Acknowledgement

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1. Introduction

There has been a growing interest in multilingualism and through this also an increasing emphasis on metalinguistic knowledge and its role in language learning (Jessner, 2017, p. 19). Metalinguistic awareness (MLA) is according to Krulatz et al., "The ability to think *about* language, reflect on it and manipulate it for various purposes" (2018, p. 41). The main aim of this study is to explore how learners can verbalise their metalinguistic awareness through metatalk. Metatalk can be defined as using "language to reflect on language use" (Swain, 1998, p. 68). When analysing the learners' metatalk one may access "processes that otherwise may remain hidden"(Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 523) and gain an insight into language learning (Swain, 1998, p.69).

Several researchers have investigated metatalk. But to the best of my knowledge, there has been little research on metatalk among young learners in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Gutierrez (2008) investigated metatalk among balanced bilinguals in the 11th grade. Swain (1998) and Storch (2008) did research on older L2 learners, the former in grade 8 and the latter on university students. Myhill (2016) and Camps et al. (2000) have done research on metatalk among L1 learners, the former on 9-10-year-olds and Camps et al. on secondary school students. From this previous research, we know that when learners verbalise their metalinguistic awareness, they tend to not use metalinguistic terminology (Camps et al., 2000; Gutiérrez, 2008; Swain, 1998). The results from Gutièrrez (2008) do also suggest that his participants in grade 11 tend to express metatalk through turns with simple text reformulations. Swain (1998) investigated the effect of modelling metatalk with and without metalinguistic terminology to learners. Storch (2008) investigated the students' engagement when given a collaborative text reconstruction task and how this affected their learning. Myhill et al. (2016) explored the effect of mentoring teachers on metalinguistic discussions in the classroom. This study, however, is set in an EFL context in Norway with learners between the age of 9-10. This research will contribute with an insight into how fourth graders in the EFL context verbalise their metalinguistic awareness and what aspects of language they focus on.

To investigate how fourth-grade learners can verbalise their metalinguistic awareness through

metatalk in the EFL classroom, the learners have been given a collaborative translation task. The learners have worked together on translating a given descriptive text where their discussions were audio-recorded and transcribed. The translation task in its nature brings up the theme of cross-linguistic awareness. Cross-linguistic awareness is a subcategory of MLA which is the ability to reflect on similarities and differences between the languages in the learner's "multilingual mind" (Angelovska & Hahn, 2014, p. 187). The data will be analysed based on what aspects of language fourth graders focus on when given a collaborative output task. By aspects of language what is meant are aspects such as lexical aspects, grammatical aspects and spelling. The collaborative component of the task may influence the metatalk which is why collaboration will also be a focus in the analysis of the data. Consequently, the research questions of this study are:

How do fourth grade learners verbalise metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative task?

> - *What aspects of language are the learners focusing on?*

How can the collaborative component affect the outcome/metatalk?

This study is part of a larger research project called MetaLearn. MetaLearn is a project researching how learners in primary school develop and use their language knowledge of their first language and other languages they know. I have been involved in the design of the task and data collection.

1.2 Relevance

Firstly, under one of the core elements of the English Curriculum, the importance of "språkbevissthet" is discussed, making this relevant in the Norwegian context. "Språkbevissthet" is translated as "language awareness" by Kunnskapsdepartementet. One can argue that metalinguistic awareness (MLA) and language awareness (LA) are similar terms where the focus is a reflection on language use. Alderson (1997) "see the terms KAL [metalinguistic knowledge], LA (and MLA) as interchangeable" (referred to in James, 1999, p. 98). Language awareness can be defined as a process of reflecting on language use (Hélot et al., 2018, p. 4) and metalinguistic awareness can be described as the "ability to think *about*

language, reflect on it and manipulate it for various purposes" (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 41). The core elements in the curriculum "are the most important parts of the curriculum as well as what the learners need to learn to be able to master the subject" (my translation) (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017). Taking this into consideration, one can argue that metalinguistic awareness is an important part of the English subject and interesting to research.

Further, one may look at the relevance of investigating metalinguistic awareness in the broader context of language learning. Through the learners' metatalk one may access language learning processes and essentially observe learning in progress (Swain, 1998, p.69). Metatalk is a term used to refer to how we talk about language use, expressing metalinguistic awareness. According to Swain, metatalk "should help us to understand language learning processes" (Swain, 1998, p.69). The way metatalk can be generated is by making the tasks collaborative. This will hopefully lead the learners to express their metalinguistic awareness and knowledge. Emphasising the collaboration may lead to a heightened focus on language use and attention to form (Philp, Adams & Iwashita, 2013, p. 173).

Next, through metatalk, the teachers and the learners themselves may be made aware of challenges in language learning. The language learning in progress may be observable and through this the development of different hypotheses and the opportunity to inspect these hypotheses. Under Formative Assessment in the English curriculum, it is stated that "The pupils shall have the opportunity to experience that experimenting on their own and with others is part of learning a new language" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). When given a translation task the learners will have to formulate and test different language hypotheses which are made available for inspection for the teacher, researcher and the learners themselves (Swain, 1998, p. 69). These hypotheses are a way of testing out new language forms and challenging their internalized knowledge. Additionally, testing these hypotheses the learners show their metalinguistic awareness by reflecting on their language use.

Furthermore, the term cross-linguistic awareness is an increasingly important term or skill in education and is argued to be a subtype of MLA (Angelovska, 2018, p. 137). Cross-linguistic awareness is the ability to reflect on similarities and differences between the languages in the learner's "multilingual mind" (Angelovska & Hahn, 2014, p. 187). Looking at the emphasis on the connection between different languages in the core elements in the Norwegian English curriculum portrays this focus. The importance of this connection is emphasised through the

following extract from the core elements "Language learning refers to identifying connections between English and other languages the pupils know, and to understanding how English is structured." (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). Jessner (1999) found that increased proficiency in at least two languages resulted in higher Metalinguistic awareness (Angelovska, 2018, pp. 137–139). Giving the learners in this study a translation task will therefore be interesting because in the nature of the task the learners will have to use their metalinguistic awareness and thus also their cross-linguistic awareness. From this, we can analyse the way the learners perform or do not perform those skills or thought processes.

1.3 How the thesis will be organised

The thesis will be divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction to the thesis as well as the relevance of the theme. Chapter 2 consists of the theoretical framework of the study where the term metalinguistic awareness will be discussed and defined before relevant theory will be presented including previous research. Additionally, the task used in this study will be presented. Chapter 3 provides an explanation of the method used for data collection. The data collection was done in collaboration with the project MetaLearn. I will also provide a description of the data analysis describing the categories used in the analysis. Furthermore, In chapter 4 the findings from the interaction-based research will be presented from the transcripts and categorised. The categories are based on whether the learners reformulate the text without further comments or make metalinguistic comments when translating the text as well as different language aspects. Finally, chapter 5 provides a general discussion of the findings, a conclusion and proposing for further research.

2. Theoretical considerations

The following part will consist of the theoretical considerations needed to analyse the data from the learners` discussions around the collaborative translation task. Previous research will also be presented.

2.1 Metalinguistic awareness

The term metalinguistic "refers to the uses of language to talk about language" (Gombert, 1996, referred to in Simard & Gutiérrez, 2017, p. 205). This definition is also used to describe metalanguage (Johnson & Johnson, 1998, p. 212) but according to Gutièrrez and Simard metalanguage is the actual manifestation of the processes of metalinguistic awareness (2017, p.209). Or in other words, metalanguage makes the metalinguistic awareness accessible or verbalised. The term metalinguistic can be ambiguous and what it specifically means depends on the attached noun. The word metalinguistic has an adjectival status that forces the use of the following noun to specify the meaning or use (Myhill, 2011, p. 249). This adjectival status leads to many related terms, such as metalinguistic awareness, metalinguistic knowledge, metalinguistic reflection and so on. These terms can be challenging to define and sometimes separate, which leads to many using the terms differently and some of the terms may also overlap.

One can choose to understand metalinguistic awareness (MLA) and metalinguistic knowledge as terms that overlap, such as in Alderson et. al (1997, p. 95). Arguably one will not be able to perform one without the other. Firstly, metalinguistic awareness is according to Krulatz et al., "The ability to think *about* language, reflect on it and manipulate it for various purposes" (2018, p. 41). What is meant by this is the ability to reflect on language use and have a meta-perspective or the ability to look at language as an object. An example of metalinguistic awareness may be noticing that regular verbs in past tense have the suffix -ed. This awareness shows the ability to notice a grammatical rule explicitly that one has learned implicitly, thus not with explicit instruction. The learners may then use their language to reflect on language

use and be able to focus on form and here specifically the grammatical form or grammatical aspect. An additional example, concerning a lexical aspect, is the learners discussing whether to spell the familial noun "ant" or "aunt" expressing an awareness that there is a difference between the forms and the meanings. Metalinguistic awareness "requires a heightened and sustained degree of awareness to allow the learner to reflect on the patterns they have noticed" (Smith, 2008, p. 181)**.** To be able to think about language, reflect and develop the ability to focus on meaning and form you will arguably need knowledge about the language. A definition of metalinguistic knowledge by Alderson et al. is "knowledge about language" (1997, p. 95) and I will argue that to be able to be aware and reflect on language use you are dependent on knowledge about language.

2.1.1 Metalinguistic awareness and multilingualism

Metalinguistic awareness is an influential component of multilingual competence. A multilingual learner is able to use two or more languages (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 53). The development of this component, metalinguistic awareness, is also present in monolinguals` language competence and therefore in individuals' first language. However, many researchers argue that this awareness is further developed and heightened in multilinguals (Jessner, 2008, p. 276). Angelovska (2018) does for example argue that MLA is a multilingual advantage gained through the experience of learning several different languages (2018, p. 136). This advantage comes with other abilities such as cross-linguistic awareness which is relevant when it comes to for example translation and will be discussed further.

According to several studies, multilinguals and bilinguals are often "more successful than monolinguals when it comes to completing tasks that require the ability to pay particular attention to formal aspects of linguistic units" (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 83). What is meant by formal aspects of linguistic units are such as syntactic aspect (sentence-level grammar), semantic aspect (language meaning), phonological aspect (sound), morphological aspect (word-level grammar) and so on (Gordon, 2012). A multilingual language user develops this skill constantly because of a growing awareness of languages as systems and sees similarities and differences in those languages. Additionally, through the development of metalinguistic awareness, Jessner (2006) states that the learner may also develop "translation skills that are considered a natural trait in the majority of multilinguals (in Jessner, 2008, p. 277).

2.1.2 Cross-linguistic awareness

 One can argue that cross-linguistic awareness is a "sub-type of MLA" (Angelovska, 2018, p. 137). The term cross-linguistic awareness is, according to Angelovska and Hahn, the ability to reflect on similarities and differences between the languages in the learner's "multilingual mind" (Angelovska & Hahn, 2014, p. 164). Cross-linguistic awareness is defined as "the learner's tacit and explicit awareness of the links between their language systems" (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009, p. 127). Essentially, being able to use their knowledge about different languages and language systems when presented with language, such as in a translation task but also generally when communicating.

Cross-linguistic influence is "any kind of influence between the languages of a bi- or multilingual" (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 63). Multilinguals' languages are not completely separate, so while one language is being used, the other language(s) may still be active in some sense (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 65). This may be observed when the learners in this project are presented with a collaborative translation task where they already have to use at least two of their known languages. Knowing several languages is an advantage because the learners are already familiar with different languages and may be able to make connections between their known languages (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2021, p.19).

Norway is a growing multilingual community and "the Norwegian classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse" (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2021, p.18). Many of the learners one meets in the classroom are bilinguals or multilinguals, meaning that they know two or more languages. The Municipality of Oslo states that approximately 40% of pupils in schools in Oslo had other languages than Norwegian or Sami as their first language in 2020 (in Flognfeldt & Lund, 2021, p.18). There will of course be some schools in Norway with a higher percentage and some with a lower percentage of learners with other first languages than Norwegian. This diversity leads to English teachers having pupils in the classroom with different language backgrounds and therefore also different difficulties with different aspects of language. For example, a common struggle for pupils with Norwegian as their first language may be with the th-sound in "this" while a student from Spain may struggle with the h-sound in "his". The importance of this awareness, an awareness of different languages in the classroom and their connections, is increasing every day in the multilingual classrooms we have today. This importance is also expressed in the English curriculum which will be discussed further.

2.2 MLA in the Norwegian English curriculum

Since an educational reform in 1997, English has been taught from first grade in Norwegian schools and is obligatory in all 10 years of school. Some learners have even been introduced to English in pre-school through songs and rhymes (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 27). According to the Ministry of Education and Research, from 1th-4th grade, the learners have 138 hours of planned English lessons, this is an indication of what the learners in this study have had approximately (2019). English is also referred to, by the Ministry of Education and Research (2004) as the primary foreign language in Norway which enhances the importance of English in Norway (in Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 27). The national curriculum presents English separately from other foreign languages and it has its own curriculum compared to other foreign languages which have a common curriculum.

Under the core elements in the Norwegian English curriculum ENG01-04, the term "språkbevissthet" is used which the Ministry of Education and Research has translated to "language awareness" when describing language learning. According to the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training[1] "The core elements are the most important theoretical content the learners should work on during their education"(my translation)[2] (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019a). Thus, focusing on language awareness in the core elements implies the importance of this ability and through this arguably the importance of metalinguistic awareness and knowledge. The following extract is from the core element "Language learning" in the English curriculum.

"Language learning refers to developing language awareness and knowledge of English as a system and the ability to use language learning strategies. Learning the pronunciation of phonemes, and learning vocabulary, word structure, syntax and text composition gives the pupils choices and possibilities in their communication and interaction. Language learning refers to identifying connections between English and other languages the pupils know, and to understanding how English is structured" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019).

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[1] Utdanningsdirektoratet

[2] "Kjerneelementer er det viktigste faglige innholdet elevene skal arbeide med i opplæringen"

The use of the term "language awareness" or "språkbevissthet" can be seen in the light of James' (1999) claim that knowledge about language (KAL) (metalinguistic knowledge) and the term language awareness (LA) is considered as corresponding. Language awareness is described as a process of reflecting on language use or being aware of language and its use (Hélot et al., 2018, p. 4). Also, Alderson (1997) "see the terms KAL, LA (and MLA) as interchangeable" (referred to in James, 1999, p. 98). This portrays the arguable interchangeable connection between metalinguistic knowledge as well as metalinguistic awareness and language awareness which is important to address.

The extract from the core elements also brings up the importance of identifying connections between known languages, which can be looked at in connection with cross-linguistic awareness. It is stated that "[l]anguage learning refers to identifying connections between English and other languages the pupils know, and to understanding how English is structured" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). This shows a focus on multilingual competence in the curriculum, and especially the importance of cross-linguistic awareness. Being able to see connections between known languages and use them as advantages in language learning show a cross-linguistic awareness and should be worked towards in the classroom. Making connections will arguably make the learners more aware of language and be able to look at language as an object and reflect on language use. In the curriculum, it is also stated that "The pupils shall experience that the ability to speak several languages is an asset at school and in society in general" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). This statement shows the focus on the existence of the multilingual classroom and its importance in the increasingly global world. The ability to speak several languages can again be looked at in connection to cross-linguistic awareness and the ability to reflect on connections between those languages.

The Norwegian Directorate of Education states that the new English curriculum will "emphasise knowledge about and an inquiring/investigating approach to language"[3] (my translation) (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019b). This emphasis on "knowledge about language" can be looked at in relation to the definition of metalinguistic knowledge which is exactly that "knowledge about language"(Alderson et al., 1997, p. 95). This ultimately portrays the importance of metalinguistic knowledge and thus arguably metalinguistic awareness in the English as a foreign language classroom. Furthermore, The Norwegian Directorate of

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[3] "vektlegger kunnskap om og en utforskende tilnærming til språk" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019b)

Education also mentioned that "A good learning tool in English (...) support (pupil`s) development of language awareness"[4] (My translation) (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2021). The focus on knowledge about language as well as specifically "språkbevissthet" or language awareness may eventually indicate a growing importance of metalinguistic awareness.

2.3 Metatalk

Metatalk is a way of expressing metalinguistic awareness. Metalinguistic awareness can be defined as a reflection on language such as reflection on different language aspects. In this study, the language aspects lexical aspects, spelling and grammatical aspects, have been selected to be analysed. This reflection on language may be accessible through metatalk. Metatalk can be defined as using "language to reflect on language use" (Swain, 1998, p. 68). Swain emphasises the importance of metatalk occurring "in contexts where learners are engaged in meaning-making, that is, where the language being used and reflected upon through metatalk is serving a communicative function" (Swain, 1998, p.69). By making this a collaborative task we create an opportunity for the learners to express their Metalinguistic Awareness through metatalk.

When learners talk about or reflect on language, also called metatalk, they are producing "a deeper level of attention" (Storch, 2008, p. 110). By encouraging this metatalk, the learners may develop or deepen their knowledge about language use. This developed knowledge may also include the understanding of the relation between "meaning, form and function" (Storch, 2008, p. 96). Swain argues that metatalk may stimulate the learners' language learning processes because it may lead to the learners reflecting on the language use and their output (1998, p. 69). One way of encouraging metatalk is through group work or working in pairs that require reflection on language or a jointly written output (Storch, 2008, p. 96), such as a translation task. Making it a collaborative task may lead to "access to processes that otherwise may remain hidden"(Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 523). In other words, by making the pupils talk to each other they will have to orally express their thought processes and metalinguistic awareness. This verbalisation would not be the case when working individually.

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[4] "Eit godt læringsmiddel i engelsk: gir elevane på alle trinn og utdanningsprogram rikeleg høve til å møte autentisk engelsk språk og støttar dei i utviklinga av språklegbevissthet"(Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2021)

According to Myhill, using metalinguistic terminology is not essential to express metatalk. The way learners refer to a text they are producing varies, some learners explicitly comment on language use, and some do not verbalise their metalinguistic knowledge specifically. It is, however, still possible to demonstrate or get to know how the learners are thinking when they use metatalk without focusing on terminology such as terms like "past tense" and "noun" (Myhill, 2011, p. 249; Myhill & Newman, 2016, p. 178). In fact, according to Berry (2005), the term metatalk has been broadened to include any talk about language (in Simard & Gutièrrez, 2017, p.208). It is possible to explain and discuss language rules without using metalinguistic terminology (Simard & Gutièrrez, 2017, p.208). Swain states that "the learners` own language indicates an awareness of something about their own, or their interlocutor`s, use of language"(Swain, 1998, p. 68). This focus on the learner`s own language includes that they do not have to use metalinguistic terminology such as "verb", "singular noun" or "past tense" to show their awareness. Examples of metatalk without metalinguistic terminology can be the learners` discussing or asking how to spell a word or discussing where the full stop should be placed (Myhill, 2011, p. 249).

Further, young foreign language learners, according to several studies, tend to not use explicit terminology when discussing and reflecting on language use (Camps et al., 2000; Gutiérrez, 2008; Swain, 1998). Swain (1998) specifically investigated the use of metalinguistic terminology in the modelling of metatalk and found that it did not make a change in the learners` use of metalinguistic terminology. The way learners refer to the text may sometimes be far from the explicit use of metalinguistic terminology such as using linguistic terms like "present" and "plural". But being able to refer to the language or text as an object, such as being able to look at the form of a word, can be a sign of metalinguistic awareness (Camps et al., 2000, p. 110). Or also as Basturkmen and Philp said, being able to "notice connections between meaning and linguistic forms"(2018, p. 296).

2.4 What is verbalised metalinguistic awareness?

There has been a growing number of studies regarding metalinguistic awareness but what is defined as verbalisation of this awareness? According to Gutiérrez, there is one aspect of metalinguistic activity or awareness that has been overlooked, and that is the fact that metalinguistic awareness is not always "overt in the learners' oral production" (Gutiérrez,

2008, p. 520). Metalinguistic awareness is, as mentioned, "The ability to <u>think</u> *about* language, reflect on it and manipulate it for various purposes" (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 41). The keyword here is "think"*,* so the way it is verbalised or expressed may differ, however, this does not mean their metalinguistic awareness necessarily differ. Gutièrrez claims that even if the learners are not able to verbalise their reflection and reason for language changes, does not imply the absence of this knowledge and reflection (2008, p. 521).

When looking at findings from Camps et al. (2000) and Fortune and Thorp (2001) one can see that they found, similarly to Gutièrrez, that there are two different types of metalinguistic activity (referred to in Gutièrrez). They differ between explicit metalinguistic activity, which is when learners explicitly and directly express their attention to language and implicit metalinguistic activity which is referred to as when the "attention to language underlies the speech" (in Gutièrrez, 2008, p.521). This distinction between implicit and explicit metalinguistic awareness or activity is however not about different cognitive processes it is rather about whether it "surfaces in the learner's speech" (Gutièrrez, 2008, p.522).

Camps et al. found that "when they [the learners] are writing collaboratively, they actively make changes in the text proposals while they are proposing them" (2000, p. 113), thus without explicitly justifying or commenting on the changes. Additionally, they noted that learners "often find direct reformulation, without any comment or justification"(Camps et al., 2000, p. 115). This shows that there is a process where the learners approach something that does not seem correct and changes it, they may not know how to explain and justify why they do it but they do understand that something is incorrect. Guttièrrez argues that "such attention underlies each text reformulation because there seems to be an evaluative activity" when the learners examine and try out each reformulation (2008, p.522). Both Camps et al. and Gutièrrez use a category of text reformulations without justification and found this to be a considerable category of verbalisation of metalinguistic awareness.

2.5 Written collaborative translation tasks

The text the learners are given is a description of Oda`s aunt, Kari, who is going to pick Beatrice up from the airport. Beatrice, from France, is going to visit Oda in Norway and needs to know what her aunt looks like to get transport to her friend Oda. The description is in Norwegian, and Oda needs the learners' help to translate the text since Beatrice does not know

Norwegian. For further insight into the text, it is attached as appendix 1.

The task session is divided into two, one individual part and one collaborative part. The participants are given the same translation task in both parts and are to first translate the text by themselves. This gives them time to think and use their metalinguistic knowledge individually and without using metatalk. The participants are then divided into groups with one microphone each. The learners will discuss their translations and come to a collective translation. Hopefully, the discussion will provide opportunities for metatalk and thus express their metalinguistic knowledge and awareness.

The translation task is made with the intention of using language for a purpose. That is why the translation task is to help translate a message with a description of Kari who is going to pick up Beatrice from the airport and drive her home. Making the learners use their language for a purpose may help the learners "start to notice connections between meaning and linguistic forms" (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 296)**.**

2.5.1 Why written collaborative translation task?

The reason for choosing a written collaborative translation task is to elicit metatalk. In Swain`s words "(...) not just any task will elicit metatalk" and I will therefore explain why this kind of task has been chosen to elicit metatalk (Swain, 1998, p. 79).

Written

The reason for making the tasks written is that writing, according to Myhill, is an act of metalinguistic determination and thus "an act of selecting, shaping, reflecting and revising (Myhill, 2011, p. 253). Furthermore, according to Williams, collaborative writing tasks may provide an ideal environment for creating new knowledge about language (2012, p. 325). The learners get the opportunity to listen and learn from each other and gather their collected knowledge. Writing tasks cater to the learners' time to think and reflect, in other words, it "provides a slower pace of production" which may open up for reflection on their collected knowledge (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 299). This reflection and discussion are what will be analysed in this thesis and giving them the time and space to reflect are therefore very important and the reason for making this a written task. Collaborative tasks that include a writing component may be rewarding because collaborative writing leads to learners

reflecting on their implicit language knowledge and making it more explicit to everyone in the group. In other words, the participants will have to reflect on their collective knowledge and try to make it "explicit and available for use" (Williams, 2012, p. 325).

Collaborative

Furthermore, the reason for including the collaborative component is to elicit metatalk or verbalise metalinguistic awareness. This is done to create a space where the learners verbalise their thoughts. Collaborating through peer discussions may also lead to the learners comparing their ideas and reflecting on their own knowledge and understanding (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 292). The chosen tasks are translation tasks where the pupils are to collaborate and find the most accurate translation of a given descriptive text. The data which will be focused on is, as mentioned, the discussion around the translation. It will essentially be the communicative output where the participants express their thoughts around the language use and the languages Norwegian and English. Inspired by Swain, the goal is to find tasks that are communicatively oriented and "tasks in which students will talk about - consciously reflect on – their own output"(Swain, 1998, p. 70). There are of course different tasks that produce output focusing on language and may through this lead to metatalk. But the metalinguistic awareness "often emerges in instances in which learners overtly discuss aspects of language such as spelling, punctuation, word order, or textual aspects.» (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 521). Thus, the task used in this project is a collaborative translation task that will elicit metatalk through discussions around the translation.

Many researchers in language learning consider collaboration as fundamental when learning a language and that it encourages the learners to reflect (Kotuła, 2016, pp. 159–160). According to Woolfolk (2014), collaborative work "enable the learner to receive help and lead to internalization and development in individual thinking" (in Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 290). The collaborative work will therefore help the learners to reflect and further their knowledge about language together. Additionally, when working in groups or with peers "the learners tend to understand more of what they read and produce better writing" (Philp et al., 2013, p. 173). Through collaboration, according to Philp et al., the learners have an outlet for focusing on language and help each other pay attention to issues of form and production or understanding of the target language (2013, p. 173).

Furthermore, including a collaborative part reflects sociocultural perspectives of interaction and learning. This is a theory that knowledge is created together and that the learners will support each other in their language development, which is supported by the Sociocultural theory (Polly, Allman, Casto & Norwood, 2017). A child or learner`s cognitive development develops during interaction with a more able learner. This is often looked at as something that happens between a less able, like a child, and an expert such as a teacher or another adult. But some researchers support the belief that this scaffolding can also occur among peers when working in groups (Storch, 2005, pp. 153–154). The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a concept within Sociocultural Theory. It is the difference between what someone can accomplish when working alone compared to what one can achieve with support from others. Such as learners working together in a group, helping and supporting each other. However, not all support leads to development. The "expert" may provide too much support, or too little, which will not lead to the desired development. The support should be responsive to what the more novice learner needs (Storch, 2017, p. 71).

The composition of the groups varied but whether the groups are heterogeneous or homogeneous everyone in the groups is to contribute in some way. Heterogeneous groups have a mix between more knowledgeable learners and some more novice learners. Homogeneous groups are more symmetrical where the peers are at the same level of language knowledge. Either way, everyone can contribute in some way, contributions such as questions where the others in the group have to "clarify, explain or justify the basis on which they were made" (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 291) creates discussion. This leads to the learners having to consider their justifications, explain and ultimately verbalise their thoughts and through the process of discussion, understanding emerges. One of the key advantages of collaborative activities such as this task is that the learners will have the opportunity to share information and co-construct knowledge, "often leading to clarification of meaning as they grapple with unfamiliar lexical items or grammatical forms" (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 291). Making the learners communicate, discuss, and maybe negotiate may lead to the kind of "noticing" that Schmidt (1990) "suggest helps learners become aware of language forms" (in Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 294).

Translation

A translation task is inherently a metalinguistic task. The focus is on language in the nature of the task. This is especially the connection between meaning and form. Being able to look at the word with the focus on the lexical or grammatical features separated from just considering the meaning of a word is an important skill when it comes to translation and metalinguistic awareness. Or to put it simply, being able to look at the text as an object. An example of this is looking at the familial concept of "aunt". The concept or essentially the meaning is represented with the word "aunt" in English and "tante" in Norwegian. These two forms "aunt" and "tante" represent the same meaning, and in this case the same concept, which reinforces that translation naturally forces the separation of form and meaning.

Further, by giving the learners a translation task the pupils will be challenged in using their cross-linguistic knowledge and thus their prior language resources when trying to find the most suitable translation. When doing the translation task the pupils will have to establish "similarities and differences among languages in one`s multilingual mind." (Angelovska & Hahn, 2014, p. 187). Being able to see similarities and differences will arguably be a natural part of translation considering "crosslinguistic awareness refers to the learner's tacit and explicit awareness of the links between their language systems" (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009, p. 127). Through metalinguistic awareness and cross-linguistic awareness, the learners will become more aware of their languages.

Similarly, Nation talks about the importance of cross-linguistic awareness by mentioning that one should focus on addressing similarities and differences between the languages present in the classroom which will be helpful in the language learning process (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2021, p. 26). In addition, the core elements in the Norwegian English curriculum do also mention the importance of being able to identify "connections between English and other languages the pupils know, and to understanding how English is structured" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). This specification in the core elements from 2019 shows the importance of both metalinguistic awareness and crosslinguistic awareness in the fact that it has its own place in the core elements.

Additionally, there is an ongoing debate about whether to use L1 in the EFL classroom or not. According to Ur, English is a tool or in other words "an ability they need to master in order to function effectively in today's world" (Ur, 2012, p. 6). However, the L1 is likely to play a valuable role in the acquisition of English, and translation is a useful ability, to be promoted rather than discouraged.

2.5.2 Development of the translation text

As mentioned, it is important to give the task a purpose, a story around the task, not just telling the learners to translate a random text. Making the task purposeful may lead the learners to "start to notice connections between meaning and linguistic forms" (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 296). From experience, the curriculum and common textbooks one can see that a focus in and up until fourth grade is, among other topics, descriptions including clothes, colours and other adjectives. One can see this focus in for example the textbook *Engelsk 1+2* where there are chapters called "What is your favourite colour", "What are you wearing" and "My body" where they introduce clothes, colours and the body in 1st and 2nd grade (Vestgård & Johansen, 2019). The goal was to make the task motivating and feasible but at the same time challenging.

Additionally, competence aims from year four were taken into consideration when developing the task. One of the competence aims that was considered in the developing stages was: "read and understand the meaning of familiar and unfamiliar words, phrases and sentences based on the context in self-chosen texts" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). This is a very important skill when learning a new language and can be used when reading text in your first language as well. When presenting the task, we emphasised that not knowing a word does not matter because later they can discuss it with their group, which again creates an opportunity for discussion. Another competence aim that was used was "discover and play with words and expressions that are common to both English and other languages with which the pupil is familiar"(Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). This portrays the importance of the learners' cross-linguistic knowledge needed to solve a translation task. Thus, I chose for example to write "blå (blue) jeans" where "jeans" are the same in Norwegian and English, instead of using "dongeribukse" which is a less used word for jeans among young people in Norway.

Based on the knowledge they have from earlier years in school I added some descriptions such as "yellow and green letters" where the colours are known but at the same time challenging them with the noun "letters". Using the noun "bluse" was also a choice to challenge them on less common clothing items compared to "skjorte" or "shirt". The definite noun form "Tant**en**" was also used to challenge the learners' knowledge of grammar. Norwegian does not have a definite article such as "the" in English in addition to this the noun phrase may also challenging considering syntax.

According to Swain`s Output Hypothesis, "In order to achieve high levels of grammatical and sociolinguistic competence, learners need to be compelled to produce language output (pushed output) a little beyond their comfort zone" (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 294). An example of such a task may be a translation task where the learners are to produce language where they may experience difficulties in portraying or expressing what they intended to (Storch, 2008, p. 96). This was taken under consideration while creating the collaborative translation tasks, trying to find the best suitable level, one that would challenge them but also not discourage them. When learners produce language, they are likely to encounter language gaps where they struggle to, in this case, find the correct translation or form. "Output triggers noticing, as learners` limited knowledge of the L2 becomes apparent to them (they notice holes)" (Doughty and Williams, 1998, in Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 295).  By creating output such as translation of a text the learners come apparent to their language knowledge holes. Here it is interesting to mention Vygotsky`s sociocultural theory again which can be helpful in instances where the learners can help each other. Another way that can cause noticing is when learners "test hypotheses in modifying their output after receiving negative evidence" (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 295). Making hypotheses and noticing holes through this "pushed output" provides an opportunity for the learners to reflect on the linguistic forms and the meaning and develop their language competence.

2.6 Previous Research on Metatalk

In this section, some previous research on metatalk will be presented. The presentation of the research will be focused on the participants, what has been investigated in the given study and the results.

Swain (1998)

In the chapter *Focus on form through conscious reflection* by Merrill Swain (1998) she investigates metatalk as one possible role of output. Swain investigated two research questions regarding metatalk. The first one investigated whether demonstrating metatalk with the use of metalinguistic terminology would affect the learners' metatalk and the second one on whether there is a relationship between metatalk and second language learning. She describes a classroom-based study with the underlying theoretical motivation of investigating "possible roles that output (talking and writing) might play in second language learning"

(Swain, 1998, p.64). This was done by giving the learners dictogloss, where they were to reconstruct a text in French. The students were also given a post-test with the intention of testing whether there is a relationship between metatalk and language learning.

Two classes of French immersion students were given tasks with a dictogloss and a post-test. The participants in this study are 48 grade 8 immersion students. The students started the early French immersion program in kindergarten and were taught entirely in French until grade 3. In grade 3 the learners were introduced to English (their first language) as a language of instruction. The difference between the two classes was the instruction they got. In one of the classes, the instructors modelled metatalk by using metalinguistic terminology and in the other class, the metalinguistic terminology was not included.

The results from the first research question regarding modelling metatalk with or without metalinguistic terminology show that the learners being instructed with the use of metalinguistic terminology produced more metatalk than the other class. However, this did not necessarily lead to the learners using more metalinguistic terminology themselves. But it did, according to Swain, lead to the students focusing on their own language use to a greater extent (Swain, 1998, p.77). When investigating the second research question regarding the relationship between second language learning and metatalk both their discussions around the dictogloss and the post-test were compared. Swain found that when the students reached a correct solution, through dialogue, "there was a strong tendency to perform accurately on the relevant post-test 1 week later" (Swain, 1998, p. 78). The results did also show this correlation between the co-construction of an incorrect solution and their inaccurate responses to the post-test one week later. This suggests that when students reflect on the language they are producing it may be "a source of language learning" (Swain, 1998, p.79).

Camps, Guasch, Milian & Ribas (2000).

In this empirical research, they are exploring "the metalinguistic function of language observed in the verbal interactions" (Camps, Guasch, Milian & Ribas, 2000, p.108). This was done by giving the students a collaborative task where they were to collaborate on writing a text on a given topic. In the chapter they are trying to show how "rich and complex students' metalinguistic activity is, as well as how it relates to the features that characterise composition contexts in school, where texts are produced" (Camps et al., 2000, p.103).

The participants were from a secondary school, some students were Catalan native speakers and some were Spanish native speakers. The students were divided into six groups consisting of two to three members. They were to collaborate on writing a text on a given topic in the Catalan language classroom. The interaction between the group members was audio-recorded and two groups were selected out randomly to be transcribed. The analysis of the data is based on two different types of data which are "utterances with metalinguistic function that come up in these conversations", and "changes or reformulations that the text undergoes during the textualization process" (Camps et al., 2000, p. 109).

Results from the analysis reveal "the existence of metalinguistic activity in the composition process in groups" (Camps et al., 2000, p.122). They also found from the data that the students did not use metalinguistic terminology in their metalinguistic utterances, the students used their everyday language when discussing. The analysis did also reveal that metalinguistic activity was present in both explicit metalinguistic utterances as well as in the reformulations of the text.

Gutiérrez (2008)

In this article, Gutiérrez examines the metalinguistic activity among 22 grade 11 students. The participants are attending a French school in a mainly English-speaking urban centre in Canada. The students use both English and French and are described as balanced bilinguals. Gutiérrez aims to investigate the participants' metalinguistic activity when given a collaborative writing task. The students were divided into seven groups of three and four. In each group, there were at least a higher achieving student and a lower achieving student. Each group was to analyse a poem following a set of questions. The interaction of each group was transcribed.

The categories used to analyse the data were Turns with explicit metalinguistic comments and Text Reformulations which were inspired by Camps et al. (2000). Turns with explicit metalinguistic comments are turns where the participants "explicitly refer to aspects of language in relation to the text" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 525). These turns were classified "with respect to the aspect of language to which they overtly referred", such as lexical or syntactic

aspects (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 525). According to Gutiérrez "(...) attention to language has been mistakenly depicted as a phenomenon that is almost always overt and directly observable." (2008, p. 522). What is meant by observable here is the explicit comment on the language use. This is why he also uses the category of Text Reformulations which is defined as "the different changes that the text undergoes since the first time it is proposed in the interaction until the final version is written down" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 524). The Text Reformulations were classified based on the accompanying comments such as "Simple" with no further comment, Justification or Rejection. In addition to this, the Text Reformulations were divided into turns containing explicit metalinguistic activity, where attention to language is directly observable, and implicit metalinguistic activity, where this attention underlies the speech. A third category emerged when analysing, which is Turns containing Speech Actions which are the instances where the students accept, reject, question and or repeat suggestions.

Gutiérrez' analysis of the participants' interaction reveals that metalinguistic activity consists of three types of oral production: comments, speech actions and text reformulations. Text Reformulations were the most frequent category of oral production in four of the seven groups and overall 15% more frequent than the other categories. In the rest of the groups comments were the most frequent. Turns with comments always constituted explicit metalinguistic activity, speech actions constituted implicit and text reformulations constituted both. Further, all groups in the study expressed implicit metalinguistic activity more frequently than explicit. Gutierrez also found that "most turns containing reformulations with implicit metalinguistic activity in this study were classified as simple reformulations" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 528).

Storch (2008)

In this classroom-based research from 2008, Storch investigated "the metatalk of learners working in pairs on a text reconstruction task" (Storch, 2008, p. 95). Specifically, what is investigated is the learners' "level of engagement with linguistic choices, and whether the level of engagement affected subsequent language development" (Storch, 2008, p.95).

There were 22 participants (11 males and 11 females) in this study. The students were attending an ESL (English as a second language) course at an Australian university. 19 of the students were from Asia, from countries such as Thailand, China, Kora and Japan. To attend

this class the students had gone through a diagnostic test, testing their ESL proficiency, one can assume their level of proficiency to be fairly the same. The students divided themselves into pairs and were given the task to reconstruct a text. The text was a coherent text with content words where most of the grammatical features have been removed. The study lasted over a 2-week period.

When analysing, Storch found that the learners attended to a range of language items, but the grammatical items elicited the most attention. She also found that both elaborate and limited engagement with linguistic choices led to learning. However, elaborate engagement was found to be more beneficial for both members of the pair. The elaborate engagement was described as when learners "deliberated over alternatives, questioned and explained their suggestions" (Storch, 2008, 110). Further, the results of this study suggest that learners who work together on a written language task "may benefit from the opportunity to verbalise and deliberate about language" (Storch, 2008, p.111).

Myhill, Jones and Wilson (2016)

In this paper, the researchers use data from a national study which involves an experimental intervention with 54 schools in England. The teachers attending the study were mentored in implementing metalinguistic discussions in the classroom. The pedagogical focus of the intervention is on grammatical choice, not accuracy. They intended to help writers understand the choices that are available to them as well as being aware of the choices authors make in their texts (Myhill et al. 2016, p.6).

The research focused primarily on L1 pupils aged 10-11 from 54 schools based in England. Two classes of students aged 10-11 from each school were involved in the research. One of the classes was given the role of the comparison class, meanwhile, the intervention was practised in the other class.

The data in this research is the discussion between either the students and the teacher or between the students. The data suggests there is "an important place for metalinguistic talk about writing in helping students recognise the inter-relationship of form and meaning in writing" (Myhill et al., 2016, p.40). Secondly, the analysis signals the significance of teachers promoting discussions on grammatical choices the students have and through this developing their "metalinguistic decision-making" in their writing (Myhill et al., 2016, p.40). Myhill et al.

also found from their study the importance of the teachers' own grammatical subject knowledge which of course influence their capacity to manage these metalinguistic discussions about writing in the classroom (Myhill et al., 2016, p.20)

2.6.1 Summary of previous research

What makes these previous studies different from this study is that the research presented here has been done on older participants as well as the participants being more advanced in the given language compared to the 4th graders attending this study. Gutierrez (2008) investigates metatalk among balanced bilinguals. Swain (1998) and Storch (2008) did research on older L2 learners, the former in grade 8 and the latter on university students. Myhill et al. (2016) and Camps et al. (2000) have done research on metatalk among L1 learners, the former on 9-10-year-olds and Camps et al. on secondary school students.

3. Methodological considerations

In this section, the research design that has been used to study how fourth graders verbalise metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative translation task will be described. The data collection is done in collaboration with MetaLearn and the participants are recruited through that project.

3.1 Description of the procedure

Prior to this project, a pilot study was performed in another 4th-grade class with a different translation task. Through this pilot study, we as researchers gained valuable knowledge when it comes to procedures and how to go forward with the study.

The study was conducted in the classroom of the participants. We started by introducing ourselves and informed the learners about the task they were to do. We told them that "Oda" needed help translating the description of her "aunt Kari" from Norwegian to English. This was done to set the task in a context and give the learners a purpose for using their language knowledge. Based on the experience from the pilot study the introduction to the task was shortened and focused on the fact that the learners' help was needed. Next, I also used visuals,

such as the map shown in Appendix 1, to visualise Beatrice travelling from a non-Norwegian speaking country, which is why Oda needs help translating the text.

The pupils were given the written collaborative translation task and put into groups of three and four. The participants were given 10 minutes to work individually on translating the given text. They were informed that they were to try their best and if they did not know how to translate a word to English, they were to write the Norwegian word. This option was emphasised to lighten the pressure and remind them that it is understandable and no problem if they do not know every word. This was also emphasised based on the pilot study where the learners often got stuck on one part of the text due to not knowing the translation of an exact word.

After working individually one individual microphone was attached to each pupil, this was done to make it easier to separate the participants when transcribing the recording. The learners were reminded that they were not to touch the equipment which they respected. Next, the learners were to work in groups on the same text. They were to share their ideas and collaborate on finding the most accurate translation together as a group. One of the group members was given a symbol that symbolised that they were given the role as the writer of the group to write down their collaborated text. We, as the researchers, decided to give them the symbol to avoid discussion around who was to write and to motivate the writer to take their role seriously. The groups were given a maximum time of 35 minutes to finish their translation. They were not informed about the time limit because we did not want that to be a focus.

3.2 Participants

Through the collaboration with MetaLearn, I have access to the participants that are attending my study. The learners participating in this study are seventeen 9-10-year-olds, all attending the same fourth grade. The participation is voluntary, and the participants' parents have given consent. No background information about the participants is collected prior to the project. The reason for not collecting background information of the participants before the study is because it is an exploratory study and the aim is not to investigate the effect of different background variables.

All of the students have had at least 3,5 years of English lessons. In Norwegian schools, learners are taught English officially from 1st grade, which means that the participants in this

study already had at least 3 and a half years of English lessons in school. From the recordings, one could hear one participant talking about their English-speaking parent. This has however not been expressed as an advantage nor a disadvantage through the transcripts, other than becoming more of a trusted member of the group. Thus, the learner participated and contributed to the group like the other learners with or without different language backgrounds.

3.2.1 Groups

The teacher in the class organised the groups based on which pupils she thought might work well together. There were some groups with three learners and some with four learners in each. Even though the interactions involve heterogeneous roles, the relations can be more symmetric compared to an interaction between a teacher and a pupil (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 291). The learners have different English knowledge which may lead to the metaphor of scaffolding which is supported by among others Bruner and Sociocultural theory, as well as Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development is a theory where it is believed that the more knowledgeable part of the interaction supports and is part of the development of the other`s knowledge. Some of the groups may be more symmetrical than other groups, but we decided to not interfere with the composition of the groups, this is something the teacher did by themself. The group composition may of course be a variable. Some group members work better together than others. This was a variable that we as researchers did not manipulate first and foremost because we do not know the learners and would not have any background to organise a group other than randomly.

In the introduction to the group work, we focused on how to work in groups, and how to treat each other in the group. This was specified because the learners were not used to working in groups, they were however familiar with working with their learning partner. It was specified that the learners were to listen to each other's ideas, respect one another and listen to others` feedback and suggestions (Storch & Aldosari, 2013, p. 32). This focus was encouraged so that the learners would work together as a group, discuss and focus on the translation task. The teacher also decided which of the group members were to write on behalf of the group. This decision was based on the learners' ability to write effectively as well as on giving them motivation and responsibility. Some of the groups' writer roles were rearranged during the task among themselves or by the adults in the classroom. This was, for some groups, necessary to activate the different learners and make them participate in some way both for

the group's gain but also for the motivation of the learner.

3.3 Qualitative study

The methodology used in this study will be qualitative analysis. The study is based on descriptive data in the form of transcripts of the discussions the learners will have when working in groups. According to Mackey and Gass, qualitative research is based on descriptive data "that does not make (regular) use of statistical procedures" (Mackey & Gass, 2015, p. 215). Hence, in this study, I will analyse the transcripts describing the different language aspects the learners are discussing illustrating their metalinguistic awareness. Qualitative analysis is about finding patterns to then be able to gather the data in different categories or themes (Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, p. 139). However, in this study, both predefined categories and emerging themes will be used to analyse.

Qualitative research tends to focus on a smaller group of participants in a more detailed and descriptive way and is less concerned with being able to generalise (Mackey & Gass, 2015, p. 216). This is an exploratory study meaning that the aim is to get an impression of what one can expect, exploring what is occurring when little is known about the subject. A small sample is often used in exploratory studies to get an impression of the subject before one gathers data from a larger sample (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p.47). There are 17 participants in this research, which in this case is a relatively small group of participants. The 17 learners were put into groups of three and four and given the collaborative translation task to work on together as a group.

The recordings of their discussions are the descriptive data which is analysed and put into predefined categories of language aspects. The data is analysed and described, not counted which one could have done using statistical procedures using a more quantitative way of analysing. I found that counting instances of different language aspects would not be effective because of the small sample of participants. It would not be representative to quantify such a small sample of data and generalise it through statistics. Making it a qualitative study is also because, again, the aim of the study is not to get the frequency counts for different categories but rather to explore how the predefined categories emerge in the learners` conversations, hence this being an exploratory study. The analysis will be divided into two where the

metatalk will be analysed using predefined categories and the phenomenon of collaboration will be analysed with the use of emergent themes from the data. When investigating the metatalk the categories are predefined which means that the categories are brought to the data rather than developed from the data. These predefined categories are based on Gutièrrez' study. Next, when analysing the phenomenon of collaboration themes regarding collaboration will emerge from the data, not using predefined categories to investigate this phenomenon.

3.4 Classroom-based research

The participants will be studied in their natural setting, as pupils in a classroom. This study will concern the micro-level phenomena of interaction in the classroom. Classroom-based research differs from laboratory-based research when it comes to variables and not being able to strictly control the variables (Mackey & Gass, 2015, p. 238). There will always be different variables in a classroom that a teacher will not be able to control which is one of the reasons for choosing to do a classroom-based study. Researching the learners in the classroom without being able to manipulate every variable is arguably a big part of being a teacher. Further, performing this research in a laboratory would lead to limitations and challenges such as the pupils being in an unknown and abnormal environment leading to distractions and arguably nervousness which would affect the quality of the metatalk. Hence, keeping the learners in their natural setting will arguably avoid the distraction of a new environment and the excitement or nervousness that may follow. Additionally, there are researchers, such as Foster (1998) who claim that research findings from laboratory contexts cannot be applied to classroom settings (Foster, 1998, p.21).

3.5 Interaction-based research

The focus of this study is on the learners' conversational interaction in the groups therefore interaction-based research. "Within interaction-based research, the goal is usually to manipulate the kinds of interaction that learners are involved in (..)"(Mackey & Gass, 2015, p. 75). Therefore, we as the researchers were present and active in the classroom. We were present when the learners arrived at school, greeted them and had the main responsibility of the class. The task was introduced and the learners were told to work together on translating the task. We also made clear that they had to listen to each other and respect each other in the group work, which arguably led to good discussions. The discussions were recorded with a

recorder and clip-on microphones which is important and very useful in classroom-based research.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis procedures used in this study are first recording the learners` discussion, to then transcribing those recordings. Next, the data is divided into Language Related Episodes (LRE). Finally, the data is analysed with both predefined categories for the analysis of metatalk and emergent themes when analysing the learners' collaboration. The data will be analysed in the light of the following research questions:

> *How do fourth grade learners verbalise metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative task?*
>> - *What aspects of language are the learners focusing on?*
> *How can the collaborative component affect the outcome?*

3.6.1 Transcribing Oral data

According to Sacks (1992) "transcripts are to the researcher as the microscope is to the biologist"[5] (my translation) (in Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, p. 164). By looking at transcripts as a microscope we as researchers may get an insight into the learners' metalinguistic awareness more thoroughly.

The recordings are transcribed and transcripts are representations of oral data in a written format (Mackey & Gass, 2015, p. 114). In the words of Mackey and Gass, "the process of transcripts varies depending on the research goals" (Mackey & Gass, 2015, p. 113). The goal of this research is to analyse the learners' metalinguistic verbalisation, hence I have not transcribed the utterances that do not refer to the task or the text. Given this is group work between fourth graders one would expect digressions, and in the word of Mackey and Gass,"(...) it is not always the case that every utterance of each learner (...) on a tape will need to be transcribed"(2015, p. 113). The full transcripts are not attached because this project is

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[5] "tilsvarer transkripsjoner for forskeren mikroskopet for biologen" (Sacks, 1992, in Postholm & Jacobsen, 2018, p. 164)

part of a larger ongoing project, but insight into the full transcripts can be made upon request to the project leader.

When transcribing this oral data I have chosen to mark the different actions the learners do when referring to the text. The different utterances are also numbered to illustrate how the conversation goes when it comes to pauses or distractions, showing this by skipping a number. The learners are anonymous which is why they are referred to as L1, L2 and so on. When the learners are directly referring to a word or sentence it is marked in quotation marks, such as "green". The word in the quotation marks will not be based on the learners' pronunciation or spelling. When the learner spells a word it is marked by adding hyphens between the letters such as h-a-v-e. A letter with a hyphen (e-) is used to show when the learners are referring to a specific and separate letter. I have also used capital letters to show what the learners are emphasising such as "ketchup And sennep" or pronouncing "aunt" as "aUnt" to emphasise the "u" in the word. Lastly, I have used ** as a symbol to symbolise action, such as *copying*, when it is needed as a context.

The conversations that are transcribed are in Norwegian because that was the language the pupils preferred and what is used in the classroom. The whole transcript will not be translated, but the examples and extracts used in the thesis will be translated. I have chosen to keep the utterances in Norwegian and added the translated utterances in English in brackets, inspired by Gutiérrez (Gutiérrez, 2008). The original and translated utterances are kept because the learners are translating and keeping both languages makes it more accurate and clear in addition to it being common procedure.

3.6.2 Language related episodes

To analyse the transcripts, the transcript of the dialogues have been divided into different language-related episodes (LRE). According to Swain and Lapkin (1996), language-related episodes can be defined as "any part of a dialogue in which students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, or other self-correct (in Swain, 1998, p. 70). Thus, I will gather parts of the conversation concerning the same language aspect in one language-related episode and then analyse the discussion or reformulation. The learners have been discussing freely in groups with no instruction to focus on anything special other than working together as a group to translate the given text. In conversations the topics change rapidly and dividing it into LRE makes the metatalk more accessible to analyse. An example

of an LRE may be on how to spell a specific word or which form of a verb they need to use to for example have a subject-verb agreement.

3.6.3 Categories

After dividing the data into Language Related Episodes the data is analysed using the following categories. The following categories will be used to investigate the following research questions:

How do fourth grade learners verbalise metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative task?

               - *What aspects of language are the learners focusing on?*

The categories are first presented in the following table to get an overview.

Overview of categories

1. **Turns with metalinguistic comments**

    1.1 Spelling

    1.2 Lexical aspects

    1.3 Grammatical aspects

2. **Text reformulations**

    2.1 Spelling

    2.2 Lexical aspects

    2.3 Grammatical aspects

3. **Cross-linguistic awareness**

    3.1 Spelling

    3.2 Lexical aspects

3.3 Grammatical aspects

The data analysis is organised into three main categories, Metalinguistic comments, Text reformulations and Cross-linguistic awareness. The two predefined and broad categories Turns with metalinguistic comments and Text reformulations are inspired by Gutiérrez and Camps et. al (2000; 2008). These two categories are used because it is important to include both instances where the learners explicitly comment on the language use as well as the instances where they reformulate their language or text without the additional discussion or comments. As Gutiérrez argues, both are ways of showing metalinguistic knowledge and it is interesting to use both categories especially when the learners are this young. Additionally, there is the category of Cross-linguistic awareness because this awareness is an important part of translation and metalinguistic awareness in multilingual contexts. In addition to the mentioned main categories, the data will be analysed using the following aspects of language inspired by Gutiérrez`s subcategories; Spelling, Lexical aspects and Grammatical aspects.

There has been a growing number of studies regarding metalinguistic awareness or activity. However, according to Gutiérrez, there is one aspect of metalinguistic activity or awareness that has been overlooked, and that is the fact that metalinguistic awareness is not always "overt in the learners' oral production" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 520). This belief that metalinguistic awareness can be present in different ways is an important part of why I have chosen to use both of these categories inspired by Gutiérrez. The two categories "turns with text reformulations" and "turns with metalinguistic comments" differ in whether the learners are commenting and discussing the language or they just reformulate or change their text without any further comment. The two categories do not necessarily differ in metalinguistic awareness, it is just how it is or is not verbalised. Metalinguistic awareness is, as mentioned in the theory chapter, "The ability to think *about* language, reflect on it and manipulate it for various purposes" (Krulatz et al., 2018, p. 41). The keyword here is "think", so the way the categories differ is how it is expressed, not how the learners think and reflect on the language or in other words their metalinguistic awareness.

Turns with metalinguistic comments

The category of Turns with metalinguistic comments contains the instances where the learners "overtly discuss changes to the text" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 520). These are instances in which participants refer to aspects of language from the text and discuss it among themselves. The aspects of language which will be subcategories in this analysis will be explained further. In addition to this, turns where the participants question the use of a word such as "has?" or "why not "have"?" and turns with different suggestions where the learners specifically ask which word to use will be categorised as metalinguistic comments. In this category, it is important to specify that metalanguage in the form of specific metalinguistic terminology is not needed to make a metalinguistic comment (Myhill, 2011, p. 249) as discussed in the theory chapter. This specification is made here because the learners are young foreign language learners and according to several studies they tend to not use explicit terminology when discussing language use (Camps et al., 2000; Gutiérrez, 2008; Swain, 1998). It is therefore interesting to analyse utterances with both explicit terminology when referring to language as well as utterances referring to language without using the language terminology. The following examples taken from Camps et. al illustrates metalinguistic comments, the first one with metalinguistic terminology and the second one without (Camps et al., 2000, p. 110). Example 1: "Do we begin with the addressees or what? Or with the objective? What do we do?"
Example 2: "These or this? No, listen, but these or this? (...) This or these?"

Turns with text reformulations

The category of Text reformulations also represents the verbalisation of Metalinguistic awareness but is verbalised in different ways than the metalinguistic comments. What differentiates the two categories is that the reformulations are just reformulations without any further discussion. Gutiérrez differentiates between "simple reformulations", "reformulations with justifications" and "reformulations with rejection", I have however chosen to take inspiration from the definition of "simple reformulation". The simple reformulation is defined as a turn that "contains a reformulation of the text, but there is no other comment about the previous formulation" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 525). Or in other words, a reformulation accompanied by any kind of explanation or justification is going to be classified as a turn with metalinguistic comment.

Even though the learners are not expressing metalinguistic knowledge explicitly in the form of metalinguistic comments there is still a process where they notice something that does not

seem correct and reformulate it. These reformulations and changes are, according to Camps et al., signs of metalinguistic activity or knowledge (Camps et al., 2000, p. 113). Additionally, in the words of Gutiérrez, "such an inability [explicitly commenting on the language use] does not imply the absence of reflection or lack of knowledge" (2008, p. 521). Through the reformulations, the learners show that they can look at the text as an object and change the text when needed.

Text reformulations represent the turns where the learners make changes to the text without the language users explicitly commenting on it. An example of a text reformulation is when learners correct themselves or others in the group with no further comment such as the following example of Text reformulations from Camps et. al (2000, p. 116).

218 X: This advertisement that we present to ...

219 O: The advertisement that we present

Cross-linguistic awareness

The category of cross-linguistic awareness will essentially include the instances where the learners are explicitly comparing English and Norwegian. Cross-linguistic awareness is defined as "the learner's tacit and explicit awareness of the links between their language systems" (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009, p. 127). This category will however consist of instances where the learners draw on their explicit cross-linguistic awareness. An example of an instance where the learners use their cross-linguistic awareness is if the learners explicitly compare English and Norwegian such as "that is different from Norwegian" or "this is not how it is done in English". Cross-linguistic awareness is the ability to reflect on similarities and differences between the languages in the learner's "multilingual mind" (Angelovska & Hahn, 2014, p. 164), hence the focus on the comparison between the languages. The reason for adding the category of Cross-linguistic awareness is because it is arguably a big part of metalinguistic awareness. Additionally, I have chosen to use this category because the links between the learners' language systems are a natural part of translation (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009, p. 127). This indicates that there will be instances of cross-linguistic awareness when given a translation task. It is therefore interesting to analyse what the learners are discussing and what language aspects they focus on when comparing languages.

Subcategories

The data will be analysed using the following aspects of language, spelling, lexical aspects and grammatical aspects. The reason for using these subcategories is because these aspects of language are often what are used to describe language and metalinguistic knowledge. Gutiérrez states that metalinguistic knowledge "often emerges in instances in which learners overtly discuss aspects of language such as spelling, punctuation, word order, or textual aspects.» (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 521). This is why I have chosen to use the following subcategories inspired by Gutiérrez. I want to specify that the categories used in this study are not identical to the ones Gutiérrez used in his study, the classification is just inspired by Gutiérrez'. I have chosen to use some of the same categories as Gutiérrez and excluded some of the categories he used. The reason for this is that he conducted his research on grade 11 students belonging to an English-speaking centre in a French school in Canada, described as "balanced bilinguals" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 523). From this information, one can assume that they have a higher language understanding and knowledge compared to most of the participants attending this project who are fourth graders in an EFL classroom in a Norwegian school. I chose, therefore, to exclude for example "discursive aspects" and kept the categories I assumed were more relevant for fourth graders and the given translation task such as "spelling". Additionally, the task given to my participants has limited issues of for example "textual organisation" and "punctuation", which is why I have excluded those as well.

Spelling

In the subcategory of Spelling the instances where the learners focus on the spelling of specific vocabulary are presented, or in other words, focusing on the form. Spelling is about the mapping of phonemes and graphemes, phonemes being the sound and graphemes the corresponding letter(s). Such as in this instance where a learner asks the group how to spell "green".

Lexical aspects

This subcategory includes the instances where the learners discuss the lexical meanings of the words. Essentially, the utterances where the learners are discussing different vocabulary, what the different words mean and what vocabulary to choose. An example where the learner uses their knowledge of form and meaning is when given a homophone, such as "ant" and "aunt".

Additionally, there may be instances where the learners struggle to find the correct word to be able to translate the sentence. Some examples may be the way the learners discuss whether they should use "small" or "short" to describe a short person and what connotations those words bring. Or an instance where they struggle to find what "skjørt" (skirt) is in English.

Grammatical aspects

Under this subcategory, there are grammatical aspects concerning syntax, which concerns grammar at the sentence level and morphology or word-level of grammar. A grammatical aspect where the learners comment on the syntax in a sentence can be recognised as where the learners discuss the word order in a sentence. One instance can be whether they should write "my aunt" or "aunt my". As seen from this example, the syntax has to do with the composition of the sentence, and the order of the words used in the sentence. There are different syntactic systems in for example Norwegian and English which is why this category is included. Instances, where the learners comment or reformulate a morphological issue, are also an important part of grammar. Morphology is "the study of how words are formed, for example, the addition of prefixes and suffixes" (Ur, 2012, p. 299). An example may be adding the suffix -s to "listen" to avoid an issue regarding the subject-verb agreement in "she listen" and changing it to "she listens".

3.6.4 Collaboration

The phenomenon of collaboration will be investigated along with the research question regarding collaboration *"How can the collaborative component affect the outcome?"*. Collaboration is investigated by addressing emergent themes. The category of Collaboration will be a part of this data analysis because the success of the collaboration affects the quantity and quality of the metatalk. It is important both when it comes to it being an essential part of the task as the method but also as a way of accessing the metatalk which is the data in this project. Instances where the focus is on collaboration and group composition will be analysed. As mentioned, the group composition is different from group to group which will affect the collaboration and outcome of the task. Some learners will be contributing by asking questions and some learners will take the role of being more knowledgeable and help the others, or correct their fellow group members. These emergent themes will be presented in the findings.

3.7 Limitations

In the following section, the limitations of the research are presented. Every study has limitations that are important to be aware of. There are also several issues to be addressed considering the reliability and validity of the research.

One limitation with the method of being present in the classroom as a researcher, especially in the lower grades, is that the pupils may be easily distracted by the observer. Mackey and Gass state that "... young learners in particular can become very easily distracted by observers" (2015, p. 240). The pupils being distracted may lead to them not paying attention to the task or being nervous to talk or say something wrong (Mackey & Gass, 2015, p. 240). Young learners, such as the fourth graders in this study, may be distracted and diverted by the new persons in the classroom. Thus, we decided to introduce ourselves and present the task ourselves. One advantage of this school is that the pupils are used to pre-service teachers doing their teacher placement and are therefore used to different and unfamiliar persons in the classroom.

Next, another limitation may be the recording equipment being a distraction. We decided to attach microphones to each learner which may become a distraction. The microphone may be a distraction in it itself as a thing to play with, a topic to talk about and distracting in a way of being very aware that everything they say will be recorded. To limit the distraction of the physical recording equipment we waited to attach the microphones until after we gave our instructions to make sure they knew what they were to do. The learners were also informed that they were to not touch the equipment which they respected. We did hear when listening to the recordings that some of the groups commented on the microphones but they did also talk about other topics. This may arguably indicate that the presence of the microphones did not inhibit the learners in expressing their thoughts and ideas.

Reliability and validity

Prior to this study, we did perform a pilot study which strengthens the validity and reliability

of the research. What was piloted was the procedures of the study, not the task because we used another translation task. During the pilot study, we noticed that the assistant and the teacher in the classroom helped the learners when translating which would have affected the outcome and validity of the research. Validity has to do with whether the measuring instrument measure what is intended (Punch & Oancea, 2014, p297). The data which is analysed is the learners' verbalisation of metalinguistic awareness and if the learners were to get help this would challenge the validity of the outcome. The pilot study made us aware of the importance of informing the adults in the classroom that they were not to give the learners the answers and rather tell them to ask each other or that there is an option to just skip the word. This was specified when doing the main study which strengthens the reliability in regards to being able to make the procedure of the study more consistent. Reliability refers to "the consistency or stability of a measuring instrument" (Punch & Oancea, 2014, p.305).

A component that can affect the reliability of the study is the classification of the used categories. According to Weber (1990) the categories "may be inconsistent (...) because of human error or coder variability (in Cohen et al., 2017, p. 684). Some of the categories are inherently ambiguous which may be problematic. The categories that may be ambiguous are for example differentiating between metalinguistic comments and text reformulations, is for example questioning a given word a metalinguistic comment or a text reformulation? However, the categories have been described both by using descriptions as well as examples to make the categories clear. Further, another limitation regarding the categories is that they are predefined which may lead to the analysis forcing data into categories.

The validity can be questioned when it comes to the investigation of metalinguistic awareness, which is normally not observable, and whether the learners' talk reflects what they know about language. Metalinguistic awareness is mental processes that are normally not observable and part of thought processes. This may weaken the validity of the project because one cannot claim that what the learners are expressing or talking about is reflecting everything they know. However, when the learners are working in groups where they are to work on the text together one can argue that they will be sharing at least some of their language knowledge and thoughts. In the instruction, they were told to share their ideas and thoughts and specified that they were to listen to each other. The learners were also given 10 minutes of thinking and translating by themselves, essentially gathering their thoughts prior to the collaborative component. Additionally, when working in groups the learners may help each other and keep the discussion going by asking each other and explaining their choices to each

other. When analysing the learners' metatalk one may access "processes that otherwise may remain hidden"(Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 523) and gain an insight into language learning (Swain, 1998, p.69).

The transcripts are based on the oral discussion which is limited to what the learners are orally expressing which may affect the reliability of the research. Some learners were observed using body language when defining or translating words. These instances could have been useful and accessed by observational notes or video recordings. This has however not been a focus in this study but could have been interesting to research. This may lead to unwitten evidence (Robson, 1993, in Cohen et al., 2017, p. 684). Witten evidence is what was intended to be expressed or imparted. Unwitten evidence, on the other hand, is when the researcher assumes something that the learner did not intend. This may affect the reliability of the research.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues are important to consider when doing research. Each stage in a research project may raise ethical issues (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 111).

The participants are 17 pupils aged 9 to 10 years old and to conduct this research we as researchers are obligated to require informed consent from the children and their parents. The consent form can be found in Appendix 2. The participants are under the age of 15 years old, thus the consent forms were sent to the parents prior to the project (NSD, n.d). According to Norsk Senter for Forskingsdata (NSD), the parents have the right to be "informed about what information that will be gathered, what method which will be used and the practical procedure" (My translation) (NSD, n.d). The parents, and their children, decided whether or not they wanted to attend this project. All 17 of the learners accepted to participate in the project. In the consent form, we informed the parents about the MetaLearn project and how we are to gather the data by informing them about the audio recording of the discussions that will happen in the classroom. Through the consent form, we did also inform the parents that their child will be kept anonymous in publications. Lastly, parents were informed about their rights to withdraw their child from the project at any time without having to give a reason or it having any consequences for their child.

The consent form states that the participants' anonymity is to be kept. The participants'

anonymity was kept by giving them the translation task on paper avoiding gathering IP addresses. Additionally, the filled out task sheets have not been used in this study, avoiding the names on the sheet of the participants. Further, the participants are audio recorded using authorised recording equipment with encrypted SD cards. By using encrypted SD cards we avoid others getting access to the recordings during the period of transcribing. The recordings were deleted after transcribing, where the names they used to address each other in the discussions were omitted, to keep their anonymity (Høgskulen på Vestlandet, 2021a).

The storing of data may raise ethical issues because of personal information about the participant. According to HVL's article on how to store data, the data in this research was classified as data that could be stored personally which means that there was no need for a research server (Høgskulen på Vestlandet, 2021b). I transferred the data from the SD cards directly to my private computer avoiding using other platforms to share the data. This is a student project with a small amount of privacy information and a low risk of this information being shared or accessed. Thus there is no need for a research server, and it is allowed to be stored on a private computer as long as the participants' privacy is kept.

As a researcher, the participants' well-being is very important and something to work towards. Cohen et al. state that "the research should not damage the participants physically, psychologically, emotionally, professionally, personally and so on" (2017, p.127). Giving the learners a lengthy translation task may be demotivating and affect the learners' well-being. To try to avoid too much discouragement the learners were to work in groups after looking at the task individually. This was done so that the learners could help each other and the learners who would have struggled on their own would get a feeling of mastery.

The group work may also be a question of the participants' well-being since they were not used to working in groups. Every individual has different boundaries and preferences and working in groups with peers may feel unpredictable. The learners did however know about the group work and the project in advance due to the consent form. To avoid groups where the learners would feel uncomfortable the teacher divided the learners into groups based on her knowledge of whom would work well together.

4. Findings

The previous chapter identified the methodology used in this study. This chapter reports on the gathered data. The data will be analysed concerning the following research questions:

> *How do fourth grade learners verbalise metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative task?*
>> *- What aspects of language are the learners focusing on?*
> *How can the collaborative component affect the outcome?*

The categories used to organise the findings are inspired by Gutièrrez and Camps et al. and will be Turns with metalinguistic comments and Text reformulations (Camps et al., 2000; Gutiérrez, 2008). Turns with metalinguistic comments include instances in which participants explicitly refer to aspects of language from the text, not necessarily using metalinguistic terminology. The category of the Text reformulations is the different changes that the text undergoes from the first time it is proposed in the interaction until the final version is written down.

The data will be presented in the form of LRE or extracts from the transcripts where the learners have commented on or reformulated instances concerning different language aspects. I will not be giving numbers of the different instances because with such a small data set these numbers will not be representative. I will investigate which aspects occurred in their speech when not instructed and present them in this section.

For information when referring to the learners I will be using the pronoun "she".

4.1 Turns with metalinguistic comments

Spelling
In the following section selected Language Related Episodes concerning spelling will be presented. It will however not represent every LRE concerning spelling that appeared in the data set.

In the following extract, the learners are trying to find a translation for "tante". The learners decide to modify the noun "aunt" when they notice the imbalance between the meaning and spelling/form of the word. The learners concluded by adding the suffix -y to make the term "aunty" but spelt "anty".

Extract 1.

48. L1: "ant" er jo maur. "Ant" e en maur

("Ant" is ant. "Ant" is an ant)

49. L2: ja, men eg skrev "ant" for du sa

(Yes, but I wrote "ant" because you said it)

51. L1: men sant ant e maur, ja det e det

(but "ant" is ant right, yes that's right)

53. L1:Ja men maur

(yes, but ant)

54. L1: "Anty"

56. L1:Ideen min e at vi skriver "ant"

(My idea is that we write "ant")

57. L1:men anty.. hei eg skriver ikke feil då kallar de i England meg for maur.

(but anty… hey I do not want to write the wrong thing then the ones in England call me an ant)

58. L2: men ka e "tante", har noen noen idear, "ant" e jo maur

(but what is "aunt", does anyone have any ideas, "ant" is ant)

59. L3: a-n-t

61. L2: "Aunt" e tante

("Aunt" is aunt)

62. L3: Berre ha a-n-t, a-n-t-y eller a-n-t

(just use a-n-t, a-n-t-y or a-n-t)

63. L1: Men "ant" er jo maur...

(But "ant" is ant…)

64. L2: det e jo også tante

(It is also aunt)

65. L4: a-n..

67. L3:A-n-t-y, A-n-t-y

74. L2:hvordan skriver man det?

(How do we write/spell it)

In the following extract, the group is discussing how to spell the colours yellow and green. The learners are struggling with the sound /j/ in yellow whether to use y- or i- at the beginning of the word to get the /j/ sound. But as we can see in the extract the learners end up with the solution to spell "yellow" starting with i-. The learners are showing an awareness of the language as an object by discussing how to spell the given adjectives, even though they do not end up with the correct way of spelling the words.

Extract 2.

864. L5: big yellow and green

865. L6: kordan skriver man "yellow"?

     (how do you spell "yellow"?)

866. L5: y...nei eller i-e-l-l-o-w

     (y… no or i-e-l-l-o-w)

868. L6: ja eg vet det.. and "green"

     (yes I know that… and "green")

869. L5: g-r-e-a-n

Here, in extract 3, is a typical example of how most discussions around spelling go throughout the task and between the members of the different groups. One of the members asks how to spell a word and another member answers.

Extract 3.

742. L5: "short"

743. L6: "short", kordan skriver man "short"?

     ("short", how do you spell short?)

744. L5: s-h-o-r-t

745. L6: "short"

The learners in the following exchange are discussing how to spell the word "easy" which develops into an exchange focusing on the connection between phonemes and graphemes. The learners use their knowledge of phonology in English to find different ways of spelling "easy".

Extract 4.

32. L8: "it's going to be easy", men hvordan skriver man "easy"?

> ("it's going to be easy", but how do you spell "easy"?)

33. L9: i-s-i

34. L10: Nei det er i-a-s-y , e-a-s-y, eller du kan bare skrive e-c det e mye lettere

> (No it is i-a-s-y, e-a-s-y, or you could just write e-c thats a lot easier)

35. L9: e-c, ok bare skriv det då

> (e-c, ok just write that)

38. L8: jeg klarte det, jeg skrev "easy", skrives faktisk e-a-s-y

> (I managed to do it, I wrote "easy", it is actually spelled like this e-a-s-y)

39. L10: ja akkurat, det e sånn man skriver det.

> (precisely, that's how it is written)

40. L9: "easy", "easy"

41. L10: Eller man kan faktisk skrive e-c, ikke e-c då men

> (Or we could actually write e-c, not e-c though but)

In the following extract, the learners are struggling with spelling "with". Learner R specifies that issue with the th-sound in turn 728 refering the learner 11 who wants to spell the word as w-i-h-t, expressing that she does not agree with having the t- last. Finally, they end up with the correct spelling in turn 730.

Extract 5.

725. L11: hvordan skriver man "with"?

> (how does one spell "with")

726. L12: W-t

727. L11: wt? w-t? nei eg skriver w-i-h-t

> (…………. no I'll write w-i-h-t)

728. L12: nei for det e "with" med th-lyd. Fordi at viss man puttar -t der så…

> (no because it is "with" with the th-sound. Because if we put -t there then…)

729. L11: w? w? hva for noe

> (........ what then?)

730. L12: w-t-h… nei vent det var -i før t-en

> (...... no wait its -i in front of the -t)

The learners are in the following extract questioning how to spell the adjective "yellow" , whether there is a double l- and what the last letter in the word is.

Extract 6.

731. L11: ka e det andre ordet? "big yellow", kor mange l-ar?

     (what is the second word? "Big yellow", how many -l`s?)

732. L12: to l-ar og -i på slutten

     (two l`s and -i at the end)

733. L11: yelloi? Yellov.

Lexical aspects

The exchange in the following extract shows how this group discusses a lexical aspect. The learners are commenting on the vocabulary choice between the adjectives "high" and "large" when describing how tall Kari is. This particular example is also interesting when it comes to categorising, whether to categorise this as a metalinguistic comment or a text reformulation. I, however, have categorised the instance as a metalinguistic comment because of the discussion around the adjectives. The learners are discussing the difference in the meaning of the two adjectives which we can explicitly see in turn 813, which arguably makes this more of a metalinguistic comment rather than a reformulation.

The learners are discussing the difference in the meaning of the adjectives. Learner 6 is not explicitly defining the adjective "large", but she is pointing out that there is a significant difference between the meaning of the two describing words. There were only recordings of their voices in this study but one could assume that learner 6 uses some kind of body language to express the different meanings of the adjectives.

Extract 7.

809. L6: very high or pretty high

810. L5: very large nei pretty large, pretty large

     (very large no pretty large, pretty large)

811. L6: pretty high

812. L5: high?

813. L6: pretty large e litt mer sånn… ja

     (pretty large is more like… yes)

814. L5: oja hehe

     (oh okay hehe)

815. L6: she is pretty high?

816. L6: ok, high...

817. L6: she is pretty high and

Another lexical aspect that occurred in several of the groups is the discussion around the Norwegian word "bluse" (blouse). The majority of the groups did not know what "bluse" was in English, which we can see in the following extract.

The learners decided that the most important thing was to get the meaning across and describe Kari in the task. They were able to think about the meaning separately from the form which is a way of showing metalinguistic awareness. They decided that the most important thing was not necessary to translate the noun directly, but rather to find another word that could represent "bluse".

Extract 8.

535. L11: ka e "bluse"?

     (What is "bluse"?)

536. L13: bluse det e sikkert…

     ("bluse" is probably..)

537. L12: eg sa bare "shirt"

     (I just said "shirt")

541. L12: eg skrev bare helt vanlig "shirt"

     (I just wrote a normal "shirt")

543. L11: eg skrev "bluse"

     (I wrote "bluse")

544. L14: eg skrev "bluse"

     (I wrote "bluse")

545. L12: eg tror faktiskt det e "bluse" (uttalt med engelsk aksent) på engelsk og men eg tror det e en type sang

     (I actually think that it is "bluse" (pronounced with an English accent) in English as well, but I think that it is a type of song)

547. L12: eg ville bare skrevet "shirt"

     (I just want to write "shirt")

548. L13: "blus", "shirt"?

549. L11: altså skjorte?

    (So shirt?)

550. L12:ja

    (yes)

551. L11: ja ok

    (yes ok)

552. L12: nei "shirt" e litt det samme som genser

    (no shirt is more like a sweater)

553. L11: ja sånn som "t-shirt" e t-skjorte det e litt det samme som genser.

    (yes just like "t-shirt" is, t-shirt which is kinda the same as sweater)

554. L11:Bare skriv …

    (just write…)

555. L11 and L12: s-h-i–r-t

556. L12: nice job

The learners are discussing whether they should use the verb "wear" or "use" to describe the action of being dressed. Learner 16 suggests using "wear" and Learner 15 agrees. The learners show an understanding of different forms of words and that some forms are better suited for certain contexts. This has been categorised as a turn with metalinguistic comment because the learners are suggesting different suggestions and specifically ask which word to use.

Extract 9.

407. L15: "wear" eller "use"?

    ("wear" or "use"?)

408. L16: kanskje "wear"

    ("wear" maybe?

409. L15: Ok, she was gonna wear blue jeans

In this exchange, the learners are trying out different lexical alternatives to find the one that portrays the intended meaning. The lexical issue is whether to use "stands" or "says" in the sentence "a sign where it says Beatrice". This is categorised as a metalinguistic comment because the learners are again suggesting different suggestions and specifically ask which

word to use. Learner 6 asks whether to use "says" or "stands", explicitly asking which vocabulary to use not just reformulating the language use.

Extract 10.

853. L5: where there stands

854. L6: where it.. where it says

855. L5: stands

856. L6: "says" eller "stands"?

("says" or "stands"?)

857. L5: stands

Many of the errors the learners discussed were lexical errors due to pronunciation. The majority of the groups struggled with one of the following lexical errors due to the pronunciation of "ant" and "aunt", "and" and "end" and "hear" and "hair". In the following LREs, I have included examples of these lexical errors.

In the following example, the learners are struggling with the words "and" and "end" due to their mispronunciation, making the words seem like homophones. A homophone is defined as "a word pronounced like another word but with a different meaning or spelling"(Hornby & Crowther, 1997, p. 570). The group is struggling to specify the difference by just pronouncing the word which leads to the specification in turn 232 by learner 2. The learner notices that there is a difference and that the different forms of the word result in another meaning and clarifies this in turn 232.

Extract 11.

225. L2:"og"

("and")

226. L1:"og"

("and")

227. L1:"og" det er...

("and" that is..)

228. L3: "End"

229. L1: "And"

230. L2:det er ikke "End"

(it is not "End")

232. L2: for når man setter to ord sammen, lissom ketchup Og sennep, begge deler

(because when one puts two words together, like ketchup And mustard, both)

Some of the groups were struggling with the words "hear" and "hair" due to their mispronunciation. They are to write "hair" to be able to describe aunt Kari`s hair. The learners in the group come up with different ways of spelling "hair" such as h-e-r-e, h-e-a-r, h-a-r. When trying out the different ways of spelling they do find that the meaning of the word "hear" is to listen and not the word they are looking for. However, in turn 123, learner L states that there are words in English with different meanings, but look the same.

Extract 12.

107. L1:eg vet hvordan man skriver "hair"

(I know how to write "hair")

108. L1:he-ar, he-ar… nei eg husker det "hair"

(He-ar, he-ar… no I remember it "hair")

109. L3:"hear"

110. L1:nei det e høre, nei men det e det

(no, thats to listen, no but it is that)

111. L3:det e h-a-r

(it is h-a-r)

112. L3: h-a-r, det e h-a-r

(h-a-r, it is h-a-r)

116. L2:ja men "hair"

(yes, but "hair")

117. L1:oja der, følg etter dette ordet he-a-r

(oh ok look, follow this word he-a-r)

118. L1:men det e også høre, det e faktisk høre, nei men du kan faktisk skrive det

(but it is also "to listen", it is actually listen (hear), no but you can actually write it)

119. L1:"hair" - hår

122. L4: h-e-a-r

123. L1: ja eg vet, for mange ord i england er to forskellige ord

(yes I know, because many words in England are two different words)

The exchange in the following extract shows how the learners discuss the spelling issue between "ant" and "aunt". This is an example of actual homophones. Learner 12 questions the use of "ant" to express the familial relationship "aunt". In turn 468, learner 12 specifies the difference between the two homophones "ant" and "aunt" with a focus on the form and meaning. This differentiation is done through the use of a spelling pronunciation where she specifies the "u" in "aunt". Spelling pronunciation is a technique where the learners may use an "artificial pronunciation based on the letter sequence of the word spelling". Examples of this spelling pronunciation may be, pronouncing the word "Wednesday" as /wed-nes-day/ to make it easier to remember how to spell the word" (Hilte & Reitsma, 2006, p. 302). The learner comes to the conclusion that there is a difference between "ant" and "aunt" in spelling and that it is important to differentiate between the two nouns to express the intended meanings. Learner 11 agrees.

Extract 13.

464. L12: se eg har skrevet det: "My ant" betyr tanten min, så da skriver jeg "My ant" først

(look I have written this: "My ant" which means my aunt, that is why I am writing "my ant" first.)

466. L12: Nei se, tanten min: "my aunt"

(No look, my aunt: "My aunt")

467. L11: ant, "ant" e tante

(Ant, "ant" is aunt)

468. L12: nei "ant" er en maur, "aUnt" e tante

(No "ant" is an ant, "aUnt" is aunt)

469. L11: ja "aunt"

(yes "aunt")

Grammatical aspect

Learner 11 shows metalinguistic awareness by questioning the others on their use of the "have" instead of "has" after Kari. She questions this subject-verb agreement without using explicit metalinguistic terminology. But by questioning it they agree that it has to be "has".

Extract 14.

470. L13: også e det "have" med h-e-v-e

(and then it is "have" as in h-e-v-e)

471. L12: "Have" e h-a-v-e

("Have" is h-a-v-e)

472. L13: "have" ja, skriv "have"

("Have" yes, write "have")

473. L11: hvorfor skriver du ikke has?

(why do you not write "has")

474. L12: nei Kari..

(no Kari..)

475. L11:det e "has light hair same as you", samme som deg.

(it is "has light hair same as you", same as you)

Here in the following extract, there is an instance where it may be difficult to categorise the oral data between metalinguistic comment and text reformulation. I argue that this is a metalinguistic comment because learner 7 is not reformulating, she is just questioning the statement to use "have" and offers "has", being present in the collaboration and discussion. Because the main difference between these two categories is the dialogue around the suggestions made by the learners, and when learner 7 questions the use of "has" it arguably makes it a discussion or conversation. In this extract learner 7 questions the use of "has" after Kari and is therefore questioning the subject-verb agreement. Learner 6 continues using "has" and that reinforces learner 7 that it is the correct verb form to use.

Extract 15.

837. L6: Kari has also
838. L7: has?
839. L6: has also

In this extract, one can see that the learners are using their knowledge of the Norwegian syntactic system when translating. The issue they are facing is whether to position the possessive pronoun "my" before or after the noun "aunt". This extract is an example where interference from the first language can be a challenge because the learners are used to the Norwegian syntax system and apply it in the English context as well. According to the Norwegian syntax system, the learners can write both "Tanten min" with the determiner after the noun as well as "Min tante" with the determiner first. As we can see from the LRE, the learners end up with the correct English syntax with the possessive adjective(or determiner) "My" in front of the noun "aunt".

Extract 16.

68. L2: Vi sier "Hei Beatrice", nei det står allerede, så skrivar vi "ant my" eller "my ant"

    (We say "Hi Beatrice", no that's already there, so we`ll write "ant my" or "my ant"?)

69. L1: anty, anty

70. L2: My ant skrivar vi

    (We`ll write "my ant")

71. L3: MY

72. L3: Nei, "anty may", koffor sier du.. "my" oja

    (No, "anty my", why do you say… "my" oh ok)

73. L1: "My ant", anty,

In the following extract, the group is facing a similar issue as the previous group with the syntax issue of the noun phrase "my aunt". Here the learners have tried adding the Norwegian suffix -en to the English word "aunt" as in "aunten". This is based on the Norwegian way of expressing definite form where one adds suffixes to indicate that one is talking about something/someone specific. Here we can see that the learners have added the suffix "-en" to make the definite form "aunten" or in Norwegian "tanten". It is also interesting to note that learner 17 has chosen to use the masculine definite suffix based on that "tante" in Norwegian (bokmål) has the grammatical gender masculine even though nouns in English do not have grammatical genders.

Extract 17.

347. L17: "aunten min"

348. L15: du må jo skrive "my aunt"

    (you have to write "my aunt")

349. L17: "my aunt"

Spelling

In this extract, the learners are spelling the word "she". Learner 5 mentions the word and learner 7 spells "she" with no other comments other than J accepting the spelling.

Extract 18.

756. L6: "Kari said she is going to"

757. L5: Kari said she

758. L7: s-h-e

759. L5: ok, s-h-e

Lexical aspect

In the following extract, the learners are to translate "vinke" which is "wave" in English. Learner 17 suggests translating "vinke" to "wink", but learner 15 corrects her and reformulates the text to "wave" with no further comments from either.

Extract 19.

452. L17: wink, wink, wink

453. L15: wave. Deilig, da er vi ferdig med denne setningen

("wave". Amazing, we are finished with this sentence)

Here the learners are reformulating their choice between "she" and "her" and end up using "she" in the sentence "shes gonna have on".

Extract 20.

788. L6: "shes"

789. L5: "shes", "her". "shes gonna have on"

In this instance learner 2 says "slik" expecting the others in the group to translate it. Given this is a translation task the other group members understand what they are to do and translate the word into "like".

Extract 21.

154. L2: "slik"

155. L3: like

156. L1:like

Here in this extract, learner 2 tries out or hypothesis "glass" as a translation of "briller" (glasses). Learner 4 reformulates the suggestion to "glasses" to portray the intended meaning of a pair of glasses.

Extract 22.

312. L2: glass

313. L4: glasses

In the following extract, one can see one thing that most of the groups have in common which is that they use "gonna" rather than "going". In this extract, we see that the learner reformulates "going" to "gonna", which can be seen as a more spoken informal form of the verb.

Extract 23.

874. L5: it

875. L6: it, it going

876. L5: it's gonna

877. L5: be

878. L6: be

879. L5: it's gonna be e-a-s-y

Grammatical aspect

In the previous extract 23, there is also a reformulation from "it" to "its" in the clause "its gonna" without any further comments. This shows a metalinguistic awareness where the learner notices that they are missing the verb "is" to express the future with the grammatical phrase "going to".

In the following text reformulation, the learners are facing a subject-verb agreement issue. They correct themselves without explicitly commenting on what they are correcting. We can see in the extract that learner 7 starts by saying "she are" and learner 5 continues by reformulating it to "she is …" without any further comments.

Extract 24.

807. L7: she are...

808. L5: she is pretty high eller large

Here, in the following extract, learner L reformulates learner 2`s suggestion of "she coming" to "she`s coming". When doing this, learner 1 adds the verb "is" in the contraction "she`s".

Extract 25.

196. L2: Ok, Kari say she coming

197. L1: she's coming

4.3 Cross-linguistic awareness:

This category consists of the instances where the learners are making an explicit comparison between English and Norwegian.

 Spelling

In this extract, there is a disagreement on whether to spell "coming" with C or K. This may be because it is pronounced with a /k/ in "coming". The learners are discussing whether to write "coming" or "koming" and come to the agreement that the verb is spelt with K in Norwegian but C in English. They are comparing the two languages using their cross-linguistic knowledge.

Extract 26.

198. L2: hvordan skriver man "coming"?

    (how does one spell "coming"?)

199. L3:Ko-m-i-n-g

200. L2: ekke det C?

    (isn't it C?)

201. L2: C-

202. L3: ikke C- det e K-

    (not C- it is K-)

203. L1: nei det e på norsk

    (no that's in Norwegian)

204. L2: C

205. L3: ååå hehe sorry

    (ahaaa hehe sorry)

207. L2: c-o-m-i-n-g

Here in this extract, learner 13 is questioning how learner 14 has spelt "hair". Learner 14 uses her creativity and knowledge of graphemes and phonemes to spell the word "hair" by recognising the known Norwegian word "hai" in the target word "hair". Learner 14 shows cross-linguistic awareness by using the spelling of the known word "hai" (shark) in Norwegian to demonstrate how "hair" is spelt in English.

Extract 27.

603. L13: har du skrevet "hai"?

    (have you written "hai"?)

604. L14: hai?

605. L12: hair

606. L14: det skrives sånn "hair" skrives på engelsk, det er "hai" bare med en -r på slutten

    (that is how "hair" is written in English, it is "hai"(shark) with an -r at the end)

In the following extract, learner 12 is using their cross-linguistic knowledge of pronunciation when working out how to spell the translated words to help the group spell the words. Using the Norwegian phonology system and pronouncing the words using a Norwegian pronunciation to make the spelling clear for the writer in the group.

Extract 28.

659. L11: hvordan skriver man "høy" igjen?

    (how does one spell "tall" again?)

660. L12: "tall" som "tall"på norsk

    ("Tall" as "number" in Norwegian)

661. L11: ja, bare skriv tall på norsk

    (yes, just write "number" (tall) in Norwegian)

707. L12: Kari have, "have" (pronounced with a Norwegian accent)

708. L12: also, "also" (pronounced with a Norwegian accent)

709. L12: Made, "made" (pronounced with a Norwegian accent)

710. L13: m-a-d-e

711. L11: ja eg e ferdig, "made"

      (yes I am finished with "made")

712. L12: made a sign "sign" (pronounced with a Norwegian accent) where it says

714. L12: it said "sAid" (pronounced with a Norwegian accent)

Lexical aspect

In the previous extract 8, we can also see that some of the learners used their cross-linguistic knowledge of loanwords when discussing how to translate "bluse". The learners show that they know some words in English and Norwegian are the same when it comes to spelling and or meaning, but different in pronunciation. The learners try the word out with an English accent to check if it sounds like an English word they recognise. This cross-linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge is used by several of the learners in the different groups such as "tænt" as in "tante" which is "aunt", and "Cary" instead of "Kari".

In the following extract, the learners are commenting on another group that refers to Kari as Cary. Learner 11 makes it clear that the name Kari is the same in English. Learner 12 points out that "carry" is to lift and not a name.

<u>Extract 29.</u>

511. L11: *hører på annen gruppe* de snakkar om "Cary", de tror Kari e Cary. Kari på engelsk er Kari

      (*listening to another group* they are talking about "Cary", they think that "Kari" is

      "Cary". "Kari" in English is "Kari".)

512. L12:"Carry" e løfte, liksom bære noe

      ("Carry" is to lift, like to lift something)

The learners in this extract are correct when it comes to loanwords and see the connection between English and Norwegian through the loanword "jeans". The learners are stating that Norway has "stolen a lot of words from English", or in other words has quite a few loanwords from English, and other languages.

<u>Extract 30.</u>

590. L11: "jeans" kan du skrive

      (you can write "jeans")

591. L11: det kan du skrive rett fram på norsk

   (its written the same way as in Norwegian)

592. L12: ja "jeans" e fra engelsk

   (yes, "jeans" is from English)

593. L11: "jeans" har Norge stjålet fra engelsk

   (Norway has stolen "jeans" from English)

594. L13: de har stjelt "please" også, Norge har stjålet veldig mange ord fra engelsk så

   (They have stolen "please" as well, Norway has stolen a lot of words from English)

The exchange in the following extract shows how the group discusses a pronunciation issue, even though at first it may seem like the learners are working with a lexical issue concerning loanwords. The learners are noticing that they can use the adjective "blond" to describe a light hair colour in both Norwegian and English. Learner 1 illustrates this by pronouncing "blond" with both a Norwegian and English accent.

Extract 31.

133. L2: "lyst", kordan skriver eg "lyst"?

   ("blond", how do I write "blond"?)

134. L1: "lyst"? "Blond"

   ("blond"/"light"? "Blond")

135. L2: E det ikke sånn det e på norsk?

   (isn't that how it is in Norwegian?)

136. L1: no "blond" (with English accent)

143. L1: "blond" (with English accent) e lyst

   ("blond" is light)

Grammatical aspect

In the following discussion, learner 2 needs help from the group to translate the infinitive marker "å" to English. In the lack of more specific wording, learner 2, asks how to translate "å" which the other learners are very persistent to inform her that they do not have that letter in the English alphabet. Learner 2, who is aware of this, struggles to get her question across, which is finding out what the infinitive marker in English is so that they can translate the verb phrase. When focusing on dividing the verb phrase the learners struggle to understand how they can translate the phrase as a whole and get the meaning across.

<u>Extract 32.</u>

208. L1: kommer til å ha...

    (is going to have…"

209. L3: to, t-o

210. L2: Hvordan skriver man "å" på engelsk?

    (how does one write "å" (to) in English?)

211. L1: de har ikke "å" på engelsk

    (they do not have "å" in English)

212. L2: ja men sånn "å gjøre noe" ka e "å lage noe"?

    (yes but like "to do something" what is "to make something"?)

213. L1: Det finnes ikke "å" på engelsk

    (There is no "å" in English)

214. L2: Ja men "å lage noe"

    (Yes but "to make something")

219. L2:Det står her: Kari sa hun kommer til "å ha" på seg…

    (It says here: Kari said she is going "to wear"…)

220. L3: "red blus", "blue jeans"

221. L2: "å ha på seg"

    ("to have on" (directly translates)/ "to wear")

222. L3: "å" en

223. L2: ok, så det vil si "on"? Eller?

    (ok, so "on"? or?

224. L3: en

4.4 Collaboration

Collaboration is the phenomenon investigated and has some themes that emerged in the different compositions of groups. The category of collaboration is based on the fact that the learners were given a collaborative task and it is, therefore, interesting to analyse their collaboration. To what extent the learners' collaboration is successful will also affect the successfulness of the task which eventually affects the amount and quality of the learners` metatalk. In this category, the collaborative aspects of the interaction between the group members will be presented and analysed.

One dominant member

The majority of the groups seem to trust one member of the group more than the rest of the group members based on their background knowledge. From the recording we found that one of the learners has a father from an English-speaking country, some of the learners are gamers who use English through gaming and some are just known as "good students".

In this extract, we can see a tension in the group composition between learner L3 and learner L1. Learner L1 states that learner L3 is wrong and that they should not listen to her. Learner L3 expresses that even though she is not from England she does know some English, which can be seen in turn 277. This extract illustrates that there is one learner that is more trusted and one that is not trusted which leads to conflicts in the group.

Extract 33.

254. L1: "wearing", kan du herme etter det eg har skrevet, hun tar berre feil

     ("wearing", can you copy what I have written, she is incorrect)

255. L3: det e ikke det

     (that is not it)

256. L2: ja eg gjør jo det

     (yes that is what I am doing)

257. L3: det e feil

     (that is wrong)

258. L1: herm etter det *shows her own translated text*

     (copy this)

262. L3: det e "wear on"

     (it is "wear on")

263. L1: det e "wearing"

     (it is "wearing")

264. L1: pappa sier: "do you want to wear this?"

     (dad says:)

276. L1: "wearing", nei det betyr ikke det, du e ikke fra England

     ("wearing", no that's not what it means, you are not from England)

277. L3: nei eg e ikke fra england, men eg vet noen engelske ord

     (no I am not from England but I know some English words)

Here in this extract, there is one member of the group that is trusted more than the other members based on her known background as a gamer of a certain game. As we can see from the extract the trusted learner does not necessarily have the correct answer.

Extract 34.

865. L6: kordan skriver man "yellow"?

    (how does one spell "yellow"?)

866. L5: y..nei eller i-e-l-l-o-w

    (y.. No or i-e-l-l-o-w)

867. L5: eg spiller masse *a game* og der må eg liksom kunne fargene på laget

    (I game a lot of "a game" where I have to know the colours)

868. L6: ja eg vet det… and "green"?

    (yes I know that… and "green"?

869. L5: g-r-e-a-n

Here in this extract, the learners are using a voting method to find what vocabulary to use in their text. But there is still one member who starts and "closes" the voting, deciding what to write.

Extract 35.

364. L15: jeg stemmer for "short"

    (I vote for "short")

365. L17: samme her

    (me too)

366. L16: samme her

    (me too)

367. L15: "My aunt Kari has short hair"

In the following extract, the learners are focused on pointing out who is wrong or right in the given situation of spelling "believe". The learner who is wrong in this instance is the learner who has been predominantly right and leading the discussions throughout the task.

Extract 36.

668. L11: nei b-l nei b-liv e det jo egentlig, det er ikke noe -e bak -l det er det ikke. Det var du som tok feil no, ikke sant?

    (no b-l no it is actually b-liv, there is no -e after -l. You were wrong now, right?)

667. L14: ja eg hørte en stemme som sa b-l-e

(yes I heard a voice that said b-l-e)

668. L11: ja det høte jeg også

(yes I also heard that)

Underestimating a member

In this extract, the group is underestimating one of the group members. The learners L12 and L11 over-direct or over-correct learner L14 which she does not appreciate. This over-correction leads to the learner expressing that she actually "knows a lot of English words" in turn 628, and this ultimately makes her feel underestimated or unappreciated.

Extract 37.

625. L12 and L11: i-s

626. L14: så "is"? Kunne dere ikke bare sagt at eg skrev "is"

(so, "is"? Couldn't you just have said that I was to write "is"?

627. L11: det e sant

(that right)

628. L14: eg kan mange engelsk ord

(I know a lot of English words)

629. L11: det kan eg se

(I can see that)

4.5 Overview of significant findings

The findings suggest that young learners, as expected, tend to not use metalinguistic terminology when verbalising their metalinguistic awareness. Further, from the findings, we get the impression that there were a considerable number of turns with metalinguistic comments which shows that the learners are able to reflect on their language use. Through looking at the LRE one can also see that the learner predominantly focused on the language aspect Spelling, then lexical aspects and lastly grammatical aspects. A significant issue the learners focused on was lexical errors due to pronunciation, such as "ant" and "aunt". The findings also suggest that the participants actively use their cross-linguistic knowledge when translating and when it comes to all three aspects looked at in this study. When analysing the transcripts it is clear that there is a difference in the collaboration of the different groups. The composition of the groups affects the learners' collaboration and essentially the quality and

quantity of the metatalk. As expected some groups were better at communicating and collaborating than others.

5. Discussion

In the following chapter, the findings will be discussed in light of the relevant theory. Additionally, implications for the EFL classroom will be presented. The aim of this study was to find how fourth graders can verbalise their metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative task, what aspect of language the learners focused on and what effects collaboration or group work has on this verbalisation. Thus, through the study the aim was to shed light on the following research questions:

> *How do fourth grade learners verbalise metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative task?*
> - *What aspects of language are the learners focusing on?*
> *How can the collaborative component affect the outcome?*

5.1 How do fourth grade learners verbalise metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative task?

Metalinguistic terminology

The learners verbalise metalinguistic awareness through metatalk, and without metalinguistic terminology. Through looking at the transcripts and the findings we get the same understanding as Swain (1998), Camps et al. (2000) and Gutiérrez (2008) that the learners tend to not use metalinguistic terminology in their metatalk to express their metalinguistic awareness (1998, p. 68). With the background of reading Swain`s, Camps et al.`s and Gutièrrez` articles, this lack of terminology was expected and especially since the learners are as young as fourth graders, compared to the older participants in the mentioned studies. This lack of metalinguistic terminology does however not impact the metalinguistic awareness other than how the metatalk is expressed (Myhill, 2011). From this, we as teachers and researchers cannot take the lack of metalinguistic terminology to indicate a lack of

metalinguistic awareness. This does, however, not mean that one should not present terminology to the learners because using terms can be helpful to express the issues they need help with. Such as in extract 32 where the learner is struggling to express what she is really asking. She is not asking the other group members how to write the letter "å" in English, she is asking what the infinitive marker in English is. The discussion would have been more efficient and clear if she were to use terminology to specify her question. Swain explored modelling metatalk with and without metalinguistic terminology and found that it did not affect the learners' use of terminology but it did lead to them focusing on their own language use to a greater extent (Swain, 1998, p.77).

Metalinguistic comments and Text reformulations

There were a considerable number of turns with metalinguistic comments. This shows that learners of this age are not only able to use the language but also to explicitly reflect on the language when given a task that encourages that kind of reflection. Gutièrrez (2008) findings suggest that text reformulations were expected to be more common among young EFL learners due to not having to give a reason or having a discussion.

Firstly, a factor that may affect the difference between the outcomes between Gutiérrez and this study is the categorisation. Gutiérrez differentiated between implicit (speech action and text reformulation) and explicit metalinguistic activity (explicit metalinguistic comments). He does also have three different engagement levels in his category of Text Reformulations, "simple reformulations", "reformulations with justifications" and "reformulations with rejection". In this study, the category used was based on the "simple reformulations" category which refers to the changes the learners make without commenting on the reformulation. Gutiérrez` category of Text Reformulations, on the other hand, does include for example justifications which, in this study, have been categorised as metalinguistic comments. However, "most turns containing reformulations with implicit metalinguistic activity in this study were classified as simple reformulations" (Gutiérrez, 2008, p. 528). Which reinforces the conclusion that his participants used more instances of the category of text reformulations compared to metalinguistic comments. One would assume that this would be the case for younger learners as well, and maybe being more common, but what is interesting is that the fourth graders in this study used both metalinguistic comments and text reformulations.

Secondly, the use of metalinguistic comments may be impacted by the way we as instructors instructed them to work together and share their ideas. This may have led them to discuss, using more metalinguistic comments, than they would without the instructions. Essentially, creating an environment where they were to share their thoughts and listen to each other may have naturally led to them giving reason to different language use and thus verbalising their metalinguistic awareness through metalinguistic comments. However, Gutiérrez` participants are older and one may assume they are more used to collaborating and know what is expected when collaborating without specific instruction. This arguably creates the same environment of sharing their thoughts as the fourth graders in this study.

Nevertheless, during specific focus or engagement on language and the task, whether it is through metalinguistic comments or text reformulations, the learners shared their collected language knowledge. When reflecting and focusing on language use they "pooled their linguistic resources and provided each other with useful knowledge about the meaning of words, grammatical rules and conversations" (Storch, 2008, p. 110). This leads to, according to Storch, "a deeper level of understanding". Storch`s study "investigated the learners` level of engagement with linguistic choices, and whether the level of engagement affected subsequent language development". What she meant by "elaborated engagement" were instances where learners deliberated and discussed language items, which can be compared to the category "turns with metalinguistic comments". The other category she used was "limited engagement" which was described as instances where a learner makes a suggestion that the others repeated, acknowledged or did not make any further comment. This can be compared to the chosen category in this study "text reformulations". Still, when learners "engage with linguistic choices, whether at an elaborate or limited level, this led to learning/consolidation of the structures focused on (…) (Storch, 2008, p. 110). This reinforces the importance of both metalinguistic comments and text reformulations because both are ways of expressing metalinguistic awareness and developing language knowledge.

Furthermore, according to Storch, this elaborate level of engagement, metalinguistic comments, leads to more learning compared to limited engagement. An implication one can take from this is the importance of continuing to make the learners aware of their language use. Myhill, Jones and Wilson draw attention to the value of focusing on metalinguistic talk in the classroom, making the learners aware of their choices of language and "the various effects those choices have within the text" (Myhill et al., 2016, p. 42). Such as discussing the difference between using the adjective "large" compared to "tall" when describing a person,

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and what difference it makes. Or making the learners aware of why there should be an -s at the end of dog when there is more than one dog. By focusing on language use in the classroom the learners may develop their metalinguistic awareness and cater for further metalinguistic discussions which are helpful when developing their overall language knowledge.

5.2 What aspects are the learners focusing on?

From the findings and the transcripts one can see that the learners predominantly focused on the aspect of spelling, then lexical aspects and lastly grammatical aspects. According to Bitchener and Storch (2016), previous research suggests that when learners are given a written component to an oral task they tend to focus on grammatical forms (in Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 297). What is meant by grammatical forms here are among others the language aspects looked at in this project. From the findings, one can recognise this focus on grammatical forms such as spelling, lexical and grammatical aspects. The learners show interest in using the correct language to express the intended meaning.

Spelling

The learners predominantly focused on spelling. This was done using different methods, but the most common method was through asking each other how to spell a given word. Every instance of this direct question is not included in the findings, but the different methods the learners used when focusing on spelling are presented. The most common method was spelling the words and telling each other how to write the words in English as we can see examples of in extract 3 where they spell the word "short" and 4 where they spell "easy". Some learners specifically used their knowledge of pronunciation when spelling, for example, "easy" in extract 4 where they try out spelling the word as i-s-i and e-c. Others used their cross-linguistic awareness and knowledge of pronunciation when working out how to spell for example "tall" in extract 28. where the learner pronounces the word in Norwegian as "tall", ("tall" as in "number" in Norwegian).

Given this is a translation task, cross-linguistic awareness is a natural part of the task, thus being aware of similarities and differences between known languages (Angelovska & Hahn, 2014, p. 187). Several of the learners are using a technique of making the spelling of certain

words more efficient and presumably easier by using their knowledge of the connection between phonemes and graphemes in their known languages. This is also interesting because the curriculum asks that connections between languages to be drawn and here the learners are doing it independently. One way the learners verbalised their metalinguistic awareness was using their knowledge of pronunciation in both Norwegian and English. This technique of using one's knowledge of Norwegian and English phonology is dependent on positive phonological transfers which Figueredo found worked in his study (Figueredo, 2006). These positive phonological transfers can however only be done when the L1 pronunciations of the phonemes are consistent with the English phonemes. This means that this technique cannot be used given every word because there are phonemes in English that do not exist in Norwegian and vice versa. Such as th- sound in "with" in extract 5. It would be hard to use this technique when that phoneme does not exist in Norwegian phonology. However, the words the learners in these groups spelt using this technique are words that have corresponding phonemes in Norwegian and English. Words they used this method and knowledge of phonology for spelling were for example "have", "sign", "also" and "made".

The fact that the learners focused predominantly on spelling supports the view Ur presented that grammar-translation and other teaching theories focusing on accuracy are still dominant in the EFL classroom. This does however not correlate with the Norwegian English Curriculum where there is a focus on communication, this will be discussed further.

Lexical aspect

The learners mostly discussed spelling aspects and secondly lexical aspects. These discussions consisted of discussing specific vocabulary choices, essentially choosing which forms that suit the context best. Such as discussing the difference between using "large" or "high" to describe the aunt in extract 7. However, the most focused part of lexical aspects was errors due to pronunciation, which will be discussed further.

Lexical errors due to pronunciation

Looking at the findings we can see that one of the aspects every group discussed was the lexical errors due to mispronunciation. Every group struggled with at least one of the

mentioned word pairs, "aunt" and "ant", "hair" and "here", "and" and "end". The discussions made it clear that the learners were aware that the form or essentially the spelling of the word made a difference. One of the learners even said: "yes I know, because many words in England are two different words". This utterance shows a metalinguistic awareness and the awareness that there are words in English that look and sound the same but do not portray the same meaning, also called homophones. These instances are however not homophones, except for "aunt" and "ant", but due to the learners' mispronunciation, they may arguably act like homophones.

These lexical errors may at first seem like spelling issues due to the focus on how, as the learners say, "write the word". However, it is arguably a Lexical issue, due to the consideration of the connection between the form and the meaning of the words. The learners are well aware that the spelling of the word changes the meaning of the word, hence not just a focus on the literal spelling. Just focusing on the spelling would be such as asking the group how to spell "hair" without any discussion of what would happen to the meaning if they wrote "here". Homophones are, as mentioned, words that sound the same but are different when it comes to spelling or meaning. This indicates that pronunciation has a distinct role in this process and that it is hard to hear the difference and therefore also hard to find the correct grapheme to the correct phoneme (Khalil, 2012, p. 529). Extensive focus on spelling in teaching may lead to extensive focus on spelling in their group work, as discussed in the previous section on spelling. However, the focus on pronunciation/spelling in cases like these would be beneficial since it affects lexical choices, and therefore the communicated meaning.

It is important to help the learners develop and strengthen this awareness of lexical issues due to pronunciation. This can be done through for example discussing the fact that words have different meanings and connotations. Making the learners aware of the lexically different meanings and that some spelling forms of words have different meanings compared to a common spelling error such as "grean". It is important to discuss the forms of words and when they are appropriate to use and not. Having discussions about for example homophones, or lexical issues due to pronunciation may arguably strengthen their metalinguistic awareness. This does apply generally when it comes to other lexical aspects as well as homophones.

Grammatical aspect

From the transcripts, one can see that the learners are discussing grammatical issues the least. Still, the learners did discuss some issues such as word order, contractions and subject-verb agreement.

Some grammatical aspects, such as word order, may be already well acquired at this stage that they remain unproblematic and pass unnoticed. What we can see is that the learners do notice and discuss aspects where there is a discrepancy between Norwegian and English. The learners did for example reflect on syntactic aspects when translating using their cross-linguistic knowledge when approaching an issue of discrepancy between Norwegian and English. One example is the challenge with the noun phrase "tanten min" or "my aunt" where their knowledge of the Norwegian syntactic system led them to question whether to write "aunt my" or "my aunt".

The learners do also focus on contractions such as in extract 23 where the learner reformulates "she coming" to "she`s coming". When doing this the learner shows an awareness that the verb in the phrase is missing. She then adds the verb "is" in the contraction "she`s". However, one cannot assume that the learner is adding the 's because she is aware that a verb is missing, it may just be because she has heard it so many times that is automatic. On the other hand, the focus on this grammatical aspect may also show an awareness of sentence structure which is important in language learning. Contractions is often avoided the first years of English teaching in Norway and all learners may not be used to it and know what it means. The learners see and hear these contractions everyday maybe not in school, the first years, but everywhere else such as the internet, movies or books. It is therefore important to make the learners aware of what the contractions means and what words that are part of the contraction.

Several groups focused on subject-verb agreement. In extract 14 the learner questions why the group uses "Kari have" instead of "Kari has" and in extract 24 the learners reformulate the use of "she are" to "she is". Most of the groups were persistent to correct these instances but do these instances affect the conveying of meaning and communication, this will be discussed further in the next section.

Communication and error-correction

The main goal of language learning in the Norwegian curriculum is communication or in other words, getting the meaning across. Misspelling a word or using incorrect grammar

rarely leads to fundamental misunderstandings (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2021, p. 21). It is therefore interesting to compare the learners' focus on Lexical aspects, Spelling and Grammatical aspects.

Spelling a word incorrectly does not necessarily affect the intended overall meaning. With an exception of the instances of the lexical errors due to pronunciation where the spelling does affect the intended meaning. Utterances must be precise to be understood, but this does not mean that the utterances must be accurate or "correct" to get the meaning across (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2021, p. 21). One can understand the meaning of a word from the contexts such as with the issue the learners faced with the spelling of the adjectives "green" and "yellow". From the context of describing what colours the letters on a sign were, spelling the colours "grean" and "iellow" does not interfere with the overall meaning of the words. The reader does understand what colours the learners are referring to even though the adjectives are spelt incorrectly. Thus, the spelling of a word is arguably more of a superficial part of language use. The process of spelling is the connection between phonemes and graphemes and does arguably not directly relate to the meaning of the word.

Furthermore, there is some debate about whether teachers should worry about grammatical accuracy when it does not interfere with conveying the intended message (Ur, 2012, p. 77). Some parts of grammar are less important when it comes to getting the meaning across and some are more important. However, several of the groups discussed issues regarding subject-verb agreement such as in these examples from the findings "she are" changing it to "she is" or questioning the use of "have" instead of "has" in the phrase "she have". One can argue that these instances of subject-verb agreement do not affect the conveying of meaning, yet it does affect the smoothness of the communication.

It is then interesting to compare these aspects to Lexical aspects when it comes to communication and meaning-making. Lexical aspects are the instances where the learners are for example deciding what vocabulary to use to convey the intended meaning. Such as in the extract where the learners are discussing whether to use "large" or "high" to describe the aunt as tall. There is a significant difference in the meaning of the adjectives, and it changes the overall meaning of the intended description, making it harder to find the aunt based on the given description.

As mentioned, the language teaching approaches that are widely used in the EFL classroom

today are Grammar-translation, audio-lingualism and PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) (Ur, 2012, p. 7). These approaches have in common that the main aim is accuracy rather than fluency. This does not correlate with the belief that "getting the message across is more important" than absolute accuracy (Ur, 2012, p. 1). Nor does it correlate with the English curriculum where communication is one of the three core elements in the English subject. And as previously stated, the core elements are "the most important parts of the curriculum as well as what the learners need to learn to be able to master the subject" (my translation) (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017). Under the core element of Communication, it says "Communication refers to creating meaning through language and the ability to use the language in both formal and informal settings. The pupils shall employ suitable strategies to communicate, both orally and in writing (...)" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). Again, stating communication and meaning-making as the goal of language learning. Through this understanding, we can also look at how the learners verbalise their metalinguistic awareness, and that it does not matter how, whether it is through text reformulations or metalinguistic comments, as long as they get the meaning across.

When it comes to these aspects of language, lexical, spelling and grammar, and the fact that the learners focus on them, it is interesting to think about what we as teachers should focus on in the classroom. When it comes to for example error correction there are some errors or issues with language that may be more urgent to correct than others. Grammatical and spelling errors are important to work on, but do we have to correct every mistake? Every error does not affect the process of getting the meaning across and conveying of meaning is one of the aims in the Norwegian English curriculum. An example is instances where the learners miss the third person -s suffix in the present simple, saying "he like" instead of "he likes". This example is grammatically incorrect, but it does not affect the meaning of the sentence. What is focused on in the classroom is up to the teacher and their priorities as well as the curriculum. Additionally, error correction will be different depending on the situation and the task at hand. There is for example a difference between written and oral tasks as well as considering what the aim of the given task is whether it is a spelling test, communicating a message through writing an invitation and so on.

Furthermore, one can look at this focus on accuracy as an indication of what is focused on in the classroom. If the presentation and practice focuses a lot on spelling then it is not surprising if this focus is reflected in the interaction. From the transcripts, one can see that learners are able to focus on lexical issues related to word choices. This ability is present even if they are

young and have limited knowledge of English. Such as the learners in extract 7 where they discuss whether they should use "large" or "high" showing metalinguistic awareness and thus an ability to reflect on lexical aspects.

An implication taken from this can be the mindset that communicatory skills do not necessarily reflect accurate grammar or spelling. The focus of the English Curriculum in Norway is on communication and as long as the learners can communicate the intended message, accuracy comes secondary. Also, when giving feedback to learners there is a belief that one should not comment on every error or mistake. This gives the teacher the opportunity to consciously select what to comment on and focus on based on the individual student and their knowledge, also due to their "freedom of method" in Norway. Through this the teacher can choose to focus on different aspects of language, and introduce the learners to reflect on their language use and what the different aspects bring to the context. Making the learners aware of their choices of vocabulary such as lexical aspects where they can discuss what meaning the different vocabulary portray and through this forward this metalinguistic awareness and discussion.

5.3 Cross-linguistic awareness

From the findings, one can see that there are several instances of the learners comparing their known languages, Norwegian and English, and using that knowledge to their advantage. Cross-linguistic awareness is defined as "the learner's tacit and explicit awareness of the links between their language systems" (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009, p. 127). The focus on the connection between known languages and the ability to speak several languages is promoted in the Norwegian English curriculum. Under the core elements, it is stated that "[l]anguage learning refers to identifying connections between English and other languages the pupils know, and to understanding how English is structured" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). It is also stated that "[t]he pupils shall experience that the ability to speak several languages is an asset at school and in society in general" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019).

One can see from the findings that the learners show cross-linguistic awareness when spelling by comparing for example the use of C- and K- in English and Norwegian. This discussion is from extract 26 where the learners are discussing whether to write "coming" or "koming" and come to the agreement that the verb is spelt with K in Norwegian but C in English. The

learners are making connections between English and Norwegian by stating that k- is used in Norwegian and c- is used in English. This observation shows an awareness of the two languages and the connection between the languages or rather the difference. Even though the observation is applicable here, it is important to make the learners aware that this is not a rule that can be generalised because it will not always apply.

Further, the learners draw on their knowledge of the different languages present in this classroom when discussing lexical aspects such as loanwords. The learners discussed how to translate the word "bluse" or /blus/ using their cross-linguistic knowledge of loanwords and trying out an English pronunciation of the Norwegian word. Another instance where the theme of loanwords is present is in extract 30 where the learners state that Norway has "(…)stolen "please" as well, Norway has stolen a lot of words from English" (from extract 30). The knowledge of loanwords shows the existence and importance of the multilingual classroom and world. The ability to speak several languages or know other languages is, therefore, an advantage and should be portrayed as an advantage according to the curriculum. This can, again, be looked at in connection to cross-linguistic awareness and the ability to reflect on connections between those languages.

Cross-linguistic awareness is also present when the learners are discussing the word order in the noun phrase "my aunt" in extract 17. Here is an example where the learners' development of cross-linguistic awareness can be challenging. The learners get confused about how to express the definite form in English. They try expressing the definite form based on their knowledge from doing it in Norwegian. The learners try to add the suffix -en to "aunt" as in "aunten" or "tanten" in Norwegian. The group do end up with "my aunt", but the msuggestion is interesting. This instance shows that the development of these different awarenesses, both cross-linguistic and metalinguistic, are skills the learners have to develop.

When it comes to implications for the classroom it is important to create a safe learning environment where the learners can try out their different languages and make connections. Under Formative Assessment in the English curriculum, it is stated that "the pupils shall have the opportunity to experience that experimenting on their own and with others is part of learning a new language" (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). There must be room for playing around with different languages and showing the learners the usefulness of this and helping them see connections. Making mistakes and errors are common and expected among learners and especially EFL learners in the EFL classroom. According to Chomsky (1998), errors are

unavoidable and proof that learning is taking place (in David et al., 2010, p. 243). In the second language or foreign language classroom, the learners tend to already be fluent in at least one language which may lead to interference between the known languages. In the competence aims, it says that the learners are to "discover and play with words and expressions that are common to both English and other languages with which the pupil is familiar"(Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2019). This promotes the importance of a good learning environment where the learners can explore and play around with language.

5.4 The effect of collaboration

Collaboration is justified, as mentioned before, by sociocultural theory as well as the view that language skills develop through interaction, but is all interaction and collaboration positive? Swain argues that metatalk may stimulate the learners' language learning processes because it may lead to the learners reflecting on the language use and their output (1998, p. 69). One way of encouraging metatalk is through group work or working in pairs that require reflection on language or a jointly written output, such as a translation task (Storch, 2008, p. 96)**.** To specify, without the collaboration component of the task it would be more difficult to access the learners' metatalk and therefore their metalinguistic awareness, this portrays the importance of successful collaboration and interaction to access their metatalk.

There is empirical evidence that illustrates the fact that L2 learners do act to provide scaffolding to peers during interaction in collaborative activities (Watanabe & Swain, 2007). From analysing the transcripts there are compositions of groups that are more successful than others when it comes to collaboration, as well as showing respect and listening to each other. There are also numerous examples where the learners together manage to come up with solutions which individual pupils, at least certainly some, would not be able to do on their own.

From the transcripts, one can see that most of the groups have one or two members that dominate the discussions. Most of the groups do also have at least one member that is looked at as the more knowledgeable student or an "expert" and is the one to be trusted when it comes to solving the task. From the findings one can see that this is not always beneficial because the "expert" may not always have the correct answers. In extract 34 the "expert" spells "yellow" incorrectly and the other members trust her because she is known for being

good in English and also, she is a gamer. This heterogeneous grouping of a mixture between more knowledgeable and more novice learners is what Vygotsky and the Zone Of Proximal development (ZPD) is referring to as optimal. The interaction between a more knowledgeable person and the person having the more novice role will mediate learning through interaction between the learners (Young & Tedick, 2016, p. 155). This collaboration can be observed in several of the groups such as discussing how to spell a word and discussing the difference between word choices, both in the form of metalinguistic comments and text reformulations. According to Basturkmen and Philp, group members contribute to the collaboration and solving of tasks in different ways, being the more novice member may lead to questioning where the other members must clarify or explain and essentially justify their thinking and understanding emerges for both members (Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 291).

On the contrary, there are, in the words of Young and Tedick, "potential pitfalls during heterogeneous grouping" (2016, p. 155). From the findings, it is visible that in some of the groups the difference in proficiency led to over-correction or over-directing such as in for example extract 37. In extract 37 the group members over-direct the writer of the group on how to spell the verb "is". The learner who is writing for the group knows how to spell the verb and gets arguably frustrated and discouraged by this episode expressing that they could have told her what word she was to write, following with the statement "I know a lot of English words"(from extract 37.) After a few similar episodes, she expresses that she does not want to continue being the writer of the group. This example shows a negative outcome of collaboration in a heterogeneous group. In this extract, the "experts" provide too much support when the support should be responsive to what the more novice learner needs (Storch, 2017, p. 71). According to Stone, successful collaboration and scaffolding require mutual respect between the group members' opinions and suggestions (Stone, 1996, 179). This mutual respect may be difficult or challenging if the gap between the learners` language knowledge is too large or if some of the group members are underestimated. This way of providing too much support is also a theme that is discussed in ZPD that this is unfortunate and does not support the other learner`s development (Storch, 2017, p. 71). It is also worth mentioning that the learners are not used to working in groups, which may also be a reason for this outcome.

An implication one can take from these findings is that the composition of the groups plays,

not surprisingly, a huge role when it comes to how successful the collaboration is, and that it is difficult to find groups that work optimally. There should of course be a goal that every pupil in a class should be able to collaborate but there will most likely always be compositions of groups that are more effective than others. It is important to teach pupils how to collaborate and practice collaboration in the classroom which will lead to more effective collaboration. In several of the groups in this project, there are learners that do contribute considerably less than the others. This, however, does not mean that they do not benefit from the collaboration and discussions around the collaborative task (Dobao, 2016, in Young & Tedick, 2016, p. 148). It is therefore important to not be discouraged when some groups seem like they do not work as optimally as hoped. Because when working together the learners can help each other and they tend to "understand more of what they read and produce better writing"(Philp et al., 2013, p. 173). Additionally, the collaboration caters for communication which is an important part of the EFL classroom where the learners can practise their conversational skills.

Conclusion

We can see that fourth graders` metalinguistic awareness emerges in different ways in the learners' interaction when given a collaborative translation task. The learners express their metalinguistic awareness through both comments and reformulations with a focus on different language aspects. The findings suggest that metalinguistic comments without metalinguistic terminology were the main way of expressing their metalinguistic awareness. When it comes to aspects of language there is a main focus on spelling which may reflect what is focused on in the classroom, referring to accuracy. Collaboration is an essential part of this project and affects the outcome because without successful collaboration one would not be able to access the metatalk. Additionally, the compositions of the groups varied which led to the metatalk varying.

To conclude we as teachers should help and cater for the learners to reflect on language use. We should promote metalinguistic awareness through questioning for example vocabulary use and explaining the connection between form and meaning both for grammatical and lexical aspects. Making learners aware of their errors but also discussing their errors or mistakes and how it affects their intended meaning. This is important in order to develop their language

knowledge and metalinguistic awareness. Such a discussion is something that could be done after the task session if the task were to be implemented in the classroom. Making the learners discuss language use by reflecting on their metalinguistic comments and text reformulations is positive when developing their metalinguistic awareness. Next, as we can see from the findings having a collaborative component may help the learners reflect and get a feeling of mastery because they can do more of the task than they could have individually. Finally, it is important to make the learners aware of their language choices by implementing playing around with different languages and language choices in the classroom.

Further research

For further research which would be interesting is to continue this exploratory research and make it a larger scale research and be able to use more quantitative methods to gain more generalisable data. Another research would be to investigate the effect of offering training in metatalk or collaboration and see whether the quality and quantity of the metatalk would be impacted. It would also be interesting to explore the composition of groups on a larger scale and test both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups and how they would affect the metatalk. Apropos group composition, it would also be interesting to take gender into consideration when dividing into groups. Lastly, comparing the data from this stud to the same study but without the written component and testing this statement by Williams (1999) "[i]n purely oral tasks noticing and resolution of problems relating to lexical forms are more common" (in Basturkmen & Philp, 2018, p. 297).

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Summary

This study investigated the way young learners verbalise their metalinguistic awareness when given a collaborative translation task. Specifically, the study investigates how the participants, fourth graders, can express their metatalk, either through metalinguistic comments or text reformulations. Further, the aspects of language the learners discussed and focused on when translating a given descriptive text from Norwegian to English was also explored. The collaboration and how it may affect the learners' metatalk is explored by analysing how the group members work together. The learners worked in groups of three and four. The data were collected by audio recording the learners' discussions on their translation and language use. Analysis of the discussions showed that, as expected, the learners did not use metalinguistic terminology when discussing the text. Nevertheless, the analysis did show that the young learners are capable of commenting on and reflecting on their language use. The aspect the learners primarily focused on was spelling and then lexical aspects and lastly grammatical aspects. Analysing the group composition also suggests that the composition of the groups does affect the quality and the quantity of the learners' metatalk in regards to the different roles the group members are given by each other.

Sammendrag

Dette studiet utforskar korleis unge elevar verbaliserer metaspråkleg medvit (eng.: metalinguistic awareness) under ei gitt oversettings- og samarbeidsoppgåve. Spesifikt, utforskar ein korleis deltakarane, fjerde klassingar, kan utøve "metatalk", enten gjennom metalingvistiske kommentarar (metalinguistic comments) eller reformulering av tekst (text reformulations). Vidare, utforska ein aspekt ved språk som elevane diskuterte og fokuserte på då dei oversatte den beskrivande teksten frå Norsk til Engelsk. Samarbeid og korleis dette kan påverke elevane sitt "metatalk" vart òg utforska ved å analysere korleis gruppemedlemma samarbeidde. Elevane jobba i grupper på tre og fire. Dataen vart innhenta ved hjelp av lydopptak av elevane sine diskusjonar rundt oversetting og språkbruk. Analysen av diskusjonane viste, som forventa, at elevane ikkje brukte metalingvistisk terminologi då dei diskuterte teksten. Likevel, viser analysen at elevane er kapable til å kommentere og reflektere på bruken av språk. Aspektet elevane fokuserte mest på var rettskriving eller staving deretter leksikale aspekt og til slutt grammatiske aspekt. Ved å analysere gruppesamansetninga viste det seg at dette påverkar kvaliteten og kvantiteten på elevane sitt "metatalk" grunna dei forskjellige rollane gruppemedlemma gav kvarandre.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Translation task

Gruppebokstav:

Hei, Beatrice!

Tanten min, Kari, har kort, lyst hår, slik som deg.

Kari sa hun kommer til å ha på seg blå jeans, en rød bluse og selvsagt de svarte brillene sine.

Hun er ganske høy og kommer nok til å hoppe rundt og vinke.

Kari har også laget et skilt der det står BEATRICE på med store gule og grønne bokstaver.

Det kommer til å være lett å få øye på henne!

Appendix 2. Consent form

Høgskulen
på Vestlandet

MetaLearn

Til foresatte (4. trinn) ved ....skole

Samtykke til deltagelse i forskningsprosjektet *MetaLearn*

.... skole samarbeider med Høgskulen på Vestlandet (HVL) om et prosjekt vi gjennomfører i perioden 2021-2030. Prosjektet er finansiert av Norges forskningsråd (NFR, prosjektnummer 303375). I prosjektet undersøker vi hvordan elever på småtrinnet utvikler og tar i bruk kunnskap om språk fra sitt morsmål eller andre språk de kan eller kjenner til. Dette er et viktig element i de nye læreplanene.

Vi vil se nærmere på hvordan elevene bruker denne kunnskapen når de jobber med oversettelsesoppgaver, individuelt og med medelever. I disse timene vil vi ta lydopptak av gruppediskusjoner og samle inn elevenes oversettelser. Gjennomføringen foregår i timene norsk og engelsk i løpet av høsten/våren 2021. I samråd med lærerne kommer vi til å sørge for at det ikke blir tatt opptak av elever som ikke deltar i prosjektet.

Prosjektet vil bli gjennomført i henhold til gjeldende retningslinjer for å forsikre at personopplysninger og data behandles konfidensielt. På oppdrag fra HVL har NSD (Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS) vurdert at håndteringen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Datamaterialet skal lagres i HVLs sikre forskningsserver og benyttes til forskning og studentprosjekter som er tilknyttet MetaLearn. Alle data vil bli anonymisert når prosjektet avsluttes, som etter planen er i desember 2030. Prosjektet gjennomføres i samarbeid med Universitetet i Agder (UiA). HVL og UiA er ansvarlig for behandlingen av datamaterialet.

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Dere kan når som helst trekke dere fra prosjektet uten å gi noen begrunnelse. Så lenge barnet deres kan identifiseres i datamaterialet har dere rett til å få innsyn i og tilgang til personopplysninger som er samlet inn om barnet, rett til å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene og til å få slettet eller rettet opplysninger som er feil. Dere har også rett til å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av personopplysningene.

Hvis dere har spørsmål om prosjektet eller ønsker å benytte dere av deres rettigheter kan dere kontakte oss ved å sende e-post til prosjektansvarlig, Monika Bader (e-post: Monika.Bader@hvl.no). Dere kan også kontakte HVLs personvernombud, Trine Anniken Larsen (e-post: trine.anikken.larsen@hvl.no, telefon +47 55 58 76 82) eller Norsk senter for forskningsdata (e-post: personverntjenester@nsd.no, telefon: +47 55 58 21 17)

Ved å skrive under godtar du at barnet ditt deltar i MetaLearn -prosjektet.

Med beste hilsen,

MetaLearn-teamet

_____   _____   _____

Barnets navn   Foresattes navn   Sted og dato

                                                      _____

                                                      Foresattes underskrift