

Amalie Flo

Teaching Gender and Disability in the English Subject

A Qualitative Case Study on the Portrayal of Gender Diversity and Disability in Intersectional YA Literature in the Norwegian Lower Secondary EFL Classroom

Master's thesis in Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education for Years 5–10

Supervisor: Libe García Zarranz

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Abstract

Literature, and particularly young adult (YA) literature, is a valuable resource for language teaching and learning because it is authentic, inspires interaction, and expands language awareness that again could encourage pupils' intellectual development (Gabrielsen et.al., 2019). However, in recent years, reading literature seems to be less of a priority in Norway, as well as other countries, with an increased focus on general skills. This negative trend needs to turn because of the several positive outcomes of reading literature, as well as the potential for improvement of how intersecting categories in YA literature are portrayed (Corbett & Phillips, 2020), the trend needs to turn. A key to build a deeper understanding of the textual context is to engage pupils with a variety of texts and meaningful practices (Gabrielsen et.al., 2019). Another trend in Norwegian classrooms is the insufficient teaching of different social categories (Røthing & Svendsen, 2008) and how pupils view and talk about gender and disability. The aim of this master's thesis is to contribute to this needed shift through studying teachers' perspectives on what and why they choose to include literature in their language learning classrooms. Drawing from critical, inclusive, and intersectional pedagogy frameworks, I also discuss how teachers can, with inspiration from Bobkina and Stefanova's (2016) model, teach the social categories of disability and gender through engaging with YA literature in ways that encourage critical thinking. To do so, I have conducted a questionnaire among lower secondary teachers and found that they use well-familiar books and films, including *A Christmas Carol*, *Wonder* and *Matilda*, to teach literature. However, they rarely base their choices on intersectional categories, and rather discuss gender and disability separately. I have chosen to conduct an intersectional comparative analysis of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003), a book identified in the questionnaires, and *PET* (2020), a book of my choice. My findings have showed that there still is a need to increase and improve the use of literature to teach gender and disability in intersectional ways. Thus, I believe my MA thesis can make a meaningful contribution to this process.

Key words: intersectionality, YA literature, EFL classroom, critical thinking

Samandrag

Litteratur, og spesielt ungdomslitteratur (YA), er ei god kjelde til språkundervisning og -læring fordi den er autentisk, oppfordrar til samhandling og utvidar eleven si språkforståing. Dette kan igjen stimulere elevane si intellektuelle utvikling (Gabrielsen et.al., 2019). Dei siste åra har derimot lesing av litteratur blitt ein mindre prioritet i Noreg så vel som i andre land, medan fokuset på generelle ferdigheiter har auka. Denne trenden må snu med tanke på alle dei positive sidene ved å lese litteratur, samt potensialet for forbedring av interseksjonelle kategoriar (Corbett & Phillips, 2020). Ein nøkkel er å engasjere elevane i meningsfulle aktivitetar med tekstar som gir dei ei djupare forståing av innhaldet (Gabrielsen et.al., 2019). Ein anna trend i norske klasserom er at undervisninga av ulike sosiale kategoriar er utilstrekkeleg (Røthing & Svendsen, 2008), men òg korleis elevane oppfattar og snakkar om kjønn og funksjonsnedsetjingar. Målet med denne masteroppgåva er å bidra til det nødvendige skiftet gjennom å studere lærarar sine perspektiv på kva litteratur dei vel å inkludere i språkklasseromma og kvifor. Mitt teoretiske rammeverk har teke utgangspunkt i kritiske, inkluderande og interseksjonelle pedagogiskar og eg skal diskutere korleis ein kan undervise om dei sosiale kategoriane kjønn og funksjonsnedsetjingar med inspirasjon frå Bobkina og Stefanova (2016) sin modell. Målet er også å bruke ungdomslitteratur på ein måte som oppfordrar til kritisk tenking. For å nå målet har eg gjennomført ei spørjeundersøking blant ungdomsskulelærarar og funne ut at dei brukar velkjende bøker og filmar som *Et Julekvad*, *Mirakel* og *Matilda* når dei skal undervise i litteratur. Funna mine viser at dei sjeldan baserar vala sine på interseksjonelle kategoriar, men diskuterer heller kjønn og funksjonsnedsetjingar kvar for seg. Eg har også vald å gjennomføre ei interseksjonell analyse og samanlikning av *Det merkelege som hende med hunden den natta* (2003) og *PET* (2020). Den eine boka identifiserte eg i spørjeundersøkinga og den andre har eg vald sjølv. Desse funna har vist meg at det framleis er behov for å auke og forbedre bruken av litteratur for å undervise om kjønn og funksjonsnedsetjingar. Difor meiner eg at denne masteroppgåva kan gi eit meningsfullt bidrag til prosessen.

Stikkord: interseksjonalitet, ungdomslitteratur, EFL klasserom, kritisk tenkning

Preface & Acknowledgements

I went into this master's project with high hopes and great motivation, and coming out of it many months later, almost graduated, I have learnt more about myself than I thought a school project could ever teach me. This emotional rollercoaster of a project has been challenging, but I am standing here today as a better version of myself, proud of my accomplishments. This MA thesis would not have been finished if it was not for the most important people in my life, and I wish to give them my thanks.

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Thank you!

Amalie Flo, Trondheim 2022

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List of Abbreviations

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CDS	Critical Disability Studies
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
NSD	Norwegian Centre for Research Data
YA	Young Adult

1 Introduction

All my life, I have been careful, cautious, afraid of making mistakes, with a strong will to always achieve and perform my very best. As part of Generation Z, or 'Generasjon Prestasjon' as it is called in Norway, I suppose these attributes have come in handy, but not always. I grew up in a small town with approximately 4500 inhabitants; not small enough for everyone to know each other, not big enough to be too forward-thinking. When I was in school, we rarely learned about themes such as gender and disability, and my classes consisted mostly of white, straight cis pupils. Most of those who have come out as lesbian or gay in my year have done so after we finished high school. I have a feeling, but cannot speak for these individuals, that this could cohere with the social environment of the town. For me, at least, I feel my upbringing there has led to a mindset that I am still partly working to re-think. This is where my caution of making mistakes can, and will, come in handy, because as a soon-to-be teacher, I believe pupils' identities are one of the most important aspects to be respectful of. Teachers are at school to teach subjects, but more importantly, they are there to support each pupil on their journey to become what they want to. Pupils are our future, and teachers are refining that future, which is a great responsibility.

My upbringing was nothing out of the ordinary, whatever that is, which leads me to believe that my experience of lacking knowledge and teaching about themes such as gender and disability is not unique. Røthing and Svendsen (2008) support this view by stating how "many pupils learn little about LGBT issues and the teaching can be problematic" (as cited in Smestad, 2018, p. 4). They do not explicitly state anything about disability, but I believe it is the same case here. Smestad (2018) also claims that English textbooks available in Norwegian classrooms lack diversity, diverse themes are taught insufficiently, and the teaching is often postponed until Year 10. Some teachers might avoid introducing and discussing these themes because they feel uncomfortable because of parents' attitudes, which I found in one of the questionnaires (see appendix 1) analyzed in this study. Other teachers, like me, do not know where to start, because they might feel they lack knowledge, which according to Anicic (2020) is a fundamental challenge for professional development. This is also problematic, because by avoiding challenging themes, teachers maintain the 'status quo' and substantiate a negative trend (Ginsberg & Glenn, 2019) of not introducing diverse materials. Another reason might be that teachers feel "they cannot speak for or represent" groups they do not belong to (Ginsberg & Glenn, 2019, p. 193), but it is necessary to realize that teaching and learning is something teachers and pupils do together (Shor, 1993). The teachers are part of the learning process as well (Ginsberg & Glenn, 2019), which I find reassuring because it takes away some of the pressure. When teachers are aware of these challenges, I would say it is the perfect opportunity for them to re-think and increase their knowledge, because the first step for change to happen is to realize it is needed. However, this negative trend is not only because of teachers, because there has been a tendency in Norwegian classrooms for pupils to use 'gay', 'transe', and other terms relating to gender and disability, as insults (Lysvold & Martinsen, 2020; Slåtten, 2007; Svendsen et.al., 2018), which shows there is room and need for improvement and knowledge among all. I believe it is crucial for teachers to discuss the importance of gender, disability, and other social categories.

Schools all over the world, and in Norway too, “are more diverse than ever before in terms of ethnicity, culture, languages spoken, disability status and so forth” (Florian, 2015, p. 13), which shows the necessity for approaches that include all and does not view differences as a problem. When the teaching of diverse materials is insufficient, the introduction of inclusive approaches can help resist stereotypes and prejudice pupils might have. A way to achieve this is by introducing YA literature into the EFL classroom, which is a great resource for language teaching and learning because it is authentic, inspires interaction, and expands language awareness that again could encourage pupils’ intellectual development (Gabrielsen et.al., 2019). Imagine if all pupils could “see themselves in the pages of a book” (#WeNeedDiverseBooks, n.d.). This is also supported by Participant 1, who states it is, “important that all pupils are presented for the diversity around us, and that all pupils can experience that they are reading about characters they can relate to” (see appendix 1). Luckily, there has been a positive trend since 2016 and the introduction of #WeNeedDiverseBooks, which encouraged the publishing industry to publish more diverse voices and books and has had implications for the EFL classroom as well (Ginsberg & Glenn, 2019). The campaign used to advocate for #ownvoices as well, which means to publish and choose literature from authors with first-hand experience from what they write about. However, the #WeNeedDiverseBooks-campaign has moved on to “use specific descriptions that authors use for themselves and their characters” (Lavoie, 2021). To utilize specific descriptions still allow them to emphasize authors with personal experience, without attempting to put everyone in the same box. Adomat (2014) has also seen the positive trend of more inclusive literature and claims there has been an increase over the past decade of (dis)abled representation and positive attitudes toward disabled people in YA literature. According to Dyson (2015), “we have a particular responsibility to work toward the respectful inclusion of our children as developing learners” (p. 206), and to do so, teachers always need to aim high for all learners (Woods et.al., 2015), including those in the EFL classroom.

Eisner (2002) has criticized scholars in the critical pedagogies-field for only being interested in schools’ *need* for change, but not necessarily developing *how* they should do it. The aim of my thesis is to contribute to this change by suggesting how to use YA literature to teach critical thinking. The research questions that have guided me through the process are, 1) “How are the categories of gender and disability represented in YA literature?”, 2) “Is YA literature taught in intersectional ways in the Norwegian EFL classroom?”, and 3) “How can teachers use (intersectional) YA literature in the EFL classroom to encourage critical thinking?”. I have used the first question to study the general portrayal of gender and disability in YA literature, the second to identify the situation in some Norwegian EFL classrooms, while the third offers a specific example of how lower secondary teachers could teach critical teaching skills with inspiration from Bobkina and Stefanova’s (2016) model. In addition, I have a supplementary aim to identify which literature and/or audiovisual materials the responding EFL teachers use to teach gender and disability in the English subject, and what reasoning they have for choosing it. This was primarily to identify a novel to analyze, because I wanted to include one that I know is being used in the EFL classroom today, but I was also interested in examining the argumentation behind their choices, and if that cohered with the theoretical frameworks chosen in this thesis.

The theoretical background employed involves ‘Intersectional studies in education’, which include ‘intersectional gender studies’ and ‘critical disability studies’, and ‘Critical and inclusive pedagogies and tools’, which I have divided into ‘critical pedagogies’ and ‘inclusive pedagogies’. These subsections can stand alone as individual

frameworks, but they also have similarities that have made it logical for me to present them together. In the center of all four stand intersectionality, critical thinking, and social justice, which lie the foundation of my thesis. These tie back to the need for an inclusive environment for pupils but are also tools for teachers to increase their own and their pupils' knowledge. I have gone more into depth of each framework in chapter 2, theoretical frameworks, and these will also function as a red thread throughout the chapters. My methodology and methods-chapter also have intersectionality as a central concept, and I have presented qualitative case study as the broader framework. Then I go into depth of how I have collected my data through questionnaires and intersectional analysis of *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, which I finally analyzed thematically.

In addition to my theoretical frameworks and methodological choices, my position as both a researcher and an individual has been at the center of my thesis. My positionality has also been one of the main ethical considerations. I identify as a non-disabled, cis woman, and I have reflected on whether I have a "right" to judge how gender and disability are presented and how it could be taught, when I am in a privileged position with no first-hand experience of the struggles disabled and/or transgender people have experienced and are experiencing. However, I have concluded that my voice is important and valuable too because it is also a part of the process of improvement. It is a step in the right direction when gender and disability do not only concern people who identify as/with either or both groups. Still, I have tried to be humble in my approach, following Cariou's (2020) example of critical humility, which means to be critical in a humble way. According to Cariou (2020), being critical in a humble way is "speaking a truth that is bigger than the speaker or the listener" (p. 9) and it is more powerful and persuasive. This can also be tied to the EFL classroom, by teaching pupils to show respect to the world and people speaking, and to "be humble enough to put [their] own thoughts out of [their] mind[s], to make that effort to follow the thoughts of another person" (Cariou, 2020, p. 6). Respect is also an important aspect of several of the core values in the Norwegian curriculum, which further underlines its importance in my thesis and in the EFL classroom (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017).

In the following chapters, I will present my theoretical frameworks in depth, amplify my method and methodology, present and analyze my findings from the questionnaires, *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, and finally discuss the implications of my findings. Throughout my thesis, I have an intersectional approach with an aim to train pupils' critical thinking skills through YA literature, also considering my own position as a researcher.

2 Theoretical Frameworks

The following chapter presents the main theoretical frameworks I have employed in my MA thesis. After careful consideration, I have decided to draw from the field of intersectional studies in education, focusing specifically on intersectionality', 'intersectional gender studies in education' and 'critical disability studies in education'. I have also used various critical and inclusive pedagogies and tools as part of my theoretical background. In particular, I examine 'critical pedagogies: developing critical thinking in the EFL classroom' and 'inclusive pedagogies through YA literature'. In this chapter, I discuss each framework in-depth to disclose how each is relevant to my thesis. I start with intersectional studies and then continue with critical and inclusive pedagogies because I find it most natural to present previous research in the fields of gender and disability and define intersectionality as the foundation of my theoretical framework first.

2.1 Intersectional Studies in Education

Gender studies and critical disability studies can be viewed as two separate fields, but they also share a set of similarities, which is why I present them together on the basis of their common denominator, intersectionality. Because I am studying the portrayal of gender and disability in the YA novels *The Curious Incident* (2003) and *PET* (2019), I found it important to read previous research in the fields of gender and disability studies. Both gender and disability studies study how their main field intersects with other social categories, which is why intersectionality is such an important concept in both. Therefore, I found it most logical to start with a definition and the history of the term intersectionality, and present how it relates to my thesis. In addition to drawing from gender studies and critical disability studies, I have grounded my research in education, because my thesis is based on how you can teach gender and disability in the lower secondary EFL classroom.

2.1.1 Intersectionality

The origin of the term intersectionality is disputed, but it emerged in the late 1980's and early 90's (Misra et.al., 2020) and credits for coining the term normally go to Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. The concept comes from Black feminist scholars who "challenged older theories that analyzed only one social category" (Romero, 2018, p. 1). By considering several categories, researchers understand how "an array of social systems" (Misra et.al., 2020, p. 9) shape each person's experiences, which means that an experience from a white woman is not the same as for a Black woman which again differs from the experiences of a woman of color (Romero, 2018). According to Romero (2018), intersectionality "provides analytic tools for framing social justice issues in such a way as to expose how social exclusion or privilege occurs differently in various social positions" (p. 1), and the aspect of social justice in intersectionality makes it suitable for my thesis. Collins (2019) also states the importance of social justice in relation to intersectionality. Central to intersectionality is the complexity of power and how identities exist simultaneously, and therefore "change the way we experience each" (Romero, 2018, p. 36). Collins and Bilge (2016) underline six core values of intersectionality, where power and inequality are two of them. In chapter 5, I will discuss how the

concepts of inequality and social justice are relevant in relation to *The Curious Incident* and *PET*.

According to Romero (2018), "Critical race feminist scholars have cautioned against the dangers of interpreting intersectionality as diversity" (p. 38), which I interpret as the importance of not forgetting that a diverse aspect of a pupil does not exclude the rest of the pupil's identity or experiences. Misra et.al. (2020) further claim how "Celebrating differences for the sake of inclusion does not dismantle the everyday practices of privilege or oppression" (p. 38), because it "does not disappear by us ignoring its existence, and ignorance will not result in social equality" (p. 59). Ignoring the issues still related to disability, gender, and the intersections of these and other social categories, to celebrate the presence of diversity, takes away and dismisses those struggles. This can also happen if educators state that all pupils are the same, not matter how they look. Everyone has different experiences and struggles, and that should not be forgotten or dismissed. Intersectionality and intersectional analysis, which I have used as a methodology, aim to understand how privilege and power create these differences and how to generate new systems of equality (Romero, 2018). Before I started my research, I believed that intersectionality was not a well-known term among educators in Norway, which has been confirmed by my questionnaire. Therefore, I find it crucial to include the concept in my thesis, as an important framework and methodology, as it further intertwines all my theoretical approaches from inclusive pedagogies to critical pedagogies and gender pedagogies to critical disability studies.

2.1.2 Intersectional Gender Studies in Education

Different gender identifications are becoming more common, and this will, and should, affect schools. More pupils are coming out and they are familiar with gender identities through family and/or celebrities (Paechter, 2021). In Norway, research on gender identities is limited and a 2021-report from *Nordlandsforskning* and UIB was the first of its kind. This report found that the mental health state in the Norwegian population is much worse, and the risk and attempts of suicide much higher among trans people than cis people (The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, 2020), which shows the importance of doing research and teaching about these themes to 'normalize' them. Gender studies shares ties with Freire's critical pedagogies, which I will present in the next framework, but his work has been criticized for being too simplistic, "in the sense that his focus on class struggle excluded other forms of oppression, such as those associated with race and gender" (Sanders, 2020, p. 4). The need for a field that has an intersectional gender perspective is therefore necessary, where the classroom is viewed as a place where individuals do "gender, ethnicity, racialization, class, nationality, sexuality, dis/ability, age, etc. in many different ways" (Lykke, 2012, p. 15). These intersectional impulses in gender studies are why I chose this complex theoretical lens.

Gender studies "include a critical approach aimed at change, as well as an active and conscious relation to power and identified hierarchies" (Lundberg & Werner, 2012, p. 5), and gender pedagogies have been developed from that field. While gender pedagogy "reflects on meanings of gender in the classroom" (Lykke, 2012, p. 15), intersectional gender pedagogies focus on "differences, power and inequalities in the classroom, based on an intersectional understanding of gender" (p. 15). According to Lykke (2012), "the aim of intersectional gender pedagogy is to make students and teachers more conscious about power relations, excluding norms and differences in the classroom" (p. 14). The pupils' differences will, in this perspective, be made visible in a critical way, and

questions about these differences will be discussed (p. 15). This is especially relevant to the EFL classroom, because pupils are vulnerable when they learn a second, or perhaps third, language, and the vulnerability can be even greater if the pupils have a different gender identity and/or are disabled as well.

2.1.3 Critical Disability Studies in Education

Critical Disability Studies (CDS), which emerged from the “early work of disability studies” (Goodley et.al., 2019, p. 974), has been developed over the last decade(s) to “make more explicit the role of materiality and embodiment within disability theorizing” (Naraian, 2021, p. 300). CDS unsettles ideas about disability and critically engages with the categories used to construct the “disability problem” (Vehmas & Watson, 2014, p. 639). Models of disability include the social and the medical model, where the former puts the blame on society while the latter holds the person and their disability liable (Leduc, 2020). The social model discusses how different hindrances created in the society, such as structural barriers of physical access to a building, create issues for a disabled person. It states that if those barriers were removed, society would take the first step toward resisting ableism. However, stigmatization and other issues would still pervade. Instead of focusing on one sole cause, CDS “views disability as both a lived reality in which the experiences of people with disabilities are central” (Reaume, 2014, p. 1248) and looks at disability as more complex. Davis (2010) states that the disabled person is not the problem, but the insistence of viewing them as a problem is. In addition, disability should not be viewed as a stand-alone category, because CDS “examines how disability intersects with race, gender, class, and sexuality in ways that influence wider power relations and personal experiences” (Reaume, 2014, p. 1248), which again shows how intersectional impulses tie this thesis together. CDS is both relevant as a concept in the classroom and as a framework to study which of and how the models of disability are portrayed in *The Curious Incident* and *PET* as I develop in my Analysis and Discussion chapters.

As a contribution to disability studies, Dunn (2010) suggests ten ways to re-see disability and ability in relation to more inclusive pedagogies and learning opportunities for all pupils. One of these suggestions includes the use of “literary and other texts as a springboard for informed discussions of disability and ableism” (p. 17). A central concept in Dunn’s (2010) study is resistant reading, a method used to identify texts with harmful stereotypes and then, challenge them. We should not necessarily avoid using these types of texts, because resisting stereotypes can help pupils develop their critical thinking skills, which then can lead to a discussion on “how those perceived as different are treated in our society” (Dunn, 2010, p. 17). However, teachers need to be aware of their own and the writers’ positionalities before they introduce resistant or critical reading into their classroom. According to Elliot (1991), critical reading should not be an opportunity to promote and instruct the teacher’s own views, but a discussion going both ways, which substantiates Shor’s (1993) concept of learning being done together. Dunn (2010) further states that the aim with these suggestions is to re-see disability, but the intersectional impulse of my thesis calls for the notion of re-seeing in an intersectional way, which is why I have discussed how the two books can be used to re-see both gender and disability. Some books might urge the need for a resistant reading method for students to re-see certain categories, which I will argue is the case for *The Curious Incident*, while other books, such as *PET*, can assist in the act of re-seeing as they are, given its intersectional impulses. Both can be used to discuss ableism and its position in the classroom.

2.2 Critical and Inclusive Pedagogies and Tools

Critical and inclusive pedagogies, as gender studies and CDS, can be viewed as two separate fields and pedagogical approaches, while also being a series of intertwined theoretical frameworks. In my thesis, I have chosen to present them as the latter, and it will become clear how they intersect and how they are relevant to my project in the following section. These critical and inclusive frameworks inform my thesis specifically, but I also argue how they are applicable as tools for Norwegian EFL classrooms generally. The use of the plural 'pedagogies' rather than the singular 'pedagogy' is a conscious choice based on what the plural form allows in terms of interpretation. There is never one correct recipe nor one right answer to aim for when it comes to pedagogy and how to teach; a solution or an initiative in one classroom may not work in another. 'Pedagogy' suggests that there is one solution, while the term 'pedagogies', in my opinion, refers to the diversity of approaches.

2.2.1 Critical Pedagogies: Developing Critical Thinking in the EFL Classroom

The 'banking model' of education, which means that knowledge is transferred from teachers to learners, used to be the leading system of how to facilitate teaching and learning (Breunig, 2005) in many educational systems, including Norway. Good grades were the aim, rather than making sure the learners got a deep and profound understanding of the subject (Uddin, 2019). However, development over the last few decades has shifted towards enhancing learners' "critical thinking capabilities, norms, and values" (Uddin, 2019, p. 110), but it is still a preferred approach in many classrooms. This means, in practice, that there is more to teaching and learning than having subject knowledge, including life skills and critical thinking. One of the most central contributors to this shift was the Brazilian educator and scholar Paulo Freire, who "noticed how learners were passive learners in the classroom. They had no voice and no choice" (Uddin, 2019, p. 111). Freire (2001) suggested more learner-centered methods which have since developed into the field of critical pedagogy. According to Giroux (1997), critical pedagogies entail the notion of how to teach and learn, and the content of what is being taught. This includes encouraging critical thinking, and "promoting practices that have the potential to transform oppressive institutions or social relations" (Keesing-Styles, 2003, para. 6). It also inspires teachers and pupils to "empower themselves for social change, to advance democracy and equality" (Shor, 1993, p. 24). Critical pedagogies assist in leaving the past of no voices, no choices behind, looking into a future where pupils are motivated to ask questions. This way, learning becomes something pupils do *with* their teacher, not something that is done *to* them (Shor, 1993). The Norwegian curriculum underlies this, stating that "pupil involvement must be a part of the school's practice" and teachers and pupils should create a co-responsible learning environment together every day (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 18). This teacher-pupil relationship is crucial in the EFL classroom, because learning a second language requires good relations and a safe environment. It also requires pupil participation because pupils need to actively work and interact to learn languages (Hedge, 2000).

Critical pedagogies have not been accepted without any criticism though. Neumann (2013) poses three main critiques towards critical pedagogies which are "who is critical pedagogy's audience?", "valuing teachers' knowledge", and "teachers' beliefs about 'real school' and 'real teachers'" (pp. 132-137). The two first arguments are, in my

opinion, the main challenges because only addressing scholars and not listening to teachers' perspectives might create a great distance between theory and practice. However, this assumes that teachers are not scholars and scholars are not educators, and it is important to realize the nuances of the criticism as well. Eisner (2002) also criticizes that the theorists are less interested in *how* schools should improve than the fact that they *should*. In addition, Freire himself has received disapproval for only addressing class differences and excluding other categories such as gender, disability, race, and sexuality. In my view, these critiques underlie the importance of introducing teachers to critical pedagogies and encouraging them to apply them, because then the gap between theory and practice could begin to close.

Building an educational system that strives to enhance critical thinking and encourages a fight for social justice is the essence of why critical pedagogies are important and relevant to my MA thesis. I wish to study how these can be achieved in the EFL classroom using YA literature, in particular texts for young adults that portray gender and disability in an intersectional way. While Freire was criticized for leaving out gender and other social categories, only focusing on class, I have chosen to study gender and disability and their intersections. The important social category of race is not the focal point of my analysis; however, processes of racialization are always integral to the discussion of the intersectionality of gender and disability, due to the roots of the term in Black feminist theory and activism (Romero, 2018). Gender and disability are key themes for encouraging critical thinking because there is a need to make a change in Norwegian pupils' minds, as stated in the introduction. These themes can help pupils to re-see and become resistant readers, a concept by Dunn (2010) which I have examined previously in chapter 2.1.3.

Enhancing critical thinking and awareness should be a central aim of education, and the Norwegian curriculum can act as a bridge between theory and practice. Core value 1.3 states that "schools shall help pupils be inquisitive and ask questions, develop scientific and critical thinking and act with ethical awareness" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 8). The curriculum in English after Year 10 underlies the importance of critical thinking in the English subject as part of the assessment, where pupils should be able to "demonstrate their competence in various ways, including through understanding, reflection, and critical thought" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 9). Lin (2018) further supports the inclusion of critical thinking in the EFL classroom, and states three ways critical thinking can enhance language learning. Critical thinking encouraged pupils to "use a variety of linguistic forms of the target language to create different meanings", it enabled pupils to "recognize what they can or cannot express in English, and thus notice their limitations and learning needs", and it "resulted in more comprehensible input and output" (p. 119). Critical pedagogies are thus an important theoretical framework as they have a double function; they stand as a research tool for the development of my MA thesis, and as a teaching tool that I recommend for other teachers, especially in the EFL classroom.

To achieve this double function, I have taken inspiration from the research conducted by Bobkina and Stefanova (2016) and Janks (2013) to develop a model of critical pedagogy. Bobkina and Stefanova (2016) developed their model of teaching critical thinking skills with four main steps: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. The steps consist of recalling relevant knowledge, understanding the general message, connecting the language to its social context, and creating own texts (p. 686), and were based on the four curricular components proposed

by the New London Group (Cazden et.al., 1996, as cited in Bobkina & Stefanova, 2016) and later adapted by Kern (2003, as cited in Bobkina & Stefanova, 2016). The aim of the steps is to look at the readers' response, the author, and the context as dependent of each other, and the pupils need to be active, reflexive readers to gain an understanding of power and inequality (p. 679). They want the pupils to develop their interpretation of the world, critical awareness, problem solving, and self-reflection (p. 691). Along similar lines, Janks' (2013) critical literacy framework relies on the four intersecting dimensions of power, diversity, access, and design/redesign. The aim was to "produce pupils who can contribute to greater equity, who can respect difference and live in harmony with others" (p. 227). This way, pupils can act as "agents for change", who "read both the word and the world in relation to power, identity, difference and access to knowledge, skills, tools and resources" (Janks, 2013, p. 227). She suggests that you have to problematize both word and world to remake it. In chapter 5.3.1, I partly use Bobkina and Stefanova's (2016) steps to show how *The Curious Incident* and *PET* can be utilized to teach critical thinking skills, regarding gender and disability. Further, I will discuss the implications of critical thinking skills, social justice, and Janks' dimensions. The main takeout from both models, is the aim to help students become critical thinkers who fight for social justice, which is my aim too, with an extra scope towards awareness about gender and disability diversity.

2.2.2 Inclusive Pedagogies Through YA Literature

There is a blurry line between the borders of critical and inclusive pedagogies, as both, among other things, aim to achieve social justice and equity through a high-quality education system (Woods et.al., 2015). The principles of inclusive pedagogies include addressing "the complex issues involved in the provision of a meaningful 'education for all'" (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011, p. 826). This means to "extend what is ordinarily available in the community of the classroom as a way of reducing the need to mark some learners as different" (p. 826). A more diverse and including classroom will, to a greater extent, facilitate education for all, and the risk of excluding pupils based on their differences will lessen. According to Loughran (2015), inclusive pedagogies offer ways that "are truly responsive to the diversity learning needs within the environment" (p. 287), and the aim is to "provide quality teaching and learning for all members of their classrooms" (p. 282), which is also highly relevant to the EFL classroom. In the English subject, pupils are learning a new language, and if they have a different home language than the school language, they might be excluded from the teaching. This can give them another disadvantage, because pupils with special educational needs, for instance caused by a disability, are more vulnerable to exclusion (Hart & McIntyre, 2007). With inclusive pedagogies, the aim is to fight this disadvantage and make sure that all pupils feel included, and inclusive pedagogies can help resisting stereotypes. As with critical pedagogies and critical thinking, inclusive pedagogies could help pupils re-see and become resistant readers. To facilitate learning for all pupils and adjusted learning is one of the most important goals in the Norwegian curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017).

Every day, teachers make decisions that affect their pupils, and with the help of inclusive pedagogies, teaching and learning should include all of them (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Inclusive education is further highlighted in the Norwegian curriculum with the core value *Identity and cultural diversity*. The curriculum states that schools shall "help each pupil to preserve and develop her or his identity in an inclusive and diverse environment" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 7). Inclusive

pedagogies are hence relevant to my thesis because I want to suggest a way of teaching literature in the EFL classroom that represents gender diversity and various abilities in an intersectional way. Critical and inclusive pedagogies both call for teaching methods that encourage and facilitate inclusion and resistance towards the set norms of society. One way of achieving this is through YA literature, and especially intersectional YA literature. The roots of the term 'young adult' can be traced back to the late 19th century, when the stage between child- and adulthood became more recognized. Young adults went from getting jobs and becoming adults to adolescents who stayed in school longer. According to Cadden et.al. (2020), "World War II proved to be the most significant turning point in the history of YA literature" (p. 8), because young survivors of the war started to reject the "invisibility of teenage interiority" (Hilton & Nikolajeva, 2012) of their adolescent years. With an increased purchasing-power among this generation, "an entire marketing culture began to cater to teenagers' interests" (p. 8), also in books. This led to the genre of YA literature, which has many definitions, but I have chosen Cadden et.al.'s description (2020) stating that YA literature is composed of "texts written for or produced for adolescents and marketed directly to teens" (p. 3). Since then, the genre has developed into one that is equally popular among grown-ups, who both use it for entertainment and to learn about adolescent life (Cadden et.al., 2020). In addition, I will discuss if the literature resists or persists stereotyped representations of gender diversity and disability.

YA literature, along with children's literature, has the "quality of being named after its reading audience, rather than its content" (Cadden et.al., 2020, p. 3). The genre of YA literature is always changing, and, because of that, "anything goes" according to Elissa Petruzzi (Strickland, 2015). The genre can include anything from dystopic novels to classic romance, and everything in-between and around. The common denominator is that YA texts are written for and marketed towards young adults. In addition, many of them have themes of 'coming of age', the transition from child to adult, or other transitional, teachable moments. A place of growth for YA literature is the diversity of it, and as previously mentioned, intersectional YA literature is especially relevant for my MA thesis. This is literature with characters who "live in the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and disability" (Gisclair, 2019), and could be a part of the growth process of YA literature. During a roundtable discussion, several other well renowned YA literature scholars discussed their field and its development. Emily Corbett also states that "there has been (and still is) a tendency to overlook the ways the different elements of the human experience intersect" (as cited in Corbett & Phillips, 2021, p. 14), while Gouck (as cited in Corbett & Phillips, 2021) argues that "YA can deal with important topics of sensitivity and nuance" (p. 2). Matos (2021) further states that "YA literature can enhance and complicate our understanding of its contemporary culture" (p. 10) and Hale claims that the coming of age-novel in YA literature "enables people to really think about what kind of people they want to be and what kind of a world they want to live in" (p. 9). Pupils need to engage "in meaningful instructional practices with a variety of texts that prompt them to build a deeper understanding of textual content" (Gabrielsen et.al., 2019). While Corbett states, as mentioned, that YA scholars tend to overlook intersectional elements, Phillips counters it with "YA has the potential to serve as a platform for really fruitful interdisciplinary work" (as cited in Corbett & Phillips, 2021, p. 11), and interdisciplinary work should not only involve several disciplines, but also how they intersect.

Dunn (2010)'s ten suggestions to "re-see disability", also support the advantages of YA literature, as previously stated, claiming that you could "use literary and other

texts as a springboard for informed discussions of disability and ableism" (p. 17). By using literature as a springboard for informed discussion, the teacher can turn the trend where literature has become less of a priority in Norway in recent years. Participant 7 reported that pupils' reading skills have worsened (see appendix 1). A key here is to engage pupils "in meaningful instructional practices with a variety of texts that prompt them to build a deeper understanding of textual content" (Gabrielsen et.al., 2019). There are many positive aspects to the use of YA literature, but it has also been criticized. As previously mentioned, it has been criticized for its lack of intersectionality, but also for striving to "queer traditional age-based structures" and "inverting adult norms of power" (Cadden et.al., 2020, p. 12). YA literature and its advantages are very relevant to my thesis, because I want to find out how the usage of the two books I have analyzed can encourage critical thinking in the EFL classroom. Critical thinking can again lead to pupils re-seeing issues around gender and disability, which would benefit society. My entire thesis has intersectional impulses which, hopefully, would lead to social justice, equity, and equality, all that can be achieved with assistance from YA literature.

3 Methodology and Methods

The theoretical frameworks I discussed above have laid the foundation of my MA thesis and will support my methodological choices. I have conducted qualitative research, which is an umbrella term for a constant evolving methodology. While it has roots from fields such as sociology and philosophy, it is now “used in almost all fields of social science inquiry” (Croker, 2009, p. 5). According to Croker (2009), qualitative studies create “data that is primarily textual not numerical” (p. 9), which is why I have chosen this methodology to analyze the questionnaire and the two novels. The aim of my thesis is not to quantify how many teachers use literature and/or audiovisual materials nor which are most frequently taught, but rather to study how and why these resources *are* taught and how they *can* be taught to encourage critical thinking. I am researching a phenomenon that is not studied excessively in Norway, and a qualitative framework is very useful when “little is known about a phenomenon or existing research is limited” (Croker, 2009, p. 10). I will not try to generalize my findings, but I will let potential readers choose how relevant my study is to them, which is another characteristic of qualitative research (p. 10). There are some critiques of qualitative studies, including the risk of being biased and small scaled, but according to Anderson (2010), a well carried-out qualitative study is “unbiased, in depth, valid, reliable, credible and rigorous” (p. 141), which is what I have aimed to conduct in order to answer my research questions. My research questions were 1) “How are the categories of gender and disability represented in YA literature?”, 2) “Is YA literature taught in intersectional ways in the Norwegian EFL classroom?”, and 3) “How can teachers use (intersectional) YA literature in the EFL classroom to encourage critical thinking?”.

3.1 Case study

There are many approaches and methods to conduct a qualitative study, including narrative inquiry, ethnography, grounded theory, and case study, and I have chosen the latter as the most suitable for my thesis because of various reasons. Case studies can be used to describe, develop, and test theories and hypotheses (Schwandt & Gates, 2017, p. 607), and are “used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context” (Crowe et.al., 2011, p. 1). They can be conducted in many ways, depending on the researcher’s standpoint, which might be critical, interpretivist or positivist, among others. In the name of the intersectional impulses, my standpoint draws from all three, which Crowe et.al. (2011) state is appropriate on some occasions. They also suggest the following steps as crucial: 1) defining the case, 2) selecting the case, 3) collecting and analyzing data, 4) interpreting data, and 5) reporting the findings (p. 5), and I have taken inspiration from these when I was conducting my research.

I started by defining my “case” and realized that, as Schwandt and Gates (2017) state, “what constitutes a case is disputed” (p. 600). According to them, a case is, in the simplest sense, “an instance, incident, or unit of something and can be anything” (p. 600). Defining and selecting the case includes formulating research questions, and my case concerns how gender diversity and disability are portrayed in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (2003) and *PET* (2019) and how they can be used as

teaching materials to encourage critical thinking in the EFL classroom. However, case studies are not without their limitations and criticism includes “lacking scientific rigour and providing little basis for generalization” (Crowe et.al., 2011, p. 7). Yet, case studies are not normally aiming to generalize, and they offer a flexibility and adoptability that other qualitative approaches cannot (Hyett et.al., 2014). With my case, I am not aiming to make a generalization with my results, which makes it a suitable methodology for my thesis. This is not necessarily the standard methodology in the Norwegian field of language education, and I know that it is quite rare to add a suggestion on how to teach a topic in a research project such as this. I chose to do so regardless, because I want to contribute to a necessary change in the field, without simply stating and discussing how the teaching is now. I do not want to reflect only on how things *should* change, if they should, but how they *can* change. The study might seem narrow, as I am only analyzing two books and the questionnaires of eight participants, but I think it still is appropriate because my suggestion could work as a suggestive model, not as *the* right answer. Case studies also tend to consist of several different methods of data collection and analysis, which is said to increase the study’s internal validity (Crowe et.al., 2011), and this is the case for my study as well. My main method for data collection and analysis is intersectional analysis of *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, with a supplementary questionnaire. I have decided to present the secondary method first because that was the first step in my data collection.

3.1.1 Questionnaire as method of data collection

Questionnaires are often used in quantitative research but can also be used in qualitative approaches. What divides a qualitative questionnaire from a quantitative one is the way the questions are asked and the intended outcomes. In a qualitative study, the questions are often open-response items, where the respondent answers freely, with some additional closed-response questions, where the respondent receives alternatives (Brown, 2009). As shown in appendix 2, my questionnaire consists of some closed-response questions, while the most central questions to my thesis are open-response items. The main reason for choosing open-response questions is that they do not have correct answers, which gives the respondent the opportunity to freely answer based on their experiences and opinions. Because the answers are solely based on the opinion of the respondent, they will be analyzed for their content, not language (Brown, 2009), which is one of the reasons why I let the participants choose whether they preferred to submit their answers in English or Norwegian. I had the choice between questionnaires and interviews as methods of data collection for my thesis, but I decided that questionnaires were more suitable for me, because I hoped to reach more participants and because they were less time consuming to conduct and because it is a supplementary, not main, method of data collection.

When designing the questionnaire (see appendix 2), I used the research questions to ask, “What do I want to find out?” and “How can I achieve this?”. I started with non-identifiable background information about the participants to see if there were any considerable patterns or anything that could affect their answers. Then, I wanted to see whether they use literature extensively in their teaching or not, because if they do not use literature in general, they would probably not use it to discuss gender and disability in the EFL classroom either. Further, I enquired how they teach gender and disability through literature, and finally, their knowledge about intersectionality. As intersectionality can be a useful concept to implement and discuss in classrooms, I also wanted to see if my participants were familiar with it already.

My main criterium for choosing participants was easy accessibility, which is why I took part in a lecture for the KFK course LVUT8084 at NTNU, where I presented my research and gave them a link to the questionnaire. These are in-service 5-10 teachers who take extra credits in English, in order to fulfill the requirement of 60 relevant credits to teach the subject. To teach English in lower secondary school, there is a requirement to have at least 60 credits that are relevant to the subject (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017). The questionnaire was online and so was the lecture, but I was available for questions via e-mail if needed. I received seven answers through the first collection-round, so I decided to e-mail previous practicum teachers and schools, which provided two extra submissions. Finally, I decided to also post a request in the "Engelsklærere" Facebook-group, which added seven extra responses to my questionnaire. However, I am studying how to use literature in lower secondary school, and six of the participants exclusively taught in lower grades, which is why I had to discard those responses. Most of the participants from the analyzed questionnaires are experienced, non-disabled female teachers, who teach all three grades in lower secondary school (8-10). All the participants in my study either have, or are in the process of getting, enough credits in English. I have decided to refer to the participants as 'Participant 1', 'Participant 2', sometimes shortened to 'P1', 'P2', etcetera.

After collecting the data from the questionnaire, I analyzed them through the method of thematic analysis, which is a method for "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2008, p. 79). There is no clear answer to what a thematic analysis is and how to do it, thus the researcher can take more liberties in the research design. What constitutes a theme is also disputed, but it "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2008, p. 82). Even if the method is not resolute, Braun and Clarke (2008) have suggested six stages of thematic analysis, which are familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report (p. 87). However, according to Hood (2009), "data collection and analysis occur simultaneously and continuously, so it is somewhat misleading to mark the off as sperate steps" (p. 78). Throughout the collection process, I was always looking for patterns and relevant findings. Coding entails the "simple but vital process of developing a textual or alphanumeric system and assigning unique markers to each piece of data" (Hood, 2009, p. 78-79). Nettskjema provides a finished coding sheet, but I found it hard to connect the codes with their questions, which is why I collected all answers together in appendix 1 to get a more comprehensible overview. From there, I divided the answers into themes, which were 'profiles', 'books and audiovisual materials and reasoning' and 'intersectionality' (see appendix 3). Then, when reviewing the themes, I realized the category of 'profiles' was more suitable in the methodology-chapter, which I presented in the previous paragraph, and was left with two. It is relatively difficult to code open-response items (Brown, 2009), but I realized there is no set answer on how to do it and decided to follow my logic and make an overview that was understandable to me. A case study cannot necessarily be recreated by other researchers, which is why I felt it was more suitable to follow that approach. An expected outcome I had was that I would either find that the teachers are using a range of intersectional materials, barely diverse materials at all, or materials that are diverse but not intersectional.

3.1.2 Intersectional analysis

The results of the thematic analysis of the questionnaire brings me over to the second data material; YA literature and/or audiovisual materials. I have chosen two books, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, identified in the questionnaire, and *PET*, a book I knew contained intersections between gender and disability. The criteria for choosing *The Curious Incident* was the frequency this YA text was mentioned in the questionnaire material, and that I was familiar with the play-version from when I was in lower secondary school. I wanted to analyze one book that I know is being used in lower secondary school today, not assume which they use. This means that audiovisual materials are omitted from the analysis, so it would be interesting to conduct a similar study on that mode.

Intersectional analysis is broader than what people tend to believe, according to Collins (2019), and there is "not just one way to do intersectional empirical research" (Misra et.al., 2020, p. 10). I have therefore based my analysis on Christensen and Jensen's (2012) definition, who state that intersectionality's aim is to study how people's positioning intersect with gender, disability, and other social categories, and how they intersect with each other (Christensen & Jensen, 2012). Intersectional analysis as a method has increased in usage in various fields, including gender research (Christensen & Jensen, 2012), to "shed light on important social problems" (Collins, 2019, p. 21). It is important to note that there has been some criticism towards the method, as I will discuss next. However, Christensen & Jensen (2012) see the increasing usage as a positive trend, which I think partly comes from how intersectionality exceeds diversity, as previously stated in chapter 2.1.1. Criticism of intersectionality includes its tendency to only focus on the cross-roads between categories and overlook long-lasting relations between categories, which is argued by both Carbin and Tornhill (2004) and Choo and Ferree (2010). Another methodological challenge is the large number of categories, because the researcher could go into a trap of choosing "an endless series of social categories" (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, p. 112). It is preferable to carefully select a few categories and how they intersect, without having too many or too few (Christensen & Jensen, 2012, p. 112). I have decided to focus on gender and disability, while race is always relevant in the background, to avoid grasping over too much.

I have analyzed the two books through the method of intersectional analysis, which explores how gender, disability, race, and other social categories intersect (Christensen & Jensen, 2012), and the term intersectionality, as presented in chapter 2.1.1, descend from the field of critical race theory. However, I have only focused on gender and disability, with some consideration to race. As previously mentioned, the theoretical frameworks of my thesis have elements of intersectionality, and I therefore chose an intersectional approach to the analysis of my materials. In addition, pupils' identities are intersectional, they are not "just trans" or "just disabled", their identities are complex, and this should not be forgotten or excluded from the literature they are introduced to. I have conducted the analysis with elements from thematic textual analysis, where I searched for key words referring to intersectional portrayals of gender and disability. In the first round of analysis, I highlighted and marked all the data that was slightly relevant to either gender, disability, or both, and then, I narrowed it down by writing down all the quotes that were very relevant to the scope of my thesis, which relates to Greenham's (2019) steps for close reading. These steps start by an initial pleasure reading, then fanning out from a focus on words, sentences, chapters, all the way to the context of the text. After narrowing it down, following Braun and Clarke

(2008) six stages, I categorized my findings as 'Disability – comfort', 'Disability – support', 'Disability – others', and 'Disability – noticing', which was code for how both Christopher and Jam are very observant. I also had separate codes for each book which were, 'Disability – literal', 'Disability – obsession', and 'Gender?' for *The Curious Incident* and 'Disability – communication', 'Disability + gender', 'Gender – Jam', 'Gender – others', and 'General' for *PET*. Finally, while writing the analysis, I renamed and sorted the codes into categories. For *The Curious Incident*, the themes were originally 'gender and race' and 'disability', but I renamed them 'strengths and interests', 'communication and social interactions', 'sensory', 'experiencing and displaying emotions', 'perception and treatment', and 'other portrayals of disability'. These categories were based on characteristics of autism (autismspectrum.org, n.d.; CDC, 2022; Kirby et.al., 2015; Lord et.al., 2018). For *PET*, the new categories were 'Jam', 'Pet', and 'Ube and Whisper', because I felt it was natural to analyze the characters as a whole, when this was how they were portrayed in *PET*, but I decided to rename them to 'the intersections of gender and disability in Jam's identity' and 'the intersections of gender and disability in other characters' identities.

3.2 Ethical considerations

While developing the theoretical frameworks and methodology chapters, I have considered some ethical aspects. The main consideration when selecting a case was my own positionality, as I identify as a non-disabled cis woman. As stated in the introduction, I have reflected on whether I have a "right" to judge whether the portrayal of gender diversity and disability is sufficient in literature and/or audiovisual materials to enhance critical thinking in Norwegian EFL classrooms. My conclusion is that my voice is important and valuable too, as long as I am aware and humble of the limitations to my positionality. Another consideration has been how to formulate the questions in the questionnaire, and I chose to let the participants answer in either English or Norwegian, depending on what they were most comfortable with. This is an ethical consideration because I find it important that the participants are allowed to express themselves in the language they are most comfortable in, to avoid answers getting lost in my translation. I had to apply to NSD to get approval, after designing the questionnaire. Originally, I thought my questionnaire did not consist of identifiable questions, but the combination of them could possibly enable an opportunity to identify participants. After altering the questionnaire and the consent form, according to NSD's requirements, my research project received the necessary approval (see appendix 4).

In addition, I have reflected on whether I should use person- or identity-first language when it comes to disability, and the debate is ongoing. Some scholars and activists prefer person-first, because they do not want to be defined by their (dis)ability, while others prefer identity-first language because they view their disability as a key feature of their identity (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, 2022). I have decided to use identity-first language, because according to Raising Children (n.d.), many autistic people prefer this terminology. For my thesis, I think it is more important to be consistent in the usage of either, and later to be considerate and use the language that the people you meet prefer. Finally, I considered the choice of case study as a methodology regarding its validity and reliability, as it will be hard to generalize and recreate the study, but I concluded that it is suitable because I am not aiming to generalize my results, as I further explain in the conclusion of this thesis.

4 Analysis of Research Findings

In this chapter, I will present and analyze my findings from the thematic analysis of the questionnaire, and the intersectional analysis of *The Curious Incident* and *PET*. The thematic analysis consisted of the following stages: I familiarized myself with the data, generated initial codes, searched for themes, reviewed the themes, defined, and named themes, and this is the produced report. The intersectional analysis also had features of thematic analysis, because I identified themes in my findings that I defined, redefined, and named. I have decided to present the results from the supplementary collection-method first, which I also did in chapter 3, because the aim of the questionnaires was to identify a text mentioned by the teachers and then conduct an intersectional analysis on the text. The theoretical frameworks, as developed in chapter 2, will inform the analysis of my research findings, which I will reflect on and discuss further in chapter 5.

4.1 Analysis of Questionnaires

As previously mentioned in chapter 3.1.1, I received 14 answers, but I had to discard six of them, which left me with eight responses to analyze in this section. While my study focuses on lower secondary school, it would certainly be interesting to conduct a similar study in primary school. In the following two subsections, I will present and analyze the responses I coded as relevant to my MA thesis. The codes from the thematic analysis that I have used to present the results are, as previously mentioned, 'books and audiovisual materials and reasoning' and 'intersectionality', because those were the two most prominent results in both the questionnaires.

4.1.1 Books and Audiovisual Materials and Reasoning

The participants all use literature and audiovisual materials to some extent and have argued there are benefits to do so. Five out of eight participants have answered that they use literature and/or audiovisual materials often in the English subject, while the remaining use such materials neither often nor rarely in their teaching (see appendix 1). Table 4.1 offers an overview of the literature and/or audiovisual materials the respondents chose. As can be seen below, *Wonder* (2012), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (2003), *The Absolutely True Story of a Part-Time Indian* (2007), and *Holes* (1998) are most frequently mentioned. The participants' choices are based on themes discussed in the classroom in a specific period, accessibility of literature and audiovisual materials, and recommendations from peers (see appendix 1). Participant 4 argues that they chose to teach *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* because they wanted "the class to share a reading experience, but also to learn more about autism and seeing the world in a different way" (see appendix 1). Some of the titles mentioned in the questionnaire are both books and films, marked by an asterisk, but they are placed in their columns because most participants stated in their answers which version they used. I find it important to add that these materials exist in different genres because that gives different teaching opportunities and methods, and teachers probably have their reasons for choosing one over the other. All participants agree that pupils benefit from the use of literature and film, because, according to them, it can improve the pupils' language skills, they can benefit from the introduction to authentic materials, and they have access to other peoples' perspectives and lives and can

understand their experiences (see appendix 1). Their responses correlate with what I have presented in chapter 2.2.2, where I discuss the advantages of using YA literature in the EFL classroom.

Books	Frequency	Movies	Frequency
<i>The curious incident of the dog in the night-time</i>	4	<i>Blindspotting</i>	1
<i>The absolutely true story of a part-time Indian</i>	3	<i>Freedom writers*</i>	1
<i>Wonder*</i>	2	<i>Rabbit-proof fence</i>	1
<i>Holes*</i>	2	<i>Remember the titans</i>	1
<i>American born Chinese</i>	1	<i>The hunger games</i>	1
<i>Animal farm</i>	1	<i>Titanic</i>	1
<i>Giraffe who can't dance</i>	1		
<i>Lamb to the slaughter</i>	1		
<i>Lord of the flies</i>	1		
<i>My life as an alphabet</i>	1		
<i>Skellig</i>	1		
<i>The boy in the striped pyjamas*</i>	1		
<i>The hate U give*</i>	1		
<i>The Landlady</i>	1		
<i>The Outsiders</i>	1		
<i>The tales of Beetle the bard</i>	1		
<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>	1		

Table 4.1: Literature and audiovisual materials used in the EFL classroom

In addition to literature in general, I asked whether the participants use literature and/or film to teach gender and disability specifically, as that is the main scope of my thesis. Six out of eight participants answered yes, one answered no, and one refrained from answering. Table 4.2 offers an overview of which books and films the participants mentioned to teach specifically about gender and disability in the EFL classroom. This list is noticeably shorter than the previous table, which might be because the participants felt they had already provided a list of titles. When asked why they do or do not choose to use literature/film to teach gender and disability, Participant 2 answered they do it to "Show diversity, normalize 'differences', and emphasize individuals". Participant 3 used much of the same reasoning as Participant 2, and stated that, "film can create room for thought and reflection in a different way than text". "It is important to talk about these topics in English class as well as other subjects", according to Participant 4, while Participant 6 raised a concern regarding gender, stating, "Teaching acceptance of all people is appropriate, but 'teaching gender' can easily and quickly be misconstrued" (see appendix 1). Participant 5 argued that they do not use literature and film to teach about gender and disability because they want the themes to be normalized (see appendix 1). This ponders the questions, "What is normal?" and "Who decides what normal is?".

Books	Frequency	Movies	Frequency
<i>Billy Elliot*</i>	1	<i>Soul surfer*</i>	1
<i>My life as an alphabet</i>	1	<i>Wonder*</i>	1
<i>The curious incident of the dog in the night-time</i>	1		

Table 4.2: Literature and audiovisual materials for teaching gender and disability

The question of normalcy is part of an ethical discussion, and when asked if there are any ethical considerations regarding teaching about gender and disability, 50% said yes, three said no, and one was unsure. The "yes"-answers vary from "you always have to do an evaluation on what is suitable to read/watch in the specific group (P1); "to show consideration to pupils if this is something close to them" (P2); "Some topics may be

difficult to talk about for some students. If you know your students well, you probably know if you need to prepare them for the topic or not. If you have a safe learning environment, most topics can be discussed and talked about in class" (P4); and "Parents might not agree with 'gender education'" (P6). "No"-answers include: "no, I experience this as unproblematic" (P7), and "I am rather feeling an ethical duty to give pupils varied education that includes all aspects and that gives pupils a good base for further thinking themselves" (P3) (see appendix 1). However, as indicated in the questionnaires, none of the participants' schools have teaching policies on how and when to teach about gender and disability. Anicic (2020) also discussed schools' policies and found that many schools have anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies, but 69% of his participants only had general or little knowledge of their school's policies. Therefore, if schools have policies on this, teachers need to become more familiarized with them.

With or without ethical issues, most of my participants find teaching about these themes to be important, to some extent, with five out of eight stating it is "pretty important", one "very important", and one "a bit important". Only the final participant finds it neither important nor irrelevant (see appendix 1). However, seven out of eight only occasionally include gender and disability in their teaching, while one does it often (see appendix 1). They explain the importance of including these themes with a need to present pupils to the diversity around them, both locally and globally, and to show people in different life situations. Yet, none of them refer to the curriculum. Participant 6 argues that "Kids need to learn compassion, inclusion, sympathy. If we aren't teaching them to be kind to everyone (not just kids who look and act like them), we aren't doing our job at helping to create functional adults" (see appendix 1). When asked how the participants find teaching gender and disability through literature and audiovisual materials, the answers extended from exciting, interesting, engaging, rewarding to normal, and even challenging. Participant 8 reflects on the challenge, stating "It can be hard to teach about gender and sexuality, because I know little about it myself. Even if the intention is good, it is hard to say something wrong and misgender. A lot of language and structures build on the dichotomy of he/she" (see appendix 1). This relates to my motivation for this MA thesis, which is to reduce that challenge, and to Ginsberg and Glenn's (2019) findings that show how teachers avoid difficult themes because they feel they cannot speak for groups they do not belong to. However, Ginsberg and Glenn (2019) also state that this is a learning process for all participants, which again relates to Shor's (1993) insistence of learning being done together. This is also the aim of my thesis, as I discussed in the inclusive and critical pedagogies in chapter 2, theoretical frameworks.

4.1.2 Intersectionality

Three of the participants were familiar with the term 'intersectionality', with one of them having heard about it through further education and one through social science (see appendix 1). Participant 1 explained how after hearing about the term through their further education program, they had become more aware of the concept and tried to implement it into teaching. I find it encouraging that teachers are becoming familiar with intersectionality through further education, because that means that there might be an on-going change for pre- and in-service teachers in teacher training. In turn, Participant 2 stated that they had not focused on the notion of intersectionality in the English subject but in Norwegian and Social Science. Finally, Participant 6 had not heard about the term but stated that they were interested in learning more (see appendix 1). This result was quite expected, which shows that there is work to do to introduce the notion of intersectionality to English teachers in lower secondary school. I fully developed the

concept of intersectionality in section 2.1.1, and I will discuss my findings considering this theoretical framework further in chapter 5.

4.2 Intersectional Analysis of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

In the following section, I present and examine my findings from the intersectional analysis of *The Curious Incident* that I have conducted. Later, I discuss these findings in the light of the theoretical frameworks previously presented in chapter 5. I have analyzed how gender and disability are portrayed in the novel, searching for themes such as gender diversity, ableism, and gender expectations. I have also made note of portrayals of racial diversity, or lack thereof, as part of my intersectional analysis. My main findings are an implicit or oblique portrayal of disability, with no mentions of a diagnosis for the main character in the book. I have also found scarce data on the intersections of gender and race, which makes the reader assume that most characters are white and cis gender.

The plot essentially leads us to believe that *The Curious Incident* is a murder mystery novel, with the main goal for readers to find out who killed the neighbor's dog, Wellington. However, readers follow the life of 15-year-old Christopher Boone and his ups and downs, told from a first-person perspective. According to the cover of the book, Christopher has Asperger's Syndrome, but that has since been debunked by the author (Haddon, 2009). Still, from context, readers have the impression that Christopher is on the autism spectrum, and according to Loftis (2015), "an audience with even a glancing familiarity with autism will conclude that Christopher Boone is on the spectrum (p. 124). Christopher's terrifying, world turning journey, as described in the book's cover, was written by Mark Haddon, an award-winning author, poet, and cartoonist, and was published in 2003. Haddon has written several novels, including YA novels, with *The Curious Incident* as the most renowned. He has worked with children and adults with mental and physical disabilities (British Council, n.d.). However, according to a post on his blog (Haddon, 2009), he has very little knowledge about Asperger's and the autism spectrum. According to Haddon (2009), "labels say nothing about a person. they only say how the rest of us categorise that person" and "good literature is about peeling labels off" (para. 4), which for me seems like a way to disclaim responsibility. Still, *The Curious Incident* is frequently used in Norwegian classrooms to discuss representations of various abilities (Loftis, 2015, p. 124), as an example of a novel with a main character on the autism spectrum. This was supported by my questionnaire's respondents, as Participant 4 states that they use *The Curious Incident* to ensure pupils "learn more about autism and seeing the world in a different way" (see appendix 1).

The portrayal of Christopher is, in my opinion, both stereotypical and authentic, because it does follow characteristics of autism, which makes it authentic, but also describes Christopher's disability as his only, or at least most important, character trait, which makes it rather reductive. This novel was, as mentioned, one of the first of its kind in its portrayal of autism, and later there have come films/tv-shows, such as *Atypical*, *The Good Doctor*, and *Wonder*, that also have white, male neurodivergent protagonists. It might be suitable to refer to Christopher as neurodivergent as well, because of the hints to him being on the autism spectrum. Common for these shows is the tendency to portray the main protagonist as exceptional, and *The Curious Incident* partially follows the narrative of exceptionalism because of Christopher's extraordinary journey alone to London. In addition, Loftis (2015) states that "Christopher's character is a

conglomeration of stereotypes, presenting autism as the public eye would imagine it to be: [...]” (p. 124). The book has received extensive critical attention. On the one hand, it has won several prizes, and Gilbert (2005) believes that the reason it “has enjoyed such popular and critical success is that Christopher’s Asperger’s Syndrome always positions him at a distance from that which appears obvious” (p. 245), with both comical and emotional moments. On the other hand, the novel has caused massive controversy in the autism community (Shim, 2019), because of Haddon’s lack of research on the subject. Barret (2016) states that as autistic herself, she gets sad reading *The Curious Incident*, because it, in her words, “feels like I’m basically being told that no one will ever love me because of my autism. Everything will fall apart because of my autism. I will always be a problem BECAUSE I HAVE AUTISM” (para. 3). However, the novel has been praised for being one of the first of its kind to spread awareness on autism in literature, which is another reason why I have chosen this text despite its mixed reception.

As discussed in chapter 3.1.2, I have chosen to code the disability-findings into narrower categories, because my findings offered a variety of portrayals of disability in the book. Even if it is not stated explicitly in the book that Christopher is on the autism spectrum, many of my findings correlated with characteristics of autism, and I therefore found it valuable to use this coding. For the examples including Christopher’s disability, I have used codes with characteristics of autism which is described as “a condition that affects how a person thinks, feels, interacts with others, and experiences their environment” (autismspectrum.org, n.d.). One of the original definitions describes ASD as social communication deficits and repetitive and unusual sensory (Kanner, 1943), but “autism is now seen as a spectrum that can range from very mild to severe” (Lord et.al., 2018, p. 508) rather than one set of characteristics. Originally, I had gender and race as separate sections, but I decided that those findings should be integrated into the other findings as part of my intersectional analysis.

4.2.1 Strengths and Interests

Some of the strengths and interests of autistic people, which are among the themes of my analysis, can include, but are not limited to, eye for details, good memory, “very strong focus on specific interest areas” (autismspectrum.org, n.d.), deep interest in typical or unusual topics, and “up to 20% of Autistic people have exceptional or above average skills in one or more areas” (autismspectrum.org, n.d.), such as maths. While some references, such as CDC (2022) describes interests as ‘obsessive’, Kirby et.al. (2015) describe them as ‘repetitive’, which has a less negative notion to it. This is not mentioned as an attempt to generalize, because I realize autistic people do not form a homogenous group; each autistic person is a complex individual. Christopher, as he is represented in the novel, checks these boxes to some extent, including his love for math. He is going to take his A levels in maths (and get an A grade), and doubles 2s in his head to calm down (Haddon, 2003, p. 149). He can also get really lost in his interest areas, stating “if I get really interested in something, like practicing maths, or reading a book about the Apollo missions, or Great White Sharks, I don’t notice anything else” (p. 92). Lord et.al. (2018) also underline how those passionate interests are a characteristic persistent with autism. Christopher has exceptional photographic memory and describes it like a film: “This is why I am really good at remembering things, [...], because my memory has a smelltrack which is like a soundtrack” (Haddon, 2003, p. 96). He also notices a lot in the environment around him, “I see everything. This is why I don’t like new places” (Haddon, 2003, p. 174), which sometimes can lead to him getting over-stimulated.

4.2.2 Communication and Social Interactions

The use of so-called sufferers, such as the verb 'struggles with' and the noun 'deficit', presents disability as a negative notion, which has been repeated in both the literature I have read, such as Lord et. al., and is a characteristic of the medical model of disability. Christopher is systematically represented in the novel as struggling with understanding people and the nuances in what they are saying and takes everything quite literally. Lord et.al. (2018) mentions autistic people can have "poorly integrated and non-verbal communication" (p. 509). Autismspectrum.org mentions further characteristics of the autism spectrum, including "difficulty with small talk, sarcasm or understanding jokes", being uncomfortable in busy social situations, "using or responding to body language differently", and "taking extra time to understand spoken information" (autismspectrum.org, n.d.). Christopher does not understand jokes, stating "This will not be a funny book. I cannot tell jokes because I do not understand them" (Haddon, 2003, p. 10), and then later clarifying that he knows a few jokes, but explains one thoroughly. He also states how he does not always do what he is told, "because when people tell you what to do it is usually confusing and it does not make sense" (p. 38). Christopher does not like talking to strangers, because he does not like people he has never met before, "They are hard to understand" (Haddon, 2003, p. 45), which, according to Lord et.al. (2018) is another characteristic of autism, stating that they might have "deficit in understanding and use [...] gestures" (p. 509). This is shown through Christopher's interactions with different people, e.g., when he found Wellington dead and Mrs Shears shouted at him: "I do not like people shouting at me. It makes me scared that they are going to hit me or touch me and I do not know what is going to happen" (Haddon, 2003, p. 4). When Christopher walked around the neighborhood to ask about Wellington's death, a neighbor laughed at a joke about police officers getting younger: "Then he laughed. I do not like people laughing at me, so I turned around and walked away" (p. 50). He finds people confusing because they "do a lot of talking without using words" and "talk using metaphors" (Haddon, 2003, p. 19), and this is another reason why he does not like the unfamiliar.

4.2.3 Sensory and Emotions

When I first started analyzing *The Curious Incident*, I coded this category as 'comfort', because all the examples I identified in the novel concerned things or occasions that made Christopher feel comfortable. However, after reading about characteristics of the autism spectrum, I renamed it sensory, which suited the examples I had found. Sensory includes "being constantly aware or more aware of some sensations", "feeling distressed or overwhelmed if there are too many sensations at once", "working hard to avoid distress by covering ears, hiding in quiet places, etc. to block out sensations", and discomfort with touch from others (autismspectrum.org, n.d.). Kirby et. al. (2015) state that sensory features that are frequent include hyperresponsiveness, hyporesponsiveness, sensory seeking, and enhanced perception, and their study found that their autistic respondents did not feel their reactions were unusual or an issue. The children simply describe their sensory experiences as likes and dislikes, "as changing over time and just like other people's experiences" (p. 320). Christopher reacts to situations where he gets overwhelmed by covering his ears and closing his eyes (pp. 4, 180), groaning: "I make this noise when there is too much information coming into my head from the outside world" (Haddon, 2003, p. 8), or hiding:

Then I went out of the toilet and I saw that opposite the toilet there were two shelves with cases and a rucksack on them and it made me think of the airing cupboard at home and how I climb in there sometimes and it makes me feel safe. So I climbed onto the middle shelf and I pulled one of the cases across like a door so that I was shut it, and it was dark and there was no one in there with me and I couldn't hear people talking so I felt much calmer and it was nice. (Haddon, 2003, p. 201)

He also reacts to touch by screaming when someone tried to help him off the train tracks at the metro station (p. 225), when the police officer tried to bring him back to Father (p. 197), when someone touched his knee at the train station (p. 216), and when Mother hugged him (p. 233). I believe this portrayal is stereotypical, based on Haddon's lack of research on the topic. However, on one occasion, he stated, "it didn't hurt when he touched me like it normally does" (p. 143). This was after Christopher felt really betrayed by his father, felt really sick, and disconnected from the world. He also feels discomfort toward the colors of yellow and brown, and he has an entire list of why he hates these colors (p. 105), while red is his favorite. At one point in the novel, he explains the following: "Which was a brown thing inside a red thing which made my head feel funny so I didn't look" (Haddon, 2003, p. 73). This excerpt is a good example of how Christopher noticed a lot and also an instance of his experience with emotions and how he is affected by his environment.

Finally, I have included a characteristic that relates to, but is not exclusive to, a "delay in learning to understand and regulate emotions" and having "difficulties understanding how non-autistic people think in some situations" (autismspectrum.org, n.d.). Lord et.al. (2018) further adds that autistic people can have an "abnormal social approach" (p. 509) and reduced sharing of emotions. These descriptions of characteristics of the autism spectrum have a negative notion, which is important to make note of because it can reinforce stereotypes. However, most of the references I have consulted have similar notions, except for CDC (2022), who use the word 'unusual' instead, which is less harsh than 'abnormal'. Christopher states very early on that he does not understand what different faces, which is what Christopher calls emotions, mean, except for basic emotions such as happy and sad. He therefore "got Siobhan to draw lots of these faces and then write down next to them exactly what they meant" (Haddon, 2003, p. 3). He used this note to understand what people were saying, "but it was very difficult to decide which of the diagrams was most like the face they were making because people's faces move very quickly" (Haddon, 2003, p. 3). His favorite dream is one where everyone who understands emotions die, while those who are like him will not contract the virus and can live in their own bubble (p. 242). He also struggles to understand why and how other people can think differently than him, for example by stating "But they should think logically and if they thought logically they would see that they can only ask this question because it has already happened and they exist" (Haddon, 2003, p. 203), and when people do not notice what he is noticing, "But most people are lazy. They never look at everything" (p. 174). He also finds it hard to imagine things that has not happened yet: "I find it hard to imagine things which did not happen to me" (p. 5), which relates to the characteristic of "difficulties in sharing imaginative play" (Haddon, 2003, p. 509). The wording of these examples show that Christopher has a hard time with some things, which gives the impression that his disability is a struggle, not something he lives with. This negative terminology can reinforce the medical model, as discussed in chapter 2.1.3, where his disability is viewed as a problem that needs fixing. Even if Christopher is, supposedly, not on the spectrum, he definitely shows characteristics of it, and is represented rather negatively because of his disability.

4.2.4 Perception and Treatment of Christopher

How a disabled character is perceived and treated by the other characters in the book, is an important, recurring note from the analyses of both *The Curious Incident* and *PET*. Christopher is treated both well and poorly, but one common denominator for him is to be viewed or treated as a problem, as problematic, or being blamed for his disability, especially by his parents. There are several examples of this in the novel, which include when Christopher stated, "This was because of the stress of looking after someone who has Behavioural Problems like I have" (Haddon, 2003, p. 21). His parents did, according to Christopher, state things like, "Christopher, if you do not behave I swear I shall knock the living daylights out of you", "Jesus, Christopher, I am seriously considering putting you into a home" (p. 61), and even: "Holy fucking Jesus, Christopher. How stupid are you?" (p. 102). When his mother explained why she left him, she wrote, "I was not a very good mother, Christopher. Maybe if things had been different, maybe if you'd been different, I might have been better at it. But that's just the way things turned out" (Haddon, 2003, p. 134). This perception of Christopher relates to the medical model of disability, which was previously presented in chapter 2, in that autism is presented as a problem to be eradicated (Leduc, 2020). Autism has become, in the eyes of the people around him, something he struggles with, not something he lives perfectly content with, which then has affected how he views himself. Because of the language of these quotes which constitutes verbal abuse, I would urge teachers who work with this novel in the EFL classroom to consider the concept of resistant reading to activate pupils' critical thinking skills. Dunn (2010) argues that you could still use texts with harmful stereotypes to identify and challenge them.

Sometimes, Christopher is even abused physically: "Father had never grabbed hold of me like that before. Mother had hit me sometimes because she was a very hot-tempered person" (Haddon, 2003, p. 103). Other times he was treated as if he was stupid and a lesser human being, such as with the police officer, who claims: "You are a prize specimen, aren't you?" (p. 188) (ironic) and "'Now listen, you little monkey'" (p. 197), or Mrs Gascoyne, who said that "she and Father should talk about this at some later point on their own" (p. 57). Mr. Jevons assuming/stating why Christopher liked maths, without asking, "Mr Jevons said that I liked maths because it was safe" (p. 78). However, there are also occasions of love and respect from his parents, such as having a special movement, where his parents "held up [their] right hand and spread [their] fingers out in a fan" and then Christopher "held up [his] left hand and spread [his] fingers out in a fan and [they] made [their] fingers and thumbs touch each other" (p. 21), to show that they love him (pp. 21, 223). They also defended him from a teacher, "But Father asked her whether she wanted to say things she would be embarrassed to say in front of me, and she said no, so he said, 'Say them now, then'" (p. 57), and toward his mother's boyfriend, "And Mother said, 'He can understand what you're saying, you know'" (Haddon, 2003, p. 245). Talking over a disabled person is a harmful tendency, acting like Christopher is not worth being part of the conversation, which deviate from the theoretical framework of inclusive pedagogies, and the curriculum that states that all pupils should feel and be included.

4.2.5 Other Intersectional Portrayals

Christopher was not the only character in *The Curious Incident* who is, or was hinted to be, disabled. These characters are portrayed in a slightly different manner than Christopher himself, which might have to do with the narrative voice being Christopher's. In one section of the novel, Christopher states: "I am not a spazzer, which means

spastic, not like Francis, who is a spazzer” (Haddon, 2003, p. 33). Notice how he uses a word that should not be used. It seems like Christopher goes to a special needs school, as some other examples from his school give this impression: “All the other children at my school are stupid. Except I’m not meant to call them stupid, even though that is what they are” and further “I’m meant to say that they have learning difficulties or that they have special needs” (p. 56), and another when “Joseph Fleming took his trousers off and went to the toilet all over the floor of the changing room and started to eat it” (p. 129). These instances could be used in the EFL classroom to discuss terminology about disability, and help pupils evolve their resisting reading and critical thinking-skills. Another character with a disability is Mr. Wise’s mother, who is a wheelchair user and Christopher states that Mr. Wise lives with his mother “so he can take her to the shop and drive her around” (p. 49). Mrs. Alexander is another neighbor with a disability, but she states it herself, saying she is “a little deaf sometimes” (pp. 50, 71). Finally, it is implied that Christopher’s grandmother has dementia or a similar diagnosis because she “has pictures in her head, too, but her pictures are all confused, like someone has muddle the film up and she can’t tell what happened in what order” (p. 99). He seems to have a rather negative attitude toward other disabled people around him, which might reflect how he has been treated by others and is very different from how disabled people are portrayed in *PET*, as I discuss next. In addition, the portrayal of these characters is one-sided, since Christopher does not describe other aspects of their identity, for example race or age. When race is explicitly mentioned in the text, that was also the only attribution of that character, such as mentions of a Pakistani boss, a Black woman behind a counter, an Indian lady behind a counter, and an Indian man at the metro shop. These examples are all of racially marginalized people, because whiteness pervades in this novel, and so does masculinity, but these are still markers of identity. One example where Christopher used two categories, gender and disability, to describe a person, was about a man he observed on the train to London: “... and one of them was a black man in a long white dress” (Haddon, 2003, p. 202). This was also one of the only times anything relevant to gender and gender roles were explicitly mentioned in the text.

4.3 Intersectional Analysis of *PET*

In this section, I present my findings from the intersectional analysis of *PET* (2019), and later discuss these considering the previously presented theoretical frameworks and additional findings from *The Curious Incident*. *PET* was written by Akwaeke Emezi. They are a “nonbinary trans and plural person” (Akbar, 2018), born in Nigeria of Nigerian and Malaysian heritage, and an award-winning author, with *Freshwater* (2018) and *PET* (2019) being some of their most famous books. *Bitter*, a prequel of *PET*, has been published in 2022 (Akwaeke.com, n.d.). During the analysis, my focus was to identify representations of gender and disability, but I have also made note of a few explicit representations of race. My main findings are partly similar to *The Curious Incident* regarding the subtle representations of disability, but also entirely different in terms of the portrayals of gender and intersectionality. Akwaeke Emezi’s novel describes, from an omniscient narrator’s point of view, how different aspects of the characters’ lives intersect in complex ways. I have chosen to divide this analysis into sub-sections as well, and I have based the division on the intersections of the characters’ identities. Jam, for instance, is not only transgender, but she is also disabled and Black, which is why it made sense for me to present them together. All the monsters are gone from the city of Lucille, at least if you ask the grown-ups, but when a painting comes alive as a monster-looking creature comes out, the reader realizes that this is not the

case. There is one monster, a free monster, left in Lucille, and it is in Redemption's house, Jam's best friend. Jam is a selective-nonverbal Black trans girl, gets the mission to hunt the monster alongside with Pet, the painting, and Redemption. The rest of the book is the journey of the hunt, with oblique portrayals of the intersections of gender, disability, and other social categories along the way. The analysis of *PET* is much shorter because the focus of the novel was more on the plot than on the characters' identities. The identities were present in the background, but not prominent, which people's identities are in real life too.

4.3.1 The Intersections of Gender and Disability in Jam's Identity

Firstly, I discuss the representation of the intersecting aspects of Jam's identity, including gender and disability, which are explicitly stated when she describes how she refused to speak when she was a toddler, "she used her hands and body and face for her words but saved her voice for the most important one" (Emezi, 2019, p. 15). She screamed her first words "Girl! Girl! Girl" (p. 16), when she was three years old after someone complimented her for being "such a handsome little boy" (Emezi, 2019, p. 16). Her gender identity was so important to her that she managed to use her voice which she had never done before. These are great examples of how "an array of social systems" (Misra et.al., 2020, p. 9) shape Jam's identity. In the following paragraphs, her transition is described, so readers learn how she received an implant with hormone blockers at ten (Emezi, 2019, p. 16) and then transition surgery at fifteen (p. 17). Later in the book, mentions of both gender and disability are far more subtle. Her non-verbalism mutism, even if a diagnosis is not explicitly mentioned, is showed through her three ways of communicating. The first is voicing, which she only does sometimes with people she is comfortable with, such as her parents, the creature Pet, and her friend Redemption. Emezi employs quotes to signal when Jam is voicing, e.g.: "'Painting?' Jam asked. Bitter was one of the few people she voiced with" (p. 10). Signing is her second means of communication, which she does with everyone, and this is portrayed through italics: "*Why can't they just tell me?* [...] Her hands were a blur as she signed" (p. 4). The final one is thinking, which she only does to communicate with Pet when she does not want other people to hear. This is written with no difference from the rest of the story, as seen in the following lines: "A thought fed into her mind, and she recoiled because for the first time ever, at least so directly, it wasn't hers" (p. 31) and "What happens now? she asked. How does this work?" (p. 71). Each way of Jam's communicating-methods is equal, none portrayed as better than the others, which is a positive representation of the complexity of (dis)abled experiences. The omniscient narrator also adds parts of Jam's thoughts and feelings around communication, and examples of this are when she states, "They didn't need to talk, which was perfect" (p. 5), "She was voicing more than she normally would, but it felt okay" (p. 40), "She hated having to yell, but she didn't want her mother coming to her room" (p. 75), and "It has been a long time since Jam had voiced this much or for this long" (p. 116). Mentions of her transition only occur three more times in the entire book; twice where her estrogen implant is chilly and ached in her arm (pp. 78, 165), and once a quick note of something happening after her surgery (Emezi, 2019, p. 90). All these references are not given much attention to in the novel, as they are only viewed as other aspects of Jam's personality. This is a key difference from *The Curious Incident* because Jam lives with her disability, and Christopher's is viewed as a problem. One could even argue that she is not disabled, but actually lives with a multitude of abilities, such as signing and voicing. Also, Jam has more to her than her disability and minoritized gender identity as a Black trans girl.

One central difference between Christopher and Jam is how she is perceived and supported by the people around her. She has close relationships with her parents, Redemption, and several other characters. An example is when Jam was going to tell her mother something, but was not comfortable with voicing anymore, so her mother said, "You don't have to voice it, you could sign it, ent?" (Emezi, 2019, pp. 13-14). When they realized she was a girl, they apologized to her, started researching puberty blockers and hormones, and taught her "how to do breast self-exams and talked to her about fertility options" (pp. 16-17). When Jam wanted to have surgery, her father said, "You know you're still a girl whether you get surgery or not, right? No one gets to tell you anything different" (p. 17), but they did not have her wait for her surgery, because they "understood how important it was for her well-being" (Emezi, 2019, p. 17). This is a positive representation of the care network surrounding Jam and connects with the core values of acceptance and inclusion (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). Using this YA novel in the EFL classroom could help destigmatizing gender and racial diverse identities. Her best friend, Redemption, is also a great support to her, when stating the following: "Thanks for coming over today. I know it was a lot of people, I was worried you'd be flooded" (Emezi, 2019, p. 98) and helping her settle when she gets overwhelmed (pp. 114-115), as she sometimes dissociates and likes to hide in small places (pp. 9, 45, 114). Redemption also learned sign language when Jam was little, so he could talk to her. His uncle, Hibiscus, did as well (p. 87). In addition to being supported, Jam is also supportive, as when she explains how it was her turn to help Redemption now (pp. 114-115), when she left her mom's painting alone even if she was curious to how it looked, because "everyone, everything deserved some time to be. To figure out what they were" (p. 22), and when she and her parents discussed what the creature from the painting was called, and she stated, "what you were called and what your name was were not the same thing, she knew that much" (Emezi, 2019, p. 64). She has felt the love and acceptance from the people around her, which has impacted how she perceives and treats others.

4.3.2 The Intersections of Gender and Disability in Other Characters' Identities

Secondly, I present the findings regarding the second most important character, Pet. Pet's gender is not mentioned nor important, it is a creature. It is always addressed as Pet or it, except for one time, when Redemption said, ""What did Pet do?" Redemption asked. "And where did he go?" (Emezi, 2019, p. 194). When Pet first came out of the painting, Jam was unsure of what it was, so she used 'the thing' (p. 34). However, she, and the other characters continued to call Pet it or the creature for the rest of the novel, such as in chapter 5; "The first step to seeing is seeing that there are things you do not see, it said", and "Pet slowed the movements of its head to focus on her" (p. 71). In addition, Pet has no eyes which could be seen as a disability; however, Pet sees things differently than humans. "The creature kept staring at her with no eyes" (p. 36) and "Pet kept looking at her with no eyes" (p. 70). Still, Pet needs Jam to see things it cannot: "There must be a hunter who is human, who can go where I cannot go, see what I cannot see" (Emezi, 2019, p. 73). Pet is not defined by its gender nor its (dis)abilities, it turns out to be an angel, because it is there on an important mission. It gives Jam an important lesson that it is not about how people/creatures look, but how they act.

Finally, other people not defined by one category are Ube and Whisper. Ube is the librarian who is black and in need of a wheelchair, but he is first and foremost a friend and source of information. His disability is mentioned twice, while he is mentioned more,

e.g., "The librarian was a tall, dark-skinned man who whizzed around the marble floors in his wheelchair. His name was Ube, and Jam had known him since she was a toddler pawing through picture books" (p. 5), and "Jam knew that he had been in a wheelchair since he was a kid, so it hadn't been the revolution that put him in it, but that the old world hadn't cared much about people like him" (Emezi, 2019, p. 126). This is again where the subtle portrayals come in. Whisper is non-binary and 1/3 of a throuple, but more importantly, they are a loving parent to Redemption and Moss. They are mentioned on a few occasions, but the focus was not on them being non-binary or in a throuple, just simply mentioned as Redemption's two other parents: "His father, Beloved, was sitting on a stool across from her, sketching her face while the recipient, Redemption's third parent, Whisper, juggled three oranges and a grapefruit, their eyes focused on the fruit, tongue sticking out in concentration" (p. 82) and "Whisper sat on the carpet, watching her, their mouth relaxed into a soft smile and their head leaning against Beloved's thigh" (Emezi, 2019, p. 162). Always focusing on what they do, rather than who and "what" they are.

These three characters also show how their characters identity comes second in the story, only as a part of it, while the plot is the primary focus. All examples from *PET* can be used for pupils to re-see both gender and disability, because they are not maintaining stereotypes. They also portray the characters intersectional, which can, and hopefully will, show pupils not to judge people by one identity-marker.

5 Discussion of Research Findings

In the next chapter, I discuss the findings presented and analyzed in chapter 4 in light of the theoretical frameworks, 'Intersectional studies in education' and 'Critical and inclusive pedagogies and tools', presented in chapter 2. My research questions were, 1) "How are the categories of gender and disability represented in YA literature?", 2) "Is YA literature taught in intersectional ways in the Norwegian EFL classroom?", and 3) "How can teachers use (intersectional) YA literature in the EFL classroom to encourage critical thinking?". The main goal is to consider the benefits of YA literature to encourage critical thinking to re-see gender and disability in the EFL classroom, and fight for social justice. I start with the big scale and first research question, and the chapter is divided into three sections: YA literature, intersectionality, and critical thinking and social justice. In the third section, I narrow the focus and discuss how to teach critical thinking through *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, with inspiration from Bobkina and Stefanova's (2016) model of critical thinking skills, which should answer the final research question. My main findings from this section are advantages of (intersectional) YA literature, such as introducing more diverse voices into the EFL classroom, the importance of discussing the difference of intersectionality and diversity, and how *The Curious Incident* and *PET* can encourage pupils to re-see gender and disability.

5.1 YA Literature

Before I discuss how it is possible to use *The Curious Incident* and *PET* to encourage critical thinking in the EFL classroom, I think it is necessary to explore why it is advantageous to use the genre of YA literature in general. Critical and inclusive pedagogies call for teaching methods that facilitate inclusion and resistance toward the set norms of society, and Gouck argues that YA literature can deal with important topics of sensitivity and nuance" (as cited in Corbett & Phillips, 2021, p. 2). Matos (2021) further states that "YA literature can enhance and complicate our understanding of its contemporary culture" (p. 10), and my findings from the analyses of *The Curious Incident* and *PET* have shown me that this is the case. The books offer two different portrayals of disability and gender, which can be because they were written approximately 15 years apart, and the context was very different then compared to now. YA literature is an always changing and flowing genre, which makes it adaptable to time and space. I would, for example, ask how *The Curious Incident* would be received if it was written today, or vice versa. Importantly, the differences between the novels also have to do with the authors' positionalities, as today's circumstances, related to movements such as Black Lives Matter and Trans Lives Matter, call for authors who have knowledge and/or first-hand experience, or are at least humble in their approach, with what they write about. I find it comforting that the genre is changing with the time, and the transitions from #ownvoices to specific descriptors (Lavoie, 2021) and from diversity to intersectionality are examples of this change (Romero, 2018).

An issue in the classrooms, including the EFL classroom, has been a lack of diverse materials (Smestad, 2018). The goal should be for all pupils to "see themselves in the pages of a book" (WeNeedDiverseBooks, n.d.), but there has been a positive trend in later years (Ginsberg & Glenn, 2019; Leduc, 2020). By introducing YA literature,

especially intersectional YA literature, into the classrooms, this trend can turn even more. Five out of eight of my participants stated they often use literature in general teaching, while the rest use it sometimes, and six out of eight use it to teach about gender and disability specifically. Without aiming to generalize these findings, I see these findings as a positive trend. Especially *PET*'s presentation of more complex identities gives several pupils this chance to feel represented. Every pupil does not need to be represented every time, but I believe everyone should get to see characters they can relate to or identify with at some point, because the teaching should be for all (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Participant 3 describes varied education as an ethical duty to give their pupils a good base for further thinking (see appendix 1). *The Curious Incident* also has characters that pupils can identify with, and how Christopher gets treated is perhaps the most relatable, so it should not be dismissed even if the portrayals might be one-sided. I also think it is important to note that pupils might not relate to the characters the teacher anticipates in advance, which further supports the notion of a variety of representations. This also relates to the workings of inclusive pedagogies, because a more diverse, and including classroom will, to a greater extent, facilitate learning for all, and as already mentioned, this might benefit language learners even more because they are in a vulnerable situation (Hart & McIntyre, 2007).

By using intersectional YA literature, the teachers might avoid the challenge of feeling they cannot speak for groups they do not belong to (Ginsberg & Glenn, 2019), a challenge Participant 8 also mentioned, because the literature can speak for itself. Again, it is important to note the author's positionality, and the teacher needs to carefully select literature that does not promote or instruct the teacher's own views (Elliot, 1991). Should they use literature written by someone, regardless of how they situate themselves, or who has not done research, such as Haddon, or is it preferable to include authors who have first-hand experiences, such as Emezi? This is an ethical consideration, but I think that, as long as the teachers are aware of it, they can use both to discuss diversity and intersections of social categories, including gender and disability, with their pupils. Teachers can see YA literature as an opportunity to learn together with their pupils (Shor, 1993), which hopefully will resist the challenge of professional development that Anicic (2020) discussed. The field of YA literature is increasing and has developed into becoming equally popular among grown-ups (Cadden et.al., 2020). My participants have also argued that there are benefits to the use of YA literature (see appendix 1). However, the field has been criticized for lacking representation of how different aspects of peoples' lives intersect, as I discuss in the next section.

5.2 Intersectionality

Intersectionality has been the common thread throughout my thesis, and in this section, I discuss how it relates to *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, and the EFL classroom. To avoid confusing the term with diversity (Romero, 2018), it is important to discuss how different identities affect each other and how it could lead to different types of oppression and social justice issues, instead of only celebrating one aspect of pupils' identities. The portrayal of Christopher's identity could easily be mistaken as not intersectional, which I have done several times in this process, because people might forget that being white and cisgender, which I have assumed he is, are also intersecting aspects of his identity. An example of this mistake is from my methodology-section where I assumed I would not find intersectional portrayals of gender and disability in *The Curious Incident*, but I should have said 'explicit intersectional portrayals'. As mentioned, the experience of a white woman differs from a Black woman and again for a woman of color (Romero,

2018), but they also differ from a disabled woman vs a disabled man, which makes it relevant to ask how Christopher would have been treated at the train if he was female, or Black, or both, and whether that would have been different or not. Even if he was treated negatively as how he is, he might have had privileges in the situations anyway. Another question one could ask is if the reader would have gotten a different impression or reaction when Christopher got hit by his parents if he was a girl, Black, physically disabled, or a combination of them. There is no definite answer here, but the questions are still important to ask from an intersectional point of view. When it comes to Jam, I am not sure if it would have made a difference to the story if the main character was a trans boy, or if she was deaf instead of selective non-verbal, because as the examples have shown, her identity was represented in an authentic, non-stereotypical and authentic way, in contrast to how Christopher was portrayed. However, it is important to note that these differences would perhaps lead to other struggles or forms of oppression in real life, even if they might not have affected Jam in the story.

These aspects are very important for teachers to consider, because as a participant stated, they introduce literature to introduce pupils to "other peoples' perspectives and lives" so they "can understand their experiences", and to "show diversity. Normalize 'difference'". This again brings the intersectionality vs diversity discussion because it is important to not "view diversity as an opportunity to interact with persons of different racial, ethnic, class, gender and sexual identities to experience that we are all the same" (Romero, 2018, p. 59). However, as I have stated earlier, I believe it is not wrong to wish for a diverse classroom, as long as the teacher is also aware of the intersections and different forms of oppression, because then the teacher views pupils as a whole, and the classroom becomes more inclusive for all (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). My findings from the questionnaire showed me that those teachers were not too familiar with the concept of intersectionality. However, one stated their eagerness to learn about it. Without trying to generalize the findings from the questionnaire, I believe it is important to make the concept more familiarized among EFL teachers to avoid the issues addressed in this section. Intersectionality "demands a rethinking of how we approach social issues and conceptualize social inequality" (Romero, 2018, p. 167)", which is why I discuss the importance of critical thinking in the final section.

5.3 Critical Thinking and Social Justice

One of the main aims of this thesis is to see how YA literature can be used to encourage students' critical thinking skills in the EFL classroom, which is what I discuss in this section. Critical thinking is a core value in the curriculum, which further underlines its importance, and the concept comes from a resistance toward the banking model of education and its passive learners (Breunig, 2005). As already mentioned, YA literature can illustrate important social happenings, but for pupils to be able to discuss these, teachers need to activate their critical thinking skills. The goal of critical thinking can be explained by Janks' (2013) critical literacy framework, which states how the aim is to "produce pupils who can contribute to greater equity, [...] respect difference and live in harmony with others" (p. 227). Teachers, ideally, want pupils to act as "agents for change", who "read both the word and the world in relation to power, identity, [and] difference[s]" (Janks, 2013, p. 227). Shor (1993) also claims that teachers and pupils need to "empower themselves for social change, to advance democracy and equality" (p. 24), which is supported by Keesing-Styles' (2003) call for a promotion of practices "that have the potential to transform oppressive institutions or social relations" (para. 6).

Critical thinking has been a recurring thread throughout the theoretical frameworks, as all aim to improve their fields towards the shared goal of social justice.

While the consensus among the references above is a need of critical thinking to achieve social justice in the big picture, Lin's (2018) study covers the benefits of critical thinking in the EFL classroom. They state that critical thinking can enhance language learning, and that learners can use language to create different meanings and they can notice their limitations and learning needs, with a result of more comprehensible input and output (p. 119). A challenge in the lower secondary school can be, as stated by Participant 6, that "parents might not agree with 'gender education'" (see appendix 1). However, this is very important to discuss because it stands against the principles of an inclusive classroom. If teachers avoid themes such as gender and disability, they can contribute to maintaining prejudice and stereotypes among their lower secondary pupils and hinder a discussion on "how those perceived as different are treated in our society" (Dunn, 2010, p. 17). I want to contribute to avoiding these challenges, together with the issue of not knowing how to talk about themes teachers are not familiar with (Ginsberg & Glenn, 2019), by suggesting how *The Curious Incident* and *PET* can be taught. The aim of this model, decisively inspired by Bobkina and Stefanova (2016), is to encourage critical thinking in lower secondary school. Hence the goal is for pupils to become active actors, and ideally fighters, for social justice and change, and to do so, we, current and future teachers, need them to re-see (Dunn, 2010) gender and disability in intersectional ways to resist previous stereotypes.

5.3.1 How to Teach *The Curious Incident* and *PET*

In this section, I provide examples of how to teach both the entire books and certain excerpts in intersectional ways. According to Sacks (2014), teachers should not only teach excerpts because the authors did not intend their work to be read like that, and it takes away a significant part of the experience. However, even if it is preferable to avoid excerpts, there are always issues with time and group composition to take into consideration, which is why I still include a suggestion of how to teach critical thinking skills through excerpts from *The Curious Incident* and *PET*. The model of teaching critical thinking skills has, as previously stated, four stages to develop critical thinking skills; situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice (Bobkina & Stefanova, 2016). The goal is, as mentioned in chapter 2 – theoretical frameworks, to train pupils to become active, reflexive readers, who discuss power and inequality, and understand the codependency of the readers' responses, the author's interpretation, and the context (Bobkina & Stefanova, 2016). There are plenty of themes you could discuss from both novels, including race, abuse, and dystopia, but the focus of this thesis is on gender and disability, so I use the model to portray how you could teach these two social categories and their intersections.

I have chosen a few excerpts from both novels that I would use, not to compare and decide which was better, but to discuss the different portrayals with pupils. Excerpts I have chosen for *The Curious Incident*, presented in chapter 4, include the situation where Christopher talks about the other pupils at school, stating "I am not a spazzer, which means spastic, not like Francis, who is a spazzer" (Haddon, 2003, p. 33), "All the other children at my school are stupid. Except I'm not meant to call them stupid, even though that is what they are", and "I'm meant to say that they have learning difficulties or that they have special needs" (p. 56), and when he received/found the letter from his mother, where she wrote "I was not a very good mother, Christopher. Maybe if things had been different, maybe if you'd been different, I might have been better at it. But

that's just the way things turned out" (p. 13). Other examples that could be discussed include the episode where his parents 'threaten' him or the presentation of his behavioral problems, as previously presented. For *PET*, I have chosen to use excerpts with Ube and Whisper, and the example in chapter 1 when she voiced for the first time to yell "Girl!", which also shows how supportive her parents are. I could also bring forward examples of Jam's communication-methods or Pet with both its non-binarity and blindness, Pet has no eyes, but can still see things others cannot. I have chosen these excerpts because I feel they have several relevant themes you could discuss with pupils, and because they are good representatives of my interpretation of the book. However, if I was to teach these books, it would be important not to let my own interpretations affect the pupils' impressions. Even if learning is something that should be done together, as stated by Shor (1993), it is crucial that pupils form their own opinions, which will improve their critical thinking-skills, which is the aim of this teaching method, after all.

5.3.1.1 Situated Practice

Situated practice, the first stage, focuses on "the here and now: students' lives and experiences" (Bobkina & Stefanova, 2016, p. 686), and includes both pre- and post-reading activities. The aim is to identify pupils' relevant previous knowledge and their first impressions of the text. According to the core curriculum (2017), to develop new knowledge, teaching should "seek a balance between respect for established knowledge and [...] explorative and creative thinking" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 8). By activating pupils' previous knowledge, they get to both tie it to something familiar and the opportunity to increase their knowledge. Pre-reading questions and tasks for *The Curious Incident* could include "How does a narrator's position affect the story? Explain the difference between a first-person narrator, an omniscient third-person narrator, and a limited third-person narrator", "If you look at the following examples; how does Christopher describe himself, and how is he treated by others?" Then I would add a few examples from the book, such as the following: "Christopher, if you do not behave I swear I shall knock the living daylights out of you" (Haddon, 2003, p. 61); "'Now listen, you little monkey'" (p. 197); his parents "held up [their] right hand and spread [their] fingers out in a fan" and then Christopher "held up [his] left hand and spread [his] fingers out in a fan and [they] made [their] fingers and thumbs touch each other" (p. 21) to show that they love him (pp. 21, 223); and "This was because of the stress of looking after someone who has Behavioural Problems like I have" (p. 21). Further, the teacher could ask the following question: "does it make a difference to your interpretation of the book if a diagnosis for Christopher is mentioned or not?", and "What is the importance of stating the characters' gender? What happens if you do not?".

After reading for the first time, post-reading activities could include the following questions: "What was your first impression or thoughts after reading the book?" and "How was Christopher portrayed? How was his disability portrayed?". This could lead to discussions around stereotypes and which terminology to use, but I would be careful to assume what pupils would answer, because different classrooms can give entirely different results, which ties back to the role of critical pedagogies. The questions could be answered orally or in writing, either individually, in small groups, or in the whole class, but I would suggest starting in smaller groups to ensure pupil participation. For *PET*, it would be much of the same, asking about the narrator's position, how Jam describes herself and is viewed by others. Examples could include, "You don't have to voice it, you could sign it, ent?" (Emezi, 2019, pp. 13-14), "You know you're still a girl whether you get surgery or not, right? No one gets to tell you anything different" (p. 17), and

"everyone, everything deserved some time to be. To figure out what they were" (p. 22). I would add many of the same post-reading questions for *PET*, as I did for *The Curious Incident*. The excerpt would also include much of the same because these questions are there to start the critical thinking-process. All these questions are only examples, and it would be preferable to choose questions depending on the subject of the lesson, but also depending on the group.

5.3.1.2 Overt Instruction

Stage two, over instruction, has the goal to understand the general message and analyze details. This is where I have moved slightly away from Bobkina and Stefanova (2016) by adding an intersectional aspect to this part of the model. Instead of "analyzing the main idea of each paragraph, its structure, and the way the key elements fit together" (p. 687), pupils would look for how the social categories of gender and disability intersect. This is similar to how I conducted my thematic, intersectional analysis, where I first read the books with my presumptive thoughts, and then secondly, I looked for intersecting categories. As Bobkina & Stefanova (2016) contend, "Close reading should help students to understand the inner logic of the literary text" (p. 687), which means that this step both focuses on content and language. To identify the intersectional aspects of it, questions that could be asked include the following: "How was disability portrayed in the book?", "How was gender portrayed in the book?" (The lack of it is also relevant and important to discuss), "How were people portrayed in the book?" (One-sided? Intersectional?). Hopefully, pupils would remember the portrayals of Ube, Whisper, Jam, and Pet, but if not, the teacher could give some hints. The same applies to Christopher and the examples from his school, and the class could discuss whether the portrayals were stereotypical, authentic, or both. I have stated that the portrayal of Christopher is both stereotypical and authentic, while the portrayal of Jam is more authentic, but my interpretation should not lead the discussion. As already mentioned, experiences are "not the same for a white woman as it is for a Black woman or a woman of color" (Romero, 2018, p. 1), and by using intersectionality we can frame social justice issues to expose and discuss privilege and exclusion. By making the pupils aware of these aspects when reading both *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, they can look at the text with a different set of eyes. However, it is important to note the difference between intersectionality and diversity, and not simply look for diverse representations, but to see if, and how, they intersect (Misra et.al., 2021; Romero, 2018). To identify language details, questions and tasks could include, "What linguistic choices have the author made, and how does it affect the story?", "Change sentences to a different narrator", and "How would you write it?". *The Curious Incident* might give the results of one-sided portrayals, while *PET* could give opposite results. This would be slightly more difficult for excerpts, because the teacher would have significant power over picking them and this could lead the pupils in a set direction (Elliot, 1991).

5.3.1.3 Critical Framing

Stage three, critical framing, includes "connecting language with its social context" (p. 686). Bobkina and Stefanova (year) suggest that this should be a teacher-directed discussion, while I believe, from the principles of Freire, that the learning should be learner-centered when possible and suitable. Learning should, according to Shor (1993), be done together, and if the teacher leads the entire discussion, the pupils can become passive, but also affected by the teacher's interpretations. This, as previously stated, is also supported by the Norwegian curriculum, and for pupils to become critical thinkers, they need to take part in activities that give them the freedom to explore. The

importance of critical framing can be tied back to Florian and Black-Hawkins' (2011) definition of inclusive pedagogies, and the importance of providing a meaningful education for all pupils. What the pupils see in the communities around them should also be available to them in the classroom. To "help each pupil to preserve and develop her or his identity in an inclusive and diverse environment" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 7) is also an important aspect of the curriculum, which means that the pupils should feel welcome and represented in their classroom. Critical framing can also be tied to how the world becomes more diverse, and that more pupils are coming out (Florian, 2015; Paechter, 2021), which further underlines the importance of an inclusive EFL classroom. Then, when teachers introduce literature, such as *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, the pupils can discuss how/if the books provide representations of the outside world.

According to Loughran (2015), inclusive pedagogies offer ways that "are truly responsive to the diversity learning needs within the environment" (p. 287). However, I have previously discussed the distinction between diversity and intersectionality. Still, the main point is to introduce more representative literature in the classroom. If you are aware of the difference, I do not think it hurts to also want diversity. Given how the themes of gender and disability are becoming more relevant/discussed in society, it can assist the teaching and give a deeper understanding of the themes that are taught as well. There is also a question of how disability is portrayed, regarding the different models of disability, which is something the pupils should be aware of. This relates to the difference between living *with* a disability, and the disabled person being viewed as a problem. All these aspects together underlie the importance of the intersecting aspects of people's lives. Depending on the book, this could also be a stage for resistant reading, for example regarding the language used in the book and how that would be in 'real life'. Examples from the analysis could include the following: "Holy fucking Jesus, Christopher. How stupid are you?" (Haddon, 2003, p. 102), "Jesus, Christopher, I am seriously considering putting you into a home" (p. 61), and the previously mentioned, "'Now listen, you little monkey'" (p. 197). It is a bit harder to come up with examples here, because I would want the pupils to get to a point where they understand the importance of such texts, without the teacher stating it directly. I would also want them to connect it to their own situations, and I think it would be reasonable to see where the discussion in the classroom is going in the previous two steps to decide which questions to ask here.

5.3.1.4 Transformed Practice

The final stage is called transformed practice and it involves pupils creating their own texts. An obvious way to have a transformed practice for two novels is to continue the story from where they left off. Another example could be to write something that happened before the setting of the current text or change something in the story. Pupils could also write themselves into the story or change the narrative from a first-person to a third-person narrative, as already mentioned in section 5.3.1.1. However, there are many things a text can consist of, not just words on a paper. A text can be a picture, a film, and even physical movements, which is why I would also suggest alternative activities for this step. For example, pupils can draw their interpretations of Pet, as the creature relates to both gender and disability, as seen in the following lines: "The creature kept staring at her with no eyes" (Emezi, 2019, p. 36) and "Pet kept looking at her with no eyes" (p. 70). The pupils can act out an excerpt as a play, for example from episode on the train or train station, or when Jam voiced for the first time, or write a poem with words that are already on the pages they have chosen, as suggested by

Stamper and Miller (2019). This step is important, as one of the core value states that "school shall allow the pupils to experience the joy of creating, engagement, and the urge to explore, and allow them to experience seeing opportunities and transforming ideas into practical actions" (Ministry of Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 9).

If the class did use excerpts from both *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, a transformed practice strategy could include writing a short story where both Christopher and Jam were the main characters, and to move the story along to show how they would tackle things together. Perhaps they would live in the same place and solve a mystery that would bring them together. This could lead to pupils reflecting over what they have read in the excerpts, to notice the differences between the two characters, but also to give them the freedom of creativity to take it in the direction they want. These specific examples could, without putting pre-assumptive thoughts into the pupils' heads, lead to resistant reading and re-seeing gender and disability. If the class was to move away from the 'standard' interpretation of the text, as already mentioned, the pupils could make a comic strip as well. There are extensive opportunities for creative ways to follow the final step of Bobkina and Stefanova's (2016) model to teach and encourage critical thinking in the EFL classroom.

6 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to answer the following three research questions: "How are the categories of gender and disability represented in YA literature?", "Is YA literature taught in intersectional ways in the Norwegian EFL classroom?", and "How can teachers use (intersectional) YA literature in the EFL classroom to encourage critical thinking?". To do so, I have discussed the benefits of using (intersectional) YA literature to encourage critical thinking skills and the goal of social justice, with intersectional studies in education and inclusive and critical pedagogies as my theoretical frameworks. Through my theoretical background, the thematic analysis of the questionnaires, and the intersectional analysis of *The Curious Incident* and *PET*, I have found the benefits of intersectional YA literature, such as increasing pupils' language awareness, the importance of critical thinking to urge pupils to re-see gender and disability, and how this hopefully can lead to pupils becoming agents of change. The findings have shown there is a need for a continuous development of lower secondary EFL classrooms in Norway, but the trend seems to be improving. Intersectionality has been the foundation that has tied this MA thesis together. As I have argued, teacher should strive to introduce and achieve in their EFL classroom, instead of, or in addition to, diversity.

However, my study has had its limitations. In my view, the main limitation concerns the case study approach. Case studies are often criticized for being too narrow and not generalizable (Crowe et.al., 2011), which questions their validity and reliability, but the aim is not to generalize nor for other researchers to be able to recreate the study and findings. The scope of my thesis is quite narrow, but I have not tried to suggest how *The Curious Incident* and *PET* should be taught, but rather how they could be taught. I do not attempt to state how all Norwegian lower secondary EFL teachers teach gender and disability through YA literature either but, instead, I have used my participants' answers as a supplement to the theoretical frameworks, which is why the selection of participants was not as crucial as it normally would have been. The method of data analysis chosen is also affected by the researcher's decisions, which also makes my research hard to recreate. Qualitative studies are, in addition, in risk of being biased (Anderson, 2010), but I have attempted to be critically humble (Cariou, 2020) and leave my presumptive knowledge behind.

To counter potential limitations, I would like to suggest some lines for future research. My study has focused on lower secondary school and YA literature, which is why I had to discard six questionnaire-answers from primary school teachers. It could also be relevant to study higher primary school (5-7) with the pre-teens, where the researcher would maybe need to tweak the genre analyzed. The concept of using literature to teach gender and disability to encourage critical thinking is still relevant at a younger age because then you avoid postponing the teaching of these themes until later grades (Smestad, 2018). It would also be key to obtain a more complex impression of the findings from the questionnaires, because, as mentioned, my study was somehow narrow, so if it is done in a larger scale, it could give more valid results. In addition, one of the data collection-methods could have been interviews, to get a more thorough understanding of their choices. The questionnaire only touches the surface of something much more complex. In addition, I was originally studying the use of audiovisual

materials, but it was too much to grasp over to study those as well, so it would be relevant to do a study focusing on the use of audiovisual materials, such as *Wonder* or Pixar's SparkShorts, to teach gender and disability in the Norwegian lower secondary EFL classroom. Finally, I have discussed Neumann's (2013) criticism of the tendency of some critical pedagogies to overlook teachers' experiences in research. In my case, I am a teacher in-training, which does not give me a lot of experience from the classroom yet, but I have substantial theoretical knowledge compared to other in-service teachers. Therefore, I think it would be very relevant to do a research project where the suggested model for critical thinking skills was tried out in the lower secondary EFL classroom to see if, and how, it works, and how pupils react. I, at least, want to try to use literature in this matter once I become a teacher, to see if and how my study achieved its purpose.

All my life, I have been careful, cautious, afraid of making mistakes, with a strong will to always achieve and perform my very best, and this master's thesis has not necessarily changed that. What this thesis *has* changed is my small town-mindset that I am continuously working to re-think. Importantly, it has also increased my knowledge about gender, disability, intersectionality, and the importance of critical thinking, and it has made me more confident that I will be able to support my future pupils on their journeys. Even if I am not entirely prepared to take on the great responsibility of refining the pupils and our future, I feel at least slightly more suited. My wish is that this thesis has contributed to give others, teachers or not, the same feeling.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Collection of Questionnaire-Answers

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Appendix 3: Themes Questionnaire

Appendix 4: NSD Approval

Appendix 1: Collection of questionnaire-answers

About the candidate

What is your gender identity?

1	Female
2	Female
3	Female
4	Female
5	Female
6	Female
7	Male
8	Female

Do you identify as a disabled person?

1	No
2	No
3	No
4	No
5	No
6	No
7	No
8	No

Which age group do you belong to?

1	40-49
2	30-39
3	40-49
4	40-49
5	50-59
6	40-49
7	50-59
8	40-49

How long have you been working as a teacher?

1	More than 10
2	5-10
3	More than 10
4	More than 10
5	More than 10
6	5-10
7	More than 10
8	More than 10

How long have you been teaching English?

1	More than 10
2	3-4
3	3-4
4	More than 10
5	More than 10
6	5-10
7	More than 10
8	5-10

In which grade/grades do you teach English?

1	8, 9, 10
2	8, 9, 10, younger
3	9
4	8, 9, 10
5	8, 9, 10
6	8, 9, 10
7	8
8	8, 9, 10

How many credits do you have in English?

1	45 (60 this spring)
2	15
3	60
4	60
5	310
6	Grew up in the US
7	60
8	60

If you have less than 60, are you taking extra credits or plan to do so?

1	Yes, I am taking extra credits
2	Yes, I am taking extra credits
3	Have enough credits
4	Have enough credits
5	Have enough credits
6	Have enough credits
7	Have enough credits
8	Have enough credits

About literature in general

How often do you use literature and/or audiovisual materials in the English subject?

1	Neither nor
2	Often

3	Neither nor
4	Neither nor
5	Often
6	Often
7	Often
8	Often

Which books/movies do you use in the EFL classroom?

1	Wonder, the boy in the striped pajamas, the curious incident of the dog in the night-time
2	Titanic, Tales of Beetle the bard, Lamb to the slaughter, Vertinnen, Giraffe who can't dance
3	Skellig, Holes, Part time Indian, curious incident
4	The curious incident of the dog in the night-time, blindspotting (movie), the hunger games (movie), rabbit-proof fence (movie)
5	Animal farm, Lord of the Flies, Holes, The absolutely true diary of a part-time Indian
6	American Born Chinese, The Outsiders, Wonder, To Kill a Mockingbird
7	True diary, freedom writers (movie), remember the titans (movie)
8	Curious incident, my life as an alphabet, the hate u give

Why and how do you choose?

1	Velger titler ut fra aktuelle tema, elevs interesser, alder, tema jeg mener er viktig <i>Choosing titles from relevant themes, pupils' interests, age, themes I mean are important</i>
2	Velger ut i fra tematikk eller for å øve på lesing/forståelse/analyse etc. <i>Choose from theme or to practice reading/understanding/analysis etc.</i>
3	Nivå på gruppa, tema for perioden
4	I choose to show movies in class so the students can get a better understanding of the topic we're working on. I always have reflection tasks after watching a movie. F.ex. the movie "Blindspotting" was used to finish a longer period with a focus on the US, from the civil rights movement up until today's society. The novel "The curious incident..." was read in class in 9th grade, partly because we wanted the class to share a reading experience, but also to learn more about autism and seeing the world in a different way
5	Ved samtale med kolleger, og interesse og hva skolen har <i>Through conversation with colleagues, interests and what is available at school.</i>
6	American Born Chinese= lettlest grafisk roman om en gutt med kinesisk bakgrunn, ønske å bygge forståelse for andre <i>Easy to read graphic novel about a boy with Chinese heritage, wish to build understanding of others</i> The Outsiders = klassisk bok om folk som føler seg utenfor <i>Classic book about people who feel left out.</i> Wonder = lett å forstå, vil bygge medfølelse gjennom "jeg"-språket

	<p><i>Easy to understand, want to build compassion through «I»-language</i></p> <p>To Kill a Mockingbird = klassisk Amerikansk roman om segregering og diskriminasjon</p> <p><i>Classic American novel about segregation and discrimination</i></p>
7	<p>Boka jeg skrev på forrige spørsmål ble valgt siden den også ligger som lydbok online og da var den fin som supplement og i kombinasjon med den fysiske boka. Den inneholder i tillegg bilder som jeg mener gjør boka mer forståelig for elever. Filmene jeg skrev er noen filmer som er brukt på 10. trinn og er filmer basert på virkelige hendelser. Begge er sterke historier so gjør inntrykk</p> <p><i>The book I wrote on the previous question was chosen because there is also an audiobook available online and they supplemented each other. In addition, it contains pictures which I mean make the book more understandable for pupils. The movies I wrote are used in 10th grade and based on true stories. Both are strong stories that make an impression.</i></p>
8	<p>Fikk anbefalt disse på studiet. Har lest de selv og synes de passer bra til aldersgruppen.</p> <p><i>They were recommended in my study program. I have read them myself and think they are suitable to the age group.</i></p>

Do you believe the students benefit from the use of literature and film?

1	Yes
2	Yes
3	Yes
4	Yes
5	Yes
6	Yes
7	Yes
8	Yes

Why/why not?

1	<p>De får utforske andre verdener, ser ting fra andres perspektiv, kulturell innsikt, øvelse i refleksjon, trene leseferdighet/leseforståelse, øke ordforråd, erfaring med "reading for pleasure" - forhåpentligvis noe de vil ta med seg videre.</p> <p><i>They get to examine other worlds, see things from other perspectives, cultural insight, practice in reflection, rehearse reading skills and comprehension, increase vocabulary, experience with "reading for pleasure" – hopefully something they will bring with them.</i></p>
2	<p>Utvikle forståelse for andre, øve på å lese/høre engelsk språk, øve på å jobbe med forståelse av fremstilling/tema/perspektiv i bøker/filmer</p> <p><i>Develop compassion for others, practice reading/hearing English language, practice understanding of representation/theme/understanding in books/movies</i></p>
3	<p>Bli introdusert til autentisk tekst, variert ordforråd, bilder, hendelser, tematikk, uttrykksmåter, må tenke selv</p> <p><i>Introduced to authentic texts, varied vocabulary, pictures, incidents, themes, modes of expression, think for themselves</i></p>
4	-

5	De må høre og se språket mest mulig, kan ikke regne med at alt de må lære kommer fra lærer. Når de ser film/serier etc hører de autentisk språk. <i>They need to hear and see language as much as possible, can't count on learning everything from the teacher. They hear authentic language when they watch films/series etc.</i>
6	It is good for students to read a book like "Wonder" to be able to put themselves in the place of Auggie--to hear and feel what he experiences. Watching the movie is good too, but then students see what happens to "him" and it is no longer the "I/Auggie" voice.
7	Ja, jeg tror det å lese mer er viktig for elevene samtidig som de får muligheten til å se filmer (gjerne filmer basert på bøker) Jeg opplever at leseferdighetene blant flere elever er dårligere enn før og lærere har et stort ansvar for å skape motivasjon rundt lesing. <i>Yes, I believe reading more is important for pupils, while they also get the opportunity to watch movies (desirably films based on books). In my experience, pupils' reading skills are worse now than before and teachers have a great responsibility to create motivation around learning.</i>
8	Fordi man lærer å sette seg inn i andres "verden" og perspektiv. Man kan også knytte tema og språklæring opp til ulike deler av bøkene. Jeg ser også på skriveingen deres at de lar seg inspirere av tema, stil, tone og formuleringer. <i>Because they learn to familiarize with other peoples' "world" and perspective. One can also tie theme and language learning to different parts of the books.</i>

If yes, how much?

1	A lot
2	A lot
3	Occasionally
4	A lot
5	A lot
6	Occasionally
7	A lot
8	A lot

About gender and disability in general

Does your school have a teaching policy on how/when to include teaching about gender and disability?

1	No
2	No
3	No
4	No
5	No
6	No
7	No
8	No

If yes, which?

1	-
2	-
3	-
4	-
5	-
6	-
7	-
8	-

How important is including gender and disability in your teaching?

1	Pretty important
2	Pretty important
3	A bit important
4	Pretty important
5	Neither nor
6	Very important
7	Pretty important
8	Pretty important

Why/why not?

1	<p>Det er en måte å jobbe med tematikken mangfold/diversity. Viktig at alle elever blir presentert for det mangfoldet vi har rundt oss, og at alle elever kan oppleve at de leser om karakterer de kan relatere seg til.</p> <p><i>It is a way to work with the theme diversity. Important that all pupils are presented for the diversity around us, and that all pupils can experience that they are reading about characters they can relate to.</i></p>
2	<p>Bidra til mangfold i klasserommet, vise mennesker i ulike situasjoner og livssituasjoner</p> <p><i>Contribute to a diverse classroom, show people in different situations and life situations.</i></p>
3	<p>Snakker om diskriminering av kjønn, hudfarge, etnisitet, der det faller naturlig. Kan være i lys av aktuelle hendelser.</p> <p><i>Talk about discrimination of gender, skin color, ethnicity where it is natural. Can be in light of recent events.</i></p>
4	-
5	-
6	<p>Kids need to learn compassion, inclusion, sympathy. If we aren't teaching them to be kind to everyone (not just kids who look and act like them), we aren't doing our job at helping to create functional adults.</p>
7	<p>Jeg tenker det er en selvfølge å inkludere begge deler når det er naturlig.</p> <p><i>I think it goes without saying to include both when it is natural</i></p>
8	<p>For å utvide elevens perspektiver</p> <p><i>To expand pupils' perspectives.</i></p>

How often do you include these themes in your teaching?

1	Occasionally
2	Occasionally
3	Occasionally
4	Occasionally
5	Occasionally
6	Often
7	Occasionally
8	Occasionally

Why/why not?

1	Engelskfaget har mange kompetansemål, og dette er et av områdene i fokus <i>The English subject has many curriculum aims, and this is one of the focus areas.</i>
2	Bruker dette noen ganger, forsøker å variere innholdet for å dekke flest mulig aspekter <i>Use it sometimes, try to vary the content to cover as many aspects as possible</i>
3	-
4	-
5	-
6	People don't learn something like compassion the first time they are exposed to it. We need to be reminded over and over and over
7	Når det er opplegg vi gjennomfører så inkluderer vi dette <i>We include this when there are teaching programs we execute</i>
8	Når det passer <i>When suitable</i>

Does any of your pupils identify with either or both gender and disability?

1	No
2	Not sure
3	No
4	Yes
5	Yes
6	Yes
7	Not sure
8	Yes

If yes, is this something you take into consideration?

1	-
2	-
3	-
4	Yes
5	No
6	Yes

7	-
8	Yes

If yes again, how?

1	-
2	-
3	-
4	It depends, but sometimes I prepare the student by talking to him/her
5	-
6	It is important to always speak respectfully of all people regardless of gender or ability. If students don't hear it from us (or thier parents), who will they hear it from?
7	-
8	Tilpasser undervisning og utfordringer <i>Facilitate teaching and challenges</i>

If you teach these themes, how do you find it?

1	Å undervise ved hjelp av film og autentisk litteratur er noe av det mest givende jeg gjør. Elsker å prøve å få elevene til å reflektere og diskutere det de leser. Samtidig er det tidkrevende og utfordrende å få til, både når det gjelder planlegging og gjennomføring. <i>To teach with assistance from film and authentic literature is one of the most rewarding aspects of what I do. I love to try to get the pupils to reflect on and discuss what they read. However, it is time consuming and challenging, both to plan and execute.</i>
2	Synes det er spennende og interessant <i>I think it is exciting and interesting.</i>
3	Givende, engasjerende, interessant <i>Rewarding, engaging, interesting</i>
4	I think it's important to include different perspectives on life in English class. Discussions on these topics may as well be discussed in English as in other subjects
5	Normalt
6	It is definitely challenging--I teach in a small town that is predominantly white/ethnic Norwegian, there are relatively few non-Norwegians or non-whites or mixed ethnicities. I know those few students we have feel "different" than the others, and I know they hear/feel/experience discrimination here. However, it is SO good to hear students speaking about justice and fairness!
7	Jeg opplever det som givende <i>I experience it as rewarding</i>
8	Det kan være vanskelig å undervise om kjønn og seksualitet, fordi jeg kan lite om det selv. Selv om intensjonen er god, er det lett å si feil og adressere ved feil kjønn. Så mye av språk og strukturer bygger på dikotomien han/hun. <i>It can be hard to teach about gender and sexuality because I know little about it myself. Even if the intention is good, it is easy to say something wrong and address pupils by the wrong gender. So much language and structure is built on the he/she-dichotomy.</i>

Literature about gender and disability in the EFL classroom

Do you use literature and/or film to teach gender and disability?

1	-
2	Yes
3	Yes
4	Yes
5	No
6	Yes
7	Yes
8	Yes

Why/why not?

1	-
2	Vise mangfold, normalisere "ulikheter" og fremheve individer <i>Show diversity, normalize «differences» and highlight individuals</i>
3	Mye godt som er produsert. Film kan skape rom for ettertanke og refleksjon på en annen måte enn tekst. <i>A lot of well-produced movies. Film can create room for afterthought and reflection in a different way than text.</i>
4	It is important to talk about these topics in English class as well as other subjects
5	Vil at det skal normaliseres <i>Want it to be normalized.</i>
6	I don't much "teach gender", but disabilities we have talked about with the movie "Soul Surfer" (surfer girl who loses an arm to a shark but keeps surfing). I live in southern Norway (the "Bible belt" of Norway) and teaching acceptance of all people is appropriate, but "teaching gender" can easily and quickly be misconstrued.
7	Det er viktig at elevene blir eksponert for ulike typer tekster der ulike temaer blir belyst. <i>It is important for pupils to be exposed to different types of texts where different themes are illuminated.</i>
8	Det er gode hjelpemidler, og en god måte å sette seg inn i andre perspektiver <i>It is great tools and a way to familiarize themselves with other perspectives.</i>

How?

1	-
2	Lese tekster, se filmer, bruke serier etc. som fokuserer på dette og bruke dette som utgangspunkt for samtale, refleksjoner, etc. i klasserommet <i>Read texts, watch movies, use tv-series etc. that focus on this and use it as a starting point for conversation, reflection etc. in the classroom</i>
3	-

4	In my experience, many of the new textbooks offered on the market include texts like short stories or novel extracts with these topics. I often choose to include these texts because I think it's important
5	-
6	We have read excerpts of "Soul Surfer" and maybe watch the movie.
7	Bruker filmer eller leser ulike tekster som er tilgjengelig <i>Use films or read different texts that are available.</i>
8	Leser og reflekterer, oppleve via film og filmsnutter. Kortfilmer er bra. <i>Read and reflect, experience through film and film clips. Short films are good.</i>

In that case, which genre/genres do you use?

1	-
2	Fiction, short story, film, tv-series
3	Fiction, novel, poetry, film, tv-series
4	Fiction, short story, poetry, film
5	-
6	Non-fiction, film
7	Fiction, non-fiction, short story, film, other
8	Fiction, non-fiction, short story, novel, film

Which books/movies do you use then?

1	-
2	Se liste fra tidligere + Billy Elliot
3	-
4	The curious incident
5	-
6	Soul surfer
7	Wonder
8	My life as an alphabet

Is this type of literature and film easily accessible in Norway?

1	-
2	Quite
3	Limited
4	Not sure
5	-
6	Limited
7	Very
8	Not sure

Are there any ethical considerations you need to take into consideration to teach these topics?

1	Yes
2	Yes

3	No
4	Yes
5	No
6	Yes
7	No
8	Not sure

If yes, which and why?

1	Man må jo alltid gjøre ei vurdering ifht hva som passer å lese/se i den gruppa <i>Always need to consider what is suitable to read/watch in that group</i>
2	Vise hensyn til enkeltelever hvis dette er noe som er veldig nært for de. <i>Be considerate towards pupils if it is something that is very close to them.</i>
3	Kjenner heller på en etisk plikt om å gi elever variert undervisning som omhandler alle espekter og som gir elevene en god base for videre tenking selv. <i>I am rather feeling an ethical duty to give pupils varied education that includes all aspects and that gives pupils a good base for further thinking themselves</i>
4	Some topics may be difficult to talk about for some students. If you know your students well, you probably know if you need to prepare them for the topic or not. If you have a safe learning environment, most topics can be discussed and talked about in class.
5	-
6	Parents might not agree with "gender education"
7	Nei, opplever dette som uproblematisk <i>No, experience this as unproblematic</i>
8	-

If no, why not?

1	-
2	-
3	-
4	-
5	-
6	-
7	-
8	-

About intersectionality

Are you familiar with the concept intersectionality?

1	Yes
2	Yes
3	No
4	No
5	Yes
6	No

7	No
8	Not sure

If you are, in which context have you heard it?

1	Ble først kjent med begrepet på studiet i høst <i>Heard about it first through my study program this fall.</i>
2	Innenfor samfunnsfag og arbeid med identitet som tema <i>From social science and work with identity as a theme</i>
3	-
4	-
5	-
6	-
7	-
8	-

Is this something you employ in your classroom?

1	Yes
2	Yes
3	No
4	Not sure
5	Not sure
6	No
7	Not sure
8	Not sure

If yes, why and how?

1	Har selvsagt blitt bevisst på det nå, så har begynt å tenke over det ifht undervisningen. <i>Have obviously become more aware of it now, so I have started to think about it regarding the teaching.</i>
2	Ja, men dette er noe jeg ikke har hatt så mye fokus på i engelsk, men har jobbet med dette i norsk og samfunnsfag. <i>Yes, but I have not focused on it in English, but have worked with it in Norwegian and Social Science.</i>
3	-
4	-
5	-
6	-
7	-
8	-

If no, is this something you would want to implement? Why/why not?

1	-
2	-

3	-
4	-
5	-
6	I haven't heard the term before, but am interested in learning more.
7	-
8	-

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

23.05.2022, 10:21

Gender and disability in YA literature FEIDE – Vis - Nettskjema

Sjekk universell utforming i skjemaet

Gender and disability in YA literature FEIDE

Side 1

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to identify what literature and audiovisual materials Norwegian EFL secondary teachers use in their teaching. In this letter you will receive information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

The aim of this master's thesis is twofold; I am going to 1) identify which literature and audiovisual materials EFL teachers use to teach gender diversity and disability, and 2) contribute to the field by suggesting a model of how to teach gender diversity and disability through literature to encourage critical thinking. The data retrieved from this questionnaire will be used to pick literature and/or audiovisual materials to analyze, and to get an overview of the process of choosing literature. It will be a qualitative case study, which means that the aim is not to generalize the findings, but rather understand this particular case.

I have three current research questions to guide me through the process: 1) "Which literature/audiovisual materials do lower secondary EFL teachers use to teach the topics of gender diversity and disability in the English subject?", 2) "How and why (not) do they choose those materials?", and 3) "How can gender diversity and disability be taught through YA (young adult) literature/audiovisual materials to encourage critical thinking?"

Who is responsible for the research project?

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) is the institution responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate in this project as a student at the LVUT8084-course at NTNU. I am studying the use of literature in the English subject in lower secondary school (8-10), and the course's focus towards in-service 5-10 teachers, I figured this would be a population with relevant knowledge and experience.

What does participation involve for you?

If you choose to take part in this project, this will involve that you fill in this online questionnaire that will take approx. 15 minutes. The questions are divided into five categories: 1) About the candidate, 2) About literature in general, 3) About gender and disability in general, 4) Literature about gender and disability in the EFL classroom, and 5) About intersectionality. Your answers will be recorded electronically.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw. You can retract your answers at any given moment through a link you will receive in your student e-mail.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act). The student and their supervisor will have access to the personal data. The answers will be anonymised, and the data will be stored on the server of Nettskjema. Individual participants will not be recognizable in the final publication.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end 25.05.22. At the end of the project, the personal data will be deleted from the server.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and

send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with NTNU, Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- NTNU via Libe Garcia Zarranz, by email: libe.g.zarranz@ntnu.no (supervisor), and Amalie Flo, by email: amalief@stud.ntnu.no (student) or by telephone +47 916 28 321
- Our Data Protection Officer: Thomas Helgesen, by email: thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no
- Data Protection Services, by email: personvern@netster@slkt.no or by telephone: +47 53 21 15 00.

Yours sincerely,

Libe Garcia Zarranz
Supervisor

Amalie Flo
Student

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project Teaching Gender and Disability Through YA Literature in Norwegian EFL Classrooms and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 25.05.22.

- I give consent to participate in this online questionnaire.



Om kandidaten / About the candidate

Hva er din kjønnsidentitet? / What is your gender identity?

Kryss av for det svaralternativet du identifiserer deg mest med / Check the alternative you identify yourself with.

- Mann / Male
- Kvinne / Female
- Trans
- Kjønns-skeiv / Genderqueer
- Annet / Other
- Ønsker ikke svare / Do not want to answer

Identifiserer du deg som en person med nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Do you identify as a disabled person?

Kryss av for det svaralternativet du identifiserer deg mest med / Check the alternative you identify yourself with.

- Ja / Yes
- Nei / No
- Ønsker ikke svare / Do not wish to answer

Hvilken aldersgruppe hører du til? / Which age group do you belong to?

Kryss av for det svaralternativet med aldersgruppen du tilhører / Check the alternative for the age group you belong to.

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-65
- Eldre enn 65 / Older than 65

Hvor lenge har du jobbet som lærer? / How long have you been working as a teacher?
Antall år / In years

- Mindre enn 1 / Less than 1
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-10
- Mer enn 10 / More than 10

Hvor lenge har du undervist i engelsk? / How long have you been teaching English?

Oppgi et anslag av hvor mange år du har undervist i engelsk av de du har vært lærer / Estimate how many years you have been teaching English out of the years you have been a teacher.

- Mindre enn 1 / Less than 1
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-10
- Mer enn 10 / More than 10

På hvilket/hvilke årstrinn underviser du engelsk? / In which grade/grades do you teach English?

Flervalg / Multiple choice

- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- Yngre / Younger
- Eldre / Older

Hvor mange studiepoeng har du i engelsk? / How many credits do you have in English?
10 vekttaill tilsvarer 30 sp. / 10 vekttaill equals 30 credits

Dersom du har under 60, er du under videreutdanning eller har planer om det? / If you have less than 60, are you taking extra credits or plan to do so?

- Ja, jeg tar videreutdanning / Yes, I am taking extra credits
- Ja, jeg skal ta videreutdanning / Yes, I am going to take extra credits
- Nei / No
- Har nok studiepoeng / Have enough credits



Siderullstikk

Om litteratur generelt / About literature in general

Hvor ofte bruker du litteratur og/eller audiovisuelle materialer i engelskundervisningen? / How often do you use literature and/or audiovisual materials in the English subject?

Eksempler litteratur: noveller, bildebøker, poesi, drama. / Examples literature: novels, picture books, poetry, drama

Eksempler audiovisuelle materialer: film, tv-serie etc. / Examples audiovisual materials: movies, tv-series etc.

- Aldri / Never
- Veldig lite / Rarely
- Verken eller / Neither nor
- Veldig mye / Often
- Foretrukket metode / Preferred method

Hvilke bøker (ikke lærebøker)/filmer bruker du i engelskklasserommet? / Which books (not textbooks)/movies do you use in the EFL classroom?

Vennligst rams opp 3-4 titler du bruker/har brukt i klasserommet / Please list 3-4 titles that you use/have used in the classroom.

Hvorfor og hvordan velger du? / Why and how do you choose?

Om titlene du ramset opp i forrige spørsmål. / About the titles you listed in the previous question.

Mener du elevene får utbytte av bruken av litteratur og film? / Do you believe the students benefit from the use of literature and film?

Kryss av alternativet du mener passer best til din undervisning / Check the alternative that is most suitable for your teaching.

- Ja / Yes
- Nei / No
- Vet ikke / Not sure

Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? Why/why not?

Hvis ja, hvor mye? / If yes, how much?

i Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Mener du elevene får utbytte av bruken av litteratur og film? / Do you believe the students benefit from the use of literature and film?»

- Lite / Not much
- I blant / Occasionally
- Mye / A lot

 Sideskift

Om kjønn og nedsett funksjonsevne generelt / About gender and disability in general

Har skolen din retningslinjer på hvordan/når man skal inkludere undervisning om kjønn og nedsett funksjonsevne? / Does your school have a teaching policy on how/when to include teaching about gender and disability?

- Ja / Yes
- Nei / No

Hvis ja, hvilke? / If yes, which?

i Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Har skolen din retningslinjer på hvordan/når man skal inkludere undervisning om kjønn og nedsett funksjonsevne? / Does your school have a teaching policy on how/when to include teaching about gender and disability?»

Hvor viktig er det for deg å inkludere kjønn og nedsett funksjonsevne i din undervisning? / How important is including gender and disability in your teaching?

- Ikke viktig / Not important
- Litt viktig / A bit important
- Verken eller / Neither nor
- Ganske viktig / Pretty important
- Veldig viktig / Very important
- Usikker / Not sure

Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? / Why/why not?

i Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ikke viktig / Not important», «Litt viktig / A bit important», «Verken eller / Neither nor», «Ganske viktig / Pretty important», «Veldig viktig / Very important» eller «Usikker / Not sure» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor viktig er det for deg å inkludere kjønn og nedsett funksjonsevne i din undervisning? / How important is including gender and disability in your teaching?»

Hvor ofte inkluderer du disse temaene i undervisningen din? / How often do you include these themes in your teaching?

- Aldri / Never
- Veldig lite / Rarely
- Iblant / Occasionally
- Veldig mye / Often
- Foretrukne tema. / Preferred topics

Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? / Why/why not?

- 1** Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Aldri / Never», «Veldig lite / Rarely», «Iblant / Occasionally», «Veldig mye / Often» eller «Foretrukne tema / Preferred topics» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvor ofte inkluderer du disse temaene i undervisningen din? / How often do you include these themes in your teaching?»

Identifiserer noen av elevene dine seg med en eller begge av kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Does any of your pupils identify with either or both gender and disability?

NB! Ikke oppgi informasjon som gjør det mulig å identifisere enkelte elever. / NB! Do not submit answers that make it possible to identify individual pupils.

- Ja / Yes
- Nei / No
- Vet ikke / Not sure

Hvis ja, er dette noe du tar hensyn til i undervisningen? / If yes, is this something you take into consideration?

- 1** Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Identifiserer noen av elevene dine seg med en eller begge av kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Does any of your pupils identify with either or both gender and disability?»

NB! Ikke oppgi informasjon som gjør det mulig å identifisere enkelte elever. / NB! Do not submit answers that make it possible to identify individual pupils.

- Ja / Yes
- Nei / No

Hvis ja igjen, hvordan? / If yes again, how?

- 1** Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Hvis ja, er dette noe du tar hensyn til i undervisningen? / If yes, is this something you take into consideration?»

Dersom du underviser om disse temaene, hvordan synes du det er? / If you teach these themes, how do you find it?

F.eks. givende, utfordrende etc. / E.g. rewarding, challenging etc.

 Sideskift

Litteratur om kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne i engelsk klasserommet / Literature about gender and disability in the EFL classroom

Bruker du litteratur og/eller film for å undervise kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Do you use literature and/or film to teach gender and disability?

- Ja / Yes
- Nei / No

Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? / Why/why not?

- 1** Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» eller «Nei / No» er valgt i spørsmålet «Bruker du litteratur og/eller film for å undervise kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Do you use literature and/or film to teach gender and disability?»

Hvordan? / How?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Bruker du litteratur og/eller film for å undervise kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Do you use literature and/or film to teach gender and disability?»

I så fall, hvilken/hvilke sjanger/sjanger bruker du? / In that case, which genre/genres do you use?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Bruker du litteratur og/eller film for å undervise kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Do you use literature and/or film to teach gender and disability?»

- Skjønnlitteratur / Fiction
 Faktatekst / Non-fiction
 Novelle / Short story
 Roman / Novel
 Poesi / Poetry
 Bildebøker / Picture books
 Grafiske tekster / Graphic novels
 Film
 Tv-serie
 Annet / Other

Hvilke bøker (ikke lærebøker)/filmer bruker du da? / Which books (not textbooks)/movies do you use then?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Bruker du litteratur og/eller film for å undervise kjønn og nedsatt funksjonsevne? / Do you use literature and/or film to teach gender and disability?»

Vennligst rams opp 3-4 titler du bruker/har brukt til dette formålet / Please list 3-4 titles that you use/have used for this purpose.

Er slik litteratur og film lett tilgjengelig i Norge? / Is this type of literature and film easily accessible in Norway?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom minst ett av alternativene «Roman / Novel», «Poesi / Poetry», «Bildebøker / Picture books», «Grafiske tekster / Graphic novels», «Films», «Tv-serie», «Annet / Other», «Skjønnlitteratur / Fiction», «Faktatekst / Non-fiction» eller «Novelle / Short story» er valgt i spørsmålet «I så fall, hvilken/hvilke sjanger/sjanger bruker du? / In that case, which genre/genres do you use?»

- Ikke i det hele tatt / Not at all
 Begrenset / Limited
 Vet ikke / Not sure
 Ganske / Quite
 Veldig / Very

Er det noen etiske hensyn du må ta for å undervise om disse emnene? / Are there any ethical considerations you need to take into consideration to teach these topics?

- Ja / Yes
 Nei / No
 Vet ikke / Not sure

Hvis ja, hvilke og hvorfor? / If yes, which and why?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Er det noen etiske hensyn du må ta for å undervise om disse emnene? / Are there any ethical considerations you need to take into consideration to teach these topics?»

Hvis nei, hvorfor ikke? / If no, why not?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Nei / No» er valgt i spørsmålet «Er der noen etiske hensyn du må ta for å undervise om disse emnene? / Are there any ethical considerations you need to take into consideration to teach these topics?»



Sideklipp

Side 6

Om interseksjonalitet / About intersectionality

Er du kjent med konseptet interseksjonalitet? / Are you familiar with the concept intersectionality?

Man må ta hensyn til hvordan alle deler av en persons identitet henger sammen, og ikke bare se på f.eks. race, kjønn eller funksjonsevne / You need to consider how all parts of a person's identity co-relates, not just e.g. race, gender or ability.

- Ja / Yes
 Nei / No
 Vet ikke / Not sure

Hvis du er, i hvilken sammenheng har du hørt det? / If you are, in which context have you heard it?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Er du kjent med konseptet interseksjonalitet? / Are you familiar with the concept intersectionality?»

Er dette noe du benytter deg av i ditt klasserom? / Is this something you employ in your classroom?

- Ja / Yes
 Nei / No
 Vet ikke / Not sure

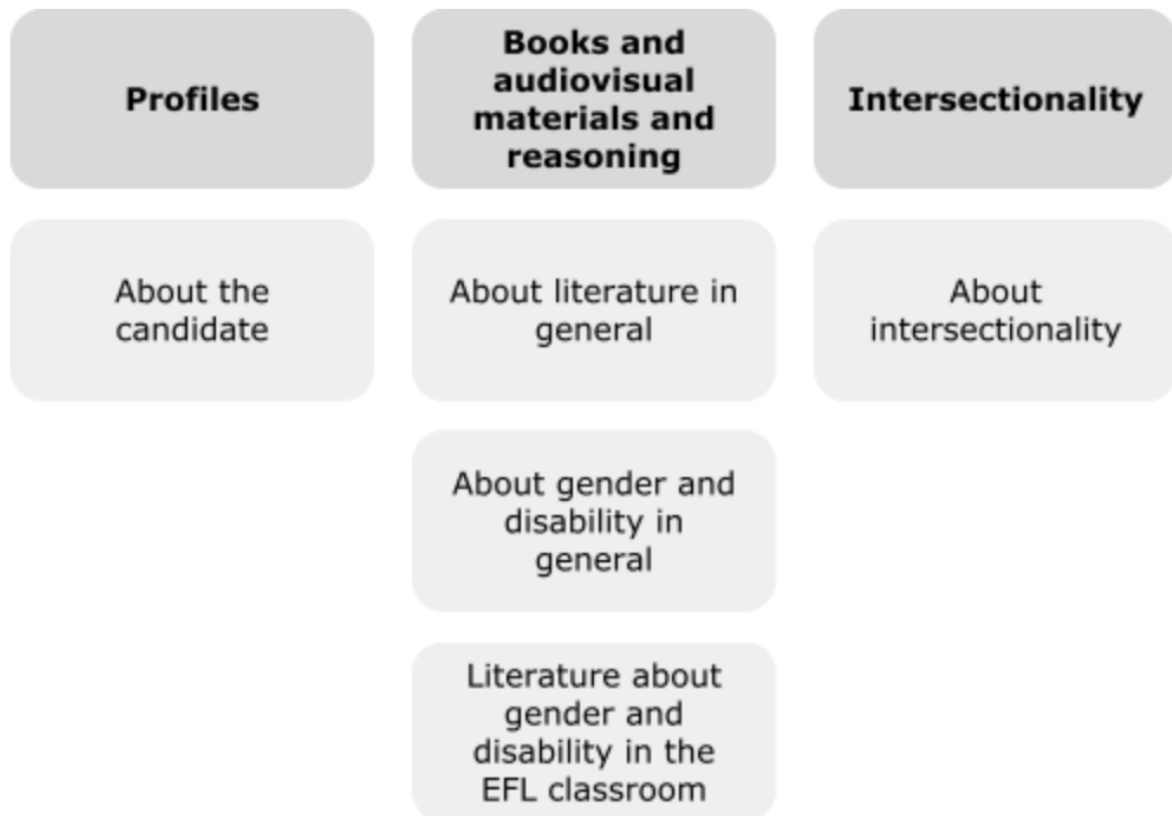
Hvis ja, hvorfor og hvordan? / If yes, why and how?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja / Yes» er valgt i spørsmålet «Er dette noe du benytter deg av i ditt klasserom? / Is this something you employ in your classroom?»

Hvis nei, er dette noe du kunne tenkt deg å innføre? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? / If no, is this something you would want to implement? Why/why not?

- 1 Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Nei / No» er valgt i spørsmålet «Er dette noe du benytter deg av i ditt klasserom? / Is this something you employ in your classroom?»

Appendix 3: Themes Questionnaire



Appendix 4: NSD Approval

[Meldeskjema](#) / [Teaching Gender and Disability Through YA Literature in Norwegian ...](#) / Vurdering

Vurdering

Referansenummer

380645

Prosjekttittel

Teaching Gender and Disability Through YA Literature in Norwegian EFL Classrooms

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for lærerutdanning

Prosjektperiode

08.10.2021 - 25.05.2022

[Meldeskjema](#) 

Dato	Type
04.02.2022	Standard

Kommentar

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen, så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet den 04.02.2022 med vedlegg, samt i meldingsdialogen mellom innmelder og Personverntjenester. Behandlingen kan starte.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET

Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige personopplysninger og særlige kategorier av personopplysninger om helse frem til 25.05.2022.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG

Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 nr. 11 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse, som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.

For alminnelige personopplysninger vil lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a.

For særlige kategorier av personopplysninger vil lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen være den registrertes uttrykkelige samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 9 nr. 2 bokstav a, jf. personopplysningsloven § 10, jf. § 9 (2).

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

Personverntjenester vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen:

- om lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet.

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

Vi vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18) og dataportabilitet (art. 20).

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

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

Nettskjema er databehandler i prosjektet. Vi legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene til bruk av databehandler, jf. art 28 og 29.

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må prosjektansvarlig følge interne retningslinjer/rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER

Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilken type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:

<https://www.nsd.no/personverntjenester/fyll-ut-meldeskjema-for-personopplysninger/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema>

Du må vente på svar fra oss før endringen gjennomføres.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

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

Kontaktperson hos oss: Simon Gogl

Lykke til med prosjektet!

