

# Lexical transfer and avoidance in the acquisition of English phrasal verbs

*Evidence from Russian and Norwegian learners of English*

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# Abstract

The main focus of this thesis is lexical transfer, avoidance, and the influence Norwegian and Russian languages have on the acquisition of English. It will be claimed that Russians avoid using English phrasal verbs more often than Norwegians. Besides, it will be claimed that Norwegians will choose PVs that look similar to Norwegian ones, but in the given English context do not make sense, and it will indicate negative transfer.

Reasons for this will be suggested in the chapter on second language acquisition and transfer, researches on transfer and PVs. I will also give definitions and descriptions to English, Norwegian PVs and Russian prefixed verbs. Transfer plays a major role in transfer in L2 vocabulary, especially if the L1 and L2 are related. It is obvious that cases of both positive and negative transfer are more frequent between the languages that are closely related, thus L1 transfer will take place far more often for the Norwegian English learners than for the Russian English learners. As we know, Norwegian and English belong to the same group of Germanic languages, while Russian belongs to the Slavic languages.

Furthermore I present the role of English, Russian and Norwegian in modern society and the way those languages are taught. I describe the educational systems in Russia and Norway and English Curricula in the two countries.

The experimental part presents the choice of method for this study and the tests. It is also concerned with the formulations of the three hypotheses and the descriptions of the tests and the participants of the study. The significant role L1 transfer plays in the acquisition of English demands further research. The present analysis will hopefully contribute to the studies of language transfer and in particular of transfer issues in the usage of English phrasal verbs.

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# List of abbreviations

FLA First language acquisition

SLA Second language acquisition

L1 First language

L2 Second language

IL Interlanguage

TL Target language

PVs Phrasal verbs

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# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The aim of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the evidence of both positive and negative transfer and avoidance in the use of English phrasal verbs by Russian and Norwegian learners of English. The results have been provided by means of tests performed by each informant.

My motivation for studying vocabulary acquisition is based on the importance of this component in the acquisition of a second language. To my mind, it is very important to study the question of transfer in language teaching in order to make English language learning more effective for both Russians and Norwegians. If the processes of language transfer in all language subsystems gets more thorough research, it will help to prevent a lot of problems caused by language difficulties. Moreover, it will help in vocabulary acquisition in particular.

Being a Russian native speaker myself, I have always been interested in the acquisition process of other languages, in particular of those which have no similar features to the Russian language.

## 1.2 Research questions

The object of my study is lexical transfer, avoidance, and the influence Norwegian and Russian languages have on the acquisition of English.

This thesis is based on 3 hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1. I hypothesize that both Russians and Norwegians will prefer a one-word verb to a PV, but Norwegians will choose PVs more often than Russians in the test where the gap in the sentence is to be filled in with either one-part verb or a PV. Russians will avoid PVs more often than Norwegians.*

*Hypothesis 2. If Norwegians native speakers will choose PVs that look similar to Norwegian ones, but in the given English context do not make sense, it will indicate negative transfer.*



*Hypothesis 3. If Norwegians avoid using PVs less often than Russians or not avoid at all, it will indicate evidence of positive transfer.*

## **1.3 Outline**

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 1 is devoted to the description of object of study and the discussion of research questions. Chapter 2 and 3 are concerned with the theoretical review.

In chapter 2 I have a look at the notions of first language acquisition, second language acquisition and transfer. Besides, in this chapter I discuss the situations where transfer may occur, such as the creation of borrowings and pidgins. It is important to mention some problems and constraints concerning the definition of transfer, the most problematic areas are comparison, prediction and generalization. I also discuss transfer in language subsystems, such as discourse, syntax, etc. and cases of both morphological and semantic transfer.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the discussion of researches on transfer and PVs. I also give definitions and descriptions to English, Norwegian PVs and Russian prefixed verbs. Several studies on PVs are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the role of English, Russian and Norwegian in modern society and the way those languages are taught. I describe the educational systems in Russia and Norway and English Curricula in the two countries.

Chapter 5 is a description of methodology of the experimental part used in transfer studies and the choice of method for this study. It is also concerned with the formulations of the three hypotheses and the descriptions of the tests and the participants of the study.

In the sixth chapter I present the data and discuss the findings of the study. The chapter ends with concluding remarks. References and appendices follow the sixth chapter.

# Chapter 2. SLA and Transfer

My thesis concerns second language acquisition (SLA), which investigates the human capacity to acquire languages other than the first during childhood, adolescence and adulthood. SLA focuses on the way a human becomes competent in more languages than one (Ortega 2009: 1). Such phenomenon as transfer can play a major role in the L2 acquisition.

The human species has a unique capacity involved in sociality and culture. We communicate about realities, events, intentions and desires. There are many people who can do it in languages other than their own. In most cases we grow up with one language and acquire other languages later in life. The process of learning to talk has fascinated researchers and parents for years. So how do humans learn other languages after they learn their first? How is second language acquisition different from first language acquisition? And how does lexical transfer help Norwegians acquire English vocabulary? In this chapter I will give answers to these questions.

First language acquisition starts in the womb, when an infant acquires the tune and phonology of the language. Although the learning of some aspects of language learning continues through the school years, the basics are learnt already by the age of four. But the basics of the first language are usually learned by the age of four (Ortega 2009: 3).

## 2.1 SLA and Transfer

The systematic study of how people acquire a second language has not studied before the second half of the twentieth century. This was the time when World Wide Web started to develop, the communication boundaries between people started to expand further their local communities, and people needed to learn languages not just for pleasure, but also in order to get education or employment. At first, the term 'second language acquisition' may seem transparent, but in fact it can be understood in different ways. Thus, it is important to mention that in this context 'second' can refer to any language that is learned after the mother tongue. It actually can refer to a third or fourth language. Besides, by saying 'second' I do not exclude so-called 'foreign language learning'. It does not matter if a person learns a language of the country he lives in or studies it in the classroom in his

or her native country, many researchers will call both 'second language acquisition'. Thus, SLA may be defined as the study of the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom (Ellis 1997: 3). As an important field of applied linguistics, language transfer has an important role in the process of second language learning.

When people hear a speaker with a foreign accent, they often try to guess the speaker's background by racial features or the style of clothing. But sometimes there is only one reliable clue - how a person talks. We have an intuition about the nature of language, which helps us understand that the native language of a speaker can cause the speaker to sound 'foreign'. A speaker who sounds foreign exhibits cross-linguistic influence, which is also known as language transfer. It makes people think that the study of one language can make easier the study of a closely related language. Similarly, people may think that some languages are easier than other. For example, many English-speaking people consider other European languages less difficult than Chinese.

The fact of language contact and the notion of language transfer were not significant for language teaching until the 1960s when American scholars, one of them Robert Lado, presented two claims about transfer. The first one was that the cross-linguistic differences make SLA extremely different from first language acquisition. Learning a second language becomes difficult not because of the new features, but because of the first language habits already existing in the mind. The second claim was that the student who learns a second language will find some new features simple, because they are similar to his native language, and other features will be difficult, because they are different. Thus, if the teacher compares a foreign language to the native language, students will know possible learning problems and can be better taught (Lado 1957: 2).

Lado's claims about the relation between first and second language acquisition and about contrastive analysis faced serious criticism in the 1970s. Research has shown that learning difficulties do not always arise from cross-linguistic differences, and they cannot always be predicted by contrastive analysis. Error analysis led to the conclusion that many errors are common for second language learners with different linguistic backgrounds. Error analysis showed the complexity of acquisition behaviors. Thus, some errors may arise from the way a student is taught, i.e. transfer of training, not from language transfer. Errors such as omitting articles, copulas and other forms may appear out of overgeneralization and simplification rather than language transfer. Thus, many errors can not be traceable to the structure of the first language (Krashen, 1981: 64).

Let us look at the following example taken from a manual to train English-speaking actors to use a Russian accent:

*Oh! I very good fellow! why? Because I Cossack. I very big Cossack. Yah! I captain of Royal Cossack Guard in Moscow - in old country. Oh! I got fifty - hundred - five hundred Cossack they was under me. I be big mans. And womens, they love me lots* (Herman and Herman 1943: 340).

The Russian language does not have present tense copula forms such as *am* and *is* or the articles *a* and *the*. We can see that the number of grammatical features in the passage are typically Russian, such as the absence of the article and a copula in *I very good fellow*. Contrastive analysis may help to explain cases like this and identify the influence of language transfer. Contrastive analysis is a basis for the study of transfer. However, for example speakers of Spanish, which like English has copula verbs, may also frequently omit forms such as *am* and *is*. Moreover, the same error may arise among children learning English as their native language. Thus, while a Russian - English contrastive analysis might explain the errors, a Spanish - English contrastive analysis cannot, and there is no such analysis for monolingual children. Even though such pervasiveness of errors has been the most significant counterarguments against the importance of transfer, nowadays transfer is considered to be a very important factor in SLA.

The skepticism about transfer rose in the 1970s, when it was considered a theoretical creature of dubious psychology and dubious linguistics. However, there are many difficulties with the arguments that minimize the importance of transfer. One problem is error studies. Even though they may be good evidence of strength or weakness of native language influence, they are not the only evidence. Another problem is that universal developmental sequences (succession of phrases of learning to master new structures) play a much bigger role in acquisition than transfer. There are also reasons to believe that cross-linguistic influences work together with the psychological factors in developing those developmental sequences. Transfer affecting second language pronunciation has been considered less controversial than grammatical transfer. Nevertheless, further studies indicate that transfer can occur in all linguistic subsystems, including morphology and syntax. Moreover, other influences besides transfer may also affect all subsystems.

There are several reasons for language teachers and linguists to consider transfer more closely. First of all, the teaching may become more effective if the teacher takes into account the differences between cultures and languages. For example, an English teacher aware of transfer errors which

come from Korean, will be able to predict the problems of Korean students better, while showing to the students that linguistic and cultural background is extremely important. Another reason to know more about transfer is that it can show the relation between language contact and language change to the historical linguists. Although languages change for different reasons, bilingualism can be a major factor as it results from language contact. Research on transfer is also important because it can show what is common to all languages, i.e. language universals (De Angelis, G. and L. Selinker 2001: 40).

The importance of language contact and transfer was explained by the study of pidgin and creole languages. In the nineteenth century, linguists became interested in so-called trade languages in Africa, Asia and the places with language contacts between local inhabitants and Europeans. Those trade jargons had the status of 'marginal languages' and were called 'pidgins'. In the situations where pidgin languages became widely used and acquired by children they were considered 'creoles'. Transfer played a relatively minor role in some situations and a major role in some other cases. For example, pidgins in New Guinea, such as Tok Pisin illustrate the former possibility. On the other hand, the Hawaiian Pidgin English spoken by many Japanese shows influence of Japanese words and structures (Odlin 1989: 8).

For reasons such as these, the role of the first language in the acquisition of a second language has always been an important issue in SLA research and has a long tradition. As I have already mentioned, discussions of transfer began in the 1940s and 1950s with the work of American linguists. At that time language transfer was considered the main factor in SLA. In the 1940s and 1950s comparisons between the native and the target languages were used as predictors of success and failure in SLA. A great shift in the research on transfer happened in the 1970s when the concept of interlanguage (IL) was introduced (Selinker 1972: 209—231). It came to light that L1 transfer did not always take place where expected. As an example, we can consider Ravem (1968). Ravem studied Norwegian children acquiring English negation. He came to the conclusion that they did not transfer Norwegian negation into English, instead they followed the same developmental route as children with other native languages (pp. 175-185). Studies like this challenged the role of transfer as the only predictor of success in SLA and instead regarded it as one of many possible factors influencing SLA.

Among linguists there still is no consensus about the nature and the significance of transfer. Some scholars consider it a paramount fact of SLA; other scholars have been skeptical about the

importance of transfer. In the next section I will discuss several controversial aspects in the notion of transfer.

## **2.2 Some problems in studying transfer**

A detailed overview of native language transfer, development of various theories and controversial points of this phenomenon can be found in the works by Ellis (1994) and Odlin (1989). In order to understand the complexity of language transfer, Odlin (1989: 25) reviews the most problematic areas, i.e. definition, comparison, prediction and generalization. All the definitions include the influence of the mother tongue on the second language. But they also include a non-native language as a source of language transfer. But in fact, we still do not know what exactly can and can not be transferred from a non-native language into an interlanguage. One of the reasons for the mixed and often contradictory findings in the studies of transfer is the lack of one common definition. In my thesis I will focus on the influence from the native language on SLA.

Following Odlin (1989) I would like to define what transfer is and use this as the working definition: 'Transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired' (Odlin 1989:27).

Odlin's definition of transfer is often cited because it is broad enough to include many different points of view. In this definition Odlin includes both positive and negative transfer processes. Negative transfer phenomena encompasses overproduction or underproduction of a particular structure, production errors (calques, substitutions and alteration of a target language item), misinterpretation during comprehension and also the differences in the amount of time needed to acquire the second language by learners with different native language backgrounds. However, here we can see some problematic terms, for example how does this influence work? The conditions that cause the influence from the learner's native language are not completely understood. The term 'acquired' is not completely understood as well.

Gass and Selinker provided another definition: '...for most researchers, language transfer is the use of native language (or other language) knowledge – in some as yet unclear way – in the acquisition of a second (or additional) language' (Gass and Selinker 1983: 372).

Other researchers, however, suppose that the term of transfer does not encompass the full range of the effects caused by cross-linguistic contacts. For example, Sharwood Smith suggests his definition of cross-linguistic influence:

*...in influence of the mother tongue on the learner's performance in and/or development of a given target language; by extension, it also means the influence of any other tongue known to the learner on that target language* (Sharwood Smith and Kellermann 1994: 198).

In his turn, Kellermann (1986: 37) limits the phenomena of transfer to 'those processes that lead to incorporation of elements from one language to another'. Whereas they consider the notion of cross-linguistic influence more appropriate to refer to in the cases of transfer. The definitions on language transfer are vague as we are still not able to specify what exactly can be transferred from the native language into the target language.

To turn to the point of comparison, the study of transfer depends on the systematic comparisons of the languages, i.e. contrastive analysis. But since many languages, even much-studied English, have not been thoroughly described, the contrastive analysis can not give us full descriptive and theoretical adequacy. The absence of theoretically adequate grammar has led to debates on unsolved theoretical problems (Chomsky 1981: 75, cited in Odlin 1989: 31).

As far as the problem of prediction is concerned, we may say that a good contrastive analysis could make the process of L2 learning easier for the person by predicting why or why not transfer will occur in this or that case. But without understanding the conditions causing transfer we do not have a chance to make a good contrastive analysis (Wardhaugh 1970: 123-130, cited in Odlin 1989: 32). Speaking about the problem of generalization we first need to mention language universals and Universal Grammar. The key hypothesis suggested by Noam Chomsky was that Universal Grammar is biologically inherited by all the humans and simply requires activation in childhood. According to Chomskyan views children will inevitably learn to talk, just like they learn to walk (Odlin 1989: 43). The lack of agreement about universals and the debates caused by Chomsky's research have led to the assumption of the complexity and unity of all human languages. Nevertheless, the interest in language universals has not led to the discovery of many features common for all the languages. Linguists usually agree on some universalist claims, for example that all languages have vowels.

It is important to mention that the influence of the learner's native language cannot be explained simply by habit formation. It is now widely accepted that transfer is not only a matter of falling back on the native language. Nor it is just a consequence of the influence of the learner's native language, as other previously acquired languages can also have an effect (Ellis 2008: 350). Thus, according to Ellis, the term 'L1 transfer' is inadequate. Sharwood Smith and Kellerman (1986) suggested a superordinate term of 'crosslinguistic influence':

*... the term 'crosslinguistic influence'... is theory-neutral, allowing one to subsume under one heading such phenomena as 'transfer', 'interference', 'avoidance', 'borrowing' and L2-related aspects of language loss and thus permitting discussion of the similarities and differences between these phenomena (Sharwood Smith and Kellerman 1986: 1).*

I would like to explain such terms as 'borrowing transfer' and 'substratum transfer'. Crosslinguistic situations arise when there is a meeting of speakers who do not all speak the same language and who need to communicate (Odlin 1989: 6). The languages learned in language contact situations may show some kind of language mixing. One of the possible forms of language mixing is native language influence. Another form is borrowing from a second language to the native language. Borrowing transfer refers to the influence of a second language on the native language. Substratum transfer refers to the influence of the native language on the target language (called the 'second', regardless of how many languages the learner already knows). Borrowing and substratum transfers are similar in some ways, but the result is very different. Borrowing transfer begins at the lexical level, while the phonetics and phonology are less likely to be affected. On the other hand, substratum transfer will affect pronunciation, i.e. phonetics and phonology. (Odlin 1969: 6) Thus L1 may be initiator when the performer has to produce an utterance in the target language but has not acquired enough L2 to do this. L1 influence may thus be considered the indicator of low acquisition. Researches have shown that higher proficiency shows less L1 influence (Odlin 1969: 7). As I have mentioned above in section 2.1 transfer may occur in different language subsystems, in the next section I would like to take a closer look at how transfer affects them.



## **2.3 Transfer in specific language subsystems**

Transfer in vocabulary will be dealt with in a separate chapter (Ch. 3), since it is the main focus of the thesis. However, let us have a quick look at transfer in other language subsystems as they all are connected and it is important to understand that language transfer may occur on all levels. Researchers have investigated the effects of transfer in all aspects of language production (pronunciation, morphology, syntax, discourse) as well as in language reception (listening and reading). It is possible to identify the evidence of transfer in the learner's interlanguage (IL) (Ellis 2008: 367). However, it is very difficult to quantify the extent of transfer in different language levels, because there is no common way to measure L1 contributions to the ease or difficulty of learning different subsystems (Odlin 2003: 450). Odlin also mentions that frequency of occurrences varies from one subsystem to another.

### **2.3.1 Morphology**

Research has shown evidence of transfer in the acquisition of morphology. One example is by Collins (2002: 43-94, cited in Ellis 2008: 371). Apart from finding L1 transfer, she also found that transfer worked alongside other developmental factors. She studied French learners' acquisition of English tense/aspect morphology. Collins found that the learners applied tense/aspect forms according to the Aspect Hypothesis thus proving the universality of it. The Aspect Hypothesis claims that the distribution of interlanguage verbal morphology is determined by the lexical aspectual class (Ellis 2008: 954). Thus the learners preferred the use of progressive forms with activities and used uninflected verb forms with statives. Collins concluded that 'the L1 influence does not appear to override the effect lexical aspect; rather it occurs with it' (Collins 2002: 85, cited in Ellis 2008: 371).

The crosslinguistic effect that is especially evident in grammar is avoidance (see 3.3 and 5.4), for example the avoidance of English phrasal verbs, which has been explored in several studies (Dagut and Laufer 1985, Hulstijn and Marchena 1989, Laufer and Eliasson 1993, Sjöholm 1995 and Liao and Fukuya 2004, all cited in Ellis 2008). Learners whose L1 does not contain phrasal verbs showed more evidence of avoidance. Another finding was that the learners tend to use phrasal verbs with literal meaning (for example, 'come in') rather than figurative meaning (for example, 'turn up'). Sjöholm in his study (1995) concluded that the Swedish learners of English showed the evidence of U-shaped behaviour. This pattern of development takes place when the learners manifest a target-language form in their output at an early stage of development only to manifest an interlanguage

form in its place at a later stage. The correct TL form reappears eventually (for example, "came" becomes "comed" and later "came" again) (Ellis 2008: 982).

Another study made by De Angelis (2005: 379-414) proved that crosslinguistic influences in grammar may be caused not only by the L1, but by another non-native language. De Angelis investigated two groups. One group had English as their L1 and either Spanish or French as their L2. Another group had Spanish as their L1 and prior knowledge of French and English or only English. She tested the learners' use of Italian function words and concluded that both groups of learners relied on their non-native languages for function words when they perceived the TL and source language as close to each other (Ellis 2008: 373).

### **2.3.2 Discourse**

In general transfer in discourse has scarcely been investigated, because the errors that learners might make can not be always explained by transfer from the L1. Usually L2 learners assume that discourse patterns are more or less the same in their native language and the target language. Even advanced learners use their L1 discourse features in writing. They may underuse or overuse certain constructions (Cenoz, Hufesisen and Jessner, 2001: 59, cited in Ellis 2008: 373).

### **2.3.3 Pragmatics**

Evidence of both positive and negative transfer was found in a series of studies concerning learners' choice of apology strategies. The researchers made the point that it might not be the actual linguistic difference between the languages that played a role, but the learners' attitude to how they should perform the apology (Ellis 2008: 374).

A number of researchers have investigated the hypothesis of positive correlation. Some of them (for example Cohen and Hill 1997) showed that lower-proficiency learners are less likely to manifest pragmatic transfer than higher-proficiency learners because they lack the linguistic resources. However, other studies (for example Maeshiba et al. 1996) have not found the same thing. Kasper and Rose (2002) claim that the reason for these conflicting results is the lack of understanding of how the grammatical complexity of speech acts in L1 and TL interrelate developmentally with pragmalinguistic transfer.

Let us have a look at the study by Schachter and Rutherford (1979: 3-12, cited in Ellis 2008: 374). They argue that in some cases transfer-induced syntactic errors may turn out to be transfer-induced discourse errors. They investigated the following examples of Chinese and Japanese learners of English:

*Most of food which is served in such restaurant have cooked already.*

*Irrational emotions are bad but rational emotions must be use for judging.*

Native speakers considered these errors to be a confusion between active and passive. However, the researchers claim that those constructions reflect the transfer of the topic–comment structure found in Chinese and Japanese. Topic–comment structure is in fact a feature of early interlanguage, which is more prevalent in L1s that support its use. Thus, the learners learn a particular TL form and afterwards come to the conclusion that this form may express a particular discourse structure (Ellis 2008: 375).

### 2.3.4 Syntax

As far as syntactic transfer is concerned, there has been much debate, and the topic has been controversial (Odlin 1989: 85). Yet a great deal of syntactic evidence has been found in studies of word order, relative clauses and negation. As we know, most human languages have either VSO, SVO or SOV as their basic word order. If we compare English and Russian, both languages have SVO as their basic word order, but they vary in terms of rigidity. The flexibility of Russian word order can be explained by its reliance on bound morphology (Odlin 1989: 86). Nouns in Russian change their endings in accordance with case, and this fact allows the reader to define whether a noun is in the role of direct object or subject in a sentence. Let us have a look at the following examples from Odlin (1989: 87):

<i>Коля купил машину</i>	<i>Kolya Bought the car (neutral)</i>
<i>S V O</i>	

<i>Коля машину купил</i>	<i>Kolya BOUGHT the car</i>
<i>S O V</i>	

<i>Купил Коля машину</i>	<i>Kolya did bought the car</i>
<i>V S O</i>	

<i>Купил машину Коля</i>	<i>KOLYA bought the car</i>
<i>V O S</i>	

*Машины Коля купил*    *The car, Kolya BOUGHT it*  
O            S            V

*Машины купил Коля*    *The car, it was Kolya who bought it*  
O            V            S

In the sentences above, we can see that the word *машина* is used in the form *машины* which makes it clear that the noun is in the role of the direct object. In contrast with Norwegian, where the basic word order in a sentence is SVO, Russian is flexible. This can lead to Russians using several word orders in English, even though English is quite rigid (Odlin 1989: 87).

### **2.3.5 Pronunciation**

According to the hypothesis "difference = difficulty" L2 sounds that are conspicuously different from the target language (TL) will be difficult to acquire and thus will be acquired later than sounds that are similar (Ellis 2008: 367). However, this hypothesis does not necessarily cause L1 transfer effects that have been observed in L2 pronunciation. Learners do not transfer the phonological features in the L1. In some cases phonological transfer is governed by universal developmental tendencies, which can be applied to any language (Ellis 2008: 368).

### **2.3.6 Reading and writing**

Ringbom says that "transfer is at least as important in comprehension as it is in production" (1992: 88). He suggests that the closer proximity of L1 to TL provides an advantage in both reading and writing. I will focus on the studies of groups with different L1 orthographic designs. Akamatsu (2003) studied two groups with logographic (Chinese and Japanese) and alphabetical (Persian) background. Akamatsu concluded that 'word processing skills or strategies developed in an L1 are transferred to L2 reading' (2003: 221). Wang and Koda (2005: 71-98, cited in Ellis 2008: 376) used a naming task that required Korean and Chinese students to say aloud English words that appeared on a computer screen. They also found a number of L1 effects. The Korean students were better at recognizing English words than Chinese students, as Hangul (the Korean writing system) is alphabetic like English, whereas Chinese learners were disadvantaged, as their writing system is logographic.

It is important to mention similar writing systems in English and Norwegian, first of all the fact that they both use the Latin alphabet allows Norwegian learners of English to save much time in encoding and decoding English writing. The Cyrillic alphabet of Russian has some letters in

common with English (M and T for example), and many other letters may seem familiar to a Russian reader of English, but they represent different phonemes (Odlin 1989: 125). Besides, there are letters in the Latin alphabet that are unfamiliar to a Russian reader. Thus it is obvious that Norwegian learners of English have an advantage since their writing system is similar to that of English.

In this section I have mentioned in short several subsystems of the language where transfer is likely to occur, but what I am particularly interested in is lexical transfer. Before we start discussing lexical transfer let us look at other factors influencing transfer. In the next section I would like to take a closer look at the constraints influencing the phenomenon of transfer.

## **2.4 Constraints on transfer**

The problem of transfer is complex and it needs to be thoroughly researched. So far we have looked at transfer in several language subsystems. But in order to understand the occurrence of transfer in learners' L2 acquisition it is also important to know not only what languages they speak, but also *who* the learners are, what their environment and background is. Odlin (2003: 454) provides the following definition of a 'constraint': '...a constraint could be anything that prevents a learner from either noticing a similarity in the first place or from deciding that the similarity is a real and helpful one'. He also notes that constraints can involve 'general cognitive capacities including perception and memory' and 'principles of language either totally or partially independent of other human capacities', i.e. constraints can be 'cognitive' and 'linguistic'. In this section I would like to consider such constraints on transfer as: social factors, markedness, language distance and developmental factors. In the next section I will describe such factors as personal factor and age, which also constrain transfer.

- **Social factors**

The social context influences the extent to which transfer may occur. Odlin (1989) claims that negative transfer is less likely to appear in classroom settings than in natural settings as in natural settings the learners are unfocused and language mixing is permitted. In the classroom, on the contrary, the learners are focused and treat L1 forms as stigmatized. Besides, they adhere to TL norms and try to avoid negative transfer. Thus we should consider external and internal norms that

the learners have in mind. Beebe (1977: 331-9, 1980: 433-7) found that bilingual Thai/Chinese learners of English showed transfer from different L1s depending on whether the addressee was Thai or Chinese. They showed transfer from different L1s depending on who the addressee was. He also found that Thai learners of English used the native variant of /r/ much more in a formal than in an informal context. Following these studies, Tarone (1982: 69-82) claimed that L1 transfer is more likely to appear in learners' 'careful style', than in their 'vernacular style', as when learners are paying more attention to how they speak they are using all their resources, including L1 knowledge (Ellis 2008: 381). As we can see the results are contradictory and the social factors need more investigation.

- Markedness.

The underlying notion of all the definitions of the term 'marked' is the notion that some linguistic features are 'special' in relation to others, which are more 'basic'. For example, the adjective *old* can be considered unmarked and *young* marked. Asking a person about his age in *How old are you?* we cannot use *How young are you?* (Ellis 2008: 381). The question is whether the degree of transfer depends on the degree of markedness. The problem with the studies involving transfer is the vagueness of the concept. There is some evidence that learners are more likely to transfer unmarked L1 forms. However, the results of the studies are contradictory (Ellis 2008: 397). Kellerman (1977) claims that the only way to make the results more precise is to refer to native speakers' own perception of the structure of their language. He called native speakers' intuitions 'prototypical' and claimed that learners do not tend to transfer non-prototypical meanings. Kellerman tried to demonstrate that learners have such perceptions of the structures of their own language, treating some structures as potentially non-transferable and others potentially transferable. These perceptions influence what the learners actually transfer. The weakness of this approach, as Kellerman later acknowledged (1986: 35-48), is that we do not know whether learners' perception about what can and cannot be transferred reflect what they actually do when they use the L2.

- Language distance

The distance between the native and target languages can be described as both a linguistic phenomenon, i.e. the actual distance between two languages, and as a psycholinguistic phenomenon (i.e. the learner's perception of this distance). The studies by Sjöholm (1979) and Ringbom (2007, all cited in Ellis 2008: 397) presented evidence that language distance causes both positive and negative transfer. According to Kellerman (1979: 37-57) learners develop a psychotypology, i.e. their perceptions about language distance. Psychotypology changes with the development of L2

proficiency level (Ellis 2008: 397). First, the learners' prototypicality influences what they are ready to transfer, then their psychotypology determines what they actually transfer.

- Developmental factors

Jarvis (2000: 246-7) notes possible ways in which transfer may influence proficiency:

1. L1 influence decreases with increasing L2 proficiency.
2. L1 influence increases with increasing L2 proficiency.
3. L1 influence remains constant with increasing L2 proficiency.
4. L1 influence decreases, but nonlinearly.
5. L1 influence ultimately increases, but nonlinearly.
6. L1 influence ultimately never decreases nor increases but its presence continually fluctuates as L2 proficiency increases.

Some researchers claim that negative transfer is more common among beginners, others argue that in order to transfer some L1 features learners may require a certain amount of L2 knowledge. In fact, transfer may occur on all the levels of L2 proficiency, and it can either accelerate or retard development (Ellis 2008: 395). By reviewing the evolution process of the language transfer study and analyzing its characteristics we can find that language transfer is a complicated process operated with different factors among which are such factors as society, environment and personal qualities.

## **2.5 Non-structural factors in transfer**

It is important to take into account such factors as motivation, personal qualities, etc. while studying the evidence of transfer on different language levels. Along with social factors, pedagogical factors may have an important influence. In this section I would like to discuss several nonstructural factors in transfer (Oudin 1989: 130).

- *Motivation* plays a great role. 'Students who experience a high amount of an external or intrinsic drive or need to learn will achieve higher levels of proficiency than students with low levels of drive' (Laufer & Hulstijn 2001, cited in Evtyukhin 2003: 10). Even though English and Norwegian have less structural differences than English and Russian, the highly motivated

Russian learner will probably learn more English than a poorly motivated Norwegian speaker. Although it seems obvious that motivated students acquire information better, measuring motivation is rather hard. Motivation is connected with attention — a factor that can significantly increase vocabulary learning. (Evtyukhin S. 2003: 11).

- *Class size* is important. Twenty Norwegian learners in English class will get less individual attention than two Russian speakers. Usually there are from 20 to 30 children in the classroom on English lessons, which makes the studying process less efficient.
- *Personality factors*, such as for example anxiety in using unfamiliar structures may lead to avoidance of some structures that the contrastive analysis would predict to be difficult (Kleinmann 1977: 93-107). Flexibility of psychic processes, or empathy, may help a learner to obtain native-like pronunciation and overcome their native accent (Guiora 1972: 145). Thus, anxiety and empathy are two personal characteristics that interact with transfer.
- *Phonetic mimicry abilities* or *Phonetic coding abilities* may be described as having or not having "an ear" for foreign languages. In Carrol (1981), it is clear that learners differ in their ability to mimic the sounds of the target language and this capacity is a predictor of future phonetic accuracy. The better mimicry ability a learner has, the less likely he or she is to show the effects of phonetic influence from their native language (Carrol 1981: 105).
- *Age of SLA* has caused considerable debate among scholars. Not all L2 researchers support the "younger is better" position although there may be some relation between ageing and foreign accent acquisition. Adults may show the same reading skills, empathy or phonetic mimicry abilities as younger learners (Odlin 1989: 137).

This chapter has discussed the early studies of transfer, evidence of transfer in different language subsystems and structural and nonstructural factors influencing language transfer. In the next chapter, we will have a closer look at lexical transfer.



# Chapter 3. Lexical transfer and phrasal verbs

## 3.1 Lexical transfer

Vocabulary is the most sizeable component in the learning of a foreign language. Learners of all proficiency levels may find themselves in situations where they cannot understand all the written text due to the fact that they do not know all the words. Vocabulary knowledge can be 'passive' or 'active', 'receptive' or 'productive' (Melka Teichroev 1982, cited in Palmberg 1987: 69). In the literature on learning Russian as a foreign language 'potential vocabulary' complements learner's 'real' or 'active' vocabulary (Berman et al. 1968, cited in Takala 1984). Real vocabulary includes those words a learner can either use ('active real vocabulary') or only understand ('passive real vocabulary'). Learner's potential vocabulary consists of the words he has never seen before but may nevertheless understand. Thus, according to Levenston (1979, cited in Palmberg 1987: 69) vocabulary knowledge of a foreign language may be considered a continuum from the ability to 'make sense of a word to ability to activate the word automatically for productive purposes' (Faerch et al. 1984: 100, cited in Palmberg 1987: 69).

Many language teachers and researchers have been interested in transfer in vocabulary. Let us have a closer look at this process. Many linguists believe that similarities and dissimilarities in word forms and meanings play a major role in how quickly the words are learned by speakers of another language. For example the similarity between *justify* in English and *justifier* in French will make it easier for English speakers to memorize new French words (Odlin 1989: 77). Odlin (1989: 79) points out that 'there can be no doubt that learners will find one language far easier to learn than another if the one language shows many lexical similarities with their native language and the other does not'. I would like to cite the characteristic given by Sweet:

*Mastering the vocabulary of most European languages means simply learning to recognize a number of old friends under slight disguises, and making a certain effort to learn a residue of unrecognizable words, which, however, offer less difficulty than they otherwise would through being imbedded in a context of familiar words. The higher vocabulary of science, art, and abstract thought hardly requires to be learnt at all; for it so consists either of Latin and Greek terms common to most European languages or of translations of them (Sweet 1899/1972: 64).*

Transfer plays a major role in transfer in L2 vocabulary, especially if the L1 and L2 are related. Undoubtedly, language distance and transfer are proportionally related. It is obvious that cases of both positive and negative transfer are more frequent between the languages that are closely related, thus L1 transfer will take place far more often for the Norwegian English learners than for the Russian English learners. Thus, if we compare Russian-speaking learners of English with Norwegian-speaking learners, the first group will obviously not do so well in acquiring new vocabulary, because Russian does not share so much cognate vocabulary with English as Norwegian does. As we know, Norwegian and English belong to the same group of Germanic languages, while Russian belongs to the Slavic languages.

Despite the fact that it is very helpful to have a common lexicon in two languages, Norwegians may face so called 'false friends'. For example, the words *time* in English and *time* in Norwegian coincide in written form, but in Norwegian it means *hour*. Or if we take the English infinitive marker or preposition *to* and Norwegian numeral *to*, they may become confusing for Norwegian learners of English. Even though Russian and English belong to different groups of languages, we can find examples of false friends in them as well, for example *аккуратный* (*akkuratnyi*), pronounced in a similar way to the English word *accurate*, means something different. In Russian the adjective has the meaning of 'neat' and in English it means 'correct/true in every detail'. Grammatical restrictions may lead to both positive and negative transfer. If the grammatical restrictions are the same in the two languages, that may be a help. Thus grammatical restrictions found in English but not in Norwegian or Russian may cause difficulty in English vocabulary learning. I found an example common for both Russian and Norwegian. The verb equivalent to *to feel* is reflexive in both Norwegian *å føle seg* and Russian *чувствовать себя* (*chuvstvovat sebya*). Thus, the students may make a mistake by applying the reflexive form in English.

In the case of cognate forms, occurrences of lexical transfer are cases of both morphological and semantic transfer (Odlin 1989: 82). In the case of Norwegian and English, the transfer of bound morphemes is possible, for example English prefix *-un* and Norwegian *-u*, as in *unreliable* in English and *upålitelig* in Norwegian. There may be some restraints in bound morpheme production, as the Norwegian prefix *-u* does not always coincide with the English *-un*, for example in *umulig* in Norwegian and *impossible* in English. Nevertheless the similarity of prefixes in English and Norwegian may facilitate reading and listening, and in many cases it can help readers identify words as cognates.

Nevertheless, the advantage of a common cognate vocabulary make English learning easier first of all in reading comprehension. It is not only lexical similarities and similar pronunciation that make English acquisition easier for Norwegians. First of all, it is important to remember that Russian and English have different alphabets, Cyrillic and Latin. Thus Russian students are exposed to different way of writing words from the beginning. It is obvious that learners with writing systems similar to that of their native language have a tremendous advantage in learning a language. Researchers have been studying the phenomenon of lexical transfer among the learners with different L1s. I would like to discuss them in the next section.

## **3.2 Studies of lexical transfer**

**3.2.1 Study of borrowing and transfer by H. Ringbom (1978, 1983), Palmberg (1985), S. Jarvis (2000), N. Jiang (2002), Sjöholm (1976), Haastrup (1989, 1991), Schouten-van Perreren (1989), Bensoussan & Laufer (1984), Laufer (1997) and Laufer & Sim (1985)**

Kellerman claimed that 'there are enormous quantities of evidence for the influence of the L1 on IL when it comes to lexis' (1987: 42). Ringbom noted that 'lexical transfer is the application of a learning hypothesis that lexical items are translation equivalents to, or have the same semantic features as items in the learner's L1 or some other language he or she knows well' (1983: 207-212). He studied lexical transfer among Swedish-speaking and Finnish-speaking learners of English in comparison and contrast to borrowing. In borrowing, a lexical item is taken into the L2 in either modified or unmodified form, but a form non-existent in that language. This item can also produce a 'formally similar, but semantically different L2 word' (Ringbom 1983: 207). In lexical transfer, semantic features of an L2 word may be formed on the model of an equivalent word in the L1. Borrowing of words can take place from any language, even if the knowledge of that language is not sufficient. Borrowing is mechanical and based on only formal similarity between the words. Transfer, on the other hand is more complex and involves creating an analogical word by taking over semantic features and combining different lexical items. Ringbom also claims that what happens in an L2 learner's mind when he or she is learning another language is 'mapping words on to concepts already existing in the mind' (Ringbom 1983: 210). The more a learner progresses in his L2 learning, the more he is able to create semantic network associations. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that even advanced L2 speakers are far from reaching the lexical network

system formed in the minds of native speakers. In the earlier study, Ringbom (1978: 80-101) found that the majority of errors made by Swedish and Finnish learners of English can be explained by the transfer of partial translation equivalents. As I have already mentioned, the acquisition of vocabulary can be easier when the L1 and L2 are related languages. Ringbom found that Finnish-speaking learners have higher error frequencies than Swedish-speaking learners, whose mother tongue is related to English (Ringbom 1983: 207). Palmberg (1985) discusses the role of mother tongue in English learning by an experiment requiring young Swedish-speaking learners to read two passages from an English fairytale. They were to use their prior knowledge of the fairytale and their English vocabulary acquired during 3 months of learning. The study proves the fact that the mother tongue is helpful in obtaining meaning from an unknown text at an early stage of English learning.

Sjöholm (1976) also found that the Swedish learners of English did better in acquiring lexis than Finnish learners as Swedish is closer to English than Finnish. Jarvis (2000: 245-309) further explored the evidence of lexical transfer in Swedish and Finnish learners of L2 English. In his study, he suggested three criteria that present reliable evidence of transfer: intra-group homogeneity, inter-group heterogeneity, and similarities between the native language and IL performance. Jarvis tried to obtain all three types of evidence and also other variables interacting with transfer, i.e. age, type and amount of language exposure, TL proficiency, and task. He analyzed both language production and perception among L2 Swedish and Finnish speakers and collected the L1 data from native English, Swedish and Finnish speakers. Jarvis found that there were clearly detectable examples of transfer. For example, the Finnish-speaking learners preferred the word *hit* and *crash* referring to a collision scene (as in *She hit the man*), whereas Swedish-speaking learners used *ran on*. The choice may be explained by different Swedish and Finnish concepts related to collisions.

One of the main issues relating to lexical transfer is whether learners form a new semantic specification for an L2 word or map it onto an existing semantic representation of their L1 (Ellis 2008: 369). Jiang (2002: 617-36, cited in Ellis 2008: 370) investigated this in his study. He analyzed the results of two semantic judgement tasks offered to Chinese learners of English. One task required them to determine the degree of semantic relatedness of two English words, the other one asked the learners to guess whether two English words were related in meaning. The L2 word pairs varied according to whether they had the same L1 translation or not. The results showed that cognate L1 and L2 (as in the case of Swedish learners of English) may not be the only condition for positive transfer. The availability of translation equivalents may also allow easy mapping of L2 forms onto L1 lemmas. While some studies (Haastrup 1989, 1991, Schouten-van Perreren, 1989,

cited in Bengelieil and Paribakht 2004: 225-249) have proved that lexical transfer can significantly help in learning new vocabulary, other studies have shown that it is not always easy and efficient. Studies on learners' reading proficiency (Bensoussan & Laufer 1984, Laufer 1997, Laufer & Sim 1985, all cited in Bengelieil and Paribakht 2004: 225-249) have shown that learners may often give a wrong translation to a polysemic word, mistranslate idioms or confuse L2 words with ones which look similar.

### 3.2.3 Study of bidirectional transfer by A. Pavlenko and S. Jarvis (2002)

It is important to mention one more study which explores the case of bidirectional transfer (i.e. transfer from L1 to L2 and from L2 to L1). This phenomenon was first recognized by Weinreich in 1953. I would like to focus on the study by Pavlenko and Jarvis (2002: 190-214), who investigated the cases of bidirectional transfer among Russian learners of English. The learners had studied English post-puberty and had been living in the USA for a number of years. The results of the study are presented in the table below.

<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>L1—L2 transfer</i>	<i>L2—L1 transfer</i>
Semantic extension	Extension of a word in one language to include the meaning of a perceived translation of the word in another language	'Neighbour' - 'roommate' (by extension from russian 'sosed' which refers to both next-door neighbours and apartment mates)	'Sozhitel'niza' — 'mistress' for 'roommate'.
Lexical borrowing	The use of a phonologically or orthographically adapted word from one language into another	None	'Boyfriend' (adapted phonologically)
Loan translation	The use of the literal translation of compound words, lexical collocations, or idioms from one language into another.	'Deep inside herself' (from the Russian 'uiti v sebia'— 'to go inside oneself')	'On vtorgaetsya v ee odinochestvo' (from the English 'he invades her privacy')

*Table 3.1. Bi-directional lexical transfer (based on Pavlenko and Jarvis 2002, from Ellis 2008: 370).*

L1 to L2 transfer occurred in grammar and vocabulary, whereas L2 to L1 transfer was mainly lexical. In cases of lexical borrowing only L2 to L1 transfer was evident. In cases of semantic extension and loan translation bidirectional transfer took place.

In this section I have focused on recent studies of lexical transfer which are relevant for my thesis. In the following sections I will take a closer look at phrasal verbs in Norwegian and English, and Russian prefixed verbs. Discussing differences and similarities between these verbs is important because they are the grounds for transfer among Norwegian and Russian English learners. Phrasal verbs are common in all West Germanic languages, they are very common in use and are a widely discussed topic in linguistics. As I have already mentioned, Norwegian and English PV systems are very similar. Russian has a large set of prefixes, which fulfill some functions of the particles in Germanic languages.

### **3.3 English phrasal verbs**

As has been mentioned above, the use of English PVs is one of the most difficult aspects of English for learners of English as a second language and English as a foreign language. PVs have been a subject of interest for a long time because of their high frequency and the difficulty they present to the learners. The aim of the present study is to explore the use of idiomatic and non-idiomatic PVs by Norwegian and Russian English learners. First, I will give definitions of PVs and describe their characteristics.

#### **3.3.1 The frequency and style of PVs**

PVs have long been regarded as one of the most characteristic feature of the English language. In 1712 Michael Mattaire in his work *English Grammar* described the basic syntactic peculiarities of the English PV. In 1755 Samuel Johnson, one of the most influential lexicographer, turns his attention to the PVs, he writes in the Preface to *A Dictionary of the English Language* (Thim 2012: 1):

*There is another kind of composition more frequent in our language than perhaps in any other, from which arises to foreigners the greatest difficulty. We modify the signification of*

*many verbs by a particle subjoined; as to 'come off', to escape by a fetch; to 'fall on', to attack; to 'fall off', to apostatize; to 'break off', to stop abruptly; to 'bear out', to justify; to 'fall in', to comply; to 'give over', to cease; to 'set off', to begin a continual tenour; 'to set out', to begin a course or journey; to 'take off', to copy; with innumerable expressions of the same kind, of which some appear wildly irregular, being so far distant from the sense of the simple words, that no sagacity will be able to trace the steps by which they arrived at the present use. (Johnson 1755: n.pag., cited in Thim 2012: 1)*

The enormous number of PVs in English is challenging to learners of English. Liu (2011) presents the most frequent PVs of British and American English. He based his analyses on data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) — a large online corpus developed by professor Mark Davies from Brigham Young University, the British National Corpus (BNC) — a 100 million word collection of samples of written and spoken language from a wide range of sources, designed to represent a wide cross-section of current British English, both spoken and written, and the list of the 100 most frequent PVs made by Gardner and Davies (2007). Liu came to the conclusion that PVs are more common in fiction and spoken speech, than newspapers, magazines and academic writing (Liu 2011: 675). According to his results, these are the 30 most frequent PVs in British and American English: *check out, come out, come up, figure out, get out, go ahead, grow up, hang out, hold up, lay out, pick up, pull out, show up, shut down, take off, end up, turn out, take on, turn around, wake up, build up, carry on, fill in, get on, set out, set up, sort out, take over, take up, turn up* (Liu 2011: 671). An analysis of different meanings can help understand how various meanings are used. Besides, not only broad category studies, but also field-specific PV usage analysis (for example, in air traffic control) is needed (Liu 2011: 681).

Following Thim (2012: 42), I would like to point out that the variation and style of the PVs in present-day English has not been subject to thorough studies. Nevertheless, the figures of the appearance of PVs in such registers as 'conversation', 'fiction', 'news', and 'academic prose' given in Biber et al (1999) seem to prove that many PVs tend to be colloquial:

*The distribution patterns of phrasal verbs closely matches that for lexical verbs generally ... except that academic prose has fewer than would be expected. Thus, rather than being a marked feature of conversation, phrasal verbs are notably rare in academic prose. In their place, academic prose shows a much greater reliance on derived verbs and more specialized verbs generally. (Biber et al. 1999: 409, cited in Thim 2012: 44)*

The question is whether the frequencies of PVs has anything to do with their colloquiality. Such PVs as *make up* and *carry out* are much more frequent in news and academic prose, as their occurrence is determined by subject matter (for example in *to carry out an experiment*). Such

frequent PVs *take up*, *take on*, *look up*, *take over* and *turn out* are also rare in conversation. With *come on* and *shut up* the colloquiality is more obvious. But figures with a lot of remaining PVs are inconclusive (Thim 2012: 44). *Give up* and *find out* are both frequent in the 'news' register, but *find out* is much more common in 'conversation' register than *find out*, which may but need not be explained by their stylistic difference. We can say that most PVs are stylistically neutral, for example *turn on the light* or *look up a word in the dictionary*.

Marks (2005, cited in Thim 2012: 44) concluded that 'some phrasal verbs are informal, and some are formal, but most are neutral; in this respect they are not different from other categories of vocabulary'.

### 3.3.2 Definitions

PV must be taken as a whole; the meaning cannot be understood based upon the meanings of the individual parts in isolation. Phrasal verbs which include a preposition are called prepositional verbs (as in *Mary is looking after the kids*) and those which include a particle particle verbs (as in *We will think it over*). In Dehé et al. (2002: 11) a particle is defined as 'an accented element which is formally (and often semantically) related to a preposition, which does not assign case to a complement and which displays various syntactic and semantic symptoms of what may informally be called a close relationship with a verb, but without displaying the phonological unity with it typical of affixes'. The particle can only follow the verb when the verb is intransitive, for example *Mary got up*. If the verb is transitive, the particle may either precede or follow the object, for example *John turned off the lights* or *John turned the lights off*. Nevertheless the position of the particle is not always optional. It can be influenced by the complement of the verb, which can be either too light, for example a non stressed pronoun, or too heavy (Evtjukhin 2003: 17): *I put on a sweater and a jacket* or *I put them on*.

The term *phrasal verb* is probably first mentioned in the work by Smith (1925), where it is attributed to the editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary* Henry Bradley:

*The term 'phrasal verb' was suggested to me by the late Dr. Bradley; not, as he wrote, that he was satisfied with it, or would not welcome any alternative that he could feel to be an improvement. But, as he said, one cannot write of these verbs without some workable description; and although the word 'phrasal' is perhaps objectionable in formation, it fills a want, and is sometimes indispensable.* (Smith 1925: 172, fn.1, cited in Thim 2012: 3)



There are numerous additional terms for PVs: verb-particle constructions, compound verbs, verb-adverb combinations, two-part verbs/words, three-part verbs/words and multi-word verbs (Biber et al. 1999). This terminology has been a source of confusion and debates among researchers. However, the differences in the definitions are quite minuscule and not significant to an average language learner. As Gardner and Davies (2007: 341, cited in Liu 2011: 663) note: 'if even the linguists and grammarians struggle with nuances of PV definitions, of what instructional value could such distinctions be for the average second language learner?'. Gardner and Davies (2007: 341) give a simple definition of PVs, which includes only syntactic aspects: a PV is any two-part verb 'consisting of a lexical verb (LV) proper ... followed by an adverbial particle (tagged as AVP) that is either contiguous (adjacent) to that verb or noncontiguous (i.e., separated by one or more intervening words)'. Biber et al. (1999: 404, cited in Liu 2011: 663) gives a definition which includes a semantic component: PVs must 'have meanings beyond the separate meanings of the two parts (i.e., the verb and the AVP) as in the case of *come on, shut up* ... whereas verb + AVP combinations in which the verb and the adverb have their own meanings are free combinations like *come back, come down*...' Both definitions are subject to debates as it is not clear whether a verb particle should be considered AVP or preposition. Besides, the semantic criterion needs some subjective judgement (Liu 2011: 664).

### 3.3.3 Idiomatic and non-idiomatic PVs

As far as the way to express the meaning is concerned, English PVs can be classified as transparent or non-idiomatic and non-transparent or idiomatic (Wurmbrand 2000, Lindstromberg 2000, cited in Evtuykhin 2003: 18). The meaning of a transparent or non-idiomatic PV can be easily understood, even without the context, as its meaning is derived from the the combination of the meanings of its components, i.e. from the verb and the particle, for example *come back*. Idiomatic PVs can not be comprehended in the same way as non-idiomatic as it is impossible to derive the meaning by simply summing up the meanings of the components, for example *be up to, figure out*. The following examples show the use of idiomatic constructions in sentences (examples are taken from the BNC):

*My husband actually said to me that **giving up** smoking was easy because he's done it plenty of times.*

*In the following extract we see that an equally offensive act is one in which a soft teacher tries to assert authority, but when challenged **gives in**.*

*Farmers, sailors, and chemists **get by** perfectly well on the basis of everyday experience, without recourse to Aristotelian logic.*

*He could not **make it out**, nor could he trust his own memory.*

Idiomatic PVs have certainly attracted most attention in the literature and in the teaching English as a foreign language.

### **3.3.4 Germanic verb-particle construction analyses**

There have been plenty of analyses of Germanic verb-particle constructions. They can be divided into two groups: small clause analysis (Kayne 1985, den Dikken 1995, Wurmbrand 2000) and complex head (or complex predicate) analysis (Johnson 1991, Neeleman 1994, Zeller 2001, all cited in Evtyukhin 2003: 25). Small clause analysis implies that the verb and the particle form a constituent and the word order variation can be explained by movement of one of the components of the construction. Thus the elements to the right of the verb are the predicates of the small clause. Particles are defined as productive, independent, syntactic heads, they combine with verbs to form a lexical unit (Evtyukhin 2003: 25). Complex head analysis suggests the underlying constituent of the verb and the particle, their unity. It is important to mention the research made by the proponent of small clause analyses Wurmbrand (2000) concerning idiomatic vs. non-idiomatic (transparent) constructions. She suggests that both structures exist, and the choice between them is determined by the semantics of a PV: either idiomacity (complex head) or transparency (small clause) of its meaning (Evtyukhin 2003: 26). She argues that idiomatic PVs have complex head structure, i.e. the meaning can not be derived by summing up the meanings of the elements, and transparent PVs have small clause structure.

Another analysis was proposed by Ramchand and Svenonius, who claim that 'the verbal structure itself is complex and that part of the verbal structure is crucially involved in the interpretation of the verb-particle construction' (2002: 102, cited in Evtyukhin 2012: 26 ). They suggest that the PV has a number of null heads which are lexicalized by the particle to 'capture the most important intuitions that underlie both the complex predicate analysis and the small clause analysis' (2002: 111, cited in Evtyukhin 2003: 27). As the aim of my thesis is not to find the right analysis, I will avoid giving the details and examples. Nevertheless, it is important to mention all existing analyses and show possible connections between English and Norwegian PVs.

### 3.4 Norwegian phrasal verbs

In all present-day Germanic languages there are verb-particle constructions which are similar to English PVs (all cited in Thim 2012: 45):

Swedish (Braunmüller 1999: 65)

*Vi **målade över** tapeten med grön färg.*  
*We painted over the wallpaper with green paint.*

Danish (Braunmüller 1999: 65)

*Vi **malede** tapetet **over** med grøn farve.*  
*We painted the wallpaper over with green paint.*

Norwegian (Askedal 1994: 262)

*Boka **kjem ut** i neste veke.*  
*The book comes out next week.*

Icelandic (Thráinsson 1994: 175)

*Fjöldi manns **tók** bækurnar **fram**.*  
*Many people took the books out.*

German (Thim 2012: 46)

***Iss** die Qualle **auf**.*  
*Eat the jellyfish out.*

Faroese (Barnes and Weyhe 1994: 211)

*Hann **las** brævid **upp**.*  
*He reads the letter out.*

Dutch (Booij 2002b: 21)

*Hans **belde** zijn moeder **op**.*  
*Hans rang his mother up.*

West Frisian (Hoekstra 2001: 93)

*De plysie **siket** it hûs **troch**.*  
*The police search the house through.*

Yiddish (Jacob, Prince and van der Auwera 1994: 407)

***Ikh heyb on**.*  
*I heave on (i.e. start)*

The similarities between all these PVs are quite striking and may be explained by the shared historical origins of the languages. Compared to the English PVs, which have received a large

overview in the literature, the Norwegian PV has not been described so thoroughly. There are some works that are dedicated to this issue (Åfarli 1985, Svenonius 1996, cited in Evtyukhin 2003: 24).

As I have already mentioned in 3.2, English and Norwegian PVs are very similar. Den Dikken noted (1995: 66, cited in Evtyukhin 2003: 24): 'Norwegian is exactly like English in all relevant respects in the domain of complex particle constructions'. We can take examples from Åfarli (1985) and notice that Norwegian constructions are very similar to those in English: *Jon sparket ut hunden.* and *Jon sparket hunden ut.* — *Jon kicked (out) the dog (out).* These examples are evidence to the fact that we can vary the order of the verb and particle like we do in English. Just like in English the order depends on the length of the object noun phrase and whether it is an unstressed pronoun, for example in *Jon sparket den ut.* and *Jon sparket ut den store gamle svarte syke hunden.* Similarities between these two construction systems can be perfect ground for positive transfer from L1.

### 3.5 Russian prefixed verbs

The Russian verbal system is very different from that of Germanic languages. Russian PVs have been widely discussed by linguists. I am especially interested in similarities between the Russian prefix and the Germanic particle. This topic has been discussed in the works by den Dikken (1995), Maylor (2002), Rojina (2002) and Spencer and Zaretskaya (1996). The description of some of the similarities between the English particles and Russian prefixes will be useful, as the object of my research is the the usage of English idiomatic PVs by both Russians and Norwegians.

There are 22 productive verbal prefixes in contemporary standard Russian (Andrews et al. 1997, cited in Evtyukhin 2003: 19). Prefixes in Russian have both lexical and grammatical functions as they not only serve for word-building, but also are a means of verbal aspect change. Russian verbs can be either perfective, i.e. with a completed aspect, or imperfective, i.e. continuous. The difference between them is that the perfective verb has an end-point. The perfectivity or imperfectivity of the Russian verb can be expressed by both certain suffixes (as for example, perfective *zakazat'* becomes imperfective *zakazyvat'* — *to order* with the help of the suffix *-yva-*) and prefixes. Thus, for example the imperfective verb *hodit'* (*to walk*) becomes perfective *prihodit'* (*to approach a certain place*) by adding the prefix *pri-* or the imperfective verb *spat'* (*to sleep*) becomes perfective *pospat'* (*to take a nap*). I will not go into details describing Russian

suffixes, as it is not relevant for my thesis, for more detailed analysis see Maylor (2002). Prefixes can also change the meaning of the verb completely, as for example in imperfective *stroit'* — *to build* and perfective *ustroit'* — *to arrange*.

There are similarities between Russian, English and Norwegian PVs. All perfectivize the verbs, i.e. by means of particle or prefix the verb acquires end-point. Besides, they change the meaning allowing the reader to comprehend it from the combination of the meanings of the verb and particle in English and verb and prefix in Russian. We can also say that both English particles and Russian prefixes are capable of creating constructions with idiomatic meanings, e.g. *stroit'* — *ustroit'* (*to build* — *to arrange*) (Evtuykhin 2003: 23). In fact, if we look at the examples of Russian, Norwegian and English PVs, we can trace some similarities in both semantics (transparent and idiomatic PVs) and syntax. The main difference is that Russian prefix and the verb are inseparable, whereas in English and Norwegian the particle can either follow the verb or be separated by a phrase.

Type of meaning	English	Norwegian	Russian
Transparent	a. pick b. pick up	a. kaste <i>to throw</i> b. kaste ut <i>to throw away</i>	a. ekhat' <i>to drive</i> b. pod'ekhat' <i>to drive up to</i>
Idiomatic	a. do b. do away <i>to kill</i>	a. ta <i>to take</i> b. ta i <i>to exert oneself</i>	a. vjazat' <i>to knit</i> b. u-vjazat' <i>to link, connect</i>

Table 3.2. Similarities between English, Norwegian and Russian PVs (from Evtuykhin 2003: 30).

So far there has not been made any specialized research on the links between Germanic particle and Russian prefix. However, some information may be found in the works by den Dikken (1995), Babko-Malaya (1999) and Spencer and Zaretskaya (1998). Rojina suggests that Russian prefixes and English particles have the same syntactic structure. She proposes the same technique for the analysis of Russian prefixes as Ramchard and Svenonius (2002, cited in Evtuykhin 2003: 30) performed in their work. Their analysis is shortly described in 3.3.

I have mentioned above that some similarities are quite obvious for English and Norwegian, but not for Russian, even though they exist, for example by means of particle or prefix the verb acquires end-point. Nevertheless, it does not mean that Norwegian and Russian speakers will learn English PVs with the same effectiveness. Norwegian and Russian in other aspects are radically different, despite that a certain construction may have some similarities.

## **3.6 Studies of idiomatic and non-idiomatic phrasal verbs**

In this section I will present several studies of idiomatic and non-idiomatic phrasal verbs, which are relevant for my thesis. This is not only an overview of different approaches to PV analysis, but also description of various methods and the results of the studies.

### **3.6.1 Studies of avoidance of PVs with figurative and literal meaning**

In section 2.3 I have already mentioned such crosslinguistic effect as avoidance.

Among the structural and lexical factors claimed to account for avoidance in second language learning are (Laufer and Elliasson 1993):

- cross-linguistic difference
- cross-linguistic similarity
- intrinsic complexity of the second language features avoided

It is important in error analysis to examine not only the L2 forms actually produced by the learners of a foreign language in their attempts to express themselves in L2, but also the L2 forms they seem to avoid using. Of course, as Kleinmann (1977) has pointed out, avoidance implies that the structure in question is known to the learners, but not freely used by them. Levenston (1979) has argued that avoidance ('under-representation' in his terminology) of various English 'clause (or group) structures' by Hebrew-speaking learners of English can be explained by the lack of Hebrew 'translation-equivalents' for the English structures in question and the learners' consequent choice of less appropriate but more L1-equivalent structures. There have been numerous studies on avoidance of PVs in English. These studies provide evidence that the learners tend to avoid phrasal verbs if their L1 does not contain any equivalent to them (as for example in Hebrew and Chinese). The

researchers have also found out that learners with different L1s mostly avoid PVs that have figurative meaning ('turn up') and not literal meaning ('come in') (Ellis 2008: 372).

### **3.6.2 Studies by Dagut and Laufer (1985) and Hulstijn and Marchena (1989)**

I would like to have a closer look at some of those studies. Dagut and Laufer (1985, cited in Ellis 2008: 372) found out that Hebrew learners of English avoid phrasal verbs, such as *let down*, while preferring one-word verbs, such as *disappoint*, since phrasal verbs do not exist in Hebrew. The study by Hulstijn and Marchena (1989, cited in Ellis 2008: 372) follows up on the study by Dagut and Laufer. They gave learners with L1 Dutch the same kind of tests as Dagut and Laufer did in their study. As Dutch contains PVs, the learners did not avoid them, but still preferred one-word verbs rather than PVs with figurative meaning. The authors hypothesized that Dutch learners of English would tend not to avoid English phrasal verbs, since phrasal verbs also exist in Dutch. It was hypothesized, however, that Dutch learners of English as a second language (ESL) would avoid phrasal verbs, too, not for structural, but for semantic reasons. Three tests (multiple choice, memorization, and translation) were administered to intermediate and advanced Dutch learners of English. Each test contained 15 sentences, eliciting preference for either a phrasal verb or an equivalent one-word verb. The results show that, Dutch learners of English do not avoid phrasal verbs categorically. However, they seem to avoid those idiomatic phrasal verbs that they perceive as too Dutch-like, which may be explained by the lack of contrast between L1 and L2. Furthermore, they prefer one-word verbs with general, multi-purpose meanings over phrasal verbs with idiomatic meanings. It is argued that this semantic strategy may have also played a significant role in the avoidance behavior of the Hebrew ESL learners observed by Dagut and Laufer (1985).

### **3.6.3 Study by Liao and Fukuya (2004)**

The study by Liao and Fukuya (2004) investigates the avoidance of English PVs by Chinese learners. Six groups of Chinese learners (intermediate and advanced; a total of 70) took one of 3 tests (multiple-choice, translation, or recall), which included literal and figurative phrasal verbs, while 15 native speakers took the multiple-choice test. The results show that 3 factors (proficiency level, phrasal- verb type, and test type) affect learners' avoidance of phrasal verbs. The authors hypothesize that the differences between first and second languages and the semantic difficulty of PVs may be reasons for the learners' avoidance.

#### **3.6.4. Study by Laufer and Eliasson (1993)**

The study by Laufer and Eliasson examines patterns of avoidance and preference for PVs or equivalent single-word verbs among Swedish learners of English. The authors hypothesized that if the participants avoided English PVs, particularly the figurative ones, even though PVs exist in Swedish, this would indicate that inherent semantic difficulty of second language forms was the main factor contributing to the avoidance behavior. If, on the other hand, the learners did not show any preference for one-word verb forms in English, or favored the phrasal forms, this would support the assumption that avoidance or nonavoidance depends largely on differences or similarities between the native and the foreign language.

A multiple-choice test and a translation test were given to two groups of advanced Swedish-speaking learners of English. Each test consisted of 20 sentences, allowing for the choice of either a phrasal or a synonymous single-word verb. The test answers show that the Swedish learners avoided neither PVs in general nor the figurative ones in particular, regardless of whether the verbs were similar to, or different from, their Swedish translation equivalents. Furthermore, the results were compared to the avoidance patterns of a group of advanced Hebrew-speaking learners of English. From the comparison it emerged that the Swedish learners used significantly more PVs than the Israelis, notably figurative ones. These results suggest that the avoidance is determined more by a systemic incongruence between L1 and L2 than by the inherent difficulty of L2 forms. This may be explained by the fact that avoidance is reduced as the level of L2 proficiency grows.

#### **3.6.5 Study by Sjöholm (1995)**

The study by Sjöholm investigated PVs acquisition mechanisms among native Finnish- and Swedish-speaking students in Finland, aged 16-25. They were given a multiple-choice test with each item containing two correct alternatives: a phrasal verb, a synonymous one-part verb, and two distractors. Results show that both language groups tended to avoid or underuse English phrasal verbs, but Finns significantly more than Swedes in the early stages of learning. The choice pattern made by Swedes was similar to their native language pattern. Choice reflected both the L1 and the semantic properties of the verbs. Sjöholm also concluded that Swedish learners showed the evidence of U-shaped behavior. This pattern of development takes place when the learners manifest a target-language form in their output at an early stage of development and manifest an



interlanguage form in its place at a later stage. The correct target language form reappears later, for example *came* becomes *comed* and later *came* again.

The table below summarizes the studies on the avoidance of PVs in English.

Study	Participants	Tests	Results
Dagut and Laufer (1985)	Advanced adult learners in an Israeli University; L1 = Hebrew	Three tests: 1. a multiple choice test; 2. a verb translation test; 3. a verb memorizing test.	Learners only selected phrasal verb option in fewer than 50% of m/c items. They were more likely to select phrasal verbs that were literal and least likely with figurative phrasal verbs.
Hulstijn and Marchena (1989)	Intermediate and advanced learners in Holland; L1 = Dutch	Same types of tests as in Dagut and Laufer.	The learners did not avoid phrasal verbs categorically but did avoid those they perceived as too Dutch-like and preferred one-word verbs over phrasal verbs with idiomatic meanings.
Laufer and Eliasson (1993)	Advanced learners of English in Sweden; L1 = Swedish	Two types of tests: 1. a multiple choice test, 2. a translation test. Also a comprehension test to test passive knowledge of phrasal verbs.	The learners did not avoid phrasal verbs. Neither did the inherit complexity nor the idiomaticity of the phrasal verbs induce avoidance.

Study	Participants	Tests	Results
Sjöholm (1995)	Mixed proficiency Finnish and Swedish learners of L2 English	A multiple choice test of phrasal verbs,	Both language groups tended to avoid or underuse English phrasal verbs, but Finns significantly more than Swedes in the early stages of learning. U-shaped behavior was evident in the Swedish group. Choice reflected both the L1 and the semantic properties of the verbs.
Liao and Fukuya (2004)	Advanced and intermediate learners in the US; L1 = Chinese Native speakers of American English	Same types of tests as in Dagut and Laufer. Two types of phrasal verbs: literal and figurative.	The intermediate learners used phrasal verbs less than the advanced learners or native speakers. All learners were more likely to use literal than figurative phrasal verb, but only in the translation test.

*Table 3.3.* Studies of the effects of L1 on learners' use of English phrasal verbs (from Ellis 2008 : 373).

It is important to note that the informants with different L1s showed different results. For example, the study by Dagut and Laufer showed that among the informants with L1 Hebrew only 50% avoided PVs. Dutch-speakers in the study by Hulstijn and Marchena did not avoid PVs categorically, but avoided those they perceived too Dutch-like. Laufer and Eliasson tested informants with Swedish L1 and found out that the informants did not avoid PVs at all. Sjöholm tested Swedes and Finns and found out that they both tended to avoid PVs, but Finns significantly more than Swedes. Since the results with learners from languages with PVs are mixed, such effect as avoidance should be studied more. Following Dagut and Laufer, Hulstijn and Marchena, Laufer and Eliasson, and Sjöholm, I would like to study Russians and Norwegians and try to find evidence

of avoidance. Moreover, I will try to trace both negative and positive transfer. To my mind, these phenomena require further investigation.

## **Chapter 4. The Norwegian, Russian and English languages.**

In this chapter I would like to explore the role of three languages: Russian, Norwegian and English. Besides, I would like to investigate the place in the society of the English language in Russia and in Norway. I will also have a look at Norwegian curriculum of the English language and how it is taught.

### **4.1 English as a global language**

The English language nowadays is the most widely spoken language in the world. There are geographical-historical and socio-cultural grounds for that. No language has spread around the world so extensively. English has become global and is being used in different situations. It has become a lingua franca in many countries. But how did it achieve its global status? Crystal (2004) in his work claims that 'A language does not achieve a genuinely global status until it develops a special role that is recognized in every country' (Crystal 2004: 7). Thus a language should have a large community of native speakers and can be made official or semi-official language of a country. Besides, it can be prioritized to be taught at schools, after the native language. Crystal claims that 'over 100 countries treat English as just a foreign language; and in most of these it is now recognized as the chief language to be taught in schools' (Crystal 2004: 8). Crystal also explains that it is not only native speakers who control the development of English, which is used by more non-native than native speakers. 'Three out of four English speakers are now non-native. All these users have a share in the future of English. Language is an immensely democratizing institution' (Crystal 2004: 23). This can lead to the fact that non-native irregularities may become part of the standard.

Crystal provides ten domains, where the power of English speakers has led to its becoming global (Crystal 2004: 11-21):

1. Politics (The British Empire, the UN)
2. Economics
3. The press
4. Advertising
5. Broadcasting (English as the first radio language broadcasted to many countries)
6. Motion pictures (Hollywood)
7. Popular music
8. International travel and safety
9. Education
10. Communications (Internet)

Once English has been established dominant in one of those domains it has been spread further as every domain is international in nature. The influential position of the English language may be the result of its borrowings of lexical items throughout centuries. Latin, French and Norse have contributed to lexical richness of English. Speakers of other languages may recognize vocabulary borrowed from their native language and consider English to be less foreign than other languages. In the next sections I would like to explore the role of English in the Norwegian and Russian societies today.

## **4.2 Russian language policy**

In my opinion it is important have a closer look at the historical process of integration of the English language into the Russian society. It has taken long time and is still very slow and unpopular. The events that took place in the past and are part of Russian history can help to make it clear why English learning in Russia still does not come natural as in Europe. Since the eighteenth century Russia has considered itself to be part of Europe, and in different periods of history the Russian language was under the influence of various Western European societies. The decline of the Communist party authority, ethnic conflicts, perestroika, and, finally, the disintegration of the USSR have triggered changes in the language. Linguists agree that one of those changes was activation of foreign words and phrases, particularly those borrowed from English. Anglo-Russian language

contacts can be traced to the sixteenth century, when the two countries established trade relations. The next massive borrowing period occurred during the seventeenth century, when Czar Peter I ruled. Seafaring vocabulary was borrowed at that time. In the beginning of the nineteenth century educated classes in Russia became interested in English technology. The borrowings from that time pertained to the social life as a whole. (Rosenhouse and Kowner, 2008: 116) In the twentieth century Russian revolutionaries brought home borrowings. Thus in 1920 mostly foreign words from the domain of government and economy were used. In that period many English words began to be used for new technology and activities. In the Soviet era, Russian language policy was opposed to the influence from other languages, which were considered to be vehicles of alien ideologies. The policy of Glasnost launched by Gorbachev and the attempts of post-Soviet Russia to enter the community of developed nations created favorable conditions for close contact with the West. Foreign imports increased, and new products entered the market under original names: *fotokity*, *pleery*, *blendery* for *photo-kits*, *players* and *blenders*, *sprei*, *conditsionery*, *pilingi* for *sprays*, *conditioners* and *peeling-creams*, *legginsy*, *kardigany*, *slaksy* for *leggings*, *cardigans* and *slacks*. Various economic and social processes introduced new terms into lexis: *retsessiya*, *depozit*, *tender* for *recession*, *deposit* and *holding*.

The main reason for borrowing is: the need to name new concepts, activities, social phenomena and products (Rosenhouse and Kowner, 2008: 117). Russian linguists have noted throughout history that the attitude to massive borrowings from other languages has been negative. Today journalists are pioneers of new vocabulary in Russia. The weakening of censorship proved favorable for the usage of Anglicisms in the media. It is important to mention a frequent theme in newspapers and TV discussions. The central channel RTR-Planeta repeatedly showed the program Cultural Revolution which was entitled "Do we have to learn English?" (Rosenhouse and Kowner, 2008: 118). The two opponents were the politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky and Prof. Yuri Viazemsky, an expert in world literature. Zhirinovsky's thesis was that the world has to learn Russian, we do not have to humiliate ourselves by suffering from a foreign language. He claimed also that if post-Soviet politicians had not used the loan words revolution, communism and default, but the Russian native words *bunt*, *obcshejtitie* and *obval*, all the political disaster would never have happened. His opponent Viazemsky maintained that one of the talents of Russians was to learn new material quickly. The only way to make it known to the world was to expand it on English. Despite the obvious absurdity of Zhirinovsky's claims, he was supported by most people in the audience.

The educational system of the Russian Federation has changed dramatically since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. During Soviet times state ideology was the main component of the national curriculum. Through the 1990s educational reforms concentrated on attuning the learning process to the needs of a market-driven economy. The information on Russian educational system and curricula is available online at the website of Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

Nowadays Russians are very interested in learning English. During the recent several years Russia has introduced a compulsory course of English for children in primary schools. English learning starts at the second grade. In practice, each school designs its own curriculum based on the Basic Curriculum for General Education in the Russian Federation. English curriculum and the documents that describe the desirable proficiency and skills level still do not exist, in contrast with existing English curriculum in Norway. Thus the standards and the curriculum remain vague and need developing. In the next section I would like to focus on the role of English and English curriculum in Norway.

### **4.3 The status of English in Norway**

The status of English in Norway has changed, now it can be treated as a second language, not as a foreign language. As we know, a second language is a language spoken in the society and a foreign language is being learned at schools without much exposure outside it. It is important to mention several factors that can make English language acquisition easier for Norwegian learners. First of all, children can learn it solely from interacting with the community (i.e. when it is not spoken at school or at home). But just being in a community and being surrounded by it is not enough, there should be a significant amount of interaction in English (Thomas, 2012: 45). Let us discuss the input from different sources that Norwegian children have access to. First of all, it is books, TV, films and music. TV is an important resource to start to learn the new language. As I have already mentioned, Russian language policy did not let the majority of the population learn English (Thomas, 2012: 104). Nowadays in Norway TV in English is available and plays a great role in the development of bilingual children. In Russian it is not common to have channels in English, even though it is possible.

In order to have a better understanding of the role of English in Norway, I would like to describe the Curricula in English. The Curricula was established in 2010. The full text of the Curricula is given in Appendix 2. English in Norway has a special status as a foreign language with its own curriculum. Norwegian students are expected to show better results in English, competence in English should be higher than in any other language. We can read:

*English increasingly used in education and working life, in Norway and abroad. To succeed in a world where English is used for international interpersonal communication, it is necessary to master the English language. Thus we need to develop our vocabulary and our skills in using the systems of the English language; its phonology, grammar and text structuring.*

There are three main subject areas. The first is language learning, i.e. 'knowledge about the language and language usage', the focus here is on 'what is involved in learning a new language and seeing relationships between English, one's native language and other languages'. The second main subject area is communication, i.e. 'using the English language to communicate'. And the third area is culture, society and literature, which 'focuses on cultural understanding in a broad sense'. In primary schools students get 328 teaching hours (one teaching period - 60 minutes), in lower secondary - 277 hours. General studies include 140 teaching hours. By the end of the studies a Norwegian learner of English is supposed to for example, 'express him/herself in writing and orally in a varied, differentiated and precise manner, with good progression and coherence', 'understand and use a wide general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to his/her own education programme', 'take the initiative to begin, end and keep a conversation going', etc. (English Subject Curriculum 2010).

There is no doubt that English has a great influence on Norwegian nowadays. Norwegians are widely exposed to English. Some of them use English with a view to marking prestige, others use it within closed social spheres. Even though it is not the focus of my study, in this chapter I shortly described the role of Russian, English and Norwegian in the societies of the two countries. In the next chapter I would like to present the methodological part of my thesis, the hypotheses, tests and informants.

# Chapter 5. Methodology

The study of language transfer faces a number of methodological problems. First of all it is unclear whether transfer is a facet of communication or learning, or both. It is also unclear what kind of data should be used to provide valid evidence of transfer. Then it is necessary to identify the cases of transfer. And finally, there are different ways in which the effects of transfer can be measured (Ellis, 2008: 351). In this chapter I will consider each of those problems in turn.

## 5.1 Transfer as a communication and learning process

In order to present an adequate study of transfer the researchers need to collect evidence that a learner's L1 influences the learner's use and acquisition of the L2. This distinction is necessary because transfer effects present in communication do not necessarily penetrate the learner's IL system (Ellis 2008: 352).

Corder (1983, cited in Ellis 2008: 352) suggested that transfer is primarily a communication strategy and he termed it 'borrowing'. He mentioned that 'borrowing is a performance phenomenon, not a learning process, a feature, therefore, of language use and not of language structure (Corder 1983: 92). Another view was suggested by Kellerman (1987) and Odlin (1989) who consider transfer as a phenomenon of both acquisition and use. It is difficult to distinguish the effects of the L1 on use and acquisition. One possibility is to examine the effects on language acquisition through language use (language production). For example, it is possible to examine learner's speech (pausing and intonation) for signs that the learner is either trying to cope with communication difficulty by borrowing from L1 or are accessing an IL form (Ellis 2008: 352).



## 5.2 Choice of data

Transfer effects can be examined in terms of either reception (listening and reading) or production (speaking and writing). Most studies have investigated production but there are a number of studies that have explored the effects of transfer in learner's reading and listening in L2. Cases of spontaneous speech might provide the best evidence of transfer. Odlin criticizes the accuracy of such studies as some structures may not be needed in this type of language use. He suggests that the most convincing evidence will come from multiple sources; spoken and written performances as well as responses to measures of perception, comprehension, or intuition (Odlin 2003: 452, cited in Ellis 2008: 353).

## 5.3 Identifying cases of transfer

The third problem we may face studying transfer is its actual identification. I have already mentioned in the chapter about lexical transfer the three criteria suggested by Jarvis (2000: 245-309) for identifying transfer: intra-group homogeneity, inter-group heterogeneity and similarities between the native language and interlanguage performance. Jarvis claimed that at least two of the three types of evidence may present reliable evidence of transfer. The first criterion requires a large sample size, the second presupposes the investigating of groups of learners with different native languages. The third criterion is the crucial one and involves some kind of comparison between L1 and L2 (Jarvis 2000: 245—309, cited in Ellis 2008: 353). The table below describes five different types of comparison and their limitations (Ellis 2008: 353). These comparisons involve the learner's IL, the learner's L1 and the TL. It is important to mention that IL can be established by studying some kind of language performance, whereas L1 and target language are determined by reference to some published description, for example dictionary, which may or may not reflect actual usage. In this case data from actual L1 and L2 may be included. These comparisons also involve whether the learner is from a single L1 background or from two or more L1 backgrounds.

<i>Method</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Limitations</i>
Type 1.  Comparison of the use of a particular feature.	IL errors are identified ; the learner's L1 is then inspected to determine if the error type corresponds to an L1 feature.	The 'after' perfect found in Irish and Scottish dialects of English (e.g. 'I'm after forgetting that'). A Similar construction exists in Gaelic — see Odlin (2003).	1. Overestimation of transfer effects (i.e. the IL error might also reflect natural principles of acquisition).  2. Only serves to identify incidences of negative transfer.
Type 2.  Comparisons of the use of a particular feature in the IL, the L1, and the TL.	IL features (deviant and otherwise) are identified. These features are then compared with the learner's L1 and the TL. Transfer (negative or positive) is held to occur if the IL feature is evident in the L1 but not in the TL.	Japanese learners' of English failure to use articles (i.e. English has both a definite and indefinite article but Japanese has neither)	Overestimation of negative transfer effects (i.e. the IL error might also reflect natural principles of acquisition).
Type 3.  Comparisons of the use of a particular feature in the IL of learners from two or more different L1 backgrounds.	Differences are identified in the IL features of learners with different L1s. Transfer (negative or positive) is held to exist if the differences in the IL features can be shown to correspond to differences in the L1s.	The comparison of learners with Dravidian and Indic L1 showed that structurally different patterns in relativization in their IL English corresponded closely to the L1 patterns (Mesthrie and Dunne 1990: 31-56).	Differences other than the differences in the learners' L1s (e.g. cultural differences) may account for the differences in their IL features.

<i>Method</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Limitations</i>
Type 4.  Comparisons of the use of a particular feature in the IL of learners who have two L1s (i.e. are bilingual).	As above except that only a single group of learners (who are bilingual) are investigated.	Learners who were bilingual in Swedish and Finnish were more likely to transfer word morphology from Swedish than from Finnish when learning English (Ringbom 1978: 80—101).	No obvious limitation; provides clear evidence of L1 transfer.
Type 5.  Two-way comparisons involving learners with different L1s each learning the other's language as an L2.	Differences in the transfer of specific forms are investigated in two groups of learners; one group has language A as an L1 and is learning language B as the L2 while the other group has B as an L1 and is learning A as the L2.	Transfer in English learners of L2 German and in German learners of L2 English, focusing on voice contrast in pairs of phonemes such as /t/ and /d/ (Eckman 1977: 315—30).	Unless this design incorporates a Type 3 comparison, it will face the same limitations as Type 1 and 2 comparisons. However, incorporating a Type 3 comparison will necessitate a very complicated design.

*Table 5.1* Methods for investigating L1 transfer (from Ellis 2008: 354).

## 5.4 Different ways to measure transfer

One more methodological issue we may face is how to measure cross-linguistic effects (Ellis 2008: 354). Each of those measures may cause different problems. Let us have a look at four possible measures:

1. Errors (negative transfer). Most of empirical work in SLA research have been devoted to establishing to what extent errors are the result of transfer or are the result of general process of language development (similar to L1 acquisition process). Thus different researchers came to variable conclusions when counting the errors caused by transfer.

2. Facilitation (positive transfer). As we know, the learner's L1 may affect L2 learning when there are similarities between the L1 and L2. I have already mentioned in chapter 3 that it is easier for Norwegian students to acquire English because of the similarities between the two languages. Ringbom (2007: 1) claims that 'learners, consciously or not, do not look for differences, they look for similarities wherever they can find them'. In many cases the facilitative effect of L1 on L2 is obvious, when two languages share a large number of cognates (for example, English and Norwegian): It gives the learners a head start in vocabulary and enormous advantage over the Russian learners of English. It is important to look for the evidence of both positive and negative transfer (Ellis 2008: 357).
3. Avoidance. Learners also avoid using linguistic structures which they find difficult. In such cases the effects of the L1 are evident not in errors (i.e. what the learners do) but in omissions (i.e. what they do not do). It is not easy to identify the presence of avoidance. It only makes sense to talk about avoidance if the learners know what they are avoiding (Seliger 1989: 120, cited in Ellis 2008: 357). The phenomenon of avoidance is complex. According to Kellerman (1992) it can occur when the learner knows there is a problem and has a sketchy idea of what the target form is like. The second condition is when the learner knows what the target form is but find it difficult to use in for example a conversation. And the third condition is when the learner actually knows what to say and how to say it but is unwilling to say it because it will flout the learner's own norms of behavior.
4. Over-use. The over-use can occur as a result of such intralingual process as overgeneralization. For example, the learner overgeneralize the regular past tense inflection to irregular verbs in L2 (for example, "costed"). Over-use may also occur as a consequence of the avoidance of some difficult structure (Ellis 2008: 358). As in the case of avoidance over-use can only be detected by comparing groups of learners with different L1s by means of Type 3 and 4 comparison.

As we can see each of those measures is problematic in its own way. It is necessary to consider multiple ways in which L1 influence can be identified. Unfortunately, there are relatively few studies considering all four measures (Ellis 2008: 359). The studies of language transfer were undertaken to test the ability to get meaning from an unfamiliar language. As I have already mentioned in section 2.2, there are two types of transfer, positive transfer and negative transfer. Positive transfer results in correct performance while negative transfer results in errors. It is important to note that language interference has been mostly studied as a source of errors, i.e.

negative transfer. The results of positive transfer are less often noticed and discussed. Positive transfer can have a large effect on SLA as when the learner is aware of the fact that two languages are similar he can easily guess the vocabulary item from the unfamiliar language.

## 5.5 Hypotheses

In my thesis, I would like to get evidence of both positive and negative lexical transfer from Norwegian into English as well as avoidance. I use method 3 mentioned in the table 5.1, i.e. comparisons of the use of a particular feature in the IL of learners from two or more different L1 backgrounds. If only one of the groups behaves in a certain way, we can be more certain that the behavior is due to transfer than if we just look at one group and compare with the L1. Method 3 is useful for my research as it involves such linguistic variables as the target language and two or more language backgrounds (Ellis 2008: 353).

I am also interested such crosslinguistic effects as avoidance (see 2.3.1, 3.3 and 5.4), which I want to find evidence of in test 2. As I have mentioned in 3.6.5, studies of avoidance among informants with different L1s have showed mixed results. Following Dagut and Laufer, Hulstijn and Marchena, Laufer and Eliasson, and Sjöholm, I would like to try to find the evidence of avoidance among Russians and Norwegians.

Moreover, I would like to expand the knowledge from the avoidance studies by also investigating both negative and positive transfer, which will be an addition to the former studies, since they highlight only cases of avoidance. To my mind, these phenomena need further investigation. I expect that Norwegians will choose PVs more often than Russians, thus show less avoidance in tests 1 and 2. At the same time, Norwegians may show the evidence of negative transfer by choosing the incorrect verbs in test 1 which look similar to Norwegian verbs. Russians will not show negative transfer in test 1 due to the absence of PVs in the Russian language.

Thus I can formulate three hypotheses. The hypotheses are as follows:

*Hypothesis 1. I hypothesize that both Russians and Norwegians will prefer a one-word verb to a PV, but Norwegians will choose PVs more often than Russians in both tests. Russians will avoid PVs more often than Norwegians.*

*Hypothesis 2. I hypothesize that Norwegian native speakers will choose PVs that look similar to Norwegian ones, but in the given English context do not make sense. They will choose such verbs more often than the Russians, and this will indicate negative transfer.*

*Hypothesis 3. Norwegians will avoid using PVs less often than Russians or not avoid them at all. This will indicate evidence of positive transfer.*

## 5.6 Tests

I would like to test advanced English learners with L1 Russian and Norwegian by giving them two multiple choice tests on PVs. In test 1 the informants have four alternatives, not all of which are correct. Test two contains only two alternatives for each sentence, but both of them are correct. This tests is designed to trace avoidance. The tests are given in Appendix 1. Test 1 is given with the correct answers underlined. The meanings of the English PVs and similar Norwegian PVs are also given. The informants got the test without these details.

I chose to test the knowledge of idiomatic PVs, the meaning of which the informant can not derive from the meanings of their components. The reason is that as Norwegian contains PVs similar to those in English, it will rather help than interfere. Thus, if I study the use of non-idiomatic PVs by Norwegians and Russians, the cases of positive transfer among Norwegians will be easy to trace, whereas negative transfer is not likely to happen at all. As far as the Russian informants are concerned, their answers will present evidence of whether they have actually learned those verbs or not. As Russian does not contain verb-particle constructions similar to those in English, there will be no trace of positive transfer.

The English PVs in test 1 have similar alternatives in Norwegian, but the meaning is different. The informants are given four alternatives, among which there are two, three or four correct answers. One answer is constructed on the basis of a Norwegian PV and gives the wrong meaning in most cases (eight out of ten). Thus I am able to trace negative transfer. The number of correct possible answers varies (two or three or four), so that the informants do not guess the aim of the test and do not choose only PVs in all options. Thus the informants are to tick all the alternatives they think are possible to put in the gaps in the sentences. If the informants were to choose only one possible answer, they would probably prefer one-part verbs or correct PVs in all cases, and it would be

difficult to trace negative transfer from Norwegian PVs. Thus it is better to give them several options. One option is, as mentioned, a verb which looks similar to a Norwegian one, but in the given English sentence does not make sense. Other options are correct English PVs, one-word synonyms, and verbs that do not fit at all. For example:

I \_\_\_\_\_ a new encyclopedia today.

- a) came over
- b) found
- c) cancelled
- d) came upon

Norwegian: komme over — finne, English: come over — visit

Not all the options contain the correct PV and its one-word synonym, because it will be easy for the informants to guess which options fit or not. Some options contain two PVs or two one-word verbs, for example:

The children \_\_\_\_\_ the small furry rabbits.

- a) touched
- b) took on
- c) caressed
- d) were caressed by

Norwegian: ta på — legge hånden på, berøre, English: take on — assume, accept; challenge

In sentences 2 and 10 all options are possible and correct, so that the informants do not guess that some options in other sentences are incorrect. I chose the verbs *ta etter* and *ta av*, which are frequent in English and have the same meanings in both English and Norwegian:

Many people say that Maria \_\_\_\_\_ her grandmother.

- a) resembles
- b) takes after
- c) looks like
- d) looks after

Norwegian and English: ta etter, take after — resemble, look like.

If informants see a PV that is new to them, they might choose the verb that to their mind means the same in English and Norwegian, but in English would not make sense. This would indicate negative

transfer. (Avoidance of PVs will of course also indicate a different kind of negative transfer). I will thus study the interference of Norwegian PVs, or 'false friends', which has not been investigated before.

Test 2 is to trace the evidence specifically of avoidance and is designed as follows: the informants are to fill in the gap with either a PV or its one-part synonym. Both alternatives are possible and correct, but the informants have to indicate which one they prefer. For example:

20. Can you help me \_\_\_\_\_ my jacket? My hands are too cold to pull the zip.

- a) fasten
- b) do up

## **5.7 Informants**

The data for this study were collected by giving the two tests described above to 16 Russian and 39 Norwegian native speakers. The Russian informants who participated in this study have approximately the same number of years of English instructions (15-18 years). Some of them also speak French or Spanish. The Russian informants are older than the Norwegian informants, 21-29 years old.

Norwegian native speakers acquire English much faster than Russians. Besides, English teaching in Norway is on a higher level than in Russia, where the system of English teaching is still developing. Taking into account the peculiarities of the Russian and Norwegian educational systems described in 4.2 and 4.3, I consider the results of two groups comparable, despite the age difference.

The Norwegian informants are at the age of 13-14 and have been studying English for 7-8 years at Skøyenåsen school in Oslo. Thus the Norwegian informants are considered to have the same level of English proficiency as they have had approximately the same number of years of English instruction. The requirements to the students after 7 years of English instruction may be found in the text of the English Subject Curriculum given in Appendix 2.

The tests were sent to the Russian informants via email. The Norwegian informants were given the tests in the class by their teacher, and it took them about 10 minutes to finish them.



# Chapter 6. Results and concluding remarks

## 6.1 The results of the tests.

In this chapter I will present my data and evaluate the validity of my three hypotheses. The data were collected from the informants by means of the two tests described in the previous chapter. The aim was to test my hypotheses formulated in 5.5. The tests were sent to the Russian informants via email. The Norwegian informants were given the tests in the class by their teacher. It took them about 10 minutes to complete them.

First I would like to present the results of the tests in tables. The first test was aimed at finding the evidence of transfer and avoidance among Norwegians and the cases of avoidance among Russians. Tables 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 below show the number of informants who chose different alternatives. In the sentences where two or more PVs or one-word verbs are correct, they are all included into the category of 'Correct PV' or 'Correct one-word verb'. For example, in Sentence 2 all the answers are correct. In that case it was important to count the number of Russian informants who chose PVs or one-word verbs in order to find the evidence of avoidance. There is also a category of 'Norwegian-like verb' which might show us cases of transfer from the L1 for the Norwegians. The tables below show how many people chose each alternative. For Sentence 3 in test 1 one alternative was an incorrect PV which was not Norwegian-like. A separate column was added to keep this one separate from the Norwegian-like PVs. This gives me five categories: 'Correct PV', 'Incorrect PV', 'Correct one-word verb', 'Incorrect one-word verb' and 'Norwegian-like PV'. From the received answers I will attempt to draw conclusions about cases of avoidance among Russian informants and compare them with the answers from Norwegian native speakers. Moreover, I will compare the behavior of the two groups with respect to Norwegian-like PVs in order to provide evidence of negative transfer for Norwegians.

In cases where there is more than one alternative in the same category in test 1, i.e. Sentences 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10 I added the numbers. Thus, for Norwegians it is 78 (39+39) and 32 (16+16) for Russians if there are two verbs in the same category. In Sentences 8 and 10 three verbs in the same categories are correct, thus it is 117 answers in total for Norwegians and 48 for Russians. In Sentence 2 three PVs are correct, but one of them is Norwegian-like. In order not to mix the cases of avoidance with negative transfer I did not include it in the category of correct PVs. The total

number of answers for the Russian informants in Sentence 2 in the category of correct PVs is 48 (16+16+16). I kept the Norwegian-like PV under the category of the correct PVs, as I am not looking for the traces of negative transfer in this case.

	Correct PV	Norwegian-like PV	Correct one-word verb	Incorrect one-word verb	Incorrect PV
Sentence 1	—	8/39 (20%)	41/78 (53%)	0/39	
Sentence 2	34/78 (44%)	5/39 (13%)	2/39 (5%)	—	
Sentence 3	—	25/39 (64%)	34/78 (44%)	—	1/39 (3%)
Sentence 4	1/39 (3%)	7/39 (18%)	39/78 (50%)	—	
Sentence 5	10/39 (27%)	22/39 (56%)	29/39 (74%)	2/39 (5%)	
Sentence 6	—	7/39 (18%)	39/78 (50%)	5/39 (13%)	
Sentence 7	12/39 (31%)	24/39 (62%)	12/39 (31%)	1/39 (3%)	
Sentence 8	53/117 (45%)	0/39	—	—	
Sentence 9	20/39 (51%)	5/39 (13%)	36/78 (46%)	—	
Sentence 10	—	24/39 (62%)	26/117 (67%)	—	—
Total	130/351 (37%)	127/390 (33%)	258/624 (41%)	2/156 (3%)	1/39 (3%)

*Table 6.1.1* Results of Test 1: Norwegian informants.

	Correct PV	Norwegian-like PV	Correct one-word verb	Incorrect one-word verb	Incorrect PV
Sentence 1	—	1/16 (6%)	20/32 (63%)	0/16	
Sentence 2	22/48 (46%)	—	12/16 (75%)	—	
Sentence 3	—	0/16	17/32 (53%)	—	0/16
Sentence 4	0/16	0/16	21/32 (66%)	—	
Sentence 5	7/16 (44%)	3/16 (19%)	14/16 (88%)	0/16	
Sentence 6	—	0/16	27/32 (84%)	1/16 (6%)	
Sentence 7	12/16 (75%)	0/16	4/16 (25%)	2/16 (13%)	
Sentence 8	22/48 (46%)	0/16	—	—	
Sentence 9	13/16 (81%)	0/16	19/32 (59%)	—	
Sentence 10	—	6/16 (38%)	25/48 (52%)	—	—
Total	76/160 (48%)	15/144 (10%)	159/256 (62%)	3/64 (5%)	0/16

*Table 6.1.2* Results of test 1: Russian Informants.

Test 2 was used to trace evidence specifically of avoidance and was designed as follows: the informants were to fill in the gap with either a PV or its one-part synonym. Both alternatives were possible and correct. The results of Tests 2 are presented in table 6.1.3. I give the percentage and the number of people who chose a PV or one-word verb in each sentence.

Sentence	PV	One-word verb
1	Norwegians: 30/39 (80%) Russians: 16/16 (100%)	Norwegians: 9/39 (30%) Russians: 0/16
2	Norwegians: 5/39 (13%) Russians: 8/16 (50%)	Norwegians: 34/39 (87%) Russians: 8/16 (50%)
3	Norwegians: 3/39 (8%) Russians: 3/16 (19%)	Norwegians: 36/39 (92%) Russians: 13/16 (81%)
4	Norwegians: 21/39 (54%) Russians: 11/16 (69%)	Norwegians: 18/39 (46%) Russians: 5/16 (31%)
5	Norwegians: 12/39 (31%) Russians: 3/16 (19%)	Norwegians: 27/39 (69%) Russians: 13/16 (81%)
6	Norwegians: 8/39 (21%) Russians: 10/16 (63%)	Norwegians: 31/39 (79%) Russians: 6/16 (38%)
7	Norwegians: 20/39 (51%) Russians: 9/16 (56%)	Norwegians: 19/39 (49%) Russians: 7/16 (44%)
8	Norwegians: 21/39 (54%) Russians: 13/16 (81%)	Norwegians: 18/39 (46%) Russians: 3/16 (19%)
9	Norwegians: 7/39 (18%) Russians: 4/16 (25%)	Norwegians: 32/39 (82%) Russians: 12/16 (75%)
10	Norwegians: 24/39 (62%) Russians: 15/16 (94%)	Norwegians: 15/39 (38%) Russians: 1/16 (6%)
11	Norwegians: 6/39 (15%) Russians: 4/16 (25%)	Norwegians: 33/39 (92%) Russians: 12/16 (75%)
12	Norwegians: 11/39 (28%) Russians: 3/16 (19%)	Norwegians: 28/39 (72%) Russians: 13/16 (81%)
13	Norwegians: 7/39 (18%) Russians: 13/16 (81%)	Norwegians: 32/39 (82%) Russians: 3/16 (19%)
14	Norwegians: 7/39 (18%) Russians: 4/16 (25%)	Norwegians: 32/39 (82%) Russians: 12/16 (75%)
15	Norwegians: 5/39 (13%) Russians: 1/16 (6%)	Norwegians: 34/39 (87%) Russians: 15/16 (94%)

Sentence	PV	One-word verb
16	Norwegians: 10/39 (26%) Russians: 4/16 (25%)	Norwegians: 20/39 (74%) Russians: 12/16 (75%)
17	Norwegians: 13/39 (33%) Russians: 7/16 (44%)	Norwegians: 26/39 (77%) Russians: 9/16 (56%)
18	Norwegians: 11/39 (28%) Russians: 12/16 (75%)	Norwegians: 28/39 (72%) Russians: 4/16 (25%)
19	Norwegians: 31/39 (79%) Russians: 9/16 (56%)	Norwegians: 8/39 (21%) Russians: 7/16 (44%)
20	Norwegians: 7/39 (18%) Russians: 3/16 (19%)	Norwegians: 32/39 (82%) Russians: 13/16 (81%)
Total	Norwegians: 259/780 (33%) Russians: 152/320 (48%)	Norwegians: 512/ 780 (66%) Russians: 168/336 (50%)

*Table 6.1.3* The results of test 2.

It is important to mention that sometimes there were more than one alternative in the same category, like for example in Sentence 1 there are two correct one-word verbs and in Sentence 2 there are two correct PVs. The informants thus could have chosen one verb in each category, instead of ticking verbs in the same category several times. Usually when people perform tests, they tend to vary their answers, because they do not expect the same categories to be correct several times in a row. This fact could have influenced the results. In free speaking or writing the evidence of avoidance or negative transfer could be more obvious.

Earlier in the present study three hypotheses were proposed. They are based on the assumption that Norwegian and English are similar, which can lead to lexical transfer, both negative and positive. Besides, I am looking for the evidence of avoidance. My prediction was that both Norwegians and Russians would avoid PVs. This prediction is based on the fact that English PVs is one of the most difficult aspects of English for learners of English as a second language and English as a foreign language. The peculiarities of English PVs have been described in 3.3. English PVs are not semantically transparent, and some of them are idiomatic. They are not structurally easy, as they can be separable and inseparable. Thus it is obvious that learners of English would use them less often than native speakers. Following the studies described in 3.6 by Dagut and Laufer, Hulstijn and Marchena, Laufer and Eliasson, and Sjöholm, I am looking for the evidence of avoidance.

*Hypothesis 1. I hypothesize that both Russians and Norwegians will prefer a one-word verb to a PV, but Norwegians will choose PVs more often than Russians in both tests. Russians will avoid PVs more often than Norwegians.*

In fact, there was no clear support for this hypothesis. Let us look at the results from test 1 first. Total numbers of correct PV are: 37% for Norwegians and 48% for Russians; one-word verbs were chosen by 41% of Norwegians and 62% of Russians. This seems to indicate that the first part of Hypothesis 1 does not seem to be supported (that both Norwegians and Russians will avoid PVs compared to one-word verbs). The second part of the hypothesis does not seem to be supported either. However, there are factors in test 1 that make the comparison of Russians and Norwegians difficult. I will come back to those factors below.

Total numbers of correct PV are: 37% for Norwegians and 48% for Russians; one-word verbs were chosen by 41% of Norwegians and 62% of Russians. This seems to indicate that Norwegians avoided PVs more often than Russians. It might be explained by the fact that Norwegians chose the Norwegian-like verbs and considered the other PV less likely to be correct.

In order to see whether the numbers point in this direction, the best thing is to look at the cases where the learners have a choice between a correct PV and a correct one-word verb. This is the case in sentence 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9. In sentence 8, all the choices are PVs so the learners are forced to go for those and they cannot avoid them, and in sentence 1, 3 and 6 they have not got the option of a correct PV. Even though the Norwegian-like PV in sentence 10 is also correct, it is better to keep it out of this particular comparison, because there might then be positive transfer for the Norwegians.

In sentence 2, 44% of the Norwegian and 46% of the Russian informants ticked a PV, 75% of the Russians also ticked a one-word verb whereas only 5% of the Norwegians did it. In sentence 3, 44% of the Norwegians and 46% of the Russians preferred a PV and 44% of Norwegians and 53% of Russians ticked a one-word verb. In sentence 4: 50% of the Norwegians ticked a one-word verb and only 3% ticked a PV; 66% of the Russians ticked one-word verb and no one ticked a PV. In sentence 5, 44% of the Russians and 27% of the Norwegians chose a PV and 88% of the Russians and 74% of the Norwegians chose a one-word alternative. In sentence 7, 31% of the Norwegians and 75% of the Russians chose a PV and 31% of the Norwegians and 25% of the Russians chose a one-word verb. In sentence 9, 46% of the Norwegians chose a one-word verb and 51% chose a PV; 59% of the Russians chose a one-word verb, and 81% chose a PV.

Even though the overall numbers showed a slight preference for one-word verbs, there were in fact huge differences between individual sentences. For example, In sentences 2 and 8 Russian and Norwegian informants mostly chose the PVs *looks like* and *reach for*, which may be explained by the fact that they are more common than for example *ran on* in sentence 4. In sentence 2 all alternatives are correct. As the Norwegian-like verb is correct, a substantial number of Russians (31%) chose it. In sentences 2 and 10 I found the highest scores on Norwegian-like verbs for the Russians. In sentences 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 none of the Russians ticked a Norwegian-like PV, whereas Norwegians ticked them in every sentence, except for sentence 8. In sentence 5, 74% of the Norwegians and 88% of the Russians chose *found a new encyclopedia*. Russians and Norwegians seem similar in when they preferred one-word verb in sentence 5 or PVs in sentences 2 and 8. This must be something that is not language-specific. It could be due to the frequencies of certain verbs. In sentence 2, there could also be an effect of there being two correct PVs. Maybe the participants were then less likely to think that they were both correct.

We might expect clearer evidence of avoidance in test 2, where there is less interference from PVs looking like Norwegian ones. Only sentences 4 (*cut out* and *kutte ut*), 5 (*turn up* and *dukke opp*) and 16 (*am after* and *er ute etter*) might look similar to Norwegian ones. Test 2 has been designed in order to find evidence of avoidance among the two groups. The results seem to indicate that both Norwegians and Russians avoid PVs to a certain extent, though the preference is not very clear.

In 5.4 I have already mentioned some facts about avoidance. Learners avoid using linguistic structures which they find difficult. In such cases the effects of the L1 are evident not in errors (i.e. what the learners do) but in omissions (i.e. what they do not do). It is not easy to identify the presence of avoidance. It only makes sense to talk about avoidance if the learners know what they are avoiding (Seliger 1989: 120, cited in Ellis 2008: 357). Since Test 2 has only two alternatives to choose from, the informants are aware of the fact that they can tick either a PV or a one-word equivalent. I have already mentioned above that it is possible that while performing the test the informants varied their usage more than they would normally do. People might have a tendency to choose a variety of answers rather than going for the same sort of verb all the time just because they think it is expected. Thus I can acknowledge that even if the informants choose PVs more often in tests like my test 2 and if they still have preference for one-word verbs, it indicates avoidance.

In fact, the results from both tests were different from what I expected, as the Russians avoided PVs less often than the Norwegians. From the data presented in table 6.1.3, we can see the percentage of

Russians who preferred PVs to one-word verbs is slightly higher. The results of Test 2 seems to indicate that both Norwegians and Russians avoid PVs, though preference is not very clear. One-word verbs were chosen by Norwegians in 66% of the cases and by Russians in 53%, whereas only 33% of the answers given by Norwegians and 48% of the answers by the Russians were PVs. The data from test 2 seems to indicate that Hypothesis 1 was partially proved. Both groups have a slight preference for one-word verbs, although Norwegians avoided PVs more than Russians. Since English PVs are not structurally easy, it is obvious that learners of English would use them less often than native speakers. In further studies the comparison to native speakers could have been helpful, both in tests like test 2 and also when looking at more naturalistic production data.

In 3.6.5 I have mentioned the results of the studies by Dagut and Laufer, Hulstijn and Marchena, Laufer and Eliasson, and Sjöholm. Their results seem to be quite controversial as well. The participants with different L1s showed different results. The study by Dagut and Laufer showed that among the informants with L1 Hebrew only 50% avoided PVs. It is interesting to note that Dutch-speakers in the study by Hulstijn and Marchena did not avoid PVs categorically, but avoided those they perceived too Dutch-like. In my study, Norwegians did not avoid Norwegian-like PVs. Laufer and Eliasson tested informants with Swedish L1 and found out that the informants did not avoid PVs at all. Sjöholm tested Swedes and Finns and found out that they both tended to avoid PVs, but Finns significantly more than Swedes. As we can see, the results with learners from languages with PVs are mixed, and such effect as avoidance should be studied more.

I have hypothesized that, at the same time, Norwegians may show evidence of negative transfer by choosing the incorrect verbs in test 1 which look similar to Norwegian verbs. Russians will not show negative transfer in test 1 due to the absence of PVs in the Russian language. Hypothesis 2 was as follows:

*Hypothesis 2. I hypothesize that Norwegian native speakers will choose PVs that look similar to Norwegian ones, but in the given English context do not make sense. They will choose such verbs more often than the Russians, and this will indicate negative transfer.*

By using method 3 mentioned in table 5.1, I compared the use of a particular feature of learners from two or more different L1 backgrounds. The condition was that if only one of the groups behaved in a certain way, we could be more certain that the behavior is due to transfer than if we just looked at one group and compared with the L1 (Ellis 2008: 353). The results presented in table



6.1.2 show that Russians did not choose Norwegian-like verbs in most cases. Thus I can conclude that it is clear evidence of negative transfer from Norwegian.

Evidence of negative transfer may be found all the sentences in test 1 except for 2 and 10 where the English PV and the Norwegian PV had similar meanings. Thus those informants who chose a Norwegian-like verb did not make a mistake, 13% of the Norwegians in sentence 2 and 62% in sentence 10. In other sentences negative transfer from Norwegian led to mistakes. The results of sentence 1 showed that 20% of the Norwegian informants think it is possible to say *Bryan was unfairly said up from his post*. Of all the 39 Norwegian informants who chose the correct PV which does not look like a Norwegian one, 5 people chose the Norwegian-like PV *takes after* as an additional alternative. 62% chose *hold off a seat* in sentence 3, which does not make sense in English, but looks like Norwegian *holde av*. In sentence 4, the incorrect Norwegian-like PV was chosen by 7 out of 39 Norwegians, no Russians chose it. Thus 18% of the Norwegians would say *Kate laid out about her trip*. 56% chose *came over a new encyclopedia* in sentence 5. 18% of the Norwegians ticked *The children took on the small furry rabbits* in sentence 6. 62% picked *laid down a lot of work* in sentence 7. In total 36% of the answers were Norwegian-like verbs.

It is interesting to note that only negative transfer took place. If we have a look at the numbers in all the tables, we can see no evidence of positive transfer. The third hypothesis predicted that Norwegians would generally avoid PVs less than Russians, which would indicate positive transfer:

*Hypothesis 3. Norwegians will avoid using PVs less often than Russians or not avoid them at all. This will indicate evidence of positive transfer.*

The third hypothesis has not been supported by means of either test 1 or test 2.

The results of test 2 has shown that the 33% of the Norwegian informants used PVs, whereas 48% of the Russian informants preferred them. Both groups were reluctant to use PVs. I can explain this by the fact that English PVs present a difficult aspect to acquire while learning English as a foreign language. To use it a learner should be aware of several things: lexical meaning and structural peculiarities. Besides, Norwegians also experience L1 influence. The Russian verbal system is very different from that of Germanic languages while the Norwegian category of PV is almost identical to the English category of PV. The language distance between English and Russian with regard to

PVs is obvious. Even though Russian, English and Norwegian verbs have some similarities described in 3.5, informants in both groups tend to underuse English PVs.

The data from Test 2 does not indicate any evidence of positive transfer, since Russians avoided PVs less often than Norwegians. Another test of positive transfer could have been performed to check whether Norwegians more easily learn English PVs that are similar to Norwegian ones. However, the results from sentence 2 and 10 where the Norwegian-like PVs are also correct in English, do not show a clear advantage for the Norwegians. They do choose the PV more often than the Russians in one case, but not in another. It is difficult to base any conclusions on just two verbs, though, so more research would be needed to look into this aspect of positive transfer.

In the next section I would like to summarize the results of my study.

## 6.2 Conclusions

The research questions of this thesis were: understanding lexical transfer, avoidance, and the influence Norwegian and Russian languages have on the acquisition of English. The primary objective of the present thesis was to give evidence of lexical transfer from L1 to English and avoidance in the usage of the English PVs. In the course of the thesis, I have outlined what is meant by SLA and L1 transfer. I have had a look at the notions of first language acquisition, second language acquisition and transfer. Besides, I have discussed the situations where transfer may occur. I have also presented studies and research of lexical transfer, avoidance and PVs. Then my efforts were focused on formulating the three hypotheses and testing my informants in order to find evidence of L1 transfer. The tests were designed as follows: in test 1 the informants had four alternatives, not all of which were correct. Test 2 contained only two alternatives for each sentence, but both of them were correct. This test was designed to trace avoidance.

What can be summarized from the analysis is that the acquisition of English PVs can be influenced by cross-linguistic factors. The data from the tests may be interpreted to show some evidence of avoidance for both learner groups, although the preference for one-word verbs was not very clear. The data did not support the hypotheses that Norwegians would avoid PVs less often than Russians. More research on avoidance behaviour is therefore needed. On the other hand, I have found clear evidence of negative transfer from Norwegian into English, with Norwegian participants using Norwegian-like PVs with the wrong meaning in English.

The significant role L1 transfer plays in the acquisition of English demands further research. A future study could address and include the above mentioned issues. The present study had a restricted number of informants, and recommendations for future research should include investigating the same problem but including more informants with different L1s. Moreover, in order to find more evidence of avoidance, the comparison to native speakers could have been good, both in tests like test 2 and also when looking at more naturalistic production data.

The present analysis will hopefully contribute to the studies of language transfer and in particular of transfer issues in the usage of English phrasal verbs.

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### **Web pages**

Sentences for test 2 are taken from: <http://esl.fis.edu/vocab/phrasal/phrasalofDay.htm>

English Curricula in Norway <http://www.udir.no/Stottemeny/English/Curriculum-in-English/>.

Russian educational system and curricula <http://www.russianenic.ru/english/rus/>.

# Appendix 1

Age:

Sex:

How many years have you studied English?

Do you speak any other languages?

## 1 Tick all possible alternatives

1. Bryan was unfairly \_\_\_\_\_ from his post.

- a) fired
- b) dismissed
- c) said up
- d) let

Norwegian: si opp — avsette, sparke; English: say up — does not make sense in English

2. Many people say that Maria \_\_\_\_\_ her grandmother.

- a) resembles
- b) takes after
- c) looks like
- d) looks after

Norwegian and English: ta etter, take after — resemble, look like.

3. Can you \_\_\_\_\_ a seat for me?

- a) put on
- b) keep
- c) save
- d) hold off

Norwegian: holde av — reservere, English: hold off — refrain, stay away from; prevent

4. Kate \_\_\_\_\_ about her trip.

- a) told us
- b) laid out
- c) prattled
- d) ran on

Norwegian: legge ut om — fortelle om noe med mange ord; English: lay out — spend money; arrange

5. I \_\_\_\_\_ a new encyclopedia today.

- a) came over
- b) found
- c) cancelled
- d) came upon

Norwegian: komme over — finne, English: come over — visit

6. The children \_\_\_\_\_ the small furry rabbits.

- a) touched
- b) took on
- c) caressed
- d) were caressed by

Norwegian: ta på — legge hånden på, berøre, English: take on — assume, accept; challenge

7. She \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of work in her thesis.

- a) put in
- b) laid down
- c) invested
- d) contributed

Norwegian: legge ned — å arbeide godt for, English: lay down — to give up; to specify

8. Don't \_\_\_\_\_ that pistol.

- a) put your hands on
- b) strain after
- c) take after
- d) reach for

Norwegian: ta etter — prøve å ta tak i, English: take after — emulate, look like

9. \_\_\_\_\_ the mistakes while you're reading

- a) disregard
- b) ignore
- c) see away from
- d) don't pay attention to

Norwegian: se bort fra — ikke ta hensyn til, utelate; English: —

10. House sales really \_\_\_\_\_ in December.

- a) took off
- b) rose

- c) increased
- d) grew

Norwegian and English: ta av, take off (here) — to rise.

## 2 Tick the alternative that you prefer

1. A large demonstration \_\_\_\_\_ in the streets of Frankfurt yesterday.

- a) happened
- b) took place

2. Please \_\_\_\_\_ your work. You have no time to talk.

- a) get on with
- b) continue

3. You will end up with lung cancer if you don't \_\_\_\_\_ smoking.

- a) quit
- b) cut out

4. If she doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ in the next five minutes, I'm going to call the police.

- a) turn up
- b) come

5. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ just a little longer? I'm sure she'll be here soon.

- a) wait
- b) hang on

6. The government is just waiting for the scandal to \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) finish
- b) blow over

7. I have \_\_\_\_\_ a nice idea for making some quick money.

- a) suggested
- b) come up with

8. He \_\_\_\_\_ the most ridiculous reason for forgetting his homework.

- a) came out with
- b) said

9. My teacher was in a terrible mood today. He \_\_\_\_\_ a boy who had forgotten to bring his homework.
- a) tore into
  - b) criticized
10. I'm not sure I could \_\_\_\_\_ my computer and the Internet.
- a) relinquish
  - b) do without
11. You are strong. You will soon \_\_\_\_\_. Don't worry.
- a) recover
  - b) bounce back
12. He strolled into the classroom and \_\_\_\_\_ a notebook computer lying on the table near the door.
- a) walked off with
  - b) stole
13. I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_ golf when I retire.
- a) start
  - b) take up
14. She was only \_\_\_\_\_ because the boss wanted an attractive secretary.
- a) employed
  - b) taken on
15. He can \_\_\_\_\_ his teachers perfectly. He'll be on TV one day!
- a) take off
  - b) imitate
16. I \_\_\_\_\_ an unusual present for my wife. Do you have any ideas?
- a) am after
  - b) want
17. Don't be \_\_\_\_\_ by his sweet words. He's only after your money!
- a) deceived
  - b) taken in
18. He never \_\_\_\_\_ anything. As soon as the going gets tough, he gives up.
- a) sticks to
  - b) continues
19. We had to \_\_\_\_\_ the party until my wife had recovered from her illness.

- a) put off
- b) postpone

20. Can you help me \_\_\_\_\_ my jacket? My hands are too cold to pull the zip.

- a) fasten
- b) do up



# Appendix 2

## English Subject Curriculum in Norway

Available online at <http://www.udir.no/Stottemeny/English/Curriculum-in-English/>.

Established as a Regulation by the Ministry of Education and Research on 24 June 2010. Applicable from: 1 August 2010

### **The objectives of the subject**

The English language is used everywhere. When we meet people from other countries, in Norway or abroad, we need English for communication. English is used in films, literature, songs, sports, business, products, trades and entertainment, and through these channels many English words and expressions have found their way into our own language. When we want information on something of private or professional interest, we often search for it in English. Moreover, English is increasingly used in education and working life, in Norway and abroad.

To succeed in a world where English is used for international interpersonal communication, it is necessary to master the English language. Thus we need to develop our vocabulary and our skills in using the systems of the English language; its phonology, grammar and text structuring. We need these skills to listen, speak, read and write, and to adapt our language to an ever increasing number of topics, areas of interest and communication situations. We must be able to distinguish between spoken and written styles and informal and formal styles. Moreover, when using the language in communication, we must also be able to take cultural norms and conventions into consideration.

When we are aware of the strategies we use to learn a foreign language, and the strategies that help us to understand and be understood, the acquisition of knowledge and skills will be easier and more meaningful. It is also important for each of us to establish our own goals for learning, to determine how these can be satisfied and to assess the way we use the language. Learning English may also give us better insight into our native language and other languages we know, thus becoming an important element in our personal development and making a significant contribution to our communicative abilities.

In addition to learning the English language, this subject will also contribute insight into the way we live and how others live, and their views on life, values and cultures. Learning about the English-speaking world will provide a good basis for understanding the world around us and how English developed into a world language. Literature in English, from nursery rhymes to Shakespeare's sonnets, may instil a lifelong joy of reading and provide a deeper understanding of oneself and others. English texts, films, music and other art forms may also inspire the pupil's own artistic expression and creativity in many genres and media.

Thus English as a school subject is both a tool and a way of gaining knowledge and personal insight. It will enable the pupils to communicate with others on personal, social, literary and interdisciplinary topics. It will give insight into how individuals think and live in the English-speaking world. Communicative skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds. In this way linguistic and cultural competence contributes to the all-round personal development and fosters democratic commitment and a better understanding of responsible citizenship.

### **Main subject areas**

The subject has been structured into main areas with competence aims. These main subject areas supplement each other and must be considered together. This subject is a common core subject for all the upper secondary education programmes. Learning in this subject shall therefore be made as relevant as possible for pupils by adapting each subject to his/her education programme as much as possible.

English has competence aims after the second, fourth, seventh and tenth years in primary and lower secondary school and after the first year in the programmes for general studies (Vg1) or after the second year of vocational education programmes (Vg2).

### **Overview of the main areas:**

Year of School	Main Subject Areas		
1–10 First year (Vg1) Second year (Vg2) (vocational education programmes)	Language learning	Communication	Culture, society and literature

### **Language learning**

The main area language learning focuses on knowledge about the language, language usage and insight into one's own language learning. Being able to assess one's own language use, define one's own needs and select strategies and ways of working are requirements for attaining this. The main focus is on seeing what is involved in learning a new language and seeing relationships between English, one's native language and other languages.

### **Communication**

The main area of communication focuses on using the English language to communicate. Communication is achieved through listening, reading, writing, prepared oral production and spontaneous oral interaction, including the use of appropriate communication strategies. It also includes participation in various social arenas, where it is important to train to master an increasing number of genres and forms of expression. Good communication requires knowledge and skills in using vocabulary and idiomatic structures, pronunciation, intonation, spelling, grammar and syntax of sentences and texts. New media and the development of a linguistic repertoire across subjects and topics are an important part of this main area. Knowing how to be polite and taking social conventions into consideration in any number of linguistic situations are also important skills to master. This goes hand in hand with adapting the language to the recipient and the situation, including distinguishing between formal and informal, written and spoken registers.

### **Culture, society and literature**

The main area culture, society and literature focuses on cultural understanding in a broad sense. It is based on the English-speaking world and covers key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions. This main area also focuses on developing knowledge about English as a world language with many areas of use. Working with various types of texts and other cultural expressions is important for developing linguistic skills and understanding how others live, and

their cultures and views on life. Reading literature may also help to instil the joy of reading in pupils and provide the basis for personal growth, maturity and creativity.

### **Teaching hours**

Teaching periods are given in 60-minute units:

Primary school

Years 1 to 7: 328 teaching hours

Lower secondary school

Years 8 to 10: 227 teaching hours

Programmes for general studies

Vg1: 140 teaching hours

Vocational education programmes

Vg1: 84 teaching hours

Vg2: 56 teaching hours

### **Basic skills**

Basic skills are integrated in the competence objectives where they contribute to the development of competence in the subject, while also being part of this competence. In the subject of English, the basic skills are understood as follows:

*Being able to express oneself in writing and orally* in English is a key part of developing English linguistic competence and is a common thread throughout the competence objectives at all levels. These skills are important tools in working on understanding and using English in increasingly varied and demanding contexts across cultures and subject fields. Having oral skills means being able to both listen and speak.

*Being able to read* English is part of the practical language competence and means being able to read and understand, to explore and reflect upon increasingly more demanding texts and thus gain insight across cultures and disciplines. Developing reading skills in English also improves general reading skills.

*Numeracy* in English means being able to supplement mathematical competence in one's native language with the necessary terms in English. Exploiting information from graphs, tables and statistics is important for understanding English texts.

*Being able to use digital tools* in English allows for authentic use of the language and opens for additional learning arenas for the subject of English. English-language competence is in many cases a requirement for using digital tools, and using such tools may also help the development of English linguistic competence. Important features of the English subject in digital contexts include being critical of sources and aware of copyright issues and protection of personal privacy.

## **Competence aims**

### **Competence aims after Year 2**

#### **Language learning**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- give examples of situations where it might be useful to have some English-language skills
- find words and phrases that are common to English and the native language
- give examples of English terms and phrases connected to personal interests

#### **Communication**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- understand and use some common English words and phrases that have a connection with the local community
- use the most basic English phonology and language rhythms through practical-aesthetic forms of expression

- greet people, ask questions and answer simple oral questions
- understand simple instructions given in English
- recognise some words, expressions and simple sentences in spoken and written texts
- use letters and experiment with writing English words and expressions
- use numbers in communication
- use the language through several senses and media

### **Culture, society and literature**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- discuss aspects of the day-to-day life of children in some English-speaking countries
- participate in English child culture and children's literature using words, pictures, music and movement

### **Competence aims after Year 4**

#### **Language learning**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- identify areas where English is useful for him or her
- find similarities between words and expressions in English and his/her own native language
- use dictionaries and other aids in his or her own language learning

#### **Communication**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- understand and use common English words and phrases connected to day-to-day life, recreation and interests, both orally and in writing
- use the basic sound system
- use some common grammatical structures, words, simple sentence structures and spelling patterns

- use simple spoken phrases to obtain help in understanding and being understood
- understand the meaning of words and phrases based on the context they are used in
- understand the main content of simple spoken presentations of familiar topics
- use some polite expressions and take part in simple everyday dialogues
- use some stock expressions that are common in familiar situations, both orally and in writing
- express himself/herself through drama, role play and improvisation
- read and understand the main points in texts about familiar topics
- write short messages and simple sentences that describe, narrate and ask
- indicate prices, amounts and sizes
- use digital tools to find information and create text

### **Culture, society and literature**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- give some examples of English-speaking countries
- compare some aspects of the way of living, traditions and customs in Norway and English-speaking countries
- join in nursery rhymes, songs and stories in English
- express thoughts and emotions in the encounter with English-language literature and child culture
- prepare oral or written texts inspired by English-language literature and child culture

### **Competence aims after Year 7**

#### **Language learning**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- identify and use various situations to expand his/her own English-language skills
- give examples of various ways of learning English words and expressions

- identify some linguistic similarities and differences between English and the native language
- use the basic terms from grammar and text structuring
- describe his/her own work in learning English
- use digital and other aids in his/her own language learning

### **Communication**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- master a vocabulary that covers everyday situations
- use basic rules and patterns for pronunciation, intonation, spelling, grammar and various sentence structures
- express himself/herself in writing and orally to obtain help in understanding and being understood
- understand various oral and written presentations on self-selected topics
- participate in conversations on everyday situations
- use polite expressions and other phrases that are appropriate for the situation and suitable in various contexts
- express an opinion on various topics
- use listening, speaking, reading and writing strategies that are suitable for the purpose
- give brief spoken and written presentations on a topic
- read and understand texts of varying lengths and in various genres
- write texts that narrate, describe or give messages
- talk about currency, measures and weights
- use digital tools to find information and to prepare texts

### **Culture, society and literature**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to



- talk about some persons, places and events in English-speaking countries
- compare the way people live and socialise in various cultures in English-speaking countries and in Norway, including the Sami culture
- read and talk about English-language literature for children and young people from various media and genres, including prose and poetry
- compare characters and content in a selection of children's books written in English
- express his/her own reactions to film, pictures and music
- express himself/herself creatively, inspired by English literature from various genres and media

## **Competence aims after Year 10**

### **Language learning**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- use various situations, work methods and strategies to learn English
- identify important linguistic similarities and differences between English and the native language and use this knowledge in his or her own language learning
- use various aids critically and independently
- use basic terminology to describe grammar and text structure
- describe and assess his/her own work in learning English

### **Communication**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- master vocabulary that covers a range of topics
- use basic grammatical and text structures of English orally and in writing
- understand spoken and written texts on a variety of topics
- express himself/herself in writing and orally with some precision, fluency and coherence

- adapt his/her spoken and written English to the genre and situation
- present and discuss current events and interdisciplinary topics
- read and understand texts of different lengths and genres
- select listening, speaking, reading and writing strategies adapted to the purpose and situation
- write texts that narrate, describe, argue or give messages, with the appropriate basic structure and adequate paragraphing
- use content from various sources independently and critically
- demonstrate the ability to distinguish positively and negatively loaded expressions referring to individuals and groups
- communicate via digital media
- describe and interpret graphic representations of statistics and other data

### **Culture, society and literature**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- discuss the way young people live, how they socialise, their views on life and values in Great Britain, the USA, other English-speaking countries and Norway
- explain features of history and geography in Great Britain and the USA
- describe the situation for some indigenous peoples in English-speaking countries
- recognise some regional accents from English-speaking countries
- read and discuss a representative selection of literary texts from the genres poetry, short stories, novels and drama from the English-speaking world
- describe theme and composition in texts and visual expressions
- prepare and discuss his/her own oral or written texts inspired by literature and art

### **Competence aims after Vg1 – programmes for general studies**

### **Competence aims after Vg2 – vocational education programmes**

## **Language learning**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- exploit and assess various situations, working methods and strategies for learning English
- describe and evaluate the effects of different verbal forms of expression
- assess and comment on his/her progress in learning English
- use a wide selection of digital and other aids independently, including monolingual dictionaries

## **Communication**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- understand and use a wide general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to his/her own education programme
- understand oral and written presentations about general and specialised themes related to his/her own education programme
- express him/herself in writing and orally in a varied, differentiated and precise manner, with good progression and coherence
- select and use appropriate reading and listening strategies to locate information in oral and written texts
- select and use appropriate writing and speaking strategies that are adapted to a purpose, situation and genre
- take the initiative to begin, end and keep a conversation going
- read texts from different genres and with different objectives
- write formal and informal texts with good writing structure and coherence based on themes that interest him/her and which are important for society
- read and write texts related to his/her own education programme
- select and use content from different sources independently, critically and responsibly
- use technical and mathematical information in communication
- produce composite texts using digital media

- select an in-depth study topic within his/her own education programme and present this to the other pupils

### **Culture, society and literature**

The aims are that the pupil shall be able to

- discuss social and cultural conditions and values from a number of English-speaking countries
- present and discuss international news topics and current events
- give an account of the use of English as a universal world language
- discuss and elaborate on English texts from a selection of different genres, poems, short stories, novels, films and theatre plays from different epochs and parts of the world
- discuss literature by and about indigenous peoples in the English-speaking world

### **Subject assessment**

#### **Provisions for final assessment:**

#### **Overall achievement grades**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Provision</b>
Year 10	Pupils shall have one overall achievement grade for written work and one overall achievement grade for oral performance.
Vg1 programmes for general studies Vg2 vocational education programmes	Pupils shall have one overall achievement grade.

### **Examinations for pupils**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Provision</b>
Year 10	Pupils may be selected for a written examination. Written examinations are prepared and graded centrally. Pupils may also be selected for an oral examination. Oral examinations are prepared and graded locally.
Vg1 programmes for general studies Vg2 vocational education programmes	Pupils may be selected for a written examination. Written examinations are prepared and graded centrally. Pupils may also be selected for an oral examination. Oral examinations are prepared and graded locally. Examinations are based on the entire subject (140 teaching hours).

### **Examinations for external candidates**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Provision</b>
Year 10	See the provision in force for primary school education for adults.
Vg1 programmes for general studies Vg2 vocational education programmes	External candidates shall sit for written and oral examinations. The written examination is prepared and graded centrally. The oral examination is prepared and graded locally. Examinations are based on the entire subject (140 teaching hours).

The general provisions on assessment have been laid down in the Regulations relating to the Norwegian Education Act.