared topics, the development increases quickly if the students are willing to do the work.
8. It's not a solid yes, but I think that my students has a stronger will to succeed (most of them) because they know I believe in them and due to goodrelations
9. They have been achieving high grades regardless, but they have expressed that they felt they learned more.
10. For kort tid siden så vanskelig å måle.
11. Well, always high achievement, but perhaps more motivation
12. Yes.
13. Ja

What are, in your opinion, the main challenges when adapting for gifted students?

1. 1 No comment
2. I would like more ideas from books, other teachers and Internet, because it is not talked so much about adapting for gifted students as for those with challenges. I have to spend a lot of time surfing and thinking to find good ideas. It should have been easier to find ideas for adapter education for both weak and strong students.
3. At man spisser oppgavene for mye - at det oppleves som urettferdig fordi det blir så vanskelig
4. Finding suitable tasks.
5. Mixed level groups, Norwegian attitude that one shouldn't obviously excel in school as it stigmatises weaker students

6. To get the students to understand that it is up to them to do the work to reach their own top potential.
7. I wish I had a closer connection to teachers on the higher levels and that we were allowed to put students in long term groups based on their skills. I also would appreciate if we had a wider range of books etc.
8. Giving meaningful assignments that still fit in with what the class is doing, but that they feel challenge them. The class community feeling is important.
9. Å ikke gjøre det FOR vanskelig. Poenget er ikke at disse elevene skal få mer arbeid, men arbeid som kjennes meningsfullt for dem og dermed også gir læring.
10. Too many students with so many different levels, only two English lessons a week, several on beginners level, so in order to reach everyone, there is much to prepare and consider.
11. Finding suitable material, finding the time to do individual follow-up as there is no time set aside to gifted learners, as opposed to IEP students. Making sure the work you give them is at a suitable level. Remembering to look for/make adapted material for gifted students before each lesson
12. Time for planning AND time for feedback.
13. To find time to do it and to find adequate material
14. Å tilpasset nivået godt nok for dem (utfordre dem uten at det blir for lett/vanskelig) Å finne oppgaver/tekster som er passende til deres nivå samtidig som det passer i undervisningen i timen som resten av klassen har.

Do you have any other comments on the topic that you would like to share?

1. 7 No comment
2. It is always very important to collaborate with the student that need adapted education as well as his parents.
3. The students need to read authentic books, make conversations about different topics and listen to the language.
4. Best of luck with your Master's thesis.
5. Interessant tema som burde drøftes mer rundt om i fagmiljøene på de ulike skolene. Mange lærere vegrer seg og vet ikke helt hvordan de skal tilrettelegge best mulig. Noen finner opp hjulet på nytt hver gang.
6. I wish there were more resources published with, for example, the books we use in class, that was also adaptable for gifted students. Also, websites and other online resources that were easy to find and use.
7. ALL nettsites from Norwegian publishers suck. There is not enough work and/practice available.
8. Godt at du undersøker dette! Viktig!

Appendix B: Survey invitation letter

(Posted with admin's permission)

Hello there 😊

I am currently writing my master's thesis in English at Høgskulen på Vestlandet and therefore conducting a survey on English teachers' opinions and views on adapted education for gifted students. My main study group will be English teachers from 5th to 10th grade. If you find yourself in this category, feel free to participate. Your response will be a great asset to my thesis.

Some questions are open ended where you will be asked to elaborate and explain your standpoint on the topic of adapted education and gifted students. If at any time you do not want to participate any longer, you are completely free to close the survey. Uncompleted surveys will not be included in the research.

The survey takes about 10-15 minutes to complete.

Note that the survey is completely anonymous, and no traceable information will be gathered. Please do not include any personal information in your answers. (name, address or other recognizable information.)

Although the survey is in English, feel free to answer in either English or Norwegian.

To participate, please click on the following link:

<https://surveys.analyzer.com?pid=gmn8b7pp>

The finished research will be posted in the comment section of this thread in June 2022.

If you have any questions, feel free to either comment on this thread or send me a DM. 😊

Sincerely,

Anders Hettervik Hansen

