Pre-service English teachers' assessment literacy
The influence of a practical work placement

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Master's thesis in English subject didactics

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II

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IV

Abstract

The impact assessment *for* learning (A*f*L) has on improving classroom standards is well documented. It is now accepted that pre-service English teachers need advanced assessment knowledge if they are to establish good classroom A*f*L and improve educational standards in the English classroom. Participants in this study were enrolled on the *Facilitating for pupils' learning* course at the University of Oslo (UiO). They complete a 45-day practical placement where they are supposed to develop classroom A*f*L skills. In order to provide valuable information on how participants learn about assessment, this master's (MA) study asks: *What influence does the final 45-day practicum work placement on the teacher training programme at UiO have on pre-service English teachers' language assessment literacy?* The ten participants were interviewed about their attitudes to A*f*L. Pre-practicum, interviewees were asked how well prepared they considered themselves to be for giving A*f*L. They described their attitudes to A*f*L and were evaluated on their assessment proficiency. Post-practicum, participants were asked to describe how their attitudes had changed and which A*f*L-incorporated teaching activities they had adopted. The interviews formed the primary data set. A secondary data set consisted of practicum activity logs which documented how often participants observed classroom A*f*L and which types of assessment they had used to teach English. To analyse the data, a thematic analysis was conducted on interview transcriptions. Themes were derived deductively from transcriptions and clustered to form three main topics. The topics were *preparedness, attitudes and influences* and *teaching activities*. In the discussion, cases were presented to address each of the main topics. The findings of this MA concur with previous assessment research. Pre-service English teachers often feel underprepared to give formative feedback to their pupils. Despite this, data suggests that participants' assessment skills were markedly improved as a result of their practicum experiences. However, the quality of assessment modelling reported varies significantly. Furthermore, data clearly indicated that opportunities are being missed by teacher education programmes to strengthen participants' assessment abilities. Based on these findings, this study argues that (i) pre-service teachers would benefit from obligatory assessment courses introduced in the early stages of teacher training programmes, (ii) additional elective assessment courses should be available to programme participants, and (iii) mentor teachers at partner schools should have documented assessment competency.

Sammendrag

Effekten vurdering for læring (V*f*L) har på forbedring av utdanningskvalitet er godt dokumentert og V*f*L står sentralt i engelskfagets nye læreplan. Det er anerkjent at lærerstudenter son deltar i lærerutdanningsprogrammer trenger avansert vurderingskunnskap om de skal etablere god V*f*L og forbedre undervisningskvaliteten i engelskfaget. I månedene før utplassering, deltok deltakerene i denne studien på emnet «Tilrettelegging for elevers læring» på Universitetet i Oslo (UiO). Som lærerstudenter er det obligatorisk å fullføre en 45 dagers utplassering hvor de utvikler ferdigheter i V*f*L. For å kunne gi et innblikk i hvordan lærerstudentene lærer om vurdering spør denne masteroppgaven (MA) «*Hvilken påvirkning har 45-dagers utplasseringen, i regi av lærerstudiet på UiO, på engelsklærernes vurderingskompetanse i språk? »* Deltakerene ble intervjuet før og etter utplassering. Før utplassering ble lærerstudentene bedt om å forklare hvor godt forbedredt de anså seg selv for å gi V*f*L. De ble videre spurt om deres egen holdning til V*f*L og deres kunnskap om V*f*L ble evaluert. Etter endt utplassering ble deltakerne bedt om å forklare hvordan deres holdning til V*f*L hadde forandret seg og hvilke V*f*L -aktiviteter de hadde tatt til seg. Intervjuene utgjorde primærdatasettet. Et sekundært datasett bestod av utplasseringslogger som dokumenterte hvor ofte lærerstudentene observerte V*f*L i klasserommet, hvor ofte de selv brukte V*f*L og hvilke typer vurdering de hadde brukt i sin undervisning.

Etter alle data var samlet inn ble intervjuene transkribert, og en tematisk analyse ble utført. Temaene ble produsert deduktivt fra transkripsjonene og deretter samlet i tre kategorier; *Forberedthet, holdninger* og *påvirkninger og læringsaktiviteter.* I diskusjonen blir tre av intervjuene presentert for å adressere hver av de tre kategoriene.Resultatene av denne MA sammenfaller med tidligere forskning innen vurderingskompetanse. Engelsklærerstudenter føler seg ofte uforberedt til å gi formativ vurdering til sine elever. På tross av dette indikerer mine funn at deltakerenes vurderingsevner forbedret seg betraktelig som et resultat av utplasseringen. Jeg oppdaget også at kvaliteten på opplæringen I vurdering lærerstudentene får under sin utplassering varierer i stor grad. Viere tilsier resultatene at lærerutdanningsprogrammer går glipp av muligheter til å styrke vurderingsevnen hos sine deltakere.Basert på disse funnene, argumenterer denne studien for at lærerstudenter ville hatt utbytte av obligatoriske vurderingsemner introdusert tidlig i studieløpet, i tillegg til valgfag i vurdering gjennom hele studieløpet. Videre argumenter denne MA for at mentorlærere på utplasseringsskolene burde ha dokumentert kompetanse i V*f*L.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of figures

List of tables

1 Introduction

Over the course of my teacher education, I developed a belief that assessment *for* learning is the most effective way of establishing good working relationships with my pupils in the English classroom. On my practicum placements, I somewhat naively expected to see teachers using formative assessment. On the contrary, I experienced an overwhelming reliance on traditional learning activities which both surprised and intrigued me. My practicum experiences inspired this MA thesis.

This MA thesis will add to the research on assessment *for* learning by exploring the difficulties of getting formative assessment into daily classroom use. I have examined how participants on a teacher training programme, studying to become English teachers, prepare for assessment *for* learning in the English classroom. This MA focuses on the programme participants' thoughts and beliefs about assessment *for* learning. It examines how those beliefs are influenced by both the teacher training programme and the practical experiences at partner schools. I do this to understand how pre-service English teacher's assessment literacy develops. I aim to draw conclusions as to why many teachers struggle with assessment *for* learning.

From here on, students on the teacher training programme will be called pre-service teachers and the term assessment *for* learning shall be known as A*f*L. Before going into depth on the aims of this thesis, a brief explanation of the status of the English language in Norway is needed.

1.1 The status of English in Norway

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research's curriculum for English describes the English language as essential for cultural understanding and communication across all levels of society (Kunnskapsdepartementet [KD], Kunnskapsløftetet [KL] 2020). This acknowledges the consensus that English functions as the global lingua franca. People around the world who have different first languages use English in a variety of settings to communicate (Sundqvist, 2009). The Ministry of Education is called *Kunnskapsdepartementet* in Norwegian and is known simply as KD. For the remainder of this

study, when referring to the Ministry, the initials KD shall be used. The education Acts that are central to this study are known in Norwegian as *Kunnskapsløftet*. For the purposes of this study the term will be known simply as KL.

KD's English curriculum reflects the global acceptance of English as a lingua franca. The curriculums states that English is a necessary skill for students of all ages (KD, KL 2020). Norwegians rely on English to live, work and communicate with non-native speakers. Children in Norway are taught English from their first year of primary education and Norwegians must document high levels of English competency for admission into tertiary education (Rindal, 2015).

Currently in Norway, English has the status of a foreign language, hence English classrooms are known as English as a foreign language or EFL classrooms. However, Rindal (2015) points out that the language exhibits substantial second language characteristics. Rindal and Piercy (2013) claim that English in Norway is in a transitional phase. The scholars suggest that the status of English is transitioning from an EFL to a second language or ESL (Rindal and Piercy, 2013).

1.2 English and the revised curriculum

KD's newly revised national curriculum reconfirms the importance of English. It describes the subject as an asset for society and important for "cultural understanding, communication, all-round education and identity development" (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [UDIR], KL20, 2020). The curriculum is built around competence aims that promote excellence in English. A*f*L takes a central role in the teaching of the aims. The curriculum also describes the skills required of teachers:

> The teacher shall provide guidance on further learning and adapt the teaching to enable the pupils to use the guidance provided to develop their reading skills, writing skills and oral and digital skills in the subject (KD, KL, 2020)

The curriculum's faith in formative assessment highlights the need for further research into teacher A*f*L competency. Thus, this study will investigate how pre-service English teachers can follow the curriculum and "provide guidance on further learning and adapt teaching to

enable pupils to use the guidance provided to develop their reading skills, writing skills and oral and digital skills in the subject" (KD, 2020). For the remainder of this study uses the terms *assessment for learning* and *formative assessment* will be used interchangeably and adopts Black and William's (1998) definition of the terms:

> The general term assessment refers to all activities teachers undertaken by teachers - and by their students in assessing themselves - that provide feedback to modify teaching and learning activities. Such assessment becomes formative when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to the students' needs (Black and William, 1999, p. 82)

1.3 Aims and research questions

The study investigates how ten pre-service teachers studying on the teacher training programme at the University of Oslo (UiO) perceive their own A*f*L development. The concept of pre-service English teachers' assessment skills form here on will be known as their assessment literacy (AL). This study adopts Stiggins' (1995) practical definition of AL:

> Assessment literates know the difference between sound and unsound assessment. They are not intimidated by the sometimes mysterious and always daunting technical world of assessment (Stiggins, 1995, p. 240)

The overarching research question of this study is:

What influence does the final 45-day practicum work placement on the teacher training programme at UiO have on pre-service English teachers' language assessment literacy?

In light of this question, three aims have been formulated and three research questions have been developed to address each of these research aims. The aims are:

> (i) *To find out how well pre-service English teachers consider themselves to be, pre-practicum, to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom as a result of participation on the "Facilitating for pupils' learning" course, on the teacher training programme at UiO.*

(ii) *To understand how pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs of AfL develop as a result of participation on the final 45-day practicum placement at a UiO partner school.*

(iii) *To find out if exposure to AfL practices in the English classroom encourages pre-service English teachers to use specific teaching activities that incorporate AfL whilst on their final 45-day practicum placement.*

Aim one will investigate how well prepared pre-service English teachers considered themselves to be for designing, planning and enacting English lessons that promote learning based on A*f*L principles. The second aim will compare pre-service English teachers' thoughts and beliefs of A*f*L pre- and post-practicum and seeks to understand how attitudes to A*f*L develop. The third aim will explore students' experiences whilst *on* placement and will investigate which A*f*L activities pre-service teachers have observed in the English classroom and if they adopted those activities as part of their own teaching. The research questions to address each aim are:

RQ1: *To what extent do pre-service English teachers studying on the "Facilitating for pupils' learning" course, consider themselves to be ready to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom, pre practicum?*

RQ2: *How does the final 45-day practicum placement influence pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards AfL as a method for teaching in the English classroom?*

RQ3: *Which teaching activities that incorporate AfL do pre-service English teachers report adopting as a result of their final 45-day practicum placement?*

The methods used to answer the research questions are qualitative interviews and quantitative digital activity logs. The sample has been selected from an English didactics seminar group. They are pre-service English teachers studying on the teacher training programme at UiO. The limited sample size means that findings cannot be generalised and the minor impact on the research field is recognised. However, this study rests on firm theoretical grounding and has been guided by recommendations from an EFL assessment expert, Professor Henrik Bøhn of the University of South-East Norway. This study will give an important insight into a rarely studied component of the Norwegian education system and present evidence to show

how well prepared pre-service English teachers are for giving AfL as a result of participation on a practical work placement.

In the following section, the international status of AfL is presented and examples of countries that have succeeded in raising education standards using AfL are given. Thereafter, the Norwegian context is presented, and the steps taken by the Norwegian government to raise education standards are described.

1.4 Thesis outline

Following this introduction, chapter two presents necessary contextual background information. In chapter three, the theoretical framework is presented. In chapter four, the methods and data employed to conduct the study will be presented and discussed. In chapter five, the findings are presented and in chapter 6 the findings are discussed in light of relevant assessment theory presented in chapter three. Finally, in chapter seven I conclude my thesis and consider areas for further research.

2 Background

In this chapter, I contextualise this study by highlighting the education reforms in Norway from 2006 to 2017. I start by discussing international A*f*L education investments (section 2.1) then Norway's implementation of A*f*L is described (section 2.2). I do this to show how A*f*L has been promoted as a way improve classroom standards. I also emphasise the importance of A*f*L for English teachers and discuss the role teacher educations institutions play (section 2.3). An overview of all Norwegian teacher training courses is given in section 2.4 and UiO's teacher training programme is described in section 2.5.

2.1 International investment in formative assessment

In recent years, there have been demands from governments worldwide for improved academic standards and greater student achievement (CERI, 2010). Globally, educational policies call for teaching institutions to integrate assessment-based teaching. Teachers are encouraged to use "critical reflective practices rooted in assessment for learning" (DeLuca & Johnson, 2017, p. 121). Studies have shown that strengthening formative assessment practices produce significant learning gains (Black and William, 1998).

To deliver on international calls for academic improvements, educations institutions have identified areas for improvements and pre-service have been singled out for needing improvement (CERI, 2010: UDIR, 2019). Canada, The United Kingdom and The United States are countries that have highlighted the need for improved pre-service teacher AL (DeLuca & Klinger, 2010). Canadian research suggests that pre-service education is the central method for preparing competent future teachers (DeLuca and Klinger, 2017; Volante & Fazio, 2017). DeLuca and Klinger (2017) point out that developing the AL of pre-service teachers needs to be "an explicit component of teacher training programs" (p. 419). Mertler (2003) has drawn attention to that fact that pre-service teachers are "often inadequately prepared in assessment literacy by teacher training programs" (p. 5). Mertler's (2003) study highlighted that the majority of teacher training institutions did not require documented AL and the scholar claimed that graduate teachers' lack of AL resulted in inaccurate appraisals of pupil's causing them to not reach their full potential (Mertler, 2003). Mertler (2003) described the phenomena as an assessment paradox because despite repeated calls for better assessment training, research confirms that teachers have low levels of assessment knowledge

and graduate teachers are underprepared for giving assessment. This view is supported by a multitude of studies (eg., Brevik, Blikstad-Balas & Engelien, 2016; Bøhn & Tsgari, 2021; DeLuca & Johnson, 2017; DeLuca & Klinger, 2010; Herrera & Macías, 2015; Popham, 2011; Stiggins, 1999; Volante & Fazio, 2007).

DeLuca and Johnson (2017) say that Mertler's findings are unsurprising since assessment has "historically been neglected by teacher education programmes" (p. 121). Kennedy (1999) posits that teacher training programmes have only a minor influence on participants assessment skills. Engelsen and Smith (2014) are also sceptical to teacher education, the scholars pointed out that few countries have succeeded in establishing an A*f*L and claim that graduate teachers finish their education without the required A*f*L skills. This means that schools are being restocked with teachers who do not know how to give formative assessment (Engelsen & Smith, 2014). The Assessment Reform Group (ARG), go a step further than Engelsen and Smith (2014) and state that "A*f*L can work on a small scale but may not be transferable to national strategies" (Mansell & James, 2009, p. 7). Despite the criticisms, Norway followed the lead of other western democracies and introduced A*f*L as a way to raise standards of education. In the following section, the implementation process is presented

2.2 Norway follows international examples of adopting A*f*L

KD has addressed the issue of teachers' AL in repeated Education Acts (KD, KL 2006/2013/2020). Since 2010, KD has been running a national programme for implementing A*f*L (UDIR, 2017). Despite continued investment,[1] international PISA test results show that academic educational standards in Norway have remained stubbornly average (UDIR, 2017). The National Curriculum for Teacher Education (KD 2006/2013) stated that pre-service teachers should have "knowledge of assessment and testing, and methods to enable quality assessment procedures that align with the core curriculum" (Brevik et al, 2016, p. 166). Reading and writing are central aspects of the core curriculum and are taught in the English classroom.

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[1] The allocated budget for the education reforms between 2006 and 2018 was 1.2 billion NOK (KD, 2016).

Subsequent assessment evaluations by the Research Council of Norway (Dale et al., 2011/2020) and KD (UDIR, 2017) have identified pre-service teachers' AL as an area for improvement. In the following section, the role teacher training institutions play in preparing pre-service English teachers will be presented.

2.3 Teacher training institutions

The 2006 Education Act states that universities that provide teacher training have an especially important role in the initiation of A*f*L (St.Meld 16, 2006, p. 66). However, teacher training institutions were criticised by a national implementation review for relying on "abstract assessment theory" to teach formative assessment (St.Meld 28, 2016, p. 57).

Dale, Gilje and Lillejord (2011/2020) carried out a comprehensive study for the Research Council of Norway on the implementation of education reforms and confirm KD's criticisms (Dale et al., 2011/2020). The researchers uncovered a problematic dichotomy on teacher training programmes. Programmes tend to divide assessment teaching into two areas: assessment theory and assessment practice. The scholars reported that assessment theory is often taught on campus whereas practical assessment is learnt on work placements (Dale et al., 2011/2020). Dale and colleagues (2011/2020) explain why this dichotomy is problematic. Classroom situations require quick reactions to deal with complex situations and pre-service teachers are rarely able to solve fast moving classroom problems with assessment theory (Dale et al., 2011/2020). Brevik, Blikstad-Balas and Engelien (2017) confirm this dichotomy is evident at UiO. The academics admit that UiO's programme presents assessment theory on campus but relies on partner schools to train programme participants in practical formative assessment (Brevik et al., 2016). However, UiO does not require partner schools or mentor teachers to document A*f*L competency (Brevik et al., 2016).

2.4 Norwegian teacher education courses

There are currently 291 study programmes at 114 education institutions in Norway that offer teacher education (Studievalg, 2021). The programmes are divided into five areas of teacher education: kindergarten, primary, secondary, vocational teacher education and high school lecturing. This study focuses solely on the area of high school lecturing. Nationwide, there are currently 11 institutions that offer the high school lecturing programme. Due to the limited scope of this study, the content and structure of just UiO's will be considered.

2.5 UiO's teacher training programme

The teacher training programme at a five-year Master of Education (ME) programme that was overhauled in 2016/17 to make teaching training more attractive. Obligatory grades to access the programme were increased and a sharpening of subject specific competency was highlighted (St. Meld.28, 2016, p. 12).

The ME is spread over 10 semesters. On the seventh semester, as part of the obligatory *PROF4045 Facilitating for students' learning* course, students are required to complete a 45-day practical placement. The PROF4045 course offers a "range of teaching activities including lectures, seminars and workshops that provide student teachers with knowledge about assessment theory, skills to provide feedback and competence to develop their own professionalism" (Brevik et al., 2016, p. 166). According to Brevik and colleagues (2016), A*f*L is fully integrated into the teacher training programme and the assessment components of the course are in adherence with the Norwegian Education Acts of 2006 and 2013 (Brevik et al., 2016).

PROF 4045 introduces pre-service teachers to A*f*L. Teacher educators model assessment with three formal assessment situations, two of which are summative and therefore model assessment *of* learning (A*o*L) (Brevik et al., 2016). This study uses the terms *summative assessment* and *AoL* interchangeably. The summative course components are a practice exam and a research and development (R&D) project. The components are not dedicated to A*f*L as participants can opt to write the exam and R&D project on *differentiation*. Brevik and colleagues (2016) report that 42% (n=93) of students choose the alternative (p. 176).

2.5.1 Necessary assessment components

Brevik and colleagues (2016) state that little is known about what kind of content and structure is useful for "developing assessment capable teachers" (p. 166). However, the scholars may have overlooked the work done by the Assessment Training Institute (ATI). The ATI was established to support teachers and challenge faculties of education to evaluate if they are producing assessment literate teachers (Stiggins, 1999). The ATI compiled a framework of seven assessment competencies that should be included on teacher training programs. However, teacher education institutions rarely prioritise AL and the majority do not have any dedicated assessment courses (Herrera & Macías, 2015; Popham, 2011;

Stiggins, 1999;) UiO is an example of an institution that trains future teachers but has no dedicated assessment courses.

Considering the calls for increased research in assessment education (Brevik et al., 2016; DeLuca & Klinger, 2010; Volante & Fazio, 2007), this study will investigate what influence the PROF4045 course has on pre-service English teachers AL. In the following chapter, I shall present the theoretical framework for this study, explain why the theory is relevant and how the theory helps to answer my research questions.

3 Theory and previous research

The chapter contains theories and previous research related to the general AL of pre-service teachers and also to ESL specific assessment theory. In addition, a theory the fundamental human learning is presented. The main theoretical frames of reference are sourced from Black and William (2009/2011/2018), Brevik, Blikstad-Balas and Engelien (2016), Bøhn and Tsgari (2021), Gee (2017), Kennedy (1999), and Taylor (2013). The first section (section 3.1) considers both formative and summative assessment provides the fundamental groundwork for understanding the claimed benefits of A*f*L. The second section (section 3.2) discusses traditional teaching methods. This section serves to highlight reasons for why A*f*L is rarely adopted. Section 3.3 presents an alternative theoretical understating on the impact of teacher training programme (Kennedy, 1999). This theory has informed my view of the importance of the roll teacher educators play. Thereafter, a hypothetical model for evaluating assessment competency is presented (section 3.4) The model served to operationalise this study's interview process as the interview questions were designed around three of the hypothetical dimensions proposed by Taylor (2013) In the fifth section (section 3.5), fundamental theory on how humans learn new skills is considered. Such theory helped to explain interviewees attitudes to the learning of A*f*L. The last section (section 3.6) I present relevant previous assessment research.

3.1 Assessment *of* and *for* learning

The concept of assessment *for* learning has its roots in the work done by the ARG (Mansell & James, 2009). Earlier research exists on the merits of formative assessment (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1986; Black & William, 1996). However, it was the ARG who established A*f*L as a way to improve education standards.

Black and William (1998) define assessment as "all those teaching activities - and by their students in assessing themselves - that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities" (p. 82). The scholars highlight the difference between standard assessment and formative assessment by explaining that "assessment becomes formative when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet students' needs" (Black and William, 1998, p. 82). Black and William (1998) hold up formative assessment as an effective way to motivate students and show that employing formative assessment in schools produces "significant and substantial learning gains" (p. 83)

Summative assessment is the use of assessment activities "primarily to evaluate students" (Black and William, 2018, p. 561). The overuse of summative assessment has been widely criticised in assessment literature. However, this study recognises that A*o*L is currently a necessity. Black and Williams (1998) proposal of employing A*f*L for improving teaching is of particular relevance for this study because the Norwegian English curriculum (KD, KL, 2020) says that formative assessment is central for English teaching and highlights the need for pre-service English teachers to be assessment literate (KD, KL 2020). The benefits and disadvantages of both assessment forms will be considered in the following section

3.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of A*f*L

Black and Williams' (1998) meta-analysis of 580 assessment articles showed empirically that strengthening A*f*L practices does indeed produce significant learning gains. The scholars compared classroom test scores and showed that the typical effect size of formative assessment experiments was between 0.4 and 0.7. An effect size of 0.4 would raise pupils to the top 35% of test score. An effect size of 0.7 is substantial enough to increase an education systems' international ranking from middle of the table to a top five position (Black and William, 1998 p. 3). The scholars concluded that A*f*L "improves the quality of teacher/student interactions, helps students take responsibility for their own learning, moves pupils out of the trap of low achieving grades and develops the habits needed for lifelong learning" (Black and William, 1998, p. 89).

There are two fundamental weaknesses of A*f*L. The first is the difficulty of A*f*L integration on a national level and the second is the challenge of getting teachers to adopt A*f*L by adapting their traditional teaching methods accordingly. The ARG expressed the view that the implementation of A*f*L is rarely possible on a national level because, so few countries have actually succeeded with A*f*L implementation despite substantial investment (Mansell & James, 2009). ARG's criticism is confirmed by KD's assessment reform evaluations. Despite the 148 million NOK invested in A*f*L between 2010 and 2018, a mere 28% of upper-secondary students report that they have received formative assessment (UDIR, 2019). The report states that no money was given to universities.

The implementation of A*f*L on a local level has also proven to be difficult (Dale et al., 2011). A central issue is that teachers do not take responsibility for adjusting their established

teaching methods. In-service teachers are highly likely to base their teaching activities on their own practical experiences rather than on scientifically grounded knowledge (Dale et al., 2011; Kennedy, 1999).

3.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages of summative assessment

Black and William (2018) say that summative assessments can be advantageous because they provide a way of extracting information about student achievement and can also be used to communicate to learners what is, and is not, valued in a particular subject. (Black and William, 2018). A*o*L is still necessary in today's modern systems of education because teachers are expected to report pupil achievement and development. Summative grades are considered to be the most effective way to do this. However, Black and William point out that the collection of marks to fill in records is given higher priority than the analysis of pupils' work by schools (Black and William, 1998). The scholars claim that summative grades are often used to rate school's performance and rank student ability and are rarely employed to improve teaching practices (Black and William, 1998). The need for teachers to give summative assessments is seen as a hindrance. Teachers often find it hard to differentiate between their formative and summative roles (Black and William, 1998). To combat this situation, Black and Williams (2018) considered it necessary to explain A*f*L in a wider theory of pedagogy. The scholars' model will now be discussed.

3.1.3 A*f*L in a wider theory of pedagogy

The pressure on teachers to differentiate between summative and formative assessment caused Black and Williams (2018) to propose a new model for pedagogy and A*f*L (Black and William, 2018). The model in shown in Figure 3.1. In the following section, I analyse one aspect of the model, namely, *Learning by Dialogue.* I single out this area because Black and William (2018) say that dialogical feedback is of particular relevance for graduate teachers (Black and William, 2018) and dialogical teaching is of particular relevance for ESL graduate teachers (Bøhn, 2017).

Figure 3.1: Black and William's (2018) model of A*f*L in a wider theory of pedagogy
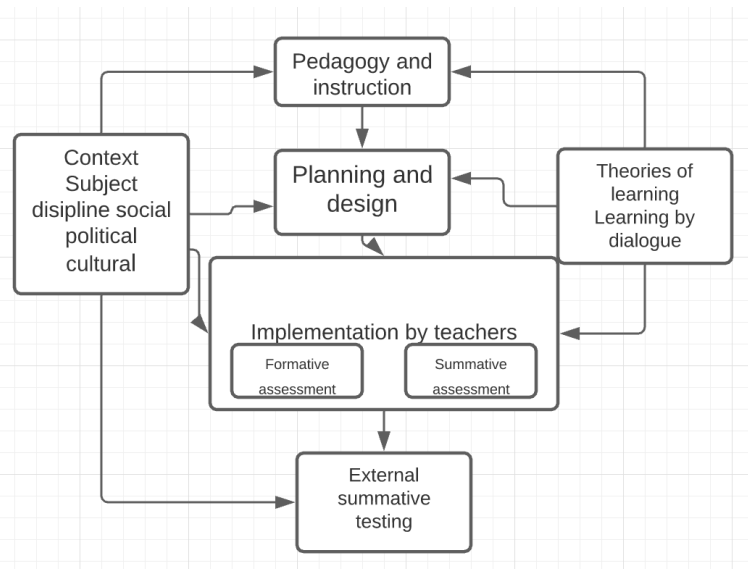
3.1.4 A focus on collaborative dialogue

Learning by dialogue is a central aspect of Black and William's (2018) model of pedagogy (Black and William, 2018). The effectiveness of collaborative dialogue for teachers has been supported by a host of landmark studies form the USA and the UK (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand & Gamoran, 2003; Smith, Hardman, Wall & Mroz, 2004). The studies have empirically proven that interactive dialogue leads to more effective learning. However, Black and William (2018) admit that this is a "delicate task for teachers" (p. 559). To improve on student/teacher dialogue, teachers are encouraged to use less time on traditional classroom activities and employ collaborative dialogue as a way to excite and motivate students (Black and William, 2018). Interactive dialogue is particularity relevant for EFL teaching because it encourages students to be comfortable with language production (Henry, Sundqvist & Thorsen, 2019). However, teachers tend to rely on written feedback and there is a reluctance to give oral feedback (Cabot and Kaldestad, 2019). This issue will be discussed further in section 3.3.3.

3.2 Traditional teaching methods

In this section, a traditional method of teaching is presented to show how the continued reliance on traditional teaching methods is hindering the acceptance of formative assessment. Many pre-service teachers experience traditional teaching on their practical placements and exposure to A*f*L is rare (De Luca & Klinger, 2010; Herrera & Macías, 2015; Mertler, 2001; Stiggins, 1999; Zu &Brown, 2016).

3.2.1 The transmission model of teaching

Classroom teaching has traditionally relied on a *transmission* model of teaching (Black and William, 1998). The scholars explain that "the teacher assumes that if their knowledge is transmitted to, and learnt by pupils, then understanding will develop along with transmission" (Black and William, 1998, p. 89). There is a wealth of evidence to show that this is not the case.

The asking of questions is typical feature of the transmission model. This is a natural way of checking on learning but has been shown to be unproductive. This traditional approach to student/teacher interaction was defined by Mehan (1979) as the *initiation-response-evaluation* model, known as I-R-E. The process is not genuinely dialogical. Teachers look for "correct responses rather than encouraging collaborative interaction" (Black and William, 2009, p. 11). According to the scholars, the model contradicts the principles of formative assessment. In a *AfL* perspective, teacher interaction is used collaboratively with the students as equal partners. Teachers encourage pupils to think critically and follow up with thought provoking comments (Black and William, 2009). However, recent Norwegian ESL classroom research from the Linking Instruction and Student Experiences (LISE) project at UiO has contradicted Black and Williams' assumptions. Handeland (2020) has shown that English teachers offered many more dialogic responses (*n*=302) in classroom discussion than questions (*n*=70) and that the evaluations were mainly positive evaluations of student utterances.

3.2.2 Common mistakes of I-R-E

A common mistake in I-R-E is not giving pupils enough time to think out their answers and respond. This is of particular relevance for the EFL classroom as responses in a foreign language generally take longer to formulate (Bøhn, 2009). According to Black and William (2009) pupils should be given the opportunity to try out their language use in a low-stakes environment (Black and William, 2009). Teachers over reliance on I-R-E means that pupils miss out on valuable classroom interactions. Black and William (1998) state that "the question/answer dialogue becomes a ritual, one in which thoughtful involvement suffers" (p. 88). However, Norwegian ESL classroom research has contradicted the scholars' claim. Williamson (2016) studied oral student output with the Classroom Oral Participation Scheme (COPS) and showed that individual instances of pupils oral output were infrequent whereas

those encouraged in classroom discussions, led by a teacher, amounted for 90% of observed classroom activity (Williamson, 2016).

The reliance on traditional teaching methods has been stubbornly hard to break (Dale et al., 2011/2020). KD reports that despite fifteen years of continuous investment there is still widespread reluctance to accept new teaching practices (KD 2006/2013/2020).

3.3 The role of teacher training programmes

According to Kennedy (1999), the role teacher training programmes have on pre-service teachers' education is overstated (Kennedy, 1999). The academic points out that "many studies of teacher education programmes indicate that teacher education is indeed a weak intervention" (p. 55). The problem teacher training intuitions face, according to Kennedy (1999), is that programme participants have already been through a lengthy introduction to teaching throughout their childhood. Kennedy (1999) describes this as the *perceived wisdom* model of teaching and claims that this process leads to the persistence of traditional teaching practices which hinders the adoption of AfL. In the following section, the limited role teacher training programmes have is explored.

3.3.1 The received wisdom model of teaching

There are three components of the perceived wisdom model of teaching. The first is the *apprenticeship of observation*. For their entire childhood and adolescence, teacher training programme participants have been observing teachers teach. Participants learn students and teachers act in the classroom. They learn the task of teaching through observation. This apprenticeship means that "teachers are highly likely to teach in the way they were taught themselves" (Kennedy, 1999, p. 55).

In the second part of the model, participants learn their subject matter through liberal arts courses. They complete foundation courses before specialising in a subject to gain expert knowledge. This system gives teachers the skills to teach their subject with confidence. The first two components are combined to make the third component of the model. Participants combine the apprenticeship of observations and the knowledge learnt on liberal arts courses in practical teaching situations to develop their own teaching style. In addition to these three components, Kennedy (1999) explains that pre-service teachers learn about pedagogical and

didactic subjects such as teaching theory and classroom management. However, Kennedy claims that the pedagogical and didactic aspects of teacher training program have a limited influence on programme participants due to their brevity. Kennedy points out that programmes focus on liberal arts courses means there is a limited focus on the practical aspects of teaching such as student motivation or classroom management. Kennedy's claim is confirmed when examining the content of UiO's teacher training program. In the first five semesters (150 study points), there is only one non-liberal arts course (10 study points). The single professional development course is intended to give an insight into teaching with 15 days of classroom observation. However, according to the perceived wisdom model of teaching, these 15 days will have limited influence considering the 13 years of observation participants have already been through.

The apprenticeship of observation gives programme participants a unique frame of reference. The frame of reference is used to decide what is appropriate and inappropriate classroom behaviour. Participants also use the reference to interpret their own practical experiences. They judge their own daily successes against a standard of expectations that are leant during observation. This established frame of reference can be problematic for teacher training institutions. If teacher training programmes fail to change participants frame of reference, participants will use their own frames of reference and reinforce previously observed traditional teaching methods (Kennedy, 1999). To combat the process of recycling traditional teaching techniques, Kennedy suggests that teacher educators should model assessment practices for their students continuously through the education programme. This suggestion is supported by Cabot and Kaldestad (2019), who have highlighted the special role teacher educators play. The scholars looked at pre-service English teachers and how they are affected by the feedback modelled by teacher educators. They scholars claims that EFL teachers still tend to provide written feedback and link this process to the fact that teacher educators overwhelmingly promote written feedback. The scholars explain that the preference for written feedback comes at the expense of oral feedback, and they advocate for teacher educators to model a combination of both (Cabot and Kaldestad, 2019).

Brevik and colleagues (2016) have reported a similar problem on the programme at UiO. The researchers found that the programme failed to model self-assessment. Self-assessment is used to adjust one's own teaching methods to improve classroom instruction (Black and William, 1998). The lack of modelling led pre-service teachers to abandon using self-

assessment. Only 14% of students reported using self-assessment in their lesson plans. Brevik and colleagues (2016) identify this as a "missed opportunity" and suggest that self-assessment should be a "key area of improvement" (Brevik et al., 2016, p.178-179).

Graham (2005) highlights the relationship between teacher educators' and pre-service teachers by pointing out the responsibility teacher educators' have to self-assess their own' teaching of assessment. Graham writes, "if teacher candidates are to assess student learning in new more reflective and powerful ways, their university and school-based mentors must be willing to assess differently themselves" (Graham, 2005, p. 168). Black and William (2018) remind us that formative assessment should be adopted at all levels of the education system for implementation to be successful (Black and William, 2018). This view is pertinent in the Norwegian context where repeated education Acts have highlighted the need for all stakeholders to adopt the principle of A*f*L (KD 2006/2013/2020).

In the next section, I discuss the model teacher educators use at UiO to structure the PROF4045 course and consider whether the course structure hinders teacher educator's ability to change participants frame of reference.

3.3.2 Edwards's (2014) quadrant model

Edwards (2014) *quadrant model* is a way of structuring the events that together may promote learning (Edwards, 2014). An understanding of the model is important because the PROF4045 course is organised around it (Brevik et al., 2006).

Figure 3.2. Edwards (2014) quadrant model of structuring educational activities

4. Demonstration of grasp of key concepts and ways of enquiring	1. Introduction of key concepts and modelling of ways of engaging with hey concepts
3. More open tasks which enable learners to apply key concepts and ways of enquiring	2. Tightly structured tasks which demand engagement with key concepts and ways of enquiring

Note. According to Brevik and colleagues (2016), pre-service English teachers are taught about formative assessment based around the sequence shown in Figure 3.2.

According to Edwards (2014), quadrant one is where teacher educators have the opportunity to "diagnose how the leaners are interpreting the new knowledge" (p. 22). Teacher educators identify a gap in learners' knowledge and model for students how the gap might be addressed. Edwards (2014) says this leads learners to move towards a mastery of the knowledge that matters in a given subject (Edwards, 2014).

The modelling of assessment practices has been shown in section 3.3.1 to be an important part of pre-service teacher education. However, research presented in section 3.3.2 states that graduate teachers lack assessment skills. This suggests that assessment modelling is a weakness of teacher education. The lack of A*f*L modelling could hinder changing pre-service teachers frame of reference that Kennedy (1999) discussed. Kennedy (1999) stated that if teacher educators fail to change participants frame of reference, the cycle of employing traditional teaching methods will perpetuate. The employment of traditional teaching method is a hindrance to the adoption of A*f*L (Black and William, 2008).

The problems of getting teachers and schools to adopt A*f*L has led to an increased need to understand the assessment abilities of all stakeholders in an education system. Scholars have looked at the components of classroom assessment and discussed which competencies stakeholders need to be assessment literate. In the following chapter a model for evaluating language assessment literacy is presented and the required competencies pre-service English teachers need to be assessment literate are discussed.

3.4 Language assessment literacy

Bøhn and Tsgari (2021) defines language assessment literacy as "the knowledge, skills and principles needed by stakeholders in order to carry out effective assessment practices" (p. 222). From here on, the term will be shortened to LAL. LAL was originally intended to evaluate traditional language testing. However, in recent years, new conceptualisations of LAL have been developed to include formative assessment. The model is used to test the LAL of stakeholders such as in-service teachers, teacher educators, university administrators and professional language testers (Bøhn & Tsgari, 2021).

3.4.1 A model for LAL

There are several models of LAL (e.g., Brindley, 2001; Fulcher, 2012; Kremmel & Harding, 2019; Taylor, 2013). This study adopts the hypothetical dimensions and theoretical framework of LAL first described by Taylor (2013). This study acknowledges Bøhn and Tsgari's (2021) explanations of the model dimensions and suggestions for additional dimensions.

The hypothetical dimensions proposed by Taylor (2013) are *Knowledge of theory Technical Skills, principles and concepts, language pedagogy sociocultural values, local practices, personal attitudes and beliefs* and *scores and decision making.* To evaluate a stakeholders'AL, interviewees self-report their competencies in each dimension. The questions are quantitative, so interviewees rate their own AL and an overall value for all dimensions is given. The results are visualised in a hexagonal graph.

3.4.2 Pre-service English teacher interview dimensions

In line with expert advice from Henrik Bøhn, I used three of Taylor's (2013) dimensions to evaluate pre-service English teachers' AL. They are *personal attitudes and beliefs, knowledge of theory* and *local practices.* In the following section, a brief description of the three dimensions is given

Bøhn (2021) interprets Taylors (2013) hypothetical dimension, personal attitudes, as how stakeholders own preconceptions and understandings inform a person's interpretations and judgements in assessment. The dimension is applicable for this study because preconceptions of A*f*L may affect the teaching activities teachers choose to use in the English classroom (Bøhn & Tsgari, 2021). Preconceived notions of A*f*L lead to teachers avoiding techniques that seam at first glance to be complicated to enact.

The second dimension, *knowledge of theory*, refers to a stakeholders' understanding of language theory. Bøhn and Tsgari (2021) considered Taylor's (2015) explanation of the dimension to be incomplete and suggested that stakeholders' *disciplinary knowledge* and *curriculum related knowledge* should be singled out as individual components. The scholar proposed that the dimension *disciplinary competence* should be added as an additional

dimension. This study accepts Bøhn's proposal and acknowledges that pre-service English teachers' *disciplinary competence* should be considered when evaluating AL.

Local practices, the third dimension, relates to institutional aspects of assessment such as the understanding of education Acts. The dimension also relates to the contexts in which teachers' use assessment. For example, there are regional differences in the way A*f*L is supported. It is therefore essential that pre-service English teachers understand education laws, so they know what is professionally expected of them. Interview questions based on the dimension of *local practices* in this study seek to evaluate how pre-service English teachers understand their own professional requirements.

The three dimensions of LAL presented here, *personal attitudes and beliefs, knowledge of theory and local practices,* where used in this study to qualitatively evaluate interview participants AL. In the next section, a fundamental understanding of the way individuals interpret and learn new knowledge is presented. This is done to highlight how pre-service English teachers should be presented with new concepts such as A*f*L.

3.5 Learning by experience

James Paul Gee (2017) claims that humans fundamentally learn from experience. This assertion sounds trivial; however, the scholar compares the way we naturally learn with the way we are taught in school and sees a disjoint. Gee's (2017) goal is to encourage all institutions of education to teach in the way humans naturally learn, through experience first.

3.5.1 +Experience

James Paul Gee (2017) explains that every waking moment is an experience that we learn from. The academic calls this +*experience* and breaks the concept down into three steps. Firstly, the leaner has an experience through an *action*. Secondly, the learner emotionally *cares* about the outcome of the action. Thirdly, something or someone helps the learner to see how the action is relevant and to pay *attention*. Action, care and attention (Gee, 2017). Gee (2017) claims that this is how humans learn and says the process makes long term memories. Long term memory is important to prepare for future events. People can think, problem solve and plan for the future if their long-term memory is well organised. The process of forming long term memories helps humans to see useful patterns which in turn is useful for making generalisations about our experiences. This becomes the process of seeking evidence to be

able to predict the outcomes of future experience. Gee (2017) says that "we can compare and contrast multiple and different memories of past experience to reflect on various possibilities about what we expect and how we should act" (p. 28). The scholar's point is that generalisations are formed from experiences, not the other way around. Gee's uses this theory to criticise the education system. He says that schools ignore the natural process of learning and educators tend to present generalisations or theory before experience.

Gee (2017) advises that teachers need to be mentors who model experiences for their students and emphasise the importance of an *action* so that learners *care* and pay *attention* to what is most relevant. Gee expands on his theory of +experience with the concept of *vertical* and *horizontal* learning.

3.5.2 Play, vertical and horizontal learning

Gee (2017) states that *play* is an important aspect of +*experience*. For learning, play frees us from the fear of failure, allows us to take risks and to try out new things. Gee (2017) says that "play allows us not just to see the way things are but the way they could be (Gee, 2017, p. 34). In Gee's (2017) theory, the teacher is a mentor who shows the leaner what to pay attention to and learning happens initially through experience and play. The scholar calls this process *horizontal learning*. In horizontal learning, the learner explores new concepts by testing out possibilities, they take risks and are given time to make mistakes without high cost. Gee says school fail to make use of horizontal learning. They teach with *vertical learning* which "involves moving ever up a skill tree from lower to higher skills" (Gee, 2017, p. 34).

Gee's (2017) theory is important for this study because it can be applied to UiO's programmes participants who are introduced to the topic of A*f*L with abstract assessment theory (Brevik et al., 2016; UDIR, 2017). According to Gee (2017), teacher educators should be modelling experiences of A*f*L in a low stakes environment before presenting theory. The opportunity for pre-service English teachers to learn horizontally about assessment is essential for developing their AL. In the next section, a description of the previous research on AL is given.

3.6 Previous research

In this section, I will provide an overview of the previous research that has influenced my MA project. The previous studies presented include general international research on AL and

more specific research on pre-service teacher's AL requirements. Previous research for the Norwegian context is presented as well as a Colombian study concerning pre-service teachers in the EFL context.

3.6.1 International assessment literacy research

International assessment research has traditionally focused on in-service teachers (Engelsen & Smith, 2014) although a number of the studies include aspects of pre-service teacher education. However, studies solely concerning pre-service teachers AL are a rarity. Stiggins' (1999) and Popham (2011) have both written on pre-service teachers' assessment capabilities from a teacher educator's perspective. Both studies highlighted the need for more comprehensive assessment training for pre-service teachers. Mertler (2003) compared the assessment skills of pre-service teachers with those of in-service teachers and focused on both parties' individual needs.

Specific pre-service teacher research includes DeLuca & Klinger's (2010) study that sought to identify gaps in teacher candidates' assessment competency. Volante & Fazio (2007) have also focused on pre-service teachers examining the impact education reforms have. Numerous conceptual AL frameworks have been proposed (Brindley, 2001; Fulcher, 2012; Kremmel & Harding, 2019) however, Zu and Brown (2016) were the first scholars to create a framework that included pre-service teachers. Indeed, the scholars singled out pre-service teachers as an essential element of their theoretical model.

3.6.2 International EFL research

A search in google scholar reveals that only limited EFL specific research has been conducted. Research by Herrera and Macías (2015) highlighted the problems facing pre-service English teachers in Colombia. The scholars showed that the majority of EFL teachers lack even the most basic formative assessment skills. The authors challenged teacher training programmes to draw on "explicit assessment expertise" and recommended that assessment should be part of a "teachers' lifelong professional development" (Herrera & Macías, 2015, p. 310).

3.6.3 Norwegian research

Norwegian research mirrors the international AL literature with the majority of studies conducted on in-service teachers (Bøhn 2015; Bøhn 2019; Bøhn & Hansen 2017; Vattøy 2019; Vattøy & Gamlem, 2020). Research on pre-service teachers is limited

Assessment research has been conducted from a teacher educators' perspective. Bøhn (2021) looked at the AL of teacher educators whilst Cabot and Kaldetstad (2019) looked at a single teacher educator and examined their feedback practices. Engelsen and Smith (2014) focused on the perspectives of a school management team examined the practical processes of A*f*L school integration and studied the participants initial reluctance and eventual acceptance of A*f*L. The scholars also interviewed pupils at the school to understand how they experienced the integration of A*f*L. Munthe, Svensen and Rogne (2011) have written generally on teacher education reform and briefly discussed how reforms aim to improve the AL of pre-service teachers. Iversen (2019) has written on pre-service teachers LAL when on field placements, although the authors' study focused on multilingualism.

Brevik and colleagues (2016) explored the A*f*L teaching activities needed on a teacher training program. The study is unique because it acknowledges Volante and Fazio's (2007) findings that pre-service teachers have specific assessment requirements. Brevik and colleagues (2016) considered AL from an institutional perspective, a teacher educator perspective and from the perspective of programme participants. The article addressed the challenges of providing participants with the skills needed for giving good formative assessment. A Google Scholar search reveals no Norwegian research on pre-service English teachers LAL. There also appears to be no Norwegian research on the influence practical work placements have on pre-service teacher's assessment skills in any school subject.

4 Methods and data

This chapter is a presentation of how this MA was conceptualised, designed, carried out and analysed. I will present and describe the methods that have been used to examine the overarching research question: *What influence does the final 45-day practicum work placement on the teacher training programme at UiO have on pre-service English teachers' language assessment literacy?* In Section 4.1, I give a detailed description of my research design. Thereafter, an explanation of data collection methods will be given (section 4.2). In Section 4.3, I present the techniques used to analyse my data. In section 4.4, the credibility of this thesis will be discussed. The chapter is rounded off by highlighting the limitations of this study (section 4.5). All of the methods chosen were to answer the three subordinate research questions in a trustworthy, reliable and valid manner:

> RQ1: *To what extent do pre-service English teachers studying on the "Facilitating for pupils' learning" course, consider themselves to be ready to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom, pre practicum?*
>
> RQ2: *How does the final 45-day practicum placement influence pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards AfL as a method for teaching in the English classroom?*
>
> RQ3: *Which teaching activities that incorporate AfL do pre-service English teachers report adopting as a result of their final 45-day practicum placement?*

4.1 Research design

The research design was greatly influenced by the expert advice received from Henrik Bøhn, associate professor of English Didactics at The University of South-East Norway (USN). After Bøhn's advice, I employed data from two sources: qualitative interviews and quantitative activity logs. The interviews are the primary source of data. The activity logs are intended as complementary data. A mixed methods approach was employed because, according to Patton (1999), combining qualitative and quantitative data can "highlight complementary aspects of the same phenomenon" (p. 1194). In addition, Patton (1999) says that studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors than studies that use multiple data collection methods (Patton, 1999).

4.1.1 Overview of the research design

The steps taken of selecting, collecting, organising and analysing data for this MA thesis are listed below.

1. Developing the aims and research questions.
2. Conducting the expert interview and revise research questions
3. Identify sample and find relevant participants
4. Pilot the interview guide
5. Carrying out pre-practicum interviews
6. Design and deliver digital activity logs
7. Carrying out post-practicum interviews, transcribing interviews and member checking
8. Analysing interview data
9. Comparing findings of development pre- and post-practicum with assessment theory

4.1.2 Study proposal and expert interview

The expert interview with Henrik Bøhn was suggested by associate professor Lisbeth Brevik at UiO. The purpose of the expert interview was to get advice on how the study should be designed. Bøhn is an expert on assessment in the ESL context (see Bøhn, 2015; Bøhn & Hansen, 2017; Bøhn & Tsgari, 2021)

Contact with Bøhn was made by email a zoom meeting was arranged. In preparation for the interview, Bøhn recommended reading a number of studies (Bøhn, 2015; Bøhn and Hansen, 2017; Kremmel and Harding, 2019; Xu and Brown 2016). For example, Kremmel and Harding's study (2019) gave a comprehensive factor analysis of LAL as an instrument for worldwide assessment development across all stakeholder groups. Zu and Brown (2016) proposed a new framework for assessment (called TALiP) to tackle assessment illiteracy amongst teachers.

The expert interview was 45 minutes in length. The audio was recorded with zoom and was transcribed the same day. A copy of the transcription was sent to Bøhn along with a summary of the conversation for member checking. Member checking and was done to "shift the validity procedure from the researcher to the participant" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127).

The level of detail in the transcription was carefully considered. Every word was transcribed but time codes, pauses and verbal fillers were not considered a necessary level of detail. Bøhn commenced the interview by explaining his research and his current study's theoretical framework. The topic for my study was then discussed. Bøhn agreed with the need for research on pre-service teachers LAL. He proposed ways in which the study could be conducted and also which theoretical concepts would be most relevant. He stated that Taylor's (2013) hypothetical model of LAL dimensions should be used to structure the interview questions. Bøhn concluded the interview by suggesting further relevant LAL research to consider (for example Fulcher, 2012) and also kindly provided a draft copy of his yet unpublished study on teacher educators' LAL (Bøhn & Tsgari, 2021). After the interview, a close reading of the interview transcription was carried out and a list of Bøhn's suggestions was drawn up. The following sections (sections 4.1.4 - 4.1.5) present summaries of Bøhn's research design suggestions.

4.1.3 Research design suggestions

Bøhn explained that my study should consider pre-service English teachers attitudes to A*f*L as a result of practicum by investigating *where* and *how* assessment skills are gained. To understand this development, Bøhn stated that a researcher must uncover how students are prepared, pre-practicum, and investigate *which* steps are taken to prepare participants. Thus, understanding how's teacher training program influences students became a central focus. The first aim of this MA reflects Bøhn's suggestion:

> *To find out how well pre-service English teachers consider themselves to be, pre-practicum, to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom as a result of participation on the seventh semester, Facilitating for pupils' learning, on the teacher training programme at UiO.*

Bøhn also recommended that students' attitudes and beliefs to A*f*L would be of. This suggestion inspired the second aim of this MA thesis:

> *To understand how pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs of AfL develop as a result of participation on the final 45-day practicum placement at a UiO partner school.*

4.1.4 Interview structure, questions and theoretical framing

Taylor's (2012) hypothetical model for LAL (see section 3.4.1) was adopted as the theoretical framing for my qualitative interviews. Bøhn suggested that the interviews should be based on the dimensions: *personal attitudes and beliefs, knowledge of theory,* and *local practices*. Thus, the pre-practicum interviews were divided into three sections. Each section correlated with one of Taylor's (2012) model dimensions. For the pre-practicum interview guide see Appendix A. In addition, Bøhn advised that the interviews should be comprised of mostly open questions because they were more likely to elicit personal beliefs about A*f*L and thus make changes in attitudes easier to document. Bøhn suggested that open interview questions should differentiate between what students have learnt on the teacher training program, what they have learnt at partner schools and what they have learnt independently. Bøhn advised to word the questions so that participants did not feel like they were being tested on their AL skills. To comply with this, the section of interview questions on local practices were based around *true/false/not sure* scenarios.

4.2 Data collection

The primary data source consisted of ten semi-structured pre-practicum interviews and ten semi-structured post-practicum interviews. The complementary data consisted of daily digital activity logs that eight of the interviewees completed on practicum every day for a single week.

Interviews as an activity for collecting data were chosen because of the well-established role interviews have in social science research (Dalen, 2004). A semi-structured format was chosen in line with the expert advice given by Henrik Bøhn. The purpose of the open format was to form a collaborative dialogue with participants and to spontaneously focus in on topics participants themselves had brought up. It also allowed for follow-up questions. The open questions elicited the most amount of transcribed text data. The interviews were structured around an interview guide which was printed out on paper and referred to repeatedly in the interviews (see Appendix A).

4.2.1 Validity and reliability

In qualitative research the author has to consider whether or not the findings are presented in trustworthy plausible and credible manner (Johnsen & Christensen, 2013). To ensure that this research is trustworthy I have employed *internal validity, external validity, and theoretical validity* (Johnsen & Christensen, 2013; Patton, 1999). Internal validity refers to how justified a researcher is when reporting that an observed relationship is causal (Johnson & Christensen, 2013). To combat this issue, I provided participants with a summary of our interview conversations and the interview transcriptions to check that the interviewees are in agreement with my presentation. I have also used direct citations from the interviewees when presenting findings so that the level of interpretation is kept to a minimum. *External validity,* according to Johnson and Christensen (2013) is the extent the results of a study can be generalised. External validity is often a weakness of qualitative enquiry. To address this issue, I openly stated in my introduction (section 1.3) that this study's findings cannot be generalised due to the limited sample size. However, I argued that my study had a strong degree of *theoretical validity* (Johnson & Christensen, 2013). I make this claim because this study's theoretical foundations were provided and guided by an expert in ESL AL research, Professor Henrik Bøhn.

In addition, I argue that the design of this research project also adds to the study's validity. The combination of interviews and activity logs were chosen to increase the perceived trustworthiness of this study. Employing a mixed methods strategy can improve validity and reliability because secondary sets of data can often highlight inconsistencies in primary data (Patton, 1999). This study also employed member checking and data triangulation to increase validity. They are tools that improve validity in qualitative enquiry (Creswell & Miller, 2000). However, the key issue in qualitative and quantitative research is not so much the methods that were chosen, but rather, how "appropriate the methods were for answering the empirical research questions" (Patton, 1999, p. 1189). I will come back to the topic of validity when discussing this study's credibility in section 4.4.

4.2.2 Sample

Interviewees were recruited from the teacher training programme at UiO. The participants were enrolled on the PROF4045 course. It is at this point of the programme that students are introduced to A*f*L. As part of the PROF4045, students attend English didactics seminars. The

seminars were led by my supervisor, associate professor Pia Sundqvist. The seminars are a way of preparing students for giving formative assessment whilst on practicum, thus making the seminar attendees of special interest for addressing this study's second research question:

RQ2: *How does the final 45-day practicum placement influence pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards AfL as a method for teaching in the English classroom?*

The student teachers were asked to volunteer to participate. I made a video where I introduced the topic of the research and explained my intentions. The video was played by Sundqvist at the end of the seminars. Students interested in participating were encouraged to share their contact details with Sundqvist, who then forwarded the details to me so that perspective interviewees could be contacted. After the four digital presentations to four separate English didactic seminar groups, fourteen students expressed an interest in being interviewed. A text message was sent to each person either on the day of the seminars or in the days after. The text message thanked the person for their interest and invited them to suggest a time they would be available. Of the fourteen students who expressed an interest, thirteen replied. Of the thirteen students, eleven attended interviews. The respondents varied greatly in age, background and previous teaching experience. Sundqvist suggested that comparing students' AL with their teaching experience would be an interesting line of enquiry. Thus, all interviewees were asked about their teaching experience. A criterion for previous experience was that students had held a paid position in the Norwegian education system. The participants were also asked if they would be willing to fill out activity logs (see section 4.2.5). Eight participants agreed as shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Overview of participants and their pre-practicum research involvement.

Participant (pseudonyms)	Length of pre-practicum interview (Minutes)	Years of teaching experience	Agreed to complete log (Yes/no)
Dagmar	22:37	0	Yes
Ingrid	26:35	1/2	Yes
Iselin	20:22	0	Yes
Konrad	12:35	0	Yes
Lee	20:15	0	Yes
Oline	28:27	10	Yes
Ruben	22:47	2	Yes

Theo	19:55	0	No
Tiril	17:26	1 1/2	No
Trond	36:09	1	Yes
Ylva	22:41	0	No

Table 4.1 shows the participants listed in alphabetical order. Pseudonyms were supplied by myself. Of the eleven participants interviewed, five had previous teaching experience. There were large variations in the type of teaching the students had done. The least experienced had worked as a primary school substitute teacher for a single semester and the most was an in-service IB teacher who had worked for ten years in the EFL classroom. The interviews varied substantially in length. The shortest being 12 minutes 55 seconds the longest being 36 minutes and 9 seconds.

4.2.3 Pilot interview

A pilot interview of the pre-practicum interview was conducted so that the interview guide could be tested. The pilot interviewee was chosen because she had previously completed the PROF4045 course and was considered to be an accurate representation of the interviewees. The interview was conducted in zoom and according to my first interview guide. The interview lasted for 55 minutes and a further discussion lasted 25 minutes. The interviewee commented positively on the nature of the interview saying that it was conducted with a friendly, relaxed tone however, she criticised some questions for being too vague. Furthermore, general knowledge questions in the third section were said to be too difficult. It became apparent, after the interview, that there were too many questions, and some were too complicated. The first interview guide was revised twice before being approved by the pilot interviewee. The third and final version of the interview guide had twelve fewer questions and included background information for the *yes/no/unsure* questions (see Appendix A).

4.2.4 Pre-practicum interview

The interviews were conducted at the UiO campus in an office space that provided privacy. A flask of coffee, a bottle of water and snacks were provided. A Dictaphone application on an iPhone was used to record the audio. The phone was placed in a discrete location so as not to distract respondents. The audio files for all eleven interviews were saved to a secure memory card and the original files were immediately deleted in line with ethical guidelines.

The first interview section contained six open questions and a six-point Likert scale question. The open questions were designed to be simple in nature but to also allow participants to elaborate. An example being *what do you understand the term formative assessment to mean.* The questions became more specific and exploratory in nature as the interview progressed, an example being *how do you plan to give formative assessment and which teaching activities do you plan to use?* In part two, six open questions and a six-point Likert-scale question were asked. The point of this section was to understand how well-prepared participants felt themselves to be. The third section of the interview was composed of twelve questions. Three *true/false/not sure* questions, five *yes/no* questions, two closed general assessment knowledge questions, one open question and one six-point Likert-scale question. This section of the interview had the purpose of evaluating interviewees' AL.

4.2.5 Activity logs

Digital activity logs were made on UiO's *Nettskjema* website and were employed to explore pre-service English teachers experiences of AfL whilst on practicum. The logs contained eight yes/no questions and were designed not be intrusive. An example of a question was: *Have you discussed formative assessment with your supervisor today?* The Logs were sent directly to students' mobile phones every day on the third week of their practical.

4.2.6 Post-practicum interviews

The interviews were conducted in Zoom as the UiO campus had been closed due to Corona virus restrictions. The interviews were spread over a period of three weeks. The audio was recorded directly through Zoom and saved straight to a protected memory card to comply with ethical requirements. However, one student could not take part due to medical reasons so that person's initial data was discarded.

The post-practicum interview consisted of eight open questions but no sectional divisions. Question one to four followed up on interviewees experiences of AfL whilst on practical and questions five to eight encouraged participants to reflect over how their attitudes toward AfL had changed. No revisions were made to the guide and no pilot interview was conducted. However, before commencing each interview, pre-practicum interview audio files were listened back to. Notes were taken on the general topics of earlier conversations and specific areas of interest were highlighted with keywords. The notes and keywords were used actively

during the post-practicum interviews, particularly when asking spontaneous follow-up questions.

Table 4.2: The length of post-practicum interviews

Participant (pseudonyms)	Length of interview (Minutes)
Dagmar	15:33
Ingrid	06:26
Konrad	12:35
Lee	10:54
Oline	12:57
Ruben	12:25
Theo	09:52
Tiril	06:47
Trond	09:55
Ylva	10:42

Table 4.2 shows that the shortest interview was 6 minutes 26 seconds and the longest was 15 minutes and 33 seconds. The average length of interviews was 9 minutes 55 seconds.

4.2.7 Interview summaries and member checking

Interviewees were sent both interview transcriptions along with and a summary. This process is a form of member checking that was defined in section 4.1.3. The summary did not contain any subjective comments but stated what respondents had reported. The respondents were encouraged to read the transcriptions and were invited to make comments on the summaries. This gave respondents the opportunity to both react to the data and influence the final narrative. Nine interviewees replied to the member checking. The interviewees reported that they were satisfied with the transcriptions and that the summary was accurate. Member checking is discussed further in section 4.4 on research credibility.

4.3 Analysis

Two types of analysis were used for the data sets. A conventional content analysis was employed to analyse the qualitative text data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). To analyse the statistical data interview from the activity logs the R program was used to create graphs (R Core team, 2013). Both types of analysis will be presented in this section

4.3.1 Analysis of qualitative data

An interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) was considered to be the most appropriate form of content analysis. The aim of IPA is too "discover, explore and generate underlying patterns in the data" (Ripley, 2016, p. 332). This method of analysis was used because I was trying to uncover how participants AL develops over a specific period, this is a pattern of change and therefore relevant for an IPA analysis. An IPA approach to data analysis starts with a thematic analysis based on a small number of qualitative interviews. According to IPA, coding starts with a close reading of a single transcription. From the transcription, initial sub-themes are generated and thereafter a list of themes are created (Ripley, 2016). The themes are then clustered into connected areas. In line with the IPA approach, I carried out a close reading of each interview transcriptions. Thereafter, I coded the data according to two sub-themes. The sub-themes were *pre-practicum beliefs* and *post-practicum beliefs*. This structure was used to analyse each transcription. Whilst I read the transcriptions, I listed themes and sorted them into pre-practicum and post practicum beliefs. After reading all of the transcriptions I put the list of themes together. From the entire list I clustered similar themes. The connected theme clustered showed a distinct pattern. The majority of the themes mentioned by interviewees fit into three distinct areas: *preparedness*, *attitudes and beliefs* and *teaching activities*. I used the three areas to structure this study's analysis.

Figure 4.2: The thematic structure for coding
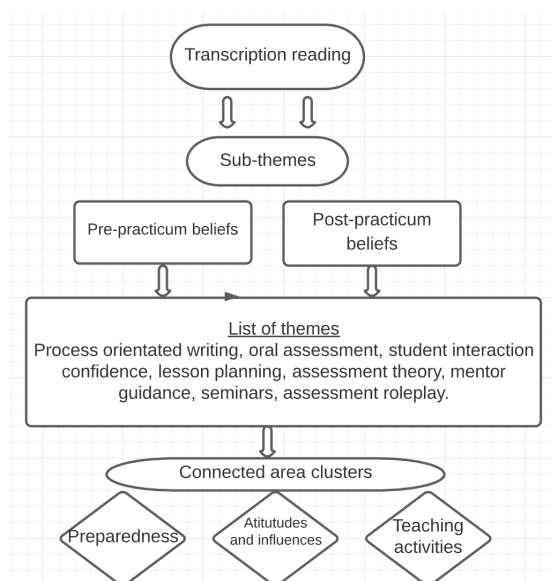
4.3.2 Analysis of quantitative data

I collected the statistical data from UiO's *Nettskjema* website. The answers to each of the eight questions in the activity logs produced were plotted in a Microsoft excel spreadsheet. I used the spreadsheet dataset to visualize the data by creating bar graphs in the R statistics program, see Figure 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 graphs (R Core team, 2013). Bar graphs are a simple way to interpret statistical data and are presented in section 5.5.

4.4 Research credibility

The researcher is themselves an instrument in qualitative enquiry and therefore any information about the researcher that could affect a study's findings needs to be considered. It is of particular importance for researchers' assumptions, personal beliefs and biases that may shape inquiry to be openly described so readers can better understand the researchers' position (Creswell & Miller, 2000). A high level of positive bias was a concern. Positive bias is difficult to avoid because researchers have a tendency to seek confirming rather than disconfirming evidence. To combat positive bias, a conscious focus on *disconfirming evidence* was applied. Using disconfirming evidence means finding aspects of the data that disagree with the preconceived assumptions of the researcher (Creswell & Miller, 2000). By highlighting disconfirming evidence, a researcher shows that they have taken a considered approach to analysing data. Patton (1999) similarly describes this process as *"testing rival explanations"* (Patton, 1999, p. 1191). According to Patton, a researcher must consider all logical possibilities when analysing data and states that presenting rival explanations demonstrates intellectual integrity and considerably increases the credibility of a researchers' findings (Patton, 1999). However, an issue of bias needed to be addressed. I have a positive bias towards the topic of A*f*L in general and more specifically to the integration of A*f*L into UiO's teachers training programme. I have published an article in the student magazine, *Pedagogisk Profil*, highlighting the benefits of A*f*L for pre-service teachers and criticised UiO's teacher training course for the integration of A*f*L. This positive bias, if unaddressed, could harm the credibility of this study.

Procedures that increase the validity of a research project establish research credibility. Validity applies not only to data collection but also to the conclusions drawn. Examples of validity procedures are member checking, triangulation, peer reviews and external audits. This study carried out extensive member checking and used data triangulation to increase

validity. This study also borrowed the credibility of a more experienced researcher by carrying out an expert interview for research design guidance. In the following sections I discuss the steps I took to increase the validity of this study.

4.4.1 Member checking

Member checking is a procedure to establish credibility. It is the process of taking data and data interpretations back to the study participants so that they conform the credibility of the information. As Creswell and Miller (2000) explain; "the validity process shifts from the researchers to participants" (p127). Member checking was employed with the data gathered form expert interview. Henrik Bøhn confirmed that the interview summary I composed was an accurate description of the interview and he confirmed that the level of detail in the transcription was sufficient. Member checking was also used after student interviews. The member checking procedure gave the students the opportunity to confirm that the transcriptions were concise, and that the summary was an accurate portrayal of what was said.

4.4.2 Triangulation

The logic of triangulation is that multiple methods of data collection reveal different aspects of an empirical reality and also provide the opportunity for a more concise analysis. In essence, triangulation is a form of comparative analysis (Patton, 1999). This study's activity logs acted as a form of triangulation and thus served to increase validity. The logs supply real time data on students' experiences so that they could be compared with their transcription data. Statistical data from the activity logs was used in this study to both confirm and disconfirm suggestions and assumptions made in the findings.

4.4.3 Ethical considerations

To carry out this research project, I had to seek approval from The Norwegian Centre for Research Data, otherwise known as NSD (NSD, 2021). In Norway, all research projects involving the use of participant's personal data needs official approvement. I completed my application on the 8th of July 2021 (Meldeskjema, 63386). I was granted the study approval on the 21st of July 2021. There were various steps that had to be taken to comply with ethical guidelines. In the field of research ethics, Ryen (2016) has described three frequently raised

concerns, namely trust, codes and consent and confidentiality. Trust refers to the relationship between the researcher and the participant (Ryen 2016). A researcher must strive to portray what was intended in interviews as accurately as possible. To do this the participants were supplied with interview transcriptions and a written summary of our interviews. Participants were given the chance to make comments or amendments to both texts. The issue of consent comes under trust.

According to Ryan (2016) the researcher has a responsibility to ensure that the participants have agreed to be part of a study. The classifies this issue as codes and consent. To ensure consent was gained ethically I made a video presentation explaining the research project which all participants saw before volunteering. Furthermore, I gained verbal consent at start of each interview. I explained my intentions with the study to the participants and they were asked explicitly if they would still like to proceed with the interview.

Participant's *confidentiality* was also a major ethical consideration. A stipulation of the NSD approval was that no personal data was to be recorded and no information that could identify participants could be included. Ryen (2016) explains that it is a researcher's responsibility to protect each participant's identity. To tackle this issue, I gave all participants pseudonyms and all information that could have possibly led to them being identified was removed from transcriptions, for example the names of partner school names or specific locations.

4.5 Research limitations

A limitation of this study was the amount of post-practicum transcribed text data. The post-practicum interview guide contained eight questions that were intended be expanded on with spontaneous follow up questions to encourage collaborative dialogue with the interviewees. However, the interview was designed for an in-person interview. Because of the Corona virus pandemic, the interviews had to be conducted in Zoom meetings. It was harder to encourage collaborative dialogue in the Zoom meetings as interviewees tended to be less responsive. In addition, the follow-up questions in pre-practicum interviews could be seen as a weakness of the research design. A fundamental aspect of the hypothetical-deductive method of scientific research, is the reproducibility of an experiment (Befring, 2016, p. 194). The spontaneous questions would be hard to replicate in a future study.

The timing of the interviews could be considered a further limitation of this study. Some of the participants had not yet received their placement location and others were concerned with organising travel arrangements. Some interviewees exhibited increased levels of anxiety and frustration because of the uncertainty of placement locations. The timing of the interviews could therefore be considered to be inappropriate as students admitted to being preoccupied with practical matters and did not feel prepared for the interview. A better planned study would have considered the proximity of the interviews to the beginning of practical placements. In the next chapter, the findings from my two data sets are presented and thereafter they are discussed in light of the contextual background information and assessment theory presented in section three.

5 Findings

In this chapter, I present the findings of this MA thesis which answer this study's overarching research question: *What influence does the final 45-day practicum work placement on the teacher training programme at UiO have on pre-service English teachers' language assessment literacy?* I have started with a summary of the main findings (section 5.1) In this section, I have included tables to make the findings as accessible as possible (Table 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3). The summary presents the finding relating to each of the subordinate research questions. After the summary, I present the findings from the pre-service teacher interviews. Again, each section pertains to one of the subordinate research questions. In section 5.2, I present the findings that inform RQ1: *To what extent do pre-service English teachers studying on the "Facilitating for Students Learning" course, consider themselves to be ready to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom, pre practicum?* In section 5.3, I discuss the findings pertaining to RQ2: *How does the final 45-day practicum placement influence pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards AfL as a method for teaching in the English classroom?* In section 5.4, I consider the findings that answer RQ3: *Which teaching activities that incorporate AfL do pre-service English teachers report adopting as a result of their final 45-day practicum placement?* Finally, the findings from the practicum activity logs are presented in section 5.5.

5.1 Summary of the main findings

This section summarises the main findings and visualises the findings in tables. Section 5.1.1 presents the findings relating to RQ1 which show the extent to which pre-service English teachers felt themselves to be prepared for classroom A*f*L. Among other things, this section includes tables to show interviewees' knowledge of assessment regulations. Thereafter, section 5.1.2 presents interviewees' attitudes to A*f*L pre- and post-practicum (i.e., the answers to RQ2). In this section, participants' developing A*f*L attitudes are considered as well as the factors that influenced the development. Finally, section 5.1.3 presents the findings related to RQ3 which are the A*f*L- incorporated teaching activities that interviewees either planned to use, encountered on practicum or adopted as a result of practicum.

5.1.1 RQ1: Pre-practicum preparedness

The interviewee responses in this section are related to the first research question:

> RQ1: *To what extent do pre-service English teachers on the seventh semester, PROF4045 Facilitating for pupil' Learning course at UiO, consider themselves to be ready to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom, pre-practicum?*

Participants were asked about the assessment theory they had read and how well prepared they felt themselves to be for giving formative assessment on their work placement. They were asked to what extent they had practiced giving formative assessment, pre-practicum, and if they had any suggestions for the way they would like to learn about A*f*L. In addition, interviewees were asked evaluative *yes/no/unsure* questions to investigate their understanding of local A*f*L practices. The interviewees' replies have been ordered into table 5.1 so that replies can be compared.

Table 5.1. A summary of how prepared interviewees felt themselves to be for A*f*L.

Interviewee (pseudonyms)	Teaching experience (Extensive/some/none)	Self reported understanding of theory (Good/average/poor)	Assessment literacy evaluation score (percent)	Opportunity to practice AfL pre-practicum (yes/no)	Self reported use of assessment theory (Much/some/none)	Suggestions for learning AfL
Alex	None	Good	12 %	No	None	Practical peer assessment
Dagmar	None	Good	62 %	No	Some	Practical assessment
Ingrid	Some	Good	25 %	No	None	Modelling
Konrad	Some	Poor	50 %	No	None	Role play/practical use
Oline	Extensive	Good	37 %	No	None	Role play
Ruben	None	Average	37 %	No	None	Role play
Theo	None	Poor	25 %	No	None	Modelling
Tiril	Some	Average	75 %	No	Some	n/a
Trond	Some	Poor	50 %	No	None	Practical/ extended time
Ylva	None	Good	37 %	No	Much	Video

In answer to the first research question, five of the interviewees felt that they had a good understanding of assessment theory pre-practicum. Two of the interviewees reported that they

had some understanding of assessment theory and three reported that they had no understanding of assessment theory or had not read it. When asked about practicing A*f*L, none of the interviewees reported having had the opportunity to practice giving formative assessment as part of their PROF4045 course. When asked if participants referred to assessment theory to plan lessons, seven of the interviewees reported that they did not use theory to plan lessons. Two said that they had referred to assessment theory intermittently and one reported planning lessons involving A*f*L-incorporated activities. When asked about suggestions for learning about A*f*L, eight interviewees suggested having practical assessment training such as role-play or modelling by teacher educators, one suggested a video presentation and one interviewee was not asked.

5.1.2 RQ2: Practicum attitudes and influences

The main findings in this section have been arranged in a table (Table 5.2) to summarise the development of interviewee attitudes to A*f*L and address this study's second research question:

> RQ2: *How does the final 45-day practicum placement influence pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards AfL as a method for teaching in the English classroom?*

Table 5.2. A summary of interviewee attitudes pre- and post-practicum, interviewee attitude development as a result of practicum and influential developmental factors.

Interviewee	Attitude pre-practicum	Attitude post-practicum	Development	Influence	Importance of AfL for teaching (1-6)
Alex	Positive, clear understanding	negative to unexpected practicalities	Disjoint between AfL theory and real classroom experience	Partner school organisation, supervisor instruction	5
Dagmar	Positive, motivation	Positive, systematic difficulties	Increased Importance	Assessment theory, practical experience	6
Ingrid	Positive, clear understanding	Positive, engaged	Increased importance	Partner school	6
Konrad	Negative, no reflection, sceptical to use	Positive, engaged	AfL become a tool for teaching	Student partner interaction. Pupil interaction	6

Oline	Positive, clear understanding. Theoretically strong	Positive, critical reflection.	Increased importance	IB training courses	6
Ruben	Passive, theoretically weak, sceptical to practicalities	Positive, clear understanding	Literacy through experience. Important tool.	Self-reliance. Practical experiences.	4
Theo	Negative, unclear	Negative, disappointed	No change	Supervisor	5
Tiril	Positive, clear understanding	Positive, engaged	Increased importance	Supervisor	6
Trond	Basic understanding. Dismissive	Positive, supportive	Literacy through practice. Abandoned theory	Supervisor, classroom experience	5
Ylva	Positive, basic understanding	Positive, clear understanding	Literacy through practice.	Student interaction	6

Table 5.2 addresses RQ2 and shows that six of interviews had a positive attitude to A*f*L pre-practicum. Of those six, five reported a positive attitude post-practicum. One reported a negative trajectory i.e., their attitude to A*f*L was more negative as a result of practicum participation. Four of the interviews reported a negative or passive attitude pre-practicum, of those four, three interviewees reported a positive attitude post-practicum, one reported still having a negative attitude. When asked about influential factors, seven interviewees reported that their partner school or teacher supervisor was the most influential factor for A*f*L development. One participant reported that assessment theory was an influential factor. One reported IB training was the influential factor and one person reported student partner interaction as the most influential factor in their A*f*L development.

5.1.3 RQ3: A*f*L incorporated teaching activities

This section summarises the answers to the third research question. The answers to have been summarised in Table 5.3 RQ3 is:

Which teaching activities that incorporate AfL do pre-service English teachers report adopting as a result of their final 45-day practicum placement?

Table 5.3: A summary of pre- and post-practicum A*f*L teaching activities

Interviewee	Planned teaching activity	Practicum teaching activity
Alex	Portfolio, peer assessment	Process orientated writing
Dagmar	Oral dialogue	Process orientated writing
Ingrid	Two stars and a wish, exit notes	Written feedback
Konrad	None	Spontaneous oral assessment
Oline	Consolidation period, exit notes	*Kahoot, Padlet*
Theo	Written/oral nonspecific	Process orientated writing
Tiril	Individual and class oral	Process orientated writing
Trond	None	Process orientated writing
Ruben	None	Written feedback
Ylva	None	Oral presentation feedback

Table 5.3 addresses RQ3 and shows that four interviewees reported not planning any teaching activities whilst three planned oral assessment, two planned digital assessment exercises and one planned portfolio work and peer assessment. Post-practicum, eight participants reported adopting written assessment, two reported adopting oral assessment and one adopted digital interactive media as a formative assessment teaching activity.

5.2 RQ1: Pre-service English teacher interviews

In the previous sections I summarized the data that was gathered to answer each of the research questions. In the following sections, I will present the text data that was gathered in interviewees with the PROF4045 course participants. I shall present extracts from the pre-and post-practicum interviews transcriptions. I do this because I aim to represent interviewees in the most trustworthy, reliable manner possible and to reduce the amount of interpretation (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Ryen, 2016)

This section will address RQ1: *To what extent do pre-service English teachers studying on the "Facilitating for pupils' Learning" course, consider themselves to be ready to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom, pre practicum?* I present extracts from the interview transcriptions to investigate how prepared pre-service English teachers considered themselves to be for giving formative assessment. The interview questions focused on what assessment theory participants had read because this is the participants had been introduced to the concept of A*f*L (Brevik et al., 2016). Each of the interviewees' self-reported preparedness is compared to their evaluative assessment scores which have been summarised

in Table 5.1. The evaluative questions are detailed (section 5.2.1) before presenting interviewees' self-reported preparedness (section 5.2.2)

5.2.1 Evaluation of interviewee assessment literacy

Participants were asked nine questions to evaluate their understanding of A*f*L. The first four questions are presented in table 5.4 below:

(i) True or false, all students have the right to formative assessment?
(ii) True or false, the right to formative assessment is written into Norwegian law?
(iii) True or false, according to law, the responsibility of delivering formative assessment for all students lies with the school owners?
(iv) Do you know who owns the school you will be placed at?

Table 5.4. The results of evaluative questions.

Interviewee	All students have the right to FA True/False/unsure	The right to FA is written into Norwegian law? True/false/unsure	The responsibility of delivering FA for all students lies with the school owners. True/False	Do you know who owns the school you will be placed at? Yes/No/unsure
Alex	False	False	False	No
Dagmar	True	True	Not sure	No
Ingrid	True	True	False	Yes
Konrad	True	False	False	Yes
Oline	False	False	True	No
Theo	True	False	True	Yes
Tiril	True	True	False	No
Trond	True	True	True	Yes
Ruben	False	False	True	Yes
Ylva	True	Not sure	True	Yes

Table 5.4 shows that seven interviewees knew the answer to the first evaluative question and five knew the correct answer to question two, four did not and one was unsure. Furthermore, five knew the correct answer to question three whilst four did not and one was of the interviewees were unsure. Lastly the table shows that six knew the correct answer to question four whereas four participants did not.

The interviewees were also asked the following questions, replies are summarised in table 5.5:

(v) When was the first fundamental reform to include formative assessment and what was it called?

(vi) Do you know what the aim of the reform was?

(vii) As part of the reform assessment K06, learning goals were introduced to strengthen assessment practices, considering this, to what extent do you agree with the following statement? One being not at all 6 being totally agree. Is it the responsibility of the teachers to express learning goals to their students?

(viii)Do you know UDIR's four principles for good formative assessment?

(ix) Do you know what theory these four principles are based on?

Table 5.5 Further results of evaluative questions

Interviewee	The first fundamental reform to include FA and what was it called? (yes/no/unsure	Do you know what the aim of the reform was? (Yes/no/unsure)	Is it the responsibility of the teachers to express learning goals to their students? (1-6)	UDIRs' 4 principles for good FA? (yes/no/unsure)	Which theory the four principles are based on? (yes/no/unsure)
Alex	Unsure	Yes	6	No	No
Dagmar	Unsure	No	6	Unsure	Yes
Ingrid	No	No	6	No	No
Konrad	Yes	Yes	5	No	No
Oline	Yes	Yes	6	No	No
Ruben	No	No	6	No	No
Theo	No	No	5	No	No
Tiril	Yes	Yes	6	No	No
Trond	Yes	Yes	6	No	No
Ylva	No	No	6	No	No

Table 5.5 shows that five of the participants knew the correct answer to question five, four did not and one was unsure also shows that five interviewees know the correct as answer to question six. Furthermore, Table 5.5 shows that eight rated question seven as a six out of six and two rated it a five out of six. Lastly the table shows that nine of interviewees did not know the answer to question nine.

5.2.2 Interviewee self-reported preparedness

In this section, I will present the findings in alphabetical order. In the extracts that are cited, I use the first letter of my own name (J, i.e., the interviewer) and the first letter of the pseudonym of the interviewee. The extracts are numbered with a denotation. The denotation contains an abbreviation of the participants pseudonym with the number of the extract. The denotations also contain the abbreviation "INT01" or INT02. This denotes which interview the extract is from (i.e., the pre-practicum interview (INT01) or the post-practicum interview (INT02)). For example, an extract from the second interview with Trond would read would be: [abbreviation of the participant's pseudonym and extract number] + [pre- or post-practicum interview] and would read TR01 INT02. The extracts are not extensive due to the special limitations of this study. Furthermore, extract size is limited because I considered it ethically responsible to include an extract for every interviewee.

The participants were asked the following question:

Does the theory you have learned at university give you the confidence to practice formative assessment on your practical placement?

This study found that, pre-practicum, Alex reported feeling confident as a result of the assessment theory he had read. However, Alex answered just 12% of evaluative questions correctly (Table 5.1) suggesting a misunderstanding of assessment theory:

Extract AL01 INT01

> *A: Yes. I definitely think so, like the reading we have been doing these past few weeks has given me a lot of ideas and it has laid the ground works for me to come up with ways to execute formative assessment, so I would say definitely yes*

Dagmar reported that she felt well prepared for A*f*L and described the theory presented on the PROF4045 as "enlightening" (DA01 INT01). Dagmar achieved the second highest score when answering evaluative questions, 62% were answered correctly (Table 5.1). The correlation between her advanced A*f*L literacy, as suggested by her high evaluation score, and her self-reported understanding of A*f*L suggests that Dagmar successfully interpreted the assessment literature which led to her incorporating A*f*L into her teaching, albeit in a limited capacity (Table 5.1).

Extract DA01 INT01

> *D: Most of the texts I have read on formative assessment have been enlightening until now, I feel like they have given some examples of how you can do it and why you should do it, I feel like its a strong point of this course.*

This study found that Ingrid felt well prepared for A*f*L and attributed her confidence to participation in seminars. However, she stated that assessment theory made A*f*L seem complicated. Ingrid answered 25% of evaluative questions correctly (Table 5.1). The low evaluation score correlates with Ingrid's belief that assessment theory made A*f*L seem complicated and can be a reason for her abandoning assessment theory whilst on practicum as shown in Table 5.1.

Extract IG01 INT01

> *I: […] by reading so much about assessment and reading how important it is and there is so much research on this subject. It makes it feel more complicated than it is. […]*
>
> *J: so you say that the practical help you have received at university has helped you more than the theoretical foundation?*
>
> *I: the theoretical foundation helps me to know what to do but it doesn't make me so secure that I will be able to do it*

This study found that, pre practicum, Konrad reported feeling under-prepared for giving A*f*L. Initially, he stated that he had read some assessment theory although he did not understand it. As the interview progressed, Konrad admitted that he had not read any. Konrad answered 50% of evaluative questions correctly (Table 5.1) suggesting that his AL was strengthened by alternative sources such as seminars and lecture attendance.

Extract KR01 INT01

> *K: Not really no, it's more like it has been mentioned as part of others but only like a small part*
>
> *J: Okay, so you have heard it mentioned in seminars and lectures, but you have not read anything specific about it?*
>
> *K: Not specific, no*

This study found that Oline reported feeling well prepared. However, she said that her advanced understanding of A*f*L had come from IB webinars not PROF4045 assessment theory.

Extract OL01 INT01

> *OL: No. I am currently taking an online course, its professional development for the IB so I have also learnt a little bit there about formative assessment, so it wasn't an article, but it was a webinar,*

Oline stated that the PROF4045 curriculum was too theoretical and was also critical to seminars stating that more practical applications of A*f*L should be presented. Oline's criticism of the theoretical nature of PROF4045 assessment theory correlates with her low evaluative score of 37% and suggests that assessment theory did not help her prepare for giving A*f*L on practicum.

Extract OL02 INT01

> *OL: [...] you know, the seminar leaders do try to give us some examples and stuff but maybe we can role play like we are a class, and we have students, [...] because just to tell us to read an article again because you have to take the initiative. Then if you do have questions, then who do you ask? You are all alone. And I do feel like some of these seminars, as far as the content. I don't feel like it helps me in any way. It like it's too… it's too theoretical it's not something you can relate to.*

This study found that Ruben reported feeling confident to try to give formative assessment despite acknowledging the difficulties of reaching all students, however he attributed his confidence to his optimistic attitude and not his knowledge of assessment theory. Ruben's low evaluative score of 37% reflects his limited reliance on assessment theory and could be the cause of him not referring to assessment theory whilst teaching (Table 5.1).

Extract RU01 INT01

> *R: [...] well it* (assessment theory) *gives me the confidence to try, but I think that I would have that confidence [...] no matter what, [...] I have a tendency to doubt myself but just do it anyways, but it usually pans out*

Tiril reported that she did not feel confident to give A*f*L, but that assessment theory had gone some way to help. She also said that hearing about A*f*L in lectures and seminars made her more conscious of the topic. Despite her lack of confidence, Tiril achieved the highest evaluative score with 74% of questions answered correctly (Table 5.1). She reported that she had refereed to assessment theory whilst teaching albeit in a limited way.

Extract TI01 INT01

> *T: [...] just hearing about it made me more conscious about it, that I should really bring it into my classes and focus more on actually giving formative assessment to the students and*

not just feedback […] I don't feel like I have learnt that much now that will make me feel so confident, but it definitely helps a little bit

This study found that Theo did not feel ready for giving assessment and was critical to the theory that had been presented on PROF4045. He stated that he did not feel it could help him with teaching and that he would prefer practical assessment tuition. Theo's negative view of A*f*L theory was reflected in his poor evaluative score of 25%:

Extract TH01 INT01

TH: Well, I felt like it didn't really go all that well because there was a lot of theory about it and not really that much about how we can actually do it and see some actual examples of how teachers actually do it.

Later in the interview, Theo stated that he would like assessment to be modelled by teacher educators and would like to practice doing A*f*L:

Extract TH02 INT01

TH: I would like feedback on my assignments and how I can improve, and I definitely feel that students can learn form that kind of information, […] I like the theory, but I would like more practice to actually do it

Trond stated that he did not feel prepared for A*f*L and explained that he did not have a clear view of what formative assessment was because the theory presented on the PROF4045 course was too complicated. Trond exhibited a lack of understanding of A*f*L, however he answered 50% of evaluative questions correctly which suggests that he underestimated his own abilities:

Extract TR01 INT01:

T: I don't really have a clear definition for it, but I am guessing it I like assessing the sort of … I really don't have a clear understanding of it. I have sort of struggled with most of the terms, like it's understandable but it sounds more complex than it actually is

Ylva reported that she felt that the articles she had read from the PROF4045 programme had prepared her for giving formative assessment. However, her low evaluation score on 37% contradicts Ylva's A*f*L confidence:

Extract YV01 INT01:

Y: I think there is a lot to learn from reading the articles… er I think for me personally its really nice to see something hands on.

5.3 RQ2: Attitudes, beliefs and influences

This section addresses RQ2: *To what extent do pre-service English teachers studying on the "Facilitating for pupil's Learning" course, consider themselves to be ready to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom, pre practicum?* I present examples of how participants' attitudes developed over the duration of their practicum and also present the influences that affected their AL development. Participants were asked pre- and post-practicum the following question:

(i) Do you feel that formative assessment could improve classroom standards?

The difference in replies, pre-and post-practicum suggest how participants attitudes developed. In addition, interviewees were asked to rate the importance of AfL on a scale of one to six as shown in Table 5.2. The self-reported attitude to AfL was followed up post-practicum by asking the following question:

(ii) How has your attitude to AfL changed after your practical experiences?

This study found that, pre-practicum, Alex believed that AfL could help improve classrooms standards. He maintained this view post-practicum although he was negative to the practical aspects of assessing a whole class. He also stated that the gap between assessment theory and real-life assessment was substantial. Alex rated the importance of AfL as a five out of six. When asked about how his attitudes had developed, Alex responded said that he had previously been naive to the complexities of giving formative assessment.

Extract AL02 INT02

A: I think it has become a lot more realistic because you can only do so much to like … especially when you have assessment and you have feedback right, you can use the assessment to change what you want to do, but you can't necessarily change what the students are going to do.

Dagmar maintained a positive attitude to A*f*L throughout her practicum experience believing that A*f*L was a way to raise classroom standards as it could motivate pupils. She rated the importance of A*f*L as a six.

Extract DA02 INT01

> *D: I think it creates an environment for learning, it motivates, or I think it could motivate pupils more if it is a regular part of your teaching […] when you have formative assessment in the classroom, they know what they have to do, you know what you have to do, they know what to expect from you, they also know what they should do themselves. The most important thing is that there is communication.*

When asked about how her attitude had changed, Dagmar said that she was more aware of the importance of A*f*L but believed it to be more difficult than she initially thought. She stated that to be successful with A*f*L, teachers require the support of their schools.

Extract DA03 INT02

> *D: […] well I have realised how important it is, because before it was very theoretical, my view on assessment for learning and formative assessment? I have realised how difficult it actually is in a systematic and a good way, […] you need to have support from the school, and you need to have support from the other teachers.*

Ingrid reported in both pre- and post-practicum interviews that she believed A*f*L was an effective way to raise classrooms standards and was optimistic to giving formative assessment. Ingrid rated the importance of A*f*L as a six. Post practicum, Ingrid was still positive but reported that her abilities did not match her confidence and said that incorporating A*f*L into her teaching had been challenging.

Extract IG02 INT02

> *I: […] assessment has something that has been challenging, […] and I have learned that I need a lot of practice and plan in advance and make room for formative assessment*

This study found that Konrad reported a substantial change in his attitude to A*f*L. Initially, he reported a limited understanding. However, post-practicum, Konrad said that A*f*L is an important tool for teaching and raising classroom standards (KR03 INT02). Despite his limited understanding of A*f*L pre-practicum, Konrad rated the importance of A*f*L as a six.

Extract KR03 INT02

> *J: So, you have gone from having no experience of formative assessment to having it clear in your head and understanding how you are going to use it as a teacher?*

> *K: Yeah, essentially yeah. Before I was aware it was a thing [...] but I didn't personally have*
> *any attitude towards it, now I find it to be a very useful tool in the toolbox*

Oline's attitude to A*f*L was positive before and after practicum. Shed rated the importance of A*f*L as a six. She said that she had used A*f*L actively in her previous years of teaching to motivate pupils and improve standards. However, Oline reported that she had focused on summative assessment on practicum because of her IB students focus on grades.

Extract OL03 INT02

> *O: I usually don't think about formative assessment, I think I focus on the summative, what*
> *will come at the end so when I start my unit, I always tell them what the outcome of this unit*
> *will be. [...]*
> *J: [...] so you concentrate on the summative, is there any reason for doing that?*
> *O: From what I have experienced my students focus a lot on grading, [...] the focus is pretty*
> *much on the grade.*

When asked how her attitude to A*f*L had changed, Oline reported that the reading of assessment theory, post practicum, helped her to be more reflective of her own teaching practices.

Extract OL04 INT02

> *OL: I think I have become more aware of how I can become better, and I think reflection is a*
> *very important part of being a teacher [...] what worked what didn't work I think it has really*
> *allowed me to be more aware to change my practices*

Ruben had a positive attitude towards A*f*L pre-practicum although he acknowledged the practical difficulties. He rated the importance of A*f*L as a four out of six. Post-practicum he was still positive. However, Ruben stated that he thought of A*f*L as challenging but restated his belief in the importance of A*f*L for teaching.

Extract RU02 INT01

> *R: I feel it's probably a difficult thing to do to try to give formative assessment to all students*
> *as often as possible, but I feel it is important and in an ideal world you would probably do it*
> *all the time*

Extract RU03 INT02

> *R: I probably feel it's even more important, but I probably feel it's more difficult to do well,*
> *it's not hard to do but it is hard to do well, and if you are going to do it you should do it well*

Tiril's attitude towards formative assessment pre-practicum was positive, rating the importance of A*f*L as a six. She had a clear understanding of what A*f*L was and expressed that it would have been beneficial for her own education. In her post-practicum interview, Tiril described how her attitude to A*f*L was still positive and that she considered herself able to use it in every class without planning.

Extract TI02 INT02

> T: *[...] my attitude has changed a bit because I could see how easy it (A*f*L) actually is and how it can be done in so many different ways. I feel like it would be easier to incorporate in my teaching. Before my practical, I thought of it as something I wanted to do, but that it would take a lot more time and planning for me but now I feel like it's just something I would do in every class without any extra planning.*

Trond said, pre-practicum, that he did not know if A*f*L could raise classroom standards, but still rated it a five out of six for importance. Post-practicum, Trond said he believed A*f*L could replace giving summative grades and that he believed A*f*L *could* raise classroom standards. Trond displayed a substantial shift in his attitude to A*f*L after initially being sceptical. However, he reported that he was aware that incorporating A*f*L would be challenging to do.

Extract TR04 INT02

> T: *I think that I am pro formative assessment, I am supportive of that is the way to do it in a way so, because I think that in my experience, not giving grades but giving feedback on their progress was a good way both for me and the students to get an understanding of what they learnt*

Theo was initially unsure if A*f*L could improve classroom standards. He rated the importance of formative assessment as a five. Due to negative experiences, Theo maintained his negative attitude to A*f*L post-practicum stating that he was still unsure if incorporating A*f*L into teaching would be a way to raise classrooms standards. When asked about how his attitude had developed, Theo said that he had drown himself in assessment theory but to no avail. He stated that theory presented on the PROF4045 course sounded nice in principle but was ineffective when teaching (TH03 INT02). He also said that he would have appreciated getting formative feedback himself to understand what was expected of him on practicum.

Extract TH03 INT02

T: Well I felt like it didn't really go all that well because there was a lot of theory about it (AfL) and not really that much about how we can actually do it and see some actual examples of how teachers actually do it [...] since drowning myself in theory before the exams I did find that I like a lot of what they talk about [...] I would like feedback on my assignments and how I can improve and I definitely feel that students can learn form that kind of information, [...] there are a lot of theoretical things that sound really nice but you have a little experience at actually doing it.

This study found that Ylva was positive to AfL, rating its importance as a six. She stated that even though she had not planned any AfL teaching activities, she believed it could improve classrooms standards by helping her build positive relationships with her pupils.

Extract YV02 IN01

Y: well one of the most important things that students say is that they like to be seen by the teacher and they like to know that the teacher cares, so there is no greater way to show a pupil that you care by doing that (giving formative feedback)

Post-practicum, Ylva maintained her positive attitude towards AfL stating that she had seen first-hand how AfL could improve classroom standards. When asked about how her attitude had changed, Ylva explained that her practical experiences had given her a greater understanding of how AfL should be done and the positive affect it can have on pupils. She also emphasised the simplicity of giving formative assessment.

Extract Y03 IN02

Y: I guess I just understand it more, because I always thought that when I was in school myself, I always wanted someone to tell me how I could do better, now I understand how easily it can be implemented in the teaching.

5.4 RQ3: A*f*L incorporated teaching activities

This section presents findings related to RQ3: *Which teaching activities that incorporate AfL do pre-service English teachers report adopting as a result of their final 45-day practicum placement?* I highlight which AfL teaching activities participants planned pre-practicum and which activities they had adopted as a result of practicum. Due to the constrictions of this study, in this section just three interviewee responses are presented. Extracts from all interviewees would have been preferable, however all of the participants responses have been presented in Table 5.1. I have categorised the interviewees by which activity the participants

adopted. The three cases presented are representative of each category. Case 1 represents the seven interviewees who adopted Process-orientated writing or general written assessment Case two is representative of the two interviewees that adopted spontaneous oral feedback and case three represents the single interviewee who adopted digital interactive games (see Table 5.3 for an overview of activities). The adopted teaching activities are compared with the planned teaching activities. The interviewees were asked the following two questions. The first was asked pre-practicum, the second was asked post-practicum. The answers to each question are presented case by case:

(i) Have you done any lesson planning as part of your course and if so, did you consider how you would facilitate for using formative assessment?

(ii) Did you have the opportunity to give formative assessment, do you have any specific examples?

5.4.1 Case 1: Adoption of process-orientated writing

This study found that pre-practicum Ingrid wanted to use *two stars and a wish* and also *exit notes* as a way to self-assess her teaching methods. However, on practicum, Ingrid's supervisor focused on Process-orientated writing so that was the teaching activity Ingrid adopted.

Extract IG03 INT01

> *I: I mentioned two stars and a wish [...] you can give them feedback on something they have written, like on a written assignment or a podcast [....] I also thought about using exit notes, like they can write something when they leave and you can use what they have written to understand what they would like to do, and you can use that as self-assessment as well and you can use that to try to help them and adapt your teaching to them*

Extract IG03 IN02

> *I: Yeah [...] they wrote for 90 minutes in class, then they handed it in, and then we gave feedback, we looked over it and gave suggestions for further writing and then the next class it came back they got this feedback*

5.4.2 Case 2: Adoption of spontaneous oral feedback

Konrad said, pre-practicum, that he had not included any assessment in his lesson planning, and he had not considered any teaching activities that incorporated A*f*L. Post-practicum, Konrad explained that he had learnt how to do oral group assessment with his students. They analysed historical paintings and talked about defining features, thereafter Konrad gave

spontaneous oral feedback. Konrad referred to this teaching activity as an essential tool for learning.

Extract KR04 INT01

K: I did a lot of it (lesson planning) *in the spring semester, but we did not really include any assessment at all*

Extract KR05 INT02

K: Yes, a lot, giving a running feedback on student work, particularly group work [...] formative assessment was given both in the form of just assessing what the groups were working on, it was very group focused the class that I taught in. I suppose a specific example would be when we were doing an analysis of paintings and each group were working on it, it was basically how to analyse an historical painting [...] and giving some feedback on what they have been able to see.

5.4.3 Case 3: Adoption of digital interactive games

Oline stated that she planned to use questionnaires and consolidation periods in her teaching to give formative assessment. Post-practicum, Oline explained that she used digital teaching tools such as *Padlet* and *Kahoot* to incorporate A*f*L. The variation in Oline's activities reflects her extensive work experience as an IB teacher.

Extract OL04 INT01

[...] for example, you could do a questionnaire, so you ask are you able to define this word or are you familiar with that [...] there is also consolidation so you can just have post it notes then at the end of the lesson you can ask them, what have you learnt today? So, you can get a little bit of feedback

Extract OL05 INT02

O: What I did and what the students really liked was Kahoot.

5.5 Practicum activity logs

The activity logs consisted of eight questions and assessed how often pre-service English teachers experienced A*f*L, what type of assessment they observed and if they had given formative assessment themselves that day. A compilation of the *yes/no* answers to questions one to five and question seven can be found in Table 5.6. Question six asked which type of assessment was observed and is presented in table 5.7. Question eight followed up on the reply to question seven and asked what type of assessment they had given. The results are

presented in table 5.8. The statistical results from all of the questions are visualised in bar charts (Figure 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3).

Table 5.6. Answers to questions 1-5 and 7 from the practicum activity log results

Question	Yes	No	Unsure
Q1: Did you plan any lessons today?	29 (67.4%)	15 (34.9%)	N/A
Q2: If you did plan a lesson, did you include any time for assessment situations in your planning?	23 (55.5%)	6 (14%)	N/A
Q3: Have you discussed any form of assessment with your supervisor today?	25 (58.1%)	18 (41.9%)	N/A
Q4: Have you discussed formative assessment with your supervisor today?	19 (44.2%)	24 (55.8%)	N/A
Q5: Have you observed any type of formative assessment being given to any pupils today?	15 (34.9%)	27 (62.8%)	1 (2.3%)
Q7: Have you given any formative assessment today?	19 (44.2%)	24 (55.8%)	N/A

Table 5.6 shows that the activity logs generated 44 replies for question one and that 29 (67.4%) of the replies confirmed they participants had planned lessons that day. Out of those 29 replies, 23 (67.4%) said that they had included time in their lesson planning for assessment. Table 5.6 also shows that question three (*have you discussed formative assessment with your supervisor today)* generated 43 responses. Of the 43 responses, 25 (58.1%) reported that they had. Furthermore, Table 5.6 shows that the activity log generated 43 replies for question five (*Have you observed any type of formative assessment being given to any pupils today?*). Of the replies, fifteen (34.9%) reported that they had, 27 (62.8%) said that they had not and 1 (2.3%) said they were unsure. The activity logs followed up question five by asking what type of assessment they had observed. The answers are in Table 5.7. Table 5.6 also shows that 43 replies were generated for question seven (*Have you given any formative assessment today?*). Of the replies, nineteen (44.2%) said that they had. Question seven was followed up by asking which type of assessment they had given, and the answers

are shown in Table 5.7. These statistics have been visualised into bar charts and are shown in Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3.
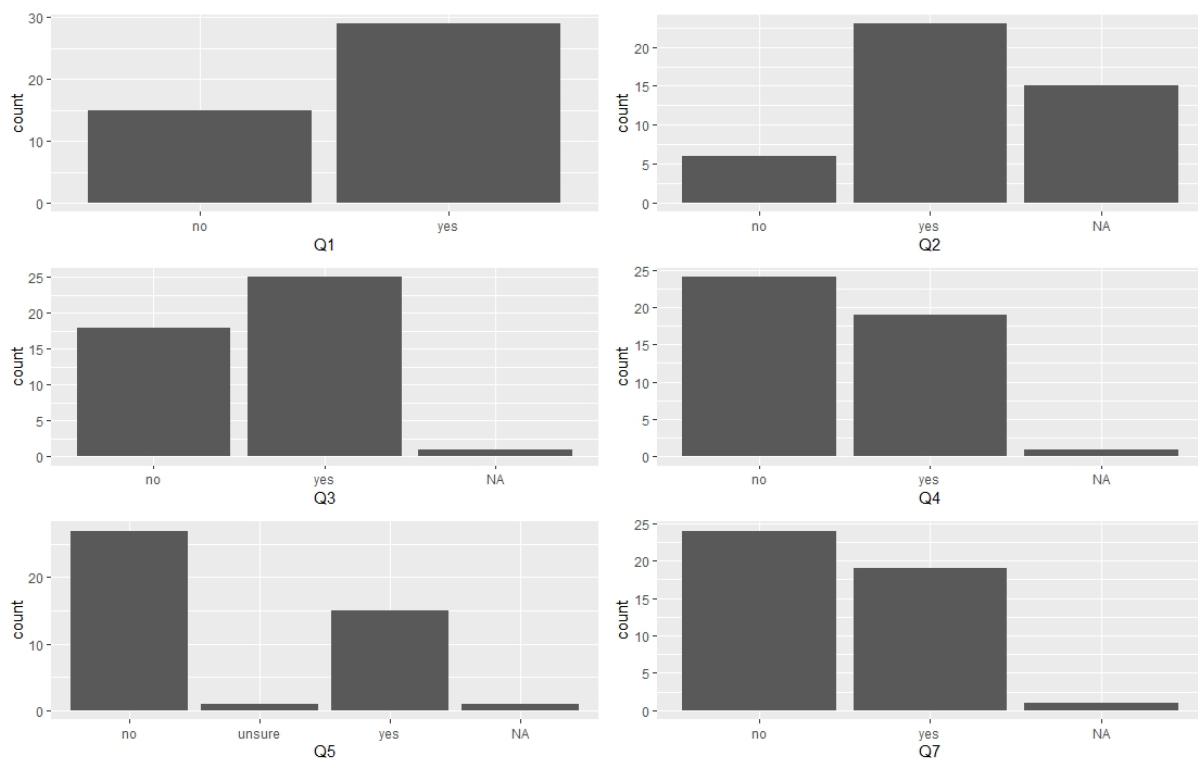
Figure 5.1 The bar charts visualise the *yes/no/unsure* outcomes for questions 1-5 and question 7.

Table 5.7 The answers to question 6: *what type of formative assessment have you observed?*

Q6. What type of formative assessment have you observed?	Answer
Written assessment	7 (16.3%)
Oral assessment	11 (25.6%)
Peer assessment	3 (7.0%)
Self-assessment	2 (4.7%)
Group assessment	1 (2.3%)
Other	0 (0.0%)

Table 5.7 shows that of the 24 replies generated in question six, seven (67.4%) said that had observed written assessment, eleven (25.6%) said they had observed oral assessment, three (7%) said that they had observed peer assessment, two (4.7%) had observed and one reported observing group assessment. The results have been visualised in Figure 5.2.
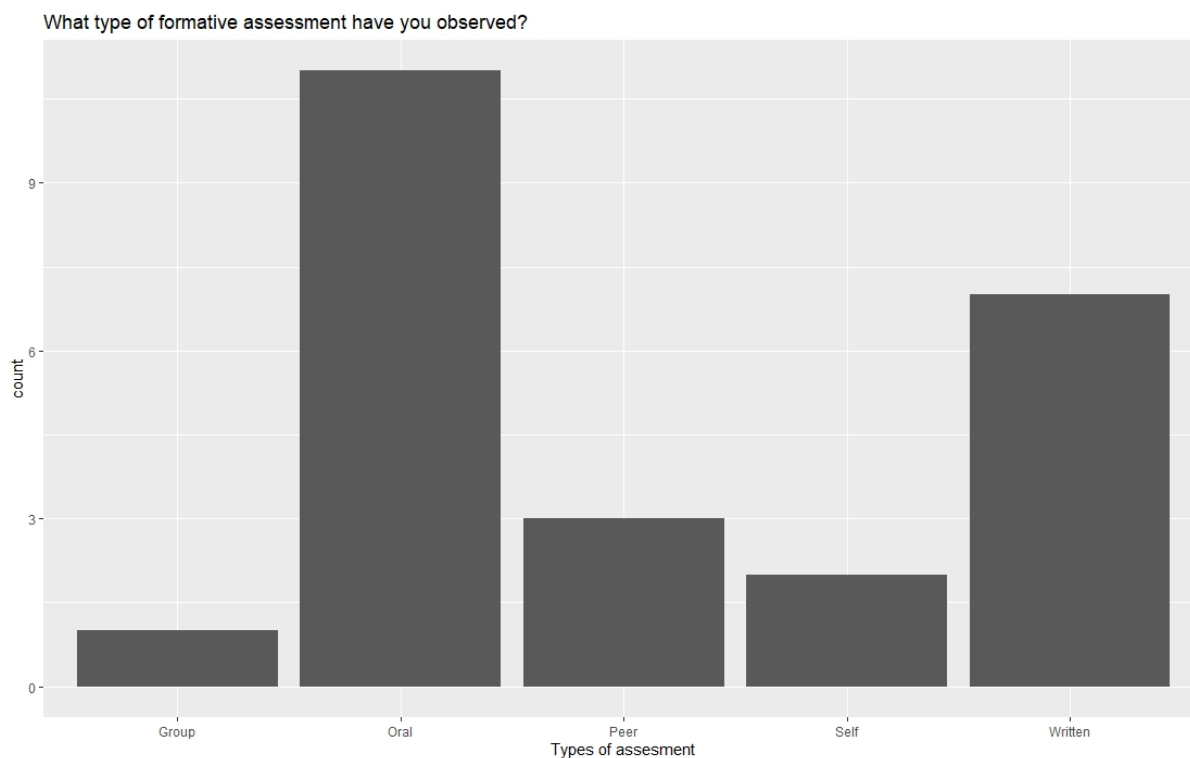
Figure 5.2. The bar chart shows the types of formative assessment activities participants observed on practicum and how often they observed them

Table 5. The answers to question eight: *Have you given any formative assessment today?*

Q8. If you have given formative assessment, what type of formative assessment did you give?	Answer
Written	10 (23.3%)
Oral	9 (20.9%)
Group	1(2.3%)

Table 5.8 shows that the activity logs generated twenty replies to question eight. Ten (23.3%) of the replies stated that they had given written assessment whilst nine (20.9%) said they had given oral assessment and one (2.3%). The table shows a total of twenty replies. However only nineteen replies answered yes to question seven. This is because respondents could answer question eight even if they had replied in the negative to question seven. The results have been visualised in Figure 5.3.

What type of formative assessment have you given?
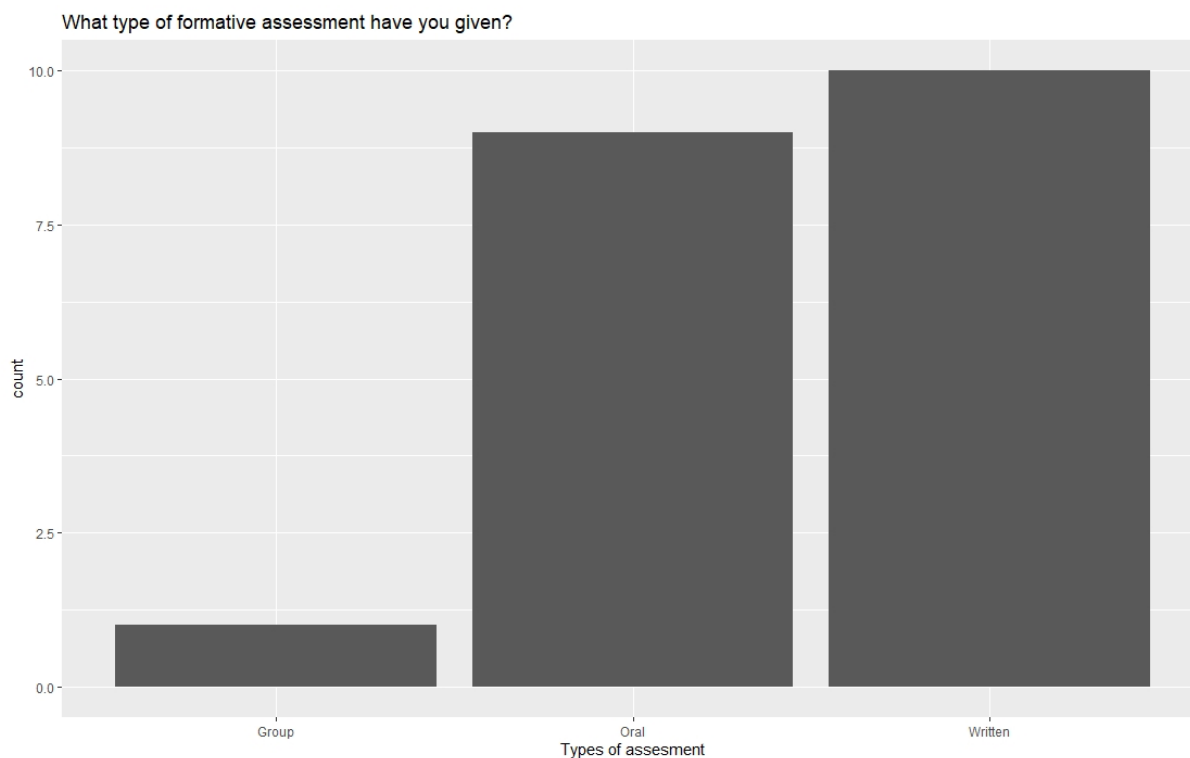
Figure 5.3 A bar chart showing the types of formative assessment participants had used themselves to teach on practicum

5.6 Summary of findings

This section has presented the findings that provide answers to this study's overarching research question and the three subordinate research questions. In answer to RQ1, this chapter found that the majority of interviewees (60%) considered themselves to be well prepare by the PROF4045 course to give A*f*L. In answer to RQ2, this chapter showed that interviewees attitudes and beliefs to A*f*L were substantially influenced by the practicum placement with mentor teachers being the biggest influence. The findings on practiucm influence were backed up by the activities logs, 55.8% of interviewees reported discussing A*f*L with their mentor teachers on a daily basis. In the majority of cases (90%) participants with a positive attitude to formative assessment. In answer to RQ3, this chapter showed that a clear majority of interviewees (80%) adopted written assessment activities such as Process-orientated as a result of practicum experiences. Other activities adopted were oral assessment (10%) and interactive digital assessment (10%). The findings in this section will, in the next chapter, be discussed in light of the assessment theory presented in chapter three.

6 Discussion

In the previous chapter, ten pre-service English teachers' self-reported AL development was presented. In the thematic IPA analysis, a list of themes was created then organised into three cluster connected areas. The cluster connected areas were *preparedness, attitudes, beliefs and influences* and *teaching activities* (see Figure 4.2.) The cluster topics were created to address each of this study's research questions and they form the structure for this discussion.

In this discussion, the interviewees have been categorised by their A*f*L trajectory as shown in Table 6.1. The categories are (i) *negative to positive trajectory*, (ii*) positive to negative trajectory* and (iii) *neutral trajectory*. I present a case from each of the categories to answer the main overarching research question; *What influence does the final 45-day practicum work placement on the teacher training programme at UiO have on pre-service English teachers' language assessment literacy?* In sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3, I discuss the findings in light of the assessment theory presented in chapters three and in light of the interviewees' experiences on the PROF4045 course. Their suggestions for alternative assessment teaching activities will be also discussed.

Table 6.1. The trajectory of pre-service English teacher's self- reported AL

Interviewee	A*f*L trajectory
Alex	Positive ➜ negative trajectory
Dagmar	Neutral trajectory
Ingrid	Neutral trajectory
Konrad	Negative ➜ positive trajectory
Oline	Neutral trajectory
Ruben	Negative ➜ positive trajectory
Theo	Neutral trajectory
Tiril	Neutral trajectory
Trond	Negative ➜ positive trajectory

Interviewee	AfL trajectory
Ylva	Neutral trajectory

Note: Neutral trajectory means that the interviewee did not change their attitude to AfL. They either maintained a negative attitude or maintained a positive attitude as a result of practicum participation.

Table 6.1 shows that Alex was an outlier as he was the only person to show a negative trajectory in his AL. It also shows that six of the interviewees had a neutral AL trajectory and that three reported a positive AL trajectory.

In the following section, the findings related to each research question will be discussed by presenting three individual cases. I have chosen to discuss just three cases because of the level of detail that is required with each case. It would have been preferable to discuss all ten interviewees individually, but the limitations of this thesis do not allow it. A case has been selected from each progression category to avoid conformation bias. Case one (Alex) was chosen because Alex is an outlier and represents the only positive to negative trajectory. Case two (Konrad) was chosen because he showed the most substantial AL development in the negative to positive trajectory category. Case three (Theo) was chosen from the neutral trajectory category because it was the only example of a negative neutral trajectory, all other cases in the category were positive neutral trajectories. The three cases will also be discussed in light of the interviewee's experiences on the PROF4045 course and their suggestions for alternative assessment teaching activities will be discussed. Suggestions for how teacher training programmes can improve participants' AL will also be discussed in light of theory presented in chapter 3.

6.1 Case 1: Positive to negative progression

Pre-practicum, Alex reported that he was prepared to establish AfL practices in the English classroom. Alex expressed a high level of confidence and attributed his confidence to previous experiences of self- and peer-assessment. Alex stated that his participation on the PROF4045 course had helped him put academic terms to earlier experiences of formative assessment. This type of experience first learning is what James Paul Gee (2017) described as

"mucking around" or "horizontal learning" (p. 34). Gee (2017) claims that people learn most effectively when they are free to try out new experiences in a low-stakes environment without fear of making mistakes. Alex was "mucking around" with his peers by exchanging draft copies of each other's assignments (Gee, 2017, p. 34). This process afforded Alex the opportunity to develop skills in self-assessment through experience first. The practice gave Alex the confidence to read assessment theory and assign academic terms to his previous experiences. Gee (2017) encourages educational institutions to not introduce new topics with generalised theory but rather to adopt the practice of facilitating for learning by modelling experiences. Gee's (2017) criticisms of theory first learning are in line with this study's findings. Seven of the ten interviewees stated that they would have liked to have learnt about formative assessment with practical activities such as role-play with fellow students. Furthermore, all ten interviewees reported that they had not been given the opportunity to practice giving formative assessment. These findings could explain the fact that seven of the ten interviewees reported that they did not refer to assessment theory to teach (see Table 5.2). The findings suggest that incorporating James Paul Gee's (2017) concept of learning by experience first learning into the PROF4045 programme could be beneficial for programme participants.

Alex attributed his assessment confidence to the theory that he had read on the PROF4045 course (A01 INT01). According to Brevik et al. (2016) programme participants are introduced to A*f*L terms and concepts firstly through lectures, based on assessment theory (for example Black and William, 1998/2018; Hattie & Timperley, 2007) and thereafter through seminars where participants are encouraged to collaborate in small groups to discuss and digest the theory. However, when Alex was asked pre-practicum about which assessment theory he had read, he was unable to recall any. Furthermore, when asked about the four basic principles of A*f*L, Alex did not know what they were or that they are based on Black and William's (1998) fundamental assessment theory (see Table 5.5). This suggests that Alex's assessment knowledge came from seminars and lectures rather than assessment theory. Alternatively, Alex's self-reported understanding of assessment theory was overstated. Alex's own reflections on this point serve to strengthen this view. Post-practicum, Alex described having a "more realistic view" of the complexities of classroom A*f*L and explained that he believed there is a large gap between assessment theory and the realities of classroom assessment. Alex also said that none of his teaching was based on assessment theory which confirms Dale and colleagues (2011/2020) findings that teachers rarely refer to

theory whilst teaching. In light of these findings, I propose that UiO is missing an opportunity to strengthen programme participants AL. UiO relies on participants reading assessment theory to gain an introduction to the topic of A*f*L. However, pedagogical research shows method to be ineffective (Black and William, 2009). Many academics point out the need for teacher educators to model formative assessment (Black and William, 2018; Kennedy, 1999; Volante and Fazio, 2009; Zu and Brown, 2018). In addition, no steps are taken by UiO to check that participants have understood the assessment theory pre-practicum (Brevik et al., 2016). This defies the basic principles of A*f*L (Black and William, 2009). Teacher educators need to understand where programme participants are in their learning and know what participants master and do not master to be able to guide their learning.

A defining feature of Alex's attitude was the tendency to think of A*f*L almost entirely in terms of written assessment. Cabot and Kaldestad's (2019) research confirm that student teachers tend to rely on written formative assessment. The academics highlight that this comes at the expense of oral feedback. Oral feedback in central to Black and William's (2018) pedagogical model for good formative assessment (See Figure 3.1). Cabot and Kaldestad (2019) found that students over reliance on written assessment was due to teacher educators over reliance on modelling written feedback techniques. The findings are mirrored in this study. Of the ten students interviewed pre-practicum, only one stated that they had planned to give oral assessment (see Table 5.1) and Six out of the ten interviewees reported that Process-orientated writing was the assessment activity they had either planned to employ or adopted post practicum (see Table 5.1). An analysis of the PROF4045 course description, lecture subjects and seminar activities reveal an emphasis on written feedback actives such as Process-oriented writing (UiO, 2021). In addition, the majority of assessment activities on the program are written assessments (Brevik et al., 2016). The findings are further strengthened by the statistics from the digital activity logs. When asked which type of assessment students had observed on practicum, 67.4% answered written assessment (see Figure 4.2). The findings suggests that both UiO's teacher training programme and partner schools are focusing on written feedback. Pedagogical research insists that oral classroom assessment is more effective than written assessment (Black and William, 1998/2018). Oral assessment is of particular importance for English teachers as it provides an opportunity to model language output for pupils and give corrective feedback on their speech (Herrera and Macías, 2015; Bøhn, 2015/2017).

Brevik and colleagues (2016) discuss the issue of neglecting specific assessment skills when assessing the integration of A*f*L on the teacher training programme at UiO. The academics realised that the lack of self-assessment modelling led to participants failing to adopt self-assessment of their own teaching and described it as a missed opportunity (Brevik et al., 2016). This study's findings suggest that teacher educators and mentor teachers at partner schools are missing the opportunity to train pre-service English teachers in an essential aspect of their profession, namely, using oral assessment to engage in collaborative dialog with their pupils.

Alex reported a more negative attitude to A*f*L as a result of his practicum after previously reporting a positive, optimistic attitude (see Table 5.2). The practical placement had a discouraging effect on Alex's attitude to A*f*L. This was an unusual outcome when compared to the other interviewees. Alex stated that he was still positive to the principles of A*f*L but had a more realistic view of giving formative assessment to an entire class. Alex described other practical factors such as the mood of the students or students' understanding of feedback as issues that were of more concern. Alex also said the amount of time needed to give written formative assessment to each pupil was impractical.

Alex's reflections are in line with Dale and colleagues (2011/2020) findings that there is a disjoint between what pre-service teachers learn through theory and the practicalities of classroom A*f*L. Brevik and colleagues (2016) admit that the assessment practice is not addressed as part of the teacher training programme, instead programme participants are expected to learn the required skills whilst on practicum. This in-balance between assessment theory and practical classroom A*f*L was addressed by Black and William (1998). The scholars emphasised that it is of utmost importance that teachers are not presented with general principles of A*f*L, but rather, provided with real working examples. Herrera and Macías (2015) addressed this issue specifically in terms of pre-service English teachers. Their research highlighted Colombian EFL teachers' lack of even the most basic practical formative assessment skills after programme graduation. The academics urge teacher educators to model A*f*L for students before sending them into the EFL classroom. Herrera and Macías (2015) plea are in line with research by Kennedy (1999) and Cabot and Kaldestad (2019) who both emphasise the influence teacher educators can have on programme participants' A*f*L competency. The academics highlight the need for teacher educators to actively and continuously model A*f*L during teacher training programmes. Fundamentally,

this issue goes back to Gee's (2017) principle of "horizontal learning". Students should be given the opportunity to try out new concepts and skills in a low-stakes environment without fear of reprisal. A real-life English lesson cannot be described as a low-stakes environment, on the contrary. Pre-service English teachers should be given the opportunity to test out practical AfL techniques, modelled by teacher educators, as part of their continuous development on training programs. None of this study's interviewees reported having the opportunity to practice giving AfL pre-practicum (see Table 5.1).

Alex adopted Process-oriented writing as a result of practicum participation and reported that formative assessment should be brief and given before a final grade so that pupils act on the feedback given. Alex's AL progression can be attributed to the guidance of his mentor. Whilst Alex did report a more negative attitude, he also showed a complex understanding of classroom AfL by critiquing the effectiveness of written assessment. Alex's rich learning experience supports Brevik and colleges (2016) assumption that AfL *is* well integrated in the teacher training programme and the practicalities of AfL can be learnt by practicum experience. However, Alex's referral to formative assessment solely in terms of written assessment again highlights Cabot and Kaldestad's (2019) findings that an over reliance on written assessment comes at the expense of oral assessment. Written assessment activities such as Process-orientated writing are highly beneficial for English pupils as writing is a core skill (KD, KL 2020). However, the over reliance on written assessment comes at the expense of pupils' opportunity to converse with their English teachers in structured dialogical activities.

6.2 Case 2: Negative to positive progression

Konrad reported that he did not feel ready to establish AfL in the English classroom. In post-practicum interviews, Konrad displayed an ambivalent attitude. He stated that he had not read any articles relating to AfL and had little interest in the topic. Furthermore, Konrad doubted that AfL would improve classroom standards. However, he did say that he would consider giving over time in his English lessons for formative assessment. When evaluated on his knowledge of AfL, Konrad exhibited a lack of understanding. He is an example of a student that contradicts the effectiveness of Edward's (2014) quadrant model which is employed by UiO's teacher training programme (Brevik et al., 2016). The assumption that participants progress to quadrant two with the required assessment skills contradicts the fundamental

principles of AƒL which in the Norwegian education system applies to every stakeholder (KD, 2006/2013/2020). Black and William (1998) explain that teachers need to use evidence to help their students move forward in their learning and also to use the evidence to adjust their own teaching. UiO's teacher training programme has little evidence that programme participants are assessment literate pre-practicum, the programme merely facilitates for assessment learning. As such, the programme thus teaches the principles of AƒL without adhering to those very principles, a problem Brevik and colleagues describe as needing to "walk the walk" and not just "talk the talk" (Brevik et al., 2016, p. 180).

Whilst the PROF4045 programme does have a positive influence on the AL of pre-service English teachers, further improvements are possible if the principles of AƒL were to be more stringently followed. Peg Graham (2005) sums up this situation when reporting on the needs of pre-service English teachers:

> If teacher candidates are to assess student learning in new, more reflective and powerful ways, their university and school-based mentors must be willing to assess differently themselves […] research suggests that foundational changes in teachers' working theories can only occur over time and with collaboration, commitment, and support. I agree. I also believe that teacher educators and mentor teachers have a responsibility to support beginning teachers through the moral, political, and emotional un- certainties of teaching in a […] reform-driven era (Graham, 2005, p. 609)

The pattern of teaching that ILS employs to train their teachers is described by James Paul Gee (2016) as "vertical learning" (Gee, 2017, p. 34). Students are expected to climb a skills ladder, continuously building on more and more theory. This is the experience described by Konrad who stated that pre-practicum, assessment theory was of no help for understanding how to integrate AƒL into his English teaching. Konrad insisted a more practical, hands on approach would be a better way to learn about formative assessment.

The 45-day practicum had a positive influence on Konrad's attitude to classroom AƒL. Of the ten interviewees, Konrad exhibited the most substantial positive development. As such, Konrad's example justifies the separation of assessment theory and assessment practice. Pre-practicum, Konrad was sceptical to AƒL. However, post-practicum, Konrad described AƒL as "a very useful tool in the toolbox" (K05 IN02). He explained that setting concrete targets with AƒL was an effective way to motivate pupils (K04 IN02). However, it was experiencing

the practical applications of A*f*L which were modelled by a fellow pre-service English teacher, that inspired Konrad to adopt A*f*L. Konrad reported that he had revisited PROF4045 assessment theory after seeing formative assessment in use and explained that the theory made more sense to him when he could relate it to real experiences. Konrad said, "I didn't really see how it was assessment as such but during work study I saw how it was assessment and what sort of purpose it has in a much clearer way than the theory ever indicated". Konrad's report once again backs up Gee's (2017) principle of *+experience*. The scholar emphasizes that general principles should be presented to students only after they have learnt about new topics through experience.

This study found that Konrad began his practicum assessment illiterate. Konrad would have most likely benefited from formative assessment modelling before being sent out to a partner school. This suggestion is backed up by De Luca and Klinger (2010) who have emphasised the need for teacher education programmes to make students' AL a priority:

> Pre-service teacher education is the central method for preparing competent and confident beginning teachers. Given the growing accountability framework in public education […] there is increased need for teacher competency in the area of student assessment and evaluation. […] Given the increasing importance of both large-scale and classroom assessment, developing assessment literacy in teacher candidates needs to be an explicit component of teacher education programs (De Luca & Klinger, 2010, p. 419)

De Luca and Klinger (2010) point out that AL needs to be "an explicit component of teacher education programs" (p. 419). However, Konrad's AL cannot be said to have developed due to an explicit component of the teacher training programme. Rather, his AL development was coincidental. He happened to be matched with a practical partner with advanced assessment skills. Furthermore, Konrad's mentor teacher did not offer assessment modelling. Konrad reported that he spoke just once with his mentor about A*f*L and that was in preparation for his final qualification examination lesson. Konrad was told to report using formative assessment if asked. This neglect of professional duties is a widely reported problem in Norwegian schools and has been discussed by Langfeldt and colleagues (2008) who carried out extensive research on accountability in Norway on behalf of KD. The academics found a widespread environment of teachers not accepting accountability for their teaching (Langfeld et al., 2008).

Furthermore, Brevik and colleagues (2016) admit that they did not monitor partner schools during their research on the integration of A*f*L at UiO and also state that mentor teachers are not required to document A*f*L literacy (Brevik et al., 2016). This situation highlights a further area of concern. Mentor teachers that graduated before the first assessment reforms of 2006 will likely have had no formal tertiary assessment education. Dale and colleagues (2011) point out that teachers tend to not keep up with pedagogical or didactic theory as characteristically, the teaching profession as a whole tends to rely on classroom experiences and neglects up to date research. The assessment illiteracy of mentor teachers could be strengthening the cycle of the *perceived wisdom* model of learning outlined by Kennedy (1999). Outsourcing the AL development of pre-service teachers to non-A*f*L documented mentor teachers can be viewed as a rejection of accountability.

As a result of the practicum, Konrad reported using oral group assessment and oral individual student/teacher dialog to give formative assessment. Konrad described the process as "running feedback on pupils' work" and said that it would be an important tool for his future teaching (K05 INT02). He also commented that it was an effective way to motivate students and help them understand their assignments. Konrad's adoption of oral assessment is highly beneficial for his English teaching and is an effective way to provide pupils with formative feedback that can help them move forward in their learning (Cf. Black & William, 2018).

6.3 Case 3: Neutral progression

Theo did not consider himself to be prepared for establishing good A*f*L practices in the English classroom pre-practicum. He reported a good understanding of A*f*L principles and said that he had read all the articles on the PROF4045 curriculum. However, he stated that the theory did not give him the confidence to give formative assessment in the English classroom. He had not planned any lessons involving A*f*L activities although when asked, Theo rated the importance of A*f*L as a six out of six. He believed A*f*L could improve classroom standards. Theo stated that he would wait to receive guidance from his mentor teacher before trying to give formative assessment. However, when on practicum, Theo reported that he did not observe his mentor teacher giving any forms of formative assessment in the first weeks of practicum and when the topic of assessment came up it was almost entirely in terms of giving summative grades. Theo was instructed by his mentor teacher to mark pupils' language mistakes in yellow text and return the assignment without any formative remarks. Theo explained that he felt the summative assessments given to pupils

were largely pointless as the assignments were non-obligatory so many pupils chose to simply not hand in work. The pupils that did hand in work were not given the chance to improve their assignments. Theo felt that the corrections were ineffective. However, Theo's criticism of his mentor teachers' assessment practice reveals a positive development in his AL. Pre-practicum, Theo was unable to assign basic assessment terms to teaching activities. For example, he did not know the term *Process-orientated writing* when talking about repeated written assessment which suggests a lack of knowledge about assessment theory. Post practicum, Theo was able to critically assess the types of assessment given and exhibited a complex understanding of the difference between summative and formative assessment. Theo's mentor teacher modelled how formative should *not* be done which was still a rich learning experience for Theo.

Theo's initial lack of AfL confidence confirms the repeated advice from academics (for example, Black & William, 1998/2018; De Luca & Klinger, 2010; Gee, 2015; Graham 2005; Herrera & Macías, 2015; Kennedy, 1999) who state that pre-service teachers AL needs to be an explicit component of teacher training courses. Despite the assessment curriculum provided by the PROF4045 programme, Theo did not consider himself to be assessment literate and was sent out to a high-stakes environment without the confidence to properly assess his student's English competency. Stiggins (1999) formerly addressed this issue by giving teacher training institutions a list of programme components to develop the AL of pre-service teacher. The list includes "a unit on assessment in an introduction to teaching course", "multiple units on assessment within the context of a various methods course", "a separate course or set of courses on assessment methods" and "a program of assessment training taught by professors who model various methods" (Stiggins, 1999, p. 24). UiO's teacher training program does not seem to have heeded Stiggins' (1999) advice as it employs none of the scholar's programme components. Rather the programme has just one single, 30-point course that teaches AfL out of a 300-point programme (UiO, 2021).

In addition to the aforementioned teacher training programme components, Stiggins (1999) suggests teacher training programmes should conduct a "thoughtful analysis of where and how the essential material is covered, modelled and certified" (Stiggins, 1999, p. 24). Stiggins' (1999) challenges teacher training institutions to adopt the values of AfL to critically self-assess their programmes. The scholar advises that programme participants be queried to determine whether they are mastering essential classroom assessment

competencies. However, UiO does not appear to have heard Stiggins' (1999) advice. UiO's self-evaluation of the teacher training programme consists of a Likert scale questionnaire where participants are asked how satisfied they are with the curriculum content. However, the previous evaluation had a reply rate of just 23% (UiO, 2019). This study has shown that a short individual interview with pre-service English teachers is sufficient to get a reasonable understanding of their AL. For example, if Theo had been queried in an interview post-practicum by the teacher educators, it would be clear that he lacked the knowledge and confidence to tackle classroom A*f*L. No such personal interventions are carried out at UiO despite Brevik and colleagues (2016) insistence that A*f*L is well integrated into the teacher training program (Brevik et al., 2016).

Pre-practicum, Theo stated that he would like to do Process-orientated writing with his students and also said that he would like to try verbal assessment by discussing the written mistakes pupils had made in their texts. Post-practicum, Theo reported adopting Process-orientated writing as an assessment activity despite it not being successful on practicum. Theo stated that in hindsight, it was a mistake to give pupils the choice to hand in draft assignments and that in future he would make draft copies an obligatory component and that pupils must show that they have used the feedback to improve their work. Despite the negative practicum experience, Theo exhibited the ability to critically self-assess his own teaching activities. This is an example of a learning process that supports Brevik and colleges (2016) assumption that practical assessment skills can be learnt on practicum. Theo's example also supports Gee's (2017) theory of experience first learning. Theo learnt by experience; however, his learning experience was not beneficial for his pupils. The pupils missed the opportunity to get formative feedback on their work due to Theo not realising that drafts should be obligatory and part of a continuous process of feedback. Theo's pupils would have befitted from Theo having had the opportunity to make the mistakes on his teacher training programme rather than in the classroom. Theo reported that at no point before practicum had he the opportunity to practice giving formative assessment. When asked how he would like to have learnt about A*f*L Theo said the following:

> *"Well, it would be useful, because a lot of the professors have been teachers themselves, so it would be useful if they shared some of their experience on this kind of assessment, maybe and I would like to hear about how they have used this assessment theory in specific situations and how they have adjusted the theory to be used in the classroom*

Thus, Theo wished that teacher educators would model how assessment should be done. UiO's reluctance to properly model assessment practices led to an actual classroom failure which had a negative impact on both Theo's AfL confidence and his pupils' learning. This situation once again strengthens the arguments of Graham (2005), Kennedy (1999), Stiggins (1999), De Luca & Klinger (2010) and Cabot & Kaldestad (2019), amongst others, that state that it is of utmost importance for teacher educators to model real assessment activities. The Department for education puts good writing skills at the heart of pupil development in the ESL classroom (KD, KL 2020). By modelling assessment activities for pre-service English teachers, teacher educators can improve the AL of programme participants which will, in turn, improve the writing skills of pupils in the English classroom.

6.4 Didactic implications

This MA study has commented on the influences a practical work placement has on pre-service English teachers and also how the PROF4045 prepares pre-service English teachers for practical work placements. This MA provides key insights into how pre-service English teachers are trained to give formative assessment, how they apply the training whilst on practicum and which AfL-incorporated teaching activities they adopt as a result of practicum influence. In the following I address some didactic implications that can be drawn as a result of this study.

The first implication is the importance of mentor teachers and partner schools to actively model AfL for pre-service English teachers with a *variety* of assessment activities. The participants in this study reported that they tended to adopt the AfL teaching activities mentor teachers used in class. However, the participants almost sole reliance on mentor teacher training for learning practical AfL skills highlights the ineffectiveness of the abstract assessment theory teacher educators use to prepare pre-service English teachers for their practical placement.

This MA argues that UiO is missing an opportunity to equip pre-service English teachers with practical AfL skills pre-practicum. PROF4045 programme participants should be starting their practical placements with a teaching toolbox full of practical assessment skills. This would possibly encourage pre-service English teachers to employ, didactically up to

date, assessment tools, rather than relying on mentor teachers to model activities for them. Mentor teachers are not necessarily up to date with the latest English didactic research, however, UiO is. This brings me to the second implication of this study. It is of utmost importance for teacher educators to model A*f*L before sending programme participants out on practical work placements. My study found that the pre-service English teachers reported a lack of practical understanding of A*f*L. The participants also all reported that they felt that they did not have the opportunity to practice A*f*L pre-practicum. Modelling formative assessment and facilitating for PROF4045 participants to practice giving A*f*L in a low-stakes environment would likely allow pre-service English teachers to build assessment confidence and thus feel free to use the A*f*L-incorporated teaching activities learnt on the PROF4045 programme on practical placements.

7 Conclusion

This MA study aimed to answer the overarching research question: *What influence does the final 45-day practicum work placement on the teacher training programme at UiO have on pre-service English teachers' language assessment literacy?*

To investigate the question, I posed three research more focused research questions:

> RQ1*: To what extent do pre-service English teachers studying on the "Facilitating for Pupil's Learning" course, consider themselves to be ready to establish good AfL practices in the English classroom, pre practicum?*
>
> RQ2: *How does the final 45-day practicum placement influence pre-service English teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards AfL as a method for teaching in the English classroom*
>
> RQ3: *Which teaching activities that incorporate AfL do pre-service English teachers report adopting as a result of their final 45-day practicum placement?*

The methods employed to investigate the RQs were qualitative interviews with pre-service teacher and quantitative digital activity logs.

The study found that the 45-day practicum work placement had a profound influence on pre-service English teachers' assessment competency. The assessment experiences reported varied to a large degree and the amount of assessment training received varied between partner-schools. The majority of research participants reported a positive increase in their attitudes to formative assessment and all participants exhibited a more complex understanding of classroom assessment as a result of practicum participation. However, this study also found that improvements in pre-practicum preparedness are needed, and opportunities to strengthen pre-service teachers AL appear to be being missed by UiO. Structural changes to the teacher training programme could be a solution. This study proposes that the programme should include an obligatory 10-point introductory dedicated assessment course early on in the programme as well as elective advanced assessment courses throughout the programme. Both the obligatory and elective course suggested should model AfL and facilitate for participants to practice giving formative assessment.

7.1 Suggestions for further research

This study has highlighted the need further research on the AL of pre-service English teachers. I would like to see further studies conducted in two areas. The first area concerns the AL of mentor teachers and how they influence pre-service teachers. I suggest that mentor English teachers' AL and the A*f*L-incorporated teaching activities they pass on would be a beneficial research topic. Included in this research would be the assessment policy of partner schools and how much support mentor teachers receive to train pre-service English teachers in formative assessment. My second suggestion for further research is for educational institutions to employ the values of self-assessment and investigate which teacher training programme activities are most effective for strengthening pre-service English teachers AL.

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Appendix A: Pre-practicum interview guide

Pre-practicum Interview guide 3.0

Explain the purpose of the interview. This interview is studying pre-service teacher's language assessment literacy. By language we mean the ESL context.

The term 'assessment literacy' (Stiggins, 1991; 1994) has become accepted to refer to the range of skills and knowledge that a range of stakeholders need in order to deal with the new world of assessment into which we have been thrust. (Fulcher, 2012)

Assessment Literacy is defined as the knowledge about how to assess what students know and can do, interpret the results of these assessments, and apply these results to improve student learning and program effectiveness."

To address the question of pre-service teacher LAL I have chosen to ask about areas specific to the Norwegian ESL context. therefore, to understand AL I will be concentrating on three focus areas. Your attitudes to language assessment as you will be teaching in Norway. Formative assessment - because of its central role in The Norwegian directorate for education and training (Udir) plan for improving classroom standards Where you're learning has taken place? This section aims to address if you learn more at university, practice or independently

3) Formal laws and regulations are important as Norway is unique in its approach to the way assessment is regulated

These dimensions are based on a theoretical model for LAL that suggest there are 7 areas that people working in LA should be proficient in

Knowledge of theory

Socio cultural values - where

Language pedagogy

Scores and rating

Technical skill

Principles and concepts

Attitudes and beliefs

Local practices - regulations

Section 1 - Your Attitude and personal beliefs about using

Q1 - What level will you be teaching on your practical placement and what subjects will you be teaching?

Q2 - What do you understand the term formative assessment to mean?

Q3 - Do you feel that FA could improve classroom standards?

Q4 - Have you done any lesson planning as part of your course? If so did you consider how you will facilitate for FA?

Q5 - How do you plan to give formative assessment?

Q6 - Does the theory of FA you have learnt at university give you confidence to exercise FA in class?

Q7 - On a scale of 1 - 6. 1 being the least important 6 being the most. How important do you think FA is for-teaching within language learning?

Section 2 - Where learning of assessment takes place socio cultural

Q1 - Have you read any articles on FA? If so which ones and where did you find them?

Q2 - Did you have any understanding of the concept of FA theory before starting your teacher training?

Q3 - Are there any other ways you have learnt about FA theory apart from at university?

Q4 - On a scale of 1 - 6. 1 being the least interesting 6 being the most. How interesting do you find the information about FA that has been presented to you by the university?

1   2   3   4   5   6.

Q5 Is there another way you would like to learn about assessment theory?

Q6 - Have you had the opportunity whilst at university to practice giving formative assessment?

Section 3 - Understanding of regulations laws

Q1 - True or false. All students have the right to FA.

Q2 - True or false. The right to formative assessment is written into Norwegian law.

Q3 - True or false. According to law the responsibility of delivering FA lies with the owners of the school owners.

Q5 - Do you know who owns the school you will be placed at?

Q6 - Which was the first fundamental reform of the Norwegian school system to include FA and what was it called? Kunnskapløftet 2006

Q7 - Do you know what the aim of the reform was?
(Raising achievement for all students)

Q8 - As part of the education reform learning goals (læremål) were introduced as a way to strengthen assessment practices. Considering this, to what extent do you agree with the following statement 1 been not at all 6 being totally agree

It is the responsibility of the teacher to explicitly express learning goals to their students

1   2   3   4   5   6

Q9 - Do you know the Norwegian directorate for education and training (UDIRS) four principle for good formative assessment?

understand what they are to learn and what is expected of them

receive feedback that tells them about the quality of their work or performance

receive advice on how they can improve.

are involved in their own learning by, for example, assessing their own work

and development

Q10 - Do you know which theory these principles are based on?

Black and William 1998

Q11 - Have you had any instruction on regulations from the university?

Q12 - Do you think regulations are important to know about

Appendix B: Post-practicum interview guide

Interview goal

This interview is a continuation of the first interview with the students. The outcome of the first interview was understanding what students know about FA, where they learnt about it and in what way could improvements implemented. The interviews also enquired to how comfortable the students felt about giving FA. They have been completing blogs which ask them to document if and how often, FA they experience FA being given on their practical. Therefore, this interview will be asking about those experiences win the practical and if their attitudes to FA have changed. One of the central things to understand will be if the practical has given them a better understanding of FA? Another aspect is if they have a greater understanding of the importance of FA for learning.

Procedure

Set up a zoom meeting the day before the interviews (10/12 and 17/12) and send the link to the zoom meetings in good time. The links should be sent by mail and by text message to make it as easy as possible for the students to gain access to the meeting.

Greet the interviewees and ask them how their practical went. Do a sound check with the students to make sure they can be recorded easily. The sound can be recorded directly on Zoom but a separate Dictaphone should be used to assure a good recording.

Questions

Q1 - In the early stages of your practical it is traditional to spend more time observing than teaching. In these observations, where you aware of FA being given to students? Do you have any specific examples that come to mind?

Q2 - As part of your continuous assessment you have regular conversations with your supervisor. In your conversations, did the topic of FA come up?

Q3 - When teaching yourself, did you have the opportunity to give FA, do you have any specific examples

Q4 - Did any of the theory that you read at University help you with giving formative assessment to the students?

Q5 - Do you feel FA helps improve classroom standards

Q6 - How Do you think AfL helps students individually? Do you have any examples of an individual benefitting from personal formative assessment?

Q7- How has your attitude to AfL changed after your practical experiences

Q8 - how do you feel our first interview affected your attitude to AfL or formative assessment

Appendix C: Practicum activity logs statistical data

Rapport fra «Your experience of formative assessment during your practical placement V2 copy»

Innhentede svar pr. 8. mars 2021 06:16

Leverte svar: **43**

Påbegynte svar: **0**

Antall invitasjoner sendt: **0**

Med fritekstsvar | Uten fritekstsvar

Thanks for filling out this log!
You will be asked to answer this log once a day of the second week of your practical, and then once a day of the last week of your practical.

1. Did you plan any lessons today? (if no, you will go straight to question 3) *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Yes	29	67,4 %
No	15	34,9 %

2. Did you include any time for assessment situations in your planning? *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Yes	23	53,5 %
No	6	14 %

3. Have you discussed any form of assessment with your supervisor today? *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Yes	25	58,1 %
No	18	41,9 %

4. Have you discussed formative assessment with your supervisor today? *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Yes	19	44,2 %
No	24	55,8 %

5. Have you observed any type of formative assessment being given to pupils today? (if no, you will go straight to question 7) *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Yes	15	34,9 %
No	27	62,8 %
Not sure	1	2,3 %

6. What type of formative assessment have you observed? *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Written Assessment	7	16,3 %
Oral Assessment	11	25,6 %
Peer Assessment	3	7 %
Self Assessment	2	4,7 %
Group Assessment	1	2,3 %
Other	0	0 %

7. Have you given any formative assessment today? *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Yes	19	44,2 %
No	24	55,8 %

8. What type of formative assessment did you give? *

Svar	Antall	Prosent
Written assessment	10	23,3 %
Oral asessment	9	20,9 %
Group assessment	1	2,3 %