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Norwegian EFL Learners' Perception of Gaming and Language Learning

A Qualitative Study of Students in Grades 5-7

This thesis is worth 30 study points

Abstract

This study explores the perceptions of six Norwegian students in grades 5-7 who learn English as a foreign language (EFL). It researches students who engage in gaming during their free time and focuses on how gaming influences their English language learning. The research aims to challenge the negative stigma often associated with gaming, such as it being a waste of time or leading to academic underachievement. Through semi-structured interviews, this qualitative research captures the perspectives of six young gamers, highlighting the potential educational benefits of gaming and digital game-based language learning.

The findings indicate that gaming acts as a highly engaging and motivational tool for these EFL learners, providing rich contexts for incidental English learning. The students informed that gaming environments offer authentic, interactive scenarios that enhance their language skills, particularly vocabulary acquisition and language proficiency. This aligns with theoretical frameworks such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, suggesting that gaming can effectively supplement traditional educational language learning methods. However, the study also acknowledges the challenges associated with gaming in relation to EFL learning. Examples of this are exposure to inappropriate content and the need for effective integration into the current educational curriculum.

By focusing on the learners' perspectives, this research contributes to a more detailed understanding of gaming's role in education, encouraging the use of digital games to enhance language learning. The study highlights the importance of learner-centered approaches in developing effective and engaging teaching strategies. These approaches can potentially transform how English is taught and learned in modern educational contexts.

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List of Abbreviations

DGBLL   Digital Game-Based Language Learning

EE   Extramural English

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

L2   Second Language

MMORPG   Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games

ZPD   Zone of Proximal Development

Acknowledgments

With this master's thesis, I conclude my five years of teacher education. This journey has given me valuable knowledge and experiences, preparing me for my future teaching career. Working on this thesis has been inspiring, providing me with insights and knowledge I will bring into my teaching practice.

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I am excited about my future as a teacher, and this journey has significantly shaped my readiness for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Alexandra Utslottøy

1 Introduction

Growing up in today's digital world, I have often observed skepticism from adults regarding video gaming, typically being perceived as a pointless or harmful activity. Although I am not an avid gamer myself, occasional gaming with friends has revealed the potential educational benefits of gaming to me. This personal experience and the skepticism I have observed sparked my interest in exploring the benefits gaming can serve. More specifically, in English language acquisition among Norwegian students who learn English as a foreign language (EFL learners). The negative views about gaming I observed during my upbringing contrasted with my own positive experiences. This divergence led me to choose this topic for my master's thesis. As a future teacher, I am interested in investigating and understanding the learners' perceptions of gaming in educational contexts. I aim to explore the learners' perspectives to understand the possibilities of integrating gaming into EFL classrooms, recognizing its potential to transform traditional learning environments.

My study focuses on the experiences and perceptions of Norwegian EFL learners in grades 5-7 who engage in gaming in their free time. The study seeks to understand and acknowledge how their passion and involvement in gaming influence their perceptions and experiences in English lessons at school. I have noticed that gaming often carries a negative stigma and is frequently dismissed as a "waste of time." An example of the stigma associated with gaming can be seen in a campaign by "Sonans Utdanning" titled "Etterpåklok, Jens?" In this campaign, the video depicts a person who does not achieve a passing grade in mathematics due to an excessive focus on gaming (Sonans Utdanning, 2022). This portrayal suggests that gaming can lead to academic underachievement, reinforcing negative stereotypes about gamers and highlighting societal perception that gaming is a detrimental distraction rather than a legitimate activity. This prejudice is precisely why I am driven to investigate from the gamers' perspective, to explore and document how gaming may impact their English language learning experience. By exploring Norwegian EFL students' perspectives on how gaming influences their English language learning, this study seeks to uncover insights into their perceptions. This approach challenges existing prejudices and contributes to a more detailed understanding of gaming's role in educational contexts.

It was clear that I wanted to research gaming and English learning for Norwegian EFL learners when I had to choose the topic and research field for my master's thesis. I acknowledged the importance of exploring the impact of gaming on English language learning, specifically from the gamers' perspectives. This focus is particularly relevant as gaming often suffers from negative stereotypes, portrayed by the mass media as an activity associated with socially isolated individuals or even linked to violent behaviors (Kümpel & Haas, 2016, p. 721). Moreover, the discourse surrounding gaming is polarized. While some highlight gaming's benefits, such as enhanced cognitive abilities, problem-solving skills, and social competence, others focus on its potential drawbacks, like social exclusion, weaker school performance, and increased aggression (Kümpel & Haas, 2016, p. 723). Recent studies have further demonstrated the negative perceptions and potential drawbacks of gaming. One study examined the impact of online game addiction on academic achievement motivation among Chinese college students. The researchers discovered that excessive gaming could significantly reduce students' motivation for academic achievement. The study suggested that online game addiction often stems from a lack of alternative leisure activities and can lead to decreased engagement in academic tasks (Sun et al., 2023). Studies like this one show that while gaming can offer educational benefits, it also comes with risks. When gaming becomes excessive or addictive, it can lower academic engagement and overall well-being. Such findings are necessary for understanding the complex relationship between gaming and academic performance, providing a more thorough view of this relationship.

Although there is plenty of research on gaming in language learning, my study centers on how gamers perceive English language learning as influenced by their gaming background, diverging from the common educational focus on integrating gaming in classrooms. This approach seeks to challenge the generally negative views about gaming, often perceived as time-consuming without beneficial outcomes. While a lot of prior research, such as works by Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016), has highlighted the positive impact of gaming on language learning, my study seeks to expand this discourse by examining the specific perceptions of Norwegian EFL learners. By focusing on how these learners themselves perceive the influence of gaming on their English language skills, this research aims to provide insights that challenge and enrich the existing perspectives on gaming in educational contexts. Through analysis of learners' experiences, this study attempts to present evidence that may reshape prevailing views on gaming, emphasizing its practical role in language education from the gamers' viewpoints.

This approach adds a unique dimension to the literature and underscores the importance of learner-centered research in understanding and leveraging the educational potential of gaming.

This study builds upon existing research by further exploring how gaming influences language acquisition among Norwegian EFL learners. This study draws on Scholz's (2022) research, highlighting the natural development of second language skills through in-game dialogues. This study explores ways of integrating gaming into language education, providing educators with valuable insights. Such integration could enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Additionally, studies like Cerezo-Pizarro et al. (2023) underscore the broader educational impact of video games, particularly their utility in cultural exchange and learning facilitation, further validating the relevance of gaming in educational contexts. This research enriches the understanding of gaming's role in educational settings by adding detailed perspectives to the established research on gaming and language learning. Additionally, by focusing on the gamers' perspectives, the study promotes a pupil-centered approach to education. Understanding students' experiences and preferences can lead to more tailored and effective teaching methods. The insights gained from this study can inform educators about the specific aspects of gaming that can be beneficial for language learning. Examining student perceptions facilitates a detailed exploration of the potential impact of gaming on their language learning processes and outcomes. By investigating these experiences, this study aims to enhance our understanding of how gaming affects language development from the students' perspectives. The findings from this study can provide valuable insights for improving educational approaches to EFL teaching.

This study investigates how playing English-language video games impacts classroom learning among Norwegian EFL learners in grades 5-7. It aims to explore these young students' perceptions of how their gaming influences their formal English education. The research question for this thesis is:

How do Norwegian EFL learners who game in English in grades 5-7 see the relationship between their English-language gaming and their in-class English-language learning?

My thesis is structured to systematically examine the interplay between gaming and language learning, focusing on the learners' perspectives. It begins with a theoretical framework that introduces essential terminology and theories relevant to this research, including concepts such as gaming, extramural English, digital game-based learning, metacognition, and self-regulation, alongside theories of learning English as a second language (L2). This is followed by a background section that reviews prior research in the field, setting the stage for a deeper inquiry. The methodology section details the research design, including, amongst other things, the interview guide, ethical considerations, and limitations. Findings from the research are then presented and analyzed in the result section, which further leads to the discussion section. These findings are analyzed and discussed in the context of the established theoretical framework and prior studies. Finally, the thesis concludes with a summary of the key findings of my research and recommendations for future research.

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter explores different theories and terminology that form a framework for my research, exploring the complex role of gaming in English language acquisition among Norwegian EFL learners. Central to my discussion is the concept of gaming, an area characterized by its rich potential for educational application yet marked by many different interpretations. I will examine Johan Huizinga's work and subsequent critiques to frame gaming within an educational and cultural context, challenging the traditional boundaries of the "magic circle," a concept Huizinga introduced to describe how games create a separate realm where normal rules and realities do not apply. This view positions games as escapist activities, isolated from the real world. Further, I will explore Extramural English (EE) and digital game-based language learning (DGBLL), highlighting their significance in informal learning environments and the autonomous learner's journey. This chapter examines the concepts of self-regulation, metacognition, and the theoretical foundations of English as a second language (L2) learning. By doing so, it seeks to clarify the complex interplay between gaming and language acquisition. This inquiry is grounded in established educational theories while navigating the details of extramural learning experiences.

2.1 Gaming

Defining "gaming" is necessary due to the term's broad scope and its significant role in this thesis. Johan Huizinga was a pioneer in attempting an exact definition of play and examining its integration and expression within cultural contexts. Huizinga argued that games construct a "magic circle" that separates the game from the outside world. In this view, playing a game means setting oneself apart from the outside world and escaping to a world that does not affect anything that lies outside this circle (Huizinga, 1955). This traditional view posits games as escapist activities, detached from reality. However, this definition has received criticism because of the impact gaming can have outside this "magic circle". Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al.'s (2012) book targets students of games as a primary audience, and the purpose is to propose a broad understanding of games (p. 3). The authors of this book argue against Huizinga's statement by explaining how games have real-life consequences. Firstly, games require time, affecting other potential activities and duties. Secondly, games affect our moods, whether they

make us feel satisfied or angry, and these emotions can carry into different activities. Furthermore, games are a medium to communicate ideas and values (Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2012, p. 30). Egenfeldt et al. (2012) state that many definitions of gaming tend to overlap, which is why it is essential to acknowledge and specify one's definition of the term when researching and studying video games (p. 42).

Modern definitions of "gaming" enrich our understanding of the term and establish a framework for its use in academic settings. Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman (2003) define a "game" as a structured system of simulated conflict governed by rules, yielding quantifiable outcomes. Similarly, Jesper Juul (2011) characterizes a "game" similarly as a rule-based system producing variable, measurable outcomes where players develop emotional connections and exert effort to influence these outcomes.

In this thesis, "gaming" refers explicitly to the activity of engaging with video games during leisure time, exemplified by Norwegian EFL learners who play video games in English. This usage draws on the broader definitions to emphasize how video games, as interactive digital activities, merge leisure with learning and function as forms of play, fields of cultural interaction, and educational tools. Through these lenses, the thesis explores the structured, rule-based, and emotionally engaging aspects of gaming that are vital for understanding its educational potential and cultural impact. Further, in the context of this thesis, "video games" refers to those interactive digital tools that facilitate the use of the English language through gameplay, specifically as utilized by Norwegian EFL learners. In scholarly discourse, video games are recognized for their significant impact on culture, education, and social dynamics. While they can vary in objective and design, their role in language acquisition is substantial.

2.2 Extramural English

The term Extramural English (EE) in the context of second language acquisition was introduced by Sundquist in 2009 as English learned outside school (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 3). Sundquist & Sylvèn's (2016) definition of EE corresponds to "English outside the walls," which refers to English that learners are involved in outside the walls of the classroom (p. 6). Further, they state that this involvement is not initiated by anyone working in educational

institutions. This initiative lies with the learners themselves or, sometimes, with someone else, such as a family member or a friend (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 6). Moreover, some learners will take charge of their own English learning so that EE can be linked to the theory of learner autonomy (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 6). Examples of EE activities are watching films and TV series, listening to music, scrolling on social media, and playing video games. This thesis will focus on pupils who engage in video games as an EE activity.

2.3 Extramural Digital Game-Based Language Learning

Today's video games are complex, player-driven experiences that engage players in problem-solving and demand high communication skills. These characteristics align with the objectives often set by educators for their EFL classrooms (Scholz, 2022, p. 129). Digital game-based language learning (DGBLL) is an increasingly popular topic in scholarly discourse, particularly in discussions about how educators can integrate these games into traditional, instructor-led educational settings (Scholz, 2022, p. 129). Scholz (2022) describes extramural DGBLL as a conceptual approach aiming to explore the relationship between digital games and their players, how these players interact with the games and the community environments that encourage continued involvement outside the game (p. 132). Scholz (2022) highlights that language acquisition through gaming encompasses a broad spectrum, ranging from deliberate educational exercises within a structured setting to unintentional learning outcomes from a gamer's engagement with the game and related online activities (p. 129). Research on extramural DGBLL, as Scholz (2022) notes, has probed into the unpredictable dynamics of game interactions, how L2 skills naturally develop from spontaneous in-game dialogues, the role of linguistic knowledge in enhancing the gaming experience, and the advantages of this gameplay approach for both gamers and non-gamers (p. 132).

Understanding the role of affinity spaces is crucial for recognizing how extramural DGBLL, without teacher involvement, facilitates L2 learning. Affinity spaces can range from online games to forums and are spaces where individuals with shared interests create environments that foster mutual learning and individual advancements. Within these forums, a varied group of learners, from novices to experts, engage in a dynamic exchange of knowledge, covering both specialized and general information (Gee, 2005, pp. 225–228). This collaborative

environment supports content creation and promotes engaging discussions, which are essential for the organic development of language abilities. Thus, affinity spaces stand out as vital for grasping how informal game-based learning can enhance language skills through community engagement and sharing varied knowledge.

The study of extramural DGBLL is still developing. While there is a growing understanding of DGBLL within educational settings (Reinhardt, 2017), the specific challenges of learning languages through informal settings need more exploration. Although existing research on L2 learning informally can offer insights (Dressman & Sadler, 2019), the unique difficulties of extramural DGBLL, such as how learners improve their language skills outside formal education, require additional study (Knight et al., 2019). Researchers have begun to examine language studies and methods used in broader DGBLL research. However, this is just a starting point, and assumptions from this research might not apply directly to learning outside the traditional classroom. According to Scholz (2022), three key areas are central to enhancing our understanding of extramural DGBLL: skill development through DGBLL, exploring new instructional strategies within DGBLL and identifying the most influential research methods for studying language learning in gaming outside the classroom (p. 133)

Research on extramural DGBLL has highlighted several core characteristics that make it an effective educational tool, as identified by Sykes and Reinhardt (2013). These include goals, interaction, feedback, context, and motivation, each playing a critical role in the learning process. For instance, goals may be set by the players or the game itself, directing gameplay activities such as problem-solving and interaction with other players. This player-driven goal setting is crucial as it directly influences second language development objectives. Moreover, interaction within these games, whether with the game specifically or with other players, can significantly enhance second language development through varied communication frequency and vocabulary complexity. Feedback in DGBLL is essential, as it provides learners with immediate, meaningful, and personalized responses that are essential for effective language learning. The context, shaped by the game's narrative and the player's approach, mirrors tasks found in second language acquisition, creating relevant and meaningful language learning experiences. Ultimately, these characteristics foster highly motivating and engaging

experiences, often resulting in a state of "flow" where the balance between challenge and skill keeps players engaged and learning effectively.

While these insights from Sykes and Reinhardt (2013) underscore the potential benefits of extramural DGBLL, further research is necessary to explore how these elements can be optimized across different learning environments and demographic groups to enhance their efficacy in language education (Sykes & Reinhardt, 2013, as cited in Scholz, 2022, p. 130). This is particularly relevant to my study, which seeks to understand the perspectives of Norwegian EFL learners on how gaming influences their English language learning. By linking these theoretical foundations to my empirical findings, I aim to demonstrate how these characteristics of digital games align with the learners' experiences and perceptions. This approach validates the potential of DGBLL and provides insights into how it can be effectively leveraged to support language learning from the learners' viewpoints.

2.4 Self-regulation & Metacognition

Incorporating the concepts of self-regulation and metacognition into this thesis is essential for understanding how young learners perceive the impact of gaming on their English L2 learning. According to Robson (2016, p. 186), self-regulation involves learners becoming actively and constructively involved in the learning processes as they manage their thoughts, emotions, and actions to get better learning outcomes and motivation. In contrast, metacognition requires individuals to monitor and manage their cognitive processes, helping them understand what they know and still need to learn (Robson, 2016, p. 186). According to Robson (2016), self-regulation and metacognition are essential to successful academic performances, as they help students navigate their learning experiences more effectively (p. 187).

Furthermore, Robson (2016) explains that these skills develop over time, with young children initially relying heavily on adult guidance to regulate their behavior and cognition. Over time, however, they gradually learn to manage these processes independently, which is essential for their academic growth and success (Robson, 2016, p. 203). In the context of gaming, these skills are particularly relevant. As students engage with interactive and often complex game environments, their ability to regulate their learning and think metacognitively about their

language use can significantly influence the effectiveness of their learning experience. Understanding these processes allows a deeper exploration of how games can serve as powerful, autonomous language learning tools that align with young learners' natural, explorative learning experience.

2.5 Learning English as a Second Language (L2)

This research will draw upon existing literature related to EE to understand how gaming, as an extramural activity, contributes to learning English as a second language (L2). My research will explore students' perceptions of how gaming outside the formal education setting complements traditional language learning methods and environments. By incorporating perspectives from general L2 English learning theories, the study aims to situate the specific findings within the broader context of language acquisition. This will enable a more comprehensive understanding of how extramural activities like gaming interact with formal learning processes and outcomes in English language education.

The research on game-based learning for L2 learning underscores the significant potential these games hold for language development, aligning with fundamental principles in second language acquisition theory. Specifically, video games provide comprehensible input, facilitate learning through interaction, and enhance learning motivation – elements that are crucial for L2 development. This resonates with Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, which suggests that learners need to be exposed to language slightly above their current level to improve. Furthermore, Vygotsky's (1978) concepts of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding highlight the value of support and interaction with more knowledgeable peers for effective L2 learning. These theories support structured guidance and collaborative engagement that promotes language acquisition (Krashen, 1982; Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Sundqvist & Sylvèn, 2016, p. 305).

The presented theories by Krashen (1982) and Vygotsky (1978) are relevant to my study in several ways. Both theories support the premise that scaffolded learning environments, such as those encountered in gaming, are central to L2 learning. In extramural gaming contexts, EFL students are often immersed in English at levels just beyond their proficiency, effectively being

scaffolded within their ZPD. This immersion challenges them and provides a dynamic platform for enhancing their English language skills through meaningful, interactive experiences that mirror the theoretical underpinnings of both Krashen's and Vygotsky's work.

2.6 Summary of Theoretical Framework

Throughout this chapter, I have explored the critical role of gaming, EE, and DGBLL in enhancing English language acquisition. I have highlighted the complex interplay between gaming and language learning by examining key definitions and theories, from Huizinga's insights to contemporary critiques and applications in educational contexts. This chapter has considered the significance of EE and DGBLL, emphasizing the potential of video games as powerful tools for informal learning and the development of English language skills. Further, this chapter explores the concepts of self-regulation, metacognition, and theories of L2 learning, highlighting how gaming influences learners' engagement, motivation, and language proficiency. These theoretical perspectives help us understand how extramural gaming activities contribute to language learning, setting the stage for further research on their pedagogical implications.

3 Background

This chapter explores prior research in this thesis field. It reviews existing literature, focusing on the role of extramural DGBLL, students' perceptions of gaming as an educational tool, and the sociocultural dynamics that frame these experiences. By situating video games within the broader context of EE activities and comparing them to traditional language learning methodologies, this chapter aims to uncover how gaming can complement formal education and contribute to L2 English learning. This chapter integrates theories and findings from earlier research to establish a theoretical foundation for understanding gaming's potential effects on language learning. It draws on the works of Sundqvist and Sylvèn, who focus on gaming's role in language learning, and Nikkarinen, who examines gaming from the perspective of Finnish university students. Additionally, the chapter incorporates insights from Chambers and Muñoz, who primarily research pupil perceptions of language learning, enriching our understanding of how these perceptions influence educational outcomes. This exploration is critical for identifying gaps in the current research field, particularly regarding young learners' self-reported experiences and perceptions, and setting the stage for the empirical study that forms the core of this thesis.

"Video games" is a central term for this thesis and is subject to a great deal of prior research. Studies such as Cerezo-Pizarro et al.'s (2023) have touched on the broader educational impact of video games, underscoring their utility in cultural exchange and learning facilitation (p. 1). This thesis narrows that perspective, focusing on how these interactive experiences contribute specifically to English language learning among young Norwegian EFL learners. The increasing adoption of digital game-based learning in technology-enhanced language education underlines this point. Research, like Alrajhi (2020), supports video games' potential as practical L2 learning tools, offering engaging resources that can enhance language proficiency. Moreover, as noted by López-Forniés (2021), the educational deployment of video games aligns with historical pedagogical efforts but with added dimensions of interactivity and engagement that are crucial for language learners (p. 1). Games in this educational context are not merely for play; they are carefully designed experiences that blend learning objectives with entertaining gameplay, often incorporating motivational elements that can make language learning more appealing (Plass et al., 2015, p. 259).

3.1 Gaming as Extramural English L2 Learning, and L2 Proficiency Among Young Learners

Engaging in video games involves exploring unfamiliar territories, adopting different identities, understanding game rules, and, for many players, doing all this in a language that is not their first. As Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) highlight, video gaming is a voluntary and highly motivating activity, contrasting with the structured, usually educator-led classroom learning environment (p. 3). Further, they claim that motivation is crucial for any learning, especially in learning a second language. The prevalence of English in gaming settings introduces these players to significant L2 linguistic input. Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016, pp. 303–304) suggest that frequent engagement in such English-dominated environments could enhance English L2 proficiency, an argument supported by the concept of EE. The authors define EE as English learning that occurs outside formal educational settings, driven by personal engagement in English activities (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, pp. 3 & 25). Further supporting this, Sylvèn's (2004) research on incidental vocabulary acquisition in a content and language-integrated learning context indicates that it was not the instructional approach but the engagement in EE activities that correlated with a richer vocabulary. This finding is echoed in Sundqvist's (2009) study, which associates EE activities, mainly digital gaming, reading, and internet use, with improvements in vocabulary size and oral proficiency, more so than other activities like listening to music or watching TV (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 304)

The literature on game-based language learning highlights the predominance of cooperative dialogues in digital games like World of Warcraft, where teamwork is often essential. Stenberg (2011) points out that while written communication through chats and forums is the main form of dialogue in World of Warcraft, the use of voice chat, especially among specific gaming friends, is also common (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 305).

MMORPGs, or "massively multiplayer online role-playing games", offer cognitive challenges that can enhance critical thinking skills, mainly when played in a second language (Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2012, p. 287). Steinkuehler and Duncan (2008) state that these games help in developing argumentation skills and processing feedback. Furthermore, research by Reinders and Wattana (2011) indicates that MMORPGs not only improve linguistic accuracy but also

the quantity and quality of L2 usage, fostering communication. According to Gee (2007), effective digital games challenge players to operate at the edge of their capabilities, which aligns with Vygotsky's concept of ZPD. In contrast, single-player games such as "The Sims" are less conducive to interactive L2 learning, suggesting that MMORPGs provide a more effective environment for language acquisition (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 306). While this theoretical overview highlights the potential benefits of digital gaming for L2 learning, Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) point out a lack of empirical research. They state that there is a gap in understanding young learners' gaming habits in relation to their L2 skills development, which is a gap their study aims to address.

Sundqvist and Sylvèn's (2016) research reveals a positive link between time spent playing digital games and proficiency in a second language. This link particularly points to positive effects on vocabulary, reading, and listening comprehension. Their study shows that frequent gamers outperformed moderate gamers, who outperformed non-gamers in both the vocabulary test and the national test in Swedish for reading comprehension (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, pp. 313-314). This trend suggests a beneficial correlation between digital gaming and L2 English learning, even in an incidental and informal manner. However, the study acknowledges limitations, such as not accounting for variables like prior English knowledge, learning aptitudes, or cognitive abilities, cautioning against broad generalizations of its findings (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 314). Further supporting evidence from Sundqvist (2009) indicates that extramural gaming correlates with improved L2 vocabulary and oral proficiency among older (9th-grade) language learners. Similarly, research by Miller and Hegelheimer (2006) and Ranalli (2008) confirms digital gaming's advantages for L2 vocabulary acquisition, particularly when combined with structured learning aids. Notably, these studies primarily involved adult participants, contrasting with Sundqvist and Sylvèn's focus on younger learners (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 315). Additionally, Cobb and Horst (2011) found enhanced word retention in younger learners over time, suggesting that playing games for more extended periods helps solidify their learning. Consistent with findings on the broader benefits of a substantial L2 lexicon, Sundqvist and Sylvèn's (2016) study also identifies a clear performance stratification among digital game user groups in national test scores for reading and listening comprehension. This stratification reinforces the observed correlation between digital gaming habits and L2 proficiency among young learners (p. 315).

While this study primarily focuses on the definite outcomes of learning through gaming, my research shifts the focus to how students perceive the impact of gaming on their English language learning. The relevance of the general extramural DGBLL research to my study lies in providing a foundational understanding of how gaming can enhance language acquisition, which serves as a framework for examining students' subjective experiences and perceptions. By understanding the established educational benefits and mechanisms of extramural DGBLL, I can better interpret and contextualize the students' perceptions, exploring how they align with or deviate from the expected learning outcomes documented in broader research.

3.2 Video Games as a Source of Extramural English: Finnish University Students' Perspective

Nikkarinen's (2019) thesis explores how Finnish players use video games for extramural English language learning, situating this within the broader sociocultural and popular cultural contexts that feature complex communities and activities. The research uses qualitative methods to draw on interviews with ten Finnish university English students who engaged in gaming during their early formal education and considered it a leisure activity. The findings suggest that video games are a valuable, effective, and manifold area for supplemental language learning. Furthermore, a report by the Federation of American Scientists highlights video games' educational benefits, advising educators to explore, test, and work with the gaming industry to leverage these advantages. English emerges as the predominant language within gaming communities and the industry at large (Nikkarinen, 2019, p. 3).

Recent studies have underscored the educational benefits of cooperative gaming, mainly its association with improved English grades, thus, demonstrating the potential of video games in L2 learning. These advantages are primarily recognized outside formal educational settings (Piirainen-Marsh & Tainio, 2009; Uuskoski, 2011, both cited in Nikkarinen, 2019, p. 7). The integration of video games into educational systems has been gradual. Initially, games were predominantly viewed as mere entertainment and were often linked to concerns about violence and antisocial behavior. This skepticism within the academic community continued from the 1970s until the late 1990s, when video games began to be studied more thoroughly as a distinct academic discipline (Ensslin, 2012, as cited in Nikkarinen, 2019, p. 8).

Nikkarinen's (2019) study provides insights into the perceived impact of gaming on English language skills among Finnish university students. The research highlights that all participants reported noticeable improvements in their English abilities through gaming, with many considering the impact to be significant. These learners articulated that language acquisition through gaming is both meaningful and lasting, noting that the skills they develop are seamlessly integrated into their long-term memory and are used instinctively across various contexts beyond gaming (Nikkarinen, 2019, p. 44). This finding suggests that the interactive and engaging nature of video games facilitates a deep level of cognitive engagement and personal relevance in the language learning process.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the diverse ways in which video games support language learning, driven by their unique features and varying game genres. Different types of games offer specific benefits; for instance, narrative-driven and role-playing games are particularly effective at enhancing vocabulary, reading, and listening skills. These games often require players to follow complex storylines, engage in dialogues, and complete tasks that necessitate a strong understanding of the language, thereby promoting comprehensive language development (Nikkarinen, 2019, p. 44).

Participants in the study highly valued video games as extramural tools for language learning, often rating them above traditional extracurricular activities such as reading literature or watching films. This preference highlights the potential of video games as powerful resources for language acquisition, suggesting that they could be systematically integrated into formal education settings to complement traditional methods. The interactive, engaging, and enjoyable nature of video games makes learning more engaging and promotes a situational learning process similar to natural language acquisition. This aligns with the ecological approach to learning, where language skills are absorbed almost effortlessly in meaningful and context-rich environments (Nikkarinen, 2019, p. 46).

Building on Nikkarinen's findings, my study digs deeper into how video games influence English language learning among students in grades 5-7. By focusing on how these young learners actively engage with and reflect on their gaming experiences, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the role interactive and engaging gaming environments play

in language learning. Additionally, the study seeks to explore how these gaming experiences contribute to broader educational outcomes, offering insights into their potential benefits and applications within the educational field.

3.3 Pupils' Perception of the Foreign Language Learning Experience

In his 1998 study, Gary N. Chambers investigates the perceptions of secondary school pupils regarding their foreign language learning experiences within school settings. Chambers (1998) compares these insights with the experiences of German pupils learning English, aiming to uncover the factors that shape students' attitudes towards language learning. The study reveals that pupils find the language learning process challenging and occasionally demotivating, highlighting the crucial role of teaching methodologies and the teacher-pupil relationship in shaping their learning experience. The pupils expressed a strong desire for greater interactive opportunities in using their target language, enhanced contextualization of learning materials, and approaches that are more positively oriented towards successful outcomes. They also emphasized the importance of applying language skills in real-life contexts and the ability to access relevant educational resources that support their language development (Chambers, 1998, pp. 252–255).

Although Chambers' (1998) research was conducted before the widespread adoption of DGBLL, it remarkably anticipates the advantages of such educational technologies. The pupils expressed the need for interaction, real-world application, and engaging learning environments that align closely with the core principles of DGBLL. This connection suggests that even before the beginning of DGBLL in its current form, there was an apparent student-driven demand for more dynamic and practical approaches to language education. Chambers (1998) highlights the desire for more interactive and relevant learning experiences, which reflects a broader trend in educational research. This trend emphasizes the importance of engaging students in meaningful tasks. Chambers' (1998) work shows that focusing on relevant usage of the language and interactive learning environments, aligns with modern language acquisition, like the communicative approach and task-based learning. These theories advocate for the use of authentic materials and interactive activities that reflect real-life communication scenarios,

which are fundamental to DGBLL. By creating engaging environments where language is used in context, digital games meet these educational demands effectively, providing opportunities for learners to practice language skills in a setting that is engaging and relevant.

The historical context enhances our understanding of how traditional educational challenges have influenced the evolution of language learning strategies. It underscores the continuous need for innovation in teaching methodologies to keep pace with the changing expectations and needs of learners. The increasing relevance of digital games in educational settings is a response to these evolving demands, offering a practical solution that integrates the principles of interaction, engagement, and relevant application of the language. As educational technologies advance, the insights from Chambers' (1998) research remain pertinent, highlighting the enduring importance of student-centered approaches in fostering effective language learning. Moreover, examining the progression from traditional methods to DGBLL highlights the significant strides made in educational technology. It illustrates how past challenges and student feedback have shaped current pedagogical practices, paving the way for innovative solutions like DGBLL. This evolution reflects a broader shift towards more interactive forms of learning that boost language acquisition and support broader educational outcomes, such as critical thinking and problem-solving.

3.4 Exploring Young Learners' Foreign Language Learning Awareness

Muñoz's (2014) study explores and discusses the awareness of young learners in Catalonia, Spain, about their foreign language learning and their learning conditions. Research indicates that even from an early age, children are aware of their learning environments and have distinct experiences and perceptions regarding language learning. Hsieh (2011) explored the experiences of young learners in a Taiwanese English program, finding their views on English learning to be fun yet challenging. The study revealed that while the children had a clear understanding of classroom activities, they had less clarity on what was actually learned (p. 256).

Studies conducted in various countries have further examined children's perspectives on learning a foreign language, showing that as children age, their beliefs about learning evolve from being influenced by others to a more self-regulated understanding (Muñoz, 2014, p. 25). For instance, research in The Netherlands and Finland has highlighted primary school children's sophisticated beliefs about the purpose of school, learning orientations, and the impact of societal and school contexts on their learning attitudes (Alanen, 2003; Aro, 2009; Klatter et al., 2001). Similarly, Kolb (2007) found that German primary school students had developed explicit beliefs about foreign language learning strategies that closely resemble those of adults. These beliefs emphasize the importance of active engagement and understanding the learning process (as cited in Muñoz, 2014, p. 25).

Young learners develop an understanding of adequate learning conditions, classroom dynamics, and activity preferences. Over time, they gradually favor traditional classroom setups and activities that enhance grammar and oral skills, influenced by accumulated school experiences. Overall, the research underscores that children's views on foreign language learning are shaped early by personal growth, educational experiences, and the broader influence of parents, teachers, and the community (Muñoz, 2014, p. 37).

3.5 Summary of the Background Chapter

This background chapter has explored the role of gaming in L2 English learning, presenting a diverse selection of scholarly work to underscore the educational potential of video games as extramural tools for language acquisition. Specifically, the studies by Sundqvist and Sylvèn (2016) have demonstrated how video games transition from mere leisure activities to valuable educational tools that facilitate informal and incidental English learning. Nikkarinen's (2019) research complements this by showing how gaming environments, particularly MMORPGs, enhance cooperative dialogues, critical thinking, and essential linguistic skills for L2 learners. Additionally, Nikkarinen's (2019) study focuses on the learners' perspectives, which this study also does. Chambers' (1998) study contributes by emphasizing the importance of understanding student perceptions and the need for educational environments that engage learners actively. Muñoz (2014) provides insights into the metacognitive and self-regulatory processes involved in gaming that support L2 learning. Together, these studies form an argument for the significant

correlation between gaming and enhanced L2 English proficiency and highlight the need for further empirical research to explore this relationship more thoroughly from the learners' perspectives. The chapter sets the stage for further investigation into how students perceive the impact of gaming on their English L2 learning, aiming to deepen our understanding of its potential benefits and challenges.

4 Methodology

The methodology in this thesis aspires to explore the perspectives of Norwegian EFL learners regarding the impact of gaming on their English language learning. This methodology section explains the theoretical underpinnings, the specific research methods used, and the rationale behind these choices. It presents the interview guide, describes the sampling and execution processes, and discusses the essential ethical considerations for conducting research with young learners. By explaining these methodological choices, this section provides an overview of how the study was conducted, ensuring that the research is both replicable and ethically sound.

4.1 Qualitative Method & Phenomenological Method

This project is carried out as a qualitative study. Qualitative methods study social phenomena, where the goal often is to understand an action, a phenomenon, or a case (Nyeng, 2012, p. 71). Dalland (2020) explains that the purpose of qualitative research methods is to capture thoughts, meanings, and experiences that cannot be quantified, unlike quantitative research methods, which rely on numerical data. Brottveit (2018) explains that qualitative methods are particularly suitable when the researcher seeks an in-depth understanding of a specific topic through detailed and rich data (p. 67). While quantitative methods can also provide in-depth knowledge, they do so through statistical analysis and patterns across larger data sets, offering different insights. Given that this study aims to recognize and understand pupils' perspectives and experiences regarding gaming and EFL learning, a qualitative research approach is the most suitable. This approach allows for a detailed exploration of pupils' subjective experiences and perceptions, providing detailed insights that are essential for understanding the relationship between gaming and EFL learning in this context.

This qualitative study will use a phenomenological method, which seeks to explore and understand the essence of students' lived experiences and perceptions. This approach emphasizes the subjective perception and interpretation of phenomena, focusing on how individuals make sense of their world and experiences (Nyeng, 2012, p. 33). Phenomenology aims to understand people's experiences, moving beyond simple descriptions to grasp what individuals are truly aware of and how they feel (Nyeng, 2012, pp. 32–33). By interviewing

Norwegian EFL learners, this method will allow for an in-depth exploration of how gaming influences their English learning. It aims to understand their perceptions and experiences in detail, which can provide valuable insights that may be indicative of broader trends, even though the primary focus is on the specific context of the participants. The phenomenological approach is especially relevant in educational and psychological research, where capturing the richness of individual experiences is central (Nyeng, 2012, pp. 34–35).

4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The chosen research design for this study is qualitative interviews, more specifically, semi-structured interviews. According to Tjora (2021), semi-structured interviews is the most used research design within qualitative methods. Semi-structured interviews explore in-depth discussions that intend to investigate the participants' perceptions, feelings, experiences, and understanding of a particular topic. Unlike structured interviews, which are locked to a fixed set of questions, semi-structured interviews are more flexible, allowing the researcher to dig deeper into specific areas of interest that may emerge during the conversation (Tjora, 2021, p. 128). The questions in such interviews tend to be open, which allows the participants to reflect upon their own experiences and perceptions regarding the topics that arise during the interview. This means that the answers from the participants will be subjective (Tjora, 2021, p. 128). Since this study seeks to understand the perceptions of Norwegian EFL learners in grades 5-7 who engage in gaming, semi-structured interviews are especially suitable for this research.

4.3 Interview Guide

Since the first language of the participants is Norwegian, I chose to conduct the interviews in Norwegian. I have, therefore, written both a Norwegian and English interview guide. This is the English interview guide for my study:

General Gaming Habits
- Can you describe your favorite games to play? Why do you enjoy them?
- How often do you play games in your free time?
- Do you play games in English? Why?

Attitudes Towards Gaming

- What do you think are common thoughts on gaming among your friends and family?
- Have you ever heard any negative thoughts/meanings regarding gaming? What are they? How have that made you feel?

Gaming and Language Learning

- Have you learned any phrases or words in English by gaming? Examples?
- Do you think playing games in English has helped you in English lessons? How?

Education and Gaming

- What skills do you think gaming has helped you develop that are useful for learning English?
- Can you share an experience where something you learned in gaming helped you in English class?
- How do you think your teachers view gaming in relation to learning English?
- In what ways do you think teachers could use games to help students learn English?

Reflections

- If you could tell your teacher one thing about gaming and English learning, what would it be?
- Do you think gaming has changed the way you view learning English? Can you explain?

The interview guide for this study has been designed to examine the relationship between gaming habits and English language acquisition among Norwegian EFL learners in grades 5-7. The first section, focusing on general gaming habits, seeks to uncover the types and preferences of games alongside the frequency and language context of gaming. This section establishes a foundational understanding of the student's engagement with gaming as a potential medium for language exposure. The second section on attitudes towards gaming is designed to illuminate the social perceptions surrounding gaming, delving into both common and personal viewpoints and their implications on the learners' attitudes and motivations. The interview guide addresses the direct impact of gaming on language learning, investigating specific instances of vocabulary acquisition and the applicability of gaming experiences to formal English education. The exploration then extends to the broader educational context, examining the perceived attitudes of educators and the potential integration of gaming into pedagogical strategies. This section also explores the perceived attitudes regarding gaming that the participants' family and friends have. Finally, the reflection section encourages the students to express their insights and

perceived transformations in their approach to learning English, thereby offering a detailed perspective on students' perception of how gaming affects their English language learning. Overall, the interview guide seeks to understand and explore the students' experiences and perceptions regarding the relationship between gaming and English language learning while also considering the social and educational contexts in which these experiences occur.

4.4 Sampling and Execution

When selecting participants for my project, I focused on finding 4-6 students in grades 5-7 who are engaged in gaming during their leisure time. As a substitute teacher at a primary school, I utilized my workplace to recruit participants, which proved to be time-efficient and advantageous due to my familiarity with the students and their interests.

Recruiting from my workplace also meant that I had pre-existing relationships with both the students and their class teachers. After discussing my research with the teachers, who understand their students' interests, we identified suitable candidates for the study based on their interest in gaming and ensuring a balanced representation of both girls and boys. Participants were selected specifically for their engagement with gaming to gain insights from those who are most likely to be influenced by it in their English learning. This selection criterion is likely to provide rich, relevant data on the intersection of gaming and language acquisition. However, it may also limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population of EFL learners who might not have similar levels of interest in gaming.

The pre-existing relationship with the researcher and the participants is expected to lower communication barriers, creating a relaxed environment that is beneficial to more open and candid responses. The comfort of the students is favorable, as it greatly influences the quality and depth of information that is expressed during the interviews. Nonetheless, there are considerations to be made regarding this sampling method. My dual role as a researcher and a familiar teacher figure may lead to a bias in the responses provided by the pupils. The students may provide answers that they believe are expected or desired, or they might withhold information based on their relationship with me or perceptions of authority. To moderate this, I will employ strategies such as emphasizing the confidentiality and non-judgmental nature of

the research, ensuring that the students understand the voluntary aspect of their participation, and clarifying that there are no right or wrong answers. Additionally, the use of convenience sampling limits the diversity and representativeness of the sample. The experiences of these pupils may not reflect the broader population of young gamers, and the findings may not be generalizable beyond the specific context of this school. However, this qualitative study intends to gain a deeper understanding of individual experiences rather than to generalize to a larger population.

The interviews were conducted at the participants' school during school hours, ensuring a familiar setting for the students. Before the interviews, I had several conversations with the students to clarify the interview process and schedule, ensuring their informed awareness and comfort. Interviews were held in a designated group room to maintain privacy, involving only the student and myself. At the beginning of each session, I explained the purpose of recording and confirmed their readiness to proceed. Each interview varied in duration, lasting between 14 and 20 minutes.

4.5 Metacognition and Self-Regulation

The interview questions are designed to provoke responses that reflect the students' self-regulatory strategies and metacognitive awareness, particularly in relation to their gaming experiences and language learning. For instance, I explore how they evaluate their gaming experiences as part of their language-learning journey and examine how they judge their performance in English within the gaming context. Robson's (2016) research informs our understanding that students' ability to self-regulate and engage in metacognitive thinking is influenced by both the presence and absence of adult guidance. As such, my methodological approach is sensitive to the dynamic between the researcher's interaction with the participants and the participants' autonomous learning experiences. This sensitivity is crucial for interpreting how students' self-reports may be shaped by their interactions with adults, including the researcher, and their independent gaming activities.

In analyzing the data, I pay particular attention to the expressions of self-regulation and metacognition, recognizing that students' insights into their learning are as much a reflection

of their cognitive development as they are of their actual learning acquisition. Acknowledging the role of adult support, as indicated by Robson (2016), also informs the analytical phase, where I look for indications of how students' learning strategies may have been influenced by their interactions with teachers, parents, or peers in the context of their gaming experiences. Including these concepts in my analysis enriches the depth of my findings and provides a detailed perspective on what we can learn from students' perceptions of their own English language learning through gaming. Through this analytical lens, the complexities of students' learning experiences are revealed, offering valuable insights into their autonomous learning mechanisms and the interplay between their cognitive strategies and gaming activities.

4.6 Analysis of Data

In this research, I will employ qualitative content analysis as detailed by Schreier (2014) and Braun & Clarke (2021). This method systematically examines qualitative data to identify key themes and patterns directly related to the research questions. Qualitative content analysis allows for the organization of complex data into distinct, interpretable themes, facilitating the analysis of both anticipated and emergent findings (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p. 40; Schreier, 2014, pp. 2–3).

In conducting this analysis, I will follow principles of objectivity and transparency, as Nygaard (2017) discusses. Objectivity in this context is about basing conclusions on the data rather than personal opinions, and transparency involves clearly describing the analysis process to allow for the understandability and traceability of my findings. This approach is central in qualitative research, where the interpretative nature of analysis means that different researchers might draw different conclusions from the same data. By openly discussing the steps taken during data analysis and how I interpret the data within the theoretical framework of the study, I aim to provide a clear description that allows others to understand the rationale behind my findings rather than replicating the study for identical results (Nygaard, 2017, p. 138). This focus ensures that my research follows thorough academic standards and provides a detailed account of how I arrived at my conclusions, offering insights grounded in the data and clearly articulated through the theoretical lenses that were employed.

In this study, I will employ a hybrid approach, integrating elements of both the positivist- and critical approaches. The elements from positivism will help in establishing a structured and trustworthy framework for the research by focusing on objective measures such as validity and reliability. Nevertheless, the nature of semi-structured interviews, particularly with a diverse group of students, acknowledges the natural variability of perceptions and experiences. Rather than seeking identical results from each participant, which is neither expected nor desirable in qualitative research, I anticipate discovering patterns in how gaming might affect language learning among young students. Although exact replication might not be possible, patterns of agreement among responses can be expected while also acknowledging and examining the variability in the students' answers. While transparency in positivist research often involves sharing raw data, the confidentiality and protection of my young participants' identities must be protected, and thus, raw interview data will not be included in my thesis. Instead, suitable and representative quotes will be carefully selected and used to illustrate key points within the thesis. The critical approach complements this by delving into the pupils' experiences and perceptions, which are central to the study's objectives. I am also aware of the principle of reflexivity throughout this process, which involves reflecting on my presence as a researcher and its potential influence on participants' responses, as well as on my interpretation of their narratives (Nygaard, 2017, p. 138). This aspect ensures a thorough examination of the interaction between me as the researcher and the participant, enriching the study's depth and contributing to its methodological thoroughness.

4.7 Research Ethics

The data of my research consists of recorded interviews, which requires a SIKT application. The application was sent to SIKT in December 2023, and the approval was received in January 2024 (see Appendix 2). In addition to describing the purpose and method of my research, the SIKT application also included a copy of my interview guide (see Appendix 1) and the form of consent (see Appendix 3). This research is participant-based and, therefore, requires informed consent from every informant (NESH, 2021, p. 18). Since I interviewed students in grades 5-7, I had to get consent from their parents. Informed consent means that the participants are given sufficient information regarding the research and their participation in it. This includes what type of data will be collected, who will have access to the data, and how it will be stored. In

accordance with NESH's (2021) guidelines, I stated that their participation was voluntary, that they retained the right to withdraw from the research at any time until its publication, and the participants' anonymity (NESH, 2021, p 19). Anonymization is a way to protect the participants' identity and integrity (NESH, 2021, p. 23). In this thesis, I will not be presenting the raw interview data, nor will I expose their identity in any way. I will, therefore, not be using any names or including anything about their background or the geographical area of the participants so that no one can track down the participants. Before the interviews, each participant was given this form of consent with an explanation of it. I conducted the interviews after I had gotten a signed form from the students, with a signature from their parents.

The relationship between the researcher and the participants can affect the interview situation. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), the knowledge obtained during an interview depends on the relationship between the interviewer and the participant (p. 35). The interviewer should create a safe environment where the participant can speak openly. A previous relationship with the researcher can make the participant feel comfortable and talk freely, but it can also have the opposite effect. To avoid bias, participants might withhold information or alter their responses due to their familiarity with the researcher. Thus, the researcher must carefully navigate this relationship, remaining mindful of its potential impacts on the study's integrity. Efforts must be taken to mitigate these effects by clarifying the purpose of the research, reassuring confidentiality, and emphasizing the value of honest feedback. Additionally, a strategy such as reflective questioning can be used to verify the data's authenticity. Reflective questioning will be employed during the interviews to encourage the participants to elaborate on their experiences and provide deeper insights. This strategy ensures that the findings accurately reflect the participants' experiences and are not overly influenced by the interpersonal dynamics of the interviews, thereby enhancing the credibility and validity of the research.

4.8 Reliability, Validity, & Generalizability

Nygaard (2017) explains that spending a prolonged period in the field can help avoid both your perceptions being colored by your own context and the participants reacting to your presence (p.147). To make the results from my study more reliable and valid, I will have a follow-up conversation with the participants. In this conversation, I intend to explain what I have analyzed

and discussed in my thesis. Further, I will ask them if they agree on what I have analyzed and discussed from their interviews. This will ensure that I have not misinterpreted the participants' answers and that they feel more included in the entire process. The outcomes of these follow-up conversations will be integrated into the discussion section of the thesis, where I will explain how the participants' feedback may have clarified or altered the initial interpretations of the findings. Such an approach enhances the reliability and validity of the study's results and enriches the research's narrative by actively including participant perspectives in the interpretation of the data. By incorporating these follow-up insights, the discussion section will provide a more comprehensive view of the research findings, demonstrating how participant feedback has contributed to a deeper understanding and refinement of the study's conclusions.

4.9 Limitations and Affordances

Even though I believe semi-structured interviews are the most suitable research method for this study, there are some limitations which is important to state. The relatively small size of the participant group inherently limits the generalizability of the findings. However, the focus on young learners from grades 5-7 is not a constraint but a deliberate choice. This demographic may have limited interview experience, potentially making the setting challenging or uncomfortable for the participants. Yet, this aspect crucially aligns with the study's aim to explore how students perceive their language learning through gaming.

Including metacognition in the theoretical framework enriches this approach, transforming what might be seen as a limitation, the young participants' potentially restricted ability to articulate their learning experience, into a significant area of investigation. Interviews, with their reliance on self-reporting, are subject to biases, including those to memory and the desire to present oneself favorably. However, these factors contribute to the depth of understanding of participants' perceptions and experiences.

It is important to acknowledge that research is inherently subjective and as such, cannot be considered as an absolute truth. Despite the efforts made to minimize bias, the researcher's perspective, experience, and interpretation still play a significant role in shaping the outcome of the research. Any reference to my empirical data is colored by, and thus a result of, my

interpretations (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 11). My interest in the topic can be considered as disturbances that can affect the results (Tjora, 2021, p. 279). It should be considered that different interpretations of the same empirical data could have led to slightly varied results. I have a positive perspective on gaming and its effect on English language learning, and I think that gaming is something educators should include in the classroom. I entered this research with the assumption that students who game have positive attitudes regarding gaming's effect on their EFL learning. Prior to the interviews, I reflected on how my body language and answers to the participants' answers were going to be presented. My goal was to appear interested without showing any positive or negative reactions to their answers. I chose to be aware of this to make sure that my own interest and engagement in the topic became as small disturbance as possible (Tjora, 2021, p. 279)

Despite the limitation in making generalizable statements from a small set of interviews, the qualitative, semi-structured approach is a suitable choice for its strengths. It provides rich, detailed data that reveal deep insights into the participants' experiences and perceptions. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews allows the researcher to explore unexpected areas of interest, enhancing the depth of the research. Direct interaction with the participants fosters a comprehensive understanding of their perspectives, making it possible to examine the specific, detailed layers of meaning within each interview. Thus, this study is designed to uncover ideas about students' perceptions of their language learning through gaming, which can be valuable for further exploration in broader contexts (Nygaard, 2017, p. 144).

5 Results

This chapter investigates the qualitative content analysis of interviews conducted with Norwegian EFL learners in grades 5-7. It examines how English language gaming outside the EFL classroom influences their language learning within it. The methodology involves coding the qualitative data and identifying themes related to the research question. This chapter presents and analyzes the findings of this study, where they will be categorized into themes that are relevant to the research question. Following the analysis, the discussion section will elaborate on these findings, relating them to existing literature and prior research in this field.

This chapter integrates the theoretical framework with the empirical data collected, providing an analysis of how digital gaming might affect English language learning amongst Norwegian EFL learners. The analysis of the students' perspectives and perceptions contributes to an understanding of how gaming can supplement traditional educational practices in EFL classrooms. These findings offer insights from students for educators and researchers into the role that gaming outside the classroom may play in supporting language learning within the classroom.

During the analysis of the interview data, new themes emerged that were not initially anticipated. The interview guide originally focused on predefined themes such as "General gaming habits", "Attitudes towards gaming", "Gaming & language learning", "Education & gaming", and "Reflections." However, the data analysis led to emergent themes such as "Linguistic skill development through gaming", "Gaming as a motivational tool for English language learning", "The role of social interaction in language learning", "Educational content in games and its relevance to classroom learning", "Teachers', family, and friends' perspectives on gaming", "Challenges and solutions in integrating gaming with English language learning", and "Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning in Gaming." These themes align closely with the collected data and the research question, offering detailed insights into the pupils' perceptions and experiences while underscoring the varied ways in which gaming influences their English language learning.

5.1 General Gaming Habits

The interviews assessed the general gaming habits of Norwegian EFL learners in grades 5-7. They revealed a preference for interactive, multiplayer games such as Roblox, Minecraft, Fortnite, and various others. The students reported spending between 1 and 6 hours daily on these games. "Because the games are fun, I can play them with my friends," one student mentioned, illustrating their participation in these interactive and social gaming environments.

A significant aspect of these games is their versatility, exemplified by a student's description of Roblox: "There are probably a thousand games in that game." Furthermore, the interviews indicate that English is the primary language of interaction in these games, with one student stating, "Most games are in English, at least the games I play." This suggests a significant exposure to English outside the formal learning environment, which corresponds with Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) concept of EE. According to the respondents, all the games they engage with are in English, suggesting that their gaming activities during leisure time serve as opportunities for encountering English beyond the classroom environment, in settings not guided by educators. In such contexts, the initiative to be exposed to English lies within the learners themselves (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p. 6).

Furthermore, the interviews also revealed that the students often engage in cross-cultural communication while gaming, with one student sharing, "I just play in Public, and when others want to talk, I speak with them." This comment reflects the opportunities for practicing English in real-time communication with players around the world.

5.2 Linguistic Skill Development Through Gaming

The interviewees provided insights into how they perceive the connection between gaming and English language learning, often reflecting elements consistent with second language acquisition theories. The students described using games as a platform for interacting in English, supporting vocabulary acquisition in contexts that might be viewed through the lens of Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of comprehensible

input. For example, one student noted learning basic vocabulary such as "sand," "wood," and "dirt" through Minecraft before these words were formally introduced in class: "When I first started gaming, I learned words through the games before I learned them in class."

The data from the interviews reveal that students recognize the complex educational benefits of gaming, particularly in relation to English language learning. The students reported that gaming has enhanced various skills transferable to educational contexts, including pronunciation and vocabulary, while also fostering digital competencies. For example, one student described how gaming provided opportunities to interact with individuals from different countries, "I have also talked to people who are from other places… where they share information about their country," which proved to be useful in educational activities such as Kahoot. Another student noted the practical application of English in gaming environments, "I learn many expressions, and math too, in English. Which I do not learn in class." This experience was echoed by another who found that regular interaction with English speakers in games improved their pronunciation, directly reflecting the practical application of theories such as Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD and Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis. These theories suggest that the interactive context provided by gaming can significantly challenge and advance learners' language skills. This set of responses highlights how gaming serves as a tool for language practice and a platform for comprehensive educational engagement, enhancing both language abilities and broader academic skills.

The interviewees reflect on the change in their perception of English L2 learning, attributing these changes to their gaming experiences. They described gaming as a leisure activity, as well as a platform that requires and enables substantial use of English. This engaging use of language was highlighted as particularly influential. For example, one student pointed out, "Gaming helps a lot when you are learning English. Especially reading and writing." This sentiment was supported by others who noted the extensive exposure to English that gaming provides, which they believed positively impacted their language learning, "I think gaming can positively affect students' English learning, mostly because we are exposed to English when we game," another student shared. Further emphasizing the practical implications of this exposure, another student explained the necessity of using English to communicate effectively within the game: "If I am playing, I must learn English to be able to communicate with others. If I am in a different

country, for example, I do not have to speak English all the time since I travel with my family."
These insights emphasize the role of gaming as a dynamic medium that enriches the language-learning process, providing both incidental and intentional language practice. Through gaming, students experience English in contexts that demand comprehensive understanding and active interaction, offering a practical and engaging learning experience that supplements traditional educational approaches.

5.3 Gaming as a Motivational Tool for English Language Learning

Several students reported that gaming significantly influenced their motivation and confidence in learning English. One student specifically noted a transformative shift in their attitude towards their EFL learning attributed to gaming. This student described moving from a position of disinterest and struggle to one of engagement and confidence:

> *"Before, I hated everything with English, the glossary, speaking out loud, and such. But now, after I started gaming, I have a much better view of English, and I also finally enjoy English class and learning the language. Because of this, I am more motivated to learn more in class because I know more English and am more confident."*

Another student articulated how gaming has made learning English more engaging: "It is fun to learn English, and you learn more than you do in English class. It is more fun because you get to do something you think is fun, while it is English." This statement accentuates the idea that the interactive and enjoyable nature of gaming can transform the educational experience by making it more appealing and directly relevant to the students.

Additionally, gaming was described as a valuable tool for applying English in real-time scenarios, which significantly boosts confidence and language skills. A student highlighted the direct application of English during gameplay: "I feel like the gaming has helped me," and elaborated, "I get more exposed to English by gaming, which makes me learn the language more in my opinion. It has been much more motivating for me to learn English now after being

invested in gaming." Another echoed this sentiment, adding, "Yes. I feel like after I got into gaming, it has become more motivating for me to learn English in school, mostly because I feel like I have gotten more confident in English."

The motivational aspect of gaming was also frequently mentioned, resonating with sociocultural theories of motivation in language learning. The respondents expressed that gaming makes learning English more engaging and enjoyable, potentially increasing their motivation to learn. "I think so. It is fun to learn English, and you learn more than you do in English class. It is more fun because you get to do something you think is fun, while it is English," one student expressed. Another student explained, "I feel like the gaming has helped me," followed by "I get more exposed to English by gaming, which makes me learn the language more in my opinion. It has been much more motivating for me to learn English now after being invested in gaming." Supporting these statements, another student expressed: "Yes. I feel like after I got really into gaming, it has become more motivating for me to learn English in school, mostly because I feel like I have gotten more confident in English."

These student reflections highlight the complex role of gaming in language education, a practical tool for practicing English, but also a means to boost engagement and enjoyment in EFL learning. Through the active application of English in gaming, students engage in an interactive learning environment that diverges from traditional classroom methods. According to the students, this engaging approach enhances their connection to the language, deepening their involvement and encouraging a positive attitude toward learning English.

5.4 The Role of Social Interaction in Language Learning

In exploring the impact of gaming on English language learning, the students frequently emphasized the role of social interaction. They reported that multiplayer games like Minecraft and Fortnite allowed them to engage in gameplay, but also to communicate with peers globally at the same time. This interaction usually takes place in English, which is the main language of communication in most online games. One student described their experience: "I just play in Public, and when others want to talk, I speak with them," illustrating how gaming environments function as social arenas where they practice their language skills in real-time.

Additionally, many students noted that the collaborative nature of these games necessitated negotiating, collaborating, and at times, leading or following instructions in English. This provided them with a practical context for using the language beyond simply acquiring vocabulary. For instance, another student mentioned, "Playing games like Among Us, where you have to discuss and argue, really helps with my English because you have to keep up and contribute to conversations." Such interactions were viewed as opportunities to enhance linguistic fluency and engage in spontaneous English language use.

The interviewees reflected that the social dimension of gaming could be associated to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of learning as a fundamentally social process, wherein the development of skills, including language acquisition, takes place through interactions with peers. They noted that the frequent and dynamic interactions in online games often mimic immersive language experiences like those encountered in natural, real-life settings. Thus, they perceived gaming as a dynamic complement to traditional language learning environments, where social interaction involved in gameplay significantly enhanced their language learning experiences.

5.5 Educational Content in Gaming and Its Relevance to Classroom Learning

In discussing the potential of games to benefit language acquisition, several students shared specific ideas for integrating gaming into EFL learning. For instance, a common suggestion was using games like Minecraft for language practice, content creation, and narration in English. One student described a possible application of Minecraft in the EFL classroom:

> "I think gaming can be used in several ways to help students learn English. An example is Minecraft, which is a game that can be used in several subjects. In English class, we could use Minecraft to tell stories, both written and spoken. This can be done by for example building historical buildings, writing stories about these buildings, and then presenting them."

Another student suggested incorporating games that are perceived as educational and enjoyable into the school environment: "You could find a game that you are allowed to play in school, which has educational benefits and that people think is fun."

The interviewees described gaming as a resourceful learning tool that could enhance understanding across multiple subjects, including English, geography, and math. One stated, "learning goes much faster because it is something you think is fun," while another specified the range of practice provided by games: "gaming provides practice in geography, English, math, and many others in just one game." These comments reflect the students' perception of gaming as a potentially valuable component of the educational process, suggesting its capability to engage and motivate learners while offering diverse educational experiences.

5.6 Teachers', Family, and Friends' Perspectives on Gaming and Language Learning

The responses to the questions in this category reveal a varied view on how people might perceive gaming. Within the respondents' families, acceptance of gaming is often conditional, frequently based on concerns about moderation and addiction. For example, one student said, "I think they think it is fine as long as you do not get too addicted," and shared a personal anecdote about a sibling's struggles with gaming restrictions. Another student stated, "I think it is good, but I should not play too much", reflecting similar sentiments of conditional approval tied to moderation.

Conversely, attitudes towards gaming among the respondents' friends are generally positive, with one student noting, "They like gaming and agree that you learn a lot from it." Another mentioned, "I think they think it is fun. Because we often call each other and play the same game together," indicating a perception of gaming as a source of enjoyment and educational opportunities.

Educators' views on gaming are varied, according to the respondents. Some respondents explained that younger teachers who may have personal experiences with gaming recognize its potential in the classroom. One student commented, "Some teachers understand… how much

you learn in gaming too. Which you may not learn in school." Others indicated a more cautious stance from educators: "I do not think all teachers want us to play, since they want us to focus more on school and stuff like that," and "I think they think it is good. But sometimes they do not think it is good because if you have English lessons and play all the time, you do not learn everything you should. So, I think it depends on what kinds of games."

Despite encountering negative stereotypes about gaming, such as it being harmful to health or a waste of time, the respondents defend their interest in gaming. One student expressed, "I do not care, I will still keep on gaming," while another showed frustration with prevailing attitudes: "It can be frustrating that people think that it is just a waste of time, and do not see the value." Furthermore, a sentiment towards maintaining a balanced lifestyle was shared by a student who believes, "I think it is fine, as long as you do other things than sit in front of a screen too much."

5.7 Challenges and Solutions in Integrating Gaming with English Language Learning

In exploring the integration of gaming within English language learning environments, this analysis predominantly will reflect the students' perceptions of both the challenges and potential benefits associated with gaming as an educational tool. The students frequently cited concerns regarding inappropriate language, exemplified by the respondent's observation of the limitations of language filters: "I have also noticed that a lot of people write curse words in the chats. Even though there are filters that remove curse words, many people just change one of the letters so that it still is visible in the chat." This perception highlights the difficulties involved in ensuring a suitable learning environment within gaming platforms. Moreover, the balance between gaming and educational pursuits emerged as a significant concern. Some educators are perceived as skeptical about incorporating gaming into the curriculum due to its potential to distract from formal educational goals. Conversely, from the pupils' perspective, the educational advantages of gaming were also predominantly noted. For instance, one student articulated the value of engaging language practice afforded by gaming: "I learn more English when I play English games since I read and listen to the language often in my free time." These student insights emphasize a detailed understanding of gaming's role in language learning. They reflect a range of experiences that point to the need for thoughtful integration of gaming

strategies. This integration should align with educational objectives while addressing the identified challenges.

5.8 Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning in Gaming

In analyzing the students' responses about how gaming impacts their English L2 learning, it becomes evident that recalling and articulating specific examples of language learning were challenging for some. For instance, when asked to recall words or phrases learned through gaming, one student could only provide one example and expressed the difficulty in retrieving more: "There are more, but I cannot remember them right now." Similarly, other students struggled to identify concrete instances where gaming had directly helped their English class experiences, with responses such as "Yes, but I cannot come up with anything right now" and "It is a bit difficult to think about what you have *actually* learned." This phenomenon highlights difficulties in the metacognitive processes involved in learning and emphasizes the crucial role of self-regulated learning strategies in language acquisition.

Such difficulties align with foundational aspects of second language acquisition theories. For instance, Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis and Vygotsky's (1978) concept of ZPD, suggest that effective learning occurs just beyond the current level of competence and requires active engagement with the language. The findings from this category suggest a potential gap in actively engaging with the theoretical input. This gap is central and will be further explored in the discussion section.

6 Discussion

This study has explored the perceptions of Norwegian EFL learners in grades 5-7 regarding the impact of digital gaming on their English language learning. The qualitative content analysis revealed several key findings. Firstly, students perceive gaming as a highly engaging and motivational tool that facilitates incidental and intentional English learning. They reported that gaming environments offer rich contexts for applying English in authentic, interactive scenarios, which they feel enhances their L2 English learning. Additionally, the data indicated that gaming contributes to the learners' confidence and positive attitude towards English, driven by the engaging and enjoyable nature of gaming. The emergent themes from the interviews, such as "Linguistic Skill Development Through Gaming," "Gaming as a Motivational Tool," and "The Role of Social Interaction in Language Learning," highlight the complex role of digital games in supplementing traditional educational methods. Gaming also reveals itself to be a dynamic alternative for extramural English learning. These findings set the foundation for the following discussion. This section will compare the findings to existing research and theories in the field of digital game-based language learning. The goal is to deepen the understanding of gaming's educational potential and challenges from the students' perspectives.

In this chapter, I will discuss the key themes identified from the analysis. Each theme will be examined in the context of existing research and theories relevant to gaming and English language learning. This approach will help clarify how the findings from this study align with or differ from previous work in the field.

6.1 Linguistic Skill Development Through Gaming

In alignment with Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016), this study reveals that English is the primary language of interaction in the games played by the respondents. This finding accentuates the role of gaming as a valuable extramural English environment. The observation supports the idea that gaming, when engaged in during leisure time and outside the formal classroom setting, offers significant opportunities for English language exposure. Such exposure is not guided by educators but is initiated by the learners themselves, which aligns with what Sundqvist and

Sylvén (2016) describe as extramural English activities (p. 6). Moreover, the interactive aspects of gaming facilitate cross-cultural communication, as highlighted by one student who noted, "I just play in Public, and when others want to talk, I speak with them." This comment shows how gaming can provide real-time, authentic contexts for language learning. It highlights that gaming goes beyond mere entertainment, offering a practical and engaging way to practice language skills.

The students' reflections indicate that gaming transcends self-initiated leisure activity to become a platform for practicing and enhancing English language skills. For instance, another student remarked on the unique opportunities gaming presents for language practice: "Most games are in English, at least the games I play, so I'm constantly using English to understand the game and communicate with other players." This engagement benefits vocabulary acquisition and developing fluency and conversational skills as students navigate, communicate, and collaborate in English. These narratives reinforce the perception of gaming as a source for both enjoyment and an effective platform for English language exposure and learning. The active use of English during gaming, including navigating, strategizing, and communicating, highlights the dynamic nature of this learning environment. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of ZPD, suggesting that gaming offers optimal challenges that enhance language learning.

Consistent with Sundqvist and Sylvèn's (2016) findings, this study underscores the role of extramural English activities, particularly digital gaming, in enhancing L2 English learning. This study extends Sundqvist and Sylvèn's (2016) observations by illustrating that students experience increased linguistic proficiency through gaming and a more positive attitude toward English. This attitudinal shift is driven by digital games' engaging and captivating nature, which provide a dynamic environment where language use is integral and engaging, unlike more traditional extramural English activities.

This study's findings echo Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, which suggests that language acquisition occurs most effectively through comprehensible input slightly beyond the learner's current level of competence. Students in this study frequently encountered such input while gaming, including standard vocabulary and gaming-specific slang and expressions, such as

"GG" for "Good Game." This exposure proposes a rich form of learning that enhances understanding and usage of informal and conversational English, reflecting a broad spectrum of incidental language acquisition facilitated by gaming.

Moreover, the interactive nature of digital games aligns well with Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD, providing a scaffolded learning environment where more competent peers or contextual cues support the learner's development. The findings reveal that students frequently use English to navigate game settings, solve problems, and interact with players worldwide. This consistent use of English allows them to practice and enhance their language skills in ways that the traditional EFL classroom may struggle to replicate.

Scholz (2022) highlights the importance of examining the dynamics between digital games and their players. He emphasizes how these interactions, along with the community environments surrounding games, support continuous involvement and language learning beyond formal educational settings. This mirrors the autonomy Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016) discuss, with video gaming serving as an essential EE activity where learners autonomously engage in English. Moreover, as Gee (2005) described, the concept of affinity spaces underscores the significance of shared interest communities in promoting an environment conducive to mutual learning and language development. These spaces, ranging from online gaming forums to in-game interactions, provide a ground for growth in language skills, assisted by community members' collective knowledge and experiences.

6.2 Gaming as a Motivational Tool for English Language Learning

The role of intrinsic motivation in language learning through digital games has been highlighted extensively in prior literature. Findings from this study further reinforce the motivational benefits observed in extramural DGBLL environments. Scholz (2022) emphasizes the role of engaging and relevant content in sustaining learner motivation, a critical element that has been consistently observed in this study. The respondents described digital games as a source of linguistic input and a highly engaging medium that sparks their interest and engagement over time. This aligns with findings from Sundqvist and Sylvèn (2016), who noted that the self-

directed nature of gaming can significantly enhance motivation due to its voluntary and enjoyable context.

Moreover, this study offers new insights into how gaming uniquely affects motivation among the chosen age group and educational contexts. Unlike traditional EE activities, where motivation may decline over time, gaming continually adapts to the player's level and interests. This adaptability helps maintain high levels of engagement and motivation. The dynamic nature of gaming helps supply the diverse needs of learners at various developmental stages, making it a valuable tool for sustaining interest and motivation in language learning from younger learners in elementary school. Echoing these findings, Nikkarinen (2019) explores how Finnish university students perceive video games as a tool for extramural English learning. Her study emphasizes the engaging and interactive aspects that make games particularly appealing and practical for language acquisition. Nikkarinen's (2019) participants reported that the compelling narratives and the need to interact in English to progress in games significantly boosted their motivation to learn and use English. Additionally, the need to interact in English in the games encouraged them to use the language more frequently and effectively. The synthesis of findings from this study with those of Nikkarinen (2019) underscores the broader applicability of gaming as a motivational tool across different educational phases. By consistently engaging students at levels that align with their developing skills and interests, digital games bridge informal learning environments and formal educational goals. This connection promotes a continuous and self-directed learning path, which traditional language teaching methods may struggle to achieve.

In contrast to prior research, which often focuses on the immediate linguistic outcomes of DGBLL, this study digs deeper into how these gaming experiences shape long-term motivational attitudes toward English language learning. The insights are drawn directly from the students themselves, providing a unique perspective. Students reported that gaming improved their confidence and interest in English, which translated into a more positive attitude towards their formal L2 language learning. For example, one student remarked, "I feel like after I got into gaming, it has become more motivating for me to learn English in school, mostly because I feel like I have gotten more confident in English." This student's experience

underscores the motivational spill-over effects of gaming in traditional educational contexts. It suggests that the benefits of gaming extend beyond just the informal learning environment.

Furthermore, the findings of this and Nikkarinen's (2019) study imply that while several age groups benefit from the motivational aspects of gaming, younger learners seem to find this method especially appealing and effective. This is possibly due to their higher tendency to engage with interactive and visually stimulating learning environments, which games inherently provide. Thus, incorporating gaming into the EFL curriculum could be particularly effective for younger students, helping them to develop a lasting interest and motivation in learning English.

6.3 The Role of Social Interaction in Language Learning

The importance of social interaction in language learning has been subject to a great deal of research. This study's findings provide valuable support for the theories positing that social interactions within gaming can enhance language acquisition. Stenberg's (2011) analysis of cooperative dialogues in games like "World of Warcraft" highlights how these games require players to engage in complex communications. These communications are both collaborative and strategic, promoting language development through social interaction. This study found similar dynamics at play, with students frequently engaging in cross-cultural communications that required the use of English to collaborate and compete effectively.

The interviews revealed that games like "Among Us" and "Fortnite" require players to communicate in English to succeed. This necessity creates opportunities for complex language use, such as argumentation and negotiation in English. These findings mirror Stenberg's (2011) findings and further illustrates how such interactive gaming environments serve as rich linguistic arenas where language learning occurs spontaneously and in context. These results underscore the potential of multiplayer games to simulate immersive language-learning environments similar to real-world interactions, which are highly beneficial for developing practical language skills.

The insights from this study suggest implications for the development of language learning games or what games to choose in a language learning environment. Games designed for educational purposes could intentionally incorporate features that require and promote social interaction. For instance, tasks requiring players to work together to solve problems, share information, and articulate strategies in the target language can create meaningful language practice opportunities. Additionally, integrating scenarios that require players to adapt their language use for different social contexts within the game can further enhance the learning experience, making it more comprehensive and beneficial. Furthermore, educational games should incorporate systems that facilitate reflection and feedback on language use within the game, enabling learners to recognize and correct their mistakes. Such features help bridge the gap between informal gaming and formal learning environments, ensuring that the language skills developed in games are transferable to real-life settings.

6.4 Educational Content in Games and Its Relevance to Classroom Learning

The enthusiastic response from the students regarding educational games highlights a significant opportunity for integrating these tools into formal educational settings. The potential for games to challenge and engage students aligns with findings from the broader educational research on digital games, which consistently underscores their motivational benefits and effectiveness in reinforcing learning outcomes. Games inherently provide such environments, making them suitable tools for facilitating active learning and engagement. Moreover, Gee's (2007) principle of "empowered learners" suggests that effective learning occurs when students are allowed to take control of their learning process, which supports the integration of games in educational settings. This principle is particularly resonant with the autonomy that games provide, allowing learners to explore, experiment, and learn from their interactions within the game world.

However, integrating games into formal educational settings also presents challenges. The diversity in the effectiveness of different types of games, as noted by researchers like Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016), suggests that not all games are equally beneficial. This indicates that different games may support different learning outcomes. Educational games should be

thoughtfully selected and seamlessly integrated into the curriculum. This approach ensures that they complement and enhance traditional teaching methods, rather than replacing or undermining them. To ensure that the gaming experience directly contributes to learning goals, it is essential to align the game's design with the educational objectives. Selective integration allows for this alignment, enhancing the effectiveness of educational games.

Students' enthusiastic endorsements of gaming's educational benefits should not overshadow the need for structured implementation. Research by Nikkarinen (2019) indicates that while games can significantly enhance language learning, the outcomes depend heavily on how games are integrated into the learning environment. Therefore, games should be used occasionally to supplement traditional teaching methods and become an integral part of a comprehensive educational strategy. This approach should include clear objectives, effective feedback mechanisms, and alignment with curriculum standards.

6.5 Teachers', Family, and Friends' Perspectives on Gaming

The attitudes towards gaming among teachers, family, and friends play a crucial role in shaping how students perceive and engage with gaming as an educational tool. This study reveals a mixed reception of digital games across these groups, reflecting broader societal and educational attitudes towards gaming and its effect on language learning. The participants' family's attitudes toward gaming varied, alternating between cautious support and concerns about overuse. This highlights the conditional acceptance of gaming, which is based on its perceived impact on academic performance and social behavior. For instance, some family members approve of gaming if it does not interfere with academic goals. This mirrors the conditional acceptance observed in broader societal attitudes towards leisure activities, as described by Muñoz (2014).

As noted by the interviewees, teachers' perspectives vary significantly, with some educators recognizing the potential of games to enhance language learning, while others remain skeptical about their educational value. This contrast underscores a potential broader debate within the educational community about the role of digital games in formal education. This debate is informed by the ongoing evolution of pedagogical approaches towards more interactive and

learner-centered methodologies. This aligns with Nikkarinen's (2019) findings, which emphasize the potential of games to facilitate extramural language learning, a perspective that is slowly gaining traction among educators.

Friends' attitudes generally appear more positive, reflecting a validation of gaming as both a social and learning activity. Peer influence is significant because it supports the social aspect of gaming, enhancing its role as a language-learning tool. This provides a natural, everyday setting for applying and practicing new language skills. Gee's (2005) concept of affinity spaces is closely related to this peer-supported learning environment, where informal learning takes place through shared interests and social interaction. This underlines the potential of gaming communities to support language development.

The contrasting views among these groups suggest a complex interplay between personal experiences with gaming and broader societal norms. This interplay can either facilitate or hinder the acceptance and integration of gaming in educational settings. The critical reflections shared by young learners about their learning environments and preferences, as discussed in studies by Muñoz (2014) and others, indicate a growing awareness among students. They recognize the potential benefits of integrating more dynamic and interactive forms of learning into traditional educational frameworks. Muñoz's (2014) study, along with this research, suggest that students see gaming as a valuable addition to their learning experiences, enhancing engagement and interactivity.

6.6 Challenges and Solutions in Integrating Gaming with English Language Learning

While gaming enriches English language learning by engaging students effectively, it also introduces challenges in educational contexts. One particular challenge is the potential exposure to inappropriate content. This study highlights incidents where students encountered offensive language despite the presence of chat filters. Such occurrences demonstrate the difficulty of regulating language standards within the unregulated and diverse virtual spaces of gaming. Students reported that other players often bypassed filters, exposing them to potentially unsuitable language. This reflects broader concerns about content appropriateness, influenced

by gaming communities' varied cultural and personal values. Although these environments offer authentic and realistic communication opportunities, they need careful consideration when used for educational purposes. The exposure to such unfiltered content underscores the complex interplay between learner autonomy and the need for educational guidance. It reveals how extramural English activities, like gaming, can lead to encounters with unconventional language. These encounters provide both challenges and unique opportunities for linguistic exploration. Addressing these challenges requires a balanced approach that involves thorough selection and curation of educational gaming content to align with age-appropriate standards. Educators and parents must navigate these digital tools thoughtfully, weighing the benefits of spontaneous language encounters against the risks of minimal oversight. This strategy ensures that gaming remains a beneficial tool in language curricula, fostering engagement and appropriate language development.

Furthermore, students reported difficulties articulating the specific linguistic benefits they have attained from gaming, pointing to gaps in self-regulation and metacognitive strategies within language learning. This aligns with Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, which suggests language input should extend slightly beyond the learner's current proficiency to enhance learning. The lack of active engagement with this advanced language input may indicate a disconnect between the theoretical benefits of gaming and actual language learning. Specifically, there may be a deficiency in metacognitive and meta-linguistic awareness. This implies that although students are exposed to advanced language through gaming, they may not be actively reflecting on or regulating their learning processes. As a result, they might not effectively internalize these benefits. Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) concept of ZPD supports the idea that while gaming provides language exposure within a learner's ZPD, active and reflective engagement with this input is essential for effective learning. This finding suggests the need for pedagogical strategies that integrate structured reflection and self-regulation. Such strategies can bridge the gap between informal language exposure through gaming and systematic language learning in formal educational settings.

Addressing these challenges requires carefully selecting gaming content and implementing strategies encouraging reflective engagement with language. These strategies should not only sustain the motivation provided by gaming but also deepen language learning through

structured practice and reflection. This comprehensive approach can enhance language acquisition in formal educational settings, optimizing the use of gaming as an effective educational tool. Given the positive effects reported, integrating gaming into EFL education could enrich traditional methods. This approach could particularly benefit disengaged learners by reigniting their interest and improving their attitudes toward language learning.

6.7 Cross-Thematic Discussion

Exploring extramural gaming and English language learning through various themes reveals central connections and some challenges that influence the learners' perceptions of gaming and English language learning. The connection between **Linguistic Skill Development** and **The Role of Social Interaction** illustrates how extramural gaming environments serve as platforms for acquiring vocabulary and applying these skills in real-time, social contexts. This synergy enhances the practical usage of language, offering authentic communication opportunities that can be seen as more engaging than structured classroom activities.

However, this beneficial relationship encounters challenges highlighted in the theme of **Challenges and Solutions in Integrating Gaming with English Language Learning**. While gaming enriches language learning with real-world linguistic interactions, it also exposes learners to potential risks, such as exposure to unsuitable language and content. This issue is particularly apparent in extramural settings, where educational oversight is less stringent than in formal educational environments. This emphasizes the need for learners to navigate these spaces with a degree of autonomy and critical awareness.

Furthermore, the theme of **Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning in Gaming** ties into these areas by suggesting that effective language learning in extramural gaming relies heavily on the learners' ability to self-regulate and reflect on their experiences. Learners' capacity to understand and control their learning processes can significantly determine how much they benefit from the informal learning opportunities that gaming presents.

The cross-thematic analysis also suggests broader implications for extramural English activities. It underscores the potential of digital games to bridge informal learning and formal

linguistic competence, where learners can organically develop language skills in engaging and informational settings. However, the autonomy associated with extramural gaming requires learners to be proactive and responsible in managing their learning environments. They must balance the freedom of choice and exposure to diverse linguistic inputs with the challenges of navigating content appropriateness and maximizing educational value.

6.8 Limitations and Future Research

This study offers valuable insights into the role of gaming in extramural English learning, yet it acknowledges certain limitations that suggest directions for future research. The reliance on self-reported data from a relatively small group of Norwegian EFL learners may limit the generalizability of the findings. While providing direct insights into the students' perceptions, self-reports might introduce bias. This is because they rely on the participants' assessments and recollections, which could be influenced by their current attitudes or misunderstandings of their learning processes. Additionally, focusing on a specific demographic restricts the ability to apply these findings universally across different cultural or educational contexts. Future studies might expand the scope by including a more diverse participant group across various age groups, educational backgrounds, and cultural settings to enhance the strength and applicability of the data.

The follow-up conversations I had with the participants after analyzing the findings were essential. They served as a mechanism to align the study's interpretations with the participants' perspectives and experiences. Through this process, the participants were allowed to assess and comment on the resemblance between the reported findings and their own experiences. In qualitative research, where subjective interpretation is central, such a process is essential to validate the interpretations with the participants' perspectives, ensuring the integrity of the conclusions drawn. Through these follow-up conversations, all the participants agreed with the analysis I had made from the findings. This ensured that I had understood their perceptions and experiences in relation to theories. Furthermore, the conversation improved the validity and reliability of my research.

To address these limitations and build on the groundwork laid by this thesis, future research could employ mixed methodologies that combine qualitative insights with quantitative measures. Implementing longitudinal studies could provide more definitive evidence of the impact of gaming on language acquisition by tracking language development over time among gamers and non-gamers. Furthermore, experimental designs allow researchers to observe the immediate effects of gaming on language skills in a controlled environment, providing a clearer picture of these effects. Investigating a wider range of games, including those with varying linguistic demands and interaction types, could also shed light on how different gaming environments contribute to language learning. For instance, exploring narrative-driven games might offer insights into vocabulary acquisition. In contrast, strategy games could be examined for their potential to enhance problem-solving skills in a foreign language context.

Research focusing on these areas has been conducted to varying extents. Other research has referred to the benefits of digital games to help in language learning, regarding vocabulary, motivation, and engagement. There have also been conducted longitudinal studies to show the effect gaming has on language acquisition. Experimental designs have been utilized to identify connections between gaming and language skills, though more research is needed to strengthen these findings. Research on different types of games, including research that compared the potential benefits of narrative-driven games and strategy games on language learning outcomes, was also a focus of (Govender & Arnedo-Moreno, 2021). Further research can elaborate on how and under what conditions gaming can work for language teaching and learning by identifying the gaps within the existing literature and bridging them.

The strength of this study lies in its focus on investigating students' perceptions, providing valuable insights into how learners view the role of extramural gaming in their language learning journey. This approach highlights the importance of learner attitudes and motivations, which are essential for designing and selecting effective language learning materials. By exploring students' views on gaming as a part of their educational experience, the study sheds light on the subjective aspects of language acquisition that are often overlooked in traditional research.

Future research could build on these findings by comparing learner perceptions with objective language proficiency measures. This would help align subjective experiences with measurable outcomes, offering a more comprehensive understanding of gaming's impact on language learning. Additionally, investigating how these perceptions evolve over time and across different educational contexts could provide valuable information for educators.

By addressing these areas, future research can continue to elucidate the complexities of extramural English learning through digital gaming. This ongoing exploration helps keep educational strategies aligned with learners' evolving needs and preferences in today's digital age. Ultimately, this research supports the development of more effective, engaging, and personalized language learning experiences. By harnessing the potential of digital gaming, it enhances educational outcomes and creates more dynamic learning environments.

6.9 Conclusion of Discussion

In sum, this discussion underscores the significant role of digital gaming as an extramural activity that enhances English language education. It supports prior research by illustrating how gaming boosts motivation and enriches language learning experiences across various educational contexts. The integration of gaming should consider educational goals, learner needs, and the strengths of different gaming genres to ensure it complements traditional teaching methods effectively.

By addressing the educational benefits and challenges and fostering an inclusive dialogue among educators, families, and friends, we can better harness gaming's potential in language education. This approach aligns with current educational reforms that prioritize student-centered learning. Educators should develop clear guidelines for selecting and integrating games into the curriculum to maximize their educational value while moderating potential risks. It is essential to create a balance between gaming and traditional educational activities, ensuring that the former enhances rather than replaces conventional teaching methods.

This research contributes to the development of more effective, engaging, and personalized language learning experiences. Leveraging the potential of digital gaming can enhance

educational outcomes, providing learners with dynamic and engaging environments that foster continuous language development. By integrating gaming thoughtfully into educational frameworks, we can create more enriching and motivational learning experiences for all students.

7 Conclusion

Through this thesis, I aimed to contribute to the research field of gaming and L2 learning in Norwegian EFL classrooms. My goal was to supply the research field with perceptions and experiences from the perspectives of EFL learners in grades 5-7. I conducted semi-structured interviews with six participants and aimed to answer the following research question:

How do Norwegian EFL learners who game in English in grades 5-7 see the relationship between their English-language gaming and their in-class English-language learning?

Through qualitative content analysis of semi-structured interviews, this study has uncovered the role of digital gaming as a complex educational tool that transcends mere entertainment to support language acquisition. Referencing the theoretical insights of Sundqvist and Sylvén (2016), along with the applied frameworks provided by Scholz (2022), it appears that gaming effectively supplements traditional English language education as a central extramural activity. The analysis discovers that students regard gaming as an enjoyable and beneficial tool that significantly strengthens their English vocabulary and conversational skills. This finding aligns with Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, highlighting the importance of meaningful and comprehensible input received through interactive gaming experiences. Additionally, consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the social interactions necessitated by gaming, which involve negotiation and cooperation in English, seem to provide authentic practice that complements the structured learning experiences within the classroom.

The students' experiences suggest that gaming provides an engaging platform for encountering English in a context that mirrors real-life usage. This exposure involves passive absorption and active and strategic use of language, which is essential for language acquisition. Games often require players to understand and use English to interact, negotiate, and collaborate, thereby supporting vocabulary and communicative competence development. Furthermore, gaming is a motivational tool, transforming the learning experience from a chore to an engaging activity. It introduces a dynamic component to language learning that traditional educational settings often lack. This shift improves learners' attitudes toward English and boosts their confidence,

giving them a sense of achievement that, for some students, often can be absent in formal educational environment. However, the integration of gaming into educational settings is complex. Concerns regarding content appropriateness and the potential for distraction underscore the need for educators to engage critically. This study supports the findings of Nikkarinen (2019), who suggests that while gaming can significantly enhance language learning, its effectiveness depends on how it is implemented within the educational framework.

Through the insights from this research, one can see that digital gaming holds substantial potential to enhance EFL education. This thesis underscores the need for educators to broaden educational methods by incorporating digital games as valid and effective tools for language learning. The findings show that Norwegian EFL learners see gaming as a valuable addition to traditional classroom instruction, enhancing their linguistic skills and motivation. This research supports the shift from only using conventional, teacher-centered instructional methods to incorporating more interactive, learner-centered approaches. By integrating gaming into language curricula, educators can create more engaging and effective learning environments that leverage the motivational and educational benefits of gaming. Such integration enriches the EFL learning experience and promotes a more diverse and dynamic educational setting. Moreover, this thesis challenges conservative views of gaming, positioning it as a transformative tool in modern education. Through the strategic use of digital games, we can significantly enhance language education by aligning informal and formal learning environments. This approach broadens the scope of traditional teaching methods and supports modern educational needs, potentially developing how English is taught and learned.

7.1 Future Research

The findings from this study highlight the potential of gaming as a valuable supplement for English language learning, presenting several areas for future research that build on the student perspectives approach. Future studies should investigate the efficacy of specific game genres in enhancing language acquisition to fully understand the capabilities and boundaries of digital games in educational settings. This could involve comparative analyses of narrative-driven games versus strategy games to determine which genres best support linguistic and cognitive development.

Moreover, addressing challenges associated with gaming, such as exposure to inappropriate content, remains fundamental. Future research should focus on understanding students' concerns and experiences with content appropriateness. It should explore how educators can develop guidelines to help select and integrate games that maximize learning outcomes while safeguarding against risks. This includes gathering student input on content appropriateness and engagement criteria to ensure a safe and productive learning environment.

Another promising area for future research involves systematically integrating gaming into existing educational curricula based on student feedback. Longitudinal studies could assess the sustained impact of such integration on student engagement and language proficiency, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of games as pedagogical tools over time. These studies would benefit from a broader participant pool to enhance the generalizability of the findings. By incorporating diverse educational settings and demographic backgrounds, future research can offer a comprehensive view of gaming's impacts as perceived by various student groups. Additionally, exploring the long-term effects of gaming on language proficiency and academic performance through extended tracking could yield a deeper understanding of how gaming influences educational outcomes. This research could examine how consistent engagement with gaming interfaces, as reported by students, correlates with improvements in language skills and whether these improvements translate into better academic performance across subjects.

By continuing to explore these dimensions from the learners' perspectives, future research can contribute to a more detailed understanding of gaming's role in education, optimizing its integration to enrich traditional educational methodologies. The goal is to harness the educational potential of extramural activities like gaming. This ensures that they are effectively and appropriately applied within the broader framework of educational practices, guided by student insights and experiences.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Interview Guide (Norwegian)

Intervjuguide

Gaming-vanar

1. Kan du beskrive favorittspela dine? Kvifor likar du å spele dei?

2. Kor ofte gamar du på fritida di?

3. Spelar du spel på engelsk? Kvifor? (Evt. Snakkar du engelsk medan du spelar?)

Haldningar kring gaming

1. Kva tankar trur du familien din eller vennane dine har om gaming?

2. Har du nokon gong høyrd nokre negative tankar/meiningar om gaming? Kva er dei i så tilfelle? Korleis har dei fått deg til å føle?

Gaming og språklæring

1. Har du lært nokre engelske ord eller uttrykk gjennom gaming? Eksempel?

2. Trur du at det å spele engelske spel, eller snakke engelsk medan du gamar, har hjelpe deg i engelsktimane på skulen? Korleis?

Skule og gaming

1. Kva eigenskapar trur du at du har fått gjennom gaming som du har fått bruk for når du har lært deg engelsk?

2. Kan du dele ei erfaring der noko du har lært gjennom gaming har hjelpe deg i ein engelsktime på skulen?

3. Kva syn trur du lærarar har om gaming i forhold til engelsklæring?

4. På kva måte trur du lærarar kan bruke spel til å hjelpe elevar å lære engelsk?

Refleksjonar

1. Dersom du kunne fortald ein lærar ein ting om gaming og engelsklæring, kva ville det ha vore?

2. Trur du gaming har vore med på å påverke synet ditt på å lære engelsk? Kan du forklare?

Annex 2: SIKT Approval

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

🖨 Skriv ut   ≣ 03.01.2024 ▾

Referansenummer
952273

Vurderingstype
Standard

Dato
03.01.2024

Tittel
Master i engelsk om korleis "gaming" påverkar engelsksspråket til norske elevar

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge / Fakultet for humaniora, idrett- og utdanningsvitenskap / Institutt for språk og litteratur

Prosjektansvarlig
Erika Kvistad

Student
Alexandra Utslottøy

Prosjektperiode
08.01.2024 - 03.06.2024

Kategorier personopplysninger
Alminnelige

Lovlig grunnlag
Allmennhetens interesse (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav e)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 03.06.2024.

Meldeskjema ↗

Kommentar
OM VURDERINGEN
Sikt har en avtale med institusjonen du forsker eller studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger er nødvendig for å utføre en oppgave i allmennhetens interesse, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 e).

Ifølge art. 6 nr. 3 b) skal grunnlaget for slik behandling fastsettes nærmere i nasjonal rett. Personopplysningsloven § 8 stadfester at behandling av personopplysninger for arkiv-, forsknings- eller statistikkformål er i allmennhetens interesse og kan gjøres på grunnlag av art. 6 nr. 1 e).

Prosjektet gjør nødvendige tiltak for å ivareta de registrertes rettigheter og friheter, jf. art. 89 nr. 1. I vår vurdering har vi lagt vekt på at de registrerte og deres foresatte får god informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen. Behandlingstiden er begrenset og få personer vil ha tilgang. Det behandles kun alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
Vi har vurdert at du har lovlig grunnlag til å behandle personopplysningene, men husk at det er institusjonen du er ansatt/student ved som avgjør hvilke databehandlere du kan bruke og hvordan du må lagre og sikre data i ditt prosjekt. Husk å bruke leverandører som din institusjon har avtale med (f.eks. ved skylagring, nettspørreskjema, videosamtale el.)

Personverntjenester legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER
Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Se våre nettsider om hvilke endringer du må melde: https://sikt.no/melde-endringar-i-meldeskjema

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
Vi vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Appendix 3: Form of Consent

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet «Gaming sin påvirkning på engelskspråket til elever på 5. til 7. trinn»?

Formålet med prosjektet
Dette er et spørsmål til deg om du vil delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å forske på hvordan gaming påvirker engelskspråket til elever ved den norske grunnskolen. Forskningsprosjektet har som mål å bli kjent med elever sine tanker og meninger om gaming, og hvordan gaming påvirker engelsklæringen deres. Denne forskingen vil være min masteroppgave, som jeg skal skrive denne våren.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?
Du får denne forespørselen fordi dette prosjektet forsker på elever på 5. til 7. trinn som gamer. Jeg ønsker å intervjue 4-6 elever på x skule, og har valgt ut 6 stykker som får denne forespørselen. Jeg har jobbet som vikar på denne skolen i snart 2 år, som har gjort at jeg har blitt kjent med elevene og lærerne på skolen. Dette har resultert i at jeg har funnet ut av hvilke elever som kan passe til dette prosjektet.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?
Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge er ansvarlig for personopplysningene som behandles i prosjektet.

Det er frivillig å delta
Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å be om å få dine opplysninger slettet.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?
Jeg ønsker å intervjue deg, som vil ta ca. 25-35 minutter i skoletiden. Under intervjuet kommer jeg til å ta lydopptak, slik at jeg får med meg alt som blir sagt i etterkant når jeg skal skrive oppgaven min. Etter vi har hatt intervjuet, kommer jeg til å skrive ned det som er sagt, slik at jeg kan slette lydopptaket. Dersom det er ønskelig fra foreldre/foresatte, kan dere se intervjuguiden på forhånd.

Kort om personvern
Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler personopplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Du kan lese mer om personvern på neste side.

Med vennlig hilsen

Alexandra Utslottøy   Erika Kvistad
Student/forsker   Veileder

Personvern

Utdypende om personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Det vil bare være jeg (Alexandra Utslottøy) og Erika Kvistad (veileder) som vil ha tilgang på personopplysningene dine. For å sikre at ingen uvedkommende får tilgang til personopplysningene vil lydopptaket være låst inne slik at man må ha en kode for å få tilgang på det. Deltakerne vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i selve oppgaven, ingen personopplysninger vil bli publisert. Alt som blir sagt i intervjuet skal transkriberes, og deretter bli diskutert i oppgaven min.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysningene om deg for formål knyttet til vitenskapelig forskning, og fordi forskningsprosjektet er vurdert å være i allmennhetens interesse.

På oppdrag fra Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge har personverntjenestene ved Sikt – Kunnskapssektorens tjenesteleverandør, vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til å protestere, be om innsyn, og til retting og sletting av opplysninger vi behandler om deg. Du vil da høre fra oss innen en måned. Vi vil gi deg en god begrunnelse hvis vi mener at du ikke kan identifiseres, eller at rettighetene ikke kan utøves. Du har også rett til å klage til Datatilsynet om hvordan vi behandler dine opplysninger.

Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?

Prosjektet vil etter planen avsluttes 3. juni 2024. Opplysningene vil da slettes.

Spørsmål

Hvis du har spørsmål eller vil utøve dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:
Alexandra Utslottøy (Prosjektansvarlig/student)
Epost: alexandrautslottoy@gmail.com
Telefon: 45848904

Erika Kvistad (veileder)
Epost: Erika.Kvistad@usn.no
Telefon: 35 02 65 01

Vårt personvernombud:
Paal Are Solberg
Epost: personvernombud@usn.no.

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til Sikts vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt på epost: personverntjenester@sikt.no, eller på telefon: 73 98 40 40.

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjekte*t* «**Gaming sin påvirkning på engelskspråket til elever på 5. til 7. trinn**», og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

♦ At barnet mitt deltar i intervju
♦ At opplysningene barnet forteller publiseres slik at det ikke kan gjenkjennes

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

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(Signert av Foresatte/Forelder av prosjektdeltaker, dato)