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Grammar presentation in English textbooks

A study of textbooks for Norwegian pupils in year 5



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This thesis is worth 30 study points

Summary

Since the national curriculum LK20 recently came into effect, there are many new or revised editions of English textbooks available for the Norwegian market. This master's thesis investigates the presentation of grammar in four of these textbooks, and their accompanying workbooks, targeted toward pupils in year 5. The textbooks are examined through a directed content analysis, in which the grammar tasks are analysed and coded according to a coding framework I have developed. The primary goal of the framework is to categorize the data according to the presentation of grammar rules, at which level the grammar operates, what the activity type is, and which grammatical elements the tasks target. The categories in the framework are developed from relevant theory on grammar didactics, previous research on textbook grammar, and the data material itself. As this study only examines the textbooks and workbooks themselves, there is no information on how the teaching materials are utilized in the classrooms. In total, 368 tasks were identified and analysed according to the framework criteria. The results are presented and discussed according to each main category, in addition to a general overview.

The main findings show that many of the grammar tasks do not provide any explanation of the grammar rule at all. However, the tasks which do provide an explanation tend to use a deductive approach. The grammar is mostly presented at sentence and word level, but approximately one fifth of the tasks present the grammar in a continuous or semi-continuous discourse. The most common activity types are composition, categorization, multiple-choice, and gap-fill activities. There are few tasks focusing on syntax. Verbs are the most frequent grammatical feature, and verb tasks are primarily focused on subject-verb agreement and the simple past. There are also many tasks focusing on the adjective and noun word classes.

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Foreword

Deciding to become a teacher is probably the largest undertaking in my life so far. And this master's thesis has been, without contest, the most demanding part of my education. My journey into academia has been a rollercoaster filled with personal growth, newfound interests into areas I did not even know existed, and enormous stacks of books which I, somehow, have not only read but actually managed to grasp. I am in awe of everyone who has done this before me, and who will do so after me. Writing a master's thesis is a beast of a task which requires focus, dedication, and above all, will-power.

I would like to thank all of my friends and family who have supported me through this process by continuously cheering me on, and always taking the time to listen. It has been a real gift to be able to discuss the process with people who have done it before, and your little nuggets of wisdom have inspired me to push further. I must also mention all of the rock-star librarians who have helped me track down obscure books and assisted me in scanning and copying seemingly endless amounts of information.

A special thanks to my husband who has been my rock and biggest supporter, and who has backed me every step of the way. Your encouraging words have been the fuel which kept me going, and it has been a privilege to be able to share this experience with you. Our daily coffee breaks have been the highlight of the day, and our discussions on grammar and research methods have provided me with new perspectives.

And finally, this would not have been possible without my supervisor Øystein Heggelund, who also shares my passion for grammar. Your guidance through the jungle of academia has kept me on track, and I deeply appreciate both your feedback and your praise. No question has seemed too big or too small, and your attention to detail is inspiring.

1 Introduction

The role of grammar in foreign language instruction is a continuously debated subject. The questions range from how much attention grammar should be given, and how it should be presented to the learner, to whether it even should be taught at all. Both teachers and pupils enter the classroom with different expectations, and their feelings towards grammar vary greatly. While my experiences with grammar have mostly been positive, as I find the systematic attributes of grammar and their ability to help organize languages very appealing, I have frequently heard other learners express a strong dislike towards it. Even now, among fellow language nerds and linguists, I sometimes get the feeling that grammar is seen as a necessary evil rather than a helpful tool, or seen as a rigid and incomprehensible set of rules with little to no relevance for language learning. While I thoroughly enjoyed the grammar course at university and found it fascinating to identify patterns in the English language, many of my peers seemed to view it as a purely mechanical process, and as something which needs to be memorized and then passed on to our future pupils.

These contrasting perceptions of grammar have stuck with me, and spurred me to look deeper into the role of grammar in English didactics. I think such differences of opinion may be due to how grammar is presented to language learners in school. With the introduction of the new national curriculum LK20, and the subsequent update and publication of new learning materials, my interest in grammar seems like a useful perspective from which to investigate these learning materials. The aim of this thesis is to investigate how grammar is presented in the English textbooks commonly used in the Norwegian classrooms. As far as I know and have been able to find, there is no research on the role of grammar in the new English learning materials, and it is my hope that this investigation will help fill this void.

1.1 Research question and limitations

The research question for this thesis is *how is grammar presented in English textbooks in Norway?* As this thesis is part of the teacher training programme for the years 1-7, I am obliged to choose books which are targeted towards learners within this range. Under the assumption that grammar will be more prominent the older the pupils are, I set out to choose books which are targeted towards the older segment. However, since the LK20 curriculum is rather new, there are still some

gaps in the new editions of textbooks from the publishers. I found that choosing books targeted towards pupils in year 5 gave me the widest available selection of textbooks targeted towards older learners. My research into textbook grammar is thus limited to books produced for year 5. The goal is not to evaluate the quality of the grammar instruction in these books, but rather to identify tendencies in the way grammar is presented. Since grammar is concerned with patterns within languages, I wish to utilize this linguistic feature in my research through a quantitative approach investigating how these patterns are introduced to learners in their textbooks. My aim is to explore the way grammar is presented, both in terms of grammatical features covered and didactic methods used. In other words: which grammatical elements are presented, and how?

This is not a hypothesis-driven study; there is no working theory about how the grammar is presented which is to be tested. Instead, it is an inductive investigation with the intent to produce a theory on the presentation of grammar. Since my research question is rather broad, I decided to break it up into two more targeted questions:

1. Which linguistic-didactic theories can be identified through the presentation of grammar in the chosen textbooks?
2. Which grammatical elements are the most prominent?

This means that other features of the grammar presentation (such as layout, ordering, instructional language etc.) will not be covered in this study. Since this is a study of the content in the books themselves, it is not possible to reach any conclusions on actual classroom practice. Teachers and pupils may choose to skip or modify the tasks presented in the textbooks, thus approaching the grammar with a different didactic approach than the textbooks suggest.

1.2 Structure of the thesis

This thesis begins with a brief look at the background for the research question, first by examining the role and presence of grammar in the national curriculum, and then by reviewing previous research on grammar in textbooks. In chapter 2, a theoretical framework will be provided in order to investigate grammar at multiple levels. This chapter will then turn to the didactic traditions of grammar teaching, covering implicit and explicit learning, and how explicit learning can be encouraged by both inductive and deductive methods. This chapter also serves as the foundation for the framework which I have developed for the analysis of the textbooks. The chapter concludes

with a definition of the word *textbook* itself, and a discussion of the dynamics between the textbooks, the learners, the curriculum and the teachers. Chapter 3 begins with an overview of the data material used in this study, and then discusses content analysis as a research method. In the following section I debate whether content analysis is a quantitative or qualitative research method. The next section describes the research design of my study and how content analysis is applied as a scientific method. The last section of the methods chapter is dedicated to the coding process, where I describe the development of my coding framework, provide an explanation for each of the categories and describe how they were applied during the coding process. In chapter 4, the results are presented and discussed. I have dedicated one section to each of the categories, in which I examine the results for patterns of presentation and grammatical focus. The final chapter will provide a conclusion and present my theory on how the grammar is presented in the textbooks.

1.3 Grammar in the new curriculum

In 2020, the new national curriculum LK20 came in to effect. With it came the publication of new books and teaching materials, which have been updated to match the new learning goals and competence aims. A textbook which does not follow the subject curriculum is unlikely to see much use, so it is vital for the publishers that their new teaching materials are written in accordance with the curriculum. As such, it seems safe to say that the curriculum is a highly influential source in the production of teaching materials. In this way, LK20 is both the teachers' instruction on what to teach in the classroom, and the inspiration for the authors behind the new teaching materials. A study concerned with grammar in textbooks should therefore look at the way grammar is presented in the subject curriculum as well.

At first glance, grammar does not seem to be very prevalent in the English subject curriculum (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [Udir], 2020). In fact, the word *grammar* is only mentioned two times, and that is in the competence aims for the upper secondary general studies and vocational education programs. Studying the previous subject curriculums shows a declining trend: *grammar* was explicitly mentioned 3 times in the 2013 version (Udir, 2013), 5 times in the 2010 version (Udir, 2010), and 5 times in the 2006 version (Udir, 2006). But does this mean that grammar is now considered a less important part of language learning, and not something which pupils in primary school should be concerned about? Reading the subject curriculum with grammar

theory in mind shows that this is not the case, as the underlying principles are still there, just worded differently and broken apart into more manageable pieces. Grammar is present throughout the subject curriculum in learning goals about word classes, syntax and conjugations. With an understanding of grammar as an underlying language structure, even more references are noticeable and can be found in expressions such as “English as a system” and “sentence structures”. When pupils are asked to investigate similarities between languages, the comparison of grammatical principles is one of many approaches. Grammar can also be found in goals concerning communication with precision and cohesion. It could even be argued that grammatical knowledge relates to learning strategies, since it is a helpful tool in seeing, understanding, and predicting language patterns. Thus, grammar is present in the subject curriculum in the form of word classes, syntax, conjugations, language structures, precise communication and, possibly, as a language learning strategy.

One of the core elements in the English subject curriculum is *language learning*, which arguably is the core element most closely connected to grammar. The language learning description refers to several grammatical elements and language structures, and suggests that learning English is more than learning how to use the language; it also encompasses learning *about* the language:

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. (Udir, 2020)

In the above paragraph, language awareness is a prominent feature and presented alongside the idea of language as a system. Language awareness can be described as a sensitivity to the patterns of language and knowledge of the target language in combination with explicit metalinguistic knowledge (Angelsen & Hauge, 2020, pp. 322-323). These are all components of grammar as well, therefore making a strong connection between language awareness and grammar knowledge. Although the other core elements *communication* and *working with texts in English* do not mention language awareness explicitly, Angelsen and Hauge (2020) argue that all of the core elements

contain an assumption that language awareness will help strengthen the learners' language skills, which in turn will help them develop strategies to develop these skills further (p. 325). Language awareness is thus portrayed as an integrated part of the development of language skills. And since grammar knowledge is a form of language awareness, grammar education will help foster and expand the learner's language awareness.

1.4 Previous research on textbook grammar

In this section, attention will be given to a few previous studies which have quantified and studied the presentation of grammar in textbooks. The research for this section, and the project as a whole, has showed that there are relatively few studies on grammar in English textbooks, especially if the scope is limited to Norway. I hope my thesis will help fill this void, and inspire to further research.

1.4.1 Burner (2005)

Burner's master's thesis is the original inspiration for my own research. His study is two-fold, investigating both how grammar is presented in the textbooks, and teachers' perceptions of grammar teaching. Four books aimed at 16-year-old learners in the foundation course in senior high school were chosen for the textbook analysis, with the aim to investigate the amount of grammar, describe the way grammar is treated, and compare the books with each other. Burner divides the grammar exercises into two main categories: indirect and direct. However, in both of these groups, the exercises are categorized using compound labels mixing both the activity type and the grammatical focus, resulting in an abundance of categories with only one task in each category. Such results make comparisons and analysis difficult. It was this observation which motivated me to create a more comprehensive and flexible framework for my own research. In his study, Burner finds that most of the books have many translation and gap-fill exercises, but the presentation of grammar is unsystematic and there is not much grammar beyond the sentence level.

1.4.2 Summer (2011)

Summer's study on grammar methodologically evaluates the simple past and present perfect instruction in nine English coursebooks for year 6 in Germany. After her initial review of previous studies, Summer concludes that traditional approaches to grammar such as the PPP paradigm (see chapter 2.3.2) and form-focused practice exercises seem to predominate. In addition to this, Summer (2011) states that "[i]t has been continuously lamented that materials writers frequently fail to fully contextualize grammar instruction and that insufficient opportunities are provided for the learner to discover grammar and communicate in the target language" (p. 11). She then performs a descriptive analysis of the grammar content in order to give an objective account of the general trends in quantitative figures, using a framework specifically designed for the study. The data are sorted into five different main categories, which are further divided into two more levels of sub-categories. With this framework, Summer demonstrates how one might develop an extensive and hierarchical coding-scheme in a structured and consistent manner. Summer codes grammar activities according to three operation types: production, reception and judgement. The results show that production-based activities clearly outweigh reception-based activities, making up 81% of the total (Summer, 2011, p. 212). Notably, no activities require judgement. In the conclusion of the study, Summer (2011) argues that there is too much focus on production, and not enough on reception (p. 389).

Another aspect which Summer investigates is whether the activities provide an explicit instruction of the grammatical feature, or if they are discovery-based. The definitions for the explicit instruction and discovery categories in her study are similar to the definitions of explicit and implicit learning I apply in section 2.3 (Summer, 2011, pp. 300-302). There are significant differences in the integration of discovery-based activities in many of the studied textbooks, as some books make a clear effort to integrate them whereas others seem to neglect or disregard them completely. Moreover, some textbooks seem to combine the discovery-based instruction with an explicit instruction, for example by urging the learner to discover a grammatical feature while simultaneously supplying the learner with a grammar box explicitly displaying the grammatical pattern. To this, Summer (2011) comments that while the explicit instruction probably is meant as an aid, it does indicate an unclear conceptual design (p. 341). As Summer compares her results to previous research, there are a number of similar findings: grammar exercises (often in a PPP sequence) predominate, productive activities outweigh receptive activities, and many of the more

innovative approaches such as discovery-based activities are often neglected (Summer, 2011, p. 391). However, the more recently published textbooks present more contextualised grammar, along with more focus on meaning and learner autonomy.

1.4.3 Askeland (2013)

In her master's thesis, Askeland (2013) investigates English grammar tasks in three textbooks commonly used in grade 10 in Norway. The mixed methods research seeks to answer two questions: how many grammar tasks there are compared to non-grammar tasks, and what the quality is of those tasks. The first part of the research question receives relatively little attention in the study, and it is simply stated that the percentage of grammar tasks for each book is 35.6%, 14% and 15.3% respectively. The second part of the research question is answered by a lengthy and theoretic textbook analysis. In order to collect the data for this qualitative analysis, Askeland (2013) developed a framework for categorizing the grammar tasks. The framework is initially inspired by Summer's (2011) framework, but Askeland modified it to better suit her data material and research question. The categories are mainly concerned with task description, how the pupils are expected to work with each task, if the task works at sentence or discourse level, which type of task it is, and at which cognitive stage the task operates.

Askeland (2013) finds that there are very few purely inductive tasks, and that there is an overall tendency for the learners to work alone and finish the tasks by writing. Tasks operating at sentence level are the most common, but it should be noted that Askeland includes word-level tasks here as well (p. 71). There are some tasks operating at discourse level, but Askeland argues that "there should be a much higher number of discourse level tasks, considering the importance of discourse, context, and pragmatics as a part of the ability to communicate meaningfully, appropriately as well as correctly" (p. 72). There are a considerable number of gap-filling tasks, often as sentences in isolation, which are typically associated with traditional grammar teaching. Composition and translation tasks are also prevalent, followed by transforming and explaining. One reason for the popularity of these tasks might be that all of them, except composition, are very easy to execute and correct, thus making it easier for the teacher to control whether the learners have performed them correctly (Askeland, 2013, p. 84). Additionally, the results show an imbalance in the cognitive stages, as the emphasis lies heavily on proceduralisation and conceptualisation, even though all of

the stages of awareness and performance are equally important in the learning process (Askeland, 2013, p. 81).

1.4.4 Brennhaug (2021)

Brennhaug's (2021) study differs from the others in that it is primarily focused on Norwegian grammar, thus targeting most of the learners' first language (L1). However, I have included it here since it is the most recent Norwegian textbook grammar study I have found, and is published after the new national curriculum came into effect. The study only investigates one textbook, and it is aimed at pupils in lower secondary school. This research is based on two research questions: which characteristics can be found in the grammar tasks, and which perspectives on grammar teaching are they based on? The questions are investigated by performing a quantitative content analysis followed by a qualitative analysis of the results.

Similarly to Askeland (2013), Brennhaug (2021) uses Summer's (2011) framework as her inspiration for the quantitative analysis, but modifies it in order to fit her data material and research question. In her reflection on the appropriateness of using a framework originally designed for English grammar, Brennhaug (2021) argues that there are several similarities between grammar education in Norwegian and in English (p. 22). Her first category, text quality, explores the extent to which the textual elements have a contextual connection to each other. The grammar tasks are coded as *coherent* if they require a cohesive text answer or if they require the pupils to investigate a cohesive text. Tasks that operate with individual words or sentences are coded as *non-coherent*, whereas tasks with some thematic connection without being fully contextualized are coded as *semi-coherent*. The framework also includes the skills the pupils are expected to use (writing, oral, reading or unspecified) and four categories related to which type of activity the learners are expected to perform: production, understanding, evaluation and exploration (Brennhaug, 2021, p. 24).

Brennhaug (2021) identifies and analyses 385 tasks and sub-tasks. 51.5% of them are coded as coherent, 15.5% as semi-coherent, and 33% as non-coherent. In the skills category, the unspecified option is dominant, as almost half of the tasks do not specify which skill the learners should use to solve the task. However, if it is specified most of the tasks require a written answer. Production

tasks are the most frequent activity type at 42.6%, followed by exploration tasks at 27.8% and evaluation tasks at 26.2%. The final activity category, understanding, comprise only 3.4% of the tasks. Brennhaug considers this to be a significant find, as she draws parallels between understanding and deep learning, one of the latest buzz words in Norwegian education (pp. 60-61).

2 Theoretical background

This chapter provides a theoretical framework on what grammar is, how it can be learned and taught, and the role of the textbook. The theory in this chapter is the foundation for the textbook analysis, and is used in the development of the coding framework. It also provides clarifications of important terms used in this thesis.

2.1 What is grammar?

Grammar can be intimidating, for students and teachers alike. One reason may be an understanding of grammar as a set of complicated rules and exceptions, as something which is separated from the practical use of the language (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016, p. 91). If grammar is understood in this way, as a rule-governed language companion, it can be hard to appreciate that grammar actually is an integrated part of the way we use language every day. Instead of viewing grammar as a separate entity, it can be seen as the linguistic tools and resources that are available for us to communicate and express meaning (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016, p. 91). The Common European Framework of Reference [CEFR] suggests an understanding of grammar as “the set of principles governing the assembly of elements into meaningful labelled and bracketed strings” (Council of Europe, 2001, pp. 112-113). This definition of grammar promotes both a rule-oriented approach, here referred to as a set of principles, and as something which relays meaning. It indicates a systematic approach to how language is constructed, in which strings, in this case sentences, are both labelled and assembled together. A similar train of thought can be found in Thornbury’s (1999) definition, in which grammar is described as the study of the order in which words are chained together, and what kinds of words may slot into each link of the chain (p. 2). Both of these definitions give weight to the order of the words, which is known as syntax by grammarians, and the categorisation of words, such as word classes. But grammar is more than that, and hard to properly define in a single sentence. Grammar could be organised into three different sub-categories, depending on how narrow the scope is: There is word grammar, which is the study of individual words and their inflections; sentence grammar, which concerns the syntax;

and text grammar, in which context is taken into consideration. I will now briefly expand on each of these categories and their grammatical functions.

2.1.1 Word grammar

In linguistics, the minimal unit of meaning is known as *morphemes*, which can be either *free* (occurring alone with an independent meaning) or *bound*, when they are added to the free morphemes (Hasselgård et al., 1998, p. 13). Some of these morphemes can be considered a grammatical element, as they are added to the end of the word and thus changes its grammatical meaning. This process is known as *inflection*; bound morphemes are added to the end of the word in order to express various meanings or to make the word fit the context (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016, p. 97). Pluralisation of nouns, genitive endings, conjugations of regular verbs, adjective and adverb comparison are examples of inflectional morphology, which all carry grammatical meaning without changing the word class. Knowing when and how to use inflectional morphemes is a component of a learner's grammatical competence (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 113).

Some grammatical distinctions are not made by inflections, but use *function words* instead. These words do not carry a lot of meaning by themselves, but they have a grammatical job in the sentence, assisting the lexical words (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016, p. 98). Function words like determiners and pronouns are closed word classes, which means that new words cannot be coined at will, and can be seen as a grammatical glue that binds the lexical words together (Hasselgård et al., 1998, p. 15).

In addition to this, knowledge of *word classes* of lexical words can be considered part of word grammar as well. In contrast to function words, lexical words have a clear meaning (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016, p. 99). Understanding the meaning and semantic content of a lexical word will typically be considered as a part of vocabulary learning, but knowledge of the word classes they belong to is, in my experience, a common introduction into grammar. Word classes are helpful in a systematic approach to understanding how words can be combined and how they function (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016, p. 99). In conclusion, word grammar can be understood to include inflectional morphemes, the use of function words and knowledge of word classes.

2.1.2 Sentence grammar

Flognfeldt and Lund (2016) introduce grammar as something which is done to concepts, in order to imbue them with more meaning. They propose an understanding of grammar as an action; as the process of adjusting and adding words in a manner which most accurately expresses the intended meaning (pp. 96-99). In this scenario grammar is the tool, and the action of using it is referred to as *grammaring*. Flognfeldt and Lund (2016) argue that the process of grammaring includes three central operations: appropriate endings have to be added by inflections, function words may have to be added, and the words have to be arranged in a particular order (p. 97). This last operation refers to *syntax*, which is the structural dimension of a sentence. Three major features of syntax are the linear order of the words, how they “clump together”, and how these clumps nest within each other in a hierarchical structure. (Payne, 2011, pp. 160-161). In other words: syntax determines the relationships between the words based on their order, what kinds of words are positioned together, and in which way. Syntactic functions in a clause can be described by different constituents, such as subject, verb, direct or indirect object, subject or object predicative, and adverbials (Hasselgård et al., 1998, pp. 248-249). These constituents are commonly distinguished by their syntactic relationship to the verb.

Summing up, syntax is essentially a question of the correct order of elements in a sentence, i.e., about patterns that express different meanings as accurately and precisely as possible (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016, pp. 98-99). It could be argued that syntax is the core of grammar, since sentence level analysis traditionally has been the main concern of grammar (Thornbury, 1999, p. 1).

2.1.3 Text grammar

Linguists seem to agree that while the traditional approach to grammar has been almost exclusively at sentence level, a wider perspective is needed in order to understand the grammatical options available and how they affect the meaning of a text (e.g. Bader & Dypedahl, 2020, p. 256; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 68; Hasselgård et al., 1998, p. 2). While a sentence can seem grammatically correct in isolation, the intended meaning might be misconstrued depending on the context it appears in. In fact, most of the grammatical choices made by a speaker or writer rely on contextual conditions (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 52). Authentic spoken or written text is rarely completely free of context, and it could be argued that understanding how a sentence relates

to the context around it is part of a grammatical competence. While much of our daily communication takes place in familiar situations where social conventions and situational context aid the interlocutors, most written texts (and some oral texts) are removed from the immediate physical context. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) refer to this as context-reduced discourse, explaining that “users of such discourse need to rely more heavily on their knowledge of the language code and genre types because the context is partly unfamiliar, less immediate, and less accessible” (p. 6). In other words, discourse which takes place away from the immediate context needs to rely more in grammatical systems in order to effectively communicate.

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) define context as the situation where the interaction takes place, that is, all the non-linguistic and non-textual elements which might affect the communicative interaction (p. 11). Their definition thus limits the understanding of context to everything which is not conveyed by words. Thornbury (1999) uses the word context as an umbrella term for everything surrounding the text, but divides it into three sub-categories: the context of surrounding text, which sometimes is referred to as co-text; the context of situation, such as the role and relationship between the interlocutors and the mode of communication; and the context of culture, in which the communication operates (pp. 70-71). This is a much wider definition, which could be interpreted to mean everything surrounding the sentence. Since this definition includes both textual and non-textual elements, thus including any text excepts the grammar tasks might refer to, this definition of context will be used in this thesis.

The context where a sentence operates is often within a text, and a text is more than just a string of sentences presented together. It is a semantic unit, in which the sentences refer to each other and are linked together in a way which creates cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 293). Cohesion could be described as the points of contact between sentences; a continuity between one segment of a text and the other (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 299). In other words, there are parts in the sentences which refer to each other, thus creating a cohesive text. Moreover, there is a system in the ways the sentences refer to each other, which can be described as cohesive ties. Halliday and Hasan (1976) identified four types of cohesive ties which relate to the grammar of texts: ties of reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction (p. 303). So, while the text itself is not a grammatical unit, there are grammatical rules which govern the way the sentences refer to each other. For example, ties of reference can be expressed by the use of pronouns, in the way they

refer back to a previously mentioned entity (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 53). In this way, the grammar of pronouns is something which extends beyond the sentence, and must be considered at a textual level as well. Cohesive ties link the sentences together, as they are dependent on each other for interpretation. If grammar is exclusively looked at from a sentence perspective, such cohesive ties might be missed. Without looking at context, it might be hard, or even impossible, to assess which grammatical form is the most appropriate.

2.2 Grammar rules

Since grammar is commonly associated with rules (Bader & Dypedahl, 2020, p. 248), a definition of grammar rules is in order. There are generally two different approaches to the way grammar rules are understood. Firstly, a prescriptive (or normative) approach to grammar dictates how the language should be written or spoken, with linguistic rules concerned with “right” and “wrong” (Hasselgård et al., 1998, p. 2). In other words, this perspective considers the grammar rules as a set of instructions on how language should be used. In contrast, in a descriptive approach to grammar, the rules attempt to describe language as it is used, as a statement on how different aspects of the language actually behave (Hasselgård et al., 1998, p. 2). This second view of grammar describes how language construction usually happens, instead of how it is supposed to be done. Thus, a descriptive understanding of grammar is more dynamic, as it can adapt to actual language use, and tends to include a greater acceptance of language change.

In second and foreign language teaching, the primary concern is usually the descriptive understanding of grammatical rules. However, since many, if not most, grammar rules often come with some exceptions or irregularities, or involve difficult and abstract concepts, they might be hard to grasp for language learners. Because of this, Thornbury (1999) presents a third category – pedagogic rules, defining them as “rules that make sense to learners while at the same time providing them with the means and confidence to generate language with a reasonable chance of success” (pp. 11-12). While these rules will likely boost the learner’s confidence, Thornbury acknowledges that it comes at the expense of the full picture, but argues that in the case of language learning, the needs of the learner are more important than those of a grammarian. In essence, pedagogic rules are a simplified version of descriptive rules, presented in order to cater to the learner’s needs of more clear-cut definitions. Although these rules will have exceptions,

introducing the simpler rule over the absolute rule will make it easier for the learner to comprehend, recall and use it in their language comprehension and production. It should be noted that Thornbury's condition for success involves a certain element of risk calculation in the formulation and application of such rules. The level of acceptable oversimplification seems to be up to the teacher (or textbook author) to decide.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, grammar rules can be understood as the "regularity or generalisation stored in the minds of speakers and shared by a speech community" (Newby, 2015, p. 18). This definition leans towards a descriptive perception of grammar rules, as the grammatical phenomenon is referred to as a generalisation, which is a way to make predictions and explain how language functions based on its use. The rule must also be shared by a community, that is, there has to be a group of people who agree on the way it is used and the meaning it conveys. In order to discuss such matters, the community must also share a linguistic framework which refers to the different components of a grammatical rule. Simply put, there has to be a shared language which allows for discussions about grammar. This special language, which aids a precise and consistent description on how language is used, is often referred to as a metalanguage (Hasselgård et al., 1998, p. 13). Much of the terminology used previously in this chapter, such as morphology and syntax, is part of the metalanguage needed to discuss grammar. Grammar rules are therefore inherently connected with metalanguage, since it is difficult to discuss rules without using a linguistic metalanguage.

2.3 Implicit and explicit knowledge

Newby (2018) claims that communication is not possible without knowledge of grammar rules (p. 197). However, there is a distinction between knowing the grammatical rules and knowing *about* the rules. A learner might know English grammar, as in being able to see patterns and use correct grammar, without being able to verbalize the knowledge through a metalanguage. Such knowledge is known as *implicit* knowledge, and it is the kind of knowledge which allows learners to understand and produce language in spontaneous communication (Bader & Dypedahl, 2020, pp. 248-249). Implicit language knowledge is tacit and intuitive, without conscious awareness about the underlying rules, and it is generally available through automatic processing – thus being easily and rapidly retrieved in unplanned language use (Ellis et al., 2009, pp. 11-12). As such, implicit language

knowledge could be understood as the unconscious and automated processing of information which aids most of our daily communication. Someone with implicit grammatical knowledge will be able to “hear” or “feel” if a sentence is grammatically incorrect, and may even be able to identify in which part of the sentence the error occurs, but in order to express why it is ungrammatical one needs *explicit* grammatical knowledge. In contrast to implicit knowledge, explicit knowledge is a conscious awareness, a controlled and attentional processing of declarative facts (Ellis et al., 2009, pp. 11-12). As such, retrieval of explicit knowledge, such as grammar rules, demands more cognitive resources from the language user.

2.3.1 Implicit learning

The implicit and explicit division can also be transferred to learning. While the concepts of knowledge and learning naturally are closely related, there is one important distinction to be made: In the discussion about implicit and explicit learning, it is the process which is the focus, whereas the knowledge is the product of said process (Ellis et al., 2009, p. 6). Similar to implicit knowledge, implicit learning is also unconscious, and it does not demand any central attentional resources. In the implicit learning process, the learner is unaware that any learning has taken place, and even though it is present in their behaviour, they cannot verbalise what they have learned. (Ellis et al., 2009, p. 3). This type of learning can be found in “learning-by-using” approaches, where the learners participate in interactive activities and remain unaware of any new grammar which might be introduced (Newby, 2018, p. 198). Such activities correspond most closely to how children learn grammar in their first language, and is the foundation of many language acquisition theories.

Stephen Krashen has developed a number of influential language learning hypotheses, and is a strong advocate for the language acquisition approach. He argues that there are two different ways to learn a new language: we can either *acquire* a new language subconsciously, without even being aware that it is happening; or we can *learn* a new language consciously, for example by applying rules or talking about grammar (Krashen, 2013, p. 1). Although the terminology is different, his ideas seem to correspond directly with the previously mentioned approaches to learning; in which implicit learning is equal to language acquisition, and explicit learning is equal to language learning. In the *Monitor Hypothesis*, Krashen (2013) claims that consciously learned language merely works as a monitor (or editor) to the learner, and that the ability to produce language fluently only comes

from acquisition (p. 2). He argues that as we experience the desire to communicate, a sentence will appear in our mind from our subconsciously acquired language, and the explicitly learned language will then work as a monitor on the sentence to inspect it or check for errors. In addition to this, it is extremely difficult to use the monitor, as three conditions must be met: first, the learner must know the rule; then a focus must be placed on the form of the sentence, in addition to its meaning; and finally, there has to be enough time to fulfil this operation. According to the Monitor Hypothesis, the explicit knowledge thus works as a metaphorical controlling unit, which is applied after, and in addition to, the implicit knowledge.

Krashen's *Comprehension Hypothesis* (previously known as the *Input Hypothesis*) explains that the only way to acquire language is to understand messages. He refers to it as the "centerpiece of language acquisition theory", as it attempts to explain one of the most important questions in the field of language education, namely how language is acquired (Krashen, 2013, p. 3). According to this theory, language acquisition occurs when we understand what people tell us and what we read, which is supported by previously acquired language, knowledge of the world, and context. In this theory, Krashen makes a strong connection between understanding the message, i.e. the meaning of what is said, and the acquisition of language. What is striking about this hypothesis is that it argues that there is no way to explicitly learn a language and that it only can happen through implicit learning.

There are, however, some arguments to be made against purely implicit learning approach with an exclusive focus on meaning and no attention to grammatical forms. While this approach obviously works with L1 acquisition, most learners will not get as much input from their second language (L2). In addition to this, when the learners engage with a second, or third, language there is already an implicit grammatical system in place. There has also been a discussion about the role of awareness in implicit language learning. While Krashen (2013) argues that the learner is not aware of the language acquisition while it is happening, others have questioned whether awareness is completely absent during the process. Awareness could be divided into two different concepts, one being the ability to notice surface elements, whereas the other is the "awareness of the underlying abstract rule that governs particular linguistic phenomena" (Ellis et al., 2009, p. 7). As such, there is a difference in being attentive to what is said, and knowing the grammar rules which govern how it

is said. While it is hard to find a general consensus on this matter, most linguists seem to agree that implicit learning occurs without a metalinguistic awareness (Ellis et al., 2009, p. 7).

2.3.2 Explicit learning

In contrast to implicit learning, explicit learning is a conscious process where the learner is aware that they are learning and are able to verbalize what they have learned (Ellis et al., 2009, p. 3). English language teaching has a long history of explicit learning, and explicit grammar teaching was at the core of the teaching tradition which is known as the *grammar-translation method*. At the end of the 19th century, modern languages were taught in the same way as dead languages such as Latin and Ancient Greek: with a strong emphasis on grammatical rules and the translation and interpretation of texts (Ur, 2011, p. 83). Since these languages did not exist in spoken form, they were not taught as a means of communication, but as a way for students to develop *Bildung*: expanding on their thinking and identity through grammar (Fenner, 2018, p. 19). This principle was present in the English classroom as well, where the materials often were highly valued and authentic texts, and any difficulties the learners faced when working on these texts were considered to have an educational and disciplinary effect (Fenner, 2018, p. 24). Thus, early English didactics was more or less a copy-paste operation of the pedagogic principles which ruled the teaching of Latin and Ancient Greek. This didactic tradition did not consider the content of the text as the primary focus. Instead, the act of reading the text was considered as means to develop systematic and logical thinking (Fenner, 2018, p. 24). In this perspective, grammar is a tool, which combined with logical thinking enables the learner to translate the text, almost as if they were to crack a code by following a complex set of instructions.

Although the grammar-translation method is not favoured by the teaching community today, explicit language learning lives on and can be found within several teaching methodologies. However, there is more than one way to reach explicit learning, and one notable discussion in this field of research relates to the sequencing of the instruction. If the teaching activity has its departure point in the presentation of a grammatical rule, followed by examples of the application of said rule, then it is considered a *deductive* approach (Glaser, 2013, p. 152; Thornbury, 1999, p. 29). A traditional deductive teaching approach is the PPP model, which stands for presentation – practice – production. In this approach, learners are first presented with a rule, then encouraged to

practice the rule through a number of conventional exercises, such as gap-filling or matching, and are finally expected to be able to generate the grammatical structure correctly in their own language production (Ur, 2011, p. 84). This approach is largely teacher-centred, and while the activities are rather instrumental and drill-based, they can result in automatization of certain skills (Bader & Dypedahl, 2020, p. 259). But the PPP model, which assumes that accuracy leads to fluency, can be criticized for its linear and step-based approach, and that such linguistic fine-tuning usually comes rather late in the language learning process (Thornbury, 1999, pp. 128-129). And even though learners have had extensive grammatical practice with the PPP model, many continue to produce grammatically incorrect language in their own spontaneous speech and writing (Ur, 2011, p. 84).

Of course, there are various ways to organize a deductive learning activity – it does not have to follow the PPP model. What they all do have in common is that the explicit knowledge, in this case the grammar rule, is presented before any exercises, and that the learner deduces the correct answer based on the previously learned knowledge (Newby, 2018, p. 198). Even activities which do not include any exercises can be considered deductive, as long as the rule comes first and any examples of how the rule is applied in text comes after (Thornbury, 1999, p. 29). But the deductive approach to learning has been criticized for focusing too much on form, which comes at the expense of focus on meaning and meaning-bearing input (Paesani, 2005, p. 16). That is, when the instruction and the subsequent activities use a grammatical feature as their departure point, that becomes the centre of attention. In this way, the correlation between the form of the grammatical feature and how it alters the meaning runs the risk of becoming secondary, or perhaps not even mentioned at all. On the other hand, if the examples or meaning-bearing input was provided first, and the explanation of the rules followed, then the focus would change towards meaning (Paesani, 2005, p. 16). This approach is often referred to as *inductive*, in which the learners are presented with authentic language first, and the explicit grammar instruction takes place after the grammatical feature has been presented in context.

Haight et al. (2007) argue that inductive approaches offer more variety than deductive approaches, especially how the rule is presented to the learners (p. 289). Some approaches depend on the learners being able to infer the grammatical rule from the patterns in the text, while others rely on the teacher to help the learners focus with guided questions. What seems to be the common

ground is that the learners should be allowed to find the grammatical patterns themselves, to discover how grammar works, by observing and examining selected pieces of language (e.g., Bader & Dypedahl, 2020, p. 259; Glaser, 2013, p. 152). In this way, the learners take on a more active role, as they take part in the knowledge construction instead of being recipients. In contrast to both the implicit and the deductive approach, the inductive approach acknowledges the role the learners can play in the grammar instruction (Haight et al., 2007, p. 290). This is something which is often favoured by learning psychologists, as the discovery aspect engages the learners' cognitive resources more actively, which leads to a stronger trace in their memory (Newby, 2018, p. 198).

2.4 The textbook

In order to discuss textbooks, a definition must be made. In pedagogic literature there is large variation in the terminology surrounding this phenomenon, such as teaching materials, learning materials, instructional materials, ELT materials, coursebooks and textbooks, just to name a few. A common Norwegian term is "læremiddel", which according to the Norwegian Education Act (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2006), is defined as printed, non-printed and digital elements which have been developed for educational purposes and cover the competence goals in the national curriculum (§ 17-1). While the Norwegian term might fit the scope of this thesis, the English translation of this word, *learning materials*, is often used in a wider context. For example, in their discussion on language learning materials, Tomlinson and Masuhara (2017) define it as "anything that can be used by language learners to facilitate their learning of the target language" (p. 2). In order to break down such a broad concept, Grey (2016) suggests three main categories of materials: published materials, authentic materials and teacher-made materials (p. 95). The most common type of published materials is the textbook, and although the technological advances of the 21st century have modified and expanded the textbook as a concept, Grey (2016) argues that "the textbook (for the time being) retains its centrality – although the form in which it is delivered is becoming increasingly diversified" (pp. 95-96). I believe this is still true for textbooks in Norway since all of the components in the publishers' learning materials package, such as the workbooks, teacher's guides and digital resources, seem to rely on the textbook as the core of the learning material package. As such, the term textbook will be used in a broad sense in this thesis, also covering the accompanying materials the publishers provide. However, in the discussion of the results in chapter four, some comparisons are made between textbooks and workbooks. In these

sections, the term textbook only refers to the textbook itself, and not the accompanying materials surrounding it.

The textbooks used in Norwegian schools fulfil a role in which the curriculum, authors, learners and teachers all meet. They are texts which express the attitudes and values in the society of the learner, as they reveal, expressed through the national curriculum, what is considered to be important enough to convey to the next generation (Skjelbred et al., 2017, p. 9). Historically, the Norwegian textbooks had to be approved by the state in order to be used in school, and the books had to meet certain conditions regarding the subject content, pedagogy, language and equality. This approval scheme was in place in order to ensure the learners' rights to equal education, but was discontinued in the year 2000 as the national curriculum achieved regulatory status (Skjelbred et al., 2017, pp. 18-19). Hence, while the state no longer examines the textbooks, it is still highly influential in regards to what the books contain, as the teachers (i.e. the customers) are obliged to follow the curriculum. However, as Lund (2020) observes: "It is important to remember that any textbook will be the authors' subjective interpretation of the curriculum" (p. 348). As the LK20 curriculum has a goal-oriented approach, declaring what the learner is supposed to know and be able to do, the authors are free to choose which pedagogic methods they consider to be the best to achieve these learning goals. The textbooks are written with a specific target group in mind, and the goal is to convey knowledge from someone who knows more to someone who knows less, thus making it an asymmetrical form of communication (Skjelbred et al., 2017, p. 11). As the target audience is young learners of English, the authors have to write with the average learner in mind, making sure the text neither is too easy nor too difficult.

Teachers will then interpret the curriculum as well as the textbook, and decide how they will incorporate it into their teaching. The teachers will perceive the textbook differently, and some of them will see it as guidance and a map for both the teacher and the learners, as well as an aid to stay on the right track for the learning goals (Lund, 2020, pp. 347-348). The goals of the book and the goals of the teacher should, after all, overlap. Some teachers, especially if they are inexperienced or feel insecure, might see the textbooks as support which provides instructions and informed choices (Lund, 2020, p. 349). For others, the textbook might function as a resource, providing texts, tasks, ideas and suggestions for classroom activities, and by extension saving the teacher from a lot of time-consuming work. However, as Lund (2020) notes, while some teachers

might see it as one resource of many, others may see it as the only resource (p. 349). There is also the possibility that some teachers see the textbooks as constraint, especially if the textbook is a compulsory element which teachers are obliged to use, or if the school has a very strong tradition of doing so (Lund, 2020, pp. 349-350). School traditions which position the teacher as mere deliverers of textbook content are sometimes referred to as deskilling, as they do not allow for teachers to make decisions on what content to select, reject or modify (Gray, 2016, p. 97). It stands to reason that the teacher's perception on the textbook will alter the way they engage with it. If the teacher sees the book as either a resource, a guide or as support, they are likely to use it as such, thus reinforcing the perception.

3 Methods and data

In this section, the data material and research method are presented, and I explain how I will answer my research question with a content analysis. Since a content analysis can be applied in both a quantitative and qualitative manner, I explore the characteristics of each approach and if it is possible to place a research project exclusively in one camp. The research design of this study is described, followed by a discussion on content analysis as a scientific method.

3.1 Data material

The data for this study is gathered from textbooks and their accompanying workbooks from the four largest publishing houses in Norway. Since there still are some gaps in the revised or new editions of textbooks for year 6 and 7, I decided to choose books targeted towards year 5 in order to study the widest available selection. The books are all part of the publishers' own teaching materials series, which are *Quest* from Aschehoug, *Explore* from Gyldendal, *Link* from Fagbokforlaget and *Engelsk* from Cappelen Damm. All of the books were scanned and converted into pdf's, in order for me to import them into the software Nvivo where the codes were applied.

Quest 5 Textbook (Bade et al., 2020b) and Quest 5 Workbook (Bade et al., 2020c) are available both as printed and digital editions, and there is an accompanying teacher's guide as well as a digital resource called Quest 1–7 Aschehoug Univers. The textbook comprises 182 pages, divided into 7 chapters, each with its own theme. There is a grammar section in each chapter, which is presented under the headline "Language work". The workbook is 127 pages, with numbered activities for each of the chapters in the textbook. The grammar tasks often appear in close proximity of each other, but there are some isolated tasks spread out through the book as well.

The *Explore* series consist of Explore 5 My Book (Edwards et al., 2020a) and Explore 5 My Workbook (Edwards et al., 2020b), accompanied by a teacher's guide and a range of digital resources in their platform Skolestudio. The textbook is available as a digital version, called smart book, with recorded audio of the texts. Explore 5 My Book is 185 pages, divided into 7 chapters, with a grammar section in each chapter called "Explore English". In addition to this, the book has a few grammar activities located outside of the grammar section. Explore 5 My Workbook is 152 pages, and the grammar

tasks in this book are distributed throughout the entire book. Some of the grammar tasks are presented under the “Explore English” headline, and some are not.

Link 5 Textbook (Mezzetti et al., 2021b) and Link 5 Workbook (Mezzetti et al., 2021c) are available both as printed editions and as digital editions. There is a teacher’s guide, and a digital resource is being developed at the time of writing. The textbook comprises 220 pages and 9 chapters, and has a dedicated grammar section at the end of the book under the headline “Building language”. This is the only explicit grammar in the entire book. The workbook is 148 pages and has a similar grammar section, with some grammar activities scattered throughout the other chapters as well.

The *Engelsk* series consist of Engelsk 5 Textbook (Solberg & Unnerud, 2020b) and Engelsk 5 Workbook (Solberg & Unnerud, 2020c), which are accompanied by a teacher’s guide and digital resources. In addition to the printed format, the textbook is available in two different digital formats. The textbook is 195 pages, but has very little grammar in it. The only times grammatical metalanguage is used is in relation to the word lists, which are distributed throughout the four chapters. The workbook is the shortest of all of the workbooks with 123 pages. In it, the grammar activities mostly appear in clusters, presented under the headline “Grammar”.

3.2 Research method

In order to answer the research questions, I needed to conduct an in-depth analysis of a selection of textbooks. I reasoned that the intrinsic patterns of grammar would benefit from a systematic and quantitative approach, and decided upon content analysis as the research method of this project. Since the research questions are exploratory in essence, the goal is not to find any causality between different variables. Instead, the aim is to find frequency patterns in the portrayal of grammar in the selected textbooks. It should also be noted that the goal is not to find how much grammar there is in the textbooks, and there will be no comparisons between grammar and non-grammar task. Instead, according to the research question, this study is concerned with how the grammar is presented in the books. I will explore this by focusing on which grammatical features are the most prominent and the didactic theories the activities rely on.

Neuendorf (2017) defines content analysis as “the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (p. 1). Initially, this definition seems to align well with the scope of my research, since the aim is to systematically analyse the textbook grammar as objectively as possible with a quantitative focus. Neuendorf’s referral to message characteristics suggests an analysis beyond a superficial level of word counting; it implies an interpretive action of the message it conveys. Bryman (2012) suggests a similar definition of content analysis, describing it as “the analysis of documents and texts that seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner” (p. 290). This interpretation also emphasizes the systematic nature of the quantification, but introduces categories as an integral part of the content analysis. These categories are applied to the text in a process often referred to as *coding*, and while Bryman argues the categories should be predetermined, the next chapter will investigate a few alternatives to how the categories may be developed. In light of both of these definitions, content analysis seems to be a suitable research method for my investigation, providing a structured approach to text analysis resulting in quantifiable data.

3.2.1 Is content analysis quantitative or qualitative?

One of the most common distinctions in research methods is the division of quantitative and qualitative research strategies. At the surface level, quantitative research methods are the ones which employ quantification and measurement of data, and qualitative research tends to be more focused on the interpretation of words. However, there are deeper aspects related to each of these strategies than the mere presence of numbers. Although both of the previous definitions of content analysis refer to the method as a quantitative process, some scholars argue it can be considered a qualitative method.

In an article advocating for a qualitative approach to content analysis, Morgan (1993) argues that the coding method itself does not automatically qualify it as a quantitative method. Instead, it is the question of how the codes are produced and which use the researcher makes of the generated data that determines which category the research falls into (p. 115). As previously mentioned, Bryman argues that a quantitative content analysis uses predetermined codes. This aligns with Morgan’s (1993) claim that that a qualitative approach is more likely to use the data within the text documents as the source of the codes (p. 115). These code categories tend to be both broader and

more subjective in a qualitative content analysis than in a quantitative content analysis. The second difference between a quantitative and a qualitative approach is how the data is used. Morgan (1993) claims that a quantitative analysis is more concerned with summarizing what is known about the data, as it seeks to answer the questions of *what* and *how many*. On the other hand, a qualitative analysis is more concerned with the interpretation of the patterns of the data, focusing on the question *why* and investigating how the patterns came to be (pp. 115-116). Thus, it seems content analysis can be both qualitative and quantitative, depending on how the framework for the codes is developed and how the researcher approaches the collected data.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) offer another interpretation of qualitative content analysis, demonstrating how it can be divided into three distinct approaches. In a *conventional* approach the coding process is done without any preconceived categories. Instead, the researcher allows the codes to emerge from the data itself in a process which can be described as inductive category development (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1279). This approach is very similar to Morgan's definition of qualitative coding, in which the categories are developed from the data source. While the flexibility of such an approach is appealing, a conventional approach does not align with the purpose of this thesis. This approach seems especially vulnerable to subjective interpretations from the researcher, and since the aim of my thesis is to systematically analyse the presentation of grammar as objectively as possible, a more structured approach is necessary.

In the second approach, referred to as *directed*, the researcher looks at relevant theory and research to guide and help determine which variables will be of interest in the initial coding scheme (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1281). This process is referred to as a deductive category application, and is similar to the preconceived categories in Bryman's (2012) definition of quantitative content analysis. However, in their directed approach, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) allow for a revision of the predetermined coding scheme; data which do not belong in any of the existing categories are revisited and may be coded into new categories (p. 1282). This approach appeals to me, since it allows for a more dynamic coding process, while still being highly systematic in its implementation. A directed approach benefits my research process, as it relies on existing language learning theory and the established categories within grammar, while being open to new codes as I investigate the tasks. Since the coding relies on existing theory and research, one of the strengths of the directed approach is that it will support and extend this theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283). As there

has been some research on the topic of grammar in textbooks, but not a great extent, a directed approach will serve to extend the existing theories regarding the presentation of grammar. However, relying on existing theory also makes the researcher “approach the data with an informed but, nonetheless, strong bias” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283).

Finally, in a *summative* approach to content analysis, the researcher identifies and quantifies chosen words or content in the text. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) mention that such an approach, in which the researcher is interested in word frequency, in essence is a quantitative method (p. 1283). However, in a qualitative approach the analysis is made with an intention of exploring and understanding the underlying meanings and usage (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1285). This echoes Morgan’s (1993) distinction between qualitative and quantitative analysis, with the questions the researcher applies in the analysis as the main difference between the two methods.

Comparing these approaches to content analysis, there seems to be a shared pattern: If the coding process is inductive and relies on the data for the generation of categories, and if the analysis seeks to understand why these patterns came to be and what it might mean, the process is considered qualitative. On the other hand, if the coding relies on predetermined categories derived from existing theories, and the analysis is primarily concerned with frequency and content of the data, the process is considered quantitative. However, as Morgan (1993) states: “there is a broad middle ground between these two extremes” (p. 116) , and the directed approach appears to reside somewhere between these two camps. In her discussion of this methodical divide, Neuendorf (2017) observes that even though the research topic may be of a qualitative nature, it is entirely possible to examine it from a quantitative perspective. Similarly, she explains, quantitative events can be examined from a qualitative perspective (p. 10). Thus, it is the analytical strategies which determine which method is employed.

Although this discussion of research methods has been primarily concerned with the division between quantitative and qualitative approaches, most authors seem to agree that very few studies will fit neatly into only one of the categories. They urge researchers to be careful about hammering a wedge between the strategies, as research projects rarely employ the strategies in its “pure” form and often include characteristics from both methods (e.g. Bryman, 2012, pp. 36-37; Ellis, 2012, pp. 46-47; Morgan, 1993, p. 117). Based on the definitions provided by Morgan (1993), both the

development of my coding framework and the analysis of the data will be done from a quantitative approach, but I will allow for a revision of the codes as suggested by Hsieh and Shannon's directed approach in order to more accurately categorize the data. Although Bryman argues that predetermined codes are a characteristic of a quantitative content analysis, it could be argued the initial phase of this study is qualitative, since the development of the coding framework relies on my interpretation of concepts and their relationship with each other. Such an approach can be referred to as a quantitative analysis of qualitative data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278).

3.2.2 Research design

The data collection in this study comes from several different textbooks, done in a very limited time frame. These are the characteristics of a cross-sectional design, which is the most common research design in pedagogic research (Høgheim, 2020, p. 117). In a cross-sectional design the goal is usually to detect variation, for which a large data sample from multiple cases is needed (Bryman, 2012, p. 59). As the goal of this study is to examine variation in the presentation of grammar in textbooks, it requires no intervention from a researcher, making it a non-experimental design. Instead of researching the effects from an intervention, non-experimental research design is concerned with how different phenomena, or variables, relate to each other in their "natural state" (Høgheim, 2020, p. 117). As the variables are collected more or less simultaneously, and are not manipulated by the researcher, it is hard to infer any causal relationship between the variables. Instead, the focus of the research is the patterns of association which might emerge from the data (Bryman, 2012, p. 59). This means that any patterns found within this study only serve to establish a relationship between the variables, but it is not enough to determine any sort of causality. As such, a cross-sectional research design typically has a low internal validity (Bryman, 2012, p. 60; Høgheim, 2020, p. 118). Validity in content analysis will be further discussed in section 3.2.3.

In order to collect the data, which will be analysed for patterns of association, it is necessary to have "a systematic and standardized method for gauging variation" (Bryman, 2012, p. 59). In a directed content analysis such as this, it is the application of the coding scheme which will ensure a systematic approach. To begin with, a framework should be developed based on previous research and relevant theory within language learning didactics. Bryman (2012) recommends piloting the framework in order to identify difficulties early on, such as uncertainty about which category to

employ or to uncover cases where there is no suitable category to apply (p. 304). In addition to this, it could also help to identify categories which may contain an unusually high percentage of cases, which then might need to be further divided into sub-categories. After the pilot, the initial coding framework should be modified in order to resolve any issues which might have appeared. The modified framework will then be used to code the entire data material. After all of the data has been coded, it will serve as the foundation for the analysis and discussion. Finally, the results from the data collection and analysis will be discussed based on relevant theory.

3.2.3 Content analysis as a scientific method

Neuendorf (2017) argues that one of the most distinctive characteristics of a content analysis is how it manages to adhere to the standards of the scientific method (p. 18). There are several similarities between this study and her definition of a content analysis corresponding with the scientific method. To begin with, there is the issue of *objectivity*, and the researcher's relationship with the object of study. Neuendorf (2017) states that "[a] major goal of any scientific investigation is to provide a description or explanation of a phenomenon in a way that avoids the biases of the investigator" (p. 18). While most researchers probably would agree, and it certainly is a goal of this study, a researcher's objectivity can be threatened by their values. There is a growing recognition in the scientific community that it is not possible to perform a study without influence from the values of the researcher (Bryman, 2012, p. 39). While the values should not affect the outcome of any research, they can steer the choice of research topic and the research question, and the choice of research method can be influenced by the epistemological beliefs of the researcher. This also involves the data collection, analysis and interpretation of data. I chose grammar as my research object since I am interested in it, and it may be questioned whether I can be completely objective in the portrayal of grammar. However, I believe the choice of a quantitative research method such as content analysis can mitigate this, since it is a very transparent method. Transparency is achieved by presenting the coding framework and the sampling procedures, allowing for replications and follow-up studies, which is why content analysis can be considered an objective method of analysis (Bryman, 2012, p. 304). Another matter to consider in terms of objectivity is the notion of what is true; what it is that can be considered knowledge and facts. According to the standard of intersubjectivity, it is decided by a consistency among inquiries by what is socially agreed upon to

be true (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 18). Luckily, there seem to be few discrepancies in the research community about what constitutes grammar.

Another component of the scientific method is what Neuendorf (2017) refers to as an *a priori design*, stating that “[a]ll decisions on variables, their measurement, and coding rules must be made before the final measurement process begins” (p. 18). Nonetheless, as the previous quantitative-qualitative discussion showed, many scholars disagree on this requirement. Instead, it could be argued that a strict *a priori* design is a feature of a purely quantitative content analysis, whereas the modification of the coding framework pivots it more towards a qualitative procedure. However, Neuendorf (2017) concludes her argumentation in favour of a *a priori* design with an acknowledgement that a strictly deductive approach does not foster innovation, and that an insistence on a predetermined coding framework thus could be seen as a disadvantage (p. 18).

The third scientific aspect that Neuendorf (2017) refers to is the matter of *reliability*, which in a content analysis primarily concerns the *intercoder reliability*; the agreement and correspondence of the measurement between two or more coders (p. 165). Since I will be the only coder in this project, that is not applicable for this specific situation. However, reliability also concerns the quality and consistency of the measures. This research studies grammar from multiple perspectives, where some of the content, such as which aspect of grammar that is presented or the type of exercise, is quite discernible. Other aspects, such as the underlying didactic direction, are not as apparent. This content may be referred to as *latent content*, as it carries meanings which lie beneath the superficial aspects, thus requiring an interpretation from the researcher (Bryman, 2012, p. 290). Since coding of latent content relies more on subjective interpretation, it may be assumed to have lower reliability (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 170). The consistency of measuring is related to *intracoder reliability*; the stability of the coder’s measurements over time (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 165). Issues such as *coder fatigue*, where the coder’s performance is impacted by a long and intensive coding schedule, or *coder drift*, where coders may change their coding habits over time, can both be a threat to the reliability of the coding (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 170).

The fourth aspect to be discussed, *validity*, can be a large and complex issue. Neuendorf (2017) suggests the question “are we measuring what we want to measure?” as a guide in evaluating validity (p. 122). Since there will be some indicators of which parts of the textbooks the authors

consider to be grammar, such as specific colouring schemes, the use of grammatical meta-language, or even specific grammar headings, these cues will aid the accuracy of my coding process and thereby positively affect the validity of the measurement. Neuendorf (2017) explains that a matchup between the conceptual definition and the operational definition of the variables ensures the *internal validity* of a project (p. 125). This can be achieved with a comprehensible definition of each coding category, which will be covered later on in section 3.3.2.

The concept of validity also includes *external validity*, that is to which degree the results of a study can be generalized and applied to other cases which are not included in the study (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 19). Since I have chosen to investigate all of the available printed editions of teaching materials for year 5 from the four largest publishing companies in Norway, this study will be examining a very large, if not complete, part of the sampling population. It would be tempting to extend the scope of generalization to include teaching material for other grade levels, for example all of the years in 1-7, but that would be misleading and inaccurate. Grammar is unlikely to be presented in a similar manner for children who are just beginning to learn English, and those who have studied it for 7 years already. Depending on which grade they are aimed at, the books will vary in their cognitive demands and the learner's expected level of proficiency. It seems reasonable to assume that the generalizability is higher for textbooks which have a target audience closer in age to those of this study, for example books targeted at grade 4 or 6. If the scope of generalizability is moved to include textbooks for English learners outside of Norway, it becomes even more complicated. Textbooks are usually influenced by political documents, and since they differ between countries so will the influences. There may also be differences in the pre-existing knowledge for pupils between countries, as they may start their English education at different ages. The countries might also adhere to different pedagogic traditions which influence the content and layout of the books.

In order for a content analysis to follow the scientific method, the study must be replicable. Neuendorf (2017) explains that *replicability* is a safeguard against overgeneralization, and that a replicable study which provides information about the methods and the protocols will allow for further studies with different cases or in different contexts (p. 19). By documenting and explaining my research method and the coding procedures, it facilitates other studies to be performed on grammar in textbooks, perhaps aimed at different grades or in different countries. Cross-sectional

studies are usually replicable, as long as they spell out the procedures for the selection of data material, devising the measures of concepts and the data analysis (Bryman, 2012, pp. 59-60).

The final criterion Neuendorf (2017) presents for the scientific method, is hypothesis testing based on theory. She argues that the scientific method generally is considered to be *hypothetico-deductive*; meaning that a hypothesis is generated from theory and then tested (p. 20). However, since my research is inductive and not designed to use a hypothesis as the basis of the study, it is not hypothetico-deductive. This does not necessarily mean that an inductive approach is unscientific though. There are other theories of what constitutes a scientific method, and the inductive method is one of them. The idea of a scientific method which involves inductive reasoning is not a new concept, and can be traced back to Aristotle (Salkind, 2010, p. 1326). An inductive method can take many forms: from the naïve inductivism in which observed facts are collected in a manner completely free of theory, to a moderate form in which the theory can be used to guide observations along with established theoretical terms (Salkind, 2010, pp. 1326-1327). Since the coding process will rely on categories derived from existing linguistic theories, my research falls within the moderate form of the inductive method. However, just as the previous discussion on quantitative and qualitative methods showed, one should be wary of categorizing too strictly. It could be argued that there is no such thing as *the* scientific method, meaning that there is only one correct way to conduct a research regardless of theme, design or research question, because there can be no fixed universal account of scientific method which is suitable for all kinds of research (Salkind, 2010, p. 1326). Applying the “one size fits all” approach to the scientific method is unrealistic, and could instead be seen as a model or suggestion for appropriate conduct, which in turn can be modified to better fit the object of study.

In summary, this study fulfils most of Neuendorf’s requirements for a scientific method. The choice of a transparent research method will help mitigate any influences of my personal values, and this allows for replications and follow-up studies to be conducted. The objectivity of this study is also strengthened as the framework is developed from existing theories on grammar didactics, thus relying on what the scientific community holds as true. The coding framework is developed before the measurement begins, but smaller modifications are allowed in order to foster innovations and to more accurately capture the required data material. The reliability of the research varies, as some of the codes rely on personal interpretations of latent content. But the risk of inconsistent

coding is low, since I am the only coder in the project. In terms of validity, the layout of the textbooks and the visual aids next to the grammar tasks will improve the accuracy my measurement. Like most cross-sectional designs, there is low internal validity in terms of causality, but the development of coding category definitions ensures an internal validity between the conceptual and operational definitions. There is some external validity for this study in terms of generalizations, but it is restricted by the age of the pupils, in which country they attend school and the governing policy documents. Because of the detailed explanations of the procedures, this study has a high replicability. And while it is not designed to be hypothetico-deductive, it does follow a moderate form of inductive research, as existing theory is used to guide my observations.

3.3 Coding

The purpose of coding can be described as the reduction of data material in order to analyse and interpret it. Without grouping the content of the textbooks into thematic categories and producing tables of averages, it is more or less impossible for the researcher to interpret it (Bryman, 2012, p. 13). As discussed in section 3.2, my content analysis is done with a directed approach, starting with a predetermined framework with codes derived from previous research and relevant theory. During the coding process, the codes have been revised to fit the data material better by adding or removing codes. This chapter provides a description of how the coding categories were developed, what the guidelines are for each category, and the process of applying the codes using the software Nvivo.

3.3.1 Development of the framework

A coding framework is a structured list of codes and the rules for their application. In the initial phase of the framework development I conducted a list with categories used in the previous research, and excluded all of the categories which did not align with my research questions. In order to examine how the grammar is presented in the textbooks, I decided upon four main categories. The grammar tasks are coded according to each of these main categories, which are further described in section 3.3.2.

The first category is concerned with how the target grammar rule (or structure) is presented to the learner, i.e. whether it is done a deductively or inductively. As discussed in section 2.3.2, it is the sequencing of instruction which is the primary distinction between these approaches. If the presentation of the grammar rule or target structure is presented before the activity or any examples of application, it is considered a deductive approach (Glaser, 2013, p. 152; Thornbury, 1999, p. 29). If the rule is presented after an activity, example or explanation, it is considered an inductive approach (Paesani, 2005, p. 16). I combined these characteristics with the categories in Askeland's (2013) study, in which she divides the category "explicit description" into four subcategories: *minimal*, *detailed*, *finding patterns* and *stating explicit rule* (p. 48). Although Askeland does not write about a deductive or inductive approach, I considered the categories to be similar enough to serve as inspiration for similar sub-categories in my framework.

The second category seeks to explore at which level the learners engage with grammar: on word level, sentence level or text level. As explored in section 2.1, there are different aspects of grammar to be explored at each level, and while grammar traditionally has been taught from a sentence-level perspective, many authors argue that a wider perspective is needed to fully understand how grammar operates at a textual level (e.g. Bader & Dypedahl, 2020, p. 256; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 68; Hasselgård et al., 1998, p. 2). The intention behind this category is to investigate how often grammar is presented at each level, especially whether the theories about grammar teaching at a discourse level are reflected in the textbooks. Because of this special interest in discourse grammar, I was inspired by the distinction and nuances between Brennhaug's (2021) categories *coherent* and *semi-coherent* context. Such a distinction seems especially beneficial in textbooks targeted towards learners in year 5, since the learners are rather young and might not be expected to read and examine full text passages as frequently as older learners.

The third category examines the activity type, i.e. how the learners are expected to work with grammar. Not only does such an examination provide descriptive data on the frequency of each activity type, but it can also provide additional information on underlying didactic theories. The codes in this category were mainly inspired by the categories in both Askeland's (2013) and Brennhaug's (2021) studies. I merged some of the categories, excluded others and created a few new ones which were better suited to capture the activity types in the textbooks. Since both of these studies were targeted towards learners which are older than the target audience in this

study, some of the merged or excluded categories relate to activities which require the learners to perform more advanced grammar operations, such as interpretation or evaluation of grammatical features or error correction.

The fourth and final category examines which grammatical features are most prominent in the textbooks. The intention behind this category is to discover frequency patterns and to examine which aspects of grammar the textbooks are focused on. It can also be used as a cross-reference to other categories, such as activity types, in order to discover which activities are the most common for the presentation of certain grammatical features. I have not found another textbook study which have systematically covered this aspect before, and have trusted my instincts and grammatical knowledge for the development of the coding framework in this category. Burner (2005) does label some of the activities according to grammatical focus, but it is not done in a comprehensive and consistent manner, and does not offer a description of his coding practice.

Following Bryman's (2012, p. 304) suggestion, I piloted the initial framework based on one textbook and one workbook. During this coding process, I discovered the need for new categories, most notably one which would accommodate all of the activities requiring the learner to sort words according to various criteria. I also noticed confusion in my own application of the categories relating to the presentation of grammar rules, as I sometimes was mixing it with task description. I realized I needed a fifth category for tasks which require the learner to apply a grammatical rule without explaining it. After the pilot I reviewed the unused categories to see which ones could be merged or removed entirely, and updated the coding descriptions.

3.3.2 Categories

1. Rule presentation	1.1 Deductive	1.1.1 Detailed
		1.1.2 Minimal
	1.2 Inductive	1.2.1 Finding patterns
		1.2.2 Stating rule
	1.3 Not provided	
2. Grammar level	2.1 Continuous discourse	
	2.2 Semi-continuous discourse	
	2.3 Sentence level	
	2.4 Word level	
3. Activity	3.1 Categorizing	
	3.2 Composition	
	3.3 Explanation	
	3.4 Game	
	3.5 Gap-fill	
	3.6 Matching	
	3.7 Multiple-choice	
	3.8 Reading	
	3.9 Reflection	
	3.10 Transforming	
	3.11 Translation	
	3.12 Other	
4. Grammatical element	4.1 Nouns	4.1.1 Word class
		4.1.2 Pluralization
	4.2 Adjectives	4.2.1 Word class
		4.2.2 Comparison
	4.3 Verbs	4.3.1 Word class
		4.3.2 Subject-verb agreement
		4.3.3 Simple past
		4.3.4 Simple present
		4.3.5 Imperative
		4.3.6 Non-finite forms
	4.4 Pronouns	4.4.1 Word class
		4.4.2 Subjective and objective cases
	4.5 Existential there	
	4.6 Determiners	
	4.7 Prepositions	
	4.8 Syntax	
	4.9 Other	

Table 1: Coding framework for textbook analysis

Category 1, *rule presentation*, describes in what manner the grammar rule is presented to the learner. If the rule is presented before any examples or activities, it is considered *deductive*. This category is then further divided into two sub-categories: a *detailed* presentation consists of an explicit description of the target grammatical structure, either in the form of a table or an explanation of why and how the rule is applied, or both. A *minimal* presentation is a short reminder of the rule, often as an example of the target structure or examples of how the task is supposed to be solved, or a reference to where they can find the rule. If the grammar rule is presented after the examples or activities, the task is coded as *inductive*. This category is also divided into sub-categories, and activities which require the learner to look for any patterns or similarities are coded as *finding patterns*. If the rule is simply presented after the activity in question, it is coded as *stating rule*. Sometimes, the grammar rule is presented between activities, in which case I would code the first task as stating rule, and the second task as detailed. If there is no presentation of the grammar rule and the learners are expected to remember the rule themselves the task is coded as *not provided*. In Figure 1 through Figure 5 below, I have exemplified these categories with grammar tasks from the textbooks and workbooks.

DEFINITE ARTICLES

★ SINGULAR	PLURAL
the jacket	the jackets (jakka – jakkene)
the towel	the towels (håndkleet – håndklærne)
the idea	the ideas (ideen – ideene)
the egg	the eggs (egget – eggene)

62 Translate from Norwegian to English
EXAMPLE: lommelykta – the torch

fiskestanga _____

regntøyet _____

campingturen _____

været _____

ekspertene _____

fiskene _____

RULE

Definite article

the jacket or the jackets – refers to one particular jacket or some particular jackets.

We pronounce **the** / ðə/ before a consonant sound (the jacket, the woman) and **the** /ði:/ before a vowel sound (the idea, the egg).

Figure 1: Example of a detailed description
(Engelsk 5: Workbook, 2020c, p. 35)

104

Places, people and things

Look at the picture and make a list of nouns. Use articles.

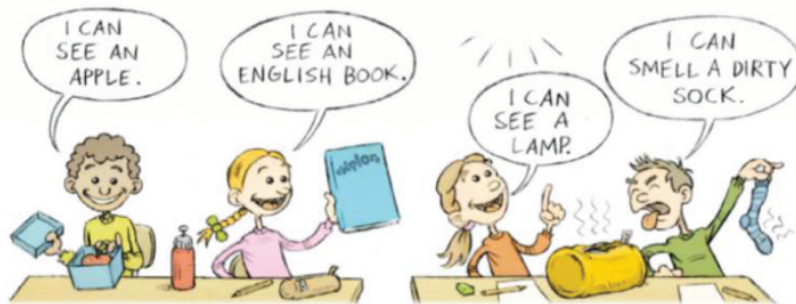
EXAMPLE: **an** island – **a** fire – **a** spade

*Figure 2: Example of a minimal description
(Engelsk 5: Workbook, 2020c, p. 62)*

A or AN?



9 Look at the picture. When do we use **a**? When do we use **an**? Can you spot the difference?



*Figure 3: Example of finding patterns
(Explore 5: My Book, 2020a, p. 88)*

211 More questions and answers 

Make questions using *did* plus a verb. Then answer them.

EXAMPLES: What did you produce at school yesterday?

We produced handmade paper.

What did they cook for dinner? They cooked vegetable soup.

When _____?

Where _____?

What _____?

RULE

When we ask questions about what happened in the past, we use *did* together with the verb.



Figure 4: Example of stating rule
(Engelsk 5: Workbook, 2020c, p. 120)

G5 Building language with adjectives

a) Find the correct adjective and finish the sentences.

full
short
dark
happy
cold
hard
boring
wet

At night, when the sun is down, it is _____.

A rock is _____.

Trousers that stop at your knees are _____.

When I do something I like, I am _____.

A glass that can't have more water in it is _____.

To do something you don't like to do is _____.

Ice cream is _____.

When it rains, it gets _____.



Figure 5: Example of not provided
(Link 5: Workbook, 2021c, p. 134)

Category 2, *grammar level*, describes in which context the grammar is presented. If the grammar is presented in *continuous discourse* the learners are expected to read or produce a coherent text featuring the grammatical element in question. The text itself does not have to be present on the same page as the task description. If the pupils are instructed to read a text in their textbooks and then solve related tasks in the workbook, the grammar is considered to be presented in a continuous discourse. Sometimes the pupils work with individual sentences, and even though these sentences are not strung together in a coherent text with a flow, progression or use of conjunctions, there can be an overarching theme or shared context. In these scenarios, I judged the grammar to be presented in a *semi-continuous discourse*. An example of this could be if the learner is asked to write several sentences describing the same image. Of course, this requires some judgement on my part on how much shared context is needed in order for them to be coded as semi-continuous discourse. The general rule I applied is that it should be clear they are operating in a shared context. Following this rule, it is not enough for the sentences to describe animals, but they must describe the same animal. If the sentences are not contextually related, but operate independently of each other, they were coded as *sentence level*. Finally, when grammar is investigated in smaller units than a sentence, usually as single words or phrases, the task was coded as *word level*. These categories are exemplified in Figure 6 through Figure 9 below.

20 Read and write ●○○

Fill in the missing adjectives from the story.

This is a legend from a little village in England. Anna and her family have moved to a _____, _____ house, but Anna is _____.

She wants her _____ home back.

Anna is very _____ in her _____ house. She has nobody to play with.

One day, Anna is in the garden. She sees a _____, _____ girl with _____ hair. Her name is Kate, and she wants to come and play.

*Figure 6: Example of continuous discourse
(Explore 5: Workbook, 2020b, p. 55)*

7:11 Make a list of what Mr Brown found

was – singular
were – plural

In the mound there **was** ____.
In the mound there **were** ____.
In the mound there **was** ____.
In the mound there **were** ____.
In the mound there ____.
In the mound there ____.

Figure 7: Example of semi-continuous discourse

(Quest 5: Workbook, 2020c, p. 115)

7:18 Fill in verbs in the past tense

show	The teacher <u>showed</u> me how to make a cootie catcher.
turn	Jill ____ left at the corner.
change	Have you ____ your mind?
stop	The dog ____ in the middle of the road.
look	Mr Thompson ____ everywhere for his keys.
order	Terry ____ a burger and fries.

Figure 8: Example of sentence level

(Quest 5: Workbook, 2020c, p. 119)

Regular verbs

In English, the “usual” rule is to add **-ed** or **-d** to make the simple past forms:
 help + ed = **helped**
 use + d = **used**

Study this table of regular verbs.

Signal words for the simple past:
 yesterday, in 2020, this morning, a week ago, a month ago, two days ago, last night / week / weekend / month / summer / winter / Christmas

Infinitive	Simple Present	Simple Past	Norwegian Infinitive
to help	help/helps	helped	å hjelpe
to play	play/plays	played	å leke, spille
to call	call/calls	called	å ringe, kalle, rope
to want	want/wants	wanted	å ville, ønske
to look	look/looks	looked	å se

How do we make the past form in Norwegian?

Figure 9: Example of word level
 (Link 5: Textbook, 2021b, p. 200)

Category 3, *activity*, describes the kind of work the pupil is expected to do in each task. Activities which require the learner to sort, organize or identify items, often based on grammatical features such as their word class, are coded as *categorizing*. Tasks which require pupils to use their imagination and produce sentences, engage in discussion or create short texts, are coded as *composition*. These activities are often open-ended, allowing for more than one correct answer, and require the learners to produce language more freely than most of the other activities. Activities coded as *explanation* require the pupil to explain a grammatical phenomenon using their own words, thus exhibiting their understanding of the associated grammar rules. The code *game* is applied whenever the activity is playful, often with an element of winning or losing, and is executed together with other pupils. There are often rules stating how the game is to be played, and the game requires the learners to apply some sort of grammar knowledge in order to succeed. Tasks requiring the pupils to fill in the missing words in blank spaces in sentences or dialogues are coded as *gap-fill*. There are often cue words in the vicinity, which the learner is supposed to place in the correct gap, conjugate or transform in an appropriate manner. The code *matching* describes tasks in which the learner is supposed to match words, chunks or two halves of sentences with each other, or write sentences based on substitution tables. If the code *multiple-choice* is applied to the task, the learner is supposed to choose one correct answer from several options. The activity may be presented as gaps in sentences, thus appearing to be similar to a gap-fill task, but if there are no

more than four options it is considered to be a multiple-choice activity. Sometimes grammar rules are presented without any tasks for the learner to solve. These activities are coded as *reading*, as the only requirement is for the pupil to read, and hopefully understand, what is being described. Activities which require the pupil to explore, evaluate, discover or reflect upon certain grammatical features are coded as *reflection*. These activities are often designed to promote curiosity, asking the pupil questions which allow them the opportunity to investigate a certain aspect of grammar. Yes and no questions are included if they are meant as a tool for reflection. Tasks instructing the pupils to transform words and sentences from one form to another are coded as *transforming*. The transformation often involves inflections, such as verb conjugations or pluralization, but tasks which require the learner to find opposites of adjectives are also included here. The code *translation* is applied to tasks which focus on the pupil's ability to translate sentences from English into another language, or the other way round. Finally, I have included a code for activities which do not fit into any other category, which are coded as *other*. Some of the tasks which are included here involve miming, colouring, word-searchers, putting sentences in the correct order or semi-scripted conversations.

The codes in category 4, *grammatical element*, are rather self-explanatory, listing different aspects of grammar found in the textbooks. *Nouns* are divided into *word class*, a code which is applied to activities which require the learner to know what a noun is and how it is different from other word classes, or *pluralization*, a code which encapsulates both the notion of plural and singular as well as the concept of countable and uncountable nouns. Similarly, *adjectives* are divided into *word class*, understanding what constitutes an adjective, and *comparison*, covering all the comparative structures. *Verbs* are also coded with *word class*, and there is a code for *subject-verb agreement*, covering any activity which requires the learner to pay attention to concord between the subject and the verb. The remaining four codes all relate to tense, with *simple past*, *simple present*, *imperative* and *non-finite forms*, such as infinitive, present participle and past participle. These codes are applied whenever the textbooks pay special attention to the characteristics of these verb forms, or mention them by name. Pronouns are divided into *word class*, understanding what a pronoun is and does, and *subjective and objective cases*, focused on understanding how the pronoun changes depending on its function. Understanding when and how to use *existential there* is a category of its own. Finally, there are codes for *determiners*, mostly definite and indefinite articles, *prepositions*, such as practice on use and word class, and *syntax*, covering word order.

There is also a code for *other*, which is used for remaining grammatical forms that are so rarely mentioned they do not require separate codes, such as adverbs, conjunctions and the genitive.

3.3.3 Application of the framework

The first and most important question to consider in my coding process was which parts of the textbooks I should code. Of course, there are some parts which are clearly related to grammar, with large headlines saying “grammar practice” or conjugation tables. However, it was much harder to define what is *not* grammar. As mentioned in section 2.3.1, it is possible to learn language, and grammar, without an explicit focus on doing so. According to Krashen’s (2013) Comprehension Hypothesis, language acquisition occurs when the learner understands the message. This suggests that learners are able to acquire grammatical knowledge from every message they comprehend in the textbook. By this definition, I could have coded nearly everything in the textbooks, as most of the instructions and texts are in English. However, this is not an interpretation which aligns with my research question. As my leading question seeks to understand how grammar is presented, it implies an explicit focus on grammar. As such, I have not coded parts of the textbooks which could lead to implicit learning of grammar, but I have focused on the areas with an explicit grammar focus. Newby (2018) offers a good definition of a grammar exercise, describing it as “one in which one or more grammatical objectives are specified and which provides learners with opportunities to reflect on or make use of grammar in ways which facilitate knowledge and/or skill development” (p. 198). This means that a writing task which asks pupils to incorporate a certain grammar structure is considered a grammar exercise. On the other hand, if the task does not specify any particular grammar focus, it is not considered a grammar exercise and therefore not included in this study.

As the coding framework shows, the grammar exercises are coded according to four main categories: rule presentation, grammar level, activity and grammatical focus. Thus, each task should have at least four codes, one from each category. I have allowed for multiple codes to be applied from the category grammatical focus, as they are often mixed in the exercises, and sometimes used in juxtaposition to each other. For the other categories, only one code should be applied from each. This can sometimes present a challenge in the coding process, as one task sometimes includes several directives. In her framework discussion Brennhaug (2021) highlights this particular dilemma, which occurs when a task is designed as one cohesive exercise but includes multiple components

(p. 23). When these components call for different kinds of activities, the coder must decide whether to code them as multiple tasks or decide if one of the directives is more central to the task than the others. In this respect, Brennhaug's coding process differs from mine, as she decides to code these as multiple tasks, whereas I decided upon treating them as one. My reasons for this are partly due to how my analysis software Nvivo treats the scanned documents; it would present a technical challenge to divide tasks in such manner. Moreover, as my research question is focused on how the grammar is presented, it could be argued that by treating these tasks as individual exercises I am disregarding parts of the task design. In other words, if it is designed and presented as one exercise, I should treat it as such.

Grammar tasks which contain more than one directive serve as a good example of the interpretative actions I was faced with during the coding process. Whenever there were multiple directives within one task, I had to interpret what the main objective of the task was, and code it accordingly. Luckily, tasks like these were not as common in the textbooks I analysed, as they seem to be in Brennhaug's material. The reason could be that the book in her study is targeted towards older learners than the textbooks I analysed. Nevertheless, there were moments of subjective interpretation in other tasks as well. I frequently had to make judgement calls on where the division lies between two categories, such as how much explanation is needed for a task to be considered detailed instead of minimal. And, if the grammar rule is presented parallel to the tasks, is it then deductive or inductive? Decisions such as these are to be expected for anyone who performs thematic coding. As Bryman (2012) explains, thematic coding demands an interpretative approach, as "the analyst is searching not just for manifest content but for latent content as well. It becomes necessary to probe beneath the surface in order to ask deeper questions about what is happening" (p. 297). This analysis of latent content is exemplified in Figure 10 and Figure 11 below.

23 Fill in the correct verbs

Thomas _____ (am, are, is) a boy.

He _____ (have, has) a mother and a father.

They _____ (am, are, is) a family.

They _____ (live, lives) in Stavanger. William and

Thomas _____ (am, are, is) not brothers. They _____ (have, has)

different nationalities and they _____ (live, lives) in different countries.

The flight attendant _____ (am, are, is) a man. He _____ (have, has)

a job to do. We do not know where he _____ (live, lives).

RULE

We use verbs in the present simple tense to express what we do or what happens every day or what happens now and then.

Figure 10: Example A
(Engelsk 5: Workbook, 2020c, p. 14)

19 Fill in the right verb ●●○

I always _____ breakfast before school starts.

Mary _____ football every day.

Jason and Lea sometimes _____ tennis.

The postman _____ in the morning.

School _____ at half past three.

likes eats

come plays

finishes comes

eat

play like

finish

Figure 11: Example B
(Explore 5: My Workbook, 2020b, p. 10)

Both example A and example B ask the pupils to fill in the correct verb, and require the pupils to understand subject-verb agreement in order to do so. On the surface, both of these tasks also have the layout of a traditional gap-fill activity, with blank spaces in sentences and cue words nearby. However, the cue words in example A are placed behind each gap, providing the pupil with a maximum of three available options for each sentence. According to the coding framework, this qualifies the activity as a multiple-choice activity. In example B, the cue words are placed in a circle outside of the sentences, thus providing the learner with 10 choices for each sentence, which

qualifies it as a gap-fill activity. Of course, a mature reader might deduce that there are 10 options with two variations of each verb which is to be distributed between five sentences, and use this information strategically. Still, the task contains more than four options, which is the requirement I set for a gap-fill activity in the coding framework.

The coding was done using the software Nvivo, a software which was recommended to me since it allows for thematic coding on scanned pdf documents. One of the most useful features for a content analysis such as this, is the ability to create, rename, colour-code and create hierarchical structures before, during and after the coding process. There were, however, a few technical issues which became apparent after the coding had begun. First of all, I realized the Macintosh version I was working on is a stripped-down version compared to its Windows counterpart, and some features were missing. And since the codes were applied directly to the pdf itself using a square selection tool, the codes were set to reference a set of pixels, instead of an item. In what I can only assume to be an interface error, the visual representation of the selected area shifted slightly as I zoomed in or out, or as I was scrolling between pages, with the unfortunate effect that the coding could be off by a few pixels. For tasks in close proximity, it sometimes produced small sections of the documents which were coded twice, or coded as one task instead of two. As I discovered this, I had to revisit all the affected areas and clean up the coding. A final issue I wish to address is the visual representation of the applied codes, which can be seen in the figure below. The codes are presented as “coding stripes” on a vertical axis in a separate window, which sometimes made it difficult to quickly assess which codes were applied to each section. Figure 12 below shows the user interface and visualisation of coding stripes.

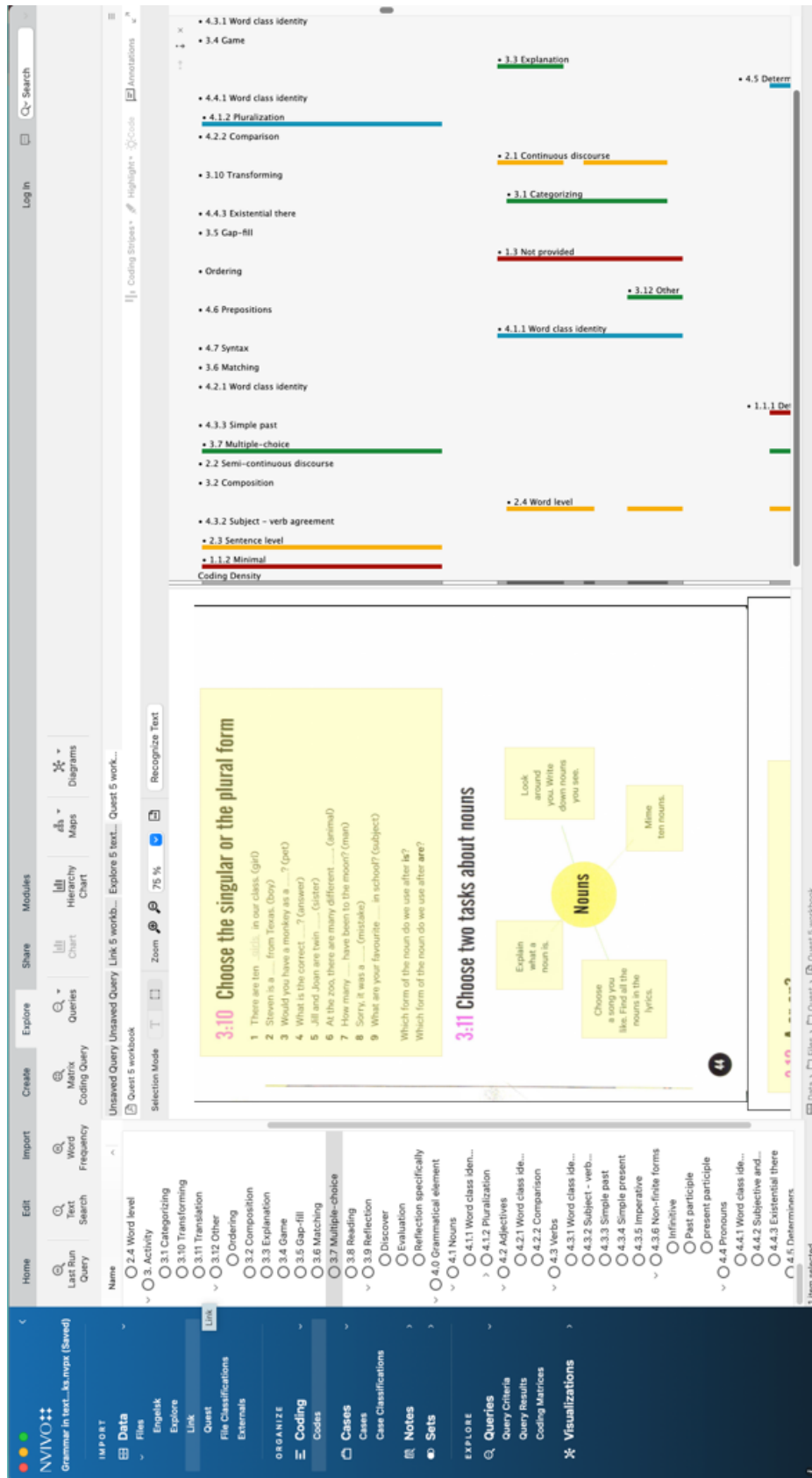


Figure 12: Nvivo user interface

4 Results and discussion

This chapter presents the results from the coding, and discusses them in relation to each other, previous research and theory. First, the overall results are presented together with an examination of the placement of the grammar instruction in the textbooks and workbooks. Then each of the main categories are studied in detail, as the results are calculated to percentages, distributed between book types or presented in cross-tabulations.

4.1 Overall results

In the analysed material, I identified 368 grammar tasks in total. 88 of the tasks are found in the textbooks, and 280 in the workbooks. 1578 codes were applied to these tasks. In total, all of the textbooks and workbooks comprise 1332 pages, which divided by the 368 grammar tasks means that there is one grammar task every 3,6 pages on average.

Below, table 2 presents a summary of all the results. As mentioned in section 3.3.3, each task is coded with one code from each main category, except *grammatical element*, in which I have allowed for multiple codes since many tasks require the learners to draw upon multiple grammatical features. This is the reason why the total number of codes is larger for the fourth main category.

The initial results show that the deductive approach is the most common way to present grammar rules, with 197 out of 368 tasks (54%). There are a significant number of tasks without any grammar explanation at all, and the inductive tasks are the least common. This will be discussed further in section 4.2. In category 2, *grammar level*, a *sentence level* approach is the most common, with 155 instances, followed by *word level* at 132 instances. There is a large gap between these categories and the discourse-related categories, which are investigated further in section 4.3. The most common activity type is *composition*, with 86 tasks, followed by *categorizing* with 52 tasks, *multiple-choice* with 43 tasks, and *gap-fill* with 38 tasks. All of the activity types are discussed more in-depth in section 4.4. Finally, the most common grammatical element is the *subject-verb agreement*, which was featured in 82 of the tasks. There are many tasks focusing on the noun, adjective and verb word classes, as well as conjugation of verbs in the simple past.

1. Rule presentation	368
1.1 Deductive	197
1.1.1 Detailed	69
1.1.2 Minimal	128
1.2 Inductive	33
1.2.1 Finding patterns	19
1.2.2 Stating rule	14
1.3 Not provided	138
2. Grammar level	368
2.1 Continuous discourse	52
2.2 Semi-continuous discourse	29
2.3 Sentence level	155
2.4 Word level	132
3. Activity	368
3.1 Categorizing	52
3.2 Composition	86
3.3 Explanation	23
3.4 Game	5
3.5 Gap-fill	38
3.6 Matching	9
3.7 Multiple-choice	43
3.8 Reading	35
3.9 Reflection	25
3.10 Transforming	27
3.11 Translation	9
3.12 Other	16
4. Grammatical element	474
4.1 Nouns	
4.1.1 Word class	43
4.1.2 Pluralization	33
4.2 Adjectives	
4.2.1 Word class	79
4.2.2 Comparison	25
4.3 Verbs	
4.3.1 Word class	34
4.3.2 Subject - verb agreement	82
4.3.3 Simple past	42
4.3.4 Simple present	22
4.3.5 Imperative	2
4.3.6 Non-finite forms	6
4.4 Pronouns	
4.4.1 Word class	15
4.4.2 Subjective and objective cases	9
4.5 Existential there	18
4.6 Determiners	29
4.7 Prepositions	18
4.8 Syntax	8
4.9 Other	9
Number of tasks	368

Table 2: Summary of coding

In all of the books, except the *Engelsk* textbook, there are clearly marked grammar sections using colour codes and grammar-related headings, indicating what kind of work the learners are to engage with. Presented alongside these grammar sections are explanations and tasks regarding punctuation, question words, affixes, pronunciation and contractions. These topics are not usually considered to be parts of grammar, but as they are presented in relation to grammar in the books, it signals a kinship between these topics and grammar to the learners. They are all parts of how we construct language, and especially texts, which is similar to Flognfeldt and Lund's (2016) perception of grammar as "resources and tools which are available to you when you want to say something meaningful in English" (p. 91). The presentation of these topics together with grammar can be understood as an example of Thornbury's (1999) pedagogic rules, which were discussed in section 2.2: the concept of grammar is generalized in consideration of the learners, and incorporates elements which linguists typically consider to be orthography or vocabulary. However, positioning grammar in clusters might reinforce the learners' perception of grammar as rules which are solely meant to be memorized, and something which is separated from the practical use of language.

4.2 Rule presentation

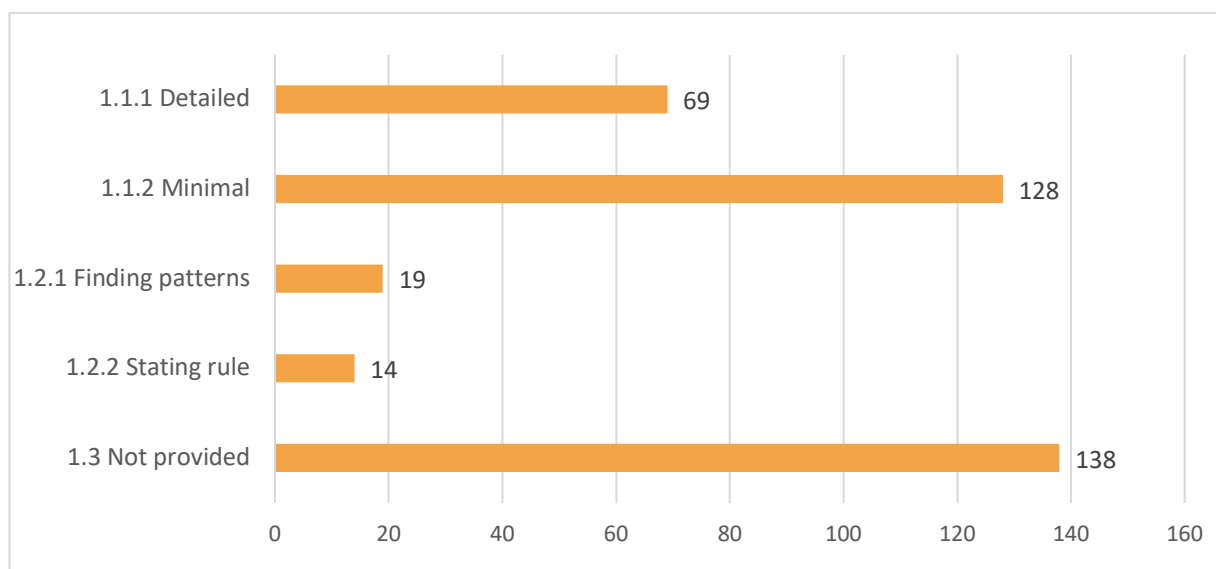


Figure 13: Results from category 1, rule presentation

As can be seen in Figure 13 above, the most frequent category is *not provided*, meaning that 37% (138/368) of the grammar exercises do not provide the learners with a rule explanation. 35% (128/368) of the tasks provide a minimal instruction, often in the form of examples of the target structure. The two inductive categories, *finding patterns* and *stating rule*, are the least common with 5% (19/368) and 4% (14/368) respectively. Finally, 19% (69/368) of the tasks provide the learner with a detailed description of the grammar rule.

Tasks without an explanation of the grammar rule require the learner to recall the rules themselves, thus testing the learner's grammatical ability. They might be a useful tool for both the teacher and the learner to identify areas which require more instruction and practice, and which grammatical aspects the learner understands. Tasks coded with *not provided* might thus serve as an evaluation tool by testing the learner's grammatical competence. Not providing an explanation of the grammar rule also requires the pupil to practice recalling the rule. Such grammar practice corresponds with the second stage in the PPP model, in which the pupils practice the target grammar structure in order to be able to produce grammatically correct language themselves. As discussed in section 2.3.2, the assumption behind this model is that accuracy will lead to fluency, and that enough practice eventually will result in fluent grammar production. Such accuracy-focused grammar practice corresponds with the linguistic fine-tuning Thornbury (1999) claims usually comes late in the language learning process. According to his critique of the PPP model, it might be too early to focus on grammatical perfection for pupils in year 5.

Since tasks coded as *minimal* do not provide a full explanation of the grammar rule, they can be seen as a scaffolded version of grammar practice. As they often provide examples of the target grammar structure before the task, but not an explanation of how it is achieved, they require the learner to deduce the rule themselves and thus practicing recalling the rule. There are similarities between the categories *detailed* and *stating rule*, as both of them provide an explanation of how the grammar rule works. As mentioned in section 2.3.2, the main difference between them lies in the order of instruction in relation to the task. The *detailed* tasks provide the rule before the task, whereas the tasks coded as *stating rule* present the task first, and then explain the rule behind the operation. It could be argued that the tasks coded as *finding patterns* are the ones which most closely aligns with what seems to be the core in inductive grammar teaching, namely that the

learner should be allowed to find the grammatical patterns themselves (e.g., Bader & Dypedahl, 2020, p. 259; Glaser, 2013, p. 152).

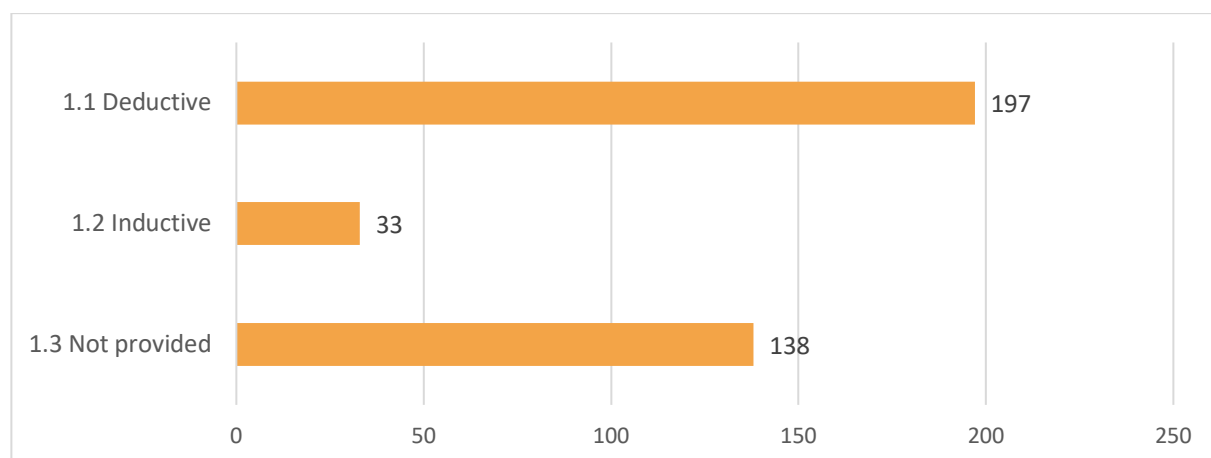


Figure 14: Didactic approach in rule presentation

In Figure 14 above, the two deductive categories *detailed* and *minimal* are merged, as well as the two inductive categories *stating rule* and *finding patterns* in order to examine the relationship between the deductive and inductive approach. The majority of the tasks, 53,5% (197/368) offer some kind of deductive explanation of the target grammar in the task, compared to only 9% (33/368) inductive tasks. This result is similar to what Askeland (2013) found in her study, in which there were very few inductive tasks as well. Out of the 181 tasks there were 14 with an inductive approach, which means that only 7,7% of the tasks in Askeland's study provided an inductive description of grammar. It is surprising that so few of the tasks have an inductive approach, since inductive learning is favoured by learning psychologists (Newby, 2018, p. 198). As discussed in section 2.3.2, the deductive approach is considered to be a form-focused approach, while the inductive approach is more focused on meaning. Since the majority of the tasks present the grammar deductively, it could be argued that the textbooks and workbooks have a form-focused grammar presentation.

Some parallels can be drawn between a deductive grammar presentation and a prescriptive view of grammar rules. By presenting the rules first, and then asking the pupils to memorize and copy the form, the grammar is presented as an instruction on how to produce language correctly. This is

similar to a prescriptive view of grammar rules, as it provides the pupils with clear examples of how English is “supposed” to be written or spoken. While Brennhaug (2021) does not explore the deductive and inductive aspects of grammar tasks, she does reflect on the prescriptive presentation of grammar. One of the main conclusions in her study is that the textbook seems to emphasize a prescriptive approach to grammar, rather than understanding the grammar. She argues that the prescriptive approach to grammar is unfavourable since it seems to overshadow other meaningful aspects of grammar (p. 58).

Askeland (2013) argues that an inductive approach to grammar teaching correlates with a language awareness approach, as the pupils discover the rules for themselves (p. 35). This appears to be a significant connection as the subject curriculum emphasises language awareness, as seen in section 1.3. From this perspective, teaching grammar through an inductive approach facilitates the learners’ language awareness, thus reflecting the core values in the subject curriculum. The central values in the subject curriculum also state that the pupils should “explore the language from the very start” (Udir, 2020). This explorative approach to language learning permeates the curriculum, as the learning goals frequently call upon the pupils to *explore* different aspects of English. In the digital curriculum support, the verb explore is described as “experiencing and experimenting, often encouraging curiosity and sense of wonder. To explore may mean to sense, seek, discover, observe and examine” (Udir, 2020). This quote has several similarities to the description of the inductive approach in section 2.3.2.

Against this backdrop, it seems textbooks and workbooks would benefit from a more inductive approach to grammar. Not only is it recommended by many authors, it would also steer the grammar presentation more towards a focus on meaning, instead of a prescriptive and form-focused presentation. An inductive presentation of grammar also seems to correspond well with the subject curriculum, as it promotes language awareness and language exploration.

The teacher’s guide to the Explore series does, however, mention that their textbook facilitates an inductive approach to grammar, presented in relevant context (Edwards et al., 2020c, p. ii), which expresses a clear intent for an inductive approach. And, as will be seen in Figure 16 a few pages below, Explore 5 My Book is the textbook with most inductive tasks, thus matching the authors’ expressed intention of an inductive approach to grammar.

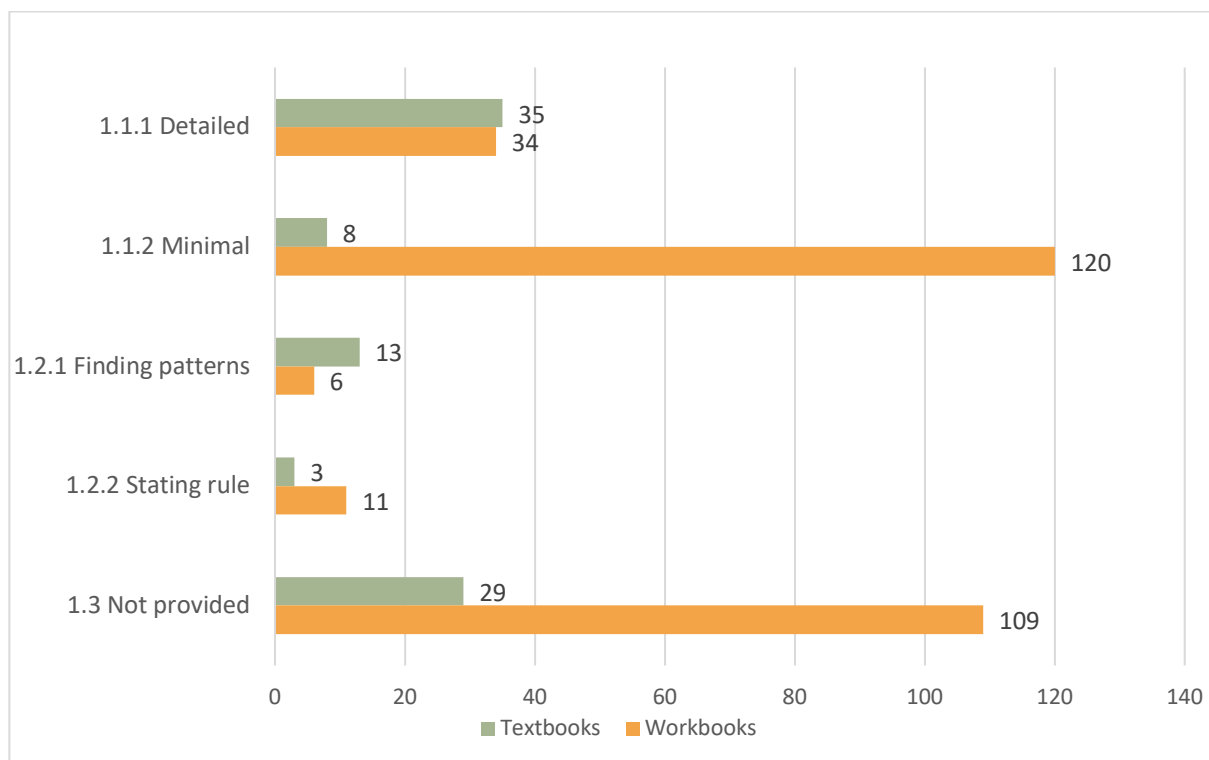


Figure 15: Rule presentation in textbooks and workbooks

In Figure 15 above, the categories are presented according to which type of book they appear in. In this layout, another pattern emerges: The two largest categories, *minimal* and *not provided*, are clearly more favoured in the workbooks than in the textbooks. This matches the indicated workflow in the textbooks, as the learners often are asked to read from the textbook first, and then move on to the workbook to continue their work. In their workbooks, the learners are met with tasks with less rule explanations, or even no instruction at all, thus testing their knowledge.

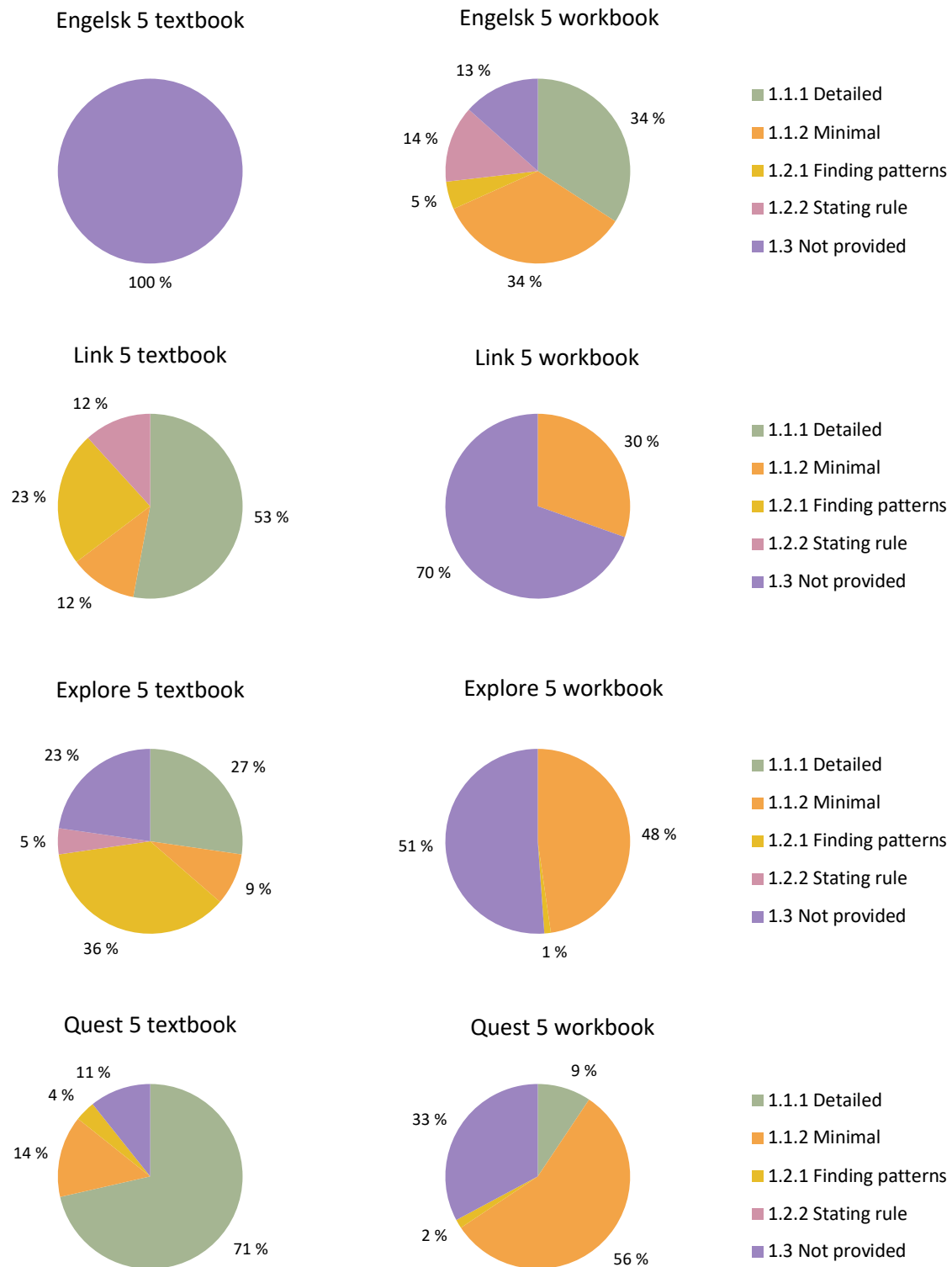


Figure 16: Rule presentation in each book

In Figure 16 the rule presentation is displayed percentagewise for each book, and it displays some significant differences between the publishers. While the *Link*, *Explore* and *Quest* series all follow the previously mentioned pattern of more detailed and more inductive rule explanations in the textbooks, and less instructions in their workbooks, the writers of the *Engelsk* series have taken a different approach and placed all of their detailed and inductive descriptions in their workbook. Considering that the grammar tasks in the textbook consist only of word lists sorted according to word class, it could be argued there is very little grammar in the book over all. On the other hand, in the *Engelsk* workbook, there are very few tasks which do not provide any grammar explanation in relation to the task. Only 13% of the tasks fall into the category *not provided*, which is considerably less than in the other three workbooks.

The lack of grammar instruction in the textbook is addressed in the *Engelsk* series teacher's guide, saying the grammar instruction is placed in the workbook in order to tie the explanations and examples closer together with the grammar tasks (Solberg & Unnerud, 2020a, p. 5). It is thus made clear that placing the grammar instructions in the workbook, instead of the textbook, is an intentional choice based on a didactic approach in which the rule explanation should be in close proximity to the tasks. Moreover, there are references to inductive learning, although not explicitly stated, in the section addressing deep learning: "We aim for pupils to explore the language, not just to learn rules and apply them. They should try to see patterns, not just cram endings in different verb forms" (Solberg & Unnerud, 2020a, p. 4, my translation). This quote shows that the authors of the *Engelsk* series distance themselves from a rote learning approach to grammar, as they emphasize exploration of patterns instead of memorization of individual items.

As previously mentioned, the *Explore* textbook has the largest amount of inductive tasks. The *Quest* textbook, on the other hand, seems to adhere to a deductive approach, as 85% of their tasks provide either a detailed or minimal description. The *Link* textbook is the only one to provide some form of rule explanation to each task, as it has no tasks coded as *not provided*. The *Link* workbook and *Explore* workbook are both dominated by tasks provided either by minimal or no description, whereas the *Quest* workbook and the *Engelsk* workbook provide a more varied approach.

4.3 Grammar level

Figure 17 below visualises how the tasks are coded according to the level the grammar was presented at. Grammar is most frequently presented and worked with at sentence level, constituting 42% (155/368) of all the tasks. A word level approach is also common, with 36% (132/368) of the tasks falling into this category. While the categories *word level* and *sentence level* are rather even, there is a distinct gap between them and grammar presented at a discourse level. Combined, the categories *continuous discourse*, and *semi-continuous discourse* make up just over one fifth of the total, or 22% (81/368).

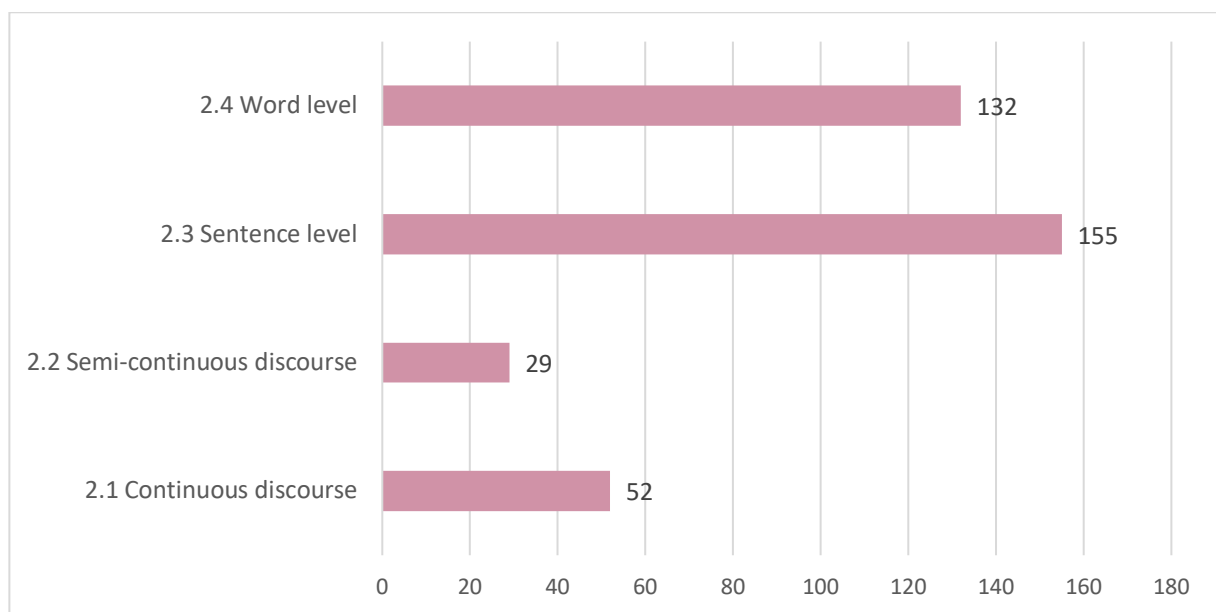


Figure 17: Results from category 2. grammar level

Comparing these results with the Norwegian studies presented in section 1.4, there are definitely similarities. In his textbook comparison, Burner (2005) concludes that “grammar beyond the sentence level is not so common in the textbooks studied” (p. 72). However, his study does not provide frequencies on how much of the grammar is presented in a discourse-related context, and it is hard to gauge how many of the tasks Burner refers to. The tasks Askeland (2013) studied mostly operate at sentence level or word level, with 72% (72/181) of the tasks falling into this category (p. 71). 15% (28/181) of the tasks were coded as discourse, which actually is lower than my study. Interestingly, these results differ from Brennhaug’s (2021) study, in which 67% (259/385) of the grammar tasks appeared in a coherent or semi-coherent context (p. 32). That is considerably

more than in the other studies, as well as mine. A possible explanation is that the textbook in Brennhaug's study was in Norwegian, and thus targeted towards what is expected to be most of the pupils' L1, whereas the other studies were conducted on books for English as a foreign language. Nonetheless, the Norwegian textbook includes both of the written standards *bokmål* and *nynorsk*, and one of these forms will likely be unfamiliar and more challenging to the pupils.

As mentioned in section 2.1.3, it is recommended for grammar teaching to extend beyond a traditional sentence level approach, and adopt a wider perspective including discourse and context. Based on what literature says, one would expect grammar to be presented in discourse more frequently than 22%. Bader and Dypedahl (2020) argue that in grammar teaching, context is "a factor that learners and teachers should always have in mind" (p. 256). Considering the results from Burner's (2005), Askeland's (2013) and my study, context is something which textbook writers also should try to keep in the forefront of their mind. Brennhaug's (2021) study shows that it definitely is possible to present textbook grammar at discourse level more often. While Brennhaug might have operated with slightly different category distinctions, or made interpretations which might vary from mine, the difference between the results in her study and mine are large enough to be considered significant. The increased focus on intercultural understanding in the LK20 curriculum presents another aspect in which context is crucial, as cultural sensitivity requires the learner to be mindful of the context in which the communication happens. Studying language and grammar in context can thus benefit the pupils in seeing the links between grammatical form and meaning, while facilitating an understanding of how different situations require different communication patterns.

The Link series teacher's guide advocates grammar teaching in small doses in interaction with texts, and explains that the decision to place all the grammar at the end of the book is due to the large number of grammatical elements which are relevant for each text (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 18). In the guide, the authors give suggestions for which texts the teacher might use as they call attention to the featured grammatical elements, but they stress that these are only suggestions and that it is the teacher's choice when to address each element. So, while the tasks themselves do not necessarily instruct the reader to consider grammar while they are reading a text, the teacher's guide expresses a clear intention for the teacher to facilitate a grammar perspective during the reading. This is a good example of the limitations of this study, which were discussed in section 1.1.

As this study only covers the textbooks and workbooks, it does not provide information on how the teachers present the grammar in the classrooms. Because of this, there are nearly infinite possibilities to how the grammar might actually be presented to the pupils, and it is impossible to predict how often the teachers choose to address grammar from a discourse perspective. Some teachers might approach the grammar sections in Link almost exclusively from a discourse perspective, while others might choose to work with it separately in isolated sentences.

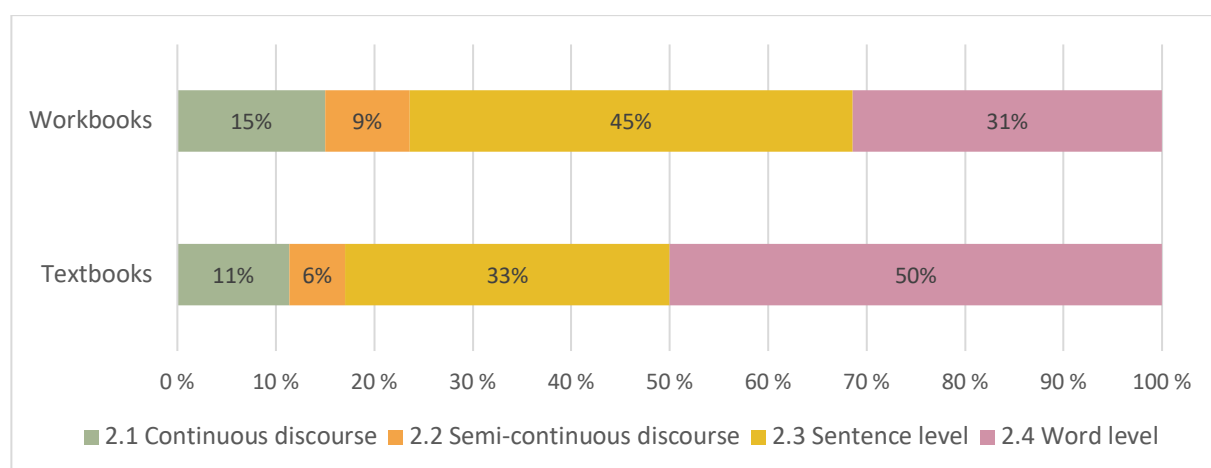


Figure 18: Grammar level in textbooks and workbooks

In Figure 18 above the results are divided between textbooks and workbooks. Since the textbooks are full of long, coherent pieces of text, I wished to find out if this means that the grammar is presented at a discourse level more frequently in these books. Against this background, it seems surprising that half of the tasks in the textbooks present grammar at a word level. In terms of percentage, the figure shows that the remaining three categories are all less frequent in the textbook than in the workbook. One reason for this might be the intended interaction between the books; the textbooks frequently refer to grammar tasks in the workbooks, and the workbooks often ask the learners to read texts which are found in the textbooks. So, while the task itself is in the workbook, it may call upon the learner to read a text from the textbook, and will thus be coded as continuous discourse. It could also be interpreted as a bottom-up strategy, in which the grammar is first presented at a word level, and then progressively placed in more complex context as the pupils continue their practice in the workbooks.

	2.1 Continuous discourse	2.2 Semi-continuous discourse	2.3 Sentence level	2.4 Word level
4.1 Nouns				
4.1.1 Word class	12	1	6	24
4.1.2 Pluralization	1	0	10	22
4.2 Adjectives				
4.2.1 Word class	23	0	20	35
4.2.2 Comparison	2	3	11	9
4.3 Verbs				
4.3.1 Word class	10	1	5	18
4.3.2 Subject - verb agreement	4	12	62	4
4.3.3 Simple past	6	3	19	14
4.3.4 Simple present	1	1	13	7
4.3.5 Imperative	1	0	1	0
4.3.6 Non-finite forms	1	0	0	5
4.4 Pronouns				
4.4.1 Word class	1	0	9	5
4.4.2 Subjective and objective cases	1	0	8	0
4.5 Existential there	1	6	9	2
4.6 Determiners	2	3	5	19
4.7 Prepositions	5	8	3	2
4.8 Syntax	1	1	6	0
4.9 Other	1	2	5	1

Table 3: Cross-tabulation of grammar level and grammatical element

In section 2.1.3, I mentioned pronouns as an example of a cohesive tie which extends beyond the sentence. Inspired by this, I wished to see which grammatical elements that are presented at each level, especially at discourse level. Table 3 above presents the code distribution for the grammar tasks between category 2, *grammar level*, and category 4, *grammatical element*. The table shows that tasks with a focus on pronouns, both *word class* and *subjective and objective cases*, are usually presented at sentence level. Both of these categories are featured only one time each in the context of a continuous discourse. Instead, the most common grammatical elements in continuous discourse are the noun, adjective and verb word classes. This could support the before-mentioned bottom-up strategy, as word classes often are among the first grammar objectives to be taught to young learners. If the learners already have been introduced to and practiced word classes in previous years, presenting them in continuous discourse may be a calculated next step in progression. The learning goals presented for the first chapter in the Quest series teacher's guide mention repetition of the word classes nouns and adjectives, thus implying this is something the

pupils already should be familiar with (Bade et al., 2020a, p. 16). In addition, the guide states that the pupils are to work systematically with word classes as a language learning objective (p. 5). This carries connotations of a structured progression which is organized carefully, and may include word class activities in a progressively more context-rich environment.

4.4 Activity

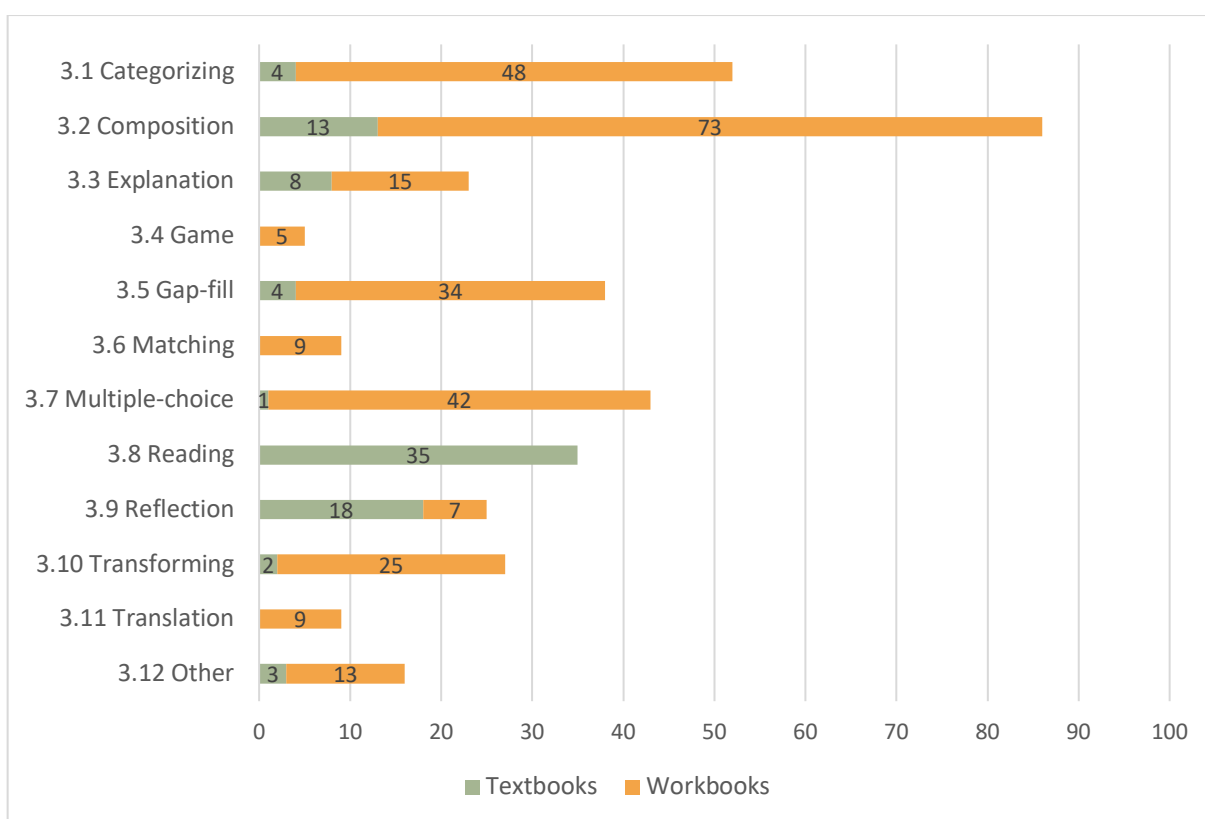


Figure 19: Category 3, activity, in textbooks and workbooks

Figure 19 above displays the distribution of activity types between the textbooks and workbooks. In total, there are 280 grammar tasks in the workbooks and 88 grammar tasks in the textbooks. The most common activity type is *composition*, followed by *categorizing*, *multiple-choice* and *gap-fill*, which together constitute 60% (219/368) of the tasks. Although the workbooks contain more grammar tasks, two of the activities are more frequent in the textbooks: *reading* and *reflection*. Activities coded as reading are the ones which do not require any action from the pupils besides reading the text, and is the only activity which does not occur in the workbooks at all. And while

there are a few reflection activities in the workbooks, most of them are in the textbooks. On the other hand, the categories *game*, *matching* and *translation* are exclusively found in the workbooks. In addition to this, the majority of the *multiple-choice* and *transforming* tasks are in the workbooks as well. These categories will be further explored in the sections below.

	1.1 Deductive	1.2 Inductive	1.3 Not provided
3.1 Categorizing	2	0	2
3.2 Composition	9	0	4
3.3 Explanation	6	2	0
3.4 Game	0	0	0
3.5 Gap-fill	4	0	0
3.6 Matching	0	0	0
3.7 Multiple-choice	1	0	0
3.8 Reading	12	2	21
3.9 Reflection	6	12	0
3.10 Transforming	1	0	1
3.11 Translation	0	0	0
3.12 Other	2	0	1
Total	43	16	29

Table 4: Cross-tabulation of category 1, rule presentation, and category 3, activity, in textbooks

Table 4 above presents how the grammar tasks in the textbooks are coded according to category 1, *rule presentation*, and category 3, *activity*. The most striking result is the tasks coded as *reading* but not providing any explanation of the grammar rule – which may seem contradictory. That is because all of these 21 instances are from the Engelsk 5 textbook, which are the word lists categorized according to word class. Of the remaining reading tasks, 12 of them present the rule deductively, while only 2 of them apply an inductive approach. This means that, except for the word lists in Engelsk 5 textbook, the reading activities are predominantly deductive grammar rule explanations. On the other hand, 2/3 of the reflection activities present the grammar inductively, with 12 inductive tasks and 6 deductive tasks. This may be expected, as reflection tasks which require the pupil to discover, analyse and see patterns fit very well with an inductive grammar

presentation, in which the examples and activities are presented before the rule. Overall, most of the inductive tasks are reflection activities, with 12 out of 16 tasks.

	1.1 Deductive	1.2 Inductive	1.3 Not provided
3.1 Categorizing	20	1	27
3.2 Composition	45	7	21
3.3 Explanation	5	3	7
3.4 Game	1	2	2
3.5 Gap-fill	22	0	12
3.6 Matching	5	0	4
3.7 Multiple-choice	25	1	16
3.8 Reading	0	0	0
3.9 Reflection	2	1	4
3.10 Transforming	21	1	3
3.11 Translation	4	0	5
3.12 Other	4	1	8
Total	154	17	109

Table 5: Cross-tabulation of category 1, rule presentation, and category 3, activity, in workbooks

In Table 5 above, the grammar tasks in the workbooks are presented according to rule presentation and activity. The workbooks provide few inductive rule explanations, but the tasks which do are primarily *composition*, *explanation* or *game*. Due to low numbers these results should be interpreted with caution. It could be argued these activities are the most creative, and require the pupils to use their imagination more freely than other activities. In contrast, activities operating in a more rigid framework with only one correct answer, such as *categorizing*, *gap-fill*, *multiple-choice* and *transforming*, are predominately coded as *deductive* or *not provided*. This implies that the inductive activities tend to be more creative, and that deductive activities often require the learner to find one correct answer. The exception to this trend is the category *composition*, which by definition is open-ended and allow for more than one correct answer. Although this is a creative activity, many of the tasks present the target grammar in a deductive manner. As mentioned in section 2.3.2, inductive grammar tasks invite the pupils to take on a more active role in their language learning, as they take part of the knowledge construction instead of being recipients. This

corresponds with the creative aspects found within the inductive activities, as they allow the pupils to take part and be co-creators in their grammar instruction.

In grammar teaching, it is vital to be aware of what the goal of the teaching is. The subject curriculum's central values state that the pupils should "become confident users of English so that they can use English to learn, communicate and connect with others" (Udir, 2020). This corresponds with the action-oriented approach in CEFR, which relies heavily on communicative competence (Council of Europe, 2001). Both the curriculum and CEFR focus on what the pupils are able to do with the language, and presenting knowledge about the language as an asset in the learning, but not as the main goal. Following this directive, the Quest teacher's guide declares production of texts as one of the overarching goals for pupils in the years 5-7 (Bade et al., 2020a, p. 4). This may be one of the reasons why composition is the most frequent activity type, comprising 23% (86/368) of all the tasks.

Since the primary goal of English language teaching is to become confident users of English, Newby's (2018) comments on the role of grammar pedagogy seem particularly relevant, as he argues the overall aim is to "support the learners in reaching the stage where they can use grammar correctly and appropriately in authentic situations" (p. 200). Most authentic communication requires learners to produce language quickly and automatically, thus relying on their implicit grammar knowledge, which was discussed in section 2.3.1. Newby (2018) argues that there are four cognitive stages involved in such grammar acquisition, and that each stage is activated by different kinds of exercises. Each stage is important and contributes to the acquisition of grammar, therefore demanding a variety in the exercises.

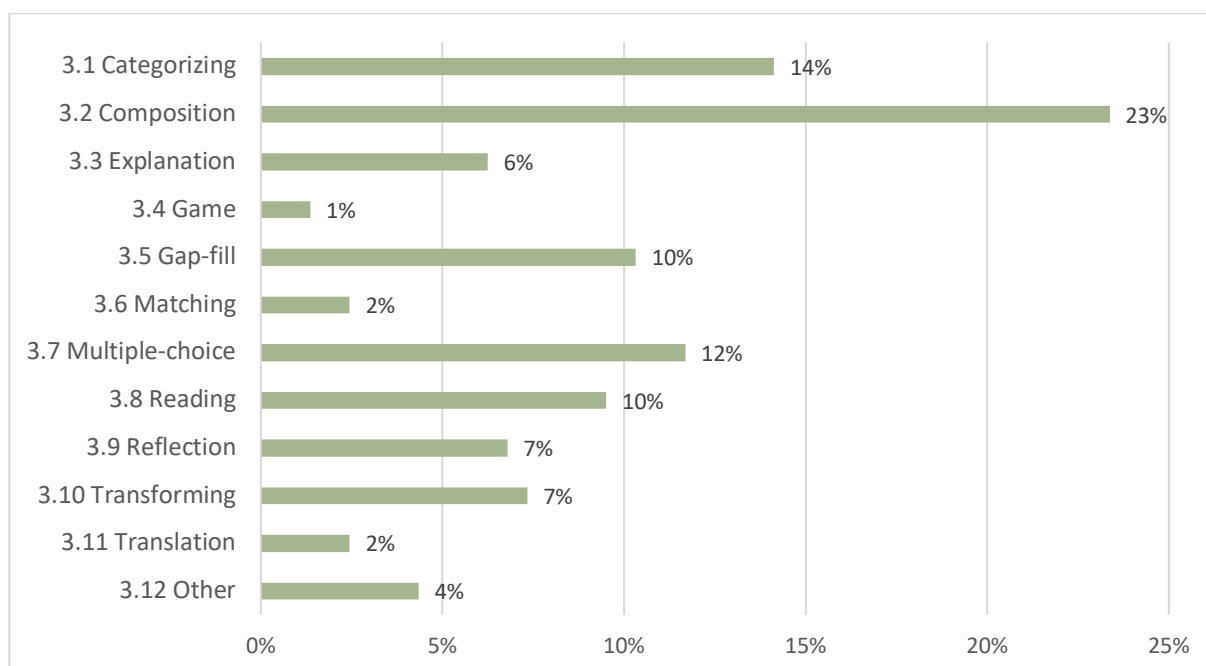


Figure 20: Task variety

The variety of tasks is presented in Figure 20 above, with the percentage of each activity type. The most common categories *composition*, *categorizing*, *multiple-choice* and *gap-fill* constitute 60% (219/368) of all the tasks. Composition tasks allow the pupils to construct texts using their own words, and require a certain degree of internalized grammar in order to get their meaning across in a concise manner. However, more rigid and heavily scaffolded activities such as *multiple-choice* and *gap-fill* tasks do not practice production in the same way. Newby (2015) explains that tasks like these require the pupils to add discrete items of grammar to pre-fabricated ideas from the authors, thus testing their explicit knowledge (p. 24). He claims the issue with this concept is that they do not provide opportunities for rehearsal of grammar production, and thus fail to promote grammar fluency development. The category *matching* also fits this pattern: the explicit knowledge is tested through pre-fabricated ideas, and together with *gap-fill* and *multiple-choice* they constitute 24% (90/368) of the tasks. Tasks involving *categorizing*, which is the second most common activity with 14% (52/368) of the tasks, can be seen as both a test of declarative knowledge, but also as an awareness-raising activity if the grammar is displayed in context. *Translation* activities, which derive from the grammar-translation method discussed in section 2.3.2, are among the least common activities with only 2% (9/368) of the tasks. This suggests that the modern textbooks and workbooks do not apply the grammar-translation method for grammar teaching. Game is the smallest category, with only 1% (5/368) of the tasks. However, given the affordances provided by the digital

medium, it is reasonable to expect most games to be placed within the accompanying digital resources.

There does, however, seem to be many tasks which adhere to the PPP model. It is common for the practice stage to involve conventional activities such as gap-filling, which are meant to automate the grammar skills. The categories *gap-fill*, *multiple-choice*, *categorizing*, *transforming* and *matching* all seem to match this notion of “practice makes perfect”, as they require the pupils to perform activities with simple instructions and only one correct answer. Together, these activities constitute 46% (169/368), which is nearly half of the tasks. The final stage in the PPP model, production, is likely to be represented by the composition activities, especially the ones which require the pupil to write a text using a specific grammatical element. Seen from this perspective, a large portion of the grammar tasks fit the PPP model.

4.5 Grammatical element

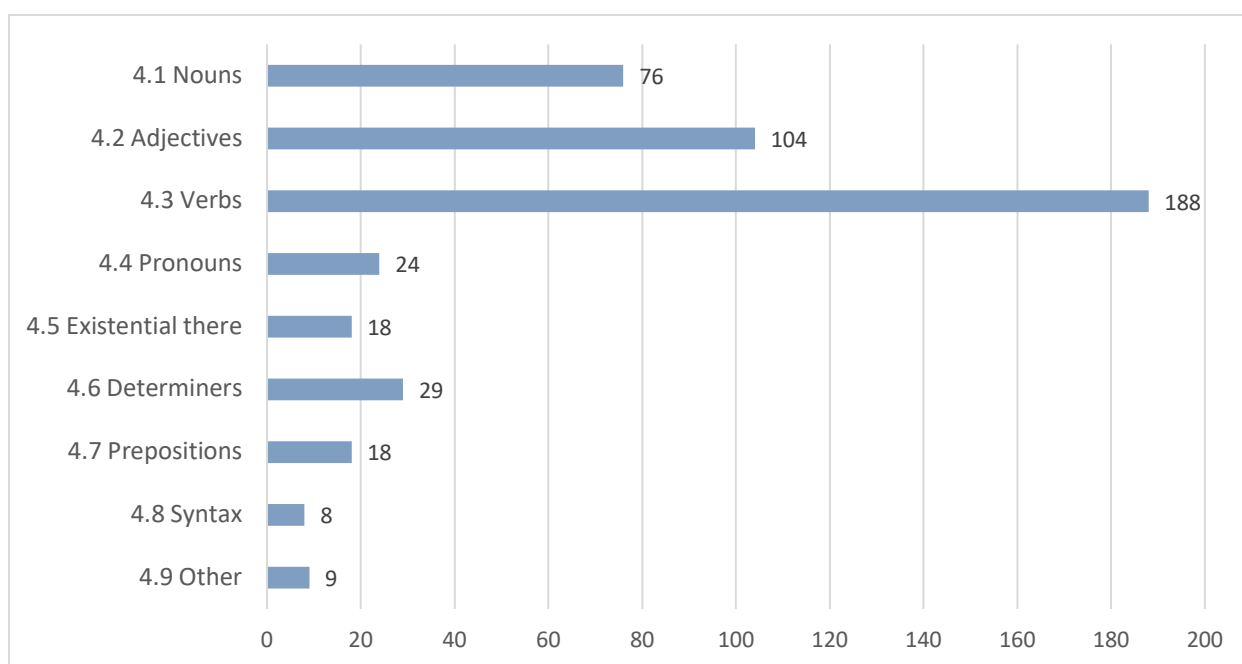


Figure 21: Overview of grammatical elements

The bar chart in Figure 21 above displays how many times each grammatical element is featured in a grammar task, with the sub-categories for nouns, adjectives, verbs and pronouns compiled. As I

allowed for more than one code to be applied for this main category the results show how many times the grammatical element is featured in the tasks, not the amount of tasks. Overall, it is most common for the textbooks and workbooks to focus on verbs, which are featured 188 times, followed by adjectives at 104 times, and nouns at 76 times. These three word classes clearly dominate the grammatical focus in the books. The other word classes are rather evenly distributed, and syntax is only featured 8 times. This seems surprising, as syntax often is considered such an integral part of grammar (Thornbury, 1999, p. 1). Both of the definitions of grammar in section 2.1 included references to syntax, but it is barely featured in the books. In fact, as can be seen in Figure 22 and Figure 23 below, syntax is only featured in the workbooks. However, in order to explicitly study syntax, the pupils need an understanding of how words can be categorized and fulfil different functions in a text, which is separated from the meaning of the word. Understanding how words can be connected through features and functions can help learners see the patterns which govern the English language, and working with word classes can be seen as a step in this direction. As such, learning word classes can be seen as a stepping stone in order to understand and discuss syntax. Since the subject curriculum explicitly mentions syntax as a learning goal for year 7 (Udir, 2020), it is likely that the focus on syntax increases in the textbooks targeted towards pupils in year 6 and 7.

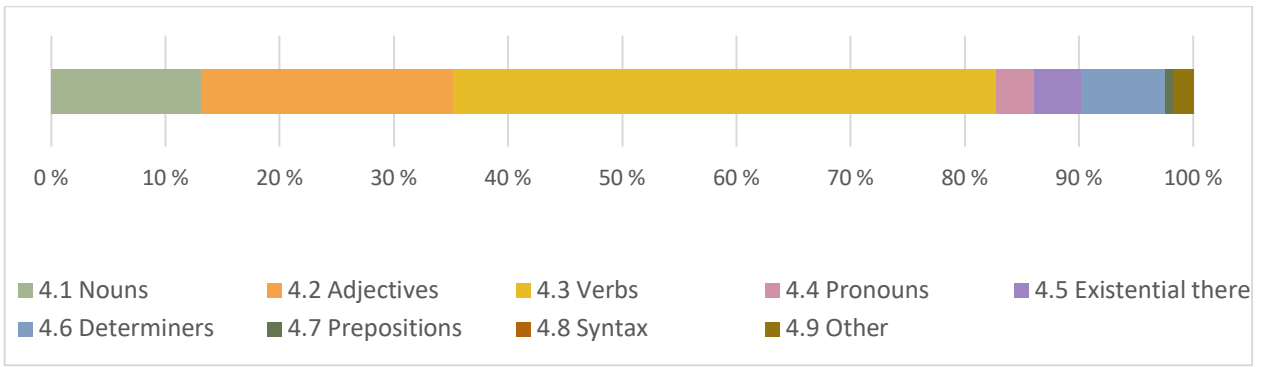


Figure 22: Grammatical elements featured in textbooks

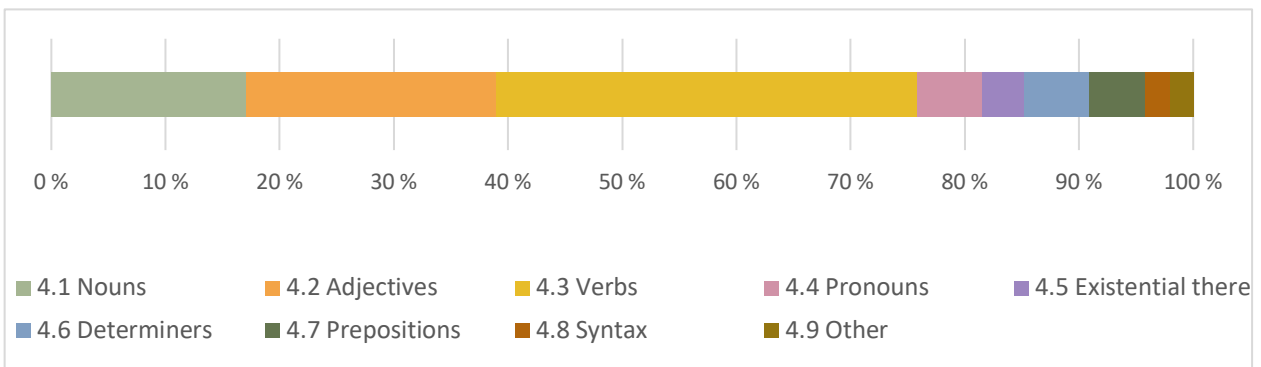


Figure 23: Grammatical elements featured in workbooks

Figure 22 and Figure 23 above show that the distribution of grammatical elements is rather even between textbooks and workbooks, with a slightly larger portion of the tasks focusing on verbs in the textbooks. As the textbooks in general provide more detailed rule descriptions, this suggests that the teaching materials in this study target verbs specifically. The workbooks have a larger proportion of preposition tasks, compared to the textbooks. Since prepositions are more idiomatic than other grammatical elements, there are less rules to learn. Instead, repetition-based activities with minimal or no instruction, which there are many of in the workbooks, can be used to practice prepositional phrases.

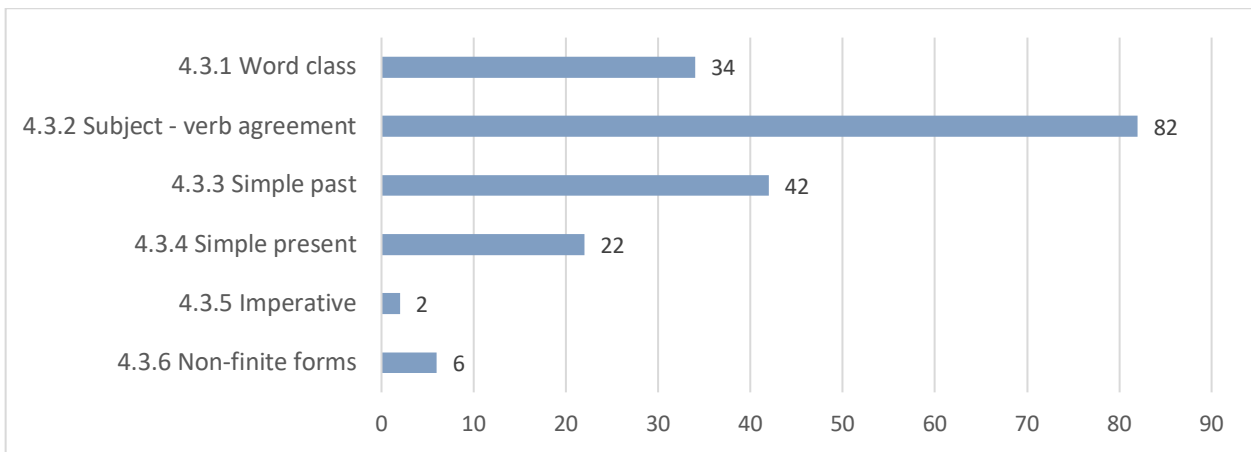


Figure 24: Grammatical focus for verbs in textbooks and workbooks

There are many tasks in the books which target word classes specifically, asking the pupils to identify words within specific word classes. The majority of the noun, adjective and pronoun tasks are focused on word class. However, this is not the case for verbs. As seen in Figure 24 above, the most common grammatical element is the subject-verb agreement, which is featured 82 times in the grammar tasks. The simple past is only about half as frequent, while a focus on verbs as a word class is the third most common element. It might be unexpected that the simple present is coded only 22 times, since this is the tense many verbs are first introduced in. That is because the coding was not done according to the tense the words were presented in, but according to the explicit focus of the task. Therefore, the tasks coded as *simple present* are instances where the focus was specifically on the simple present, either in comparison to other tenses or by using explicit meta-language.

5 Summary and conclusion

With the introduction of the new national curriculum LK20, Norwegian textbook publishers revised their learning materials in order to facilitate English language learning in accordance with the updated subject curriculum. As these books are new to the market, there is a need for research analysing them from a scientific standpoint, and it is my hope this study may help fill this void. The intention for this research is to investigate grammar in the new textbooks, as stated in my research question *how is grammar presented in English textbooks in Norway?* In order to narrow the scope of the research, I have explored the grammar presentation from two main perspectives. The first perspective is to investigate which linguistic-didactic theories are visible in the presentation of grammar. I examined this by coding the grammar tasks according to how the grammar rule was presented, in which context the grammar operates, and what activity type the task is. The second perspective is to explore which grammatical elements are the most prominent, which is achieved by coding the grammar tasks according to their grammatical focus. Together, these perspectives form the foundation for my coding framework, which was applied in a structured content analysis. Although content analysis can be performed both as a quantitative and qualitative research method, I have continuously strived for a quantitative approach, in order to analyse the grammar as objectively as possible. My discussion on research methods concluded that a quantitative content analysis uses pre-determined coding categories, for which I chose a directed approach. The categories were developed from existing theories on grammar didactics and previous research within the field. In order to minimize modifications to the coding framework, I piloted the coding process and revised the framework before the actual coding process. Furthermore, the analysis of the collected data uses the frequency of the codes as a starting point, another feature which is commonly associated with quantitative research.

I believe content analysis is a suitable approach to study grammar in textbooks, as it allows for a systematic approach. The data revealed certain patterns in the grammar presentation, which were explored further in light of relevant didactic theories. In the first coding category, *rule presentation*, the most common way to present grammar is with no rule presentation at all. For the tasks which do present the grammar rule, the two deductive categories *detailed* and *minimal* are the most frequent. Only 9% of the tasks are presented inductively, and the inductive tasks tend to be placed in the textbooks. Comparing these results with previous research shows a tendency for a

prescriptive and form-focused approach in the grammar presentation in English textbooks, where the explorative and inductive approach is given less attention. An increased focus on inductive grammar learning could benefit the pupils' language awareness, an attribute which is featured in the core values of the English subject curriculum. The Explore series has the highest frequency of inductive tasks, which correlates with the expressed intent in their teacher's guide.

With much of recent literature calling for grammar to be studied from a discourse perspective, I examined the textbooks and workbooks to find out how many of the tasks fit this recommendation. The results show that only 22% of the tasks present grammar in continuous or semi-continuous discourse, and the grammar which is presented in continuous discourse is usually related to word classes. Two of the previous studies also report a low amount of grammar tasks presented in context, with the exception of Brennhaug's study of a Norwegian textbook which reports 67% discourse-related grammar tasks. This suggests that grammar is more commonly presented at a discourse-level for the pupils' L1 grammar education. In addition, it shows that it is entirely possible to design textbooks with more discourse level grammar tasks. However, a lack of discourse level grammar tasks does not mean that grammar cannot be studied at discourse level. This is evident in the Link series teacher's guide, as it provides examples of grammatical features the teacher might call attention to during the reading. In the textbooks, a word level approach is the most common, whereas the workbooks contain more grammar tasks at sentence level. Overall, 42% of the tasks operate at sentence level and 36% on word level.

My examination of the activity types reveals several interesting patterns. At 23%, the most common activity type is composition, which allows the pupils to practice their text and speech production. There is a considerable amount of *multiple-choice* and *gap-fill* activities. Together, these two categories constitute 22% of all the tasks. While they can facilitate practice and testing of explicit grammar knowledge, they can also be criticized for being mechanical and drill-like. These activities correspond with the practice stage in the PPP model, as do the categories *categorizing*, *transforming* and *matching*. Together, these categories make up 46% of the tasks. 10% of the tasks require no extra action from the pupils except reading, and all of these tasks are placed in the textbooks. The reading tasks predominantly consist of deductive grammar rule explanations. Most of the reflection activities are placed in the textbooks as well, but in contrast to the reading activities, the majority of them have inductive rule explanations. In general, the inductive tasks tend

to involve a creative form of activity, whereas the tasks with a deductive rule explanation tend to be more rigid. While most of the composition activities present the grammar in a deductive manner, there are some inductive tasks as well.

Verbs are the most frequent grammatical element in the tasks, followed by adjectives and nouns. The tasks involving adjectives, nouns and pronouns primarily focus on the word classes themselves, but the most common feature for the verb-tasks is the subject-verb agreement. The second most frequent grammatical focus for verbs is the simple past, and verbs as a word class is the third most frequent focus. There is very little explicit focus on syntax, as this is only targeted 8 times. However, working with word classes can prepare the pupils for explicit work with syntax later on, as it can help them understand how words can share features which are not connected with meaning, and fulfil different functions in a sentence.

In conclusion, the results from this study show that the English textbooks most often present grammar rules with a deductive approach at a sentence or word level. Grammar in discourse, on the other hand, makes up a surprisingly low portion of the total. The most common activity types involve either production-based activities such as composition, or activities for grammar practice, such as categorization, gap-fill and multiple-choice. Verbs are the most common grammatical feature, especially the subject-verb agreement and simple past. In addition to this, there are many tasks which target the identity of the word classes of adjectives, nouns and pronouns.

There is still a need for further research on grammar in textbooks. It would be valuable to investigate how the textbooks are applied in the classrooms, and if the grammar instruction takes on a more inductive approach as it is presented by the teacher. There is also a need to investigate textbooks targeted at other levels, and the accompanying digital resources. Since this study revealed very few tasks targeting syntax, it would be useful to examine if there are more syntax-related grammar tasks in year 6 and 7, as syntax is an explicit learning goal for year 7. It would also be useful to investigate the pupils' perception of the grammar tasks, or which ones they find motivating and rewarding.

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