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Young film critics

Improving pupils' reading of film through media lessons

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I

Acknowledgements

This thesis marks a milestone and represents a huge transition in my life. Before it lies my wonderful time as a student in Tromsø, and on the other side awaits the birth of my first child, the promise of a steady job and "adult life". The conduction of this project has been very rewarding for me, I am passionate about films, and trying to figure out how I can extend this enthusiasm to my future pupils has been the most rewarding part of this process. This is a theme I will continue to explore.

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Abstract

This thesis explores whether teaching a group of 9th grade pupils basic film-related theory and vocabulary has any impact on their written reflections about films. The thesis question is "Does pupil reflection of visual narratives evolve with short-term teaching?". To answer this question, I initiated a qualitative intervention in a classroom, where I conducted three lessons about various cinematic techniques and their effect on the film and the viewer. Before and after the intervention the pupils watched a different short film and wrote a review for it. These reviews were used as the data in a thematic analysis to detect any difference in reflection and vocabulary. The findings indicate that a few of the pupils who already reflected well had improved reflections when they could incorporate how the film's devices affected them and the film. Other pupils who only wrote a summary for the first review now could incorporate their opinion and reflection into their reviews. For the average pupils, there was a slight increase in vocabulary use, but no found increase in reflection. Despite marginal findings, the study thematizes the importance of working with film and film-related perspectives in English teaching. Film is an increasingly important part of children's and young people's lives, and heightened attention to visual and cinematic means and devices should form a central part of what we consider modern literacy.

Keywords: *Literacy, media literacy, film in education, English teaching*

Sammendrag

Målet med denne studien har vært å utforske hvordan det å undervise elever i 9. trinn i grunnleggende filmteori og vokabular knyttet til film har innvirkning på hvordan de reflekterer om film i sine skriftlige tekster. Forskningsspørsmålet ble formulert som «Kan elevers refleksjon rundt visuelle filmnarrativ utvikle seg som følge av et kort undervisningsopplegg om temaet?». For å svare på dette spørsmålet gjennomførte jeg en kvalitativt orientert intervensjonsstudie i et klasserom, hvor jeg hadde tre undervisningstimer om filmteknikker og deres effekt på filmen og seeren. Før og etter intervensjonen så elevene en kortfilm og skrev en anmeldelse for den. Disse anmeldelsene ble gjort gjenstand for en tematisk analyse for å avdekke forekomster av filmrelatert vokabular og refleksjon rundt film. Funnene indikerte at noen få av elevene som allerede reflekterte godt hadde forbedret kvaliteten på sine refleksjoner når de kunne inkorporere hvordan filmens virkemidler påvirket dem og filmen. Andre elever som før kun skrev et sammendrag for den første anmeldelsen, kunne inkorporere sin mening og refleksjon i sine anmeldelser. For gjennomsnittselevene var det en liten økning i vokabularbruk, men ingen merkbar økning i refleksjon. Til tross for marginale funn, tematiserer studien betydningen av å jobbe med film og filmteoretiske perspektiver i engelskundervisningen. Film er en stadig viktigere del av barn og unges liv, og en skjerpet oppmerksomhet rundt filmens virkemidler bør utgjøre en sentral del av det vi kaller moderne tekstkompetanse (literacy).

Nøkkelord*: Tekstkompetanse, mediekompetanse, film i undervisning, engelskundervisning*

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1 Introduction

"If a million different people see my movie, I hope they see a million different movies", once said the famous director Quentin Tarantino (Azquotes, 2023). Although Tarantino was referring to his film *Pulp Fiction*, the quote has relevance for all films. All viewers have their individual experience and tastes which affects how they respond to a visual narrative, thus resulting in "a million different movies". In general terms, the aim of the present study is to explore ways to increase pupils' media literacy. More specifically, it seeks to investigate whether providing pupils with terms and concepts related to visual narratives will increase their awareness as viewers and enable them to better express their opinions about films. In other words, will teaching pupils *about* film help them express which one of "millions of movies" they are viewing?

In this study, I conduct a small-scale intervention in a 9th grade classroom. The pupils watch two short films and produce written reviews after each of the films. In between the two films I conduct three lessons where I introduce basic concepts related to visual storytelling. The empirical data for the study is the pupils' texts, written before and after the film-specific lessons. These texts have been subject to analysis in order to see how and in which ways teaching cinematic techniques, effects and vocabulary have impacted their reflections and opinions. From this, the thesis question is formulated as "Does pupil reflection of visual narratives evolve with short-term teaching?"

1.1 Background and motivation

Text constitutes a central aspect in the subject English and in education as a whole. Pupils need to read, reflect on and process information, as this is the core of becoming educated. Texts, both fictional and factual, open a new world of experiences and knowledge to anyone with the curiosity to receive it. Text, however, is not just books and literature, but also other means of expression and narratives, such as film. The core curriculum for education in Norway has a section under 1.4 that relays the role and importance of visual arts and expressions: "Our aesthetic sense is developed when we are exposed to different cultural expressions, and this helps to point out new perspectives. Art and cultural expressions are also important for individual personal development" (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019b). Thus, in

addition to being a part of narratives, which helps pupils explore and experience different cultures, it also helps pupils develop their aesthetic sense.

Film does not get the same treatment as literature in school and is often overlooked when it comes to its educational benefits. There appears to be some sort of general agreement in the field of English teaching that films deserve a place in the classroom. As Bakken (2016) observes, "overall, teachers tend to emphasise the importance of showing "good films" that fit the topic and that films should not be used as an emergency measure or as entertainment." (Bakken, 2016, p. 7). Still, notions about the educational value of classroom film use might represent a blind spot that has escaped critical attention (Bakken, 2016). With little work involving how the visual media is used, the question of what happens with the narration in this transition, how storytelling is done visually, and how stories are told differently in a visual versus a verbal media format, is not often covered. If the work in a classroom is based on a narrative, it is for example common to read the novel first and watch the movie as a "reward" afterwards. A perceived lack of tools given to both teachers and pupils to understand and reflect upon visual narratives can be the causation of this, as opposed to "regular" reading.

Several scholars have commented on the lack of visual media literacy education. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) argue that since "literate cultures have systematically suppressed means of analysis of the visual forms of representation" there is still no "established theoretical framework within which visual forms of representation can be discussed" (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006, p. 23). According to Hoechsmann and Poyntz (2012, p.138), therefore, "media literacy has mainly been a marginalized, add-on component to school curricula". Consequently, "[…] our educational systems have been slow to respond to the ascendance of visual media in our society" (Donaghy, 2019, p. 22). These and similar observations coincide with my own, personal experience as I have often experienced the use of film in school as a reward, both as an educator and a pupil. There is clearly a place for film in school, as well as a documented need for improving our dealings with it in education.

Films and other forms of visual narratives take up a large part of the pupils' free time. A national survey conducted in 2021 shows that 92 percent of pupils reported watching more than half an hour of film, TV series or YouTube every day, in which 43 percent of them watched more than two hours each day (Ungdata, 2021). Most, if not all of the pupils' input in English after school derives from different sorts of media such as movies, gaming, series and social media. This should be accommodated in schools, and their education should reflect their narrative habits

more closely to better be able to process and reflect over the narrative content they are consuming.

While the consumption of English language media is so high, it is important for the school to accommodate this change in societal behaviour. English media is more readily available than ever before, and from an English teacher's point of view, this is a positive trend. However, the teaching of the subject of English needs to follow this societal trend and facilitate teaching that reflects the youth's media consumption. The English curriculum in English refers to literacy and text (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019a). A failure to consider media literacy is not the fault of the individual teacher, as the system of education has not facilitated for teachers to gain significant competency in this, and therefore not pass that competency on to the pupils. The goal of media literacy is to make reflected pupils who considers the surroundings of a film, how it influences them, and who made it for what reason.

The overarching goal of this study is to explore how to provide pupils the tools they need to identify and express what parts of the film affects them, and by extension give them what they need to truly understand why they like or dislike a film. The goal is for every pupil I teach to be a critic, to be an active consumer as opposed to a passive one. Whether the pupil enjoys the film or not is not the objective, it is rather whether or not they are able to communicate why they feel the way they do by means of relevant and appropriate terms and concepts.

This thesis consists of five chapters. This first chapter is an introduction, where theme, thesis question and the background for the study is presented. The second chapter lays out some of the thematical and theoretical fields of film literacy and pedagogy relevant for the study. The third chapter presents the practical and methodological aspects of the study, and describes the choice of methods for collecting data, the practical planning and execution of the lesson, and how I chose to organize and analyse the data that was gathered through the pupils' texts. This chapter also assesses research quality, through the lens of reliability, validity, and research ethics. The fourth chapter presents the findings made of the dataset. Finally, the fifth chapter contains the discussion and conclusion of the study, where the findings are discussed in relation to the theoretical grounds and previous research set in the second chapter. It also readdresses the quality of the study, its shortcomings, and some suggestions for further research.

2 Thematic and theoretical field

This chapter consists of the thematic and theoretical framework for this study. It is divided in three parts. The first part lays out discussions surrounding the concept of literacy, what constitutes media literacy and how it is dealt with in present-day Norwegian education. The second turns to issues relating to films and viewers; what it means to "read" a film and to the media habits of the young generation. The third part of this chapter turns to issues relating to teaching and learning about film, to what conceptual learning involves, and to teaching through classroom interventions.

2.1 Literacy

Literacy is a central term in the present study. While it used to refer to the ability to read and write, literacy has taken on a much more comprehensive meaning in the past few decades. According to a definition by UNESCO, "[…] literacy is now understood as a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world" (UNESCO, 2023). It is, in other words, a wide range of skills and abilities required for a person to adapt and navigate in modern society. Moreover, as the world moves onward, so does our understanding of what skills that need to be developed in order to be literate (Veum & Skovholt, 2020, p. 12). In previous times, the ability to read and write was something one either possessed or did not possess. At present it is not a question of either-or, but rather of degree. Texts (in all forms) can hold multiple or deeper meanings, and this means that someone can read and understand part of or the whole meaning from on aspect of the text, but not another part of it, yet still be literate.

While literacy as a term continues to change as the skills required to understand, respond and develop changes with society, it has always been affiliated with self-empowerment, and social status (Hoechmann & Poyntz, 2012, p. 210). At a time when literacy was solely a matter of being able to read and write, essentially immortalising your words to communicate with parties not present, reserved for nobility and other high social status individuals, "common people" like farmers or manual labourers were not seen as having any need or worth for this ability. Today when reading and writing is an essential skill and a goal for all individuals to acquire, literacy is expanded to seeing behind the content presented and being able read meaning in a large variety of forms. As literacy is such a broad term, it has split into subcategories, such as

visual literacy, *media literacy* and *critical literacy*, with varying degrees of overlap in field and definitions.

Critical literacy refers to a more critical approach to texts. "Critical" in this context does not bear negative connotations, but is simply a matter of investigating the intent and tools applied in order to convince or influence recipients of the text. Veum and Skovholdt (2021) make a distinction between reading *with* or reading *against* the text as an approach to reading texts in school. Reading *with* the text is characterized by finding the main viewpoints in a text, understanding and assessing the content. The other approach, reading *against* the text, consists of understanding that all texts construct a selective worldview that is colored by the author, and to identify what interests this creator has and how it may affect the text (Veum & Skovholdt, 2021, p. 14). In practical terms, this involves considering who the text is made by, who the intended recipient is, how the text is shaped considering the genre in which it is communicated, what the goal of the text is, and what lexical and textual strategies are used to achieve this goal (Veum & Skovholt, 2020, p. 15). Critical literacy is often associated with analysis of the content in connection with advertisements, fake news, and other publications where the objective for the publisher is to affect the consumer in a way that is rewarding for the publishing part. Critical literacy also involves challenging power structures and question dominant narratives. This entails questioning who has the power of the narrative and what the publisher's intention with the text, and whose perspective is being included or excluded. In sum, the goal of critical literacy is to empower individuals to become active and engaged citizens of society.

In their book, *Kritisk literacy i klasserommet* (2020), Veum and Skovholt state that critical literacy is founded on a principle of democracy, where pupils have the opportunity to ask questions, analyse and act on their own accord. This can make school a place that does not just provides knowledge, but where pupils are participants that can develop, criticize, and create knowledge (Veum & Skovholt, 2020, p. 16). As this theme is often associated with the reader being on the receiving part of information presented, it is also important to consider that a critical reader is not simply a passive recipient, but needs to assess and critique the content and where it comes from, both in terms of its source and message (Veum & Skovholt, 2020, p. 15). They further point out that the importance of criticizing information is essential to taking a more active and reflected role to information that is presented. Veum and Skovholt call these predispositions to information presented being either a "textual victim" or a "textual participant", where the "victim" is a reader who does not question any of the information presented, and is in this way easy to influence (Veum & Skovholt, 2020, p. 16). Being a textual

victim is described as a threat to democratic freedom in the way that it can inhibit a perosn's ability to make informed choices in society. The textual participant is aware of the mechanisms behind the text, and therefore can separate the text from the author and forces behind it.

Crucially, being literate and processing texts is not just a matter of absorbing or "taking in" the meaning of a text. Meaning can be regarded as created in the encounter between the text and an engaged reader (Grøver & Bråten, 2021). The readers' understanding and perception of what is presented is affected by their own relationship with the themes presented. This is especially relevant in multimodal texts, where verbal and visuals modes are mixed and the readers' perception need to process multiple sources of information (Grøver & Bråten, 2021, p. 16).

2.1.1 Media literacy

"Media literacy is a set of competencies that enable us to interpret media texts and institutions, to make media our own, and to recognize and engage with the social and political influence of media in daily life." (Hoechsmann & Poyntz, 2012, p. 1). The quote above is, according to the authors and media scholars Hoechsmann and Poyntz, the shortest definition of media literacy they are able to provide. Media literacy thus refers to the ability to process, understand, create and analyze different forms of media. It involves understanding how media are created, and identify why it is made, who created it, who it is for, and any biases or misrepresentations of the truth for the creators gain. Being aware of the credibility and intention of sources is important in understanding how different pieces of media can influence public opinion. As society relies more on digital information in diverse forms, the relevance and importance of being able to navigate this landscape increases along with it.

Media literacy also includes understanding how factors outside the media product itself contribute to shaping it. All forms of media depend on an audience, and in most cases, some sort of revenue stream in order to be produced and distributed. For entertainment media, such as movies, video games or printed literature, this means the story and content must have a certain appeal and adhere to cultural norms for it to get the recognition and distribution required to make a profit. The higher the production value, the more risk the production company takes in its production. To combat this risk, film companies guard themselves against financial loss by using well known, tried and tested master plots which are audience tested and thus have a higher probability of producing a net profit (Abbott, 2021, p. 132). Media is largely produced by global market participants and as such have biases and agendas to sell merchandise or an image. The biggest five film studios; Universal Pictures, Paramount Pictures, Warner Bros.

Pictures, Walt Disney Pictures and Colombia Pictures distribute the majority of films being shown in theatres (Wikipedia contributors, 2023). Of the top 50 highest grossing films at the global box office nine films were of Asian origin, from China, India and Japan respectively, the remaining 41 films were English language films, of these only two were not distributed by Hollywood's five largest film companies, and their daughter and parent companies (IMDB, 2023). These productions are often blockbusters, expensive productions which are expected to have mass appeal and to gather crowds. In this way a film can be seen as an investment that the company expects to gain a profit from. This can hinder artistic expression and lead to watching experiences that are meant to please audiences, rather than challenge them.

2.1.2 Literacy in the Norwegian curriculum

The current curriculum for schools in Norway is the essence of knowledge that the government wants pupils to manage to thrive as members of society. There are several parts to the curriculum and one for each subject, with competence aims that the teachers facilitate to and the pupils should achieve. The competence aims in the newest curriculum (LK20) are broader than before, and are intended to focus on letting pupils explore and develop an inquisitive and critical mind. The broadness of these competence aims leaves the teacher to decide the methods and materials that are taught. An example of a broad competence aim is "Use a variety of strategies for language learning, text creation and communication" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019a), and the somewhat more specific "explore and present the content of cultural forms of expression from various media in the English-speaking world that are related to one's own interests" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019a). These and many other competence goals leave ample room for the teachers to explore and make use of any type of medium that the children enjoy and learn from.

Text, like literacy, has broadened in its definition since earlier days. The extension of meaning runs parallel to the development of the new means of communicating meaning, i.e. the development of new media. Gordon (2021) points out in his chapter about film in the English classroom that "use different digital resources and other aids in language learning, text creation and interaction" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019a) is one of the competence aims that serves as a didactic rationale for teaching about films in the subject English (Gordon, 2021, p. 258). However, this is not the only one of the competence aims for the tenth grade that fits for education of visual narratives in the English subject. Due to the changes of how information and media is shared and consumed, the term text is now extended to include films, music and

other meaning bearing media content that communicates verbal information (Økland & Aksnes 2021). The consequence of this change and the new and more open competence aims for LK20 is that film and other types of media that can communicate meaningful information are relevant in all competence aims that seek to enhance pupils' textual competence.

2.2 Films and Viewers

2.2.1 Subjectivity and creating meaning in film

As with printed narratives, where meaning emerges in the encounter between the texts and the reader (Iser, 1972), films are texts where meaning is created through the encounter between the film and the viewer. Reception theories emphasise how each individual reader or viewer of a text interprets and creates meaning differently. The message, viewpoints and attitudes in films is something that is often attributed to the way the film expresses itself (Engelstad, 2015, p. 209). But identifying the message presented in a film can be intricate, as several films have multiple and even contradictory messages. There are layers of meaning in a film, which can be interpreted according to which position it is being observed from. These viewpoints are depicted in the model below figure 1 – the narrative communication model - and describes the roles both in and surrounding the narrative. The positions of the film are those of the actual author, the implicit author, the narrator, the narratee, implicit reader, and actual reader. The positions can each interpret their own meaning, both explicitly and implicitly. Between the lines in the model lays the roles which make up the action withing the work, they are their own "individuals" with their own viewpoints and biases. The implicit roles of author and reader are roles that tailored to what the actual reader *thinks* meaning is, and as the meaning of the work is made in the mind of the viewer, the implicit roles are part of the narrative. The implied parties of the narrative communication model are without a voice, and is therefore a construct in the viewer, based on contextual clues placed by the actual director (Lothe, 2000, p. 19). Thoughts like "The director did this because of ….." is an angle of thought for the film that the viewer has constructed. As the implied author and reader are without a voice, many oppose their inclusion in the model, but others include it on the grounds of it being an "expression of textual intention" (Lothe, 2000, p. 19).
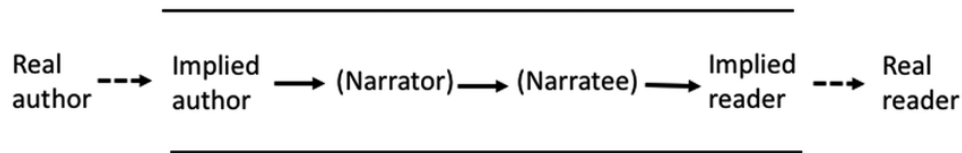
Figure 1 - Narrative communication model (Lothe, 2000, p. 16)

Films where several subjective opinions can be interpreted are common. By way of example, a film like *Fight Club* (Fincher, 1999), divides the public in terms of reception. On the surface level, *Fight Club* is a thriller about commercialism and men who do not feel adequate in society and rebel against it. Many groups hail this film as an important work because of it. Others hold the opinion that *Fight Club* is a satire depicting a terrorist organisation, toxic masculinity and the dangers of groupthink. In film circles there is a common phrase that applies to this: "You missed the point by idolizing them", and this rings true to many well-known characters - Walter White, Tony Soprano, Rick Sanchez, Patrick Bateman, to name a few. But this also illustrates that the viewer creates their own viewpoint and that they apply and create their own meaning. The simplified common denominator of these characters is that they are protagonists who do bad actions for their own gain, that are seen as evil or misguided in the society they live in, but in their own logic are able to justify what they do. Seemingly the fans of these characters have observed the narrative from the narrator's perspective in figure 1 and resonated with the justifications that the characters provide to themselves. This is not to say that their subjective view is wrong (even though some may say so), but rather that with idealizing characters such as this, they may not have seen the bigger picture in the story.

The quote from Quentin Tarantino "If a million different people see my movie, I hope they see a million different movies" emphasizes the role of the viewer as the co-creator of meaning in the film experience. *Pulp Fiction*, which the quote is about, has measures put in place to ensure the viewers creativity and imagination has an effect on the story they experience. For example, the infamous briefcase in the same film, which lights up the face of anyone who opens it, its content is never stated. Tarantino has also refrained to discuss what the briefcase contains, but rather expressed his wish that the viewer imagines by themselves what it contains (Karam, 2021, 25:47). If three different people have three different beliefs about the contents of the briefcase, there are three different movies in Tarantino's logic. In this way, he ensures that the mystery and subjective meaning of the viewers becomes a part of the overall experience in viewing the film.

One of the main attractions to narratives is the emotional commitment it elicits. Penne (2010) points to research that suggests that the emotional immersion from film and television has a more immediate effect for children that are not used to reading, and that feelings are the foundation of engagement in a narrative. Emotional involvement is closely linked with narrative dramaturgy and anxiety about or hope for a turning point in the story (Penne, 2010, p. 112). It is through the elicitation of emotions that narratives can become powerful vehicles for capturing our attention and fostering a deep connection with the story and its characters. This research may indicate that film is easier to enjoy and become engaged by for pupils who have not yet formed reading habits, and that the excitement is created in the level of attachment the pupil has with the narrative.

2.2.2 Young media habits

Screentime among Norwegian youth is high and increasing. Ungdata is a national survey based on response by pupils from primary school and secondary school in all Norwegian municipalities. In this survey, pupils anonymously answer questions about all aspects of daily life such as well-being, school, home life, substances, health, bullying, and more. One of the topics asked about for is media habits.

In Tromsø municipality, the sample pool of 8th to 10th grade pupils provided answers for the study in 2018. The study asked the pupils how much time they spent with a screen each day outside of school. 63 percent of pupils in Tromsø claimed to use more than three hours a day outside of school in front of a screen, and the percentages grew higher for each hour bracket, with the most pupils in the "more than four hours" bracket and the least in "under one hour" bracket (Ungdata, 2018, p. 22). In 2021, the study was conducted again, with the same grades as sample pool. One percent claimed to use no screentime each day outside of school. This time the survey had increased the hour brackets to accommodate the large pool of pupils who answered more than four hours in 2018. To showcase these two highest degrees, 28 percent said they used between four to six hours, and 25 percent claimed they used over six hours each day in front of a screen during their free time (Ungdata, 2021, p. 20). All combined in 2021, 79 percent claimed to have more than three hours of screen time each day, compared to the 63 percent in 2018. This reason for this could be the recent Covid pandemic and national lockdowns, but it is still an alarming three-year increase that must be accounted for when working with media literacy.

The data from the survey is further divided into classifications of what respective screen time content the pupils were consuming. These are categories such as social media, video games and gaming on phone/tablet. One of the categories are watching movies, series or YouTube, and this category will be referred to as visual narratives henceforth. In 2018 the visual narratives category was one of the two largest categories in screen time usage, along with social media. A combined percentage of 89 of the pupils watched more than half an hour of visual narratives each day, with more than two hours being the largest bracket both in time and amount of pupils at 37 percent (Ungdata, 2018, p. 23). The survey for 2021 also listed visual narratives as the second biggest media category for the pupils, with social media being the biggest. 92 percent of pupils reported watching more than half an hour of visual narratives every day, and 43 percent of them watched more than two hours each day (Ungdata, 2021, p. 21).

What becomes evident from this data is that the usage of visual narratives such as films and series is something that the pupils in 8th to 10th grade spend a lot of time with. Almost every pupil spends some amount of time every day consuming visual narratives. The amount of pupils that watched less than 30 minutes a day decreased from 11 to 8 percent from 2018 to 2023, indicating an increase in view time. This can again be because of external factors such as the covid-19 pandemic, but this does not negate the extent of consumption of this type of media. Even though self-reported view time numbers can be under- or overrepresented, there is no denying that the amount of time used watching films and series among the pupils queried is significant. With data like this there are always many factors to consider. Several American studies suggest that young people's screen time is high because of multitasking, consuming media on several devices at the same time (Butler, 2020, p. 2). The Ungdata survey is only divided into gender and area, and does not account for other factors such as socio-economic background or cultural background, however, since there is such a low number of pupils that reportedly do not partake in these media types, it is not unfounded to believe that pupils of all backgrounds partake in viewing visual narratives in their free time.

2.3 Teaching and learning about film

2.3.1 Film in school

Film is narrative, and understanding film is part of modern-day literacy. Several authors and scholars therefore argue that learning about film should hold a more central place in the teachers' repertoire than what is the case at present. A major driving force for using films in

school is pupil motivation. Motivation for reading longer texts is on a decline shows national surveys, and fewer pupils read on their free time (Roe, 2020). While many pupils express discontent and challenges with reading longer, printed fictional texts, film is a storytelling format pupils are familiar with and seek out willingly in their spare time (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019).

Stories and narratives are a large part of language subjects. In the national curriculum (LK20), intercultural competence and exploring English-speaking cultures is emphasized. One of the reasons films should be thought is language input, like with literature in the traditional English classroom provides pupils with exposure to the language (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019, p. 25). Films and other visual storytelling devices are able to immerse pupils in a format they are accustomed to and provide language input in the form of dialogue in a natural setting, giving audio-input. Herrero and Vanderschelden (2019) refer to several studies that point out the benefit in language input, written knowledge and vocabulary when subtitles are used for an L2 (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019, p. 72). When pupils view films with subtitles they get language input in three different modes; verbal, written and visual, and they are exposed to a large amount of multimodal input.

2.3.2 Conceptual understanding

One of the foundations of this study is conceptual learning. Contrary to traditional learning where lessons typically revolve around topics, conceptual learning is based on teaching central concepts and key ideas. This links closely to Lev Vygotsky's theory of the close and intertwined relationship between language and thought. Comprehending terminology is important while developing not just a second language, but when learning about a new field or subject which is new to the learner. Comprehension is useful because it provides learners with a way to connect the terminology with concepts that the learner already has previous knowledge of, thus providing a way to build and keep building understanding according to the national center for multicultural training (NAFO, 2023).

The last chapter of Vygotsky's last book, *Thinking and Speech* (1987), is a compressed argument about the construction of consciousness through the internalisation of language. Vygotsky's analysis of the "voyage into the interior" describes oral speech as its starting point and is then internalised and abbreviated into "inner speech", and then further concentrated as non-verbal thought. Vygotsky considered thinking and speaking system as "unified psychological formation" (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 44), and suggests that the creation of

consciousness comes from the internalization of language. The mind cannot categorize and create meaning without terms and phrases to sort them.

This creation of consciousness that Vygotsky theorised connected to language acquisition is a gradual process that takes place over several years of the child's developmental years. The classifications of the inner planes, the layers of thought and expression range from external communication to the most internal thoughts: base emotion. The layers of thought are separated and classified as 1) "oral speech", which is vocabular speech that is directed outwardly to others, 2) "internal speech" which is described as vocal speech that is directed at the child itself or has no direct receiver. The next is 3) "thought itself", which is not thoroughly explained by Vygotsky, but consists of the internal monologue that occurs in the mind. The final and most inner layer of thought is 4) "emotion", which is the affective and base feelings and needs that individuals experience. According to Barrs (2016), "affect is […] imagined as lying at the core of all verbal and intellectual ability" (p. 248). Vygotsky outlined and theorised that these layers of "inner planes" feed, rely on and amplify each other both internally and externally, and that the importance of vocabulary is invaluable in the process of learning and processing information. The innermost layers of thoughts are released in the layers above them, and the external layers are internalized in the layers below.
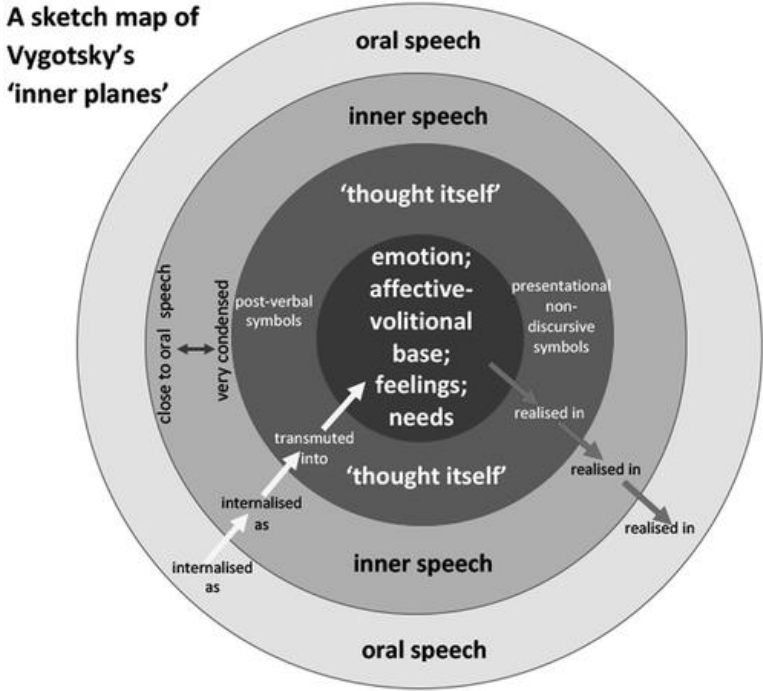

Figure 2 - Vygotsky's inner planes (Barrs, 2016, p. 250)

Barrs constructed a sketch map of the inner planes to better illustrate the imagined inner workings, comprehension and interaction between the verbal and cerebral. This shows the close and intertwined relationship between thought and speech:

> The internal relationships between thought and word with which we are concerned are not primal. They are something given from the outset as a precondition for further development. On the contrary, these relationships emerge and are formed only with the historical development of human consciousness. They are not the precondition of man's formation but its product. (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 243)

This quote shows how Vygotsky founds his belief that thought and speech are not separate entities that lay dormant or come naturally, but rather one self-reinforcing process, that evolves with outside stimuli. Without thought there is no words, but the opposite is also true, with no words there is no thought. This underlines the importance of vocabulary work in the leaning of new concepts. Even though pupils are conscious beings, learning new phrases, categorizing and processing new concepts and information has the possibility of expanding their inner voices and consciousness. Vygotsky illustrates with this how language has a transforming power throughout the consciousness.

2.3.3 Teaching as intervention

Intervention research and action research are research methods that are based on intervening in a field in order to incite a change. The difference between the two approaches is that action research is a circular method that constantly reassesses itself to how this change can be better. The actual intervention is only a part of this, and as such the intervention research is just one of the stages in action research (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 215). Intervention research is based on an intervention of the regular factors in a given field, and the measure of the difference before and after this intervention. Action research is similar in intervening in the regular field and, but differs in that is a perpetual process that is constantly reevaluated with the observations and results currently achieved with the goal of achieving the best possible outcome (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 215).

Intervention research has been criticized as a qualitative research method for several reasons. One of these is that the validity and reliability of the research is affected by all of the factors that the researcher cannot control. When studying the individual meanings and expressions of people, the researcher cannot be certain that a change is because of the intervention or some

other factor that the researcher cannot control, may not account for, or even know about. Interventions are regularly used to assess the effectiveness of medicines and drugs in a quantitative way within the field of medicine, and this is considered a viable research method where the outside variables largely do not affect the study (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 211). This is because factors and trends can be assessed in masse, be calculated for and assessed accordingly, and there are clear and concise indicators of the effects of the factors that are being researched. But in qualitative research, where the individual is central, there are a plethora of variables that the researcher cannot account for, and as such the validity and reliability of such studies are topics that require discussion.

Andersson-Bakken and Dalland suggest that interventions are a research method that is close to the profession of teaching, focused on the utilization, and a research method that is centered around the increase of competence of the individual teacher and improving the practice through new knowledge (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 232). With the expansion of teaching education to a five year long master degree in Norway, it has become an expectation that research will become a larger part of the university degree, and by extension teachers practice in their work after graduating. This emphasis on research has also been expressed in the in-service education for teachers educated before the change to teaching education (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 209). This is a political decision that affects schools and teaching as a profession. For teachers to introduce and test the effect of new methods and content is an interest for educational authorities, and as such this is one of the measures to ensure that teachers are academically inclined, up to date on the science of pedagogy, and uphold their knowledge over time. The foundation for teaching in the current school system is that pupils are introduced to new concepts and knowledge and internalize and learn this knowledge. The constant intervention of the profession is the introduction of new themes and knowledge with the goal of the pupils internalizing and making use of this knowledge, based on the general belief that pupils will learn from these constant interventions. But the main goal of an intervention is the increase in competence of the teacher, based on the results of the intervention. Studies that involve smaller and larger interventions with the goal of increase in teachers' pedagogical skills is therefore a considerable part of the teachers education and practice (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 209)

3   Materials and methods

This chapter accounts for the methods applied in gathering data for the project. It contains four parts: The first part lays out the design of the study and the choice of methods for data collection. Part Two concerns research quality, and discusses the study in terms of validity, reliability and ethical aspects. Part Three describes the choice of films, the lesson plans and how the lessons were executed. The final Part Four explains how thematic analysis was used to analyze the empirical data.

3.1   Research design

The goal for this study is to seek out ways build pupils' media literacy in a classroom setting. The overall question asked is whether pupils' reflections of visual narratives evolve with what I refer to as "short-term" teaching. The study was conducted in a 9th-grade class of 27 pupils at a school in Tromsø over the course of two weeks. The empirical data consists of two written film reviews written from each of the pupils involved: one from before the intervention and one written shortly after. This allows for a comparison that may give indications as to whether the teaching has any notable effect on pupils' reflections and/or vocabulary surrounding the film experience.

The study is primarily qualitative in nature, but also holds some quantitative attributes. I have been interested in researching the pupils' perspectives on film and whether these are affected by my teaching. Qualitative research is, as opposed to quantitative research, interested in people's relative perception of reality, which cannot be measured in numbers. One of the pillars of qualitative research is the belief that the individual's reality is in flux, and their truth is influenced by what they perceive. It is therefore not a static reality, but their own individual reality. The goal for qualitative research is to seek answers, but not *the* answer, as reality is defined the eye of the beholder (Nilssen, 2012, p. 25). The relationship between researcher and subject is very important in qualitative research, as they color each other with their own knowledge and perspective. The researcher's analysis is their interpretation of the subjects' expression. In the present study, I present pupils with my interpretation of film theory; they express their reality and I in turn interpret their expression of that subject afterwards. For the quantitative part of the analysis, I combined the number of times different thematic codes were coded and reflected on increases or decreases in the trends of these. However, this is not an

accurate portrayal of the reflections that are made by pupils and is therefore only used as an indicator. The actual meaning of what the pupils have learned is in their texts.

This project could be classified as intervention research. Intervention studies are after discerning and evaluating how change happens when new methods and ways of working are introduced in the classroom (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 211). Intervention studies typically begin by measuring a baseline before introducing a new variable, followed by gathering a new sample of empirical data after the variable is introduced. The empirical data in this research are film reviews written by pupils in a class before and after lessons in film theory - a "new variable" - is introduced to this class. Interventions are very close to the everyday practice of teachers, centered around the increase of competence of the individual teacher and improving the practice through new knowledge (Andersson-Bakken & Dalland, 2021, p. 232). As such, interventions are very valuable for a student teacher wanting to learn and know what happens in a class when change is introduced.

The empirical data for the study comes from pupils' texts. The choice of using written data was not accidental, but regarded as a good way to access the pupils' perspectives as the subjects can weigh their words more carefully and can present their reality the way they want to. I also considered that written data would be easier in terms of interpretation. As opposed to observational methods or interviews, with written data there is only the text to interpret, not a range of expressions such as body language or tone of voice and would therefore yield more valid data.

3.2 Research quality

3.2.1 Validity and reliability

The quality of a research project is examined through the terms reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the accuracy of data collection and to the extent to which another researcher will obtain the same results if a study is replicated.

The intervention was conducted only once, so it is not possible to assess the study's reliability in those terms. It is also unlikely that a completely identical setup can be arranged, as there are too many variables to consider in any classroom situation. Yet, as I explain further on in this chapter, I made several careful considerations when collecting and analyzing the data. During

the lessons I tried to diminish bias and preconceived notions both among the pupils and myself. The pupils did not have any previous knowledge of the films they were reviewing, and as such were made to present their honest opinion, uncolored by the teachers' or any others subjective opinions the films. I deliberately chose two films that are critically acclaimed and have a relatively similar theme, that were not very controversial as they have a positive message and are subjectively hard to dislike. This was done also as a reliability measure, and to minimize the effect of individual pupils' tastes and preferences.

When writing the reviews, the pupils were seated in a position so that their computer screens always faced the teacher and were therefore not able to access external tools such as ChatGPT or persons not involved in the study to write a review for them. The pupils were allowed to ask questions about relevant terminology during the writing sessions, because if they knew what to ask for, they had a certain level of understanding of the subject. The texts were made anonymous before they were handed to me so that I would not be biased when reading them. Yet, as with all qualitative research where the researcher is involved, there is an inevitable degree of subjectivity. In this study, I was involved both as teacher and as the one analyzing the data. There is no doubt that my own subjective views had considerable effect on how the data is presented to the reader. It is therefore important to be transparent when accounting for how the data was formed and interpreted. Hence, this chapter includes a detailed description of the lesson plans and how the lessons were executed. I also describe in detail the steps I took in order to analyze the data and settle on a set of findings. If the study is not reproduceable in every detail, at least the procedures I followed are open for inspection.

Validity refers to whether a study measures what it intends to measure (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The validity of a given study is inherently integral to the value this study can provide, as Cohen, Manion & Morrison states: "If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless." (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 245). There are two types of validity. *External* validity refers to whether a study's finding can be generalized to other contexts. *Internal* validity refers to whether the results are a direct cause of the intervention rather than other, unrelated issues.

In terms of external validity, only having results from one class gives no actual proof on the large scale. The findings from this study could simply be the results of the learning culture that represents the region, city, the school or even just the class that the study took place in. The sample size of this study (n=17) is possibly enough to observe a trend with outliers, but not enough to give definitive proof of correlation. Still, the group of pupils in this class were of

diverse cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic standings, their teacher has a traditional teacher's degree, and teaches using material that is used across the nation. Norway as a whole has a rather homogeneous public education system. With these factors in mind, I believe the data from this class to be relatively similar to that of the region, if not nationally, and thus represent a certain likelihood of being representative.

The question of internal validity is slightly more complex. In an ideal intervention, every variable is controllable, and the researcher can monitor the effect of changing any of these variables. However, in qualitative studies involving the subjective realities of people, there are endless variables at work. The ideal of controlling all variables is not feasible in a study like mine. In this class I could not control the pupils' outlook on the subject, the films, or even school in itself. There could be any number of outside factors that affected their performance. As such, the only real variable I could control, at least to some extent, was my own presence and the lessons I give. In addition, the intervention was done with measuring only one baseline to compare results to before the intervention. As stated by Howard, Best and Nickels (2015), the ideal intervention has more at least two measures for baselines, in order to assure that the measures done before the intervention are not an anomaly. Having only one baseline could therefore be said to diminish the internal validity of the study because of the possibility of a change in performance pre-intervention.

In sum, my own involvement as both researcher and teacher in this experiment inevitably had an impact on the reliability and validity of this study. To be an active participant in the classroom, as well as an observer that wants favorable results, are inherently conflicting roles. Moreover, my style of teaching, relationship to the pupils and the actual material I have chosen to teach will affect what the pupils learned and internalized. To some extent, these issues were countered by measures such as anonymization and limiting help and prompts for the actual writing of the texts. I took care not to lead the pupils to the "right" answers, but rather let them express themselves freely to write what they thought a review should contain.

3.2.2 Ethical considerations

All research needs to meet ethical standards, and the people who conduct the research, be they master students or scientists, are obliged to ensure that the research is up to the ethical standards (Gleiss & Sæther, 2021, p. 43). Research in Norway that involves human subjects must follow the guidelines set by the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH, 2021). Before this study started these guidelines were assessed

carefully. Children are considered a vulnerable group within research and their safety is therefore of great importance when planning and conducting research involving them (NESH, 2021, p. 20)

A major ethical consideration for this study was the issue of consent. NESH outlines that there are four factors which are particularly relevant in a research ethics assessment of whether consent is necessary: the public nature and context of the statement, the sensitivity of the information, the vulnerability of those affected and the interaction and consequences of the research (NESH, 2021, p. 21). Firstly, it was decided that the pupil texts would be anonymized when I gathered them, so that I at no time held any personal data of the participating pupils. NSD, the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, was contacted and this study was cleared of needing permission from them to proceed, as I did not at any point handle personal data. I wrote a consent form that was based on the one provided by NSD for use in data collection from vulnerable subjects, that all participating pupils' parents consented to. The information ensures that the persons understand why they are being asked to participate, what information is collected, how it is used, who will use it and for what purposes it will be used (NESH, 2021, p. 19). In addition, the consent form emphasized the voluntary nature of the study, which also means that there was given enough information about the aim, and procedure of the study to make an informed decision of their children's participation (NESH, 2021, p. 19). A copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix 1. NESH also notes that the consent should be documentable, to ensure the participants' rights are upheld (NESH, 2021, p. 19). This was done digitally by the teacher of the class, so that I did not see which of the pupils in the class were participants of the study, and they could keep their anonymity. No person beside their teacher and the individual pupil knows who provided what material, which therefore cannot be traced back to their author.

3.3 Organization

3.3.1 Choosing films

There were several factors to account for when picking films that would suit this project. In the early stages of the project I envisioned using full length films, but after some consideration I decided that short films would be a better route. Firstly, there was the time constraint to consider. Secondly, short films would allow a more focused, intensive viewing that would keep

the attention of the pupils. Short films are also suitable to show several times to deepen pupil understanding (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019, p. 29). Thirdly, short films may represent interesting alternatives to the full-length films the pupils normally would be familiar with. The film industry is, as other industries, a profit driven industry consisting of large companies that "invest" in films with the promise of monetary gain. Consequently, films largely need to promote wholesome and viewer-friendly productions with mass appeal. Short films, however, are often funded and produced by small independent film companies. Their short length and minimal production is on a smaller scale, involving fewer people, and thus is seen as an investment with less risk. Up-and-coming directors can through short films create their visions without having an executive board, financial investments or public appeal to compromise their intent. Using short films could therefore possibly lead to a more diverse film experience than the pupils are normally exposed to.

I wanted to find films that were engaging visually and emotionally and therefore would give the pupils an easier task in writing a review, this as noted by Penne (2010), emotion drives the motivation to engage with the film (Penne, 2010, p. 112). In order get comparable results, the two films had to be somewhat similar. The films should also be age appropriate, not only in legal terms, but also in content and appeal. While exploring short films I came by the academy award list of winners in the short film category. The first of the two I found suitable for the study was *The Silent Child* (2017), whose significant theme of isolation because of disability, and camerawork which illustrated these themes, would make a good candidate for the project. To find a comparable film I continued the search on the same list, and I eventually encountered *Stutterer* (2015), which similar theme and clever use of voice and sound to show isolation and introspectiveness made it a comparable experience to the former film. I decided on these two suitable short films, that depict isolation and loneliness because of a disability, both acclaimed Academy Award winners.

The Silent Child (2017) is a short film that tells the story of a deaf child who has troubles adapting to her surroundings because of her family's lack of facilitation for her disability. The film focuses on communication and exclusion and portrays these themes largely through camerawork, in for example point-of-view camerawork where the audio is silenced, giving the audience the sense of the subject's isolation. The end of the film is a textual appeal for the facilitation in schools and society for deaf children. *Stutterer* (2015) is similar in that it depicts a person with a disability that suffers from isolation due to the disability itself and to the lack of patience from his surroundings. But *Stutterer* (2015), which is about a man who suffers from

extreme stuttering, is different than *The Silent Child* (2017) in the approach to how the disability is conveyed to the audience. The action is more introverted, and we can hear the protagonist's self-deprecating inner monologue and what he thinks, contrasted with what gets communicated outwards. As with many short films, these two have open endings, where the viewer is left to create their own meaning in what comes next for the protagonists.

Both films are about the struggles of isolation, feeling left out, loneliness and communication. As such, both these short film address topics that would potentially appeal to a broad group of individuals. In addition, their themes are relevant for the core curricular goals from the Ministry of Education and Research of identifying with the lives of others, having short films that depict disability, and use visual and audio techniques to depict how the effect that they have on the subject, and how isolating these impairments can feel (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019b), which makes these films particularly relevant for the age group. One of competence aims that is very relevant for these films is "explore and describe ways of living, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity in the English-speaking world" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019a), throughout this project the pupils will explore and describe the films, which covers diversity in England and sign language is central as a way of communication for the protagonists. As previously presented, Penne (2010) emphasises the importance of emotional involvement for a narrative to be engaging for a reader or viewer. The immersion and sense of what feels real for the pupils plays a big role in the emotional involvement of pupils for the narrative. The two films I have picked out share themes of the very real challenges that comes with disability, both share a very emotional view of the ostracization that occurs when having troubles with communicating to your immediate surroundings. Everyone has experienced feeling of not fitting in, to some degree, making these films relatable for anyone. One of the films offers an outsiders view of this while the other is introspective, and I believed that these emotional films that are based in reality were good choices for this project.

3.3.2 Lesson plans

The lessons were conducted over a two-week period, with two lessons per week, with three of these being lessons where the material was presented, and the final lesson the viewing and review of the second film. The lessons were largely teacher-centered lecture-style lessons, built around PowerPoint slides and example clips. Examples of some of the PowerPoint slides that were used in the lessons can be found in Appendix 2. This decision was made as it was a new

theme for the pupils, with little time for independent exploration. In addition, the goal of this study was to research the effect of the topic on the pupils, not the method of teaching, and therefore I opted for a more traditional teaching style. My opinion was that the results of this research should be easily recreated in most classes, and be accessible without having to deviate too far from the "average" teacher's style of teaching.

My original intention was for the pupils to have no instructions when writing their film review, so the pupils could express what they perceived to be a review uncolored by the specific elements I was looking for. Before I decided this, I considered having a template containing different categories where pupils could be prompted to write about certain aspects of film techniques, however I decided against it because it would be too leading. During the watching of the first film and the following review writing I was not present because the teacher of the class would do this part of the project when she found time for it, before my intervention. The teacher in charge of the lesson experienced that the pupils had a hard time producing the reviews while having no set instructions, so the teacher decided to give them the task to "write about what happened in the film and what you thought about it; 300 words is an expectation, but not a limit". I assessed that those criteria were not in conflict with the intention of the study, and I repeated them for the second film to get a data that was more comparable in structure and content.

The material used for the lesson was mainly an abbreviation and simplification of a chapter in Engelstad & Tønnessen's book *Film: En innføring* (2011, p. 77-113). The chapter, called "The expression of film" [My translation], is separated into three categories; visuals, audio, and editing, with subcategories of how these elements affect the film in various ways. I thought this suitable for the goal, as it would set a standardized procedure for the content that was covered in the lessons. The vocabulary for this would also be suitable to analyze after the intervention. The subcategories included things like color and camera shots for visuals, and diegetic sound or sound effects for sound. To demonstrate and emphasize the effects of these cinematic techniques I used clips from famous film scenes to demonstrate.

I thought it to be integral to the project to use *The Silent Child* (2017) as a part of the lessons in some way. To encourage repetition, and make the pupils see sides of the film that they may have overlooked during the first viewing, and thus, the possibility of a new outlook on the film and rewatching film in general. I also considered the use of a viewing sheet, as Herrero and Vanderschelden states that they can be a bridge for pupils to connect the theory about film; the

visuals, the auditive elements and general concepts like settings and characters to the actual film (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019, p. 28). This would be beneficial in the sense that the pupils would get a new outlook on the narrative and how these different effects coexist and affect each other. In addition, this would help to break up some of the monotony of the very teacher-controlled, "lecture type" lessons. I briefly considered making use of the viewing sheet for the viewing of *Stutterer* (2015), but quickly decided against it, not only because it would ruin the immersion of the first viewing of the film, but mainly because it would be too invasive for the data gathering, and by extension the integrity of this study. But multiple viewings are a benefit of short film, and therefore I decided to use *The Silent Child* (2017) in the film lessons, not only for examples of cinematic devices, but also using viewing sheets during a screening of the film so that pupils could learn to recognize and identify these devices themselves.

3.3.3 Execution

The first lesson was dedicated to visuals, where the goal of the lesson was to "Understand what makes a film feel a certain way". I used a PowerPoint with the theme of visuals from Engelstad and Tønnesen (2011, p. 77), using examples from well-known films, in the form of clips and stills to accentuate and demonstrate the use and effect of these narrative devices. Some of these examples were clips and images from *The Silent* and were used to demonstrate things that they may had overlooked in their first viewing of the film, so the pupils could get insight to how the film they had seen had utilized visuals to evoke emotions. While presenting the techniques and examples the plan was to ask pupils if they have any examples, making them active participants in the lesson. However, the class was quite silent, so I resorted to having them discuss among their desk partner, which that gave them room to reflect with each other.

Figure 3 - The Silent Child (Overton, 2017)

This still from *The Silent Child* (2017) was used in the first lesson to demonstrate image composition and symbolism. I asked the class what was going on in this image. The answer that the pupils provided was that the tutor of Libby the deaf child was outside of the school gate, looking in at her. I then asked them what it looked like the tutor was doing. After some discussion amongst themselves they agreed that it looked like the tutor was behind bars, like in a prison. After they came to this conclusion, I probed them if this may be representative of how the tutor was feeling, to which they agreed. I did not want to give the pupils the answer, but rather let them resonate and create their own understanding and interpretations of what is presented to them. Even though I probed them heavily towards an answer, I think that they had a moment of realization, without fully resonating themselves to it. This scene is one that carries symbolism that can be explored without explicitly telling them the meaning, and may provide the pupils with experience to think about symbolism in the future.

Another example from *The Silent Child* that was used in the first lesson was a clip (from 5:25 to 5:47) in the film, where the family is gathered around the table for a meal. Libby, the main character, is deaf, and this scene is one without audio to emphasize hew lack of communication and isolation from the rest of the family. The point of displaying this to the pupils was to make them aware of how the close-up camera shots were meant to display an uncomfortable and vulnerable reality by showing us the scene from Libby's perspective. This, in addition to the lack of audio, emphasized her isolation around the dinner table, something I wanted to display to the pupils.

Figure 4 - The Silent Child (Overton, 2017)

In my opinion, the lesson went reasonably well. There were three other adults in the classroom with me, two of which were teachers at the school and the last person was a student who had her teaching practice in the class. All three commented that the subject was interesting and exciting. The class teacher gave me feedback and we discussed ways to improve the next lesson.

She observed that some of the material may have been too hard to grasp for some pupils while only speaking English and then suggested to repeat terminology and harder phrases in Norwegian. I have previously made it a point to keep my spoken Norwegian at a minimum in my English lessons to increase exposure and English input to the pupils, but I was happy to oblige in increasing it for this new and difficult theme. I, too, had observed some pupils losing focus and zoning out during the lesson. I also noted to myself that repetition should be a considerable part of every subsequent lesson.

The second lesson introduced sound and editing as new topics from the same Engelstad & Tønnessen (2011, p. 104) chapter as the previous lesson. The goal for the lesson was to "Deepen understanding of the different elements that make a film engaging". This lesson, like the first, was mainly a teacher-driven lecture, revolving around repetition of the visual elements of film and an introduction to sound and editing. The emphasis in the section for sound was classifying voice, music and sound-effects, distinguishing between diegetic and non-diegetic sounds, and when and why these types of sound are used. The introduction to editing was not advanced, as I decided that too advanced material would not yield results, this was also based on the experience from the previous lesson. The main part of this segment was about how time is presented through editing with linear and non-linear narratives.

Both class teacher and I thought this lesson went better in terms of pupil attention for those that became inattentive the previous lesson. This lesson had fewer stills and images than the previous lesson, and more clips to explain sounds. In this lesson I explained terminology in Norwegian and English. During the part of the lesson where diegetic and non-diegetic sounds was discussed, I explained to the pupils that the terminology was not important to know and that I did not expect them to remember it, only what it is, how it works and what effect it has on the film experience.

The third lesson, which was the final lesson where new teaching material was introduced, contained repetition of all previous topics as well as introducing how a story is built up, with terminology central to this theme. The goal of the lesson was to "Deepen understanding of the different elements that make a film engaging" and to "know what character development is". Lesson three was divided into two parts: a lecture part and practical task to apply the new information. The lecture part consisted of repetition, and an introduction to narrative storytelling such as character development, genres and character arcs. The practical work consisted of viewing *The Silent Child* with a viewing sheet with prompts for observations about

the techniques the lectures had covered. And as previously mentioned was a way to connect the theory to the story (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019, p. 28). The viewing sheet contained questions about the story with prompts that aligned with the previously covered material, the questions of the viewing sheet are listed after the description of the lesson. After watching and writing we had a discussion segment that pupils were very willing to partake in, and several pupils shared their observations that correlated to themes that had been presented to them in previous lessons.

I could tell that the lectures were beginning to tire the pupils after the third lesson. At the beginning of this lesson, upon seeing the PowerPoint on the projector, two separate pupils asked how many more PowerPoints we were going to watch. I understand that only having lectures can be tiresome and unengaging, and I would change this if I were to do this again. I reassured the pupils that this was the last PowerPoint lecture, that it was shorter than the others, and that we would be doing something more engaging the last half of the lesson. The pupils were very engaged when we discussed *The Silent Child* after the use of the viewing sheet, and had a lot of good observations written down. I think that it helped pupils to have viewed this film before, as they had previous knowledge of what they were viewing and could expand on that understanding and possibly develop a new outlook, in addition to the viewing sheet not distracting them from the immersion of the film on the initial watch.

The questions in the viewing sheet are listed below. They were made with dedicated lines under each question for the pupils to fill in.

What is the setting? (time, place)

Give one example of both diegetic (the characters can hear it) and non-diegetic sound (only the audience can hear it).

Do you see any examples of moving camerawork or different shots? Which styles?

How does this film show Libby being excluded? Write two examples

How is sound used to show us Libby's perspective?

Can you spot any symbolism in the film?

> Who is the protagonist, what is their goal, and what hinders them from achieving that goal?
>
> What is this film about?
>
> What do you think of this movie? And if you could change anything, what would it be?
>
> What is the director trying to tell us with this story?
>
> Can you describe any character development in the film?

These questions were made to incorporate the elements of film that we had used in the lessons during their viewing experience, and to help the pupils reflect.

The reference image on the next page was put on the last page of the sheet for the pupils to have a reference point when reflecting over the elements of *The Silent Child*. The illustration of *The Good the Bad and the Ugly* was taken from the Engelstad and Tønnesen (2011) chapter that the lessons were based on. In addition, a clip of the scene from the same film was used in the first lesson to depict and demonstrate the different types of camera shots. The illustration points to a scene the pupils should be familiar with and therefore bears more meaning to the effect of the cinematic technique.
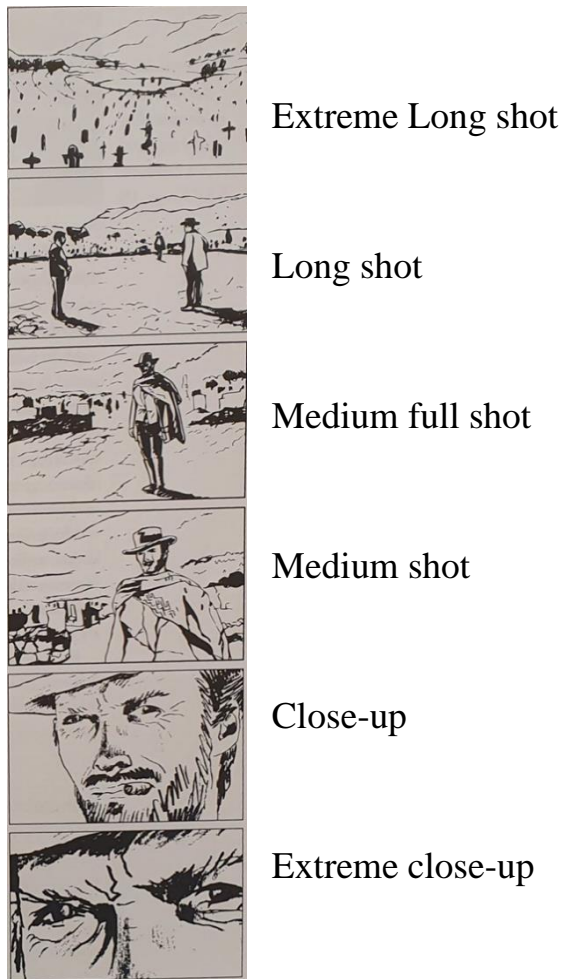
Figure 5 - Camera shots (Engelstad & Tønnesen, 2011, p. 89)

The fourth and final lesson was dedicated to watching and reviewing the second film. When writing the reviews for the second film, the pupils had this final lesson just dedicated to the viewing and writing. This means that of the whole hour, roughly 45 minutes, would be used for writing. That was not ideal, but I deemed the importance of having the writing the same day as watching the film more important than an extra 15 minutes of writing, and this was the only way to achieve this. In addition, this was the first available lesson following the preceding lessons that were held, and I assessed it as beneficial that there was not too much of a gap between the learning, and using the knowledge.

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Thematic analysis

Qualitative research is by nature diverse and complex and therefore difficult to analyze in a rigid way. Thematic analysis is a way to analyze, recognize, systemize and present patterns in datasets. Braun and Clarke (2006) present the method as consisting of six steps.

Step one: familiarizing oneself with the data. This first step entails reading and re-reading the data and writing down initial thoughts. For other studies this might also include transcribing the data before re-reading it. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 88) emphasize how this creates a thorough understanding of one's data. It was therefore important for me to be meticulous in reading my data. As this is data that I have gathered, and that I have helped form, I already had preconceived notions about what it should be like and what should be in it. The elements I were looking for were understanding and expression of the material that had been thought between the first and second review. However, I also noted any irregularities between the two datasets, such as shorter or longer texts for one or the other; the format of these, and their opinion of the films. These were all anomalies that I considered for future codes.

Step two: gathering initial codes. After reading and re-reading the data, the second step is to generate initial codes. This step is working with the outline that has presented itself through the reading of the data, using the initial list of ideas for codes and collecting various examples for each one, while giving equal attention to each datapoint and reflecting over findings that could be the base of a pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). For this step I wrote down the most common of the code ideas that were noted in the first step. The following are the initial ideas, noted in a notebook while reading the dataset for the first time. These are observations, that I believed to be quantifiable to mark and track in the dataset, or otherwise helpful to keep track of in the effort to analyze and compare in the study.

Explaining how the movie should have been different	Phrases like "I felt"	Mentions Oscars – and whether or not they felt it was deserved.
Mentions the message of the film – or deeper meaning	Real reflection – See Britney *Silent Child* commercial commentary	Mentions of color and if they explain the effect of said color

"Review" contains only a summary of the film	Commenting on genre and overall thoughts	Mentions of story structure, such as mentioning "open ending"
Mentions inner voice	Mention of short film	Mentions specific scenes
Interpretations of things that are not explicitly told	Misinterpretations of things that were explained	Misinterpretations of things that weren't explained
Explaining their own opinion in relation to themes that the film discussed	Conflicting opinion about film	Relates the action or themes to personal experience
Mistakes the title of the film	Names of characters	Elaborates and explains their viewpoint
Mentions setting	Mentions diegetic- or non-diegetic sound, and/or if it has an effect on the scene	Does the introduction of new knowledge have a negative impact on the review?
Mentions character progression – arks – or explains it	Uses names in one review and not the other.	Mentions the suitability of the actor for their role -this shows meta reflection
Speculation	Mentions of perspective	Use of plot
Missing the point	Mentions of character traits	

Many of these codes became the basis for the themes that would emerge as they could comparatively be categorized. Others were harder to classify or measure and were not included in the themes. The preliminary themes were set as *knowledge, opinion, reflection* and *structure*. These were to my knowledge the broadest categorizations that were still

meaningful enough to make sense while reading and sorting. Codes starting with "Mentions of" were primarily assigned to *knowledge*, as they were representative of phrases that displayed knowledge about films and film theory although not all of these ended up being codes after reevaluating.

Structure was meant as a measure of how the review was written, how much of the text was a summary of the film, and how much was actual opinion and reflection. This however was hard to measure in a way that was consistent and adaptive for each pupil, so instead of making this its own theme I noted each instance of a pupil only summarized the film, and noting if the first or second review was the longest of the two. The reason for noting structure was to see if there was a discernible pattern in length contra verdict, or in relation to other themes. I thought that any possible patterns found could provide some context and insight into common denominators for certain predispositions in the reviews. This later proved itself to be hard to measure in a reliable way, but I noted down if their first or second review were longer and if their review was only a summary of the actions in the film.

Several of these initial codes were upon closer inspection not suitable for the themes and had to be discarded. "Misinterpretations of things that were explained" was scrapped from the themes and was not something I coded further, as the observations of pupils in the spirit of social constructivism were not for me to judge because they did not align with my own personal perception. Out of the "mentions of" knowledge theme codes the two that did not make it to the next stage were "mentions of short film" I originally thought that this was somewhat of a display of genre knowledge, but upon reconsideration realized that it was too vague to display any deeper knowledge at this level that I could measure. The second one was "mention of specific scene" , but his was scrapped because it would be covered by reflection in some other way when the pupil was talking about their opinion.

The following is an example of how a text was coded.

The Silent Child (2017) film review

The Silent Child (2017) is a movie about a deaf girl that cannot speak so her parents hire a teacher that is supposed to teach her how to speak and do sign language. The teacher begins to become a good friend to this girl, and it looks like the mother begins to be jealous of the teacher, so she begins to be mad at her for not teaching her how to speak but rather teaching her sign language. The teacher talks back saying it's easier for her to begin speaking if she can do sign language first, but

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the mother doesn't care. She sends the daughter to school even though it's hard for her to learn since she can't speak or hear. In my opinion I think the mother doesn't want to accept that her child is deaf, and she wants her to be "normal".

The movie was released 8. August 2017 and is 20 minutes long. The movie was written by Rachel Shenton and directed by her husband Chris Overton.

I think this was a good movie because it shows that whatever the mom thinks can't always be right even though she only wants the best for her children, and sometimes it's better to just get professional help than just ignoring the fact that your child has a disability and just sending them to school like "normal" children.

In my opinion, this movie was a 6 out of 10 because I feel like the movie could've been longer and it could have happened something a lot more interesting in the end rather than them just saying "I love you" to each other in sign language. I feel like the teacher could have tried harder for the child to get the education she deserves and be able to talk in sign language to her family and more people.

Written by:batman

Code	Coded for
The movie was released 8. August 2017 and is 20 minutes long. The movie was written by Rachel Shenton and directed by her husband Chris Overton.	Knowledge about the film, displays that the pupil has a sense of what they think belongs in a review.
I think this was a good movie	Display of opinion
because it shows that whatever the mom thinks can't always be right even though she only wants the best for her children, and sometimes it's better to just get professional help than just ignoring the fact that your child has a disability and just sending them to school like "normal" children.	Commenting on events in the movie and mixing in own reflections about the subject.

In my opinion, this movie was a 6 out of 10	Display of opinion in how good the pupil thinks the film was
because I feel like the movie could've been longer and it could have happened something a lot more interesting	Reasoning for their opinion about the film
I feel like the teacher could have tried harder for the child to get the education she deserves and be able to talk in sign language to her family and more people.	Display of the pupil's opinion around certain events in the film.

Step three: searching for and recognizing patterns. The third step is searching for themes by collating codes and assembling all the codes to their prospective theme. I did this by looking over the codes that were written down, and generating the initial themes. In consideration of what I was measuring in this study the themes were initially Knowledge, Reflection, Opinion and Structure. These themes seemed to fit the codes I had already marked and were distinct enough that they could be categorized in a neat manner.

Step four: reviewing themes. After searching for themes, the fourth step was reviewing them. This was done primarily on two levels; 1, checking if the themes work with the coded extracts, and 2, the entire dataset. This is done to create a thematic map and to give a better overview of the data and how it fits withing the theme. While coloring every code for each theme I decided to leave out the structure theme, and rather make a note for each pupil's collective text for which of the reviews were longer. The reason for this being that the structure theme was too ambiguous and difficult to mark.

Step five: defining the themes. The fifth step is the main analytical section of the analysis, where defining the themes are the biggest part. Explore what the themes tell us, this is where ongoing analysis takes place, producing clear definitions and names for each theme.

Knowledge was coded when the pupil made meta-commentary about the films. Most notably through the terminology that was taught in the lessons. Examples of this could be mentions of "the actor", an "open ending" or "the screen", or if they referred to topics that were taught in the lessons, visual elements like camerawork, colors or the actors' presence. The specific

vocabulary referring to cinematic techniques taught in the lessons include but are not limited to; lighting, color, actor, setting, image composition, camera angle or movement, audio, sound, diegetic, non-diegetic, speech, monologue, dialogue, story structure, open ending, linear, protagonist, antagonist. These were the phrases that were part of the lessons, and would all be coded in the Knowledge theme. Not all of these phrases were found in pupil texts, but they are the phrases that were taught in the lessons. The reason this theme is called Knowledge is that it does not only cover vocabulary relating to the lessons that were held, but also general statements such as who acted in the film and if the film won an academy award.

Opinion was coded for when the pupil expressed their personal opinions. Statements of opinion were marked because they can relate to reflection, and it is an indication of high literacy when the pupil manages to explain why they have the opinion that they have.

Reflection was coded for instances of elaborations, questioning, speculations or justifications where the pupil elaborates why they are opinionated, or when they explained how a particular cinematic effect had an effect on the pupil or the film itself, how it made them feel or why. The reflection theme is broad and does not need to contain the vocabulary that is considered a knowledge code.

These themes were designed by me to get a count of the ratio between these elements, and so that it would be manageable to compare reviews for the first and second films. However, opinion and reflection are fluid concepts and can be hard to distinguish in some instances. For example this sentence:

> "They had spent so much time together and I feel like Libby eventually looked at the social worker as a mother figure, the reason of that was mostly because Shenton learned Libby how to communicate with each other even though she was deaf." -Caramel on *The Silent Child.*

I originally marked the section that is now coded for opinion as reflection because it can also be interpreted as such, but seeing as it is a statement and is further reflected upon by the reflective part that follows, I decided that it fits better as opinion. This is one of multiple such instances and could be improved by having different themes for codes that I have not considered. One positive attribute of this process is that I am the only one coding these texts, and as such have achieved higher reliability in the coding process, as opposed to if there were multiple coders.

Step six: producing and presenting the findings. The sixth and final step is to produce the report with analytical findings. The intention is here to use compelling extracts that relate to both the literature and the research question. These finding will be presented in the following chapter.

4   Findings

This chapter will first present the general data, before the four findings from the dataset are presented and explained.

In a class of 27 pupils, 17 pupils both had parents who consented to them being part of this project and were present for both writing sessions. This accounts for 34 texts which are of the first and second review. The texts were of varying lengths, some were only a few lines of summary of the story, while the longest reviews reached almost a full page in length. As mentioned, the themes where codes were categorized were *knowledge* (abbreviated here to Kn), *opinion* (abbreviated here to Op), and *reflection* (abbreviated here to Re). *Knowledge* refers to points where pupils make meta-commentary about the film they have reviewed. This could be comments about the material that was taught in the film lessons, or phrases like "the main character", "the director", etc. *Opinion* is the theme where pupils express their opinion of the film or specific segments of the film. *Reflection* refers to the number of sentences that contained reflections about the film. The reviews that contained no reflections at all were only summaries of the films. *N.A* is an abbreviation of not available, and this is an input I have chosen for those reviews that do not contain a verdict for the film in the review. In addition to the themes, I recorded the length and verdict of both reviews for each pupil so that these could be compared to see if any pattern could be discerned.

The following is a table of how many instances of each theme has been found for the pupils that submitted for both films. The children were instructed by their teacher to anonymize their own names, and the names they chose for themselves have not been changed since then. Most of the names are gender-specific, hence they will be referred to as "he" or "she", although there may not be an actual correspondence between the name gender and the pupils' real gender.

Pupils	Ve 1	Ve 2	Kn 1	Kn 2	Op 1	Op 2	Re 1	Re2	Length
Batman	Positive	Negative	1	1	3	2	2	1	1
Brittney	Positive	N.A	1	2	4	3	10	3	1
Caramel	Positive +	Positive	5	6	10	3	8	3	≈
Connor	Positive	Neutral	1	2	2	1	3	1	1
DeMarcus	Positive	Ambivalent	0	0	6	4	5	5	1
Donald	N.A	N.A	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hailey	Positive	Positive	2	14	5	4	7	7	≈
Lady	N.A	N.A	0	1	1	0	2	2	1
Lionel	N.A	Positive	0	2	1	2	5	2	1
Maggie	Positive	Positive	2	5	5	1	4	4	≈
Meredith	Positive	Ambivalent	4	12	4	5	10	5	1
Mr. Bean	Positive	Positive	2	1	2	2	3	3	≈
Pablo	N.A	Neutral +	0	1	0	3	0	1	≈
Per	Positive	Neutral	6	12	4	5	7	4	≈
Pinocchio	N.A	Positive	0	1	0	2	0	6	2
Rachel	N.A	Positive	1	1	0	3	0	6	2
Xiao	Positive	Positive +	4	14	3	6	9	9	≈

Table 1 - Coded data

Underneath are the diagrams that show the difference in the number of codes from the first to the second review. When the data input for Knowledge, Opinion and Reflection are systemized in order of film reviews the data becomes very readable, and it allows for easy comparisons of the differences in the first and second review.
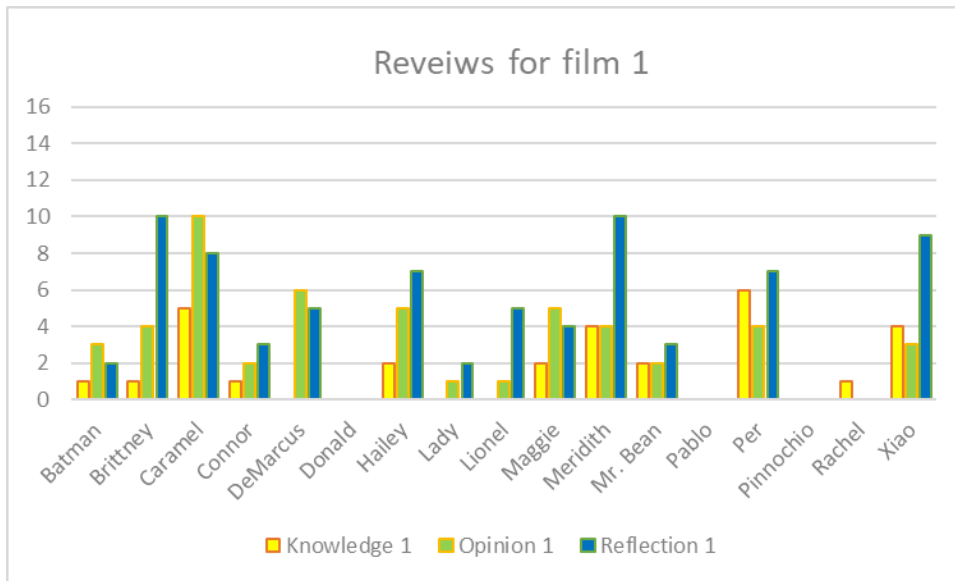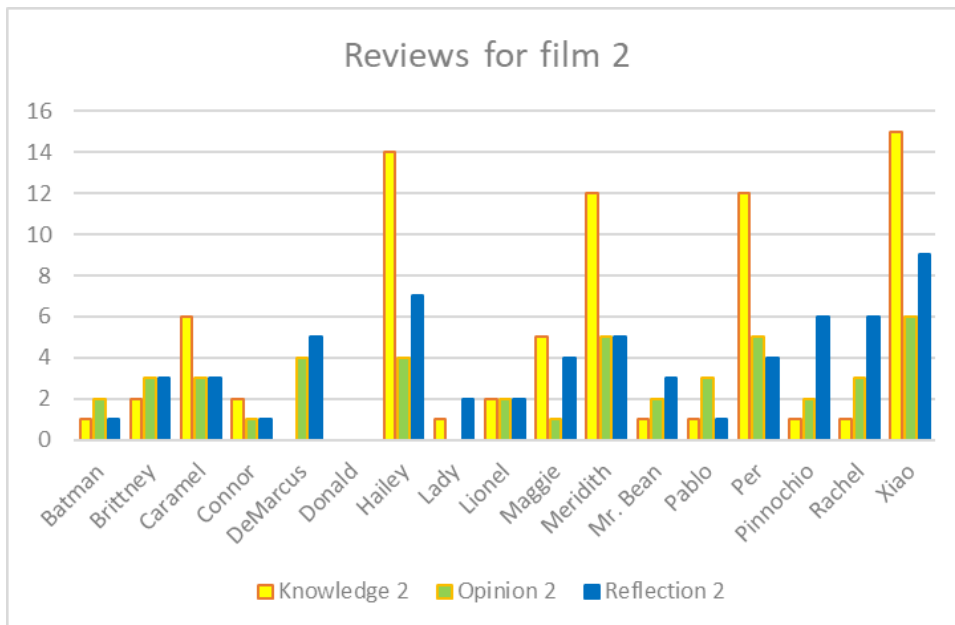
Figure 6 - Reviews for film 1

Figure 7 - Reviews for film 2

The data was not uniform and presented a wide range of opinions and observations. Many pupils were positive to both the first and second film, and others were positive to only one of them. What the pupils consider a review was also not uniform, as some pupils were content writing a short summary of the story, while others explained with great passion what was positive about the film and why.

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Increase in the use of terminology

There was an increase in use of terms that were coded for Knowledge from the first to the second viewing. Usage of terms that were coded for Knowledge has a large increase, which is significant because it may show that pupils internalized the terms that were part of the lessons and felt proficient, and confident enough in its meaning enough to use them. There were five pupils who did not increase their terminology use; four of these were on the same level, and one had a decrease.
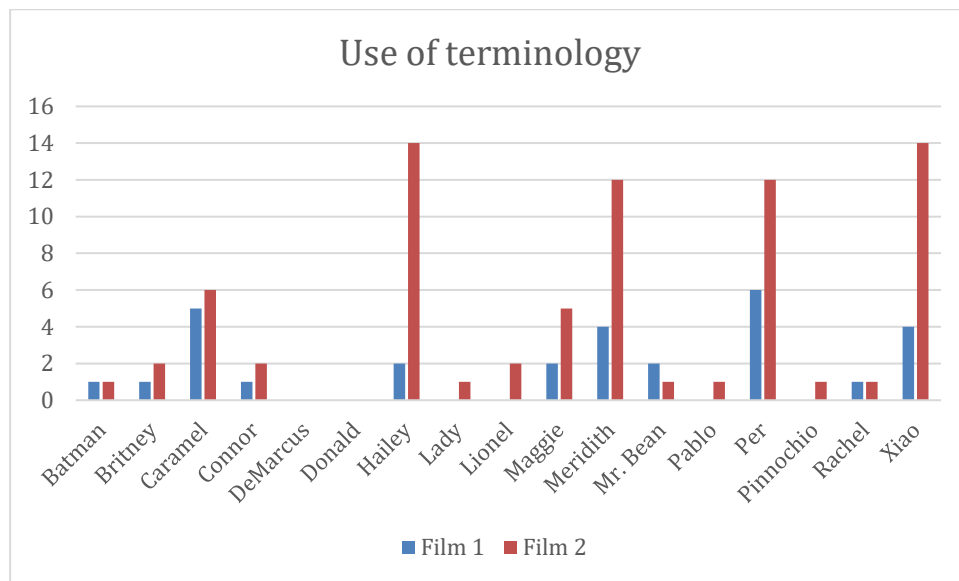

Figure 8 - Use of terminology before and after

4.1.2 Improved reflection

Three of the four pupils that had a large increase of cinematic terms used them in connection to reflections and opinions from the first to the second film. The last of the four had used a lot of terminology but had not used it in connection to their reflection. For the former three, it made them able to communicate their feelings towards the film and explain why they had the opinions that they had. Underneath are excerpts from the pupils' first and second film review, to showcase how their reflections changed with the additions of the terms that were taught in the lessons.

Meredith:

> "I'm afraid this happens to way too many of the deaf children. In one seen in the movie we get to see things from Libby's perspective, everything is just totally quiet. I can only imagine how it must feel like not hearing anything. Just think about how hearing affects

us. If somebody yells my name, or if the doorbell rings, or even if you're just going to wake up early. How will you hear the alarm." Meredith on *The Silent Child (2017)*

"His hair was very greasy. The camera angle close up was used the most, I think that's because it gives us a better understanding of how they might feel and what they may think. When Greenwood was riding the bus, he thought out loud. His voice came in many layers, and it made me understand that inside his head it was all a mess. Those voices are non-diegetic sound because they were put over after the seen was filmed." Meredith on *Stutterer (2015)*

In the first review, Meredith comments on a scene in the film where the viewers can observe from the character's perspective, and follows this up with how she sympathizes with this character. In the second review, she uses terminology relating to the effects that are used, and connect these effects to explain how the protagonist's emotional state is. She does this several times and proceeds to detail what the intention for the cinematic technique was. This makes her reflection about the film seem deeper than from the first film.

Per:

«The produsers of the film wanted to bring atention to the deaf kids in school all over the world, and hopefully help them get the education they deserve. The move won an Oscar and I think it absolutely deserved it. I think it was a beautiful film bringing up a verry important thing that not many people think twice about. It was a good story and it was easy to understand and sympathize with the charecters.» Per on *The Silent Child (2017)*

«I thought that the movie was alright, it had a lot of different camera angles and camera movements like close up, full shot and pan. Usually, I like it when there is more camera movement, but I think that for this movie there was a perfect amount of it. I think that the setting for the movie was good, but I didn't think that the actors fit into the role. Some more things that I didn't like were that the voices in his head got extremely loud at some points and that made it harder to pay attention to the actual movie. There was some non-diegetic music, but there could probably have been some more.» Per on *Stutterer (2015)*

This pupil reflected critically in the first review through presenting the producers' desire to inform the viewers about deafness. He then elaborates that the message is a positive one and why he enjoyed the film. In the second review he points out the cinematic techniques that were covered in the intervention, how they relate to the story and how they affected his viewing experience.

Xiao:

"I will rate this short movie a 7/10, because I think some scenes were a bit unnecessary for the plot. Other than that, the short movie could've replaced the unnecessary scenes with scenes that show how Libby does later in life. However, considering that the main purpose of this short movie was to tell a message to the audience, I think the author has done an excellent job." Xiao on *The Silent Child (2017)*

"In my opinion, this film was perfectly summarized. The film had no unnecessary scenes and was only focusing on the crucial parts. I think including a lot of medium/close up shots was a great choice, since the attention was meant to go to the actors, instead of the setting because the film is mostly about what goes on inside the main character's mind. In my opinion, the time and setting of the movie were not important factors to the story, which is why there was no great attention to detail." Xiao on *Stutterer (2015)*

These two excerpts come from similar parts of the pupil's reviews, where s/he states their opinion on how the film is composed. In the first of these excerpts the pupil reflects on the purpose of the film and considers that in relation to their opinion, this is an indication of a reflected review. In the second review the vocabulary and knowledge from the intervention is incorporated in a similarly reflected review, where the pupil explains the introspectiveness of the film and how the type of camera shot relates to what the film was trying to communicate. In this manner, the pupil is connecting the contents of the lessons to his experience of the film.

What becomes apparent when reading the excerpts of these three pupils is that they were adept at reflecting on what they were watching before the intervention, and in their second review they utilized the knowledge that was acquired in the lessons to explain how they perceived the film.

However, not all pupils with a significant increase in terminology displayed an improvement in their reflections. One of the four pupils who had the most increase in usage of the terms they were taught in the intervention did not connect the observations of cinematic techniques to reflection of the intention of these.

> «In the movie it was some non-diegetic sounds like the voice in his head, we could only hear it not the other characters, I think it was some backround music, but he talked over it. The typing on the computer was a diegetic sound, the traffic sound was a diegetic sound, I think." "The camerawork in this movie was long shot, mid shot, close-up and medium full shot. The camera was in one place the whole time, for me it was.» Hailey on *Stutterer (2015)*

From this we can discern that even though a large increase of terminology can be an indicator of improved reflections, it is not guaranteed.

4.1.3 Shorter reviews for film 2

Several of the pupils had longer reviews for the first film, and thus wrote longer reviews before the lessons began. There were only two pupils who wrote a longer review for the second film than for the first film. The amount of pupils who wrote reviews that were about the same lengthwise for film 1 and 2 was about the same as the amount of pupils who wrote a longer review for the first film.

This is an interesting imbalance, that seems to have a correlation to the pupils verdict of the films. As can be seen in the spreadsheet below, the pupils who had positive verdicts of the first film relative to the second film tended to have a longer review for the first film. This suggests a correlation between the pupils opinion of the film and the length of the review they provide for the film.

Pupils	Ve 1	Ve 2	Length
Batman	Positive	Negative	1
Brittney	Positive	N.A	1
Caramel	Positive +	Positive	≈
Connor	Positive	Neutral	1
DeMarcus	Positive	Ambivalent	1
Donald	N.A	N.A	1
Hailey	Positive	Positive	≈
Lady	N.A	N.A	1
Lionel	N.A	Positive	1
Maggie	Positive	Positive	≈
Meridith	Positive	Ambivalent	1
Mr. Bean	Positive	Positive	≈
Pablo	N.A	Neutral +	≈
Per	Positive	Neutral	≈
Pinnochio	N.A	Positive	2
Rachel	N.A	Positive	2
Xiao	Positive	Positive +	≈

Table 2 - Pupils verdict of the film and length of review

To demonstrate a review for film 2 that is shorter than its predecessor, I will use Batman's second review. Batman's film 1 review was displayed in chapter 3.4.1, and all the other film reviews that have been shown excerpts from can be found in Appendix 3.

Film review of The Stutterer (2015)

The movie "The Stutterer" is about a boy that stutters a lot and has an online girlfriend. He learns sign language so that he doesn't have to speak and can say he's deaf. When he meets up with his girlfriend, he sees that he does the same thing as him.

In my opinion the movie was terrible because it was boring and I couldn't really get into it because he stuttered a lot, and I got kind of weirded out that he was like staring at people and trying to understand their lives.

The movie was written and directed by Benjamin Cleary.

Written by:batman

4.1.4 Fewer summaries

While some pupils only wrote summaries of the story presented as a review after the first film, there were fewer of these in the second review. This was measured by the lack of any codes for Opinion, Reflection or Knowledge, thus only containing an abridgement of their objective observations of the film. What can be seen in the data graphs of the review for the first film is that three pupils had no Opinion, Reflection or Knowledge of the film they viewed, and one additional had one Knowledge code in it. These were the reviews of Donald, Pablo, Pinocchio and Rachel.

An example of a text that contains summary and no Reflection or Opinion:

Film review "The Silent Child"

Written by: Rachel Senton

This film is about a girl named Libby that is deaf. Libby's parents found out that she was deaf at the age of 3 1/2. Her parent's decided to get here someone that can help here whit reading lips, and sigh langued. Then a woman named Joanne comes and helped Libby with sigh language. And Libby was doing so good and was able to talk sigh language. Until her mother decides to stop Joanne whit helping Libby and got sent to school. Even though she

> dos does not understand anything, of what they were saying. Libby also hade a brother named Seb and a sister named was Nancy.
>
> **What I think about the film?**
>
> in my opinion this is a very

For the review of the second film, three of these pupils included all the coded categories, while only one pupil (Donald) wrote a review for film 2 that contained none of the coded categories. This marks a notable increase in expressing their thoughts about the film.

5 Discussion and conclusions

The overall goal for this study is to investigate whether providing pupils with terms and concepts related to visual film narratives increases their awareness as viewers and enables them to better express their opinions about films. This objective is contained in the research question "Does pupil reflection of visual narratives evolve with short-term teaching?" Although this is a small-scale study based on a limited data set, the findings show some interesting traits worthy of discussion. In this concluding chapter I connect the findings laid out in the previous chapter to theoretical positions and previous research, and discuss their implications for the use of film in the English classroom.

5.1 Does short term-teaching improve pupils' media literacy?

As the analysis shows, the number of terms and film-related vocabulary used by the pupils increased significantly from first to the second review. This feature was almost universal among the sample pool, although to a varying degree. Most of the texts showed a slight increase, while a few had a significant increase of terminology use. The lessons were oriented around central terms; what they meant, and how they presented themselves in visual narratives. They included examples of use and the effect it had on the film and the viewer. After the pupils were introduced to new terminology, and shown examples of these, their texts show their willingness and ability to use this where they found it appropriate in their second review. The increase of terms in the second review reflects the ability to connect and recognize the cinematic techniques from the lessons in the second film. Several of the cinematic techniques covered in the intervention were represented prominently in the second film, especially the use of sound, non-diegetic voice and close-up camerawork. The prominence of these techniques can be an additional factor to the increase in the use of the new terminology. The pupils observed and processed these and were able to communicate them appropriately. In *Thinking and speech* (1987), Vygotsky's explanation for the construction of consciousness is closely related to the words and verbal activity. That the pupils have used a wider vocabulary in the second review may then indicate that they have expanded their knowledge of the workings of a film. They may have gained a way to express phenomenon that they already have some knowledge about, but had no way to refer to, thus giving them a new way of processing information. It became very clear during the course of this study that pupils hold a lot of knowledge about visual narratives that they did not know how to express and use. This is only to be expected

considering the amount of time spent on consuming visual media in their free time (Ungdata, 2021). Their high exposure to visual narratives has presumably given them an underlying understanding of the material covered in the lessons. The new vocabulary opens up a way for them to understand and properly process what they are seeing.

Does increase in vocabulary mean that pupils' levels of reflection also improve? On this point, the findings are not uniform. Four pupils had a significant increase in the terms that were taught in the lessons. Of these four, three used the terminology in relation to their subjective experience with the film and strengthened their reflections of the film. They were able to explain what cinematic effect or concept was at use, and how it affected the scene or their feelings for it. With the three pupils that showed quite a lot of reflection around their opinion in their first review, were possibly able to connect these terms to the subjective effect that the film had on them. This implies that they were susceptible to the lessons, and it is likely that they recognized the effects of the cinematic techniques implicitly, and therefore had an easier time of using the terms describing them. The common denominator for the three pupils who had better reflections was that their first reviews were descriptive and showed reflection already before the intervention. This could mean that the terms and vocabulary that were taught in the lessons described concepts that they already were familiar with at some level, and that for them, learning this vocabulary gave them the ability to express themselves on the matter. This supports Vygotsky's (1987) view of the connection between mind and speech, as can be seen in the figure 2 by Barrs (2016, p. 250). They may have had notions of the cinematic techniques in the film, feeling the effects as it were, but have not been aware of a way to express them.

However, one of the pupils who showed an increase in terminology use did not connect the observation of the cinematic methods to his/her own reflections. This pupil's review largely consisted of observations of these effects, separate reflections which were not connected to these observations. How can we explain this feature? It may well be the case that this pupil may have internalized the vocabulary but lacks some form of underlying knowledge to connect the vocabulary to and therefore did not reflect on the effect of the cinematic techniques. Another possibility is that this pupil absorbed the past lessons' vocabulary about what these cinematic techniques are and felt inclined to point them out whenever they were observed, but not reflect on what they were used for. In contrast, pupils who showed a lot of reflections around the first film were able to use the terms that were taught to explain their opinions through reflection. The sample is small and by no means generalizable, and it could be well be the case that other, external variables played a part in this pupil's text at this moment. Nevertheless, this

observation does point to an interesting trait that probably aligns with many teachers' everyday classroom experience: that increase in vocabulary does not necessarily equal improved reflections. There is a qualitative difference between understanding and simply reproducing. While a few pupils responded very well to this intervention and showed genuine understanding, it is important to find out how to reach the rest of the pupils in a similar manner.

Many of the pupils also show a notable increase in the overall quality of their work. Some pupils only wrote a summary rather than a more elaborate review, but the number of pupils who did this decreased for the first to the second review. The pupils were largely free to write what they defined as a review and therefore, this could be seen as consequence of the pupils having evolved their definition of what a review is. Four pupils submitted only a synopsis of the story for their first review, for the second review this number had decreased to only one. A possible reason for these extended reviews may be the setting and context of the writing session. It was reported to me by the teacher that several pupils were struggling to produce a review with no instructions, and were therefore told to "write what happened and what you thought of it", and that this happened in the middle of the writing session. It is possible that the pupils did not get this message or misunderstood it. In an effort to keep the same requirements for the second review as were laid for the first, they were instructed to "write what happened and what they thought about it" from the start of the writing session for the second review. The purpose of having few or no requirements for the review was to get an accurate portrayal of what the pupils considered a review. And the lack of any reflection or opinion in the first review can be a sign that these pupils did not consider this a crucial part of the review. The increase for the second review could then be a sign that the pupils have acquired a sense of what makes a film feel a certain way, at a level where they could communicate this. One possible reason could be with time restriction, as can be seen in Rachel's review of *The Silent Child* , where she has made a section of "Opinion", but had not filled it out with any opinions.

That the majority of the pupils started writing about their experience of the film may be an indication of them gaining enough proficiency in vocabulary to being able express their thoughts and feelings on the topic. As mentioned, thought and speech are closely connected, and it is not unlikely that these pupils view their experiences of films in a different way because of the new vocabulary. Meaning is not an entity embedded in the film for the viewer to unravel, but rather created in the encounter between the text and the engaged reader/viewer (Grøver & Bråten, 2021). These pupils have formed their independent opinions and expressed them, as active viewers not simply absorbing the content on the screen.

The study was designed with the objective of building pupils' literacy. As stated above, literacy is no longer restricted to the reading and writing of printed texts, but embraces a whole range of competences, formats, and media types (Økland & Aksnes 2021). Recognizing and identifying certain elements of films and their effects is part of what it means to be literate in our media-saturated, highly visual society. As such, an increase in cinematic vocabulary usage means the individual pupil's literacy has improved. Moreover, communicating information also is a part of literacy. Although the pupils may have felt the effects used in the film before the intervention, the actual identification and communication of these terms is what qualifies as an increase in literacy as expansion of their knowledge of the field. The new vocabulary is there to use it wherever they find it appropriate. Then again, the significance of this result must not be overstated, as for most of the pupils the increase was slight, and the indication of an upwards trend may therefore not be entirely reliable.

That pupils have an inherent critical literacy disposition to film is also evident from some of the material. A valid example of this is Brittney, in her first review:

> "I think the movie deserved an Oscar because it has an important message and is well made. The movie wants to enlighten more people about the serious issue. But when I saw the film all I could think about is how much it felt like a commercial. I don't know if I think its good or bad but it felt like a commercial for deaf kids especially with the text at the end." - Brittney on *The Silent Child* (2017)

What Brittney is referring to here is that *The Silent Child* has a section in the end where statistics for deaf children and the facilitation for their disability is displayed. The section ends with the quote: "We hope this film contributes in the fight for sign language to be recognized in every school across the globe" (Overton, 2017, 19:25). The statement Brittney makes about this section, comparing it to a commercial, is interesting. Film makers obviously steer their viewers in certain directions, having some kind of agenda in making the film. Even though Brittny does not know how to express it other than "it felt like a commercial for deaf kids", she clearly recognizes the way the creators of the film have a clear goal and seek to create public change. Although she shows critical awareness, she lacks specified tools to process and express this, when she expresses that she cannot tell if it is a good or a bad thing. This is a good example of how the foundation for media literacy is already in the pupils, and what is still needed is a set of conceptual tools and terms with which they may capture and formulate their impressions.

The study also showed some unexpected results. One of these was that several pupils wrote shorter reviews for the second film than they did for the first film. How does this match up with the objectives of the intervention? Does it undermine the effects of specified media lessons? Again, these results may be due to other factors that are not directly linked to the teaching method. Rather, the short second reviews seem to be attributed to their opinion of the films. Some pupils thought that *Stutterer* was a worse film experience than *The Silent Child.* There are a number of possible reasons why they may have felt that way. It could be due to the fact that *Stutterer* is shorter than *The Silent Child*, and that this gave the pupil less time to form an attachment to situations or characters. Another explanation could simply be that since the lesson was the first lesson of the school day some pupils were late and missed the beginning of the film. It could also be that since *Stutterer* is an introspective film, the pupils did not like the internal monologues and general lack of dialogue or interaction. Some commented that the film was "boring" and that they "did not like the character". It could also be attributed to identification and to the fact that the film is not a child-oriented story like *The Silent Child.* Perhaps they were less prone to relate to the adult protagonist of *Stutterer* who is dealing with adult struggles than to the struggles of the child protagonist Libby in *The Silent Child.* In sum, there are a number of possible reasons why the pupils could feel less enthusiastic about the second film, and therefore invested less effort in writing the review. Personal opinions of the films can have an effect on their reviews, as their opinion on any piece of media impacts their enjoyment and thus their motivation for working with it. It is up to the teacher to find ways to engage their pupils also with unfamiliar media types and formats.

Interestingly, their previous and excessive experience with film could also have been a factor that contributed to the negative responses displayed by some of the pupils. Again, this could well be because of their expectations to what a film experience should entail. Quite possibly, these negative feelings stem from a lack of experience with short films. There is less opportunity for emotional connection in a short film, and the desire to see "what comes next" is not met in the same way as with a full-length format. As Penne (2010) points out, emotional involvement is what drives the viewer to seek a hope for a turning point, and many of the pupils expressed this desire in their reviews. I interpret this to mean that the pupils, when emotionally involved, dislike the fact that they do not get to follow the characters for longer (Penne, 2010, p. 112).

5.2 Relevance to the subject of English

How are the findings of this study relevant for today's English teachers in primary education? On a general level, engaging analytically and critically with any English language media format can be tied to the objectives of the current curriculum. As "text" now covers a wide range of media types, there is equal room for a film as a book, a poem or a newspaper article. As previously covered, the current curriculum for teaching English in Norway is very open for the teacher to do their own approach. Many of the competence aims are broad and unspecific, and leave ample room and opportunity to employ use of film, such as in these goals for Year 10: "use a variety of strategies for language learning, text creation and communication" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019a) and "explore and present the content of cultural forms of expression from various media in the English-speaking world that are related to one's own interests" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019a). Ideally, such broad goals should encourage the teachers to explore and experiment with the media that the children engage with on a daily basis.

So why then does film tend to be treated with less earnest that printed media (Bakken, 2016)? Two reasons spring to mind. First, it may be due to tradition and the fact that many teachers lack training with media literacy themselves. A large number of English teachers in Norway still lack formal qualifications for teaching the subject, and are more prone to reproduce their own, possibly outdated ideas and practices of the subject of English. Those who have qualifications may also not be entirely up to date, as teacher education still struggles to find new methods and approaches to keep up with the times in a rapidly changing media landscape.

Secondly, the reasons for treating films as a second-tier narrative vessel may be more deep-rooted, as a reluctance to change in a time of transition. Older generations have always been concerned with the change in youth culture and expressed both nostalgia for their own traditions and fear of new modes of expression and consumption of media. The transitional period when new technology and trends are emerging is often met with resistance by the usually conservative older generations. Michael Stevens (2015) points out that the journal of Education in 1907 wrote "a modern family gathering silent around the fire, each individual has his head buried in their favourite magazine." (Stevens, 2015, 2:55). This criticism of the younger generation could have been written last year if the word "magazine" was replaced by "phone" or "screen". In the words of George Orwell, "each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it." (Orwell, 1986). This is not to

say that film and cinematography are new and unexplored themes or subjects, but the availability and consumption of these in recent years have made them the de facto input for narratives, and this is such a radical change that society may experience difficulty in accepting and adapting to this. Reluctance to change is nothing new in education, but nevertheless unfortunate, as schools that do not adapt to a changing society stagnate and fail to provide pupils with the skills to acquire the knowledge they need in everyday life.

A matter of some urgency in today's education is how to keep pupils engaged. According to Ungdata, 77% of children in Norway say they are bored at school. In Tromsø municipality, the proportion of students who experience this has increased from 2018 to 2021, not only in terms of the number who agrees, but also the proportion who strongly agrees as opposed to those who partially agree. It may seem as though children perceive school as less stimulating than the rest of their everyday life (Ungdata 2018; Ungdata 2021). Both scholars and commentators currently speculate on these developments. Some attribute it to an effect of the recent pandemic, others to the fact that increase in digital media use require a type of stimulus that cannot be met through traditional teaching methods. Whatever the reason, schools and teachers have an obligation to keep searching for ways to keep pupils engaged. Crucially, general literacy, as well as media literacy, is not something that is learned once and for all, but should be regarded as continuous process that evolves with the times as new media formats require new understandings and competences.

5.3 Conclusions

The aim of this study was to see how pupils' reflection was affected by short term teaching. More specifically, the study has investigated whether providing pupils with terms and concepts related to visual narratives will increase their awareness as viewers and enable them to better express their opinions about films. This objective is regarded as a central part of modern literacy.

The findings of this study are not conclusive. For some of the pupils, the use of new vocabulary increased, and they expressed a higher level of reflection. For three of the pupils, the improvements were substantial. As such, the intervention had an effect, although not on all pupils. This may indicate that the pupils need to have certain level of media proficiency to respond well to this kind of lessons.

Several factors may have impacted this result and could have been improved in order to gain more conclusive, reliable and valid results. For one, the timeframe for this study was relatively short. Five lessons were used, but with the watching and reviewing of two short films, the effective teaching time was effectively three lessons. It is likely that the short duration of the lessons allowed for only a gain the proficient pupils. Secondly, another factor that possibly affected the outcome was my teaching style. Vygotsky's *Thinking and speech* (1987) is centered around the use of words to expand and make use of new vocabulary. This study was largely centered around receiving new vocabulary, but not for the pupils to make use of it. This can be an attributing factor to more pupils not connecting the vocabulary learned to reflections they made. The pupils were encouraged to ask questions and discuss the themes and materials presented during the lessons, however the verbal response to these prompts were low for most pupils, and most questions were asked by a vocal minority. If I were to have more lessons or were to do this study again with the knowledge of hindsight, I would dedicate time to more practical tasks where pupils could use their knowledge with each other. The use of the viewing sheet was ostensibly well received in the classroom, and more and similar tasks where the pupils could make use of their gained vocabulary and knowledge could possibly affect the outcome. Thirdly, the material may not have suited all pupils equally. Had the pupils been accustomed to watching short films on a regular basis and gained experience of their narrative structure before the intervention, their opinions would have been less affected by the disappointing open endings. Last but not least, this was a small-scale study based on a very small number of pupils. The study would have benefitted from using larger sample and a more fine-grained approach to establish internal differences among the pupils, in order to highlight any significance of gender, socio-economic background, previous experience with film, general media habits, or general level of academic achievements.

While there is clearly a wide range of arguments in favor of media literacy teaching playing a bigger role in schools, this study cannot really contribute to a body of "evidence" in that respect. A number of factors contributed to this, and I am well aware of all the things that could have been done better or differently, such as choosing more comparable films, having more pupil-centered lessons, more time, and so on. Conducting a study like this has also drawn attention to the challenges of studying human interactions and subjective experience. There are numerous variables that may affect the validity of a study such as this. It is clearly not simply a matter of input/output, and that what is taught gets taken on and applied by the pupils. In teaching and learning situations, one must be reluctant to point to any causal relationships. However, this is

exactly the design underpinning most of a teacher's job: providing input and expecting an output. Yet, on some level we know that matters are far more complex, and that equally important as "input" are other factors, such as who is in charge of disseminating the pieces of knowledge, and in which ways this is done.

Despite the shortcomings in the design of this study, it touches upon issues that are of utmost importance. Giving pupils the tools to process visual narratives, making them empowered in knowing how a film affects them, and giving them the ability to express this is more important than ever. The foundation for teaching pupils about film is already here, as most pupils watch visual narratives every day and are interested in the subject. The findings of the present study may indicate that the knowledge they already possess can be enhanced through media-specific teaching. Further research is required on how media lessons can benefit a broader range of pupils. More research is also required on how teachers could educate themselves on the benefits of using film as a tool in the classroom, and the methods with which to do so. Finding stimulating activities for pupils is the cornerstone of curiosity and willingness to learn and should be every teacher's goal. The role of visual media has changed and is more accessible than ever, and understanding the effects of visual media and strengthening pupils' visual literacy are important investment for both teachers and pupils of tomorrow.

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Appendix 1

<u>**Consent form**</u>

Vil du la barnet ditt delta i forskningsprosjektet

«Film i engelskundervisning»?

Jeg heter Even Seljeseth er lærerstudent ved UiT. Jeg var i praksis i klassen til ditt barn i fjor, og kjenner elevene fra før. I år skriver jeg masteroppgave hvor jeg ønsker å analysere elevers refleksjoner rundt film, før og etter undervisning i filmteori. Datainnsamlingen vil foregå i klassen til ditt barn, hvor de først vil se en film og så skrive en anmeldelse av filmen. Senere vil klassen ha undervisning om filmteori, for så å se en ny film og skrive en ny anmeldelse. De to filmanmeldelsene eleven skriver vil utgjøre datamaterialet mitt, hvor jeg ønsker å undersøke hvilke forskjeller som eventuelt kommer til syne i måten de skriver på før og etter undervisningen.

Jeg vil med dette be om ditt samtykke for at jeg kan benytte ditt barns to filmanmeldelser som datamateriale i mitt masterprosjekt. Tekstene vil bli anonymisert av kontaktlærer ███████ ███████ før de leveres til meg. Jeg vil ikke ha tilgang til informasjon om eleven utenom kjønn, og det vil dermed heller ikke være mulig å identifisere enkeltelever i den endelige masteroppgaven. Utdrag fra elevtekstene vil være gjengitt i masteroppgaven, men under fiktive navn.

Mens prosjektet pågår er det kun meg, kontaktlærer og min veileder på universitetet som vil kunne se de anonymiserte anmeldelsene. Jeg vil kun benytte tekstene til det formålet som her skisseres. Prosjektet vil avsluttes når masteroppgaven er levert i mai 2023.
Selve undervisningsopplegget vil gjennomføres i klassen uavhengig av den enkeltes samtykke. Samtykket knytter seg altså kun til innsamling og behandling av tekstene. Hvis du samtykker på vegne av barnet ditt, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi grunn. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg eller ditt barn hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å vite mer om eller benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med meg (Even Torbergsen Seljeseth, <u>Ese018@uit.no</u>), min veileder førsteamanuensis Hilde Brox (<u>Hilde.brox@uit.no</u>) eller vårt personvernombud ███████ ███████ (personvernombud@uit.no).

Samtykke innhentes digitalt av lærer.

Med vennlig hilsen

Even Torbergsen Seljeseth
Student

Appendix 2

The following are some examples of the PowerPoint slides used in the lessons.

<u>**Lesson 1**</u>

Camera movement

- What can it do for a scene?
- Panning
- Tilting
- Dolly
- Zooming
- Rolling
- Speed?

4 clips

Have we learned anything?

- Do you recognize any of these techniques in your favorite film?
- There are a lot of elements
- Goal: Understand what makes a film feel a certain way

Lesson 2:

Plan and goal

- Repetition
- Film as text
- Audio
- Editing
- Goal: Deepen our understanding of the different elements that make a film engaging

Repetition

Visuals:
- Setting
- Light and color
- The actor
- Image composition
- Camera shots and angles
- Camera movement

What is your favorite film?

Music

Is the music in the movie world or added for the mood?
-Origins

Diegetic (Natural)

🎞	Music **in** the film

🔍	1 clip

Non-Diegetic (Added)

- Music added in post-production for mood, tension or excitement
- Film scores

Task

🎥	We'll watch some scenes

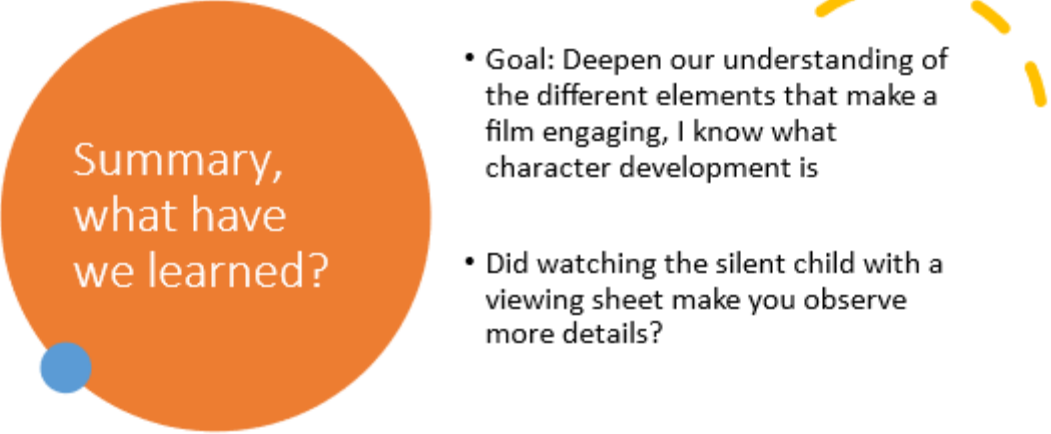|	
✏	Write down every film-making technique we have learned about that you can see in the scene

Lesson 3:

Plan and goal

- Repetition
  - Visuals
  - Audio
  - Editing
- Film as storytelling
- The silent child with viewing sheets
- Summary
- Goal: Deepen our understanding of the different elements that make a film engaging, I know what character development is

Visuals

- Setting
- Light and color
- The actor
- Image composition
- Camera shots and angles
- Camera movement

Summary, what have we learned?

- Goal: Deepen our understanding of the different elements that make a film engaging, I know what character development is

- Did watching the silent child with a viewing sheet make you observe more details?

Appendix 3

Pupils' film reviews that were partially used in the thesis, ordered alphabetically.

The Silent Child

In this task I'm going to write a movie review about the "the silent child".

The movie is a short film about a deaf child called "Libby". She gets a nanny/tutor, so she can be ready for school. Libby lives with her big sister, big brother, mom and dad. None of them is deaf so I think none of them really understands what she is going thru. Libby doesn't know sign language, but her mom Sue says she can read lips, turs out she isn't that good. The nanny's name is Joanne. At first Libby is quite skeptical of her new nanny, but we see that after a while she begins to trust Joanne. I think Libby felt that finally someone understands her.

Joanne begins to take her out to the park and swimming hall and lots of activities. Joanne also taught Libby sign language. Libby's mother Sue does not like that. I think she feels maybe a bit "left out". Sue can't understand sign language and thinks no one at school will either. When we get closer to the end sue has taken Libby to school with out any help teachers and have to rely on lipreading that she isn't very good on. I felt so sorry for Libby in one of the last scenes where she stood alone in the lunch break, just leaning against the wall while the other kids were playing. And when there was a spelling contest, she didn't know what to do she couldn't hear anything. That just broke my heart especially since there are kids that is going thru this in real life.

I think the movie deserved an Oscar because it has an important message and is well made. The movie wants to enlighten more people about the serious issue. But when I saw the film all I could think about is how much it felt like a commercial. I don't know if I think its good or bad but it felt like a commercial for deaf kids especially with the text at the end.

I got really shocked by the numbers that got shown in the end. Over 78% deaf children in school without any learning support just like Libby. That is a lot of children. And over 90% has parents that isn't deaf. That can affect the children, the parents doesn't know how to help the children. I don't think Sue wanted to make Libby struggle in school, Sue just doesn't know how to help. Sue probably wanted Libby not to have it any different than the other kids.

Written by Brittney Spears

A film review "the silent child"

"The silent child "is an Oscar winning British sign language short movie written and starred by Rachel Shenton and directed by Chris Overton. The movie was once released in 2017 by slick films and is a very emotional and touching short movie witch I have grown very fond of.

This might be the best short movie I have ever seen in my life. It has a story, a deeper meaning, different sides to look at it from and it is just so good told and written. Personally, I would have liked the movie even better if it was longer but at the same time, I also like that it has an open ending which involves that we cannot see or know how everything works out for Libby and her social worker I mean will she ever be happy without sign language? Will she ever understand what everyone around her is saying or doing? Will Libby and the social worker be reunited again? We can ask ourselves a thousand of these questions because We will never know due to the open ending witch, I also find extremely exciting and thrilling.

It tells the story of a profoundly 6-year-old deaf girl named Libby. Libby lives a quite silent life until her family makes the decision to get Libby a caring social worker played by Shenton herself. In the beginning of the movie the social worker brought it to her attention that Libby was not as happy as her mother explained she was, she was genuinely unhappy or in fact sad. Shenton and Libby's relationship eventually had grown, and their love showed brightly through the screen. They had spent so much time together and I feel like Libby eventually looked at the social worker as a mother figure, the reason of that was mostly because Shenton learned Libby how to communicate with each other even though she was deaf. However Libby's parents did not respond to this leaning method that the social worker had planned for Libby and her parents (witch I and many believe is naturally the right way) but sadly Libby's parents didn't allow her to get the help she needed but we don't know that for sure since it is an open ending but in the ending we could notice that Libby was sad once again

This book was loved by so many and including me myself and it has so many positive recommendations and compliments. The book really reached out to many and has a deep message that can be seen in many different ways. I believe that "the silent child" should be shown in all the schools around the world because it is important that people learn more about this and can understand how important sign language is to so many humans on this planet. I recommend this short movie to all ages, all schools and absolutely everyone that might come across this wonderful and beautiful short movie.

This film review was Written by: caramel

Film review about "stutterer".

The short movie is about a man who stutters and use sign language in public, he's signing when someone ask him a question in public. He meets a girl online and they meet in real life, and she uses sign language as well. We don't know if she stutters as well or is deaf.

Some of the settings in the movie is at a café, the house of the man, the bus and some kind of backyard. I will say the time in the movie is present tense.

In the movie it was some non-diegetic sounds like the voice in his head, we could only hear it not the other characters, I think it was some backround music, but he talked over it. The typing on the computer was a diegetic sound, the traffic sound was a diegetic sound, I think.

The camerawork in this movie was long shot, mid shot, close-up and medium full shot. The camera was in one place the whole time, for me it was.

The director is showing how it is to have a stutter, what they think is scary and what they deal with. It won an Oscar so more people in the world have seen this movie. So, more people know how the daily struggle is to have a stutter.

I think the movie was great, it shows what people with stuttering might think or what's going on in their mind. I understand more what people with stuttering deal with. It was a reason this movie won an Oscar, so it's not weird that it's a good movie. One thing I would change with the movie is that it was longer, I would love to see what happens to him and the girl he meets online. If they fall in love, get together and stuff like that. This movie rolls the dice 4 from me. I didn't get to see the whole movie, but it's on a 4 or a 5. Great movie.

Text from Hailey Biber

The silent child film review

"The silent child" is a short movie, about a girl named Libby. She is 5 years old and was born deaf. Her parents are very busy and haven't tried to learn her any sort of sign language, and she have not learned how to speak, so Libby doesn't have any way to communicate with anyone. Libby's parents one day hires a tutor that is a specialist on deafness and sign language. Her name is Joanne, and she starts to learn Libby sign language so that she can communicate, and others can understand what she wants and needs.

 After a while Libby gets good at sign language, but her mom named Sue doesn't understand how she will make it work at school since very few people understand sign language. And as a Mother Sue only wanted her child to be normal. So, her mother sent Sue to school without any special help, Libby didn't understand anything and how could she learn without understanding what the teacher said.

I believe the movie was very entertaining and important. 90% of deaf children is born to hearing parents, and 78% of deaf children attend mainstream school with no specialist support in place. Therefore, I think this is an important them that needs to be talked about a lot more. 1 in 1000 babies in the world is born deaf. Many parents thinks is a shame and maybe their kid will get bullied. But what's more important is how they are doing and that they have a way to communicate with others. In the movie we can see that her parents didn't take time to understand Libby, they didn't try to learn sign language and they waited until she started at school to get her any help. I'm afraid this happens to way too many of the deaf children. In one seen in the movie we get to see things from Libby's perspective, everything is just totally quiet. I can only imagine how it must feel like not hearing anything. Just think about how hearing affects us. If somebody yells my name, or if the doorbell rings, or even if you're just going to wake up early. How will you hear the alarm.

I think the movie was good and the perspective really got us to believe how it must be like for Libby. In 2018 the movie won an Oscar, that's amazing because than maybe people started to talk more about being deaf and it made it easier for people that isn't deaf to understand what its like.

Written by Meredith Grey.

Stutterer film review (2015)

In the movie "stutterer" we meet a man named greenwood, he stutters and struggles to speak. We can see that he often practises sign language, because he has been chatting to this girl named Ellie online for the past 6 months. He has not told her that he stutters, and she asks him to meet her.

I thought the movie was interesting. I did not believe the actors fitted into the role. The man looked like he had slept on the street for a week or more. His hair was very greasy. The camera angle close up was used the most, I think that's because it gives us a better understanding of how they might feel and what they may think. When Greenwood was riding the bus, he thought out loud. His voice came in many layers, and it made me understand that inside his head it was all a mess. Those voices are non-diegetic sound because they were put over after the seen was filmed.

The plot in the movie was at the end, after she asked him to meet, first he didn't dear to meet her, but at the end of the movie he manned up and went to meet her. The plot was that she was deaf and communicated with sign language. When Greenwood hung out with his dad, I understood how it may feel for him to not even being able to speak with his own dad. The setting was kind of sad and depressing, it was a lot of dark colours, and it rained all the time.

Closing this up I think the movie has an important massage and theme, it makes us understand how it might feel to have a stutter. I however did not really like it because of the actors and that it so short, I wanted to know more.

Written by Meredith Grey.

Per:

Film review "the silent child"

The film is set in a gray sad house with the meaning to make it feel like the characters are living a more depressing life. The main characters are Libby and Johanne, Libby is deaf and Johnne is teaching her sign language. Libby`s parents are not really interested in helping Libbye, they don't want to learn sign language, they want a "normal child" not one that is deaf.

When Libby is at home, she feels alone and left out of the family. Johanne helps her feel seen and cared for. It shows how important it is to help and support a child, even one with a disabilety. Many parents struggle to understand a kids problems and won`t listen because they have other children and they turned out fine. Johanne is educated on this and knows what Libby needs but she can`t force the parents to do something they don't want to or have time to. This leaves Johanne in a stressing situation because she have grown a bond with Libby and wants her to be happy.

The produsers of the film wanted to bring atention to the deaf kids in school all over the world, and hopefully help them get the education they deserve. The move won an Oscar and I think it absolutely deserved it. I think it was a beautiful film bringing up a verry important thing that not many people think twice about. It was a good story and it was easy to understand and sympathize with the charecters, The film was happy and sad and had plotwist even if it was short.

Film review of stutterer (2015)

In the movie "stutterer" we meet a man named greenwood, he has been talking to a girl online for about 6 months. One day the girl messages Greenwood and says she will be in his town for a few days and that they should meet. Greenwood gets very excited, but the only problem is that he has a bad stutter and uses sign language most of the time, and she doesn't know. The plot of the movie was that she couldn't talk either and used sign language.

I thought that the movie was alright, it had a lot of different camera angles and camera movements like close up, full shot and pan. Usually, I like it when there is more camera movement, but I think that for this movie there was a perfect amount of it. I think that the setting for the movie was good, but I didn't think that the actors fit into the role. Some more things that I didn't like were that the voices in his head got extremely loud at some points and that made it harder to pay attention to the actual movie. There was some non-diegetic music, but there could probably have been some more. What I didn't like at all was that the whole movie was kind of expected. Just from watching the first few minutes you could've guessed the ending. The whole plot would have been better if it wasn't what everyone thought it would be.

One thing I liked about this movie was how you could tell the actors emotions from their facial expressions, I also liked how I hadn't seen any of the actors before, so I didn't recognize them for another role.

Written by per.

Written by: Xiao

The Silent Child

The short movie is about a deaf little girl who struggles to be a part of everybody else in her family, and at school. Realizing Libby needs some sort of help, her family reaches out to a person who can help Libby to understand sign language so that she can also communicate with other people around her. However, Libby's mother tells the helper that lip reading is a better choice for Libby, but the helper disagrees. It is shown that Libby had a very good and successful time learning sign language with the helper. Once her parents take away the chance to talk in sign language from Libby, it appears that she can't be a part of the other kids at school. In the ending, the helper and Libby tell each other that they love each other. This shows how important and meaningful sign launguage and the helper were to Libby, in order to live a happier life.

I will rate this short movie a 7/10, because I think some scenes were a bit unnecessary for the plot. Other than that, the short movie could've replaced the unnecessary scenes with scenes that show how Libby does later in life. However, considering that the main purpose of this short movie was to tell a message to the audience, I think the author has done an excellent job.

From the start to the end, the short movie was presented in mainly dark color schemes. Such as rainy weather, and many scenes with low exposure to sunlight. I think this was because this short movie wasn't about anything happy.

The message of this short movie was very clear, it was even written in the end; "We hope this film contributes to the fight for sign language to be recognized in every county across the globe"

In my opinion, freedom to sign language should be accepted everywhere, since it doesn't affect anything or anyone in a negative way.

Film review: Stutterer

The film "Stutterer" shortly explained is a film about a man who suffers from extreme stuttering, which makes him unable to talk freely person to person. Simple tasks like phone calls are also a big challenge for him and make him frustrated when failing such easy tasks. In the film, he has been dating a girl online for 6 months. He feels very mentally unstable when she asks if they want to meet in person but proceeds to do it anyway. In the end, he realizes how his partner is also talking in sign language and likely suffers from deafness.

In my opinion, this film was perfectly summarized. The film had no unnecessary scenes and was only focusing on the crucial parts. I think including a lot of medium/close up shots was a great choice, since the attention was meant to go to the actors, instead of the setting because the film is mostly about what goes on inside the main character's mind. In my opinion, the time and setting of the movie were not important factors to the story, which is why there was no great attention to detail.

The scene where the main character was going to meet his online girlfriend, had a nondiegetic voice over that showed a character trait which is overthinking. Another important character trait is his extreme observation skill. He could basically explain a person's personality and what they're doing. This tells us viewers that his disability took his observation skill to another level. Similarly in reality, I've heard that people who are missing a sense of the body have much better sense regarding the other ones. I think this was also a great attention to detail.

Aside from the visuals, the open ending felt very nice and smooth.

I would very much recommend this film to other people.

I will rate this movie a 9/10

Written by: Xiao