



# Young learner's lexical proficiency and motivation to learn English in Iceland

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*Young learner's lexical proficiency and motivation to learn English in Iceland*

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## Abstract

Globalization and technological development contribute to an increased demand for English skills in daily recreational activity in Iceland. This phenomenon, and a steadily growing exposure, has changed the status of English in Iceland from being a foreign language towards being closer to a second language (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir 2007). This study aims to explore 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' attitudes towards English and examine which contributing factors affect their motivation for learning English, specifically learning English vocabulary. Four research questions explore the relationships between context-specific variables and whether gender or onset of instruction affects context-oriented English use or vocabulary size. The study used a quantitative method approach. First, a survey was administered based, on the one hand, on Dörnyei's "L2 Motivational Self-System" (2005) and, on the other hand, seven context-specific factors. These are *TV/Music*, *Computers*, *Education*, *Peers*, *Family*, *Texts* and *Lingua Franca*. Secondly, two vocabulary tests were administered to determine students' lexical knowledge at the onset of formal English instruction; a Yes-No test and a VKS test measured students' vocabulary size and dimension of knowledge. Participants were 378 primary school students in the 4<sup>th</sup>-grade (190 girls and 188 boys). The quantitative methods of analysis of the survey responses and vocabulary tests include descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and stepwise multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between motivating factors, English context-based exposure, and vocabulary test results.

The study's findings are that the participants' vocabulary knowledge is acquired largely extramurally and is motivated by a need to use English during leisure time in their daily lives. Additionally, the results indicate that the children in this study visualize how and where they need to use English in the future.

*Keywords:* second language acquisition, foreign language acquisition, vocabulary acquisition, motivation, extramural input, onset of instructions

## Ágrip

Hnattvæðing og tækniþróun í samskiptum kalla á aukna enskukunnáttu í daglegu lífi á Íslandi. Ljóst er að enskuáreiti í daglegu lífi Íslendinga er mikið. Því hefur staða ensku á Íslandi breyst úr því að vera erlent tungumál, sem var aðallega kennt í skólum, í að vera líkara öðru tungumáli sem lærist bæði innan og utan skóla (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007). Rannsóknin sem greint er frá hér skoðar viðhorf til ensku og enskunotkun íslenskra barna við upphaf formlegrar enskukennslu í 4. bekk og áhrif þessara þátta á orðaforðabekkingu þeirra og hvata til að læra ensku. Rannsóknarspurningarnar leitast við að skoða tengsl milli enskuáreitis og enskunotkunar í umhverfi barnanna og stærð orðaforða þeirra, en einnig að skoða áhrif kyns og upphafs enskukennslu á orðaforða þátttakenda. Fyrst var lögð fyrir spurningakönnun um hvata barnanna til námsins sem er byggð á hvatakerfi Dörnyei „L2 Motivational Self-System” (Dörnyei, 2005). Könnunin beinir sjónum að m.a. hvort og þá hvernig sjö umhverfisþættir, *Sjónvarp/tónlist, Tölvur, Menntun, Vinir, Fjölskylda, Textar og Samskipti (Lingua Franca)*, hafa áhrif á enskan orðaforða barnanna. Tilgangurinn var að kortleggja hvaðan börnin lærðu enskan orðaforða. Síðan voru lögð fyrir tvö orðaforðapróf sem meta grunnþekkingu og vídd þekkingar við upphaf formlegs náms í ensku í grunnskóla. Þátttakendur voru 378 nemendur í 4. bekk grunnskóla haustið 2010 (190 stúlkur og 188 drengir). Megindleg greining á könnunum og prófum var framkvæmd með lýsandi tölfræði, greiningu á áhrifum umhverfisþátta auk raðbundnar fjölbreytu- aðhvarfsgreiningar til að skoða tengsl umhverfisþátta, notkunar og orðaforðabekkingar. Niðurstöður benda til að orðaforði nemenda kemur að mestu leyti úr daglegu umhverfi utan skóla og er tengdur áhugasviði þeirra. Niðurstöður sýna einnig að þessi 9 ára börn átta sig á nauðsyn þess að læra ensku til framtíðarnotkunar í skóla og við lestur. Þetta eru svið þar sem enska var almennt ekki notuð þegar rannsóknin var framkvæmd. Það að börnin gera sér grein fyrir því að þau ættu að kunna að nota ensku í skóla og við lestur bendir til að þau túlka framtíðarhlutverk enskunnar og notkun þess sem veigarmikinn hluta af námi og lífi þeirra út frá hagnýtu sjónarhorni.

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

This dissertation examines the English proficiency of Icelandic children and identifies factors that contributed to their proficiency. This is accomplished by measuring, on the one hand, lexical proficiency levels of 4th-graders at the onset of formal English instruction and, on the other hand, the possible sources of that proficiency along with the children's motivation for learning English. Up until recently, the focus of research on English language learning in Iceland has been the attitudes and self-reported proficiency of students, often with small numbers of participants confined to schools in the Reykjavík metropolitan area. The goal of this study is to expand that body of knowledge by including measurements of actual proficiency and identifying the origins of this proficiency. This project will provide a baseline for further longitudinal examinations of the development of English lexical proficiency of Icelandic children, especially in the context of the spread of English and its effect on local people's language repertoires.

My interest in this subject was prompted by the changing linguistic environment that Icelandic children grow up in today in comparison to my own English language learning background. This study is an indirect continuation of my master's thesis where I compared results from instructed and incidental vocabulary learning in 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade in Iceland on students' proficiency (Jóhannsdóttir, 2009). That study revealed, amongst other things, that the English proficiency of my subjects in the 4th-grade, at the onset of formal instruction, exceeded the National Curriculum Guides' expectations of proficiency levels prior to instruction. The children's measured proficiency suggested that they had a larger vocabulary at their disposal than laid out in the goals of the National Curriculum Guidelines (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2007) for their grade level. This meant that they came to formal instruction in English having learned it as a foreign language (as English is still defined in Icelandic) outside of school. This result, as well as

my own experience learning English, and watching my own children and their friends' English use and acquisition, enhanced my interest in the subject of English language learning in Iceland.

### **1.1 Learning English as a foreign language: Personal experience.**

I began learning English at school when I was 12 years old after having studied Danish at school for one year. At the time, Danish was the first foreign language taught in Icelandic schools. Until then my exposure to English was limited to subtitled television shows and films. This exposure was not extensive since we had access to one television station that began airing in the late afternoon, no television on Thursdays, and no television during the month of July until the year 1983. Nonetheless, this exposure and a strong reading tradition resulted in my venturing into reading literature in English. I was an avid and fast reader in Icelandic and was sorely disappointed when I finished a book quickly, so, with the dearth of Icelandic novels, I began reading books in English. This affected my confidence with English at school and I began to “collect” pen friends around the world where English was the lingua franca of our correspondence. When I was 15, my father and I bought a computer, a PC for me to use for school. Combined with reading, the computer extended my English proficiency exponentially. I began accessing more and more material online, read every program manual, played games, and corresponded with people in English around the world, and when I entered the job market, my English and computer proficiency became a primary asset. Despite this extensive and, at the time, unusual exposure, my English skills were limited to informal language. I conversed easily and then used formulaic language for formal job-related correspondence without expanding my formal English.

In 2003 I went back to University after a 13-year stint raising a family and working as a secretary and a bookkeeper. I signed up for the BA in English to extend my English proficiency

with the intention of going into translations or international business later. What I found out was that the English that I knew, and the English used at University, were two different things and I struggled with academic English in the beginning. However, due to my strong reading skills, I quickly caught up with the study material and progressed onward. Early in my studies I developed an interest in the study of English as a language and decided to pursue a teaching diploma and a Masters in English with a focus on vocabulary development in foreign and second language acquisition. This led me to become an instructor at the University of Iceland studying the English proficiency of students who nowadays experience extensive exposure to English in their everyday life, the exposure I had to go out of my way to attain.

While watching my own three children, I realized that their exposure to English was similar to mine, but that it began earlier and was more through TV, music and computers than it was when I began learning English mainly through reading. Their exposure to television and film was more extensive than mine, when I was growing up, as they had more television stations to choose from, both Icelandic and foreign. They would watch English and Icelandic programs equally when young, but as they grew older, they leaned towards English shows and films rather than Icelandic. At first, I thought this interest was different from other children since their mother was highly involved with English, but I saw the same pattern among their friends. Thus, I began to watch for any differences among them. I have three children born two years apart: boy, girl, and boy. The boys were, and are, avid computer users and sought to play games both on game stations and online on a PC and are highly exposed to English. They prefer English as the language for all systems and avoid Icelandic in these environments. My daughter, on the other hand, uses computers quite differently. She did play games when she was younger, but preferred to spend time with her friends out and about. Later, her internet use became more about looking



for tips and watching *YouTube* videos, and thus Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat became a major part of her and her brothers' life. She also did more reading both in Icelandic and English than her brothers did when younger. Despite this exposure to English, communication with friends is in Icelandic except when the boys are referring to a storyline or instructions in computer games, in addition to interaction with foreign players, or if they are traveling abroad, when the language of choice is English.

My children's formal English instruction also began differently despite them being only two and four years apart in age. My oldest son began learning English at school when he was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade (age 10), my daughter in 4<sup>th</sup>-grade (age 9) and my youngest son in 2<sup>nd</sup>-grade (age 7). For the younger children, English instruction was once a week at the beginning, while the older son had English lessons 3 times a week. Nonetheless, they progressed in a similar way through English at school. Despite this difference in length of formal English instruction, my children did equally well in English classes and finished the first year of secondary school English while still finishing their compulsory education (in 10<sup>th</sup> grade). Their English use today is highly informal, but somewhat academic at school. My children's experiences learning English, as well as my own experiences, are the impetus for my interest in second language acquisition and thus a major motivation for this study.

I describe these experiences here because in many ways they reflect the English encounters of many Icelanders of my own and my children's generation. The consequences of these experiences on language learning and language use have, until recently, not been extensively researched nor well understood.

The findings of my master's study demonstrated that the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade participants in my research encountered English in much the same way as my children, extramurally and

without specific instruction. In the MA study, general instruction that intentionally did not focus on specific English words yielded better results on tests than the focused experimental vocabulary instruction we executed in the 4<sup>th</sup>-grade. However, in the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade, the difference was not as significant and only one group of 7<sup>th</sup>-grade girls, taught and tested in the spring, seemed to benefit more from intentionally focused instruction (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2009). The findings suggested that the status of English in Iceland was more complex than previously considered and that children were learning more English outside the classroom than the writers of the National Curriculum Guides had assumed. Learning English was very different from learning other foreign languages in Iceland, yet the assumption in Curriculum Guides prevailed that all foreign languages (including English) be taught from an absolute beginner level.

I thus became interested in exploring the factors in young learners' lives that affected their English use and attainment. After completing my masters' degree, I had the opportunity to continue this line of research by joining a research project at the University of Iceland. The project, *English as a Lingua Franca in Iceland? The status of proficiency and preparation for transition to a new linguistic reality*, explored English in Iceland from the beginning of formal instruction, through the educational system and in the work environment (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2018). The research reported here on the status of English among young Icelandic children was part of that project. Before focusing on my study, I will describe the educational and extramural language contexts of young children in Iceland, but first, the use of terminology in this dissertation must be clarified.

## **1.2 Terminology**

The term 'Second Language Acquisition' (SLA) refers to any language (second, third, fourth etc.) learned after the acquisition of the first language (L1) has begun. The terms 'foreign

language learning' (FLL) and SLA appear interchangeably in the Applied Linguistics literature and may often cause confusion. According to Ellis (1997),

'[S]econd' is not intended to contrast with 'foreign'. Whether you are learning a language naturally as a result of living in the country where it is spoken, or learning it in a classroom through instruction, it is customary to speak generically of 'second' language acquisition. 'L2 acquisition', then, can be defined as the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom, and 'Second Language Acquisition' (SLA) as the study of this. (p. 3)

The study of SLA focuses on how languages are learned and although immense research has emerged in the field over the past decades, we have yet to achieve a clear understanding of the process of language learning (de Bot et al., 2005, p. 3). In this dissertation, the term *second language* is used to indicate any language learned after the learner's mother tongue (L1) and consequently uses *second language (L2) acquisition/learning*.

In my discussion, I will use the terms *learning* and *acquisition* interchangeably. Nonetheless, not everyone sees these terms as interchangeable. Some argue that acquisition means, on the one hand, acquiring a language subconsciously, similarly to L1 acquisition and when L2 is picked up through exposure as children, while learning is a conscious effort accomplished through explicit, formal instruction (Krashen, 1981, pp. 1-2). This distinction is controversial and the difference between acquisition and learning is difficult to test and therefore some researchers choose to use the terms interchangeably (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 6). I will make the distinction if and when it is relevant to the discussion.

English in Iceland is the object of interest in this study, a language that is both naturally acquired outside school and studied at school in Iceland. The status of English in Iceland is confusing, as it seems to conform to neither of the traditional ESL or EFL contexts. The usual target language learning contexts have either been when the language is learned in the target culture, considered a second language situation (SL), or as a foreign language, where learners learn the target language in a classroom (FL) (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007, pp. 51-52). *English as a second language* (ESL) is used in this study instead of *English as foreign language* (EFL) when referring to English in Iceland. English in Iceland is officially labeled a foreign language (EFL). However, the linguistic environment has changed in Iceland, as in other Nordic countries, for English is now easily accessed outside of the classroom even though English has no official status other than as a foreign language. The actual context is neither a foreign nor a second language context and thus not easily defined but should probably be placed on a continuum between the two (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007).

SLA research has demonstrated a clear distinction between adult and child second language acquisition, especially in terms of ultimate attainment. Adults customarily learn another language after they have ‘mastered’ the system of the first language, very often receiving instruction in it at school, whereas children sometimes learn their second language alongside their first language, gathering skills for more than one language simultaneously, from both the social environment and from school. Furthermore, children have advantages in acquiring languages, especially in terms of acquiring native-like pronunciation, while most adults do not appear to succeed in developing native-like mastery of an L2 (R. Bley-Vroman, 1989). Despite the differences, some commonalities have been established in L2 acquisition among both children and adults such as the importance of the amount of exposure, motivation and purpose for learning

(Baker et al., 2008; Dörnyei & Skehan, 2005; Skehan, 1989). The disparity found between adult and children's learning may have a number of cognitive, affective, and environmental causes (Krashen et al., 1982; Long, 1990, 2005; Singleton, 2003; Singleton & Ryan, 2004). These will be reviewed in the next chapter, along with their implications, and later explored using the results from this study within the context of the changes in Iceland's linguistic environment.

### **1.3 English in the lives of young Icelandic children**

In Iceland, as in many countries in the world, exposure to English is high and the language is increasingly used among Icelanders both in the context of the workforce and education (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2018). One manifestation of this changing context is the increased pressure to lower the starting age of formal English instruction based on the perceived need that good English proficiency is a functional necessity in the modern world. This is also supported by research carried out in bilingual and immersion circumstances where children acquire the new language faster than their parents do. This is the central notion of the influential Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) based on the work of Lenneberg (1967) and supported by generative linguists, who maintained that children have a special innate ability to acquire languages that adults do not possess. Even though this position has been contested by researchers in the field, there seems to be a consensus that children who start learning earlier than 11-12 years of age can acquire English to a native level without an accent in a high exposure environment (see Singleton, 2005; Singleton & Ryan, 2004 for review).

However, proponents of early foreign language education fail to take into account that native-like attainment is likely to happen only in ideal learning contexts, i.e. when there is enough input and interaction in the foreign language in the learner's environment to sustain long-term acquisition of the target language (Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson, 2000). This is usually not

the case in most foreign language situations where input is limited to the classroom. What is uncertain is where to place the changes in the linguistic ecology of many countries caused by the spread of English on the input continuum.

Although English still has the official status of a foreign language in Iceland, it has been suggested that English exposure and use is so extensive that the linguistic context can no longer be defined as either a second or a foreign language environment (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007, 2011). Regardless of what we call the new linguistic context in Iceland and most of Northern Europe, it is a consequence of the spread of English as a World Language and its use as a *Lingua Franca* in cyberspace as well as in face-to-face encounters through increased travel (Crystal, 2003). For young Icelanders, this means, on the one hand, that they are exposed to vast amounts of receptive English through new media (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2010; Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2015; Ortega, 2011), while, on the other, productive use may be constricted to the classroom environment and even there, productive use of English is limited. This has led to an overestimation of the general English proficiency among Icelanders who do not seem aware of their ability to use English productively (Jeeves, 2013; Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir & Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2018). However, up until now, we have had limited information as to children's actual proficiency and use of English *outside* of the classroom.

Results of official surveys demonstrate how much access to media young learners have. Numbers from *Statistics Iceland* (2009; 2014) show that 92% of homes in Iceland have computers and 90% are internet connected. Interestingly, 99% of homes with children under the age of 16 have computers in the house. A survey done by *Capacent Gallup* (2007) showed that 46% of 4<sup>th</sup>-graders use the internet daily, or almost daily, and 30% once or twice a week, and this usage has increased gradually and is still increasing with more streaming services (Capacent

Gallup, 2007, 2009, 2013). Most of this exposure is likely to be in English. This exposure could be one-dimensional for young learners; that is, they may be exposed to a considerable amount of English input but lack opportunity to produce output. This calls for more research into the actual exposure and use of English among young Icelanders extramurally as little is known about what effect this exposure has on Icelandic children's language development. This study addresses this question.

Several studies are available on students' views about the success of formal instruction of English in Iceland, although the effect of that instruction on actual language attainment is not clear (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2011; Jeeves, 2013). In 1999, English became the first foreign language introduced at school as formal instruction was moved from 7th grade to 5th grade<sup>1</sup> (Menntamálaráðuneytið 1999). In the *National Curriculum Guidelines* from 2006/2007, compulsory English teaching is moved to the 4th-grade (to be applied by 2010 in all schools) and guidelines for schools who would like to start earlier were added to the curriculum. The goals for English in 4th-grade stipulate that it is important to build an interest and a positive attitude towards the English language as well as to provide opportunities for students to use the language for simple communicative tasks (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2013). Since it was only recently that English was included in the curriculum guidelines and has changed rather quickly, little research is available as to how appropriate the goals are, given how much English Icelandic children already know. Some primary schools begin English instruction even earlier than in the 4th-grade, and even some pre-schools offer English lessons (Statistics Iceland, 2012).

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<sup>1</sup> Children begin compulsory education in Iceland in August of the year they turn 6, starting in 1st Grade.

Considering the changed linguistic environment of Icelandic children with enormous English exposure, but fewer opportunities to use English (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2015), research of the English receptive knowledge of children in Iceland might be most appropriately placed under the heading of a Second Language Acquisition (SLA), while the study of productive knowledge of English and all other languages qualifies as Foreign Language Learning (FLL). It may therefore be a simplistic view to over-generalize the route children take in learning English in a linguistic context such as the one found in Iceland, and Scandinavia, that has moved from the classic foreign language environment to an environment where English exposure is high, yet not quite high enough to be considered a second language (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2011, 2015; Brevik, 2015). This can only be modeled as a continuum rather than two discrete contexts. Measuring children's actual English proficiency further addresses concerns about the trajectory of English vis-à-vis the vitality of Icelandic (Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021).

Earlier studies suggest that the English proficiency of 8 to 9 year-old Icelandic children, who are first introduced to formal English instruction in the 4th-grade, exceeds the actual English learning objectives for that level as outlined by the National Curriculum Guidelines (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2009; Auður Torfadóttir et al, 2006; Lefever, 2007, 2010). Understanding the effect massive English exposure has on children's motivation for learning English, both in and outside of school, is important. Prior studies and surveys show that students consider themselves proficient in English, find learning fun, and consider knowing English important. However, later they say that the English they learned at school was only partially relevant to their use of English in their daily lives (Jeeves, 2013; Kristjánsdóttir, Laufey Bjarnadóttir, & Samuel Lefever, 2006). These responses suggest that there is a discrepancy between the type and amount of English taught in school and the type and amount of English that children are exposed to outside of



school, and the type of English they are actually required to use. The apparent dissonance between the nature of formal instruction and actual, perceived needs and uses of English extramurally provided another impetus for this study, especially their effect on children's motivation to learn English.

#### **1.4 Theoretical foundations**

The main objective of the study is to examine the lexical proficiency of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the onset of instruction, identify the factors that motivate students to learn English at this early age, and to examine the amount and type of English young children are exposed to prior to beginning English studies in school. By doing so, this study contributes to the knowledge of the changing linguistic environment in Iceland and other countries in the context of the spread of English. This study has its theoretical basis in three domains of research; motivation (Csizer & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei, 2001, 2009a, 2009b; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009); age-related and young learners' studies, (Kiss & Nikolov, 2005; Larson-Hall, 2008; Munoz, 2006; Nikolov, 2009a; Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006, 2011; Pinter, 2006); and vocabulary acquisition (Daller et al., 2007; Laufer, 1997; Milton, 2009; Nation, 2006b).

According to Dörnyei and Skehan (2005), motivation and aptitude are the best predictors of students' success in language learning. While age is probably the most important and most researched general factor in second language acquisition, vocabulary is logically the foundation for literacy and the building blocks of language (Grabe, 2009; Nation, 2013; Read, 2000). Thus, vocabulary is a fundamental factor in acquiring a second language and "...the importance of vocabulary is highlighted by the oft-repeated observation that learners carry around dictionaries and not grammar books" (Schmitt, 2010. p. 4). Therefore, this study focuses on young learner's

exposure, attitudes and motivation, and vocabulary proficiency in English in a changing linguistic environment where exposure to English is no longer confined to the classroom.

Iceland is not the only country experiencing a changed linguistic environment due to the spread of English. Research from Scandinavia and Northern Europe shows changes in proficiency, use, and attitude towards English (Brevik & Hellekjær, 2017; Graedler, 2014; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Rindal, 2010, 2014; Sundqvist, 2009). English is used as a lingua franca among many Europeans and the language most useful for mutual understanding almost anywhere in the world (Crystal, 2003). English is also increasingly the language more and more students must use at University, even their local university, as much of the reading material, and increasingly instruction as well, is in English (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2010; Hellekjær, 2009; Henry, 2010). Thus, this study is an important addition to the discussion on the status of English worldwide and the subsequent changes in the linguistic ecology of many linguistic communities around the world.

#### **1.4.1 SLA and Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is the essence of success in language study. The greater your vocabulary is, the better your proficiency, and lexical competence is essential for communicative success (Henriksen et al., 2004; Meara, 1996; Singleton, 1999). In addition, learners consider vocabulary the most difficult aspect of language to master due to the vast number of words needed to master a language (Laufer, 1997). The size of a learner's vocabulary is considered the best predictor of a learner's proficiency (Milton, 2009).

Vocabulary studies have focused either on how much vocabulary is needed for successful attainment of a foreign language within the classroom, or how much vocabulary is needed to succeed in a second language in immigration or immersion environments. Most of the studies,

and thus the tools and lists used to measure language attainment, are based on adult data sources (Milton, 2009; Nation, 2013). Although numerous studies have focused on age and language acquisition, it is only recently that the study of young learners' motivation and vocabulary acquisition has received more attention within SLA and applied linguistics (Milton, 2009; Nikolov, 2009b; Nation, 2013; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The focus of this study is on vocabulary acquisition and motivation of children in the linguistic context of Iceland where English is neither a foreign language nor a second language (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2018).

#### **1.4.2 SLA and Motivation**

Motivation is of great importance in second language learning, as it provides the impetus for learning and is a deciding factor in successful attainment. Without motivation to learn, there is little hope of success regardless of input and ability (Dörnyei, 2009b; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Research on motivation has grown exponentially in recent years and the focus has moved from the early studies of bilingualism and immersion environments (Gardner, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner et al., 1997; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) to looking at global learning of additional languages within and outside the classroom, resulting in an explosion of studies with focus on L2 motivation (Csizér & Magid, 2014; Dörnyei et al., 2015; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Murray et al., 2011; Ushioda, 2014). These studies examine factors such as learners' sense of self and their personal motivation, their immediate learning environment and the effect motivation has on attitudes and proficiency (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

To date, motivational research has focused on older children learning languages (12 years and older), possibly because previous research has shown that the youngest learners' motivation to learn foreign languages is not imminently clear and their goals may be vaguer than older learners' goals (Nikolov, 1999); moreover teaching foreign languages to young children in

general is a fairly recent phenomenon historically (Alexiou, 2009; Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2009; Nikolov, 2009b; Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006, 2011). This study will use the L2 Motivational Self System's dimensions proposed by Dörnyei (2005) including children's exposure to English, *ideal selves*, what they would like to become, and *ought-to-selves* that they think they should become in the future. Although not developed for young children in particular, it is used in an effort to identify relationships between exposure to language students' immediate environment, their motivations and sense of themselves and their future, and their lexical proficiency, thus contributing to the discussion on language learning by young children.

### **1.5 The study**

Because we do not have a clear understanding of what motivates learners, especially young learners, to learn languages, the focus of this study is to explore 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' attitude towards English and examine which contributing factors affect their motivation and success in learning English in a high exposure environment. This is done by focusing specifically on their learning of English vocabulary and map out their actual English lexical knowledge at the onset of formal instruction.

An attempt is made to bring forward a realistic picture of a new linguistic environment of young learners in a linguistic context where the status of English has changed rapidly over the last decades. Popular media, the internet and the increased use of English as a lingua franca among native speakers of other languages, have all altered the linguistic ecologies of many countries and affected children's language development and language repertoires. Very little is known about the extramural acquisition of English as a world language. This is true for most of Northern Europe, and perhaps other geographical areas, and has implications not only for language acquisition in general, but also for formal education in areas with rich English exposure

(Dörnyei et al., 2006; Rindal, 2010, 2014; Sundqvist, 2009; Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012). This study endeavors to shed light on the effect of the spread of English as a world language on the language development of children by focusing on English learning by Icelandic children.

Therefore, the research questions are:

1. What are 4th-grade students' attitudes towards English in Iceland at the onset of formal instruction, specifically:
  - a. What are their views on the importance of knowing English?
  - b. What are their views on their own ability to use English?
2. What is the English vocabulary size of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction?
3. What motivates Icelandic 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students to learn and use English in Iceland in relation to:
  - a. Type of English exposure
  - b. Their Ideal Self
  - c. Their Ought-to Self
4. What is the relationship between students' lexical knowledge and where and how frequently they use English in different situations (L2 Exposure), their expected (Ought-to Self) and desired (Ideal Self) use of English?

The effect of gender, and onset of instruction, on learning outcomes will also be examined when relevant. This is motivated by the ongoing discussion on how gender affects language attainment and motivation (Ellis, 1994; Singleton & Ryan, 2004, Dörnyei et al., 2006; Heinzmann, 2009, Lefever, 2010; Auður Torfadóttir et al, 2005) as well as the controversial debate on “earlier the better” that has caused parents and others to put pressure on educational

authorities to lower the starting age of formal English as a foreign language instruction with the view that, the younger children are, the better language learners they are. It is important to examine whether this applies to the new linguistic environment of Iceland and other countries experiencing similar changes in language use.

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives and answer the research questions, I surveyed and tested 416 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students (8-9 years old) from schools around Iceland (378 tests and surveys provided the basis for analysis). These participants answered a questionnaire built partly on previous surveys of attitudes carried out in Iceland for comparison purposes. The first research question is therefore a general question about views and attitudes that follows the goals and methods of previous studies of Icelandic students' attitudes about knowing English and their own English skills for the purpose of comparison over time. Participants also completed two different vocabulary tests which addressed Question 2. First, students took a simple yes/no test, in the tradition of Milton and Meara's (2003) X\_Lex test, that asked whether students recognized the words in a word list consisting of 100 real words and 20 pseudowords. Secondly, a Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) test was administered. The VKS test examines learners' degree of knowledge of vocabulary as well as testing their 'sight vocabulary', that is, their ability to translate words on a list out of context. The words chosen for the list came from *Word Express: the first 2500 of spoken English*. This is a list originally developed by Stemach and Williams (1988) and later adapted by Cobb (2008) and based on the lexical proficiency of 6-7 year old native speakers of English. This list was chosen because it was considered more appropriate than lists derived from adult speaking or writing corpora since we are testing children. To answer Research Question 3, survey questions were formed built on Dörnyei's (2009a) three dimensions from his L2 Motivational Self System, The Ideal Self, the ought-to self, and the influence of seven context or situation specific factors which are perceived influential in children's English

development (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2006). The factors are: parents, peers, education, written texts, computers, TV/music and their immediate and future needs to use English (here English as a Lingua Franca or ELF). Finally, to answer Question 4, the relationship between students' lexical knowledge (Question 2) and where and how frequently they are exposed to English, or have used it in different situations (L2 environment), their expected (Ought-to Self) and desired (Ideal Self) use of English (Question 3) will be measured.

The reason this study focuses on vocabulary size and single word knowledge, and not on other aspects of proficiency, is that this study is conducted at the beginning of children's English language instruction in Iceland. Testing learners' complete vocabulary knowledge is not possible, both due to time constraints and complexity of administering such a test to young children, and most importantly, because of the fact that such a tool has yet to be developed (Milton, 2009; Nation & Webb, 2011; Schmitt, 2010). More importantly, this study fills a major gap by establishing a baseline for lexical proficiency at the onset of formal instruction for the benefit of educational policy and future studies, and to shed light on from where that lexical knowledge is derived.

The goal of this study is, first of all, to provide new insights into the linguistic environment of children in Iceland and their actual English lexical proficiency. Secondly, this study will be a contribution to the understanding of the motivational factors that affect students' language learning, particularly at a young age. Thirdly, this study will contribute to the ongoing work within the field of vocabulary testing, the application of the Self-system in motivational research and the development of test instruments to measure young children's lexical knowledge in English as an L2. Finally, it will inform foreign/second language education policy and instructional practice and shed light on how we can better meet the needs of Icelandic learners,

and hopefully other children, who grow up in linguistic contexts evolving rapidly due to the spread of English.

The thesis is structured in the following way: Chapter 2 is devoted to a literature review, where current research on young learners and language acquisition, vocabulary acquisition and motivational research is presented. The status of English in young learners' linguistic environment in Iceland will also be discussed in some detail. Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the study, research questions, participants, instruments, data collection, data analysis methods, and gives an account of the pilot studies carried out prior to this study. Chapter 4 shows results and analyses of the surveys on students' motivation, exposure and attitude towards English, and results from the vocabulary tests. In chapter 5 the results are discussed with reference to the research questions and implications. Finally, chapter 6 presents conclusions and identifies limitations of the study, unanswered questions, and issues for further research.



## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

This chapter provides an overview of the research relevant to this study. First, a short introduction is provided to relevant theories on second language acquisition, especially by children. Then the role of input in second language learning is presented with respect to the nature and amount of exposure of the target language, both extramurally and in formal instructional settings. The focus then shifts to the theoretical foundations directly pertinent to the study: children's lexical development and the motivational factors that affect word learning. Firstly, children's development of lexical knowledge and its relevance to the study of Icelandic 4<sup>th</sup>-graders' acquisition of English vocabulary is discussed. This is followed by a discussion of current theories about motivation and its role in language learning. The discussion focuses on Dörnyei's influential L2 Motivational Self System. Thereafter, the chapter presents the context and relevance of this study in Iceland and how the spread of English as a World Language has affected Icelandic children's linguistic repertoires. This includes a short discussion on gender and language learning. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the research questions.

### **2.1 Second Language Acquisition by children**

This section presents current theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) that inform this study. The subjects of this study are children, and this section provides an overview of relevant studies on the acquisition of a second language by children. Therefore, before venturing into the specifics of vocabulary and motivation, it is prudent to look at what has driven the discussion on children's second and foreign language acquisition.

Governments around the world, under pressure from parents and others (though not usually Applied Linguists) have increasingly decided to move foreign language learning to the primary level or lower the age of children learning foreign languages at school (Enever et al.,

2009). Young children are assumed to learn languages easily, uniformly and with limited variation or interference from individual or even social factors well established for adult language learning. Lately, these assumptions have come under scrutiny (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012). Furthermore, the role of input, both amount and type of input, has not been considered as many of the studies focusing on age and early learning are conducted in second language (SL) contexts with adequate target language (TL) input and often these findings are generalized to all contexts and used to support teaching foreign languages (FL) to younger learners at school with its much more limited input (for review see, Muñoz & Singleton, 2011; Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006; Singleton & Ryan, 2004). These two contexts are very different, especially in terms of the amount of input learners receive, and are therefore discussed separately below. First the research on age related factors in language learning are presented and then studies about the relationship between the amount of TL input and (SL) language attainment.

### **2.1.1 Age and language acquisition**

One of the most studied factors influencing second language acquisition is the role of age. The single most influential theory on the effect of age on language acquisition was introduced by Penfield and Roberts (1959) and further developed by Lenneberg (1967). Lenneberg proposed the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) that claimed that children have a special ability to acquire languages, a type of biological clock that allows natural acquisition to occur during a certain period before it is lost. According to the theory, the optimal period for language acquisition is from about 2 years old to puberty (12-13 years of age), at which point the brain loses its cerebral plasticity and language learning becomes difficult (Lenneberg, 1967). This was later supported by studies with the study of language-deprived children such as Genie, who was deprived of language until the age of thirteen and showed a lack of linguistic competence after several years

of learning (Curtiss, 1977; Fromkin et al., 1974). This is also the basis of the generative approach to language acquisition (Chomsky, 1957). Furthermore, studies of deaf individuals showed that children exposed to sign language early in life perform better on tests than those that are exposed later in life (Mayberry et al., 2002, p. 38). This view gained momentum when explored in second language learning contexts (Bley-Vroman, 1989). More recently this view has been called into question as recent brain research has shown that the adult brain is still malleable and can grow in response to information and experience (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012, p. 16). Nevertheless, as several studies have demonstrated, the general census is that there are benefits to starting to learn a new language early as opposed to later in life, but the reasons may be more complex than can be explained by an innate capacity for language learning. This will be discussed below.

Early research on a critical period or maturational constraints in second language learning was mainly conducted in naturalistic situations where learners have access to ample input in which children do not initially perform as well as older learners in the short term, but they often catch up and surpass older learners in the long-run (Singleton & Ryan, 2004). For example, Johnson and Newport's (1989) study of immigrants using grammatical judgement tasks showed children experiencing more successful acquisition than their elders, wherever age of arrival was considered a deciding factor, and supported the notion of a critical period affecting second language acquisition. Although great variation appeared in the results, the study concluded that there was a specific maturational phase up to seven years that was favorable to learning, and a later phase, around puberty, where language learning capacity declines. This type of evidence has been used to support full second language attainment by children. Other studies suggest that "full attainment" by children may be limited to pronunciation. This is based on the perception that younger children are more sensitive to sounds and rhythms of language, which leaves them

particularly open to second language success because they “sound” like native speakers. Studies such as Scovel (1988) and Long (1990), focusing on pronunciation, suggest that a native language accent cannot be acquired if language learning begins after the age of 12 (as cited in Singleton, 2005). But even this view has been challenged. Singleton and Ryan (2004) reviewed several studies that showed that adult learners were mistaken for native speakers (see also Birdsong, 1999).

The younger the better stance has been challenged on two levels. One suggests that older children may be more efficient language learners, and the other that the context of learning may affect attainment regardless of age. Research from formal instructional contexts has challenged the ‘consensus view’ in a formal context of the classroom, where language acquisition is not automatic, and catching up might prove difficult because acquisition is slow in the beginning due to limited input and because very young children have less cognitive capacity for formal learning. The “younger the better” does not necessarily apply when a language is learned at school, often because of limited input (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007, 2015; Kinsella & Singleton, 2014; Larson-Hall, 2008; Munoz, 2006, 2008; Muñoz & Singleton, 2011). For example, learners with early L2 formal exposure, and tested at the secondary level with late beginners, did not maintain an advantage in the formal instructional context (Muñoz & Singleton, 2011). Thus, the younger the better stance is contested by studies that compare the long-term advantage of early learners in a naturalistic language-learning context, who have constant and unlimited input, to attainment by early learners in an instructed context, with limited access to the target language (TL) input (Kinsella & Singleton, 2014; Singleton & Ryan, 2004). Thus, it may be a matter of quality and quantity rather than innateness or maturation that determines success in second or additional language learning. The role of the learning context and the nature and amount of input may have

been under researched and its role in second language learning perhaps underestimated. The importance of input in the development of second languages is the topic of the next section.

### **2.1.2 The role of input in SLA**

With the introduction of socio-cultural theories of language, the role of input in ESL and EFL environments garnered more attention than before (Lantolf, 2006). Previous form-focused theories centered on the internal mechanism of language development with very little reference to input. Since then, a rich tradition has developed that examines the effects of input on second language development both inside and outside the classroom (Gass & Mackey, 2015; Hall & Verplaetse, 2000; Long, 1981; Swain, 1985, 2000). Findings are at best inconclusive due to the complex interaction of age and amount of input and comparisons of studies of language attainment in different learning contexts.

Studies in instructed language settings have produced conflicting findings and have failed to reveal the precise ways in which the amount of input influences the outcome of instructed language learning. In an FL learning situation, the stakes are different from an SL situation. The source of input varies greatly; the target language is not spoken outside of the classroom and sometimes not even in the classroom, depending on the instructor's level of FL proficiency (Hall & Verplaetse, 2000). In addition, in an FL situation there is limited exposure to the language outside of school. Therefore, starting language education younger is one way to ensure larger amounts of language input over time, even when input is only minimal at each point in time (Larson-Hall, 2008). Larson-Hall's (2008) study found a modest difference to both phonological and basic morpho-syntactic abilities in favor of a younger starting age in a minimal input situation, thus supporting the prior critical period theories. However, as Munoz observes, the assumption that being a young learner is the only necessary condition to guarantee success within

the FL environment, may be because starting earlier simply means more input over a longer period. Additionally, Munoz predicts that, in the formal instructional context, that differences between younger and older beginners will disappear once, given the same time and exposure, they reach the same state of cognitive development. (Munoz, 2008, 2014). This is based on studies that have shown that, provided with the same amount of input, later starters do not perform worse than early starters. For example, Holmstrand (1982 cf. Munoz, 2008) conducted a study where groups of Swedish children began studying English at different grade levels (1 and 3). Their proficiency was evaluated at the end of 6<sup>th</sup>-grade at a point in time when the total number of lessons in English was the same for both groups. No difference was found in relation to proficiency in English and attitudes towards English between the two groups. Other recent studies of age and proficiency (Munoz, 2008; Serrano & Munoz, 2007), and age, exposure and lexical knowledge (Miralpeix, 2007) show a difference in favor of learners who receive intensive exposure over those receiving the same amount of input over a longer period.

Furthermore, recent studies in Norway on 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' instructed vocabulary development, showed that the amount of input is as important to language development as age. In the first study, two groups were compared: an experimental group that received added input in the classroom in the 1st grade, while the other was a control group. Initial testing immediately after application showed gains for the experimental group (Dahl & Vulchanova, 2014). However, as neither group received continued extra input in the classroom, by the 4<sup>th</sup>-grade, in comparison of the groups showed no statistical difference in development of vocabulary when input was equal, which the authors suggest shows that the initial vocabulary boost did not have a long-term effect (Dahl, 2014; Sivertzen, 2013). Munoz (2014) expressed this clearly by pointing out that the amount of exposure may have as an important role in successful language learning as the age

which students begin receiving formal language instruction at school. Therefore, learning outcomes could also be influenced by time distribution as well as the amount and type of input, rather than young age in terms of formal instruction.

The role of exposure or instruction in early language learning in regular programs needs further study. Because it has been suggested that young learners may benefit particularly from greater amounts of input, given their advantage in implicit language learning, it is of great importance to study the intensity of exposure and whether there is a relationship between exposure and proficiency that favors younger starters. This line of inquiry is gaining momentum in SL research. Very little is known about the nature of the effect of extramural language input. This inquiry is further complicated by the lack of definition of the contexts in which extramural input might occur.

The traditional definition of an L2 context is based on a binary division between an English as a second language context, in which the TL is learned in the environment where it is spoken, and an English as a foreign language context when the TL is learned in the L1 environment. This binary division is being blurred in many speech communities as English spreads as an international language (Arnbjörnsdóttir & Ingvarsdóttir, 2018). This begs the question of whether linguistic input differs in these contexts, and if so how, and how the differences might affect learners' language learning trajectories.

This strict SL vs FL paradigm no longer applies to Iceland and most of Northern Europe. In Iceland, the line between school registers and conversational language is being blurred as Icelandic students are in a foreign language context at school, with limited formal input, but are also exposed to massive amounts of informal language extramurally, and little is known about the effect this mixed exposure has on students' linguistic development. This study examines the

vocabulary proficiency of young learners at the age of nine, who are beginning their English language education in the 4th-grade in the Icelandic school system. They are still developing literacy skills in their first language and are in the middle stages of L1 development. Our subjects have experienced 3 years of L1 schooling prior to testing and should have some, but varied, literacy foundation in Icelandic. However, since students in Iceland are exposed to enormous amounts of English and begin learning English while attaining literacy in their first language, this might affect the speed and quality of their acquisition of both languages. This study focuses on the status of 9-year-old students' English proficiency to begin exploring the nature of the input which may affect their language development.

Studies are beginning to appear on the changing linguistic context where English has become a part of a speaker's linguistic repertoire but does not hold an official status in society (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2010; Dahl, 2014; Kuppens, 2010; De Wilde et al.; 2019; Lefever, 2010; Nikolov & Timpe-Laughlin, 2021; Papp, 2019; Peters, 2018; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016; Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012) and the studies main focus is on assessing student vocabulary knowledge. Sundqvist (2009) defines Extramural English (EE) as language that is encountered outside the classroom, without deliberate language learning purpose (p. 25). She studied the oral proficiency, vocabulary and exposure to English of 15-16 year old students in Sweden. Sundqvist found relationships between EE and English skills, and this relationship was stronger for vocabulary than it was for oral proficiency. The main sources that impacted proficiency were video games, the internet and reading. Kuppens (2010) studied a large group of 11 year old students (N=361) in Belgium to examine the effect of EE on language proficiency and found that boys scored higher than girls on an oral test, self-assessed their



proficiency higher, and spent significantly more time playing computer games that had a significant but limited effect on skills.

Studies in Iceland show that children and teenagers feel that English as a school subject is rather dull and difficult (Hafðís Ingvarsdóttir & Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2018). The same children use English outside of school without problems, suggesting that there is a gap between their School English and Extramural English. This begins early in their education, as younger learners are acquiring more English from the environment than they do from school (Lefever, 2010, Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2010; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein). Although studies in Iceland suggest that increased input should increase proficiency, the actual relationship between this perceived input and language success at the age of 9, still remains unclear and that is the purpose of this study.

### **2.1.3 Summary**

In this section, I have focused on early second and foreign language acquisition. This includes theories of innate capabilities and maturational effects on language acquisition and the nature and amount of linguistic input. I have provided a brief overview of the complex nature of the linguistic environment in which Icelandic children learn English. Studies of the impact of increased English input are beginning to appear, but little is known about how increased English input outside of school affect learners' vocabulary and motivation to learn English in general. This is the topic of the following sections.

## **2.2 Vocabulary Acquisition**

As one of the goals of this study is to measure the possible relationship between motivational factors and vocabulary development, the Icelandic children's lexical proficiency needed to be established. There are several reasons as to why we want to measure a learner's

lexicon as an indication of proficiency. We might want to find out whether learners have enough vocabulary to understand, read or speak comfortably. We could be interested in measuring the growth of learners' vocabulary over a period, or comparing native and non-native vocabulary development to be able to estimate the expected growth. The relationship between vocabulary size and literacy is uncontested. It is also important to examine the role of extramural vocabulary learning in contexts where, previously, most students learned the bulk of their L2 vocabulary in school.

This section discusses the nature of vocabulary acquisition, specifically, the size, nature and importance of lexis in language proficiency. Previous vocabulary studies have often focused on the role of the lexicon in the development of first language literacy and not specifically on children learning a second and foreign language. Because of the importance of lexis in language development of both the first and subsequent languages, it is important to expand research on vocabulary to the second language learning of young children.

Measuring children's language is a complex task, given the unpredictability of test performance and other issues related to maturation. Studies on acquisition of words by children have come under criticism for the type of test used being too difficult for young learners (Albrechtsen et al., 2008). Many believed that vocabulary learning continues throughout a learner's lifetime, both in L1 and other languages, in contrast to structural elements of language, which generally do not (Gass, 1999) and may therefore not be as interesting from a language development perspective. However, "certain levels and qualities of lexical knowledge are important prerequisites for successful language learning and language use" (Schoonen & Verhallen, 2008, p. 211). In the following section, major studies of vocabulary learning relevant to this study are outlined.

### **2.2.1 Vocabulary acquisition and second language learning**

This section discusses vocabulary acquisition and the importance of lexis in the development of language structures with a focus on second language vocabulary learning. Early studies of vocabulary acquisition focused on vocabulary teaching, and often on the role of the lexicon in the development of first language literacy and not specifically on children learning a second and foreign language. Early studies in second and foreign language research of vocabulary focused on vocabulary instruction, often on word associations by foreign language learners and other diverse groups, where large individual differences could be expected (Meara, 1980, pp. 1-2; 2006). Later, the attention in language study began to focus on the specific processes that take learners from a first meaningful encounter with a word to the successful assimilation of a lexical item to a learner's lexicon. Research focusing on the assessment of young learners has increasingly stressed the significance of lexis, especially in SL literacy, and thus on the study of teaching and learning of vocabulary (Nikolove & Timpe-Laughlin, 2021). In other words, "vocabulary is now recognized as an essential element of learning a second language" (Ishii & Schmitt, 2009, p. 5). This section begins by exploring what it means to know a word and how much vocabulary is needed for effective comprehension and use. This is followed by a discussion of children's acquisition of vocabulary.

### **2.2.2 Knowing a word - receptive vs. productive vocabulary**

There are many types of skills involved in knowing a word and being able to use it effectively. Vocabulary knowledge is generally divided into receptive and productive knowledge, as it is one thing to know a word and understand it and quite another to use it productively. Productive knowledge of a word is usually defined as the ability to use it while speaking or writing, while receptive knowledge is the ability to understand a word while reading or listening

(Nation, 2001). When defining vocabulary knowledge, we may refer to ‘vocabulary breadth’ or ‘vocabulary size’ when we are talking about learner’s overall knowledge (quantity of words), or we use the term ‘vocabulary depth’ when referring to the quality of word knowledge (how well the learner knows that particular word). Nation (2001) provided a clear definition of the range of “word knowledge” to ensure successful acquisition and use (see table 2.1).

**Table 2.1 What is involved in knowing a word?**

<i>Form:</i>	Spoken	R*	What does the word sound like?	
		P*	How is the word pronounced?	
	Written	R	What does the word look like?	
		P	How is the word written and spelled?	
	Word parts	R	What parts are recognizable in this word?	
		P	What word parts are needed to express this meaning?	
<i>Meaning</i>	Form and meaning	R	What meaning does this word form signal?	
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?	
	Concept and referents	R	What is included in the concept?	
		P	What items can the concept refer to?	
	Associations	R	What other words does this make us think of?	
		P	What other words could we use instead of this one?	
	<i>Use</i>	Grammatical functions	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
			P	In what patterns must we use this word?
Collocations		R	What words or types of words occur with this one?	
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this one?	
Constraints on use (register, frequency ...)		R	Where, when and how often would we expect to meet this word?	
		P	Where, when and how often can we use this word?	

\*R=Receptive, P=Productive

(Nation, 2013)

Reception and production entail different mental tasks (Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997). For second language learners, receptive proficiency often develops incidentally, while development of production may occur as a need or pressure to communicate, in a foreign language setting, and may be limited to an instructional setting. The consensus is that a person's receptive vocabulary is much larger than their productive vocabulary, though there is still no agreement on how much larger (Fan, 2000; Laufer, 1998, 2003; Laufer & Paribakht, 1998; Webb, 2008). In addition, there are indications that receptive vocabulary knowledge develops faster at lower levels and productive knowledge at later levels, and that the gap never closes completely (Webb, 2008).

Productive vocabulary knowledge is only marginally relevant to this study. Much less is known about the level of productive vocabulary needed for productive use, e.g. in writing, and productive and receptive vocabulary is measured using different types of tests. The most basic element of productive knowledge includes word recollection to express meaning, Furthermore, while most of receptive knowledge can be acquired incidentally, productive knowledge demands a more comprehensive approach and deliberate learning to master pronunciation, spelling, word parts, form, appropriate use, structure, and association, to be able to speak or write (Nation, 2013). Testing productive knowledge has proven highly complex as more tests have been developed to test receptive knowledge. Productive tests usually focus on a single concept, i.e. single and/or multiword items, word form knowledge, association, to mention a few, rather than comprehensive productive knowledge, and this is still the case, particularly with young learners as they are still developing their academic skills (Miralpeix, 2019). The distinction between receptive and productive knowledge is important to this study as it measures mostly knowledge

of English words, or receptive knowledge, based on written texts. Below is an overview of the relationship between vocabulary size and text comprehension, both spoken and written.

### **2.2.3 The size of the lexicon**

Vocabulary size and language comprehension are intrinsically connected as numerous studies demonstrate (Daller et al., 2007; Laufer, 1997; Nation, 2001; Paribakht & Wesche, 1999, 2000). Paul Nation (2006a) concludes that knowledge of 3000-word families is needed to adequately understand a spoken second language. Furthermore, 95% coverage has been deemed enough for spoken discourse (Nation, 2006a) though some suggest that a 98-99% coverage would be more appropriate (Nation & Beglar, 2007; Nation & Hamilton-Jenkins, 2000).

Vocabulary knowledge has long been deemed a major determinant in ESL and EFL reading comprehension (Laufer, 1997). For effective comprehension of written text, a reader needs to know enough words in the text to decipher the message. The most common view is that 98% knowledge of the lexical items in a text is needed to read a wide variety of texts, and 95% when reading for necessity (Laufer, 1997; Laufer & Goldstein, 2004; Laufer & Hill, 2003; Nation, 2006a, 2013). To understand literary and journalistic text types, a reader must understand 98% of the words in the text. This requires a receptive vocabulary of around 8000 to 9000 word-families (a head word and all forms and derived words of that word [Nation, 2006]). Knowing 8000 word families suggests that a speaker knows around 34,660 individual word forms associated with the 8000 headwords (Nation, 2006b). Acquiring this considerable amount of lexical items has to be approached in a variety of ways and requires both explicit intentional teaching as well as incidental continued exposure.

It is generally accepted that a learner has to meet words often in order for the acquisition to occur (Nation, 2013). Recognizing the complexity of word knowledge is important when

considering acquisition and pedagogy as some elements are easily taught intentionally, such as meaning and form, while collocation and intuitions of register and frequency, etc., when a learner knows where, when, and how often he/she can expect to meet the word, are more difficult to teach explicitly. Acquiring this considerable amount of lexical items in a second language relies on more than just intentional learning through formal instruction; it requires incidental continued exposure, for example through reading (Schmitt, 2010; Schmitt et al., 2011; Webb & Chang, 2012). Single episodes of instruction can even be counterproductive rather than productive. For example, instruction before a listening task can interfere with students understanding instead of enhancing it, while listening twice and reading beforehand established a firmer grasp of the target vocabulary (Chang, 2006).

The measurements in this study are based on written tests. Given the close relationship between ESL/EFL learners' vocabulary command and their ability to understand English texts, the level of reading proficiency may affect the children's ability to complete the tests. In addition, the nature of the tests in this study measures different dimensions of knowledge but also addresses the participants' confidence in that knowledge.

#### **2.2.4 Confidence and Vocabulary tests**

The tests in this study (see chapter 3 for an in-depth review) measure the size and dimension of vocabulary knowledge. Recent research indicates that test-takers' confidence levels about their word knowledge may affect performance on tests and is a meaningful concept for language learners, and that this factor has received limited recognition in the literature (Ronald & Kamimoto, 2014). Despite their limited coverage in terms of the number of words tested, the most frequently used format for testing vocabulary size, such as the various types of Yes/No tests, include an element of guessing and introduce pseudowords to limit overestimation and risk-

taking. Other tests, such as the scales that ask participants to indicate a level of knowledge, i.e. whether they know the meaning of the word and are able to use it in a sentence, do ask explicit questions related to confidence, but the questions are included for the purpose of examining the breadth and depth of the vocabulary knowledge and is discussed as such in the literature. These factors are related to confidence, but may also be related to context factors and are therefore examined in this study as one of the foci is on the nature of the knowledge the children in this study are exposed to. Children and vocabulary learning are discussed in the next section.

### 2.2.5 Children and Vocabulary acquisition

Age of acquisition has traditionally been thought irrelevant to the development of a learner's lexicon. Mayberry and Eichen (1991) claim that age of acquisition "exerts one effect that reverberates throughout the processing of language structure" (p.507) and this principal effect is essentially "lexical" (p. 507). This applies to acquisition in and outside of the classroom. However, as some long-term 'naturalistic' studies show, the younger the learners starts, the better lexical proficiency he or she attains (Singleton, 1998). This seems related to length of exposure more than any other factor. However, in a formal environment, older children, adolescents, and adults advance more at the beginning of vocabulary acquisition than younger beginners do, probably because they command more developed cognitive skills in addition to a larger L1 vocabulary. Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir (2009) found in an empirical study of incidental and intentional vocabulary acquisition in the classroom, students start to truly benefit from formal vocabulary instruction around 12-13 years of age.

Nevertheless, the younger beginners eventually catch up and often overtake the older beginners, mainly because they have more time to learn and are exposed to the second language over a longer period (Singleton, 1998). Today the nature and size of the lexicon and its



importance to language development is acknowledged with a subsequent proliferation of vocabulary studies, especially the relevance of the size of the lexicon and its nature and relevance to the development of language and literacy.

Children learn implicitly or incidentally both their first and second language while adults benefit from a form-focused approach to the learning of words (DeKeyser, 2000, 2003; Hulstijn, 2003). Additionally, children are thought to possess a larger receptive (passive) vocabulary than productive, while the gap is smaller with adults (Laufer, 1998). This is because adult language learning is often more focused and with a specific purpose, while children often acquire language incidentally and more generally reflecting the contextual needs of children.

This study examines the receptive version, that is the size and breadth of the English vocabulary knowledge of 8-9 year old children. An advantage in exploring vocabulary knowledge is that at first glance it is countable or measurable in some meaningful sense (Milton, 2009). We can estimate the number of words a learner knows or count the words in a passage. However, this is not as easy as it sounds because it is possible to come up with several definitions of knowledge, or what it means to know a word, that can produce different outcomes. It is not always clear what constitutes a word and how to count them. Clearly, to be able to do further learning at a higher level, a substantial amount of vocabulary is needed as Nation points out. Research shows that, due to time constraints, and the large number of words to be learned, most of the words must be acquired incidentally rather than through direct vocabulary study (Nation, 2013).

Learning the lexicon of a foreign language is vastly different from learning L1 vocabulary, if only from the perspective of the amount of input, which is much more limited in many L2 situations than in one's L1. L2 learning is highly reliant on the characteristics of the

learner, the context and the type and amount of language the learner encounters. Until recently it has not been clear how much L2 vocabulary young learners acquire at different stages of learning. Very few studies focus on measuring young learner vocabulary size and often focus on the skill level of the learner instead of their age (Miralpeix, 2019). Nation and Waring (1997) stated that the average native English-speaking 5-year-old knows between 4000-5000 word families receptively and 2000-3000 families or headwords, productively. For an L2 learner of English, regardless of age, to expand the vocabulary at the rate of 1000 families per year is hardly attainable and near impossible in a formal setting, particularly for children who are also expanding their L1 and learning to read. In a natural setting this growth is more attainable in a second language, but still not at the level children's L1 lexicon develops. This, however, depends on amount and quality of input. Research indicates that deliberate learning, i.e. formal instruction, can expand the vocabulary size of around 500 word families per year (Jiménez et al., 2006; Milton, 2009; Orosz, 2009) given that enough encounters and input is provided. How much that would be is still debatable as the interaction between extramural and instructional input in many countries is still not fully understood. It has been established that a bilingual individual has a smaller lexicon in each of their languages than monolinguals do, but they exceed the amount of words known by monolinguals when both their languages are counted (Bialystok et al., 2010; Thordardottir, 2011, 2020).

Young learners at 8-9 years old are still acquiring reading skills in their first language, so expecting them to learn incidentally through reading is unrealistic as suggested by Coady (1997), who proposed the beginner's paradox: how can L2 readers learn enough words "to learn vocabulary through extensive reading when they do not know enough words to read well" (p. 229). In addition, as demonstrated by Collier (1989), "first language acquisition is not a quick and easy process; it takes a minimum of 12 years" (p. 510). Consequently, for the first years of

primary school, students' ability to learn vocabulary in a foreign language from reading is limited as they are learning to read in their L1 at the same time and building their L1 vocabulary alongside their L2 vocabulary.

Considerable credit has been given to incidental language learning by children from television (d'Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999). Research has shown that the vocabulary demands of television shows requires similar word knowledge as reading does (Webb & Rodgers, 2009). However, the value of such input in expanding vocabulary knowledge has been questioned due to the passive nature of the input (De Wilde et al., 2020). Regardless, exposure varies and in Iceland we do not have enough evidence from testing to assume how much vocabulary is learned by children through these mediums. As one of the goals of this study is to measure the possible relationship between motivational factors and lexical development, the Icelandic children's lexical proficiency needed to be established. The role of motivation in language learning is the topic of the next section.

### **2.3 Motivation and Second Language Acquisition**

In recent years, partly driven by the changing role of English in the world, there has been an increased interest in young foreign language learners' proficiency and motivation to learn English. This interest has risen alongside the increased number of programs of teaching English to young speakers of other languages in foreign language settings (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Nikolov, 2009a, 2009b). In this section, I will discuss what motivates young learners to acquire or learn a second language. Currently, there is no agreement on the exact definition of motivation although its prominence in learning additional languages is unquestioned. Dörnyei (1998) said, "although 'motivation' is a construct frequently used in both educational and research contexts, it is rather surprising how little agreement there is in the literature with regard to the exact meaning

of the concept” (p. 117). Recently, the direction of motivational research in second language learning has been from focusing on how an individual identifies with a target language group and its influence on attainment, to how individuals perceive themselves as L2 users, currently and in the future (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Here the concept of motivation will be discussed in relation to the L2 motivational system introduced by Dörnyei, with emphasis on the context of actual, desired and expected use of English. This section explores what motivates young learners’ language learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Research on language learning motivation has gone through considerable change since Gardner and associates in Canada first introduced and pursued the issue in 1959 (for review see Dörnyei, 2005; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) focus was embedded in a bilingual and immersion environment. They divided motivation in language learning into *instrumental* and *integrative orientation*. *Instrumental orientation* refers to a learner’s motivation to learn a language to achieve a certain goal, for example, a better job or higher grades. *Integrative orientation*, on the other hand, refers to a learner’s positive attitude towards an L2 group, the desire to become similar to members of a L2 community, and the student’s motivation to learn the language of the community. The 90s brought a change of perspectives in L2 motivational research with stronger revitalized interest, where the focus moved towards an approach connected more with learners’ overall disposition and the classroom context. In 1999/2000, Dörnyei, Ushioda and colleagues in Europe began to explore the ongoing changes of motivation over time, which resulted in Dörnyei (2005) reframing the L2 motivation as a part of a known model from psychology and offered a learning focused model ‘The L2 Motivation Self System’ that has guided motivational research in recent years (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). This study will use Dörnyei’s dimensions to identify which context-specific factors influence young

learners' vocabulary acquisition. First, the following section will discuss self-concepts and possible selves from social psychology and touch upon the self-concept in language learning motivation before discussing Dörnyei's "L2 Motivational Self System", after which, motivational research focused specifically on children's language learning and how it relates to this study will be presented.

### **2.3.1 Dörnyei's Self System**

Dörnyei (2005) suggested that through the process of language learning and in conjunction with the learners' individual differences, different types of 'selves' show how learners view themselves. The views differ depending on the time, type, amount, and circumstance of the individual at any given moment. He proposed a new conceptualization of L2 motivation that emerged from the theory of 'possible-selves'. The model proposes both current selves, but also emerging or future selves. Dörnyei thus developed the 'L2 Motivational Self System' where students' learning is affected by what they think they could become, what they aspire to become and what they are afraid of becoming, and how it affects their learning environment and eventual attainment (Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei does not address the age of learners specifically, but focuses on language learning in formal settings and his theories are thus relevant to this study.

#### **2.3.1.1 Self-conception and possible selves**

Self-conception forms a collection of images and cognitions about the self. They are believed to give substance to an individual's goals, thus helping individuals to "assess their progress, evaluate their instrumental acts, and revise their aspirations" (Cantor et al., 1986, p. 103). Although self-conceptions are thought to aid individuals in their learning, they differ in degree of their interpretation, and in their location in time. Some are images of the current self,

while others represent past or future selves. Images of the past and future selves are thought to be more likely to have effect on motivation than images of the current self (Dörnyei, 2009a). The way we perceive our future would thus inform our current choices. Whether this applies to children as well as adults is uncertain.

Possible selves are hypothetical images that give form, meaning, structure, and direction to an individual's hopes and fears. They are therefore important for motivating and guiding focused behavior (Dörnyei, 2005). Markus and Nurius (1986) introduced three different types of possible selves: ideal selves that we would like to become; selves that we could become; and selves we are afraid of becoming. These selves act as reasons for future behavior, whether they are to be approached or avoided. They also help individuals to interpret and evaluate their current behavior. Although possible selves are often considered as future self-guides, not all of them serve that purpose. The 'could-become' self is situated in a static position and therefore it predicts rather than guides future development. On the other hand, the Ideal Self and the feared self, have a clear guiding factor. These selves focus on how the individual perceives him/herself.

Higgins and associates presented another version of possible selves, the *Ideal Self* and the *Ought-to Self* which Dörnyei (2005) later adopted for his 'L2 Motivation Self-system'. Higgins (1987) suggested that the Ideal Self and the Ought-to Self can both be influenced by what an individual thinks of him/herself and how someone else views the individual. Furthermore, Higgins maintained that each individual had one Ideal Self and one Ought-to Self, although those selves are made up of several characteristics. However, he also acknowledged that there are other types of self-representations in addition to the ideal or ought to selves (as cited in Dörnyei, 2009a, p. 14). As mentioned before, Dörnyei aspired to move beyond the concept of integrativeness in language learning, as proposed originally by Gardner & Lambert (1975), and

suggested that the possible selves theory presented the most promising way forward in interpreting motivation in language learning (Dörnyei, 2009a, p. 25).

### **2.3.1.2 The L2 Motivational Self System and L2 language learning**

First, Dörnyei and current notions of motivational systems question Gardner's original concept of the importance of 'integrative orientation' as a major influence on language attainment. Gardner and Lambert's 1975 binary factors, integrational motivation or identification with the TL people and culture vs. instrumental factors or pragmatic motivation, because knowing the TL leads to better job opportunities, may in fact be even more relevant today than when the theory was first introduced. More people in the world today speak English as a second or a foreign language than as a first language (Crystal, 2003). For example, English, in very many cases, is learnt disassociated from any particular group or groups of speakers (Henry, 2009). English is learnt by many as a lingua franca to be used to communicate with other non-native speakers (Seidlhofer, 2005). Extending the concept of integrative motivation could be done by talking about some sort of virtual identification with the socio-cultural relevance of language, rather than with the actual L2 community that speaks it (Dörnyei, 2006). Dörnyei (2005) developed the L2 Motivational Self System to link two important paradigms to his own research findings and the theory of possible selves by adopting the constructs of interrelated orientations and clusters of motivational dimensions introduced by Noels and Ushioda.

The paradigms emerged through the research of Noels (2003, 2001) and Ushioda (2001) and their conceptualizations of L2 motivation. Noels suggested a construct made up of three interrelated types of orientations: Intrinsic reasons inherent in the language learning process, extrinsic reasons for language learning, and integrative reasons, whereas Ushioda identified eight motivational dimensions grouped into three clusters corresponding with Noel's

conceptualization. First, *actual learning process* consisting of language-related enjoyment/liking, positive learning history, and personal satisfaction, then, *external pressure/incentives* and the third, *integrative* dimension consisting of personal goals, desired levels of L2 competence (language-intrinsic goals), academic interest and feelings about target language countries or people.

The model Dörnyei (2005) constructed to link these concepts is made up of three dimensions:

1. **The Ideal Self**, referring to the L2-specific facet of one's Ideal Self: If the person we would like to become speaks an L2, the Ideal L2 Self is a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves. This dimension is related to Noels' integrative category and the third cluster formed of Ushioda's motivation facets.
2. **Ought-to Self**, referring to the attributes that one believes one ought to possess (i.e., various duties, obligations, or responsibilities) in order to avoid possible negative outcomes. This dimension corresponds, on the one hand, to Higgins's ought self and thus the more extrinsic (i.e. less internalized) types of instrumental motives, and on the other hand, to the 'extrinsic' constituents in both Noels' and Ushioda's taxonomies.
3. **L2 Learning Experience**, which concerns situation-specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience. Although Csizér and Dörnyei's (2005) study only concerned generalized (i.e. non-situation-specific) motives, and therefore did not offer information about this dimension, past research conducted in the spirit of the situated approach has provided ample evidence of the pervasive



influence of executive motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience. This dimension corresponds to Noels' intrinsic category and the first cluster formed of Ushioda's motivational facets (pp. 105-6).

The field has thus changed from Gardner's original integration interpretation towards a more global view (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), mainly connected to English and its status in the world.

Several scholars have explored the issue of global identity or expanded L2 language identity, and how it is relevant to the global community and changing status of English as a world language (for review see Dörnyei, 2006; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). For example, Dörnyei (2005) notes that in many technically advanced societies, English no longer holds the status of being a foreign language and, therefore, instrumentality and integrativeness will inevitably overlap. Similarly, Lamb (2004, p. 3) concluded that young people now develop global identities that incorporate "English-speaking globally-involved versions of themselves".

The overlap between instrumentality and integrativeness is most obvious when looking at young people and their expert use of new and emerging forms of media (Henry, 2009). By their engagement in cultural activities through the Internet, TV and computer gaming, new multilingual identities emerge. Furthermore, Norton (2001) introduced the concept of 'imagined community', which is constructed by a combination of factual knowledge and personal experience and may affect identity construction (the self) and therefore learning. Next the relevance of Dörnyei's model to the participants in this study is discussed.

### **2.3.2 Children and their motivation for learning languages**

Early studies exploring the efficiency of Dörnyei's model have in common that they focus on adolescents and the FL context (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), which does not adequately apply to the context of the participants of this study. Young Icelandic language learners experience

massive SL extramural exposure as well as FL formal instruction in English. There are not many studies that focus on language learning motivation in the lower primary school setting, although this is changing as seen in published collections edited by Nikolov (2009a, 2009b), and later articles focusing on early learning motivation (Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2011). The reason has been mainly the perception that children's sources of motivation to learn English may be multiple and not always clear. Young learners 'imagined community' and motivation to use English could be simply a vague notion of wanting to be able to watch TV, play games, and use the internet, as well as to do schoolwork. Nevertheless, as emphasized by Macintyre et al. (2002) children as well as adults do not all have the same individual characteristics and motives for learning a foreign language, especially in the new linguistic environment caused by the spread of English. However, it is important to use appropriate methodology suitable for learners' different levels of developmental and individual characteristics that may affect language learning. For example, Nikolov (1999) found in her studies in Hungary that children have different sources of motivation to learn English. To begin with, they have a positive attitude towards English; they enjoy the activities and are intrinsically motivated to learn. Older children (11-12) have more extrinsic motives, such as future goals that require good English proficiency even though their specific goals were vague and general (Nikolov, 1999, 2009). Edelenbos & Kubanek's (2009) review of the research on young learners' motivation demonstrates that as learners grow older, their positive attitude diminishes and their motivation in foreign language learning suffers accordingly. However, this does not seem to be as connected to the age of the learners as it is to their learning experience. Continued research on young children's motivation to learn is needed, especially in light of the general tendency in the world to begin foreign language education earlier and earlier (*A rewarding challenge. How language diversity could strengthen Europe*, 2008) and children's increased access to technology means that their general linguistic

environment is changing. This study adopts Dörnyei's self-system to explore Icelandic children's sense of future selves and their immediate learning experiences and the effect of those factors on students' English vocabulary acquisition.

### **2.3.3 Summary**

The goal of this section was to present the developments of the motivational system that provides the model for this study. This includes the three main categories of motivation: The L2 Exposure, the Ought-to Self and the Ideal Self to explore to what extent the new context affects motivation and the impact on language attainment, in the case of this study, on lexical development. The linguistic context of the study and its participants will now be presented.

## **2.4 The linguistic context of learning English in Iceland**

Icelanders are widely exposed to English daily, through media, education, and employment as well as through contact with speakers of other languages where English is used as a lingua franca. The linguistic situation in Iceland is in transition and constitutes neither a traditional second nor foreign language environment for English (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007, 2011; Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2018). In Iceland, English is defined as a foreign language in the National Curriculum, and instruction and educational materials reflect this status. However, studies have shown that receptive exposure is so extensive in the lives of all Icelanders, most of whom hear English for more than 4 hours a day through mass media and using English as a lingua franca in communication with others (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2011). This is also true for young Icelanders to the point that they grow up in a linguistic environment that resembles more closely a second language environment affecting their linguistic repertoires (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007, 2011, 2018). How and in what ways English affects Icelandic children's linguistic repertoires are less known. This study is the first to measure and map out the

effects of extramural English on Icelandic children's language repertoires. This section explores first formal English instruction in Iceland, reviews previous studies, and examines the notion of extramural English. Children's use of English in the classroom is also included to provide a comprehensive view of the nature of children's English exposure in Iceland.

In 1999, English became the first foreign language taught in Icelandic schools, when formal English instruction was moved from the 7th grade to the 5th grade<sup>2</sup> (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 1999). In the *National Curriculum Guidelines* from 2006/2007, compulsory English teaching was moved further down to the 4th grade (to be applied by 2010 in all schools) and guidelines for schools which would like to start English instruction earlier were also added to the curriculum. The goals for English in 4<sup>th</sup> grade stipulate that it is important to build an interest and a positive attitude towards the English language as well as providing an opportunity for students to use the language for simple communicative tasks (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2007). This point is further strengthened in the most recent guidelines with added emphasis on the importance of English as a lingua franca in a global environment driven by information and multimedia in English, that demands proficiency in that language. (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2011).

There is pressure on educational authorities in many countries to offer English as a foreign language instruction to younger and younger children, but this is limited in terms of hours allocated. Many early English learning/teaching programs at school allocate from less than an hour once a week to short daily sessions (a few minutes) (Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006). This is also the case in Iceland, as the average numbers of minutes of English instruction per week in the table below show.

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<sup>2</sup> Children begin compulsory education in Iceland in August of the year they turn 6, starting in 1st Grade.

**Table 2.2 Instruction time pr. week\* in English in the 1st-4th grade 2006-2015**

	2006-2007	2010-2011	2014-2015
1. grade	0.1 (4 min)	0.4 (16 min)	0.4 (16 min)
2. grade	0.2 (8 min)	0.4 (16 min)	0.5 (20 min)
3. grade	0.2 (8min)	0.5 (20 min)	0.8 (32 min)
4. grade	0.4 (16 min)	1.0 (40 min)	1.2 (48 min)
5. grade	2.1 (84 min)	2.2 (88 min)	2.5 (100 min)

\* Instruction time is shown in 40 minute lessons per week. 0.1 means 10% of the allotted 40 minutes or 4 minutes. Note that included in the calculations are times when none of the allocated 40 minutes are used for teaching English.

\*\*min= minutes

(Statistics\_Iceland, 2017)

The numbers in table 2.1 demonstrate that prior to 2011 exposure to English at school was minimal, and never more than the equivalent of 40 minutes a week in grades 1-4. However, as Samuel Lefever (2007) reported, some schools break down these 40 minutes into 10-15 minutes, two or three times a week, to maintain regular exposure and continuous acquisition (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2015).

Students' views about English language learning were elicited in a 2006 survey among 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students (Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir, Laufey Bjarnadóttir, & Lefever, 2006). The findings showed that among the reasons students in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade gave for wanting to know English was to be able to watch television programs and movies, play computer games, talk to foreigners and do schoolwork. Interestingly, English moves from being a subject that is *a lot of fun* for 70% of students in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to 25% in grades 9 and 10. Most of the reasons students gave for the lack of enjoyment were connected to redundant teaching material and boring learning activities. Students claimed to be learning English at school just as any other subject with limited opportunities to practice productive language in real life situations (Lovísa

Kristjánsdóttir et al., 2006). This is echoed by Anna Jeeves's subjects when asked about their secondary school experiences. They suggested that the English they had learned at school, albeit secondary school, had only partial relevance to their actual use of English in their daily lives in Iceland (Jeeves, 2013). The need and motivation to use and learn English at school is not immediately clear. Therefore, it is possible that there is a discrepancy between the type and amount of English taught in school, and the type and amount of English children are exposed to outside school, that may have a negative effect on motivation.

A study by Auður Torfadóttir et al. (2005) of the English proficiency levels of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland revealed that, despite the small number of students tested in conversational proficiency, the implications are that many students already fulfilled the goals of the National Curriculum Guidelines for 4<sup>th</sup> grade before they entered formal instruction (Auður Torfadóttir, et al., 2006). Surveys and tests administered since then show that this development has only increased (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2009, 2010; Lefever, 2006, 2007, 2010).

The changing status of English in Iceland calls for a reconsideration of the effect multilingual exposure has on children's language learning and subsequent adjustments in language and educational policies. As previously stated, the goals in English for 4<sup>th</sup> grade maintain that it is important to build an interest and a positive attitude towards the language as well as provide an opportunity for students to use the language for simple communicative tasks. For example, students should learn to understand simple instructions, understand simple words and sentences connected to familiar subjects. They should be able to follow a simple text with sound or picture for support, and be able to introduce themselves, describe objects or pictures in a simple way and to write simple sentences (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2007). However, based on the research presented above, these goals seem moderate considering that students have no problems surfing the net, playing videogames in English, and participating in simple conversations before

they start learning English at school (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2009, 2010; Lefever, 2010). This suggests that children are learning English outside of school also. Extramural English exposure is the topic of the next section.

#### **2.4.1 Extramural English in Iceland**

English exposure in Iceland is extensive as the average Icelander hears English more than 4 hours a day. Young adults hear English more than older adults (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2018). Young learners in Iceland encounter extensive receptive exposure through new media, while productive use seems mainly restricted to the classroom (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2011). But this may be changing rapidly, especially the nature of children's use of English. Until this present study, we have had limited information as to children's actual use of English and exposure to English outside of the classroom.

Icelandic media broadcasts materials mostly in English. A study conducted by Ortega (2011) about English exposure through the media suggests that during the same week in June 2011, three Icelandic channels: *RÚV – Sjónvarpið*, *Skjár Einn* (now *defunct*) and *Stöð 2*, were broadcasting 68.6 hours of materials in Icelandic that week and 180.9 hours in English, which means that 72.6 % of the material presented in Icelandic television was broadcast in English. In addition, young Icelanders are exposed to English through computer games, interacting in chat and on forums, and reading online websites, suggesting that many of them are quite proficient in informal English (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007; 2014; Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir & Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2018).

Furthermore, numerous public surveys demonstrate how much access and use of media young learners have. For example, numbers from Statistics Iceland (2009) showed that 92% of homes in Iceland have computers and 90% are internet connected. Interestingly, 99% of homes

with children under the age of 16 have computers in the house. Likewise, surveys conducted by Capacent Gallup (2007, 2009, 2013) showed that 46% of 4<sup>th</sup>-graders use the Internet daily, or almost daily, and 30% once or twice a week in 2007, increasing to 66.7% daily in 2013, showing that this exposure is increasing, and this internet use is predominantly in English. This survey suggested that the increased exposure to English begins when children are 5-6 years old. The activities reported are playing games, watching movies and other material on *YouTube*, and looking at *Facebook*, while little reading or texting is done in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Thus, this exposure could be one-dimensional for young learners, that is, they may be exposed to a considerable amount of input but lack opportunity to produce output in context. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume, that through TV and computers, children at that age in Iceland are exposed to a considerable amount of Extramural English and are learning from this exposure.

Up until recently, the focus of research in Iceland has been on attitude and proficiency at a point in time without a longitudinal follow-up. This study assesses the status as well as sets the stage for further research and longitudinal examination of the status of English in Iceland that will inform international discussions on the effect of the spread of English. Doing so will provide us an opportunity to monitor the speed and trajectories of the observed changes. The changed educational environment in Iceland calls for research on the amount and nature of exposure, the children's situational experiences and their effect on English vocabulary development, and how to identify the factors that motivate them to learn English at the onset of formal instruction.

## **2.5 Language learning and gender**

Gender is a variable that has received some attention in foreign language learning. There is a long-standing myth that girls are better at language learning than boys, especially in a formal setting. However, acquisition studies have not demonstrated that language learning is easier for



one gender or the other. Some empirical evidence in the formal setting supports this assumption (Ellis, 1994; Heinzmann, 2009). However, this may not apply to all language and English has been considered rather gender-neutral in relation to achievement, particularly after the language became a global force of the digital domain and in international communication. It is rather, as Dörnyei et al (2006) point out, that studies focusing on English do not find salient differences in attributes or achievement in as much as they identify different behavior when it comes to foreign language learning (p. 55). Furthermore, from research it is evident that gender is a complex variable not easily measured or identified as an individual variable affecting language learning (Norton & Pavlenko, 2004). Therefore, mere gender may not be the deciding factor, but rather gendered activities that are more likely to appeal to girls and therefore enhance their language learning success.

## **2.6 The research questions**

This study is designed to explore what general knowledge and attitude students in Grade 4 in Iceland bring with them at the onset of formal instruction (OFI). Specifically, this study identifies factors that affect students' motivation to learn English and measures vocabulary proficiency at the onset of formal instruction. The surveys and measurements were administered in 2010 and explore 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' attitude towards English and examines which of seven context-specific factors affect their motivation for learning English, specifically learning English vocabulary. The group includes five groups, three groups of students who began learning English prior to 4<sup>th</sup> grade (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade), one group of students who started formal instruction in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and finally, a small group of students who have yet to begin studying English at school in 2010. The goal is to examine whether an early start has an advantageous effect on students' attitude, motivation, or lexical knowledge in English. The research questions are:

1. What are 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' attitudes towards English in Iceland at the onset of formal instruction, specifically:
  - a. What are their views on the importance of knowing English in Iceland?
  - b. What are their views on their own ability to use English?
2. What is the English vocabulary size of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction?
3. What motivates Icelandic 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students to learn and use English in Iceland in relation to:
  - a. Type of English exposure
  - b. Their Ideal Self
  - c. Their Ought-to Self
4. What is the relationship between students' lexical knowledge and where and how frequently they use English in different situations (L2 Exposure), their expected (Ought-to Self) and desired (Ideal Self) use of English?

The next chapter describes the methodology used in this study including pilot studies that were conducted to ascertain the relevance of the instruments and methodology of the research questions.

### **Chapter 3. Methodology**

This chapter addresses methodological issues related to research with children, how data were accessed in this study, as well as the development and administration of surveys and the two vocabulary tests. The chapter begins with an account of the pilot phases of the study and describes for the methodological adaptations applied to the instruments and administration through the pilot phase. The participants in the main study are then introduced and the sample's demographics presented. This is followed by an extensive overview of the final survey and test instruments and data collection procedures. The chapter closes with a description of the methods of analyzing the data. Survey and test instruments were analyzed using various quantitative methods of statistical analysis as deemed appropriate to answer each of the research question. First, however, a few words about conducting research with children.

#### **3.1 Conducting research with children**

Measuring children's language poses many challenges and while children are often considered highly motivated to learn a foreign language, do so with success, and have a positive attitude, some concern has been voiced as to whether children have the cognitive, communicative and social skills to produce "good quality" responses to survey questions (Bell, 2007; Pinter, 2011). There is concern that children's responses may not demonstrate the actual feelings or knowledge of the respondent. However, "in most of the western world, it is now recognized that children have a voice that should be heard and there is a demand for research that focuses on children as actors in their own right" (de Leeuw et al., 2004, p. 409). To explore this concern, several studies have been conducted and results show that, despite the hesitation, children, in general, can answer survey questions from the age of 7, provided the questionnaires are adapted

to suit their level of language as well as with clear instructions about how to complete the tests or instruments (Bell, 2007; Borgers et al., 2000; Borgers & Hox, 2001; Dörnyei, 2008).

A common adaptation of instruments is to provide children with short, structurally simple and straight forward questions as children tend to be literal in their interpretation. Research also suggests that negative items be avoided when administering to young children because such questions tend to confuse their literal interpretation. Another concern is children's short attention span. McKay (2005) noted that motivation is key and testing in an educational setting might meet the needs of participants with limited attention spans, if the class as a whole is motivated. McKay also suggests that varying elicitation approaches within a survey or testing instrument can assist in keeping students' attention and minimize fatigue. As children are easily distracted, having someone on call during testing helps keep them on track (McKay, 2005). Therefore, the survey instruments developed for this study had explicitly worded questions in Icelandic and a simple structure as a means to avoid fatigue effects (Dörnyei, 2008). Also, visual representation with emoticons such as ☺ and ☹ were provided (see Appendix A the final instrument).

### **3.2 Pilot studies**

Initially, an extensive search was conducted for appropriate instruments to test young learners' English proficiency and motivation to learn English in Iceland. There were no instruments available that were primarily aimed at testing children's English as a foreign language vocabulary knowledge, nor tests that examined children's motivation for language learning. Also, there were concerns expressed in previous research about 4<sup>th</sup>-grade children's ability to take part in such surveys as explained previously. Therefore, several different methods of surveying and testing were explored during the pilot phases of this study before the final instrument was developed. During this period, based on research as outlined above, and on

observations and feedback on previous versions, alterations and adaptations were made to the instruments to best accommodate the age and cognitive maturity of the participants. These important adaptations and pilot tests are described in the following subsections.

### 3.2.1 Phase 1

Preparations for the study began in 2009 by recruiting four children, two who had just finished 4<sup>th</sup> grade and had some English at schools, and two who had just finished 3<sup>rd</sup> grade with no prior English exposure at school. These four children answered questions about their reading habits (made by the author, in Icelandic) because the original goal was to include a comparison of reading levels in Icelandic and English in the study. This idea was later abandoned due to scope and time constraints. The children also took *Cambridge Young Learner English: Starter listening and reading sample tests* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) to explore their English comprehension and answered interview questions about their own experience with English (see appendix B). This method was used to explore the general assumption that young learners of English in Iceland have considerable knowledge of English. This proved close to the mark as all four participants scored 80% or more on the listening test, regardless of age and years of study. It was later decided that including all the tests and surveys piloted so far would create a test that would be difficult to administer to a large group of students, in addition to the age of the participants and due to access constraints. Furthermore, the scope of the study and the time it would take to administer would be too long, so the focus of this study became learners' vocabulary size and motivation to learn English. Nevertheless, the results from the initial survey and test indicated what Borgers and others found: that children at the age of 8 and 9 were fully capable of answering such a survey once adjusted to appropriate language levels for this age group, and to the time spans children were able to cope with (Borgers et al., 2000; Dörnyei, 2008;

McKay, 2005; Pinter, 2011). Additionally, the outcome of the tests supported our conception that children in this age group do have some English proficiency even before receiving formal instruction at school. This finding strengthened the need to include an examination of the nature of English proficiency, attained extramurally, in this study.

### **3.2.2 Phase 2**

At this stage we had established that children at the age of 9 could participate in a survey about their views and so, accordingly, a pilot study exploring the previous issues, such as their English comprehension and children's experience with English and to address any language or time constraints that might ensue, was developed and administered to a group of 18 students in Grade 4 (9-year-old students). The purpose of this test run was to examine whether the previous assumption of proficiency applied to a larger group than the four that took part in the exploratory study and to explore students' view of English and their current use of the language. Therefore, a survey about views and usage of English and a vocabulary test were administered in addition to interviews with students about their experience, both with the testing and their English experience.

#### ***Survey***

The survey eliciting views and information about usage was a version of a survey used with 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students in 2005 by Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al., (2006) as well as an adapted version presented to 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in 2009 (Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir & Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2018). During this period, the focus of the study shifted to factors in the students' immediate environment that could influence their motivation to learn English, in particular the influence of English use by their family and peers, in education and from media, and the influence of any future goals that might require English language proficiency. Therefore, all survey items

concerned with English proficiency and learning outside of school from the Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al 2006 survey were retained, but questions on English use with computers were expanded as computer use had radically changed from the time of the 2006 survey. Also, questions regarding perceived parent and peer attention and exposure were added (appendix A). For example, the statement, “I use English with Computers”, in the 2006 survey, was expanded to “I use English to play computer games (Runescape, Club Penguin, etc.)”, “I use English to play videogames on a game station (X-Box, PlayStation, etc.)” and “I use English on the Internet (chat, MSN,)” to distinguish between domain on the one hand, and receptive and productive use of English on the other. Items concerned with parent and peer attention were “I use English to talk to my parents” and “I use English to talk to my friends” The distinction between “I use” and “I want to” in the 2006 instrument were found to coincide with two dimensions from Dörnyei’s ‘L2 Motivational Self-System’ (Dörnyei, 2005), *the Ideal Self* and *the L2 environment* (as presented in chapter 2). Therefore, students would, on the one hand, indicate their current L2 environment and exposure to English by answering a series of statements beginning with “I use”, while on the other hand, we could explore their Ideal Self (how they want to use English) through their answers to statements using “I want to”. Scales were also added (these were not used in the previous survey) to indicate the degree of use or wanting to use, that is by marking the choices: often, seldom, sometimes, never. This was included to match instruments most commonly used to examine motivational models discussed in the literature (Dörnyei, 2005). The final survey instrument consisted of 48 items (appendix A) on themes exploring their background, usage, and desire to use English.

### ***Vocabulary tests***

To examine students' vocabulary knowledge, the vocabulary items that were used in this phase were modeled after a knowledge study conducted in Swedish-speaking Finland (Palmberg, 1985), and matched the vocabulary suggested for 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the Icelandic National Curriculum guidelines for English from 1999. Although Palmberg's study was a listening study, it was decided to administer a written test because the students participating in this pilot had 3.5 years of schooling and were thus able to read and write simple language. Students were asked to indicate their level of knowledge of the particular English words based on the first four levels of the VKS scale developed by Paribakht and Wesche (1997), where participants indicate how well they know the words presented (this is further discussed in the final instrument section below).

The results from this pilot run showed that this group of 9-year-old students knew, or had seen, on average 77% of the 60 words on the test (range 55-100%) ; also, the children provided the Icelandic meaning for 65% (range 43-100%) of the words elicited. This is a high score for learners who are deemed absolute beginners. However, this group of students was small (18 participants) and many of them received formal English instruction in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. These results did not demonstrate the English knowledge of children, who did not receive English instruction before 4<sup>th</sup> grade, for the purpose of showing how much of their English might be acquired extramurally. Therefore, this test was explored further with a different group that had not been exposed to English instruction before 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

### ***Interviews***

From this group of 18, 6 students (3 girls and 3 boys) were interviewed after completing the survey and test, and asked to discuss their responses to the survey, their experience taking the test, and their general views and experiences with English (interview frame in Appendix A).



These students were chosen based on their varied proficiency in English as reported by their homeroom teacher. None of the interviewees expressed having difficulties in answering the survey, although some expressed a need for more explicit choices when it comes to agreeing and disagreeing about their proficiency. The outcome of the interviews further supported that children in grade 4 in Iceland think English is important in their lives, and that this view seemed to be more apparent among the boys than with the girls. Additionally, all expressed a positive attitude to being asked to express their opinion about their knowledge of English as seen in the following exchange translated by the author:

R: Hvernig finnst þér að svara svona könnun? (What do you think about answering this kind of survey?)

S: Bara gaman ... svona ... fá að segja hvað maður finnst (Just fun ... like ... to get to say what one feels/thinks)

R: En hvað með að taka svona próf? (What about the test?)

S: Ekkert mál ég kunni svo mikið. (No problem I knew so much).

Another student, described by the teacher as having average English proficiency as compared to his classmates, commented on taking the test (the student claimed to know 65% of the words, and provided meaning for 53%). He said:

S: Ég kann ekki mikið í ensku ... en ég þekkti fullt af orðum ... ehm ég veit bara ekki hvað er á íslensku. (I don't know much English ... but I knew a lot of words ... ehm I just don't know the Icelandic.)

The participants' feedback and performance in this pilot study supports what Bell (2007) and others have found, that children are able to take part in surveys and testing as early as 7 years old.

In light of the high scores on the vocabulary test in the pilot study above, where the lowest score was above 50%, it was decided to examine other vocabulary tests than the VKS. This was done to compare results and test reliability and establish frequency lists from which the words for the final test used for his study could be chosen. Furthermore, it was decided to explore the possibility of applying two vocabulary tests, one receptive and one productive, to lend more reliability to the test instrument for more reliable results.

### 3.2.2 Phase 3

During the third and final stage of pilot testing, the knowledge gathered from the previous test phases about the appropriateness of survey and testing instruments were combined to develop a survey and tests to use in the final study. The background- and motivation questionnaire used during this phase was expanded to 54 items (see appendix A) and two tests: a Yes-No vocabulary test, a checklist test based on the *X-Lex: The Swansea levels* test (Meara & Milton, 2003) (discussed below in the final instrument description) and the previous VKS test (Paribakht & Wesche, 1999) were adopted and adapted to suit the participants' age and maturity based on the previous pilot phases. A list of 100 test words were randomly selected using Excel from a pool of the 1250 most frequent words from *The Word Express: the first 2500 words of spoken English* (Stemach & Williams, 1988) and updated by Cobb (2008) in addition to 20 pseudowords for a final test of 120 words. These were then incorporated into the final Yes-No vocabulary test (see discussion in the instrument section below). From that list (the 100 real words) 25 words were extracted for the VKS test to examine participants' depth of knowledge of words they mark as known on the Yes-No test.

Forty-two students in 4th grade took part in this pilot run in March 2010. This group was selected because they started formal instruction of English in the 4th grade, thus representing the

beginning of formal instruction in English as indicated by the National Curriculum Guidelines (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2007). They also represent a group that is taught English by their homeroom teacher, which is a common practice at the primary school level, as opposed to a specially trained English language teacher (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2010).

Students expressed no problem in comprehending the test during this pilot run, further strengthening the assumption that this age group is fully capable of participating in such a long survey as long as each item was kept short and well structured. This entailed making sure the language was explicit and simple and the design clear and clean (Fonts, tables, choices, etc.) Furthermore, considering that students reported being exposed to written input in Icelandic and English through the Internet and computer games, as well as spoken input from games and TV, taking part in these tests should not be problematic. These results and Samúel Lefever's (2010) study of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders English listening skills, administered around the same time, indicate that the knowledge of at least some young learners in Iceland exceeds the English learning goals set for this age group in the National Curriculum Guidelines before they start learning English at school. The results of this pilot study, using a small sample, supports previous findings that English exposure is increasing in the lives of young Iceland children, and so is their English proficiency (Auður Torfadóttir et al., 2006; Lefever, 2006, 2010; Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al., 2006). However, the test groups were small and their generalizability unclear (for further information on this phase see: Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2010).

After this pilot run, the questionnaire was expanded to 58 items and the statement "I use English to speak to my *parents*", the word "*parents*" was simplified to *mom* and *dad* and presented in different lines on the questionnaire to explore whether any distinction would be found. Finally, an open-ended question was added to the background section to allow participants to express anything else they wanted to add about English.

This section has provided an overview of the pilot phases of this research prior to the actual study that provides the basis of this dissertation. The instrument and application are described in detail in section 3.4 and shown in full in Appendix A. The participants are described in the following section.

### 3.3 Participants.

The participants in this study were Icelandic students in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade (8-9 year old) in the fall of 2010. According to *Statistics Iceland*, 4136 students were enrolled in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in Iceland and 68% (2840) of those attended school on the south-west coast of Iceland, in and around the capital area in 2010 (Statistics Iceland, 2012). In our representative sample of 378 students, 63.3% (239 students) come from the south-west area, with the remaining 36.6% (139 students) representing the remainder of the country, both large and small towns. (See table 3.1 for distribution). Therefore, in the representative sample, other regions than the South-West are somewhat over-represented. The average age of participants in this sample was 8.9 years, of which 94% (n=363) have not lived in an English-speaking country as reported by participants in the background information section of the survey.

**Table 3.1 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students – Participant sample and total student population 2010-2011**

Region	Number of students (N)	Percent of total sample	Student population (N)	Percent of total population
South-West	239	63.3%	2840	68%
Other regions	139	36.6%	1296	32%
Total	378	100%	4136	100%

Prior to group selection, limited data was available about how many or what schools were teaching English before the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, begin instruction in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, or started in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Not all schools had started formal instruction of English in the fourth grade as the National Curriculum guidelines suggested. Thus, all but one group of students in the sample were selected by approaching 20 schools around Iceland to seek participation. One school was selected for participation because students at that school were scheduled to begin formal English instruction in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade the following year. This one group was chosen for comparison purposes, as this group consisted of students who had yet to receive formal instruction in English. Other schools were randomly chosen from a list of primary schools elicited from the website of the Ministry of Education (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2010). In the hope of collecting the most representative sample, the primary condition for selection was that students were taught English in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade during the school year 2010-2011. This resulted in 11 schools agreeing to participate in the study in addition to the school especially selected for comparison purposes. The final sample in this study consists of 378 students from 12 schools and 22 class groups (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2 Class groups based on official information on Onset of formal instruction**

Teaching environment	Number of schools	Number of class groups
OFI 1st grade	3	4
OFI 2nd grade	2	3
OFI 3rd grade	3	6
OFI 4th grade	3	7
OFI 5th grade	1	2
	N=12	N=22

In the survey, information about onset of instruction was also elicited from the participants themselves by asking them to indicate in what grade they began learning English,

since students might have changed schools and come from schools where the onset of English instruction may be different from their current school (Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3 Distribution based on onset of instruction (OFI) – student reports**

Groups - OFI	N
OFI 1st grade	84
OFI 2nd grade	71
OFI 3rd grade	126
OFI 4th grade	73
OFI 5th grade	24
Total	378

Thus, following the self-reporting nature of the survey, data analysis will be based on the student's own report of onset of formal instruction.

Data from 378 students (190 girls and 188 boys) in Iceland from 12 primary schools from the main regions of the country were submitted for analysis. The original sample consisted of 416 students; however, 13 tests were incomplete and thus excluded. 25 test responses were excluded as outliers that might skew the data analysis. Those 25 tests belonged to students who were considered native English speakers with 6+ years in an English-speaking country, English speaking parents (n=3) and speakers of other languages with limited of Icelandic (n=5). Also, tests from students with considerable learning disabilities (n=5) (based on teacher information), students who did not complete the tests (N=4) or students excluded due to overestimation of proficiency on the yes/no test (n=8) (observed from questionnaire and testing data as marking too many pseudowords for the outcome to be valid, as suggested by Milton 2009, and further explained in the following section). These excluded participants were all from the South-West

region of the country resulting in the over representation of other regions. As a result, data from 378 students are examined in this study.

### **3.4 Survey and test instruments**

Two types of instruments were used for this study. First, the participants answered a survey eliciting students' views on the importance of being able to speak English, their knowledge of English, their current use of English and general background questions. For the second part, two vocabulary tests were administered to participants to test their receptive vocabulary size and their ability to provide meaning out of context, or what is termed as their "sight" vocabulary (Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, 2010). The survey and tests are described briefly below to give an overview of the instrument as a whole in relation to its purpose and how it addresses the research questions; the different parts of the instrument and the survey and tests are then described in more detail.

The purpose of these instruments is to examine students' views and use of English as well as their vocabulary knowledge and from where their vocabulary might be derived. The survey questionnaire adopts statements and questions from previously used instruments used in studies by Dörnyei et al., in Hungary (2006), and by Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al. (2006) in Iceland. However, the questions, order, structure and language was rearranged and adapted by the researcher for the participants, and to better address the research questions. The survey included questions that address research question 1 on students' views about the importance of being able to speak English and their own proficiency, and question 3, about their motivation to use English as well as the nature of English exposure, by measuring, respectively, the importance they place on knowing English, their self-proposed knowledge of English, and their current use of English. In addition, this instrument explores what students' desired and expected use of English is in

Iceland by exploring *the Ideal Self* or the wanting to use English and the *Ought-to self*, or the necessity (obligation) to use English as proposed by Dörnyei (2006).

To answer research question 2 “What is the English vocabulary knowledge of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction?”, the second part of the instrument contained two tests. The first was a Yes-No vocabulary size test that was organized in similar fashion as Meara & Milton’s X-Lex (Milton, 2009). Vocabulary frequency was adapted to suit the age of the participants. Students indicated whether they knew 120 words, i.e. 100 real words and 20 pseudowords (they were not required to suggest a meaning in writing) in accordance with the original X lex test. This was done to explore students’ receptive vocabulary size. The second vocabulary test aimed to look at the scale of student’s vocabulary knowledge in the self-perception tradition of the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) introduced by Paribakht and Wesche (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997, 1999, 2000) and presented here below. This test asks students to provide meaning in Icelandic for 25 words randomly chosen from the first test in Icelandic. These types of tests have already been shown to be reliable in assessing students’ vocabulary size (Milton, 2009; Orosz, 2009). Asking students to provide meaning will be an indication of their understanding of the words and strengthen the validity of the tests, by exploring the internal correlation between the tests and the test items.

Table 3.4 shows the number of questionnaire and test items per section of the survey and test instrument. The full version of the instrument can be found in appendix A and examples will be presented in the following subsections.



**Table 3.4 Questionnaire and vocabulary tests and number of items per section:**

Scale	No. of Items	Questionnaire items
1. Background questions	6	52-58
2. Importance of English	1	1
3. Self-perceived knowledge of English	7	2-6,37,43
4. Current L2/English learning environment	16	7-21,44
5. The Ideal L2 Self	15	22-36
6. Ought-to L2 Self	10	38,39,42,45-51
7. Yes-No vocabulary test	120	
8. The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale	25	

In both cases, survey and test modifications are made to accommodate the age and cognitive capabilities of the participants in the hope of acquiring a more reliable result. Modifications are discussed further in the following sections.

### 3.4.1 Survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaire contains 58 questions in Icelandic about students' language background, self-described knowledge of English, motivation for learning English, attitudes and exposure. The questionnaire is modeled from previous instruments used in Hungary and Iceland, but modified to comply with the concept of Dörnyei's three dimensions of the "L2 Motivational Self-System" as well as to accommodate the participants' young age and language (Csizer & Kormos, 2009; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Kiss & Nikolov, 2005). The survey items concerned with attitude and exposure are adopted from a survey instrument previously used in Iceland (Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir, et al., 2006) for comparison purposes. The questions were also designed to explore participants' use of English with reference to context-specific factors that represent their

usage of English. These factors are: the use of English with family, peers, school, texts, computers, TV/music and their use English of English as a lingua franca in communication.

### **3.4.1.1 Background Questions**

The background section includes questions on participants' gender and age. Additionally, participants are asked to indicate whether they have lived in an English-speaking country and if so, for how long. They are asked whether they had English teaching in grade 4 (start of formal English instruction according to the curriculum guidelines) at their school, and at what grade level they began to learn English. Furthermore, they were asked if there was a computer at home they could use and how frequently they used it – a cross reference question for the previous items concerned with English use on the computer. In addition, an open-ended question asked if students wanted to add anything in their own words about English. Although this question does not connect directly to a research question, it was included to see if students would add any further information that might prove valuable for the rest of the survey and its results. Information on gender and onset of instructions is used to explore whether these variables have an effect on the overall results and thus addressed all research questions.

### **3.4.1.2 Importance and perceived knowledge of English**

The following questions all aim to answer research question 1, “What are 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' views on; 1) the importance of knowing English in Iceland and 2) on their own ability to use English?” The examples here are presented in English but the original instrument was in Icelandic (see Appendix A). The first question asks students how important they feel it is to know English. Participants choose from a 4-point scale ranging from *very important (4)* to *not necessary (1)*. The second question is a general inquiry as to how they feel they know English, on a 5-point scale of *very well (5)* to *not well enough (1)* as seen in figure 3.1.

<p><b>1. How important do you feel it is to know English?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Rather important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Not so important</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Not necessary</p> <p><b>2. How well do you think you know English?</b></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very well</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Well</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Rather well</p> <p><input type="radio"/> So So</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Not so well</p>
---

**Figure 3.1 Questionnaire questions 1 and 2 – the importance of English and perceived proficiency (Appendix A).**

The next four questions refer to how the participants rate how easy or difficult they find using English divided into each of four English language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. They responded by using a 4-point scale ranging from *very easy (4)* to *very difficult (1)*. As can be seen in figure 3.2, emoticons are used to explicitly assist students in recognizing the move from positive to negative. As discussed in the previous chapter this can strengthen the participants' comprehension of the question, hopefully resulting in a more reliable outcome (Dörnyei, 2008).

How easy/difficult do you find?	Very easy ☺ 4	Easy 3	Difficult 2	Very difficult ☹ 1
3. Listening to English				
4. Speaking English				
5. Reading English				
6. Writing English				

**Figure 3.2 Questions 3 – 6 – Rating of perceived difficulty using English in reference to the four skills (Appendix A).**

Item 37 is a statement “I know something in English” and item 43 is a statement “I do not feel I need to learn English,” again addressing the issue of self-conception after responding to questions on use, desire and obligation. The scale used for these two questions is a 4-point scale of *highly agree* (4) to *highly disagree* (1) but giving the option of *I do not know* (0). These questions will give us an idea of their conception of their own knowledge. Conforming to the previously used surveys will allow us to compare the results of the surveys, compare grade levels, and see if the general view changes as students mature, or extramural English exposure increases over time.

### 3.4.1.3 The L2 Exposure

Participants were asked to evaluate and respond to a series of statements connected to where and how they were currently using English as well as what is their expected and desired use of English. This was done to address research question 3: “What motivates Icelandic 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students to learn and use English in Iceland in relation to: type of English exposure, their Ideal Self, and their Ought-to Self?” The first items address students’ current use of English and the 15 items on page 2 were answered on a 4-point scale ranging from *frequently* (4) to *never* (1). Items 7-21 (see Figure 3.3 for examples) ask participants to indicate the frequency of their current use of English if and when:

- speaking to mom and dad
- speaking to other family members (not parents)
- speaking to friends
- playing computer games in English with friends
- using English at school
- reading English books
- using English on the Internet (chat, Facebook etc.)
- reading magazines in English
- watching English television/movies
- listening to music with English lyrics
- playing computer games in English on the Internet
- playing games in English on game- stations (for example: x-Box, PlayStation)
- while traveling abroad
- speaking to foreigners in Iceland

Below is a figure outlining questions about current use of English.

<b>Where and how much do you use English (to speak/write/read/listen)?</b>	Often ☺ 4	Sometimes 3	Seldom 2	Never ☹ 1
7. I read books in English.				
8. I watch television shows and/or movies in English.				
9. I speak English to foreigners in Iceland.				

**Figure 3.3 Current English use - question examples (Appendix A)**

These items all explore students' use of English based on 7 factors, that is, the use of English with family, peers, in school, using texts, computers, TV/music and their use of English as a Lingua Franca.

### 3.4.1.4 The Ideal Self

This section addresses the dimension of *the Ideal Self* – what participants want to be able to do - what they saw as the ideal outcome and how frequently they would like to use English. Participants were asked to evaluate statements that indicate where they want to use English under the same circumstance as presented for their current use of English to explore the seven factors against the Ideal Self Dörnyei proposed in his L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005). They are asked to rate 15 items, as before, on a 4-point scale ranging from *frequently (4)* to *never (1)*. Participants are asked to indicate the frequency of desired use through statements beginning with, *I want to use English while:*

- speaking to mom and dad
- speaking to other family members (not parents)
- speaking to friends
- playing computer games in English with friends
- using English at school
- reading English books
- using English on the Internet (chat, Facebook etc.)
- reading magazines in English
- watching English television/movies
- listening to music with English lyrics
- playing computer games in English on the Internet
- playing games in English on game-stations (for example: x-Box, PlayStation)
- while traveling
- speaking to foreigners in Iceland

Below are sample questions and response options in this category.

<b>For what purpose do you <u>want</u> to use English (to speak/write/read/listen)?</b>	Often ☺	Sometimes 3	Seldom 2	Never ☹
---	------------	----------------	-------------	------------

	4			1
22. I <u>want</u> to be able to use English to read English books.				
23. I want to be able to use English to read papers and magazines (i.e. comics) in English.				
24. I want to be able to use English to speak English in foreign countries				

**Figure 3.4 the Ideal Self – question examples (Appendix A).**

This part shows us how they want to use English with family, peers, school, texts, computers and their need to use English as a Lingua Franca (the Ideal Self) and allows us to compare how they are using English and how they want to use English.

### 3.4.1.5 Ought-to Self

This part of the questionnaire (minus item 37, 43, 44) focuses on the *Ought-to self*, that is, the obligation to learn English. These are a series of statements on where and why the participants believe they are expected to learn English. These items include the influence of family, peers, school, texts, computers, media, education, and need, as before. Unlike the former two categories, for this part a 5-point scale of *highly agree (4)* to *highly disagree (1)* is used with the option of answering *I don't know (0)*.

Participants were asked to agree or disagree to whether they have to learn English:

- because their parents want them to
- to speak English in other countries
- to get good grades in English class
- to understand television shows
- to use the computer
- to play computer games
- to read books when they grow up
- to speak to foreigners in Iceland
- to use at school or for work when they grow up.
- because their friends know English

Below are samples of this category of questions and response options

<b>Now we ask whether you agree or disagree?</b>	Highly agree ☺ 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Highly disagree ☹ 1	Don't know ?
38. I have to learn English because my parents want me to learn English.					
39. I have to learn English because my friends know English.					

**Figure 3.5 the Ought-to Self – question examples (Appendix A).**

This section presented survey questions that elicited how important participants believed the learning of English is, both currently and for their future, by exploring their sense of obligation to learn and use English. The next part of the instrument contains the vocabulary tests. Their main purpose was to measure participants' vocabulary and whether the perceived use and exposure to English is reflected in their lexicons.



### 3.4.2 Vocabulary tests

The two vocabulary tests address research question 2: “What is the English vocabulary knowledge of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction?” Furthermore, these tests will be used to explore the relationship between exposure and vocabulary knowledge. One test was a Yes-No test intended to explore students’ basic vocabulary size, and the other test was a Vocabulary Scale test intended to explore the scale of students’ word knowledge.

#### 3.4.2.1 Yes-No Vocabulary test

The Yes-No test was chosen due to its user-friendly approach in addition to having the reputation of correlating well with global proficiency tests (see Eyckmans, 2004; Milton, 2009 for historical review). For this study, a pen and paper version of the Yes-No test format was retained, but the frequency list chosen is derived from *The Word Express: the first 2500 words in spoken English* (Stemach & Williams, 1988)<sup>3</sup> as a list of words elicited from children was deemed more appropriate for the purpose of this study. This is discussed above. Words were chosen at random and run against an updated version of the list on Cobb’s website Lextutor.ca (Cobb, 2008). The original list is divided into 10 levels based on frequency where each level contains 250 words. Words in level 1 are more frequent than words in level 10. For this study, we chose to use words from the first 5 levels, thus the first 1250.

For this study, 100 words were randomly selected from each of the first five frequency levels, 20 words for each level, and then 20 pseudowords were added. These pseudowords were

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<sup>3</sup> At the time a more recent corpus, Childes, with children’s language that had not been worked into frequency lists as S&W and Cobb had done. The more recent Childes database at the time would have demanded more work in corpus design and was beyond the scope of this study.

borrowed from X-Lex (Milton, 2009), making the total of test words 120. These words were then set up in a list in a random order and participants were instructed to mark the words they had seen or knew and leave out any unknown words. The pseudowords were included to lessen the risk of guessing and over-estimation of knowledge. In addition, participants were informed of the existence of the pseudowords in the attempt to avoid said problems. An example is presented in Figure 3.6 and the full test in Appendix A.

<b>Do you know these words?</b>											
Here below are a few words in English. Some of these words are real English words and some are false words. Please tick <b>only</b> the words <b>that you know you have seen or know</b> . Here is an example.											
Example: <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"><tr><td style="padding: 5px 20px;">dog</td><td style="padding: 5px 20px; text-align: center;">X</td></tr></table>										dog	X
dog	X										
again		black		scream		freeze		dragon			
brother		bounce		hyslop		fight		window			
game		alive		drive		girlfriend		summer			
money		door		computer		alden		skeleton			
peanut		follow		they		hungry		darrock			

**Figure 3.6 The Yes-No Vocabulary test – example (Appendix A).**

The analysis of the pseudoword part of the test is included in the description of the instrument to show their validity as test items. Each item marked gives one point (excluding pseudowords), resulting in the score of 0-100; this score is then multiplied by 12.5 to give the score of 0-1250. The number of pseudowords then counted and multiplied by 62.5, again to give the score of 0-1250. This total is then subtracted from the raw score to give an adjusted score, thus compensating for guesswork. This formula follows the X-Lex calculation method (Milton,

2009, pp. 73-74). This score is then labeled as the learner's estimated vocabulary size in the range of 0-1250. The higher the number, the larger is the estimated vocabulary size. The pseudowords also allow the score on the real words to be adjusted to give an estimation of participants' vocabulary size and address the issue of over- or underestimation. To preserve the validity of the Yes-No test, mean scores for marked pseudowords were generated and explored across gender and groups to examine whether there was a gender or group difference found statistically significant in the results. The results submitted for analysis (N = 378) show that participants marked on average one pseudoword out of the 20. Table 3.5 demonstrates marked pseudowords distributed by groups based on onset of formal instruction (OFI) and gender and shows that participants in OFI1 are more likely to mark a pseudoword than participants scheduled to start learning English at school in 5<sup>th</sup> grade (OFI 5). The difference between groups 2-3 is not significant. In addition, we see that boys mark pseudowords more often than girls do in all groups except for group OFI 5, where students have yet to begin formal English instruction. Thus, students, in particular boys, who have received formal instruction in English longer, take more risks when marking words on the Yes-No test, thus, overestimating their English vocabulary knowledge by marking more pseudowords.

**Table 3.5 Mean marked pseudowords divided by gender based on onset of formal instruction (OFI) - Max = 20**

Mean (N)	Means (N)	Girl	Boy
OFI 1*	1.18 (84)	1.00 (41)	1.35 (43)
OFI 2	.89 (71)	.75 (40)	1.06 (31)
OFI 3	.82 (126)	.57 (54)	1.00 (72)
OFI 4	.64 (73)	.31 (39)	1.03 (34)
OFI 5	.33 (24)	.44 (16)	.13 (8)
Total	.85 (378)	.64 (190)	1.06 (188)

*\*Note: OFI = onset of formal instruction*

A one-way analysis of variance indicated that there was a significant difference across groups according to onset of formal instruction.  $F(4, 381) = 8.675, p < .01$ . S-N-K post hoc tests confirmed that 5<sup>th</sup>-grade starters marked pseudowords significantly less than the other four groups in this sample, and 1<sup>st</sup>-grade starters marked pseudowords significantly more than the other four groups,  $p < .05$ . Groups 2-4 did not differ from each other significantly. Furthermore, an independent sample t-test confirmed that, on average, boys mark more pseudowords than the girls (Table 3.5). This difference was significant  $t(387) = -3.489, p = .001$ . To explore the pattern appearing here, a Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated, and it revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between test scores and marked pseudowords  $r = .42, p < .01$ . This suggests that a student marking many words on the Yes-No test is also more likely to mark a pseudoword, possibly because the student is highly confident in their knowledge and thus overestimating it. Nevertheless, this was very seldom and did not significantly affect the overall results. Furthermore, these results strengthen the validity of the measurement developed in this study as intended by the developers (Meara & Milton, 2003). Finally, these scores were subtracted from the overall score on the Yes-No test to calculate students' final score presented with other results in chapter 4.

Although the X-lex test has been widely used and research demonstrates a high positive correlation between checklist tests and other proficiency tests in measuring students' proficiency (Milton, 2009), it only presents surface knowledge of the word items. Further tests were deemed necessary to ascertain a deeper vocabulary knowledge, and so the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale test, was also administered.

### 3.4.2.2 The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS)

The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) was chosen both due to its diverse response approach and because it is organized in the same self-reported way as the motivational scales and the exposure questions used in this study. The scale ratings range from complete unfamiliarity to recognition of the word, and knowing its meaning, and it eliminates the guessing factor frequently associated with multiple choice and checklist tests. Learners were presented with a list of target words and asked to indicate their level of knowledge for each word, to explore their “sight vocabulary” knowledge (Paribakht & Wesche, 1999; Read, 2000). The term “sight vocabulary” knowledge means that the knowledge of a word is so familiar to the person that they can understand and provide meaning for an item presented individually and without context. Thus, when encountered in a text, these words are recognized and decoded quickly and without much cognitive effort (Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, 2010).

<b>Do you know these words?</b>	
Now you will see 25 words that you are asked to look at and <b>tick with an X or write the meaning of the bold words</b> in the box (you should only tick or write once for each word).	
<b>1. Brother</b>	
I. I don't remember having seen this word before.	
II. I have seen this word before but I don't know what it means	
III. I have seen this word before, and I think it means ... Write in the box	
IV. I know this word. It means ... Write in the box	

**Figure 3.7 VKS – example (Appendix A)**

For this study, the first four points of the original scale are adopted and students instructed to choose one of the four options to answer (see Table 3.6 and Figure 3.7). Option V, on the

original scale, asks participants to provide a sentence including the tested word and was excluded on the grounds of length of survey and test as well as the age of the students. Plus, this study is not testing the complete lexical knowledge of participants, but rather identifying a baseline of receptive vocabulary for further studies. In addition to the exclusion of option V – can you use the word in a sentence - the test was translated into Icelandic, but otherwise no other changes were made to the wording of the test.

**Table 3.6 The VKS test level I-IV (excluding level V) (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997, 1999).**

<p>I. I don't remember having seen this word before. (0)</p> <p>II. I have seen this word before but I don't know what it means. (1)</p> <p>III. I have seen this word before, and I think it means _____. (synonym or translation). (2)</p> <p>IV. I know this word. It means _____ (synonym or translation). (3)</p>
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Twenty-five words (5 from each frequency level) were randomly selected from the 100 word list used for the Yes-No test for the adapted VKS test. These words were chosen to further explore participants' knowledge of the words they marked in the Yes-No test. As participants are children and the instruments extensive, testing all one hundred would prove too cumbersome. Choices I and II indicate a surface knowledge or lack thereof as in the Yes-No test. However, if participants answer either III or IV, they were asked to provide meaning in Icelandic to measure their confidence in guessing meaning in L1 out of context (sight vocabulary) and knowledge of the word items. Although these two choices indicate the same knowledge if correct, there is a different degree of familiarity. During the pilot phase, it became evident that children at this age

are fully confident and capable of distinguishing between the meaning of “I think I know”, and “I know”. On the one hand, scoring was done on the scale of 0-3 producing total scores between 0 and 75, per the rating scale (see table 3.6) Paribakht and Wesche introduced in their studies, and on the other hand, 0 (choice I and II) and 1 (choices III and IV) to explore clear correct and incorrect (and missing) translations. This was done to explore whether the gender difference found in rating scale results also demonstrated itself in the actual capability to provide meaning.

### **3.5 Data collection procedures**

Questionnaires and tests were administered to individual class groups during the fall of 2010. A letter requesting participation in the survey and tests was sent to 20 schools around the country via email in September 2010 (appendix C) and 11 schools agreed to participate. Additionally, the researcher elicited cooperation from a group of students in a school that does not start teaching English until 5th grade for control purposes. Likewise, parent permission for the students’ participation was sought through the schools’ network (Mentor) or by correspondence with parents in the form of a letter which students took home<sup>4</sup>. The permission request gave a brief description of the study, its purpose and the students’ roles, and parents were given the choice of denying permission for their child to participate in the study (appendix C). For the whole sample, seven parents opted for their child not to take part.

In most cases, the researcher administered the tests with the classroom teachers’ assistance. However, due to geographical distances and unfavorable travel conditions at the time, at four schools either an English or a homeroom teacher administered the survey and tests following strict guidelines from the researcher given beforehand. Each part of the survey and

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<sup>4</sup> The decision whether to use the schools network system or send a letter home with students was made by the school’s administrative contact, based on their prior experience.

tests was explained to the participants prior to their taking it. For example, participants were asked whether they understood the difference between phrases such as “I want to” and “I have to” to make sure they all had the same understanding. If needed, this difference was explained, although, in most cases, it proved unnecessary. Likewise, students were informed that the Yes-No test included pseudowords and told how marking those could influence the outcome.

Administration time was estimated to be one class period (40 minutes) based on pilot testing. In general, survey and testing time ranged from 30-45 minutes for all classes.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

The data in this study is analyzed using quantitative methods. To begin with, a frequency analysis was conducted to get a general view of the answers to each individual item and word; this allowed for detecting if there were any problematic items such as missing data. After correcting for missing data, mostly due to input errors, the remaining missing values were on average less than 3% of cases in this sample, and ranged from 1-5 per variable; it was decided, therefore, to use maximum-likelihood estimations to replace missing values which maintained the same mean estimates as before the correction (Dörnyei, 2007; Field, 2009a).

After reversing the score of negatively worded item 43, “I do not think I need to learn English”, to correspond to the same scale as the other questions, multi-item scale scores were calculated, and the reliability of the scales was assessed. The multi-item scales were tested for internal consistency reliability and good alpha ratings were achieved (Table 3.7)<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Internal consistency reliability is measured by the *Cronbach Alpha coefficient*. This is a figure ranging between 0 and 1, and if it is very low, either the particular scale is too short or the items have very little in common. Internal consistency estimates for well-developed scales containing as few as 10 items ought to approach 0.80. However, in



**Table 3.7 Internal consistency reliability estimates for multi item scales**

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
L2 Exposure	16	.816
The Ideal Self	15	.858
Ought-to Self	10	.829
Yes-No vocabulary test	120	.939
The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale	25	.945

The relevant data analysis methods chosen to answer each research question will be further introduced in the relevant sections. The quantitative analysis of the surveys and vocabulary tests includes descriptive statistics, correlation coefficient, FANOVA and a hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the examination of the relationship between motivating factors, exposure and the vocabulary tests results.

### 3.7 Summary

In this chapter, the methodology and procedures for data collection used in the study were presented. This includes the piloting of questionnaires and test, the participants, instruments, method of data collection and general data analysis methods to ascertain the accuracy of the outcomes of the survey and tests. Further discussion of each data analysis method chosen to answer each research question will be discussed alongside the results in the next chapter.

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light of the complexity of the second language acquisition process, L2 researchers usually want to measure many different areas in one questionnaire, and therefore cannot use very long scales. This means that somewhat lower Cronbach Alpha coefficients are to be expected, but even with short scales of 3-4 items we should aim at a reliability coefficient in excess of 0.70; a scale with a Cronbach Alpha that does not reach 0.60 should sound warning bells (Dörnyei 2007)

## Chapter 4. Results

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaires and tests administered to participants at the beginning of fourth grade (9-year-olds). The study examines views about the importance of knowing English, self-reported ability to use English, participants' vocabulary size and motivation (L2 Exposure, the Ideal and Ought-to selves) to learn the language. Additionally, these variables were explored by analyzing their relationship to seven context-specific factors that might affect participants' motivation to learn English, namely: *TV/Music* (listening), *Computers* (playing games), *Education* (use of English at school), *Peers* (speaking to friends), *Family* (speaking to parents and other family members), *Texts* (written language) and using English as a *Lingua Franca* (speaking to foreigners, at home and abroad).

First, the results of the questions that address students' perception of the importance of knowing English and their self-perceived English proficiency are presented. The results represent an element of students' attitude towards English. These address research question 1. Then results from the two vocabulary tests are described to account for students' English vocabulary size and scale of knowledge. These results address research question 2. Thirdly, research question 3 is answered by presenting responses to questions about English exposure and motivation (desire and expected language use), and influence of the seven context-specific factors on their motivation to learn or use English. The fourth research question is answered by presenting the relationship between the L2 Exposure, the Ideal Self (desire), the Ought-to self (expected) and English vocabulary across the seven context-specific factors. The implications of the findings are addressed in chapter 5.

#### 4.1 Students' views about English at the beginning of 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

The first research question examined students' general attitude towards English, the importance of knowing English and their own ability to use English.

##### 1. Research Question:

What are 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' attitudes towards English in Iceland at the onset of formal instruction, specifically:

- a. What are their views on the importance of knowing English?
- b. What are their views on their own ability to use English?

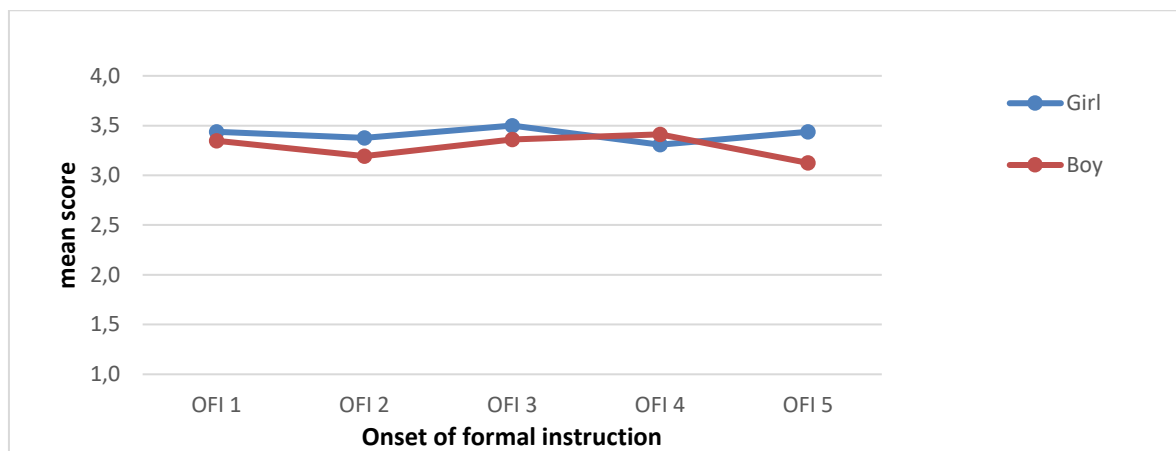
Seven questions in the survey addressed the two sub-questions in research question 1. Survey question 1 asked students to rate the importance of knowing English. Survey questions 2-6 asked participants to estimate their own overall proficiency in English and to rate their ease of using each of the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. Frequency percentages are shown for each question as well as divisions based on gender and onset of formal instruction (OFI). The results were calculated for statistical significance using factorial analysis of variance (FANOVA)<sup>6</sup>. Gender and OFI were chosen due to the ongoing discussions on how gender affects language attainment and motivation, and because of findings of previous self-reported studies that English proficiency exceeded Curriculum goals. The results are presented below.

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<sup>6</sup> As often is the nature of categorical data as we have here (with limited number of choices), the distribution is non-normal and therefore non-parametric tests (Mann-Whitney U for gender differences and Kruskal-Wallis for group differences) were run to confirm the outcome of the analysis of variance. In all cases the significance, or lack thereof, was confirmed and the FANOVA is considered relatively robust even when the data is not normally distributed (Field, 2009b).

#### 4.1.1 The importance of knowing English

According to the responses to the question on the importance of knowing English, the majority, or 87.3 percent (N=230) of participants in this survey, feel that English is either very important or rather important to their lives. That is, 52.6 % (N=199) say that knowing English is very important and 34.7% (N=131) say it is rather important. Interestingly, a further 10.1% (N=38) feel that knowing English is not very important followed by only 2.6 % (N=10) out of 378 participants responding that knowing English was not important. The general findings were then analyzed further to see whether either gender or onset of instruction of English (OFI) affected participants' views about the importance of English. The results are shown in Figure 4.1.



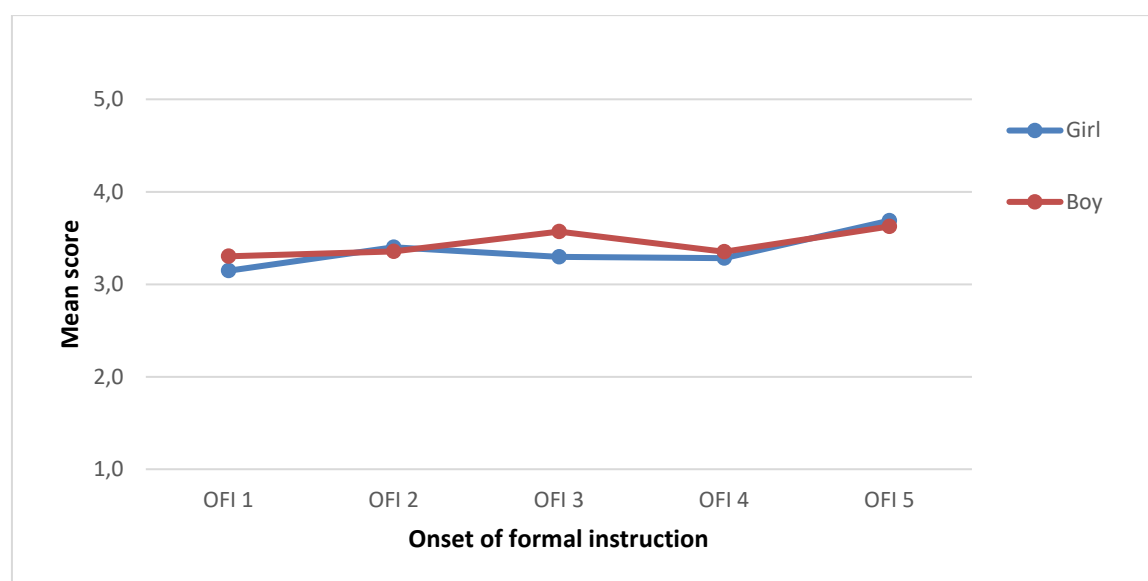
**Figure 4.1 The importance of English according to gender and onset of formal instruction (OFI).**

Figure 4.1 shows a factorial analysis of variance that was used to test if any differences exist in the mean score of how important the participants consider knowing English. This analysis explores the role of gender and OFI groups in the results. The factorial analysis of variance indicated that there was no significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 368) = 1.675, p = .196$ , nor did onset of instruction (OFI) affect students' views on the importance of English  $F(4, 368) = 0.297, p = .741$ . In addition, there was no significant interaction effect between gender and onset of formal instruction (OFI) on students' views on the importance of English  $F(4, 376) = 0.482, p =$

.749. Thus, results confirm that learners from 8-9 believe that knowing English is important with 87.7% claiming it very or rather important, regardless of gender or OFI.

#### 4.1.2 Perceived English proficiency

Participants were asked how well they thought they knew English in general, and 24.3% (N=92) said they knew English very well and 27% (N=102) said they knew English well. Another, 18% (N=68) of participants say they know English rather well and 23.3% (N=88) fairly well. However, only 7.4 % (N=28) feel they do not know English well enough. Testing gender and group effects with factorial analysis of variance shows that neither gender  $F(1, 368) = 0.245$ ,  $p = .637$ , nor onset of formal instruction,  $F(4, 368) = 0.637$ ,  $p = 0.621$ , affect these responses. Plus, no significant interaction effect was found between gender and OFI,  $F(4, 368) = 0.218$ ,  $p = .928$  (Figure 4.2).



**Figure 4.2 Perceived English proficiency divided by gender and onset of formal instruction (OFI).**

Students who have received less formal instruction are slightly more confident as 69.3% of them claim that they know English very well or rather well. These results show participants' somewhat high confidence in their own knowledge of English. The overall results of this question

suggest that neither gender nor length of formal instruction influences student's views on their general English proficiency. Therefore, factors other than gender and onset of instruction might influence their self-reported English proficiency.

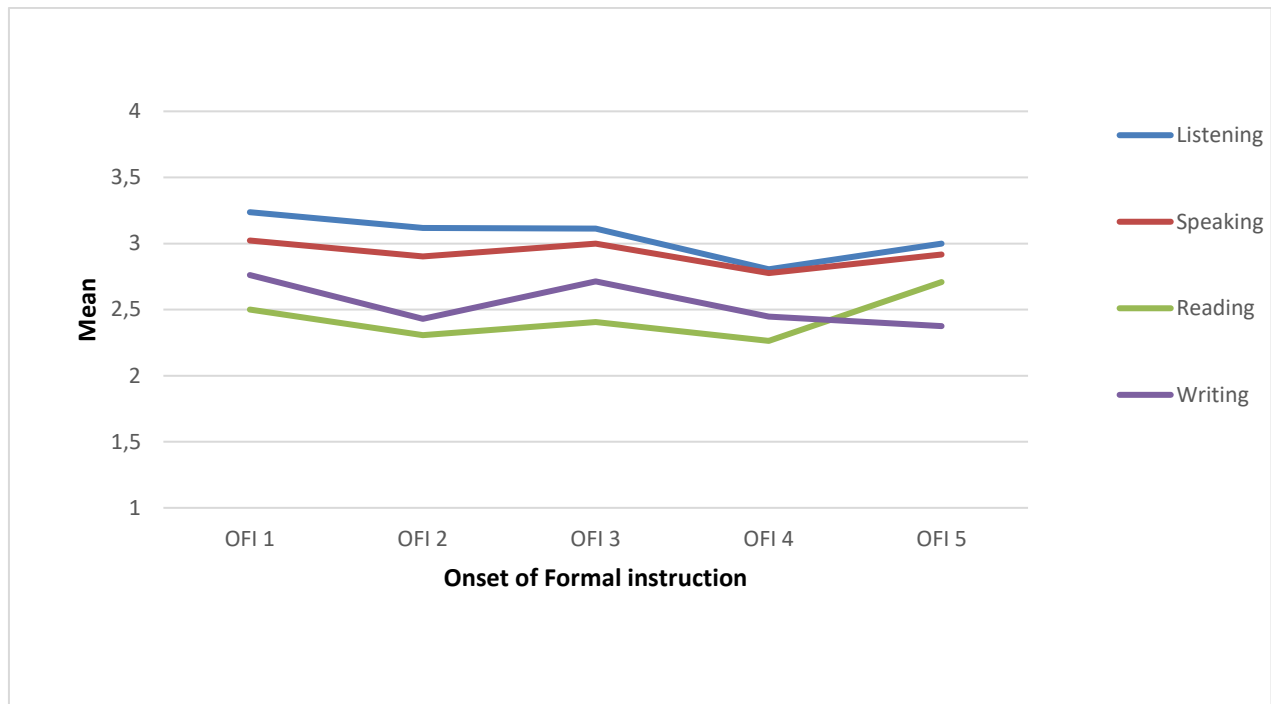
To explore this self-reported proficiency further, the participants were asked to rate their ease of use of the four individual English language skills. Table 4.1 exhibits how participants rate how easy or difficult they find using English by each of the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

**Table 4.1 Ease of use of English: the four skills**

	Very easy	Easy	Difficult	Very difficult	Mean	SD
<b>Listening to English</b>	31.5%	48.4%	16.7%	3.4%	3.08	.78
<b>Speaking English</b>	26.7%	45%	22.8%	5.6%	2.93	.84
<b>Reading English</b>	15.1%	23.5%	47.6%	13.8%	2.40	.90
<b>Writing English</b>	16.4%	37.8%	34.4%	11.4%	2.59	.89

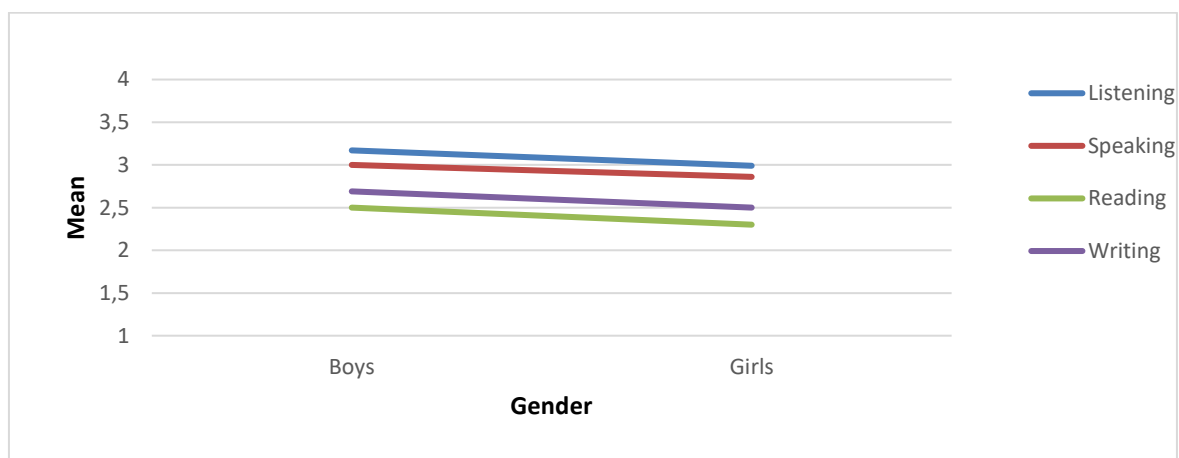
Table 4.2 shows responses to questions on proficiency by skill. The most obvious results are that respondents find reading and writing more difficult than speaking and listening, as almost 80% report that listening to English as easy or very easy. It is noteworthy that the participants find writing easier than reading. This will be explored further in the discussion chapter.

Examining these responses in relation to OFI and gender, we find that the respondent groups which are already receiving formal English instruction at school find writing slightly easier than reading, whereas the OFI 5 group, which is not receiving formal instruction, finds writing most difficult. This is shown in Figure 4.3 below.



**Figure 4.3** Ease of use divided by the four skills and compared between groups based on onset of formal instruction (OFI).

Figure 4.4 shows as minimal difference between the responses based on gender. Boys tend to find each skill a bit easier than girls do, but this difference is not significant.



**Figure 4.4** Ease of use divided by the four skills and compared between groups based on Gender.

Factorial analysis of variance (FANOVA) was run for each skill and found no statistically significant main effect for gender in any of the skills, nor a significant interaction effect between gender and OFI. However, a significant main effect of OFI was found for both listening and writing, but none for speaking and reading.

**Table 4.2 Observed main effect of onset of formal instruction (OFI) for each individual language skill.**

Skill	Group	Mean	SD	<i>F</i> (4,368)	Sig.
Listening	OFI1	3.23	.72	3.317	.011
	OFI2	3.10	.72		
	OFI3	3.13	.80		
	OFI4	2.81	.81		
	OFI5	3.00	.83		
Speaking	OFI1	3.02	.86	1.445	.219
	OFI2	2.90	.81		
	OFI3	3.00	.83		
	OFI4	2.73	.82		
	OFI5	2.92	.97		
Reading	OFI1	2.50	.96	1.038	.387
	OFI2	2.31	.90		
	OFI3	2.40	.90		
	OFI4	2.26	.80		
	OFI5	2.71	.95		
Writing	OFI1	2.74	.88	2.425	.048
	OFI2	2.44	.81		
	OFI3	2.71	.88		
	OFI4	2.44	.93		
	OFI5	2.38	1.01		



Table 4.2 shows how a slight difference between groups for all the skills, though only two, listening and writing, were statistically significant, although only negligibly so. Students who began learning English in 4<sup>th</sup> grade (OFI4), rate their ease of listening statistically significantly lower than the other 4 groups as shown in table 4.2. The pattern is less linear with writing, where students who begin learning English in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade rate themselves higher than the other three groups. Because no difference was found in this respect, this suggests that there may be a slight difference in English exposure and language use in relation to when students begin learning English at school.

Standard Deviation varies between and within OFI groups, but overall group OFI 5 shows greater variability (thus more spread from the mean) in responses than the other 4 groups. In terms of listening, this difference in variability is linear as OFI 1 and 2 have the least variability, then OFI 3, 4 and finally group 5. Notably, SD for reading, speaking and writing within groups OFI 1 and OFI 5 show a greater response variability than the other groups. This may be because of different exposure to English in this sample of participants and given that no gender effects were found as stated above, this suggests that other factors than gender and OFI might be more influential in determining students' perception of proficiency in each skill.

#### **4.1.3 Summary**

The results presented above address research question 1, on 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' views on the importance of knowing English and on their own ability to use English. Almost 90% of participants think knowing English is important. Secondly, participants rate their overall English skills as relatively high. Thirdly, participants rate their receptive skills, i.e. listening, the highest, and then speaking, and rate listening and speaking higher than literacy skills, reading or writing.

More boys rate their English skills slightly higher than girls do. However, no statistically significant gender effect was found for students' attitude towards English: neither towards the importance of knowing English nor self-perceived English proficiency. Therefore, English is important in the eyes of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland regardless of onset of instruction and gender. Interestingly, participants who are receiving formal instruction at school rate reading as the most difficult skill, whereas students who have yet to start formal instruction rate writing as the most difficult skill, and this might be connected to their individual use of English at this point. This will be explored further when examining students reported use of English. First the results of the vocabulary tests are presented.

#### **4.2 English lexical proficiency in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.**

Research question number two focused on participants' measured lexical proficiency. It asks, "What is the English vocabulary knowledge of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction?" To answer this question, two vocabulary tests were administered to explore students' receptive knowledge and the depth of that vocabulary knowledge. The tests were a Yes-No vocabulary test (Milton, 2009) and a Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) (Paribakht & Wesche, 1999). For the Yes-No test, 100 words were randomly selected from the first five levels (20 from each of the first 5 levels) of an updated *WordExpress* frequency list (Cobb, 2008; Stemach & Williams, 1988), in addition, 20 pseudowords were added as discussed in chapter 3. From those 100 from *WordExpress*, 25 were randomly selected (5 from each level) for the VKS test to examine the depth of knowledge of words marked in the Yes-No test.

#### 4.2.1 Yes-No vocabulary test – receptive vocabulary

First, participants' receptive vocabulary was examined using the Yes-No vocabulary test instrument. This test, which measures basic vocabulary size, asked participants to mark words they knew from a list of 100 real words and 20 pseudowords. Mean scores and standard deviation were extracted for both actual words and pseudowords to calculate the results from the responses.

The Yes-No test scores show that the participants know on average of  $M=40.09$  ( $SD$  25.14) words out of 100 on the test. This number amounts to an estimated vocabulary size of 501 words from the first 1250 words in the *WordExpress* frequency list. Table 4.3 exhibits the mean total divided by gender and shows that boys mark more words on the average than girls and there is a greater variability in the scores for the boys than there is for the girls suggesting that they recognize around 100 more words than the girls. Table 4.3. also displays the total score for both genders. High SD numbers (see table 4.3) indicate that there is a larger individual difference in participants' marking.

**Table 4.3 Overall Yes-No Vocabulary test scores and estimated vocabulary size – total divided by gender**

		Total N	Mean test score (Max 100)	Standard Deviation	Estimated vocabulary size (Max 1250)
<b>Total (Max 100)</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>36.35</b>	<b>22.56</b>	<b>454</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>43.88</b>	<b>27.04</b>	<b>548</b>
		<b>378</b>	<b>40.09</b>	<b>25.14</b>	<b>501</b>

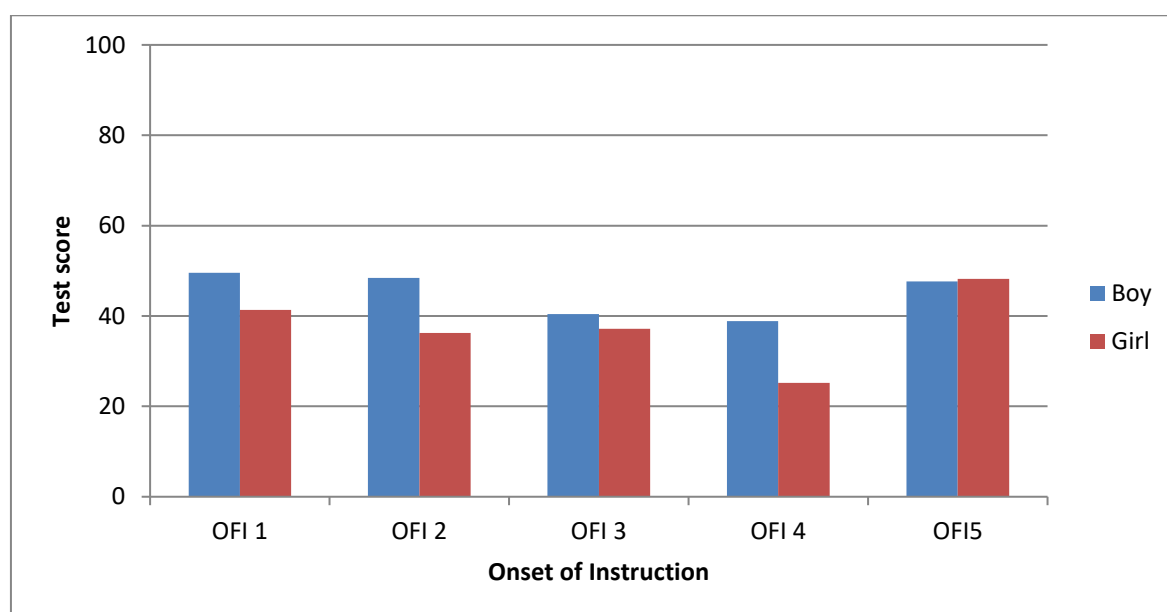
Mean scores on the Yes-No test for the five OFI groups and gender scores are shown in table 4.4 below. The table shows the adjusted mean (after pseudowords were subtracted) of actual numbers marked on the test plus the estimated vocabulary size out of 1250 for the whole sample

and then by gender. When standard deviation is examined, there is a considerable variability based both on gender and onset of instruction, as with the total score, and that there is a greater variability in the scores of the boys than the girls in all groups.

**Table 4.4 Yes-No Vocabulary test scores and estimated vocabulary size – group and gender means**

		<b>Total N</b>	<b>Mean test score (Max 100)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Estimated vocabulary size (Max 1250)</b>
<b>Total (Max 100)</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>36.35</b>	<b>22.56</b>	<b>454</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>43.88</b>	<b>27.04</b>	<b>548</b>
<b>OFI 1</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41.32</b>	<b>24.54</b>	<b>516</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49.56</b>	<b>25.27</b>	<b>619</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>45.54</b>	<b>25.11</b>	<b>569</b>
<b>OFI 2</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36.28</b>	<b>18.70</b>	<b>456</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>48.45</b>	<b>26.92</b>	<b>606</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>41.59</b>	<b>23.29</b>	<b>520</b>
<b>OFI 3</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>37.15</b>	<b>22.68</b>	<b>464</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>40.46</b>	<b>27.52</b>	<b>506</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>39.04</b>	<b>25.51</b>	<b>488</b>
<b>OFI 4</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>25.21</b>	<b>14.57</b>	<b>315</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>38.88</b>	<b>25.88</b>	<b>486</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>31.58</b>	<b>21.59</b>	<b>395</b>
<b>OFI 5</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>48.25</b>	<b>31.63</b>	<b>603</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>47.63</b>	<b>34.66</b>	<b>595</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>48.04</b>	<b>31.91</b>	<b>601</b>

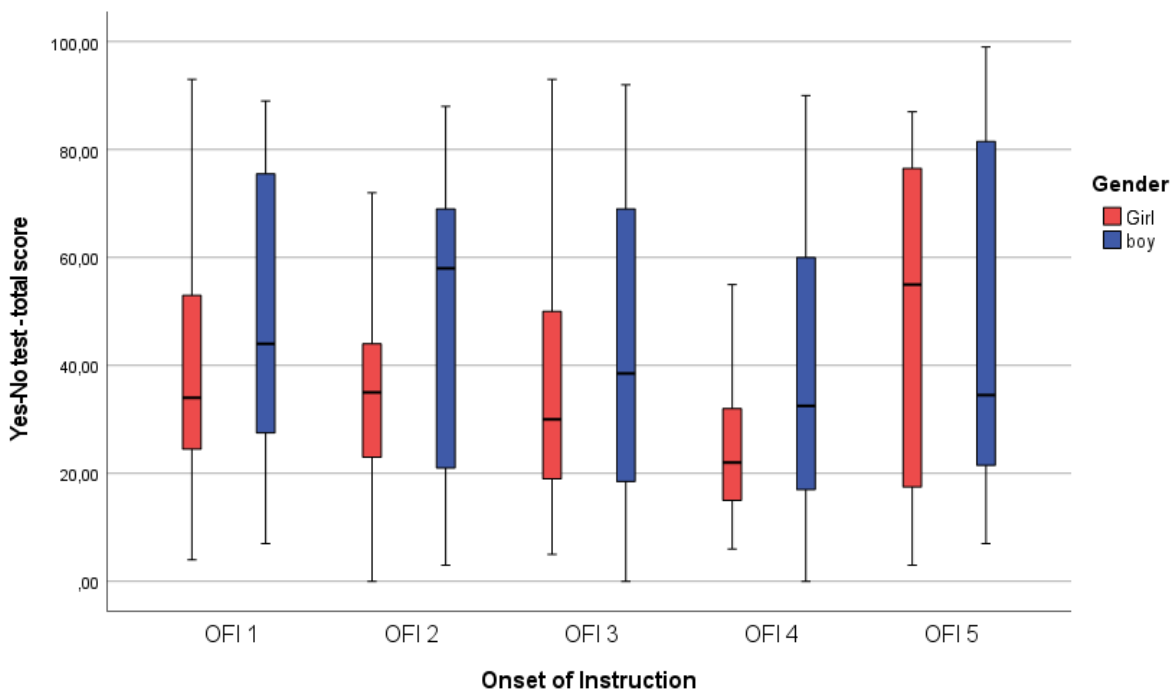
The factorial analysis of variance indicated that there was a significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 368) = 4.177, p = .002$ , on students' score on the Yes-No and significant main effect of OFI,  $F(4, 368) = 9.641, p = .003$ . There was no significant interaction effect between gender and OFI,  $F(4, 368) = 0.819, p = .514$ . The results of this analysis shows with statistical significance that boys mark more words as known receptively than girls do. Figure 4.5 reveals that this gender difference appears in all groups except group OFI 5.



**Figure 4.5 Yes-No scores across gender and group OFI**

Furthermore, a Bonferroni *posthoc* that was conducted to examine where the statistical difference is found, revealed that students who begin to learn English in 4<sup>th</sup> grade score significantly lower than students who received formal instruction earlier, but that groups OFI 1, 2 and 3 do not differ significantly from each other. The difference between scores in the OFI 4 vs. groups OFI 1, 2, and 3, can be seen in Figure 4.5. This difference is only apparent in girls' responses as there is no significant difference in the boys' responses. In addition, students who have yet to receive formal instruction (OFI 5) mark more words than any of the other groups and

no gender difference is found within that group. This shows that boys mark more words known receptively than girls do, regardless of when they began learning English at school. Standard deviation suggests there is a large difference between the responses of individual students. As can be seen in table 4.4 there is a considerable variance of SD between groups and this variance is not linear, further suggesting that there is a large individual difference between participants in the sample and that other factors than gender affect the outcome.



**Figure 4.6 Yes-No vocabulary score across gender and groups by onset of instruction (OFI).**

Figure 4.6 clearly shows the considerable variance within each group and this variance is most prominent in the scores for the boys than the girls in all groups but OFI5. This means that students who have received formal instruction since the 1<sup>st</sup>- grade (3 years of formal instruction) score significantly higher on the Yes-No test than students beginning formal instruction in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade (2 months of formal instruction) as expected. However, the difference between 1, 2 and 3

grade OFI is not significant suggesting a slow progress from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. That is, the size of the vocabulary does not increase as would be expected under formal instruction each year, and the largest jump in this sample is between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade OFI. Furthermore, the control group OFI 5 (students yet to receive formal instruction) unexpectedly scored higher than all the other groups, suggesting that different factors than amount of instruction are affecting this group.

Because of this anomaly, a calculation was done excluding group OFI 5 to see if it would significantly change the overall results. This is because they scored higher than groups that had received formal instruction. The exclusion of this group did not change the overall results as the mean score for total results without OFI 5 was 39.5 while the mean score with OFI 5 was 40, or an estimated 494 words (with OFI 5, the total was 501), and this change was not significant enough to exclude the group. These results will be further explored in section 4.4 and discussed in Chapter 5.

The test included pseudowords as described above to monitor guessing and overestimation of knowledge. Despite marking more pseudowords than girls do, boys in this sample do show a higher receptive vocabulary level according to the Yes-No test scores (raw score minus pseudowords). These results also show that even students who only recently began English formal instruction have a considerable English vocabulary (395 words). Also, students yet to receive formal instruction score higher than all other groups (601 words), suggesting that the number of years at school receiving English formal instruction might not be the most decisive factor for success on a Yes-No vocabulary test. The scores on the Yes-No test show that participants mark knowledge of a considerable number of words at the onset of formal instruction and even before receiving formal instruction, as noticed with group OFI 5. However, using a test with only a yes or no option reflects receptive lexical knowledge and may promote overestimation of vocabulary skills. In addition, it does not tell us whether they fully understand



or can use the words in question; therefore, a test was added to measure the depth of the knowledge of the marked words on the Yes-No test. Still the Yes-No test shows that the participants feel they know many of the words on the test (40% on average) considering that the majority has received very little formal instruction.

#### **4.2.2 Vocabulary Knowledge Scale – semi-productive vocabulary knowledge**

To examine participants' depth of vocabulary knowledge, a Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) test was administered. Being able to assign meaning to words out of context demands a considerable depth of lexical knowledge. Using two different tests was also a way to test the validity of the instruments as well as the reliability of the results (see chapter 3 for further discussion). Choosing the VKS allows for exploring "stages in learners' developing knowledge of particular words" (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997, p. 179) through their "sight" vocabulary, that is the meaning of words out of context (Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, 2010). However, due to the length of the survey and the Yes-No test in this study, it was not possible to explore knowledge for all the 100 words in the original Yes-No test. Therefore, 25 words were randomly chosen from Yes-No test (5 from each level) and students' degree of knowledge of those words was tested using the VKS scale (see chapter 3 for further information).

#### ***Test scores***

Table 4.5 shows the total mean scores on the VKS test scoring out of 75 points on the one hand, and correctly translated words out of 25 on the other. The VKS test scores reveal an average score of  $M=36$  ( $SD=20.26$ ) out of 75 possible points where participants could translate  $M=11.44$  out of 25 words correctly. The results show that on the scale of 0-3 exploring the depth of knowledge, the boys score higher than girls; however, when exploring how many they can translate, the difference is not statistically significant.

**Table 4.5 VKS test scores and estimated vocabulary size – total and gender means**

	<b>Total N</b>	<b>Mean test score (Max 75)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean number of correct translations (Max 25)</b>
	<b>Girls 190</b>	<b>34.11</b>	<b>17.75</b>	<b>10.95</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Boys 188</b>	<b>37.93</b>	<b>22.40</b>	<b>11.94</b>
	<b>378</b>	<b>36.01</b>	<b>20.26</b>	<b>11.44</b>

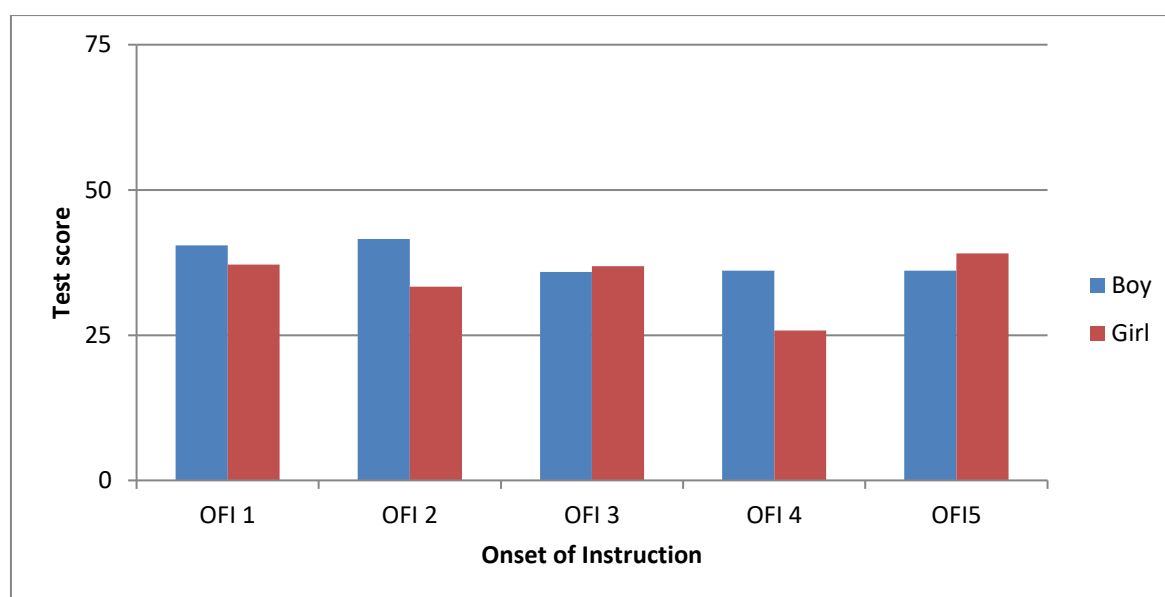
As has been observed before, there is a greater variability in the scores of the boys, further supporting a greater individual difference in their scores than in the scores for the girls.

Table 4.6 below shows mean scores on the VKS test for the five groups and gender division per group showing the same variability on the VKS scale as was found on the Yes-No test. The distribution of scores shows a considerable variance, thus we begin by exploring the scores of the VKS for the effect of gender and OFI group.

Table 4.6 VKS test scores and estimated vocabulary size – OFI group and gender means

		<b>Total N</b>	<b>Mean test score (Max 75)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean number of correct translations (Max 25)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>34.11</b>	<b>17.75</b>	<b>10.95</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>37.93</b>	<b>22.40</b>	<b>11.94</b>
		<b>378</b>	<b>36.01</b>	<b>20.26</b>	<b>11.44</b>
<b>OFI 1</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>37.15</b>	<b>18.02</b>	<b>12.29</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40.47</b>	<b>19.99</b>	<b>13.00</b>
		<b>84</b>	<b>38.85</b>	<b>19.01</b>	<b>12.65</b>
<b>OFI 2</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33.35</b>	<b>16.70</b>	<b>10.60</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>41.58</b>	<b>23.07</b>	<b>12.65</b>
		<b>71</b>	<b>36.94</b>	<b>20.01</b>	<b>11.49</b>
<b>OFI 3</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>36.87</b>	<b>18.48</b>	<b>11.54</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>35.90</b>	<b>22.62</b>	<b>11.31</b>
		<b>126</b>	<b>36.32</b>	<b>20.87</b>	<b>11.40</b>
<b>OFI 4</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>25.82</b>	<b>23.08</b>	<b>8.36</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36.09</b>	<b>11.93</b>	<b>11.32</b>
		<b>73</b>	<b>30.60</b>	<b>18.60</b>	<b>9.74</b>
<b>OFI 5</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>39.06</b>	<b>23.54</b>	<b>12.75</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>36.12</b>	<b>29.35</b>	<b>11.88</b>
		<b>24</b>	<b>38.08</b>	<b>25.01</b>	<b>12.46</b>

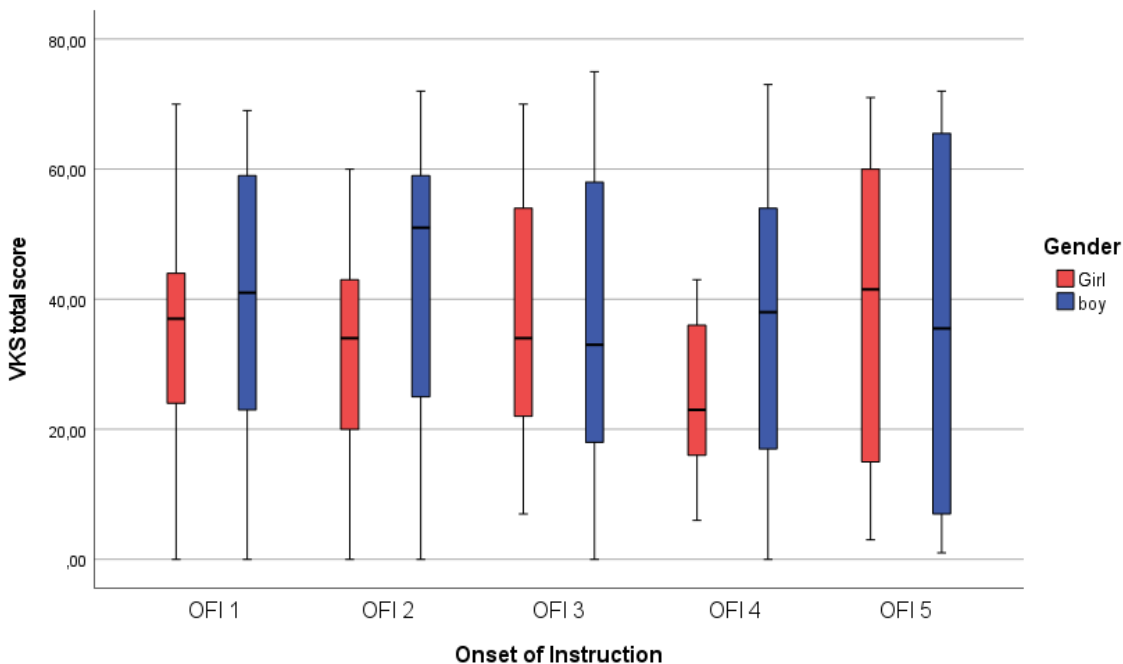
However, no statistically significant differences across gender and group were found in the result for either score. The factorial analysis of variance did not find a statistically significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 368) = 3.357, p = .068$ , on students' VKS mean score and no statistical main effect of OFI,  $F(4, 368) = 1.836, p = .121$ . Also, no significant interaction effect between gender and OFI was found,  $F(4, 368) = .1272, p = .281$ . This suggests that although there is a significant main effect of gender on receptive word knowledge (Yes-No test) this effect is not apparent when it comes to depth of vocabulary knowledge (VKS).



**Figure 4.7 VKS scores across gender and group OFI**

Although these results show no statistically significant difference, there is a noticeable difference within individual OFI groups, as can be seen in figure 4.7 for groups OFI 2 and 4, while there is almost no difference in group OFI 3. What is also interesting in the results is that boys score higher in OFI 1, 2 and 4 while girls score higher in group 5. This further suggests that other factors than gender or group OFI influence these results.

Figure 4.8 clearly shows the considerable variance within each group and this variance is most prominent in the scores for the boys than the girls in all groups.



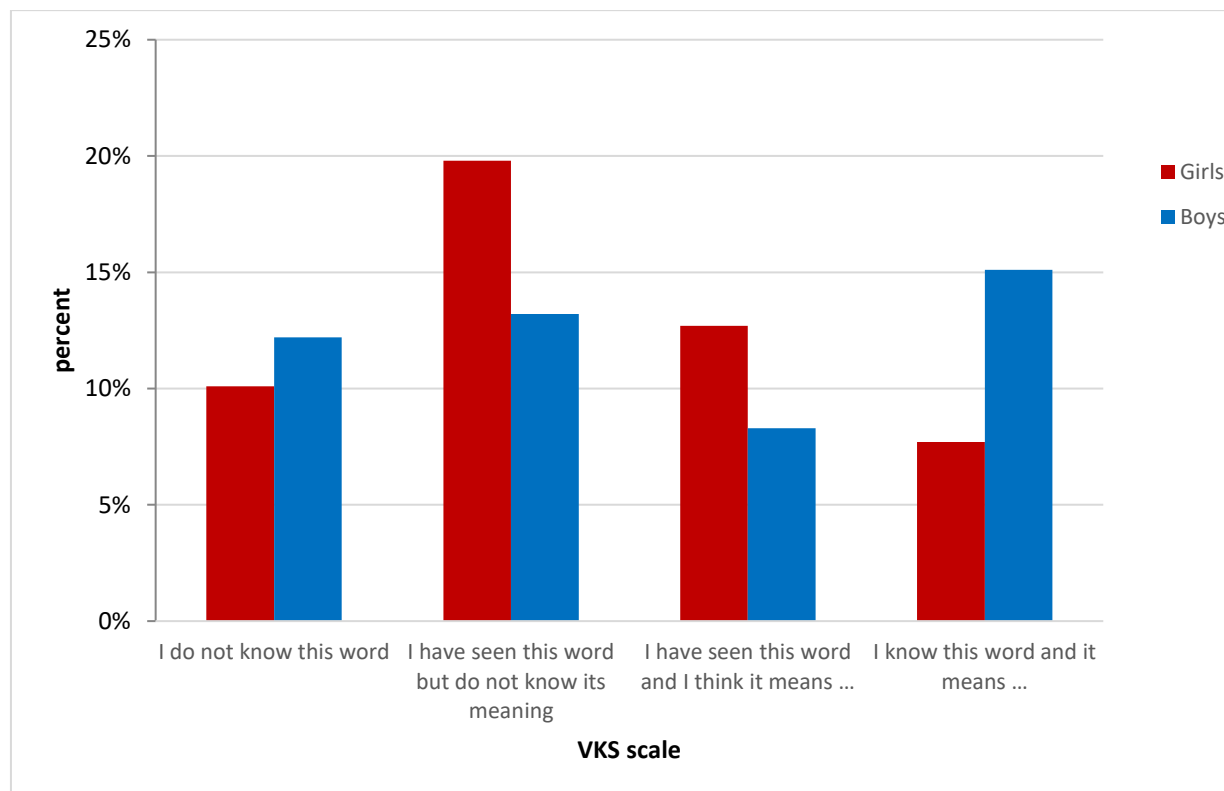
**Figure 4.8 VKS vocabulary score across gender and groups by onset of instruction (OFI).**

The results above also show that students who have received formal instruction from 1<sup>st</sup> grade and those yet to receive formal instruction score higher than students beginning in 4<sup>th</sup> grade on the VKS as they did on the Yes-No test. However, the difference is not statistically significant. Therefore, it seems that an early start before grade 3 does not render much success in English language learning at school by the participants in this sample. The difference of knowledge and variation in scores originates from other variables than onset of instruction.

#### 4.2.3 Gender specific confidence

Despite the lack of statistical gender difference, this discrepancy between scale of knowledge and actual translations bears further investigation. Thus, we explored the different choices for gender differences according to the 4 scales of the VKS test based on how many

students marked each option on the VKS test, and figure 4.9 shows the gender division within each choice on the scale.



**Figure 4.9 Dimension of knowledge – Gender difference across the VKS scale.**

Although the prior FANOVA analysis did not find a significant main effect for gender on overall scores there seems to be a relationship between gender and response choice. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender and VKS scale choices. The relationship between these variables was significant,  $X^2(3, N = 378) = 16.9, p < .001$ . Cramer's  $V$ , shows a moderate association, .21 (Cohen, 1988).

First, a small difference between genders is found for option I, "I do not know this word" and 84 participants (38 girls and 46 boys) chose that option. A more noticeable difference can be seen for the other three options. The largest number of students chose option II "I have seen this word, but I do not know its meaning" or 33.1% (N=125) of the whole group, of which 39.5%

(N=75) of the girls chose this option and 26.6% (N=50) of the boys. Those two options represent little to no knowledge and the gender difference might explain some of the reasons why girls mark less words on the Yes-No test than the boys do, but that will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Next we compare the translation options, and out of the correct translations in response to question III: “I have seen this word and I think it means ...” 22% (N=83) of participants chose this option and provided a correct meaning, 25.3% (N= 48) of the girls made this choice and translated correctly while 18.6% (N= 35) of the boys did so. But when option IV, “I know this word and it means...”, is examined, it shows that a similar number of students, or 22.8% (N=86), chose and provided correct translations of the words for IV, and 30.3% (N=57) of the boys and 15.3% (N=29) of the girls made this choice and translated correctly. This shows that girls are more likely to choose options II and III, while boys are more likely to choose option I and IV, and gender and VKS scale choices are moderately associated.

Finally, when only incorrect and correct translations were examined, there was a small difference between girls and boys, where 54.3% (N=88) of the boys translated correctly and 45.7% (N=74) of the girls. A chi-square test of independence showed no significant association  $X^2(1, N = 378) = 2.38, p = .123$ . Cramer’s  $V$ , was low, .08 (Cohen, 1988). This confirms that there is little association between gender and ability to translate words out of context.

This shows that although the boys in this sample are not significantly better at translating out of context than the girls, they are more likely to mark a statement with “I know” and “I don’t know,” than the girls are, and girls may be less confident in claiming knowledge or lack thereof. This coincides with the results from research question 1 where boys showed more confidence of their general knowledge of English than girls did

#### 4.2.4 Test comparisons

An analysis using Pearson's correlation coefficient was run to further compare and explore the validity of the tests as well as the relationship between students' receptive and productive knowledge. Considering the results above, the correlation results should show a linear finding of participants' lexical knowledge. The results show a strong positive relationship between the Yes-No vocabulary test scores and the VKS scores ( $r = .86, p < .01$ ). This means that it is 74% ( $r^2$ ) likely that a student scoring high in the Yes-No test will also score high on the VKS test (Figure 4.10). The ability to translate many of the words into Icelandic shows depth of knowledge or recognition of sight vocabulary.



**Figure 4.10** Scatterplot comparing Yes-No test scores to VKS test scores

It should be noted that the number of words on each test are not equal since the Yes-No has 100 words and the VKS contains 25 words. Therefore, the scores for the 25 words from the Yes-No test were run separately against the correct translation on the VKS, and again the Pearson's correlation coefficient showed an almost identical strong positive relationship ( $r = .855$ ,



$p < .01$ ). Thus, a participant marking any of the 25 words known on the Yes-No test is also 73% ( $r^2$ ) likely to be able to translate those words. Across gender and group, the calculation rendered  $r$  above .8,  $p < .01$  for both the full Yes-No test vs. VKS scores as well as the translation against the Yes-No 25-word extraction suggesting that this relationship is equal across gender and group. This further strengthens the assumption that conjointly these two tests are showing the participant's estimated vocabulary knowledge and the chance is high that a participant marking many words on the Yes-No test is also able to translate those words.

Although these findings show that the 386 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in this sample demonstrate knowledge that exceeds the curriculum goals, as well as the ability to translate the words, they understand there is a large individual difference. Also, the relationship between scores is considered very strong, but there is some difference between breadth and depth of knowledge and this is best explored by looking at the type of words participants are marking and translating.

#### **4.2.5 Type of words**

This section presents the frequency of responses to individual lexical items on the Yes-No and VKS tests. The results give an indication of the size and nature of the 4<sup>th</sup>-graders' vocabulary. Thirty-four words out of 100 on the Yes-No test were marked as recognized by 50% or more of the participants, and 11 words on the VKS test were translated correctly by 50% or more of the participants. Table 4.7 shows the ranking and vocabulary levels of the 10 words with most marks on the Yes-No test and the 10 most correctly translated words on the VKS test and their vocabulary levels.

**Table 4.7 Top 10 marked and correctly translated vocabulary test items**

Yes-No test				VKS test			
	Vocabulary level	N	N %		Vocabulary level	N	N %
play	1 <sup>7</sup>	348	92%	apple	2	284,00	75%
open	2	337	89%	you	1	279,00	74%
help	2	325	86%	monster	2	267,00	71%
black	2	324	86%	play	1	261,00	69%
happy	3	314	83%	happy	3	259,00	69%
TV	1	312	83%	brother	1	258,00	68%
game	1	308	81%	friend	1	248,00	66%
kiss	4	307	81%	TV	1	247,00	65%
you	1	296	78%	computer	5	212,00	56%
sport	4	269	71%	snowman	4	205,00	54%

This shows that the level of the 10 most marked words varies, while 5 of the 10 words correctly translated most often belong to level 1 or the first 250 spoken words from the *WordExpress* list. Nevertheless, there are some words from lower frequency levels that are often marked and correctly translated, suggesting a contextual influence on vocabulary acquisition. Responses to possible cognates with Icelandic, such as sport, computer, and TV, were in the middle of the list and do not seem to skew the results significantly. These words are essentially not cognates in the two languages, not similar in English and Icelandic. However, these words have found their way into young people's repertoire, but as the words íþróttir (sport) and sjónvarp (television) and tölvu (computer) in Icelandic are usually used in Icelanders' spoken language they are thus in the children's immediate input. However, these words may have found their way into the children's

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<sup>7</sup> Level 1 = 0-250, level 2= 251-500, level 3= 501-750, level 4=751-1000, level 1001-1250. Level = frequency level

repertoire from English explaining why not all of them mark or can translate these words. On the list of the 10 most known or translated words open, help, kiss (Yes-No test), apple, brother and snowman (VKS scale) are similar to their counterparts in Icelandic (opin/opna, hjálp, koss/kyssa, epli, bróðir, snjókarl). Despite this, no word that might be considered similar in both languages on the tests were marked to the 90-100% level, so cognates did not have a significant effect on the results.

Table 4.8 shows the least marked and fewest correctly translated words and, as expected, these are primarily from the less frequent words on the list.

**Table 4.8 Fewest 10 recognized words and fewest correctly translated words**

Yes-No test				VKS test			
	Vocabulary level	N	N %		Vocabulary level	N	N %
because	1	70,00	19%	hole	2	137,00	36%
chase	2	69,00	18%	drive	3	134,00	35%
elevator	5	69,00	18%	painting	4	118,00	31%
seek	3	67,00	18%	children	4	109,00	29%
whip	4	65,00	17%	question	5	99,00	26%
skeleton	5	64,00	17%	Saturday	3	97,00	26%
invite	5	60,00	16%	farm	4	96,00	25%
exciting	5	45,00	12%	witch	2	89,00	24%
bounce	3	41,00	11%	exciting	5	30,00	8%
pretend	3	40,00	11%	whip	4	23,00	6%

On the list of least recognized or translated words it is notable that the word hole, which is hola in Icelandic, was only translated by 36% of participants. Nevertheless, that further supports the view that cognates did not skew the results.

The word *play* is marked most often as known respectively by 348 of the participants (92%), but only 69% (N=261) of students were able to translate it correctly. This word can be used in several contexts and meaning, such as playing with toys/outside or playing games/sports on and off a computer. In Icelandic, the most common meaning would be *leika* for the former and *spila* for the latter and playing cards would be *spila* as well, and so we expected different meanings based on this. Participants provided the following meanings: *spila* (N=83), (computer, games, cards, sports), *leika* (N=75) (play—toys, outside, acting), *byrja* (N=52) (begin), *áfram* (N=39) (forward), *af stað* (N=11) (go/onwards) and *leikrit* (N=1) (a play). Considering that most participants associate a game or computer related meaning to the word, the results suggest a highly computer related English use by these participants, and this type of contextual influence is explored in relation to their exposure to English demonstrated in research question 3.

#### 4.2.6 Summary

The discussion above addresses research question 2, which investigated the level of vocabulary knowledge of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction. This section presents the results from the two vocabulary tests used in this study, a Yes-No vocabulary test of receptive knowledge, and the VKS test of depth of knowledge i.e. sight-vocabulary. On average, participants in this study know about 500 words of the first most common words in English and they can translate around 48% of those words. In general, boys score higher on both tests in all groups except in groups OFI 3 and OFI 5, where gender difference is not a significant factor. Students who began learning English in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade score significantly better on the Yes-No test than students in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade showing a larger receptive vocabulary (they have encountered more words); however, that does not indicate the depth of knowledge of that vocabulary. The results from the VKS test suggest that students who

began learning in 1<sup>st</sup> grade are better at translating words out of context than students' beginning to learn in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade as expected; however, this difference is not statistically significant across gender or groups demonstrating that, regardless of gender or group, participants are able to translate many of the words they know.

When it comes to type of response on the translation questions on the VKS test (III and IV), there is a difference between genders on the degree of confidence in their translation where boys are more likely to say "I know the word" and the girls "I think I know," but no gender difference in whether they are able to translate the word, showing that although the knowledge is the same, confidence in that knowledge is different. Further, although onset of instruction affects test scores, it is not a large decisive factor on depth of knowledge in this sample. The results also show that the two tests render similar results and there is a high positive relationship between test scores. This suggests that students who recognize many words on the Yes-No test are likely to be able to translate correctly a higher number of the words on the VKS test; anyone scoring high on one test will score high on the other as well. This result strengthens the validity of the two tests and the results of this study.

As expected, participants were more likely to mark and be able to translate words from the higher frequency word lists, but there were also words from the lower frequency lists among those most often marked or correctly translated. One was the word computer. Also, among those less marked were words such as 'because', that is among the 250 most frequent on the wordlist used. This could be because the frequency of said words has changed since the development of the list or there is a contextual influence in the knowledge of the participants.

The results also show that the knowledge is not linear between frequency levels within the first 1250 words and that variance in scores could be better explained by exposure than by gender or onset of formal instruction. Thus, these results indicate that other factors than gender and OFI

explain students' lexical success. Before examining this notion, the results from the L2 Exposure, The Ideal Self, and Ought-to Self are presented in the next section and later relationships between those scores and vocabulary size and nature is examined.

### **4.3 The nature of English Exposure and attitudes towards the use of English.**

Since students' views of English do not inform us about their actual use of English, the third research question in this study investigates the nature of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' exposure to English and their motivation to learn it:

What motivates Icelandic 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students to learn and use English in Iceland in relation to:

- a. Type of English exposure
- b. Their Ideal Self
- c. Their Ought-to Self

This question is intended to explore students' L2 Exposure and attitudes toward English in a context specific situation at the onset of formal instruction. Asking students how often they use English in several different circumstances may give an indication of where their English knowledge comes from. This study provided an opportunity to examine the relevance of current theories of motivation within the Icelandic context. Lately, the focus of motivational research has focused on the theoretical frameworks based on the idea of the Self and how notions of current and future selves affect language learning (Dörnyei, 2009a). Thus, this question explored our participants' desired and expected use of English as an incentive for learning, or, in other words, we measured Dörnyei's constructs of learners' Ideal Self and Ought-to self to examine students' view on their future use of English and later explore the relationship between the L2 Motivational system's dimensions and the lexical proficiency of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students (see section 4.4). Results

are examined within the context-specific variables introduced in chapter 3, namely, *TV/Music*, *Computers*, *Education*, *Peers*, *Family*, *Texts* and *Lingua Franca*. In addition, gender and group differences are examined to explore if there is a statistically significant difference between boys and girls and onset of formal instruction (OFI).

### 4.3.1 L2 Exposure

Questions pertaining to L2 Exposure and use included statements that began with assertions like “I use English to ..., I play ..., I speak..., I listen..., I read... and I write... in English” (see appendix A) and asked about project participants’ current use of English. To begin with, we examine the frequency percentages for the context-specific factors in a descending order. Table 4.9 shows that students report using English most frequently while watching television, listening to music, and using the computer, while they seldom or never read in English.

**Table 4.9 L2 Exposure - frequency divided by context-specific variables**

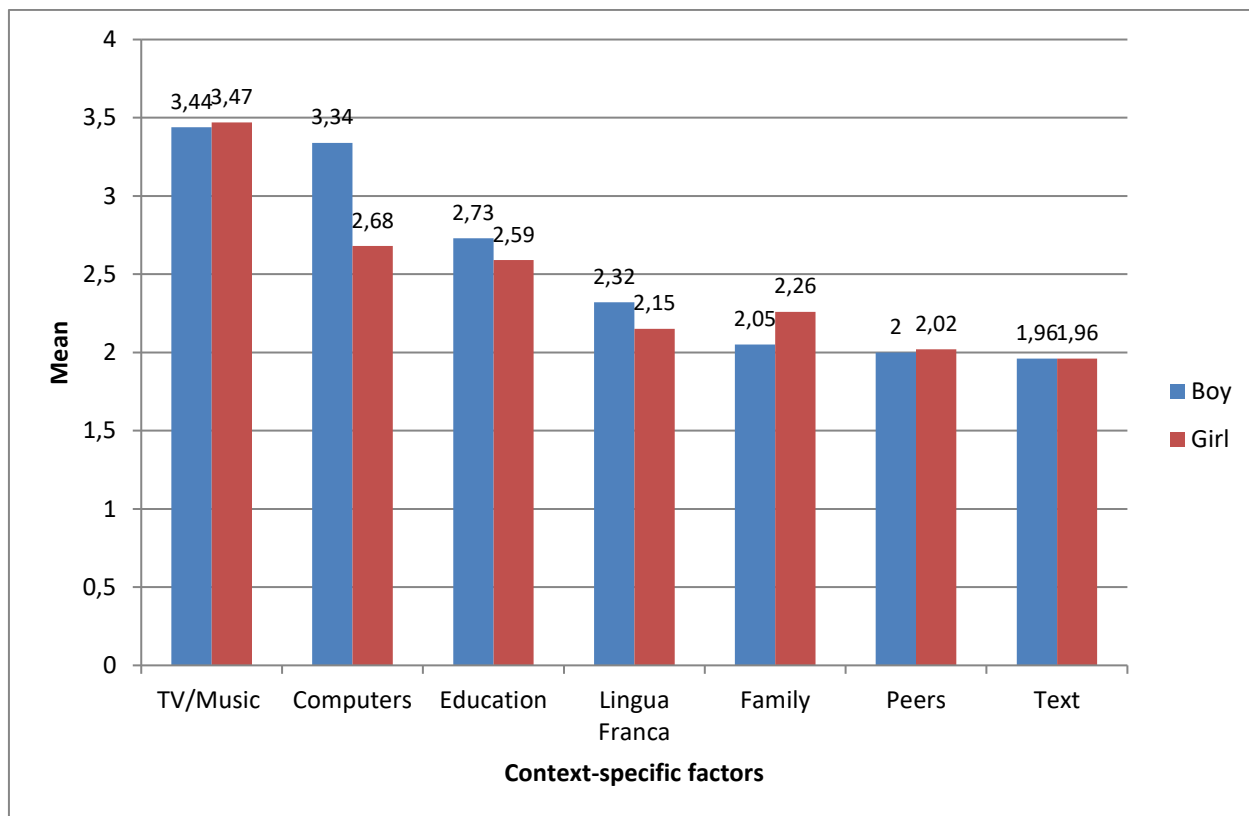
	Frequently		Sometimes		Seldom		Never		Mean	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
TV/Music	256	67.7%	104	27.5%	17	4.5%	1	0.3%	3.45	0.65
Computer	178	47.1%	118	31.2%	55	14.6%	27	7.1%	3.01	0.86
Educational	68	18.0%	159	42.1%	106	28.0%	45	11.9%	2.66	0.91
Lingua Franca	65	17.2%	118	31.2%	126	33.3%	69	18.3%	2.24	0.93
Family	46	12.2%	129	34.1%	179	47.4%	24	6.3%	2.16	0.74
Peers	64	16.9%	199	52.6%	88	23.3%	27	7.1%	2.01	0.91
Text	25	6.6%	105	27.8%	185	48.9%	63	16.7%	1.96	0.73

As can be seen in the table above, 256 out of 378 participants (67.7%) say they frequently use English to listen to English lyrics or watch English films and television shows. These two activities have the highest mean and lowest variability (both as individual activities as well as together) showing this as the main activity participants are engaged in at the age of 9 when it comes to English and with little individual difference. In addition, almost half, or 47.1% (N=178), frequently use English on the computer to play games. Using English often at school comes third, closely followed by using English often with foreigners, but more say they use English at school sometimes than with foreigners. Greater variability is also shown within these scores than with the first two, suggesting greater individual difference. Although more students say they speak to peers more often than family, the mean score for peer interaction is lower than speaking English with family, and the variability is higher with peers than family. This will be explored further when looking at gender and group OFI differences. Finally, only 6.6% use English frequently while reading or writing in English. Although we have yet to discover how this affects participants' proficiency and whether gender or onset of formal instruction influence each context, this shows that the English experience of these participants is highly extramural and recreational (out of school) rather than formal (in school).

#### **4.3.1.1 Gender and OFI group differences in exposure**

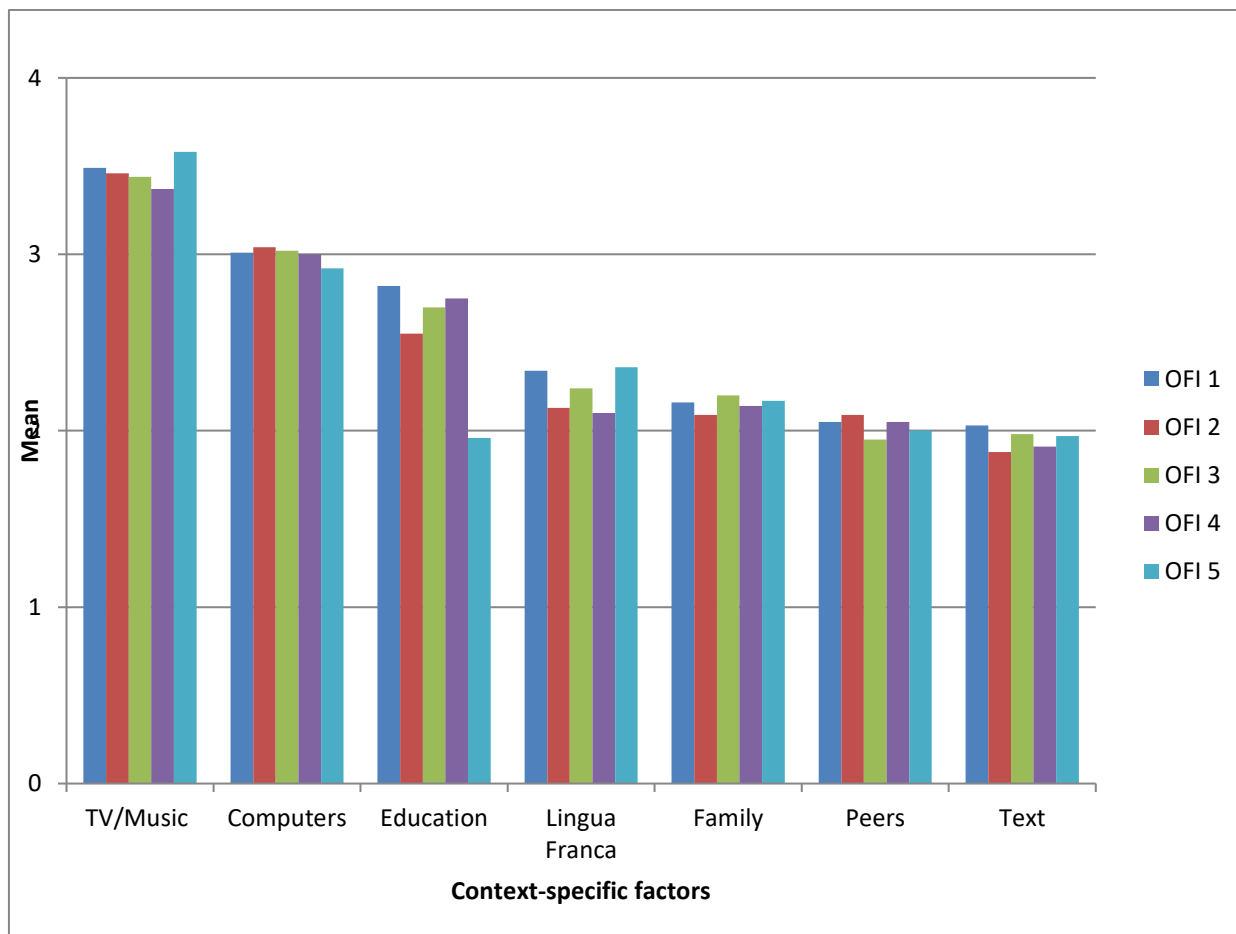
All factors were also examined for the effect of gender and OFI differences. Figure 4.11 shows that boys claim to use English more frequently for traveling and speaking to foreigners (*Lingua Franca*), at school and on the computer. Both genders listen to music or watch TV in English equally, and speak to peers and work with texts, while girls claim to use English more frequently with family than boys, although this is seldom. The most significant difference is seen when using English to play games on the computer.





**Figure 4.11 L2 Exposure according to gender**

Figure 4.12 below shows the extent of L2 Exposure in relation to onset of formal instruction (OFI). Most groups follow the same pattern of using English to listen to TV/music most frequently, while fewest report the use of English with texts, with the exception of group OFI 5. The participants in OFI 5 claim to use English with TV/music more than the other groups and they also use English less at school than the other groups. This is not surprising, as they were not scheduled to receive formal instruction until the following year. However, they do claim to use some English at school and that could be connected to other situations, such as to speaking to their friends who may be foreign. This group (OFI5) also claims to use English with foreigners and while traveling (Lingua Franca) slightly more frequently than the other groups.



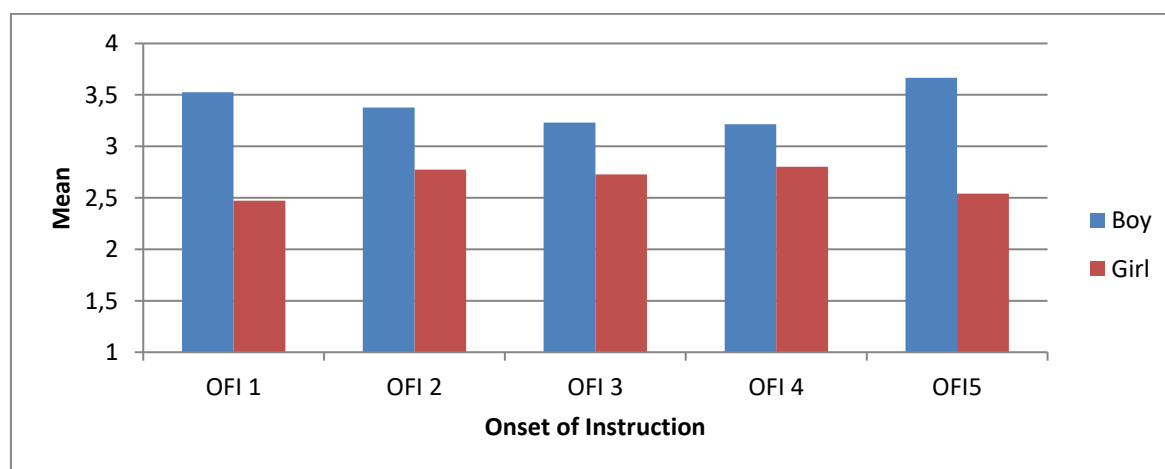
**Figure 4.12 L2 Exposure according to onset of formal instruction (OFI)**

Table 11 presents descriptive results on the frequency and mean of the responses about the context-specific variables presented above where the effect of gender and onset of formal instruction (OFI) was found statistically significant. A factorial analysis of variance was used to explore this difference across gender and OFI. No significant effect of gender or OFI was found for use of English with *TV/music*, *Lingua Franca*, *Text* and *Peers* and will not be presented further here. The effect of gender and/or OFI were found for using English while playing computer games, at school, and with family and those results are presented below.

### *Computer games and current use of English*

A main effect of gender on using English while playing computer games was found in the responses by participants in this sample, and this is one of the main reasons gender became a factor explored further in this study (see chapter 3). This difference is mostly found within questions 13 and 16 within this variable, where boys report using English more frequently than girls while playing on a game station (PlayStation, x-Box etc.). Boys also report playing computer games with friends more frequently than girls. This, however, does not necessarily tell us about the relationship between these activities and their English skills. This relationship will be explored further when comparing vocabulary size and exposure later in this chapter (section 4.4).

The factorial analysis of variance found a significant main effect of gender on the reported English use with computers,  $F(1, 368) = 64.906, p < .001$ , while there was a non-significant main effect of onset of formal instruction (OFI) on computer use,  $F(4, 368) = 0.226, p = .924$ . In addition, a significant interaction effect was found between gender and onset of formal instruction,  $F(4, 368) = 2.522, p = .041$  (Figure 4.13).



**Figure 4.13 L2 Exposure with computers – gender and group distribution.**

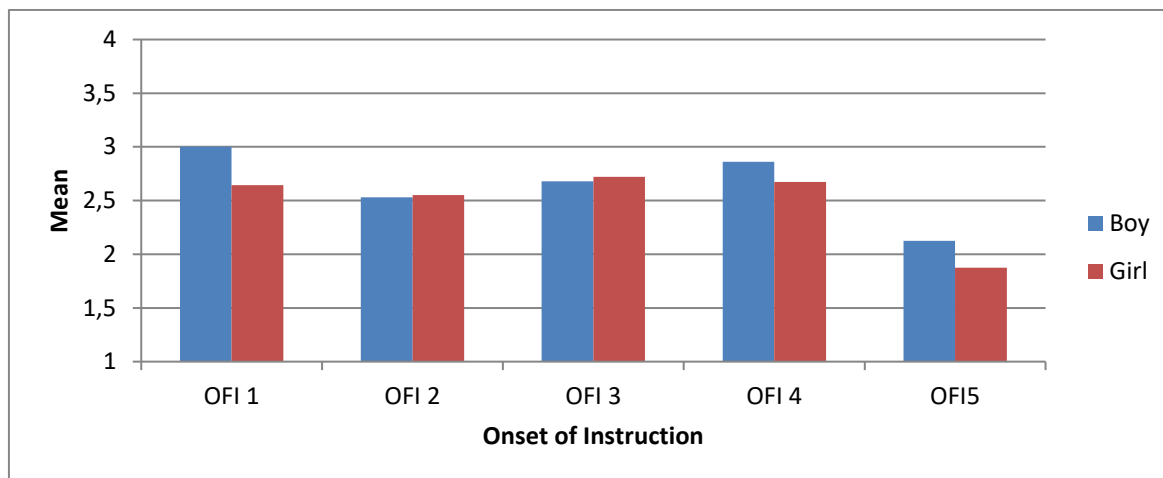
The main effects of gender plus the frequency results clearly show that nine-year-old boys report using English on the computer while playing computer games more frequently than girls do in all groups. Examining the group/gender interaction, we see that girls who begin learning English in the first grade report using English on the computer less than girls who begin learning later. Boys, on the other hand, show a reverse pattern, although there is not a large difference in the boys' group overall, reporting more frequent use of English with computers the longer they have studied English (at school). Group OFI5 stands out here and is more similar to Group OFI1, who are the same age but began studying English earlier. This will be explored further in the sections below when we look at the interaction between context-specific factors and proficiency.

### ***Educational influence and current use of English***

Education was the second factor that showed a statistically significant difference for either gender or group. For the educational influence factor, one item was calculated and participants asked to rate how often they use English at school.

When examining L2 Exposure of English at school, we see that students who began learning in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade report using English at school significantly more often than those who began in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This is explained by the fact that those in group OFI 5 have yet to receive formal instruction at school.

A factorial analysis of variance (FANOVA) found no significant main effect of gender on educational influence,  $F(1, 368) = 1.831, p = 0.241$ , but there was a significant main effect of onset of formal instruction (OFI),  $F(4, 368) = 4.672, p = 0.001$  on current English use at school. There was no significant interaction effect between gender and onset of formal instruction,  $F(4, 368) = 0.645, p = 0.630$ .

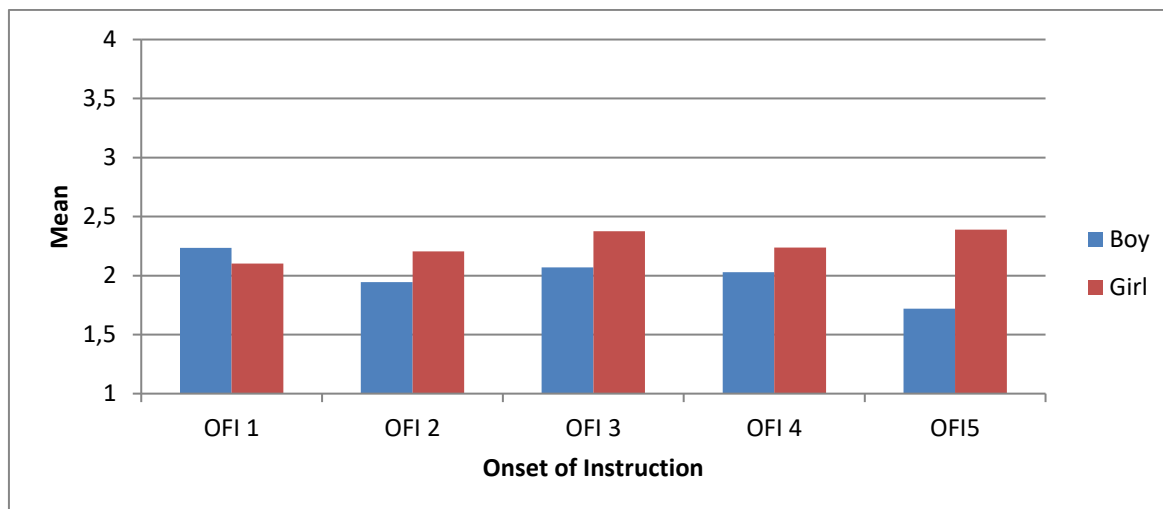


**Figure 4.14 L2 Exposure at school**

An S-N-K post hoc evaluation showed no significant difference between grades 1-4 showing similar English use at school. This could be because the length of lessons is the same or similar for those four grade levels and this will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

***Family Influence and current English use.***

The third L2 Exposure factor that showed significant gender difference is use of English with parents and other family members. When exploring this factor, girls predominantly report using English to speak with their family more than the boys although this difference does not seem to be large and notably participants report seldom engaging in this activity (Figure 4.15).



**Figure 4.15 L2 Exposure of English with family.**

A factorial analysis of variance indicated that there was a significant main effect of gender,  $F(1, 368) = 7.750, p < .006$ , on students' use of English with family, but a non-statistical main effect of OFI,  $F(4, 368) = 0.415, p = .798$ . Furthermore, there was no significant interaction effect between gender and OFI on students' use of English with family,  $F(4, 368) = 1.042, p = .385$ .

This shows that girls claim to use English with family more frequently than boys do and as Figure 4.15 demonstrates this gender difference is mostly in group OFI 5, although group difference was non-significant. However, this use is very low for both genders and may not have significant influence on their proficiency or attitudes towards English.

Results show that our participants' L2 Exposure with English is mainly extramural through watching television and listening to music with little individual variance and no statistical gender or group difference. Participants also say they play computer games often and that a context-specific factor also shows clear gender differences, and although education and speaking to family are affected by group or gender differences, these differences are small and not statistically significant. The remaining factors (Lingua Franca, peers and text) show no statistical main effect for gender and OFI and these results show that gender and OFI are minor in

determining students L2 English exposure at this age. The next section looks at participants' Ideal Self or their ideal context where they would like to use English most often. .

### 4.3.2 The Ideal Self

To examine students' desired use of English or their Ideal Self dimension (Dörnyei, 2005), students were asked how frequently they would like to be able to use English for each of the context - specific variables. These questions included a statement starting with "I want to be able to use English to/when..." and the results are presented with the most frequent variable at the top (Table 4.10).

**Table 4.10 The Ideal Self - frequency divided by context-specific variables**

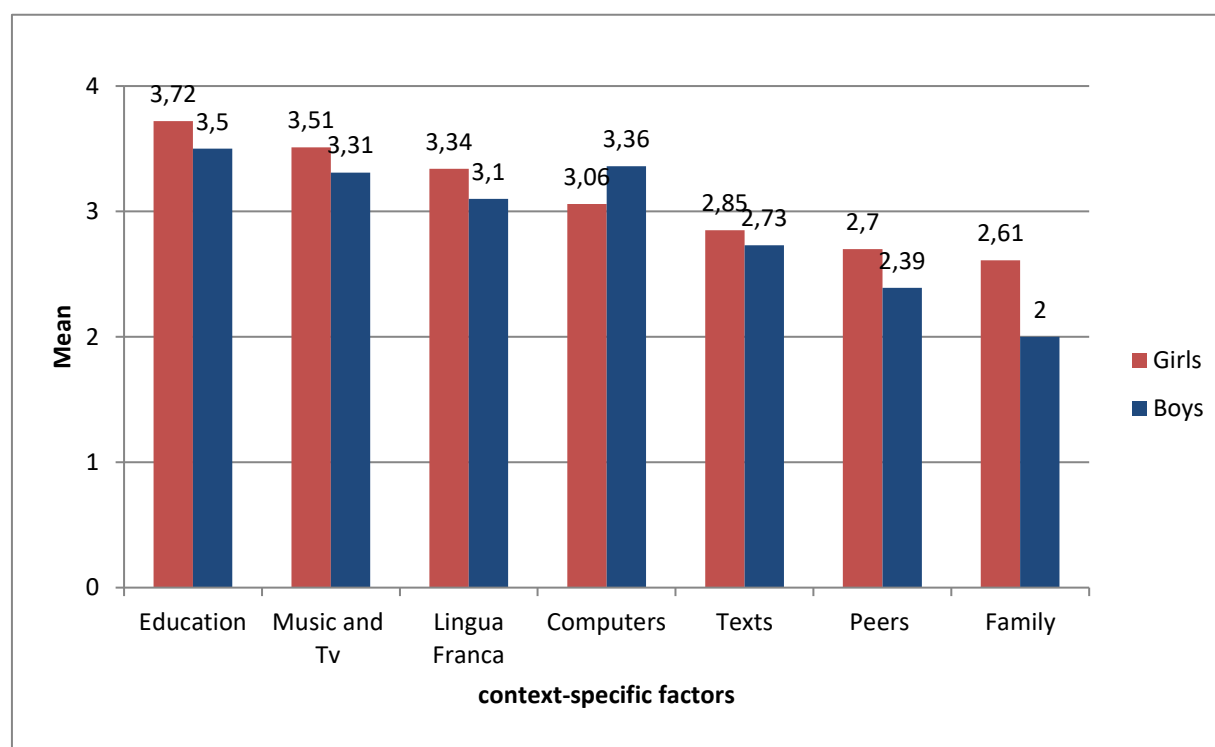
	Frequently		Sometimes		Seldom		Never		Mean	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Educational	270	71.4%	78	20.6%	21	5.6%	9	2.4%	3.61	0.70
TV/Music	253	66.9%	86	22.8%	35	9.3%	4	1.1%	3.41	0.76
Lingua Franca	224	59.3%	113	29.9%	37	9.8%	4	1.1%	3.22	0.75
Computer	216	57.1%	99	26.2%	48	12.7%	15	4.0%	3.21	0.90
Text	135	35.7%	147	38.9%	83	22.0%	13	3.4%	2.79	0.82
Peers	96	25.4%	100	26.5%	97	25.7%	85	22.5%	2.55	1.10
Family	80	21.2%	112	29.6%	97	25.7%	89	23.5%	2.30	1.03

Table 4.10 illustrates that participants would like to use English for all contexts more than they are currently doing, but the importance of each context changes. Although *Computers*, *Lingua Franca* and *TV/Music* are still important mediums of English, students' want or desire to use English at school is more important. The desire to read more, and speaking to peers and family are less important but they want to do more of that than they report doing in the previous

questions. Therefore, instead of two contexts dominating their current use they would like to expand their overall use of English. These implications will be explored further in chapter 5.

#### 4.3.2.1 Gender and OFI group difference in desired use of English.

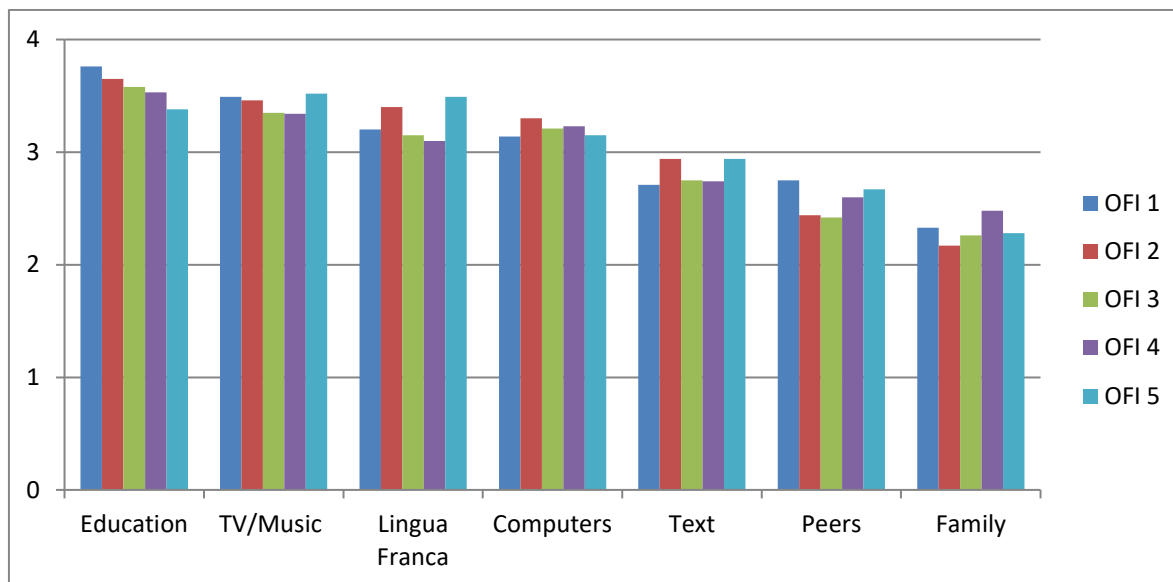
As for the L2 Exposure, gender and group differences were explored for the responses pertaining to desired future uses of English, or the Ideal Self. Figure 4.16 shows that boys desire to use English on the computer more than girls, but for all other variables the girls demonstrate a higher desire to use English more frequently.



**Figure 4.16 The Ideal Self across gender.**

Figure 4.17 shows results for the Ideal Self responses in relation to onset of formal instruction (OFI). Within this sample, the longer students have been exposed to English at school, the higher the desire to use English in that environment, whereas there is no linear pattern for the other variables suggesting that individual characteristics may have more effect than OFI.





**Figure 4.17 The Ideal Self across groups based on onset of formal instruction (OFI)**

A factorial analysis of variance showed no main effect in relation to OFI groups, but all factors except one, the desire to be able to use English while reading and writing (text media), showed some significant main effect of gender as boys desire to use more English on the computer but girls desire to use more English for all other factors. Table 4.11 shows the results of the FANOVA for those context variables that showed a statistically significant effect by gender.

**Table 4.11 FANOVA result for observed main effect of gender and The Ideal Self**

Main effect	Gender		OFI		OFI+Gender	
	<i>F</i> (1, 368)	Sig. ( <i>p</i> )	<i>F</i> (4,368)	Sig. ( <i>p</i> )	<i>F</i> (4,368)	Sig. ( <i>p</i> )
Education	10.738	.001	2.307	.058	1.353	.250
TV/music	5.948	.015	0.661	.619	1.431	.223
Lingua Franca	8.231	.004	2.207	.068	0.407	.804
Computer games	10.870	.001	0.455	.768	0.783	.537
Peer	7.061	.008	1.352	.250	0.700	.250
Family	36.910	.000	1.117	.348	0.835	.504

This means that girls' desire to be able to use English more than the boys for five of the variables (Education, TV/music, Lingua Franca, family and peers), whereas the boys want to be able to use English for computer games more often than the girls. In addition, for what participants want to be able to use English for is not affected by onset of formal instruction. This is very different from their L2 Exposure where boys seem to be using English as much as they desire, while the girls desire to use English more than they are doing. Despite these differences the results show that participants, regardless of gender and OFI, want to increase their use of English for all context-specific factors.

### 4.3.3 The Ought-to Self

Responses to questions pertaining to the Ought-to Self factor shows whether participants perceive an undeniable (sometimes pressured) need to use English and is generated from 10 statements starting with "I have to learn English to be able to ...". For this section participants are not indicating frequency of use as before, but whether they agree or disagree with the statements made and are presented with the option of "I don't know" if unsure.

**Table 4.12 The Ought-to Self: responses divided by context-specific variables**

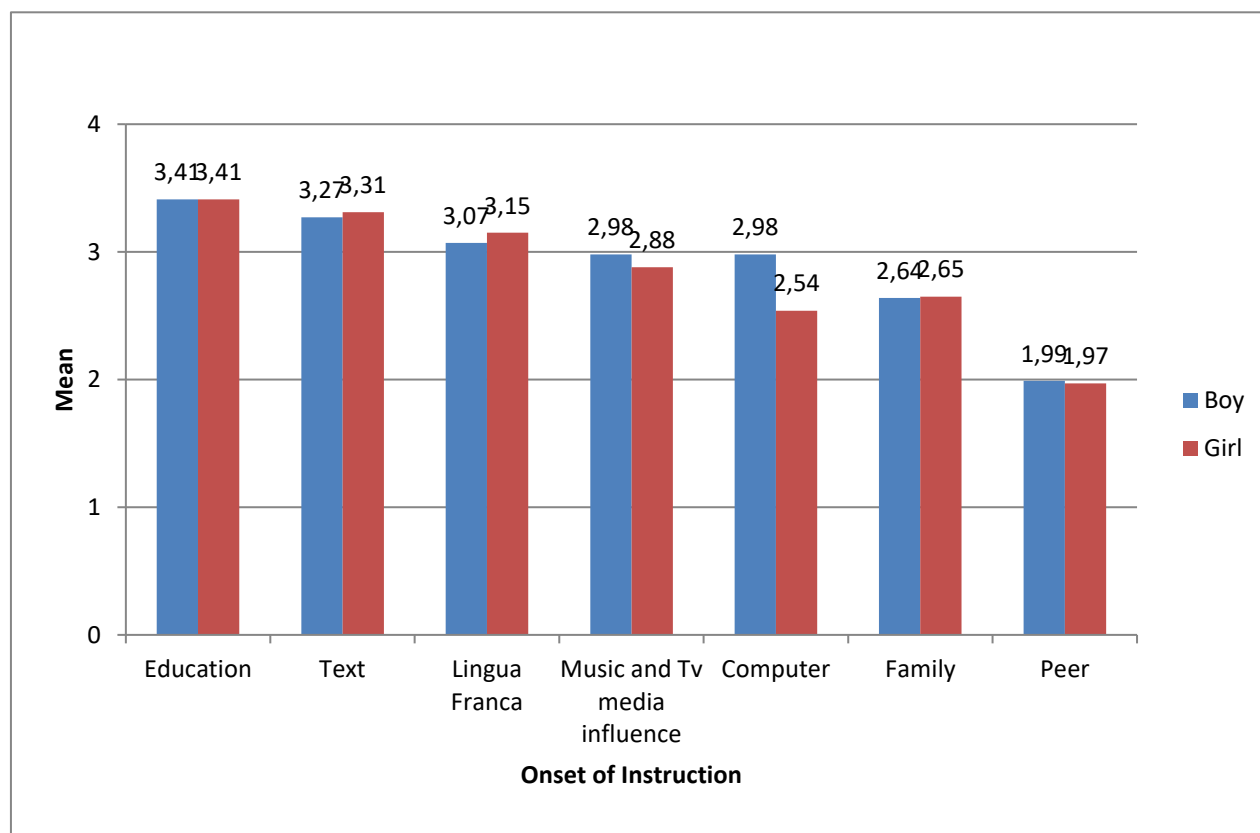
	Highly agree		Agree		Disagree		Highly disagree		I don't know		Mean	SD
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Educational	252	66.7%	82	21.7%	16	4.2%	3	.8%	25	6.6%	3.41	1.08
Text media	222	58.7%	98	25.9%	37	9.8%	14	3.7%	7	1.9%	3.29	1.09
Lingua Franca	216	57.1%	110	29.1%	22	5.8%	6	1.6%	24	6.3%	3.11	0.96
TV/Music	138	36.5%	144	38.1%	54	14.3%	15	4.0%	27	7.1%	2.93	1.14
Computers	137	36.2%	108	28.6%	77	20.4%	34	9.0%	22	5.8%	2.69	1.18
Family	103	27.2%	94	24.9%	81	21.4%	22	5.8%	78	20.6%	2.64	1.06
Peers	61	16.1%	70	18.5%	113	29.9%	68	18.0%	66	17.5%	1.98	1.31

Table 4.12 shows that participants mark that they must use English for school more often than they wish to (the Ideal Self) and with texts more than they currently are (L2 Exposure) or desire to (Ideal Self). As expected, they feel obliged to use English to speak to foreigners abroad and in Iceland. On the other hand, they also feel they do not have to use English to understand TV and music or for computer games as much as they claimed they were already using or desired to use English for those activities. Finally, these 9-year-olds feel less pressured to use English to speak to family and friends, and more participants were unsure if there is a need to with the other factors. Thus, the observed need or obligation is much different from their reported current use and slightly different from their desire to use English within the contexts examined in this study. These factors were also explored for group and gender differences as reported below.

#### **4.3.3.1 Gender and OFI group effects for the Ought -to Self (obligation to use English)**

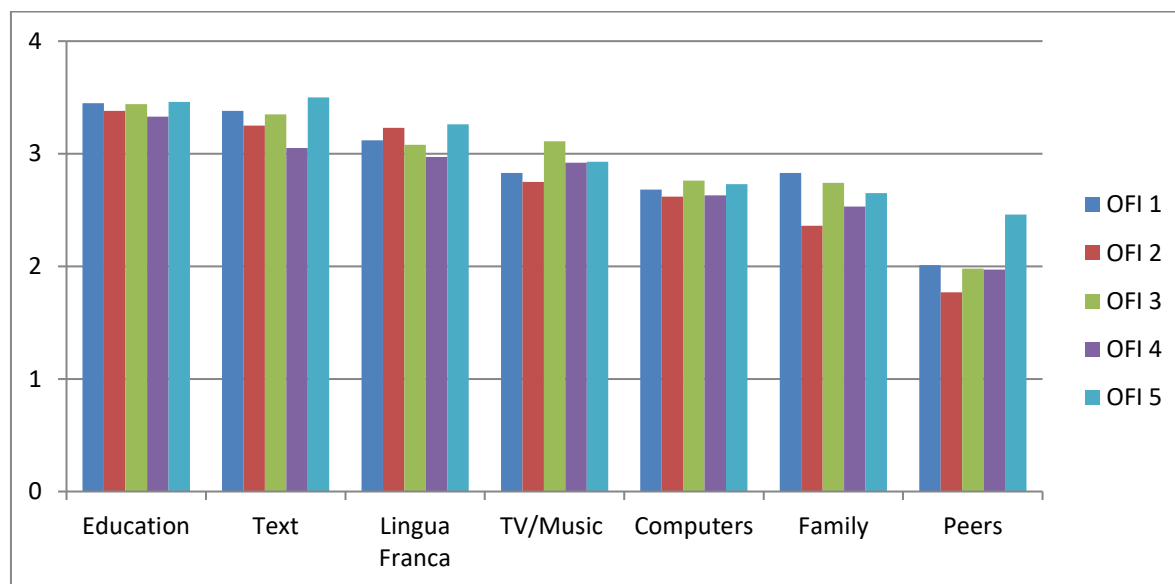
Some gender and group difference can be observed in figure 4.18 and 4.19. These are not statistically significant, however. Figure 4.18 shows some, but very little, gender difference for

all variables other than the need to learn English to play computer games, where boys say they have to know English to play computer games, while girls feel less obliged to do so. This concurs with the current use as girls play less on the computer than boys do.



**Figure 4.18 The expected need to use English (the Ought-to-Self) across gender.**

Figure 4.19 shows that the distribution based on onset of formal instruction where group OFI5, that is, students yet to receive formal instruction, feel more strongly than the other groups that they have to learn English to read and write, and to speak to foreigners.

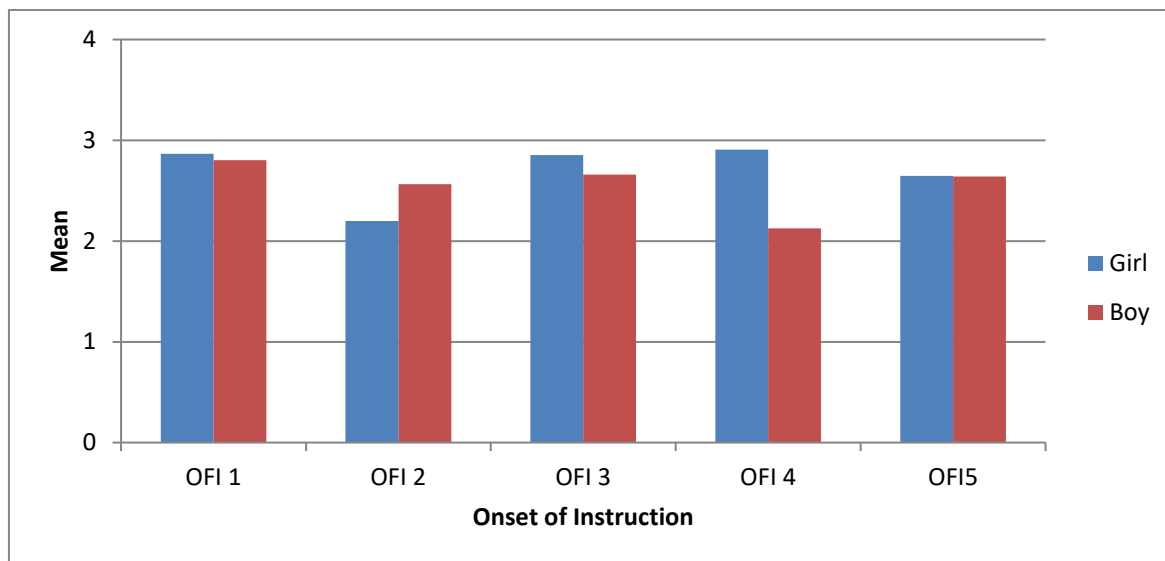


**Figure 4.19** The Ought-to-Self context variables across groups

Interestingly, the FANOVA showed that three variables showed a statistically significant main effect and none of those three the same main effect. A main effect of OFI group was found on the variable having to learn English to speak to family, a significant interaction effect was found between gender and onset of formal instruction for the *Text* variable, and main effect of gender was found for *Computer*. These are described separately below.

#### *Use of English with family and the ought-to-self*

The factorial analysis of variance did not find a significant main effect of gender on the need to learn English to speak with family,  $F(1, 368) = 0.101, p < .751$ , while there was a significant main effect of onset of formal instruction (OFI),  $F(4, 368) = 2.465, p = .045$ . In addition, no significant interaction effect was found between gender and onset of formal instruction,  $F(4, 368) = 1.544, p = .189$  (Figure 4.20).

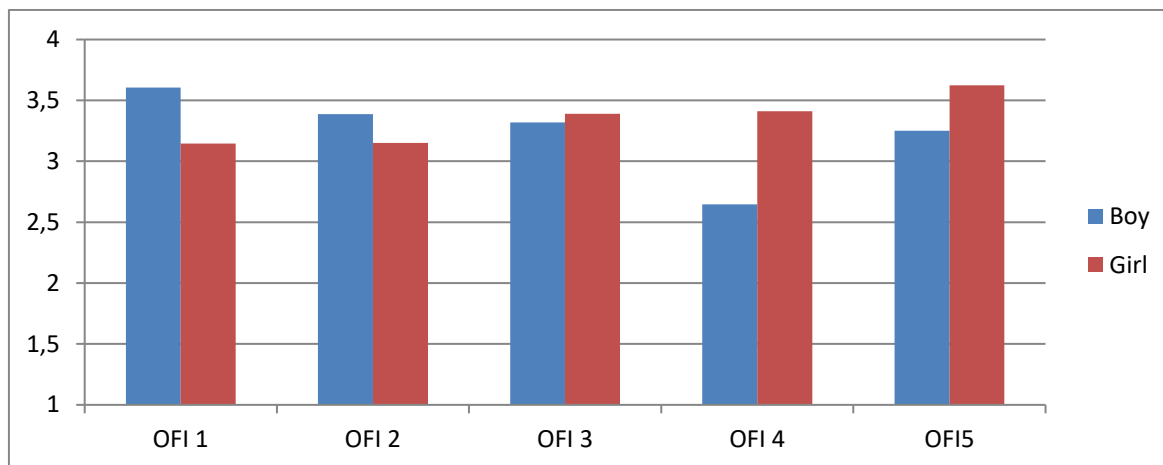


**Figure 4.20 the Ought-to Self with family – gender and group distribution.**

A S-N-K posthoc shows that group OFI 2 report the least need to learn English to speak with family, then OFI 4, OFI 5 and OFI 3 while group OFI 1 sees the most need. Thus, although groups are divided by onset of instruction, we cannot say that a linear onset guides the perceived need, but rather that there are other unobserved individual characteristics affecting the outcomes.

### *The Ought-to Self and text media*

The factorial analysis of variance found no significant main effect of gender on the need to learn English be able to understand texts,  $F(1, 368) = 0.169, p < .681$ , in addition to a non-significant main effect of onset of formal instruction (OFI),  $F(4, 368) = 1.387, p = .238$ . However, a significant interaction effect was found between gender and onset of formal instruction,  $F(4, 368) = 3.629, p = .006$  (Figure 4.21) and the obligation to understand written texts.



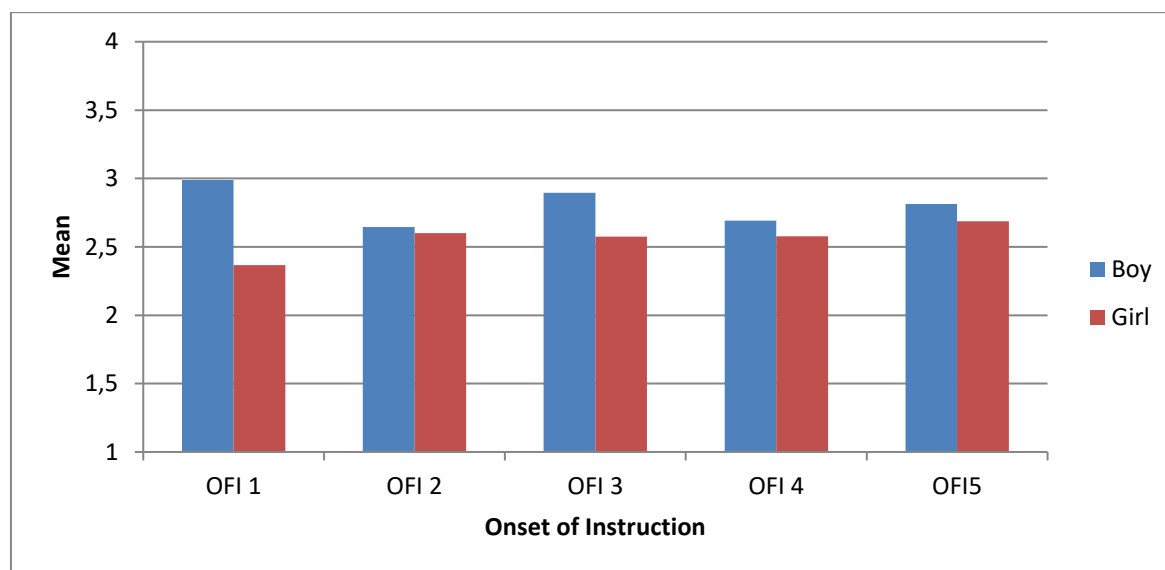
**Figure 4.21 The Ought-to-Self and texts – gender and group distribution.**

As figure 4.21 shows the perceived obligation to learn English to read and write in English is higher among boys that began learning English in first grade than it is with girls; the gender difference then shifts when we look at groups who begin in 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade, where the girls perceive a greater pressure to use English with texts. Overall, both girls and boys perceive a high need to learn English to be able to interact with texts than they are currently doing. These participants reported little current use of English with texts as well as at school, but those already receiving English instruction at school are more exposed to the pressure or obligation to read and write which could result in increased online chats and reading instructions online.

### ***Computer games and obligatory use of English (Ought-to-Self)***

A significant main effect of gender on the need to learn English to be able to play computer games in English was found,  $F(1, 368) = 5.435, p < .020$ , but no significant main effect of onset of formal instruction (OFI),  $F(4, 368) = 0.152, p = .962$ . In addition, no significant interaction effect was found between gender and onset of formal instruction,  $F(4, 368) = 0.735, p = .568$  when examining English use with computer games.

As with L2 Exposure and the Ideal Self, boys feel they have to learn English to be able to play computer games as seen in figure 4.22.



**Figure 4.22 The Ought-to Self and computer games.**

Nevertheless, this gender difference is not very high and likely connected to their current L2 Exposure where boys report playing more games than the girls do. The gender difference is most apparent in group OFI1, that is, the longer boys received formal instruction the better they recognize the need to learn English to be able to understand the games they are so apparently playing. Research question 4 will look further into the relationships between these factors.

#### **4.3.4 Summary**

Above we have addressed research question 3: What motivates Icelandic 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students to learn and use English in Iceland in relation to, type of English Exposure, their Ideal Self and their Ought-to self? This explored where and how frequently 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students use English in Iceland, in addition to what their desired (Ideal Self) and expected (Ought-to Self) use of English in Iceland are. The results were also examined for gender and group effects. The results show that students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade in Iceland report using English most frequently when



listening to music and watching films and TV, plus using English frequently to play computer games, whereas they seldom use English to read texts. There is no gender difference, nor OFI group difference, for the most frequently reported activity (TV/music) and the least frequent (speaking to friends and texts in English) in this sample. The statistical results show that onset of formal instruction has little or no effect on current use of English, except the frequency of English use at school, as expected. Gender is a factor when it comes to English use with computers and family, where boys report an obligation to use English with computers more than girls do, and girls report a greater obligation to learn English to use with family.

Although the participants are not using much English at school, their Ideal Self and Ought-to Self responses show that they desire and need English in that context. When asked to switch from actual use to a desired use, the responses shift rather drastically as participants report that they want to be able to use English more often for all context-specific factors. Using English with family or peers and for education and written language takes precedence over recreational activities. Although gender effects are rarely significant enough to show statistical impact, they are slightly different where boys are predominantly using English (L2 Exposure) now, but the girls desire to use more English than the boys for everything but computer games (Ideal Self). In addition, the participants desire to learn more English to listen to music and speak to foreigners. This difference evens out when we consider overserved need or obligation (the Ought-to Self) where the only gender difference found was in obligation to learn English to play computer games, as boys feel they have to learn more English to be able to play them, but for everything else the genders agree that there is more obligation to learn English for school, reading and writing, and to be able to speak to foreigners. The only stable context-specific factor is use of English as a Lingua Franca, which although desire and need are more than actual use, Lingua Franca rates as the third to fifth factor in order of importance. The results in this section have

given an insight into where and how frequently participants are using English, where they want to use English, and for what they think they need to learn English, but motivation does not tell us of students' actual English proficiency. The next section explores students' lexical proficiency in terms of vocabulary size and scale to present students' basic understanding of English in Iceland at the onset of formal instruction.

#### **4.4 Relationship between students' exposure to English, motivational dimensions, and vocabulary knowledge**

The three previous research questions focused on the one hand, on students' views and attitudes towards English and when, where, and how often students use English, and on the other hand, the level of their lexical knowledge. However, individually these questions do not address the relationship (or lack thereof) between the context of use (L2 Exposure), learner's motivation for learning (the Ideal and Ought-to Selves) and vocabulary proficiency. Therefore, the fourth and final research question asks, "What is the relationship between students' lexical knowledge and where and how frequently they use English in different situations (L2 context), their expected (Ought-to Self) and desired (Ideal Self) use of English?"

This section brings together vocabulary test scores previously addressed and includes items categorized by the context-specific variables regarding current use of English, what students want to use English for, and what students think they have to use English for (the Ought-to Self) as explained in chapter 3. These items are explored using a correlation coefficient and regression analysis to see which factors (TV/music, computer, education, peers, family, texts and lingua franca) significantly contribute to explaining the variance in test scores on the vocabulary tests. When dealing with regression, it is important to realize that several models can fit the data well. Thus, the models presented here are what can be called a reasonable explanation of what

occurs with the data presented and based on the strongest observed predictors after performing a standard regression, as well as being based on theoretical and logical information extracted from previous descriptive results and correlation comparisons.

The correlation between each context-specific factor from each dimension, the L2 Exposure, the Ideal Self and the Ought-to self, and each vocabulary test was calculated. It must be noted that correlation statistics do not represent cause and effect, which means that, based on these results, the significant relationship indicates that each pair of factors are interrelated and the strength of that individual relationship. In Applied Linguistics research, correlations of as low as 0.3-0.5 can be considered meaningful and if two variables correlate with each other at 0.6, they measure more or less the same thing (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 223).

#### **4.4.1.1 The L2 Exposure and lexical competence**

Before examining the interrelations between all the factors with a regression analysis, correlation coefficients are presented, and tables 4.13 and 4.14 show how individual L2 Exposure factors correlate with each other and each vocabulary test. When the L2 Exposure for one factor goes up, it is likely that the other will follow.

**Table 4.13 Correlation between L2 Exposure factors**

	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Lingua Franca	2.24	-	.561**	.268**	.374**	.332**	.411**	.192**
2. Texts	1.96		-	.326**	.372**	.335**	.421*	.202**
3. Computers	3.01			-	.251**	.190**	.120**	.263**
4. Music and TV	3.45				-	.269**	.283**	.221**
5. Peers	2.01					-	.460**	.241**
6. Family	2.16						-	.199**
7. Education	2.66							-

In this case, it is most likely that Text use and Lingua Franca follow each other, as these two variables have the strongest relationship, and a Pearson correlation ( $r$ ) on a bootstrapped data set found a fairly strong relationship with a medium effect size<sup>8</sup>, and the CI fairly condensed (95% CI [0.485, 0.636],  $r = .561$ ,  $N = 378$ ,  $R^2 = 0.31$ ) which is considered a meaningful relationship. This means that a student who reads books, magazines or chats in English on the internet, is likely to also speak English to foreigners in Iceland and while traveling. Other variables show less strong relationships which proved to be less meaningful. This will be discussed in chapter 5. To explore how the context-specific factors might explain the variance in vocabulary scores, we also ran a Pearson correlation between individual L2 Exposure factors and vocabulary outcomes (Table 4.14).

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<sup>8</sup> For this dissertation I will follow the criterion for effect size given by Plonsky and Oswald (2014) and introduced in Larson-Hall (2016, p. 209) to interpret the meaningfulness of the relationship. Thus, Effect size ( $R^2$ ) = 0.06 is small, 0.16 is medium and 0.36 is a large effect size.

**Table 4.14 Correlation coefficients comparing L2 Exposure factors to vocabulary test scores.**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Yes/No test (r)</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>Effect size (R<sup>2</sup>)</i>	<i>VKS test (r)</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>Effect size (R<sup>2</sup>)</i>
<b>The L2 Exposure</b>	<b>.427**</b>	<b>.351, .507</b>	<b>0.182</b>	<b>.444**</b>	<b>.365, .523</b>	<b>0.197</b>
Lingua Franca	.363**	.264, .461	0.131	.375**	.276, .479	0.141
Texts	.347**	.248, .442	0.120	.359**	.262, .450	0.129
Computers	.318**	.229, .413	0.101	.293**	.196, .393	0.086
Music and TV	.285**	.196, .366	0.081	.265**	.173, .355	0.070
Peers	.263**	.162, .357	0.069	.313**	.215, .411	0.098
Family	.254**	.158, .345	0.064	.272**	.173, .364	0.074
Education	.025	-.079, .141	0.001	.074	-.033, .197	0.005

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

N = 378

When the mean for the combined L2 Exposure factors is compared to vocabulary scores we find a significant medium positive correlation for the Yes-No test  $r = .427$ ,  $p < .01$  and the VKS test scores  $r = .444$ ,  $p < .01$ . This means that around 19% of the variance in the scores is explained by the relationship between vocabulary scores and the total L2 Exposure. Individually most factors show an average positive relationship between test scores and English use. On both tests that relationship is strongest for the Lingua Franca factor, showing that the frequency of communication with foreigners positively influences test scores; the more often the children speak to foreigners, the larger their vocabulary size. Notably, education is the only factor which does not show a significant relationship with vocabulary scores, suggesting that for 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland, the reported use of English at school does not contribute significantly to

lexical competence as measured by the tests. The implications of these results are discussed in chapter 5.

#### 4.4.1.2 The Ideal Self and lexical competence

Table 4.15 shows how participants' desire to use English according to the different individual factors (Ideal Self) that correlate with each other, and in table 4.16, how each factor correlates with general scores on the vocabulary test. Table 4.15 show the results when each factor is correlated with the other factors to determine the strongest relationship between individual contextual factors. As with the L2 Exposure, the highest positive correlation was found between Texts and Lingua Franca, Lingua Franca and Education, on the one hand, and Family and Peers on the other hand. Thus, it is most likely that a student who desires to learn more English to understand written input and to write (Texts), or desires to use English at school, also wants to use English as a Lingua Franca more often. Also, a student who wants to use English to speak more to family also wants to learn English to speak to friends.

**Table 4.15 Correlation between Ideal Self factors**

	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Texts	2.79	-	.423**	.573**	.286**	.451**	.332**	.289**
2. Computer	3.21		-	.336**	.158**	.377**	.161*	.123**
3. Lingua Franca	3.22			-	.560**	.573**	.376**	.352**
4. Education	3.61				-	.362**	.256**	.205**
5. Music and TV	3.41					-	.349**	.278**
6. Peers	2.55						-	.589**
7. Family	2.30							-

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson correlation coefficient calculation confirms these relationships. An ( $r$ ) on a bootstrapped data set found a strong relationship between *Family* and *Peers*, on the one hand, with a medium effect size, and the CI fairly condensed (95% CI [0.513, 0.691],  $r = .589$ ,  $N = 378$ ,  $r^2 = 0.34$ ) and between Texts and Lingua Franca (95% CI [0.509, 0.635],  $r = .573$ ,  $N = 378$ ,  $r^2 = 0.32$ ), and Lingua Franca and Education (95% CI [0.511, 0.633],  $r = .573$ ,  $N = 378$ ,  $r^2 = 0.32$ ) on the other hand, which are considered meaningful relationships. This means that a student who desires to use English to reads books and magazines or chat in English on the internet, and use more English at school, is likely to want to use English to speak to foreigners in Iceland and while traveling. In addition, a student who wants to speak English to family also wants to use it to speak to friends. However, as can be seen in table 4.16, neither the Family nor the Peers factors correlate significantly with vocabulary outcomes while other factors do. So, even though these 9 year old children want to use English more with family and friends, that desire does not have a relationship with their current vocabulary size and breadth (Table 4.16).

**Table 4.16 Correlation coefficients comparing the Ideal Self factors to vocabulary test scores.**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Yes/No test (r)</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>Effect size (r<sup>2</sup>)</i>	<i>VKS test (r)</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>Effect size (r<sup>2</sup>)</i>
<b>The Ideal Self</b>	<b>.183**</b>	<b>.059, .291</b>	<b>0.033</b>	<b>.186**</b>	<b>.066, .301</b>	<b>0.034</b>
Texts	.231**	.121, .338	0.053	.237**	.129, .341	0.056
Computer use	.173**	.059, .280	0.030	.188**	.074, .298	0.035
Lingua Franca	.157**	.054, .261	0.024	.156**	.048, .265	0.024
Education	.122*	.011, .217	0.015	.146**	.029, .243	0.021
Music and TV	.118*	-.007, .238	0.014	.126**	.005, .247	0.016
Peers	.103	-.015, .222	0.011	.099	-.012, .208	0.010
Family	.000	-.112, .105	0.000	-.013	-.115, .094	0.000

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As these results show there is a low significant positive relationship between test scores and The Ideal Self (the desire to learn English) factors when it comes to Texts, Computer use, Lingua Franca, Education, and Music/TV factors. However, the effect size, and thus the meaningfulness of the relationships, are small in addition to Family and Peers showing a non-statistical relationship and negligible effect size. This means that the Ideal Self factors by themselves are unlikely to contribute to vocabulary knowledge of students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. That is, students are not learning vocabulary based on future use, but are influenced by current exposure only. This result is revisited in chapter 5.

#### 4.4.1.3 The Ought-to Self and lexical competence

Tables 4.17 and 4.18 show how individual Ought-to-Self factors correlate with each other and each vocabulary test. As with the L2 Exposure and the Ideal Self, it is most likely that participants who agree that they need to learn English to understand written input and to write



(Texts) will also agree to the need to learn English to use as a Lingua Franca. Furthermore, those participants who report a need to learn English to play on the computer will also see it as a need to learn English to listen to music and watch TV in English.

**Table 4.17 Correlation between Ought-to-Self factors**

	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Lingua Franca	3.11	-	.454**	.561**	.401**	.432**	.405**	.487**
2. Computers	2.69		-	.340**	.548**	.241**	.420*	.308**
3. Texts	3.29			-	.317**	.315**	.239**	.315**
4. Music and TV	2.93				-	.210**	.339**	.298**
5. Education	3.41					-	.190**	.325**
6. Peers	1.98						-	.396**
7. Family	2.64							-

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson correlation ( $r$ ) on a bootstrapped data set found a strong relationship between *Texts* and *Lingua Franca* with a medium effect size, and the CI fairly narrow (95% CI [0.218, 0.404],  $r = .561$ ,  $N = 378$ ,  $r^2 = 0.31$ ) and between *Computer use* and *Music/TV* (95% CI [0.448, 0.640],  $r = .548$ ,  $N = 378$ ,  $r^2 = 0.30$ ) which is considered a meaningful relationship. This means that a student who sees the need to learn English to reads books, magazines or chat in English on the internet, is likely to see a need to learn English to speak English to foreigners in Iceland and while traveling. In addition, a student who sees a need to learn English to play on a computer also sees the need to learn English to listen to music and watch TV in English. These factors, however, do not explain success on the vocabulary tests, as can be seen in table 4.18.

**Table 4.18 Correlation coefficients comparing the Ought-to Self factors to vocabulary test scores.**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Yes/No test (r)</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>Effect size (R<sup>2</sup>)</i>	<i>VKS test (r)</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>Effect size (R<sup>2</sup>)</i>
<b>The Ought-to Self</b>	<b>.071</b>	<b>-.032, .180</b>	<b>0.005</b>	<b>.074</b>	<b>-.024, .176</b>	<b>0.005</b>
Lingua Franca	.106*	.002, .214	0.011	.104*	.008, .206	0.010
Computer use	.073	-.025, .189	0.005	.070	-.034, .182	0.005
Text use	.060	-.053, .165	0.003	.070	-.036, .179	0.005
Music and TV	.045	-.067, .158	0.002	.051	-.056, .167	0.003
Education	.039	-.047, .123	0.002	.047	-.041, .141	0.002
Peers	-.039	-.137, .064	0.002	-.048	-.151, .058	0.002
Family	.001	-.116, .115	0	.032	-.069, .142	0.001

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The only Ought-to-Self factor (I have to learn English to ...) that demonstrates a statistically positive relationship with vocabulary scores is Lingua Franca. This suggests that a participant who feels pressured to learn English to speak to foreigners will score higher on the tests.

However, the relationship is weak and the effect size is very small (1%) and it is likely affected by other variables. However, as noted before, a correlation coefficient does not show causality or internal relationship between context specific factors.

#### **4.4.2 Factors contributing to 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students' vocabulary success**

Building an exact regression model with multiple factors is complex and more than one variation could explain parts of relationships. Based on the previous correlational analysis and the estimation of skill variables, where the most frequent domains did not show a strong (or any) relationship with vocabulary scores, it was decided to run a standard regression in the first step of

the analysis and include all motivational dimension factors. Based on that analysis, it was decided to extract those factors that were statistically significant and run a standard regression only including those factors. Throwing all factors together may not give a very good model, for although the numbers increase, they contribute very little to change in the model and may skew the interpretation. Therefore, a hierarchical regression was run in the final step and the order of inclusion of factors is based on the Standardized coefficients (Beta) from the previous analysis. An analysis of standard residuals was carried out to verify that the model used was appropriate and the factors' relationship statistically significant. The calculations show that the data contained no outliers (Yes-No model = Std. Residual Min = -2.10, Std. Residual Max = 2.66, VKS model = Residual Min = -2.44, Std. Residual Max = 2.49). Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Table 4.19 and 4.20). The histogram of standardized residuals indicated that the data contained approximately normally distributed errors, as did the normal P-P plot of standardized residuals, which showed points that were not completely on the line, but close. The scatterplot of standardized predicted values showed that the data met the assumptions of homogeneity of variance and linearity. The data also met the assumption of non-zero variances. Thus, all assumptions for a relatively good fit model were met. This means that although other models are an option, the models chosen are a reasonable explanation of what context-specific factors contribute to the participants' lexical competence.

#### **4.4.2.1 Contribution of factors to Yes-No vocabulary test scores**

Exploring the contribution made by the factors to receptive vocabulary knowledge as indicated by the test results, a regression analysis yielded that seven context-specific factors

significantly contribute to the explanation of Yes-No test scores (Table 4.19). Six factors from the L2 Exposure dimension and one from the Ought-to-Self dimension.

**Table 4.19 7-Factor Model of Yes-No test success**

<b>Model</b>	<b><math>R^2</math></b>	<b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b>	<b><math>b</math></b>	<b>95% CI for <math>B</math></b>	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
(constant)			-8.578	-21.814, 4.999		
L2-Exp - Computers	.101	.101	6.292***	3.489, 9.095	.837	.1195
L2 Exp – Lingua Franca	.184	.083	5.159***	2.173, 8.145	.632	1.582
Ought-to Self- Peers	.198	.013	-2.957***	-4.704, -1.210	.934	1.071
L2 Exp - Peers	.219	.021	3.996**	1.302, 6.689	.811	1.234
L2 Exp - Education	.233	.014	-3.981**	-6.581, -1.382	.877	1.141
L2 Exp- TV/music	.251	.019	5.270**	1.399, 9.141	.779	1.283
L2 Exp- Text use	.261	.010	4.302*	.461, 8.144	.615	1.625

\*\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that computer use contributed most significantly to the regression model,  $F(1,376) = 42.16, p < .001$  and accounted for 10.1 % of the variation in scores on the Yes-No vocabulary test. Thus, participants' computer use predicts vocabulary success. Introducing the L2 Exp - Lingua Franca variable explained an additional 8.3% of variation in scores and this change in  $R^2$  was significant,  $F(2,375) = 42.36, p < .001$ . Adding the Ought-to Self - Peers factor to the model explained an additional 1.3% of the variation and this change in  $R^2$  was significant,  $F(3,374) = 30.71, p < .001$ . Including the L2 Exp – Peers explained an additional 2.1% significant change in  $R^2$ ,  $F(4,373) = 26.07, p < .01$ , and adding L2 Exp – Education explained additional 1.4% significant variance,  $F(5,372) = 22.54, p < .01$ . The sixth factor added is L2 Exp – TV/music which added 1.9% to the variance,  $F(6,371) = 20.73, p < .01$  and finally, the addition of L2 Exp - Texts to the regression model explained an additional 1% of

the variation in scores and this change in  $R^2$  square was also significant,  $F(7,370) = 13.70$ ,  $p < .05$ . This model presented in table 4.19 predicts 26.1% of the vocabulary size for receptive vocabulary.

Students' use of English to play computer games is the most powerful predictor of scores on a Yes-No vocabulary test with Lingua Franca use the second strongest, together explaining 18.4% of the variance. The more frequently they use English under those circumstances, the higher they score on the Yes-No frequency test. Notably, two factors that individually did not significantly correlate with the test scores, appear in this model, namely, how frequently English is used at school (L2 Exposure – Education) and having to learn English to speak to friends (Ought-to Self - Peers) and will be discussed further in chapter 5.

#### 4.4.2.2 Contribution to VKS vocabulary test scores

The regression analysis for the VKS test scores yielded six context-specific factors that significantly contribute to explaining the VKS test scores (Table 4.20).

**Table 4.20 6-Factor Model of VKS test success**

<b>Model</b>	<b><math>R^2</math></b>	<b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b>	<b><math>b</math></b>	<b>95% CI for <math>B</math></b>	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
(constant)			-6.624	-17.854, 4.606		
L2 Exp – Lingua Franca	.141	.141	4.470***	2.097, 6.844	.650	1.538
L2 Exp - Peers	.180	.040	4.470***	2.165, 6.437	.838	1.193
Ought-to Self- Peers	.202	.021	-2.680***	-4.089, -1.272	.934	1.071
L2-Exp - Computers	.235	.033	3.890***	1.684, 6.096	.878	1.139
L2 Exp- Text use	.249	.014	3.835*	.765, 6.905	.626	1.597
The Ideal Self - Education	.258	.009	2.791*	.202, 5.381	.960	1.041

\*\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that L2 Exposure – Lingua Franca contributed most significantly to the regression model,  $F(1,376) = 61.57, p < .001$  and accounted for 14.1 % of the variation in scores on the VKS vocabulary test. Introducing the L2 Exposure – Peers use variable explained an additional 4% of variation in scores and this change in  $R^2$  was significant,  $F(2,375) = 41.27, p < .001$ . Adding the Ought-to Self - Peers factor to the model explained an additional 2.1% of the variation and this change in  $R^2$  was significant,  $F(3,374) = 31.51, p < .001$ . Including the L2 Exp – Computer use explained an additional 3.3% significant change in  $R^2$ ,  $F(4,373) = 28.69, p < .001$ , and adding L2 Exp - Texts explained additional 1.4% significant variance,  $F(5,372) = 24.70, p < .05$ . Finally, the addition of the Ideal Self - Education to the regression model explained an additional 0.9% of the variation in scores and this change in  $R^2$  square was also significant,  $F(6,371) = 21.52, p < .05$ .

This model presented in table 4.20 explains 25.8% of the variance in vocabulary score for vocabulary depth with their English use with foreigners as the predominant predictor of their VKS test scores. Again, the L2 Exposure Educational (current use at school) factor positively and Ought-to Self - Peer factor (pressure) negatively but significantly contributed to vocabulary success. This does not necessarily mean that students are hindered by current English use at school, as this study did not explore that use in detail, but rather that students are experiencing different frequency of use at school as well as different material and different number of lessons. The tests used in this study are based on frequency of English words from children's speech and may not represent the type of English vocabulary taught at school in Iceland in the early years but may represent the Extramural vocabulary students are exposed to.

### 4.4.3 Summary

This section has addressed research question 4 in this study: What is the relationship between students' lexical knowledge and where and how frequently they use English in different situations (L2 environment), their expected (Ought-to Self) and desired (Ideal Self) use of English? It explored the relationship and contribution of factors to explain the variance in test scores on both receptive and productive vocabulary test scores. A significant relationship was found between students' English exposure and test scores. Thus, vocabulary test scores significantly correlate with all L2 Exposure factors individually except for *Education*, five Ideal Self factors (*Texts*, *Computer games*, *Lingua franca*, *Education* and *Music/TV*), but only one Ought-to Self factor (*Lingua Franca*). However, when hierarchical multiple regression analyses are conducted for each test, those analyses each yielded a 7 and 6-factor models showing how factors significantly contribute to explaining variance in the test scores. On the Yes-No test, the most powerful predictor of success is participants' computer use, whereas their use of English to speak to foreigners is the predominant predictor of scores on the VKS test. This suggests that success on vocabulary scores is significantly connected to students' traveling habits and frequency of playing computer games, providing learners with both receptive and productive exposure.

### 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presents data results based on the research questions presented in this study. First, results for research question 1 were presented and showed that overall English is important to 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland and the need to learn English is high regardless of gender or English background. In addition, their rating of skill may be connected to their individual English use, thus indicating that this type of exposure plays a large role in their experience with English.

Lexical knowledge was chosen to measure students' English proficiency. To do this we asked: "What is the English vocabulary size of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction?" Two vocabulary tests were administered to explore receptive (Yes-No test) and depth (VKS test) knowledge. The results show that participants scored 40 on average (out of 100) on the receptive test and 36 (out of 75) on the semi-productive depth test. Boys scored higher on both tests in general and students beginning formal instruction earlier scored higher than students starting later. However, there was great variance within the results and most notably there was little difference between students starting in 1, 2 and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade showing little progress between proficiency based on onset of instruction. Notably, gender and group difference were statistically significant on the receptive test, but not on the semi-productive test. This shows that although there is a difference in whether students recognize the words, there is little gender or group difference in the ability to translate them into Icelandic, Gender differences are more connected to degree of confidence than actual proficiency as shown in the responses to the VKS scale.

When looking at type of words marked and translated correctly, it is apparent that within the 1250-word frequency list the knowledge is not linear as the most commonly marked words belong to all levels rather than beginning with level 1 and progressing to level 5. Also, the most commonly known words are connected to games and gaming-related activity and as the translation of the word 'play' shows, this is connected to the type of games these children play. Correlation between the two tests found that a student scoring high on one test is highly likely to score high on the other, regardless of gender or onset of instruction. Consequently, research question 3 addresses where, and how frequently, students are using English (the L2 Exposure) in addition to how frequently they want to learn English (the Ideal Self) and whether they need to learn English to be able to use English (the Ought-to Self) in various specific contexts, namely, at school (*Education*), while playing computer games (*Computers*), while reading and writing



(*Texts*), while speaking to foreigners (*Lingua Franca*), speaking to family (*Family*), with friends (*Peers*) and while listening to music and watching television (*TV/music*). The results show that students' L2 Exposure is highly colored by recreational activity such as playing games, watching television and listening to music, while their Ideal Self, or desire to use English, shifts focus and puts more emphasis on Education, family and speaking to foreigners above playing games. The need or obligation to speak English also places a stronger emphasis on Education, Texts and Lingua Franca than students' current use presents. Thus, a more formal need takes precedence over the recreational environment 4<sup>th</sup> graders are currently exposed to. The results also showed that boys are using more English than girls, but when desire and obligation are explored, these gender differences change as girls desire to learn more English. Finally, both genders feel equally obliged to learn English. The only context-specific factor that consistently shows the strongest gender effects is *Computers*, in all three dimensions (Exposure, Ideal Self, Ought-to Self, where boys put more emphasis on that factor than the girls do. Thus, the results that address research question 3 have shown us where and how 4<sup>th</sup> graders are using English and the variety within that use but does not represent the relationship with their English proficiency.

To find out how the proficiency could be explained we explored the relationship between the context specific variables within the L2 Exposure, the Ideal Self, the Ought-to Self, and vocabulary scores in research question 4. Correlation coefficient analysis found that the L2 Exposure has a stronger relationship to vocabulary scores than the other two dimensions (Ideal Self and Ought-to Self) suggesting that current exposure has more influence on students' lexical knowledge than what they desire or need to use English. This was confirmed using regression analysis to generate individual models for each vocabulary test. For the Yes-No test, or receptive knowledge, the results present a 7-factor model with the *L2 Exposure - Computer games*, followed by *L2 Exposure - Lingua Franca* as the predominant factors contributing to success on

the Yes-No test. For the VKS test, or sight-vocabulary knowledge, a 6-factor model emerged. There *L2 Exposure - Lingua Franca* and *L2 Exposure – Peers* contributed most to success on the VKS test. Notably, education contributes negatively to receptive knowledge in conjunction with other variables. That is, the less they use English at school in relation to the more they use English extramurally predicts a higher score on the Yes-No test. This suggests that the vocabulary learned at school may be different from the vocabulary acquired extramurally. This gives us the image that a student who scores high on the vocabulary tests is playing computer games, conversing with foreigners and speaking English to his friends, thus providing this learner with both receptive and productive exposure.

These results show learners with high interest, need and motivation to use English, but that their current knowledge is highly contextualized. Their use is mostly extramurally, with high individual differences. Some use may be affected by gender and onset of instruction, but this effect is minimal, suggesting that other factors, such as access to media, interests, type of exposure, cognitive development and literacy, may explain some of the variation. This is further discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5. Discussion**

Chapter 5 focuses on the discussion of the results from the previous chapter in the context of outcomes, constructs and previous studies in this field. First, I discuss each research question in turn beginning with students' attitude towards English and their self-reported proficiency. Second, the vocabulary test results are examined further. I then discuss when, how and where students are using English most frequently, based on the 7 context-specific factors proposed earlier (family, peers, school, texts, computers, TV/music, and use of English as a Lingua Franca), supported by information extracted from student interviews during the pilot session to explore the nature of the exposure, their Ideal Self and Ought-to self. Finally, I look at the relationship between the L2 Exposure, the Ideal Self, and the Ought-to Self through context-specific factors and students' lexical proficiency to bring together the full study. Next, the results of the study will be examined in relation to the current studies on gender implications, onset of instruction, theories of motivation and lexical development. Finally, the relevance of the results to the Icelandic linguistic context will be explored. The chapter closes with a few personal observations about the results of the study.

### **5.1 Students' views about English and self-reported proficiency**

As remarked in the previous chapters, attitude towards learning another language is a complex factor and to answer the first research question we need to look at several components. For this study, I explored student's view on the importance of English in Iceland, their self-perceived knowledge and general need to learn English.

#### **5.1.1 Importance of English**

Not surprisingly, the results demonstrate a high importance placed on knowing English (87.3%) for the students in this sample, regardless of gender or onset of formal instruction. This

has been a reoccurring trend in the past 20 years in Iceland for all age groups and has remained stable for that period (Auður Torfadóttir et al., 2006; Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2009, 2010, 2018; Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2011, 2015; Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir & Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2018; Jeeves, 2013; Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al., 2006; Lefever, 2006, 2010; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Lowenstein, 2021). English has become the first foreign language taught at school, moved increasingly to lower grades (1-4<sup>th</sup> grade) despite officially starting in the fourth grade, and young learners are exposed to English through media very early on. Both studies conducted prior to this study and later studies show a positive attitude towards English in Iceland, and this is unlikely to subside considering the global spread of English in the digital world and frequent use of English as a lingua franca in Iceland (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2018). Studies confirm that English has become an integral part of Icelandic culture regardless of individual proficiency, and surveys on digital use further strengthen that assumption (Capacent Gallup, 2007, 2009, 2013; Statistics Iceland, 2009). The importance of English has grown and, as stated in the curriculum guidelines, English is needed for global communication, business transactions and general participation in today's world (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2013, p. 125). Young learners, as this study shows, feel that English is very important in Iceland. This trend coincides with studies of learners in other countries with equal or similar exposure to English, where English may no longer be a typical foreign language but moving towards the status of a second language in daily life (De Wilde et al., 2020; Jensen, 2017; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021). This in turn affects young peoples' view of their own skill in English.

### **5.1.2 Perceived English Proficiency**

Participants consider themselves rather proficient in English, as young learners have in previous studies in Iceland (Lefever, 2010; Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al., 2006). This also

corresponds with results from studies with adults and adolescents in Iceland who consider their general English skills rather high (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2011, 2015; Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2010, 2011, 2012; Anna Jeeves, 2013). This may stem from the extreme exposure to English from music, television and computer use leading to receptive skills and familiarity with informal registers as reported in the studies above. However, when explored further, the use may be highly contextual, and that could lead to an overestimation of skill as their actual use is very limited at this point. This is certainly one of the findings of this study as the results of L2 Exposure demonstrate. No significant difference was found based on gender or onset of formal instruction, showing that neither variable affects participants' evaluation of general proficiency in English. Studies in Norway and Sweden suggest that the same applies in those countries and perhaps others where English exposure is high (Rindal, 2010; Sundqvist, 2009; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). This changes slightly in this study when individual language skills were examined.

When students' self-reported proficiency by individual skills are examined, the students' find English rather easy for the most part, although reading and writing are slightly more difficult than listening and speaking. They rate verbal skills higher than their written skills, which is probably connected to the type of use participants are experiencing at this point. They are not reading very much and writing even less. Their highly contextualized use shows that these learners engage more in listening to music and watching television than any other activity. However, although they do not speak as often as they hear English, it is possible that they are engaged in very limited interaction that is contextualized and allows them to use the exact limited knowledge of English they have. Interestingly, students find writing easier than reading; reasons for this, as well as the limited use mentioned above, will be discussed later in the chapter when exposure to English is explored. This also concurs with studies with adults and adolescents

mentioned in the previous section suggesting that students' views about English in Iceland are not dependent on age. Again, no gender difference was found, but when these items were explored in relation to group difference, there was a difference in results based on students' onset of formal instruction. Group 5, comprised of students yet to receive any instruction in English, rate similarly to the other groups for listening as well as speaking (although not statistically significant for the speaking skill) and show more confidence in their reading skill. This is maybe because the reading group 5 is doing is very little, thus they are not qualified to evaluate their skill. The groups receiving formal instruction have gained some awareness of the lack of skill through their reading experience at school. As to why these groups evaluate their writing skill higher than reading, this could be that they are expected to write in class, regardless of how much, and they feel they can do well. Popular activities with young learners in the classroom consist of listening and speaking (learning songs and games) and it is unlikely that participants are reading English outside of school at this age other than very limited specific computer-based language. Notably, in this sample, those who started in 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade show more confidence in their writing skill than the other three groups, which suggests that those groups are more engaged in such activities.

The difference shows a variance in perception, which may be the result of different exposure and learning experiences not dependent on onset of instructions for the 4<sup>th</sup> graders, and this is examined in research question 2. Despite the difference between OFI groups, the numbers and effect size tell us that this difference in confidence is too low to have significant meaning and may be specific to this sample. Therefore, it seems that neither gender nor early OFI affect students' view of their own skill in the language.

Recent research in Iceland is focused on how much English learners are exposed to in the environment as this study set a baseline for and its effect on attitude towards English and skill

perception in English. However, currently there is limited information on what type of activities the youngest learners of English in Iceland are engaged in and out of school, and their relationship with actual and perceived English proficiency. This study, as well as later studies, shows that there is a relationship between perceived skills and general exposure. (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2018; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021). The findings suggest that students have very little awareness of their own proficiency and that their views are based on very limited and highly contextualized use of perceptive language that they generalize to overall language proficiency. These findings have implications for educational policy and practice and will be discussed in the general conclusion

## **5.2 What is the size and breadth of the English vocabulary of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland at the beginning of formal instruction?**

The participants in this study were at the beginning of formal instruction in English according to the National Curriculum Guide for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Despite the guidelines, some groups started to learn English earlier at school and one group in the sample (5<sup>th</sup> graders) had not started English when tested. In order to set a baseline for future studies of Icelandic students' English proficiency, we measured the size and breadth of participants' lexical knowledge. Research has shown a clear link between all four skills and vocabulary knowledge and confirms the importance of focusing on vocabulary in language learning (Milton, 2013). This study focuses on the baseline of the young learners' vocabulary knowledge to explore the possible relationship between knowledge, motivation, and use.

### **5.2.1 Lexical knowledge of Icelandic children**

The receptive vocabulary test results (Yes-No) showed that 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland know an average of 501 words, from the first 1250 words in the *WordExpress* frequency list (see

chapter 3 for further information on the list) ranging from the average 395 up to 600 words per groups at the onset of instruction. Standard deviation is high, showing a considerable individual variance in the results, as previous and later studies in Iceland and abroad observe (Jensen, 2017; Kuppens, 2010; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021; Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012). Given that some of these students have had little or no English instruction at the point of testing, it is evident that students bring some vocabulary knowledge with them to school, as previous studies have shown (Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al., 2006; Lefever, 2007, 2010; Auður Torfadóttir, Brynhildur Ragnarsdóttir, & Lefever, 2006).

The Icelandic curriculum does not provide a framework for vocabulary size, but considering curriculum guidelines from other countries, students are expected to learn 250-400 words per year at the onset of formal instruction up to 5<sup>th</sup> grade (Alexiou, 2009; Milton, 2009). Therefore, 395 words are thus equivalent to approximately a year or two of studying English at school with weekly classes. The results in this study showed a great variation in scores and a difference between groups based on when formal instruction began. This difference does not show much gain between an early and later onset. Furthermore, this difference was not statistically significant between groups 1, 2 and 3. This means that although there is an observable difference between students who began learning in the first grade (thus had 3 years of English at school prior to testing) and those who began in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, this difference is not significant enough to assume the success of beginning English instruction early. Looking at the estimated vocabulary gain between grade levels, shows that this difference is 49 words gained between first and second grade onset and 32 between second and third grade onset, which does not conform to the estimated increase formal instruction should add to a students' vocabulary. This could suggest that early formal instruction does not sufficiently add to students' vocabulary, which should be 250-400 words at least. Also, the limited information we have on how much



time is dedicated to vocabulary work hinders general assumptions of success. This can be affected by the vague vocabulary goals indicated in the National Curriculum and it is in the hands of each individual teacher to decide how much class time is dedicated to vocabulary work. Furthermore, this could be affected by the limited instructional time allotted to English (16-40 minutes per week in 2010) at those grade levels, as the numbers reported in section 2.4.1 from Statistics Iceland (2017) show. Research on vocabulary gain clearly show that numerous encounters with a word are needed to facilitate acquisition (Nation, 2013). Thus, to facilitate repeated use within the limited instruction time, less words are acquired at school.

It is also quite possible that the vocabulary gains are simply the result of exposure outside of school. The relationship between use and vocabulary knowledge is further explored in the final research question of this study. Nevertheless, the main findings from this test are that students who have received little to no English instruction at school still recognize 395 or more words from the first 1250 most common words in English.

A Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) was chosen to explore participants' productive knowledge of the vocabulary they claim to know on the Yes-No test. Participants scored on average 36.01 out of the 75 points available on the VKS test and translated correctly 11.44 out of 25. Using a correlation coefficient to determine test validity (see chapter 3) we confirmed that it is 73% (correlation  $r = .86$ ) likely that a student scoring high on the Yes-No test will also score high on the VKS. This comes as no surprise as the constructs are highly related as the 25 words on the VKS also appeared among the 100 on the previous test. As mentioned, this was done to explore whether the recognition on the VSK test of words on the Yes-No test meant that they had deeper knowledge of the words. Thus, when correct translations of the 25 words on the VKS test are correlated with the same 25 on the Yes-No test, it is 80% likely that a student marking the word can also translate said word. Students marked 50% of those words on the Yes-No test while

being able to translate 48%. This suggests that student's semi-productive knowledge is close to their receptive knowledge. That is, participants can translate out of context (sight-vocabulary) the words they know receptively, thus showing a greater understanding than mere recognition. Theory says that, in general, the gap between receptive and productive vocabulary increases as learners (at least older learners) add more vocabulary that is more characteristic of foreign language learning than second language learning (Nation, 2013). Based on our sample, there is a slight gap, but a very small one, which supports the notion that young learners learn both receptive and productive use of the words. This is most likely connected to contextual use.

We have established that our participants who use English most often are using it to play computer games, and that the small gap between receptive and productive knowledge maybe because computer gaming can facilitate both dimensions of knowledge. This, however, is dependent on what type of gaming is involved as well as other activities learners engage in related to gaming (or other productive activity. Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012).

In this study this was most apparent in the varied and game related translations of the word play, where the Icelandic *spila* (e. play a game) was more prominent than the general translation *leika* (e. play among children). Additionally, Icelandic children's television programs and movies in English are subtitled, thus the children might be acquiring productive knowledge alongside receptive knowledge. Nevertheless, to draw that conclusion one must consider their L1 literacy level (4 years of reading in Icelandic), a skill which was not explored in this study. The main conclusion to draw from the overall results is that the learners in this study already know some English vocabulary before the compulsory level of onset of instruction (4<sup>th</sup> grade). However, this knowledge varies between individuals and many factors other than length of instruction are likely to influence that knowledge.

### 5.2.1.1 Vocabulary knowledge and gender

Boys scored significantly higher than girls on the Yes-No receptive test suggesting that they have a larger receptive vocabulary (548 words) than the girls (454 words). A larger variance was found within the boys' group than with the girls. This does not correspond to the commonly held belief that girls are better at language learning than boys (Ellis, 1994; Heinzmann, 2009). The boys in this study also reported using, on average, more English than the girls did.

A significant gender difference was found in the results of the VKS test in the way students responded to category III and IV (translation combined with, I think, and I know). Girls tended to mark "I think I know, and it means" which scored 2 points, while the boys marked "I know this word and it means" (scoring 3 points) before providing a meaning. Thus, the boys showed more confidence in their knowledge than the girls did.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that the boys were able to provide more correct translations than the girls, and this was confirmed when we looked at gender differences based on correct translations only, and each translation choice received the same point. No statistically significant gender difference was found in those results, although the boys were slightly better. This shows that in this sample, boys and girls are almost equally capable of providing translations for the words they know. This suggests that the boys in this sample are not significantly better at translating words out of context, but that they are significantly more confident in their knowledge than the girls are. This is also confirmed in research question one, where boys rated their English skills higher than the girls.

Although no significant gender difference was found on the VKS test when it comes to correct translations, a difference was found when the two tests, the Yes-No and the VSK, are compared. A comparison showed that the relationship between the scores on the Yes-No test and the VKS is slightly stronger for the boys (77%) than it is for the girls (69%). Thus, the gap

between vocabulary size and breadth is smaller for boys. Considering that boys seem more confident in their knowledge than girls, the girls' lack of confidence may result in their being more cautious when marking words on the Yes-No test. The larger gap between results on the Yes-No test and the VKS scale seen in the girls' responses might therefore be a reflection of more caution on the girls' part when responding, rather than an indication of an actual knowledge gap (Ronald & Kamimoto, 2014). Although Yes-No tests have shown to correlate well with proficiency tests (see Eyckmans, 2004; Milton, 2009 for historical review), it is important to err on the side of caution when interpreting the results. The results from the analysis in this study observe the importance of using more than one test type to explore vocabulary knowledge and the limited assumptions we can make based exclusively on recognition tests.

#### **5.2.1.2 Differences in vocabulary knowledge between groups based on OFI**

The statistical evidence indicates that students who began learning English in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade score significantly higher than students beginning in 4<sup>th</sup> grade on both tests. This was expected as OFI 1 has had 3 years of instruction while OFI4 has only received 2 months of weekly lessons. Logically, those who have received English instruction longer should score higher. However, the difference between groups 1 to 3 is not significant enough to be meaningful, suggesting that little extra is gained in vocabulary between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and that the greatest gains are between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The differences found suggest that the onset of formal instruction is not the primary influence on vocabulary gain at this age, and this is supported by participants who claim that they currently use little English at school regardless of when they began receiving formal instruction. Interestingly, group five in this sample scores higher than all the other groups on the vocabulary tests, even though these students have yet to receive any formal instruction at school. This further supports the conclusions that there are other variables than OFI that determine the

outcome of the vocabulary tests. This will be further explored in section 5.4 when we look at the relationship between knowledge and context-specific factors. On the other hand, it is clear that moving instruction to a younger age with limited results does not seem to result in better lexical proficiency. Given that our learners are still acquiring conversational and academic skills in their first language, we need to consider the relationship between L2 and academic achievement. As Collier (1989) suggests, “Children around the age of 8 to 12 who have had L1 schooling are the most efficient L2 school language acquirers” (p.518). This assumption is based on a second language environment with considerable exposure and use of English in all domains. As English exposure and use increases in Iceland this may apply here. However, this study also shows that children are not conversing with family and friends, or using English in all domains, for English to qualify as a second language.

### **5.3 The nature of students’ exposure to English, their Ideal Self and Ought-to Self**

The first question in this study focused on participants’ own views about the importance of knowing English and their own English skills. The third research question asks, where and how often 4<sup>th</sup> grade students use English in Iceland and under what circumstances they want to, or feel that they must do. This explores their L2 Exposure, Ideal Self and Ought-to Self, in relation to seven context-specific factors: TV/music (watching and listening), Computers (playing games), Education (using English at school), Peers (speaking to friends), Family (speaking to parents and other family members), Texts (reading texts) and Lingua Franca (speaking to foreigners, at home, and abroad).

The study provides an opportunity to explore internal and external factors on a micro level within the linguistic context of young learners and allow us to examine the relevance of current theories of motivation to the Icelandic context. There are factors external to the students’

control that affect their language learning success. Several studies have been conducted that identify those factors and they are generally divided into two categories, internal and external (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The internal factors examined in this study include motivation and attitude, while external factors include instruction, linguistic context and exposure, and actual language use. Lately, the focus of motivational research is on theoretical frameworks based on the idea of the Self (Dörnyei, 2009a, 2015). Therefore, Dörnyei's L2 motivational self-system's dimensions are used to explore students' contextual use and future selves in relation to their English language learning. This is discussed in the next sections.

### **5.3.1 The L2 Exposure**

Dörnyei's L2 Experience dimension refers to how students experience learning within the classroom context, while in this study we define experience by seven identified contexts, regardless of whether the exposure is at school or at home thus naming the factor L2 Exposure. This study shows that students are using English primarily to watch TV and films, to listen to music and to play on a computer. Next, they claim to sometimes use English at school (*Educational*), to speak to foreigners (*Lingua Franca*) and speak to family. Finally, they seldom or never use English with friends, or to read and write. This suggests a primarily media-exposed youth acquiring English incidentally through recreational activities rather than focused learning in educational contexts, particularly as some participants in this study have yet to begin learning English at school. Likewise, participants do not report speaking much English, although that was the skill they found easiest along with listening. This may be because they only speak when they know what their proficiency allows, which limits their productive experience. Their use of English is very context oriented and confined largely to watching films and listening to music, which do not necessarily facilitate learning to speak. Recent studies show a lack of a relationship

between listening to music and general proficiency (De Wilde et al., 2020; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021). It is likely that young children still use Icelandic to converse about the activities they engage in. Their computer activity is divided between playing interactive games and games on game stations such as Xbox, PlayStation etc., and while the former activity may not require communication in written form, or the little writing they do, they may not perceive as actual writing, and the latter does not require any communication. Thus, the need to speak is limited. The language of the games is also very context specific whereby the vocabulary to navigate is the same across games and does not require understanding the meaning as much as what their function is, as seen in the response to the word play in this study. For example, they may know that “settings” take you to a place where you control how you see and play the game, choose characters etc., while they may not know the translation of “settings” (*ísl. stillingar*), thus understanding the concept in this context, but not necessarily the global meaning or use of the word. Therefore, “settings” become a symbol rather than a word to use in a sentence.

A significant gender difference was found for several questions, where boys say they use English more often than the girls while on the computer, at school and while speaking to foreigners. Girls say they speak more often to family than the boys do. The most significant difference is that boys are using English to play games in English on game stations, on computers and with their friends. The first type, as mentioned before, requires more recognition of function than full language skill, while interactive games require discourse and pragmatic competence. Although the question asked how frequently they use English to play games with friends, we cannot confirm whether the actual communication was conducted in English or Icelandic, only that the games were in English. However, research on gaming done in Sweden (age 10-11) has shown that individuals who frequently play interactive computer games use English as the

primary medium of communication (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012, 2014). Those gaming individuals are primarily male, as our participants were, and it is likely that since the games are in English, the communication is also in English, or they are translanguaging, using both English and Icelandic.

Interestingly, only two factors demonstrated a significant difference between groups based on OFI, namely, education and Lingua Franca. On the one hand, the 5<sup>th</sup>-grade starters reported using English seldom at school while the other groups say sometimes, which is not surprising, since Group 5 have yet to receive formal instruction in English at school. On the other hand, this group reports using more English to speak to foreigners (as stated in the question) than the other groups. This group attends class with two native speakers of English and that may be affecting the frequency of use to speak to foreigners. Nevertheless, they do not report speaking to friends more than the other groups. Students may be conversing with said native English students, while not seeing them as friends but foreigners in their response, thus speaking English to foreigners often in their view.

The numbers from Statistics Iceland and Capacent Gallup about computer use and type of use, show us that computer use by young learners is on the rise and this use evolves around games and visual media, while children around the age 9 and 10 are not reading or writing much on the internet (Capacent Gallup, 2007, 2009, 2013; Statistics Iceland, 2009, 2015, 2017). Ortega's study in Iceland from 2011, on the language of children's television shows on Icelandic stations, showed that the language used was predominantly English, albeit with Icelandic subtitles. Television shows and films on other providers are predominantly in English and this is likely to increase English exposure exponentially in the coming years. Our participants report using English mostly to enjoy this medium.



### 5.3.2 The Ideal Self

The second part of research question 3 examined what motivates Icelandic 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students to learn and use English in Iceland to explore their Ideal Self; the desired use of English. Motivational research today has moved away from native English speakers as a target group to a more globally oriented self-image of using English as a Lingua Franca in communication (Dörnyei, 2009a; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Lamb, 2004, 2012; Norton, 2001). In this study, we focus on how this image is projected through contextual use of language. Dörnyei's original construct investigates the desire to use English in general by focusing on how one sees oneself as a user of English. We asked how frequently participants would like to be able to use English for a specific purpose, in specific contexts of use.

In this study the most prominent Ideal Self context is education. 71.4% of the participants respond that they would like to use English more often at school, while only 18% report using English at school currently. This is not surprising, as some students have received instruction for 3 years and others have just begun learning English at school. However, there was no significant difference between OFI groups demonstrating that even though students have had longer instruction they desire to use English more frequently at school. The second most reported activities where English is used is TV and music, in which 66% of participants want to continue to engage in those frequently and equal to what they are already doing. It is important to note that using English as a lingua franca now takes third place because participants are rarely speaking to foreigners, but the question asks about desired use. This could reflect the reality of Icelandic children, who at 9 years of age have gained awareness that they will need to use another language than Icelandic while traveling. Although computers are now the fourth prominent factor, participants still desire to be able to use more English than they are actually doing so on the computer. This may also reflect the notion previously mentioned, that they know they will need

more English. Text media gains more importance when it comes to desired use where students would like to read and write texts more than they are currently doing. However, as we would have predicted, students still use Icelandic to speak to family and peers and do not foresee having to use English in that context.

Although slight gender differences emerged for all factors, with girls desiring to use English more than boys for all factors except computers, these differences were only found statistically significant when it comes to computer use and using English with family and peers. Considering that boys claim to play computer games in English more than girls do, they still see a further need and thus desire to use English in that context, while the girls do not. Overall, this shows that students would like to use English more often in all respects than they are using at the moment and English is a part of their future use. This suggests that despite current use, these students desire to use more English in the future, and if we consider that they do think English is highly important and that there is a need regardless of how they interpret their own proficiency, they will need more English. The fact that there is a gender difference in their desired use, where girls would like to use English more often, could be connected to identification of need. Previous research has shown that there is a gender difference in motivation when it comes to foreign language learning for other languages than English in instructional settings (Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2009, Dörnyei et al, 2006). That is, girls prefer and do better in a formal instructional environment, while boys prefer to acquire more incidentally. This, however, seems to be different for English as it is considered a more gender-neutral language in relation to achievement now that the language has become a global force within the digital media and international communication. Not all research supports this as Heinzmann found in Switzerland that girls had a higher motivation to learn English and put more effort into their schoolwork (Heinzmann, 2009, 2013). The gender difference found in this study supports the assumption that girls are more

motivated to learn English in school because English use at school has higher priority for the future than it does when it comes to current use. However, this difference is very small, and no group difference was found within context variables, so variation in response is most likely guided by different factors than gender or onset of instruction.

Previous research on motivation and young learners has shown that children do not follow a stable motivational pattern, but rather demonstrate multiple contextual variations and that they are still experiencing the world, trying out different identities, thus the views can be considered vague as more stable ideal selves emerge in adolescence (Alexiou, 2009; Dörnyei, 2009a; Lamb, 2012; Nikolov, 1999a, 2009a). This study supports a notion that in relation to English, Icelandic children do have a sense that they would like to be able to use English in the future, but the desire does not necessarily extend to speaking English to family and friends. English is to be used with other English speakers or other foreigners, while they seem to have little desire to speak English to family and friends. Clearly Icelandic children see themselves using English in school in the future, but not with their intimates in or out of school.

### **5.3.3 The Ought-to self**

The Ought-to-Self factor as presented by Dörnyei represents the aspirations for oneself based on expectations from others. However, studies in Europe have not found a clear Ought-to-Self dimension and this may be age specific, that is this dimension of Dörnyei's model does not emerge before a certain age. This dimension may also be culture specific and more apparent in findings from studies on Asian or Arabic cultures, where students are more influenced by demands of family than European youngsters are (Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Lamb, 2012). This study explores the Ought-to Self in relation to specific contexts of use and shows how participants evaluate their future expected (obligated) use of English related to where it is used.

The responses are generated from statements starting with “I have to learn English because...” so that participants were asked to agree or disagree with statements for each factor. This dimension has not been explored in previous research in Iceland but is considered an important element in current research on motivation and deemed relevant to the age group in focus in this study. That is, youngsters, who live in an environment where the importance of English is growing.

Participants in this study agreed, or highly agreed, that school is the environment for which they must learn English. Children may at this point realize the obligation to learn English as they have received limited formal instruction, but they know this will change. We cannot ignore the fact that, despite the positive attitude towards English as a language, it is a compulsory school subject for these children. Other use of English is more optional where contextual, pragmatic and personal factors play a larger role in whether learning and using English takes place. Also, as they are heavily exposed to English in their daily lives, they may interpret their will to use it as a need or obligation to learn it as they will not be able to function without knowing English. In our sample, more than 50% of students perceived it as an obligation to learn English to prevent a negative outcome when it came to school, reading and writing, and using English to speak to foreigners.

A negative outcome at school may not be perceived yet for many students as they are quite confident in their skills and have just begun formal instruction recently, so they might not make the connection between skill and grades. The second prominent obligatory Ought-to-Self context is *Texts*, that is reading and writing. This strongly supports the first factor. What is interesting is that children already perceive the need to learn English for education and information gathering and this is clearly expressed by Anna Jeeves’ (2013) adolescent and adult subjects. They also realize that to communicate with foreigners they will need to learn English. Which may be a reflection of an awareness that they speak a first language that has very few

speakers. An interesting outcome of this study is the pragmatic awareness these 9-year-olds display when it comes to the functions of language. While other studies conducted internationally mention family or authoritative pressure as motivators, the responses of these children reflect an awareness of their need to use the language in the future as they have their own age-appropriate needs in the own lives, so they do not need or perceive external pressure to feel obliged to learn English.

Participants agree that they must learn English to use English for TV, music, and computers, but the obligation is less prominent than the will and the actual use demonstrates. The only factor showing gender differences was computer use, where boys agree more strongly than the girls that they must learn English to play computer games. Considering that boys are currently playing computer games more frequently than girls, this difference is not all that surprising. The boys may feel that they will not survive in such games without English, and thus feel more obliged to learn English, while the girls have no need at all for such activities. Nevertheless, the obligation to learn English for computer games is still low for both genders; they do not experience pressure in that context. Perhaps they perceive they have all the language they need, perhaps they even do have enough language for their current purposes.

These results show that the current use of English (L2 Exposure) presents different contextual factors that are as important as the Ideal Self or the Ought-to Self. That is, although current use of English is largely recreational, students at this young age acknowledge a desire and a need for more formal use of English. Current exposure and the Ideal Self are somewhat gender specific, while early onset of instruction does not affect any of the dimensions significantly enough to count as relevant to participants' use or attitude. Thus, we examined their actual English proficiency and its relation to their English use in different contexts.

#### **5.4 Relationship between L2 Exposure, the Ideal Self, the Ought-to self and Vocabulary Knowledge.**

The relationship between L2 Exposure, the Ideal Self and the Ought-to self on the one hand, and English vocabulary knowledge of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland on the other hand, is multifaceted. The purpose of this question is to examine what, if any, context-specific factors could explain the vocabulary proficiency of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students in Iceland.

The results show that all context-specific factors (L2 exposure) except education have a significant relationship to results on both vocabulary tests. Using English as a lingua franca shows the strongest relationship to results on both tests. The Yes-No test has a significant relationship with the other factors in this order: Lingua Franca, Texts, Computers, Music and TV, Peers and Family. Whereas, the VKS has a significant relationship to the factors in this order: Lingua Franca, Texts, Peers, Computers, Family and Music and TV. Therefore, it is safe to assume that current use of English explains in part vocabulary success. This means, in terms of strength of relationships, that students who speak to foreigners and read are more likely to score higher on the vocabulary tests than those who do not, and whether students use English at school does not determine the vocabulary proficiency of participants in this study.

The Ideal Self (the desire to use English) has a very low relationship with vocabulary knowledge, but five context-specific factors correlate positively with vocabulary results. The factors are listed here in order of strength, strongest first. They are: Text, computers, using English as a lingua franca, education and music/TV. This correlation is very low ( $r = .118-.231$ ), so it is not likely that current proficiency is explained by participants' desired use of English.

Only one factor within the Ought-to self (obligation to learn English) dimension shows a significant positive correlation to vocabulary success and that is the use of English as a lingua franca. This relationship to both tests is very low ( $r=.106$ ) and thus does not explain vocabulary

proficiency. Therefore, the weak relationship between participants' perceived obligated use of English suggests that it is predominantly the L2 exposure (use of English as a lingua franca and computer use) that is likely to predict vocabulary success in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in Iceland.

#### **5.4.1 Combined contribution of context to lexical success**

Even though students show a desire and need to use English, now and in the future, no single context-specific factor within the Ideal Self and Ought-to-Self dimensions contributes meaningfully to lexical success. A correlation was found between English exposure (L2 exposure) and scores on the test. The positive relationships between L2 exposure factors and vocabulary do not explain the interconnection between the factors. To discover if, and then what combined factors in this study contributed the most to lexical success, a model was built using hierarchical multiple regression analyses for each test. These analyses each yielded a 7-factor model for receptive vocabulary (Yes-No test) explaining 26.1% of variance, and a 6 factor model for semi-productive vocabulary (VKS test) explaining 25.8% of variance in scores showing how factors significantly contribute to explaining variance in test scores. These models show that for receptive proficiency, students' use of English to play computer games is the most powerful predictor of scores on a Yes-No vocabulary test. Use of English as a lingua franca (speaking to foreigners in Iceland and abroad) was the second strongest. Together the two factors explain 18.4% of the variance. For the semi-productive proficiency test (VKS), the most powerful predictors are use of English as a Lingua Franca (speaking to foreigners in Iceland and abroad) and speaking English to friends, i.e. use of English productive skills. The more frequently they use English under those circumstances, the higher they score on the vocabulary test. Studies have shown the same relationship between vocabulary, on the one hand, and extramural activities, such as computer use or gaming and speaking English (Lingua franca) on the other, as emerged

from this study showing that active use of language is more effective than passive perception such as watching television and listening to music (De Wilde et al., 2020; Jensen, 2017; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021; Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012).

Importantly, two factors that individually did not significantly correlate with the test scores appear in both models as significant factors. These are how frequently English is used at school (L2 Exposure – Education) and the need to learn English to speak to friends (Ought-to Self -Peers) in the Yes-No model. In the VKS model, the desire to use English at school (The Ideal Self – Education) and the need to learn English to speak to friends (Ought-to Self – Peers) appeared.

The results from the overall study support the hypothesis that the amount and type of input play a larger role than age and onset of instruction in any successful acquisition of English in Iceland. Nevertheless, despite Extramural factors having a stronger relationship with vocabulary outcomes than English use at school, it is important to consider the implications concerning the number of hours and type of input. The fact that participants' current educational experience negatively relates to receptive vocabulary, when combined with other factors, is in line with the lack of a statistically significant effect of onset of instruction on vocabulary gain between students who began learning in 1-3 grade. This showed that vocabulary increase between those grades is very limited (less than a 100-word difference between years) and not what is suggested for a formal instructional environment (Alexiou, 2009; Milton, 2009). However, this does not necessarily mean that students are hindered by using English at school. Schools offer different number of classes in the initial years of English learning, as Table 2.2 from Statistics Iceland shows. A student experiencing 4-16 minutes a week, on average, is less likely to add much new vocabulary. Lessons can vary from short sessions multiple times per week, once a week, once every two weeks, or even less, depending on the schools. This is



because there is no real consensus relating to when to begin instruction as the current National Curriculum leaves that decision in the hands of each individual school (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2013) . In addition, the students may be exposed to vocabulary at school that they already know from Extramural activity, such as computer use and speaking with foreigners, the factors that had the strongest predictability for vocabulary size. This suggests that the Icelandic formal instructional environment still teaches English as a foreign language, whereas the increased exposure is more in line with, or closer on the continuum towards, a second language (Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2007, 2011, 2014; Jóhannsdóttir, 2010, 2018).

In light of these results, an image appears of a student who uses English while playing computer games and interacting with friends, and those friends could possibly be both Icelandic and foreign. This student is more likely to acquire more vocabulary than a student who does not engage in said activities at this early age, regardless of when they began learning English at school.

This suggests that success on vocabulary tests is significantly connected to students' traveling habits, or use of English to speak to non-Icelandic speakers, and frequency of playing computer games, regardless of gender and onset of formal instruction. Notably, in this study, education does not significantly predict success on either the vocabulary test or the negative contribution demonstrated in the regression models, and this suggests that the little English used at school, and the vocabulary acquired extramurally, may not be the same. The tests used in this study are based on frequency lists compiled from general language use, while words are often introduced in thematic and semantic sets in textbooks for the early learning of languages, regardless of general frequency. This may explain the lack of an educational relationship, although we cannot make that assumption until a study of the use of educational materials is conducted. Nevertheless, the curriculum guidelines say that students should be introduced to

general phrases of speech and current language need (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2013), which in turn should result in a relationship between education and vocabulary size. The lack of recognition of the word *because* may be a manifestation of this discrepancy.

These results suggest a disconnection between official curriculum goals and guidelines on the one hand, and the new linguistic reality in which these children find themselves, on the other. Previous studies were either self-reports or tests disconnected from real use. The contribution of this study is that it tests a large number of students, and this allows for general assumptions and focuses on vocabulary proficiency based on general frequency, which in turn allows for a prediction of future progress. In addition, the study provides a more detailed picture of the influence, relevance and importance of context on proficiency.

The findings are that children's English language proficiency is acquired largely extramurally and is motivated by a pragmatic desire to use English in their daily lives during leisure time. There is an indication that these children have a vision of how and where they as Icelanders need to use English in the future, in particular for educational purposes.

## Chapter 6. Conclusion

This final chapter presents a summary of the study, its main points, questions and findings. Following this short summary, I will address some limitations of the study and its results. I then present further questions raised in this study about children's motivation to learn language and how it is measured, and note future research opportunities in relation to the study of early learning of English. Finally, there is a short discussion of the practical implications of this study, especially in a changing linguistic environment such as in Iceland due to the world-wide spread of English.

### 6.1 The study

The goal of this dissertation is to measure the level of English lexical proficiency, explore attitudes towards English, and to determine the source of the vocabulary levels of the 9 year old Icelandic children who participated in this study. This was accomplished by a combination of a survey and two tests. The survey's purpose was to identify students' views on English, their own skill in the language, and their motivation to use English using Dörnyei's Self System, that is, their L2 Exposure, their Ideal Self and their Ought-to Self (Dörnyei, 2009a) at the onset of English instruction. Thus, the survey included questions about how important knowing English is, how participants rated their ability in the four skills (reading, speaking, listening writing), how frequently they use English, how frequently would they like to be able to use English, and what they think they ought to learn English for. The exposure and motivational questions centered around seven context-specific factors that were chosen were based on previous research done in Iceland (Auður Torfadóttir et al., 2006; Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2009; Lefever, 2006, 2007; Lovísa Kristjánsdóttir et al., 2006), namely, TV/music (watching and listening), Computers (playing games), Education (using English at school), Peers (speaking to friends), Family (speaking to

parents and other family members), Texts (written language) and use of English as a Lingua Franca (speaking to foreigners, home and abroad). The two tests were a Yes-No test to examine receptive knowledge and Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) to examine semi-productive or depth of their vocabulary knowledge. The two tests were also chosen to strengthen the validity and reliability of the test results for each test as the VKS test provides stages of knowledge that allowed us to check the reliability of the responses on the Yes-No test which, despite its success in vocabulary research, is very susceptible to guessing and over/underestimation.

These tools were expanded to include the measurement of knowledge beyond the classroom environment, particularly since previous research showed a substantial extramural exposure to English in Iceland as a result of the spread of English world-wide. The data is derived from 378 participants' responses, which is about 9% of the total number (4136) of students enrolled in fourth grade in 2010, and the gender and demographic distribution is representative of the population during that school year. The participants in this study were tested and surveyed within a two-month period. Reaching many participants at the same time is rare but essential in quantitative research to ensure the robustness of the data and to derive meaningful output from it. I also chose this method to reach a wider demographic than has been done before with surveying and testing done at the same time.

### **6.1.1 Summary of findings**

Circling back to the research questions shows a complex English linguistic environment for these 4<sup>th</sup> graders. When exploring attitudes towards English and participants' own ability (research question 1) the response is in general a positive attitude. Participants rated their verbal skills (listening and speaking) higher than written (reading and writing) skills and this is representative of their actual use of English at this age. This was supported by the findings of the

third research question that focused on students' motivation to learn by examining the frequency of use (the L2 Exposure), their desired use (the Ideal Self) and expected use (the Ought-to Self) of English. The findings showed us that current use is highly media based, listening to music, watching television and playing on the computer, but they rarely read texts or speak, in their own opinion. However, their Ideal Self would like to use English more at school as well as for reading, and their Ought-to-Self shows a need to learn English for said activities more than they do for the media activities they are currently engaged in. Because of their L2 Exposure, the Ideal and Ought-to-Self do not show us whether or how the use affects or connects to their proficiency. I tested their vocabulary size and scale to respond to research question two and found that 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students have some English vocabulary knowledge that does not correlate with the onset of instruction. Students are not getting their vocabulary from school-based activities. It was also confirmed with correlation analysis that a student scoring high on the Yes-No test also scored high on the VKS test validating the results. I also found that boys scored statistically higher on the Yes-No receptive test than girls, but were equal on translations on the semi-productive VKS test, which could be because of girls being more cautious on the Yes-No test. As expected, there was a difference between groups when looking at onset of instruction, showing that students starting earlier had a larger vocabulary size; however, the difference between students beginning in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade was not statistically significant and the number of words gained from one grade to the next grade onset were limited, thus the vocabulary is derived from other sources than school before grade three. To find out where this knowledge comes from (research question four), the data was run through a hierarchical regression analysis exploring which L2 Exposure, Ideal Self and Ought-to-Self factors contribute to participants' vocabulary knowledge. The results show that the most powerful predictors of success on these vocabulary tests was computer use and engaging in conversation with foreigners and friends, whereas

education had a negative relationship with vocabulary scores. In addition, although children are watching a great deal of television shows/movies in English and listening to English music, they are not doing much reading and speaking. This might suggest that onset of instruction or the vocabulary encountered at school is different from the English these participants encounter extramurally, and the observation of proficiency found that this proficiency is usage-based and informal, where vocabulary size derives primarily from computer games and speaking to foreigners, and the breadth of vocabulary comes primarily from speaking English to foreigners and friends. The results of this study are that young learners' English vocabulary proficiency is predicted by Extramural activity rather than educational influence at the age of 9 and that their motivation to use English is pragmatic in nature. This results in levels of receptive and semi-productive vocabulary that exceed the expectation of the national curriculum for this age group, and reflects the changing status of English in Iceland. However, this use is highly contextualized and may not predict a general success in the future, as the relationship between Extramural activities and the educational environment needs further examination.

## **6.2 Contribution to research**

This study contributes to the ongoing discussion about the complex language environment created because of the globalization of English by identifying extramural and educational factors that influence the linguistic repertoires of children whose previous early linguistic input was largely in their first language.

The spread of English is changing the language ecology of many countries, Iceland among them, and calls for a reexamination of the status of English, in contexts where English has traditionally been classified as a foreign language, with clear language and educational policy implications. This is the first large scale quantitative study based on tests and surveys that

reached a large sample of learners. The study identified specific external factors that affect learners' repertoires and factors that motivate learners to learn English. This study thus explores views, exposure, and vocabulary knowledge enabling us to set a baseline for identifying the origin and nature of the children's vocabulary. This is unique in Iceland and elsewhere and informs current research on children's language learning.

The decision to use fixed context-specific factors to examine exposure and motivation to learn English further identifies the complex nature of the problem addressed. There is still a need to examine the influence of each context specifically and evaluate the variables' contribution to knowledge in more detail, possibly with qualitative or mixed exploration methods.

The extensive exposure to English affects young learners' language awareness, as English is an intricate part of their recreational environment. This study gathered information to inform the theoretical and practical discussion on extramural learning of languages. The data was collected almost a decade ago. However, this does not downgrade the importance of the findings as the results offer information about the development of English which accelerated since the study was conducted. Only very recently have new studies become available of the influence of English in Iceland (Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021). The present study is crucial to the interpretation of those findings and provides a clear baseline for future studies. The main findings show individual differences that may result from varied contextual exposure and unequal formal English input. Extramural exposure is contextual and individual, and obviously, dependent on the individual's access to resources in English. The practical contributions of this study are that the linguistic context of the respondents differs markedly from the linguistic context assumed in traditional EFL based educational policy. Curriculum guidelines and instructional practice should reflect the reality of students' English contexts and build upon their extramural exposure and future educational needs in a multilingual world. The assumption that

all students enter formal English instruction with the same proficiency level is not supported by this study, with consequences for students' educational trajectories. The finding that onset of formal instruction does not affect lexical proficiency in the 5<sup>th</sup>-grade attests to the need to reexamine National Curriculum Guidelines so that they reflect the reality of changing linguistic contexts in the expanding circle of English use.

### *Limitations*

All studies have some limitations and challenges that are not evident during the research planning phase. In this study we could not secure equal group size due to lack of information on actual onset of instruction, both because the information was not official, and the type of teaching differs between schools. Our groups could have been of equal size and language background had we known in advance. Nevertheless, by randomly choosing schools and determining onset of instruction afterwards, it is closer to what happens in the real world. Another limitation may be that a socio-economic status variable was not included in the survey for this study. Studies in Iceland have not put much focus on socio economic status (SES) as a variable as everyone has access to education (school is compulsory to the age of 16) and, as studies show in general, everyone has almost unlimited access to computers or other digital devices. Therefore, it was not considered as a variable to explore in this study as we were setting a baseline for knowledge and exposure. Nevertheless, this would be something to explore in the future as the economic situation in Iceland is changing, which may affect the type and amount of exposure students have to English.

There was also a great variation in responses, reflecting the real world; however, statistical tests can be sensitive towards such variation and recommend elimination of outliers that greatly skew the results. This, however, can also result in lost information, as in language



research the outliers are often as interesting as the general group. It was therefore decided to work with raw data, hoping that the large number of participants would provide more meaningful results.

Another limitation to the study is that we do not know the participants' full proficiency in Icelandic (nor English for that matter). During the pilot process, the ability to read the survey and test did not suggest problems with literacy; however, this may have affected the outcome of low proficiency learners as the survey and tests were in written form. The standardized evaluation in Icelandic is scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade at the end of September, beginning of October, which was during the same period we were administering the survey and tests, and access to those results were not available for individual students for comparison. Therefore, further studies on exposure, motivation and proficiency should include a test instrument on the native language of the test taker, most importantly when testing younger learners as level of general literacy and L1 vocabulary size, for this could affect the ability of the test taker to read the instructions.

Finally, this study only explores vocabulary proficiency, not participants' full English proficiency, and that could be considered a limitation. However, vocabulary is the foundation of language and vocabulary size has been shown to predict further language knowledge (Nation, 2013). It may be a weakness in the study that the vocabulary for the tests was chosen from general frequency lists, derived from corpora and used in comparable research, and a survey of vocabulary used in Icelandic schools might have yielded different results. However, it is the sense of the author, who is an English teacher, that the vocabulary chosen was not way off the mark for the curriculum used in Icelandic schools as directed by the National Curriculum Guide. This is a limitation, nonetheless, and we cannot exclude the possibility that this may have skewed the results. Researchers in the future may want to explore the vocabulary represented in the teaching material in early grades, as early language teaching is often presented in context specific

sets (clothes, colors, activities, etc.) regardless of general frequency. There is also a significant lack of research focusing on the type of material used for teaching which could have informed such a study as this one. However, using frequency wordlists to test general vocabulary knowledge is more indicative of knowledge that is connected to real world use than more limited of focused wordlists, and that was one of the goals of this study.

### **6.3 Further questions**

Although gender effects in this study seemed random at times, this study shows that the issue of gender is not exhausted, and in the linguistic context of young English users, highly relevant, as computer games and general use are showing to have considerable effect on proficiency and boys tend to begin earlier than girls to use computers on a regular basis (Capacent Gallup, 2013). Further, boys seem more confident in what they know and overestimate their vocabulary knowledge, more so than the girls, which is important to explore in future research as it may have important implications for teaching.

Onset of instruction will continue to confuse research outcomes until we decide when to begin teaching English in Iceland. Offering some optional early starts creates an uneven playing ground for students and a pick-and-choose teaching environment. Extramural learning must also be considered in future studies. Group 5, who were students yet to receive formal instruction at school, surprised us, but provided valuable information about the linguistic environment. Originally, this group was intended as a control group, since the students were yet to receive formal instruction in English. However, their scores on the vocabulary tests were consistently higher than for the other groups, presenting us with a new question. When examined closer, however, this group supports the assumption that at 9 years of age, the English exposure in Iceland is primarily extramural and so there is little gained in terms of vocabulary proficiency, at

the moment, by introducing formal instruction before 3<sup>rd</sup> grade unless the curriculum offers firmer guidelines, and all schools begin formal instruction at the same age and provide focused and varied learning material/environment. This study, and later studies showing increased exposure to English, demonstrate a need to include research on what is being taught in schools in Iceland to better meet the needs of the students and offer a more uniform education.

The participants in this study see themselves as future users of English; however, as seen in the results, in terms of motivation, English is a utility language to them as they need it to navigate the digital world and when using English as a lingua franca, but do not need it for all aspects of life, which is to be expected at this age. Furthermore, one element of language identity is language use with family, and this is non-existent with Icelandic young learners, further showing that English has not achieved bilingual or ESL status in Iceland despite the global exposure, at least not for young learners.

#### **6.4 Early English education in Iceland**

As mentioned before, English is a compulsory school subject from primary school through secondary education in Iceland, and not long ago it became compulsory from 4<sup>th</sup> grade with the option to introduce it earlier. As the average numbers from Statistics Iceland show, this is not common, and little was known of the consequence of early teaching of English. Furthermore, previous studies show that English as a school subject in Iceland is not as popular as the language in general, showing a gap between formal school English and the English language met outside of school when they finish compulsory education (Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir & Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2018).

This study suggests that introducing formal instruction as early as in 1<sup>st</sup> grade is currently questionable as the findings show little difference in vocabulary knowledge of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students

who started in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and those who started in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and that the 5<sup>th</sup>-grade OFI group scored among the highest without having received formal instruction in English at the time of testing. A possible explanation is that the students already know the language introduced at school due to extensive Extramural exposure. This poses challenges to the educational system that was not in existence when English was still an actual foreign language in Iceland, and current curriculum guidelines still reflect this. This study suggests that it is time to reconsider this status of English and adjust educational policy accordingly. Furthermore, we must consider the instructional implications in terms of students' varied proficiency, varied stages of cognitive development, and the reality for the educator who then must face a group of students. The variance in scores in the study where the majority of participants do not score in the middle, but rather somewhat low or very high, reflects the varied exposure addition.

Varied proficiency, as demonstrated by this study, demands varied and individual instruction and material. Educational policy and curriculum guidelines must reflect this reality. Successful instruction is partly based on learners' background and basic proficiency at the onset of instruction. The assumption that all students begin English language learning at the same level is not supported by this study and later studies show varied individual difference in motivation and exposure (Nikolov & Timpe-Laughlin, 2021; Leona et al. 2021; Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021) and education policy needs to be reevaluated accordingly. There is no indication that this situation has changed since this study was conducted. If anything, the proficiency is more varied and extramural exposure even more intense; moreover, instructional time has not increased and guidelines are even less defined in terms of proficiency levels.

Considering that the current proficiency of Icelandic users of English is highly informal, and that English is neither a foreign nor a second language in Iceland, but an additional utility language which learners have varying levels of access to, we need to consider the implication this

has on future English competence. The educational system could set a firm onset of formal instruction of English, such as in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade for all schools, and then gradually introduce a more academic literacy-based instructional approach earlier, as early as upper compulsory (8-10<sup>th</sup> grade) since research shows that students already have an informal competence very early (Lefever, 2010, Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, 2010) and thus provide additional support for those with less exposure who need more. Research clearly demonstrates that intense extramural and informal English exposure does not translate to success at tertiary level where most textbooks and more and more instruction are in English (Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir & Hafdís Ingvarsdóttir, 2018).

Research in Icelandic literacy is also showing a continuous gap between students with low proficiency continuing to trail behind those who are more proficient, and this can affect students' English proficiency as well (Hrafnhildur Ragnarsdóttir, 2015). Research does show a link between L1 competence and L2 competence (Grabe, 2009) but if we do not support one to the benefit of the other, the linguistic environment becomes more complex and may result in a primarily informal use of both languages or some students who have better proficiency in English than their native tongue, as studies from Norway have shown (Brevik & Hellekjær, 2017), thus limiting their progress in other subjects taught and tested in the native language. Today there is a high awareness of the change in Icelandic and the effect of English, but the discussion revolves too much around the threat English poses. Rather than seeing English as an undeniable threat, it is time to explore what we can do to strengthen Icelandic by introducing it into the very domains which are providing exposure to English.

## **6.5 Future research**

It is unlikely that the momentum of English in Iceland will diminish soon as English is the language of digital media, which only gains momentum each year as recent research shows

(Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021). As this study and later studies in Denmark, Sweden and Finland, as well as in other countries in Europe are pointing out the effect and relationship of computer gaming, other Extramural exposure related to digital media and English proficiency of younger learners, we need to explore that domain further (Jensen, 2017; Kuppens, 2010; Nikolov & Timpe-Laughlin, 2021; Papp, 2019; Peters, 2018; Sivertzen, 2013; Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012). This does not mean that we should push computer gaming into the curriculum, but rather that we should explore what it is within that domain that contributes to increased English language knowledge and utilize it in other domains. For example, computer gaming is a choice and readily available to learners. They are motivated to play and interact with other players, both friends within the same country as well as foreigners. For the players, this in turn adds to their confidence due to successful interaction and progression. If there is no connection to the knowledge gained and knowledge introduced through school, we maintain the gap students report between English at school and English in the real world. If we can connect these elements in the classroom, we would be able to facilitate increased formal knowledge. For those students who do not engage in said activity, we can find domains that facilitate similar competence and make the material relevant for all students. However, before doing so, I would suggest that we explore the actual language, for example with Lexical Proficiency analysis, whereby the vocabulary is run through programs analyzing the level of vocabulary. This would give us an idea of the vocabulary size and breadth needed for future use of English and help connect it to the classroom activities and other proficiency skills as research has established vocabulary as a building block for general proficiency.

Research on the relationships between attitudes and proficiency in Icelandic is also needed to identify how we can strengthen our native language and counter the extensive exposure to English. This could give us an opportunity to use this extensive exposure to engage in

linguistic activities to enhance Icelandic proficiency alongside English, rather than treating one as being a threat to the other.

Because English is no longer a foreign language in Iceland, we must explore what is happening within the classroom in the same way as we have done by exploring Extramural English. This we can do by a similar study as this one in addition to a textual analysis of text books and materials in use, as well as observing how they are used in the classroom. The English educational environment has changed from what prior research showed, in addition to recent curriculum changes, where it is now in the hands of individual schools to decide when to begin formal foreign language instruction (Menntamálaráðuneytið, 2013, p. 125), though we do not know the effect of this within the classroom environment.

## **6.6 Final words**

I began this study based on my own prior research, my own and my children's experience, and from what is heard from parents and teachers on increased English proficiency by younger children. The increased proficiency was confirmed, but it is complex and highly contextualized. I am more convinced that we need a strong framework for English teaching tailored to students' needs to maintain and strengthen students' motivation in the classroom and formal proficiency. This cannot be done without considering the status of Icelandic.

Icelandic is still the native tongue of the country and will hopefully, with increased research and focused policy, continue to be so for the unforeseen future. Research on the interaction of English and Icelandic is showing that English is not negatively affecting attitude and use of Icelandic (Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir & Íris Nowenstein, 2021), but global exposure continues to increase our younger generations' informal skills in English, and we need to meet the needs of those students in the formal instructional environment to provide a link between authentic and formal use and attempt to bridge the gap emerging between in-school and out of school English experience.

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## Appendix A. Final survey and test instruments

### Final instrument

#### A. Viðhorf og notkun ensku í 4.bekk

Við höfum áhuga á að fá að vita hvað þér finnst um ensku. Vinsamlegast svaraðu spurningunum með því að krossa við það sem þér finnst eiga best við. Könnunin er nafnlaus.

##### 10. Hversu mikilvægt finnst þér að kunna ensku?



- ( ) Mjög mikilvægt  
 ( ) Frekar mikilvægt  
 ( ) Ekki mjög mikilvægt  
 ( ) Óþarfi

##### 11. Hvernig finnst þér þú kunna ensku?

- ( ) Mjög vel  
 ( ) Vel  
 ( ) Frekar vel  
 ( ) Sæmilega  
 ( ) Ekki nógu vel

Næstu spurningar eru settar í dálka (box) sem við biðjum þig að merkja við það sem þér finnst passa best við þig.

##### Hversu auðvelt/erfitt finnst þér ? (Merktu X í dálkinn sem passar við þig)

	Mjög auðvelt  4	Auðvelt 3	Erfitt 2	Mjög erfitt  1
12. Að hlusta á ensku				
13. Að tala ensku				
14. Að lesa ensku				
15. Að skrifa á ensku				

**Hvenær notar þú ensku núna (til að tala/skrifa/lesa/hlusta)? (merktu X við dálkinn sem passar best við þig)**

	Oft ☺ 4	Stundum 3	Sjaldan 2	Aldrei ☹ 1
16. Ég les bækur á ensku.				
17. Ég horfi á sjónvarpsþætti og/eða bíómyndir á ensku.				
18. Ég tala ensku við útlendinga á Íslandi.				
19. Ég hef notað ensku á ferðalögum í útlöndum.				
20. Ég tala við mömmu mína á ensku.				
21. Ég tala við pabba minn á ensku.				
22. Ég spila tölvuleiki á ensku með vinum mínum.				
23. Ég nota ensku á internetinu (spjall, msn, myspace, facebook og þannig).				
24. Ég nota ensku í tölvuleikjum á netinu (club penguin, farmtown, pet society, runescape eða þannig)				
25. Ég leik mér í tölvuleikjum á ensku (playstation, wii, x-box eða þannig).				
26. Ég hlusta á tónlist með enskum textum.				
27. Ég les eða skoða tímarit (blöð og teiknimyndablöð) á ensku.				
28. Ég nota ensku í skólanum.				
29. Ég tala við vini mína á ensku.				
30. Ég tala við fjölskylduna mína á ensku (aðra en foreldra).				

Til hvers viltu nota ensku (til að tala/skrifa/lesa/hlusta)? (merkту X við það sem þér þykir réttast)

	Oft ☺ 4	Stundum 3	Sjaldan 2	Aldrei ☹ 1
31. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að lesa enskar bækur.				
32. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að lesa blöð og tímarit (t.d. teiknimyndablöð) á ensku.				
33. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að geta talað ensku í útlöndum.				
34. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að skilja texta í enskum lögum.				
35. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að skilja bíómyndir og/eða sjónvarpsþætti á ensku.				
36. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við útlendinga á Íslandi.				
37. Ég vil geta notað ensku í skóla eða vinnu þegar ég verð eldri.				
38. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að nota Internetið (spjall, msn, myspace, facebook og þannig).				
39. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að spila tölvuleiki á netinu (club penguin, farmtown, pet society, runescape eða þannig).				
40. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að spila tölvuleiki í leikjatölvu (playstation, wii, x-box eða þannig).				
41. Ég vil geta notað ensku í enskutímum í skólanum.				
42. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við mömmu mína.				
43. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við pabba minn.				
44. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við fjölskylduna mína (aðra en foreldra).				
45. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við vini mína.				

Núna spyrjum við hverju ertu sammála eða ósammála? (merktu X við það sem þér finnst réttast)

	Mjög sammála  4	Sammála 3	Ósammála 2	Mjög ósammála  1	Veit ekki ?
46. Ég kann eitthvað í ensku.					
47. Ég þarf að læra ensku af því að foreldrar mínir vilja að ég læri ensku.					
48. Ég þarf að læra ensku af því að vinir mínir kunna ensku.					
49. Ég held að mamma mín kunni ensku.					
50. Ég held að pabbi minn kunni ensku.					
51. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að geta talað ensku í útlöndum.					
52. Mér finnst ég ekki þurfa að læra ensku.					
53. Foreldrar mínir hjálpa mér við að skilja ensku.					
54. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að fá góða einkunn/ná góðum árangri á prófi.					
55. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að skilja þætti í sjónvarpinu.					
56. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að geta notað tölvuna					
57. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að geta spilað tölvuleiki					
58. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að lesa bækur þegar ég verð stór/eldri					
59. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að tala við útlendinga á Íslandi					
60. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að nota í skóla eða vinnu þegar ég verð eldri/stór.					



61. **Kyn:** Ert þú  stelpa?  strákur?

62. **Hvað ertu gamall/gömul?** \_\_\_\_\_ ára

63. **Ég hef átt heima í enskumælandi landi.**

Já Hversu lengi \_\_\_\_\_  Nei

64. **Er kennd enska í 4.bekk í þínum skóla?**

Já  Nei

65. **Ef þú ert að læra ensku í skólanum núna, í hvaða bekk byrjaðir þú? (t.d 1.bekk, 2.bekk, 3.bekk eða 4.bekk.)**

\_\_\_ bekk

66. **Er tölva heima hjá þér sem þú mátt nota?**

Já - Ég nota tölvuna:  Oft  Stundum  Sjaldan

Nei

67. **Hér máttu skrifa ef þú vilt segja eitthvað meira um ensku.**

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**Á næstu síðum koma orð sem við viljum vita hvort þið þekkið, kunnið eða hafið notað. Merkið bara við það sem þið eruð viss um.**

**Þekkir þú orðin?**

Hér fyrir neðan eru nokkur orð í ensku, sum eru alvöru ensk orð og **sum eru bullorð**. Merktu **þara** við þau orð sem **þú veist að þú hefur séð eða þekkir** eins og sýnt er í dæminu sem er á undan.

a. Dæmi: 

b.	dog	c.	X
----	-----	----	---

again		black		scream		freeze		dragon	
brother		bounce		hyslop		fight		window	
game		alive		drive		girlfriend		summer	
money		door		computer		alden		skeleton	
peanut		follow		they		hungry		darrock	
invisible		beginning		elevator		hospital		somebody	
candlin		fishlock		spoon		big		hat	
bottom		afraid		waygood		last		steal	
cartoon		boot		invite		kiss		manomize	
children		because		chase		kennard		warm	
gumm		wrong		happy		pencil		seven	
lake		use		jacket		hair		play	
mountain		body		horozone		present		cantileen	
house		gillen		pretend		down		know	
dark		hole		lucky		painting		pay	
pardoe		walk		friend		TV		king	
dinner		seek		apple		Saturday		whip	
her		captain		middle		frequid		stop	
monster		treadaway		office		shoot		sumption	
farm		chocolate		true		you		zoom	
litholect		snowman		pound		sock		question	
word		joke		gazard		outside		two	
should		sport		witch		silver		exciting	

horobin		open		help		hobrow		yellow	
---------	--	------	--	------	--	--------	--	--------	--

### Kannt þú þessi orð?

Nú koma 25 orð sem þú ert beðin að skoða og **merkja með X eða skrifa merkingu á feitletruðu** orðunum í dálkinn (það á **bara** að setja X eða skrifa einu sinni fyrir hvert orð).

<b>1. Brother</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		
<b>2. Apple</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		
<b>3. Drive</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		
<b>4. Children</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn		

<b>5. Chocolate</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>6. Friend</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>7. Hole</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>8. Happy</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>9. Farm</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>10. Computer</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>11. Play</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>12. Monster</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>13. Hospital</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>14. Painting</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>15. Exciting</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>16. TV</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>17. Window</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>18. Saturday</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>19. Snowman</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>20. Jacket</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>21. You</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>22. Witch</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>23. Sock</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>24. Whip</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skriðið í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skriðið í dálkinn	
<b>25. Question</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skriðið í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skriðið í dálkinn	

**Skoðuðu nú allar síðurnar og athugaðu hvort þú hafir gleymt að svara einhverju.**

**Við þökkum kærlega fyrir hjálpina ☺**





## Appendix B. Pilot test instruments

### Phase 1 surveys

Done on a computer online with the assistance of the researcher

LimeSurvey

http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...

PDF Export

### Enskukönnun

Viðhorfskönnun til ensku í neðri bekkjum grunnskóla

#### Backgrunnur

**\* ID: ID númer**

Settu inn númerið sem kennarinn gaf þér.

Vinsamlega skrifaðu svar þitt hér:

**\* bekkur: Í hvaða bekk ertu?**

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- 3.bekk
- 4.bekk
- 5.bekk

**\* Kyn: Ertu?**

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- Strákur
- Stelpa

**\* enskland: Ég hef átt heima í enskumælandi landi.**

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- Já
- Nei

**ensklandja: Ef já að ofan þá hve lengi?**

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

- Mánuðir
- Ár

#### Enska og nemandinn

**\* EN003:**

Hvenær myndir þú nota ensku helst (hlusta/lesa/skrifa)?

(Settu kross við öll atriðin sem hér finnst eiga við um þig)

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á:

- til að geta talað ensku í útlöndum
- til að skilja texta í enskum lögum
- til að geta lesið bækur og blöð á ensku
- til að skilja bíómyndir eða sjónvarpsþætti á ensku
- til að tala við útlendinga á Íslandi
- fyrir nám og/eða vinnu seinna
- til að nota Internetið
- til að spila tölvuleiki

Annað:

## \* EN002: Hvernig finnst þér þú kunna ensku?

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- Mjög vel
- Frekar vel
- Sæmilega
- Ekki nógu vel
- Illa

## \* EN001: Hversu mikilvægt finnst þér að kunna ensku?

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- Mjög mikilvægt
- Frekar Mikilvægt
- Ekki mjög mikilvægt
- Óþarfi
- Alveg sama

## \* EN004: Hvar lærir þú ensku annars staðar en í skólanum?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:

	Oft	Stundum	Sjaldan	Aldrei
Ég les bækur á ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég horfi á sjónvarpsþætti eða bíómyndir á ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég tala ensku við útlendinga	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég hef notað ensku á ferðalögum í útlöndum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég tala við vini á ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég tala við fjölskylduna á ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég nota ensku á internetinu (spjall, myspace, facebook o.s.frv.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég note ensku í tölvuleikjum á netinu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég leik mér í tölvuleikjum á ensku (playstation, wii, xbox o.s.frv)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég hlusta á tónlist með enskum textum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ég les eða skoða tímarit (blöð) á ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Enska og nam</b>
---------------------

## \* EN005: Hversu auðvelt/erfitt finnst þér að læra ensku?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:

	Mjög auðvelt	Auðvelt	Frekar erfitt	Erfitt
Að hlusta á ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Að tala ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Að lesa ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Að skrifa ensku	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## \* EN006: Hvernig finnst þér enska sem námsgrein?

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- Mjög skemmtileg
- Frekar skemmtileg
- Ekki skemmtileg
- Leiðinleg

\* EN007: Hvernig finnst þér námsefnið (bækur, blöð, lög, leikir o.fl) sem notað er í ensku í skólanum?

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- Mjög skemmtilegt
- Frekar skemmtilegt
- Ekki skemmtilegt
- Leiðinlegt

\* EN008: Enska og kennslustundin

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:

	Altaf	Oft	Stundum	Sjaldan	Aldrei
Talar kennarinn þinn ensku í enskutímum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Svara nemendurnir kennaranum á ensku í enskutímum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tala nemendur ensku við aðra nemendur í bekknum í enskutímum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talar þú ensku í enskutímum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EN009:

Er eitthvað sem þú vildir breyta í enskutímum?

(Finnst þér eitthvað vanta?)

Vinsamlega skrifaðu svar þitt hér:

EN010: Hér getur þú skrifað meira um sjálfan þig og ensku ef þú vilt

Vinsamlega skrifaðu svar þitt hér:

**Ljúka við könnunina**  
Þakka þér fyrir að ljúka þessa könnun.

PDF Export

**Könnun á viðhorfi grunnskólanema til lesturs**

Þessi könnun skoðar viðhorf nemenda a neðri stíum grunnskóla til eigin lesturs á bókum bæði heima og í skóla.

**Viðhorf nemenda til lesturs**

ID: ID númer

Settu ein  
númerið  
sem  
kennarinn  
kít þig  
hafa áður

Vinsamlega skrifaðu svar þitt hér:

\* kyn: Ertu...

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- Stelpa?  
 Strákur?

\* grade: Bekkur:

Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:

- 3.bekkur  
 4.bekkur  
 5.bekkur

skyringeras:

**Veldu þá mynd sem lýsir best hvernig þér líður þegar þú lest bók á íslensku**

\* eras1: Hvernig líður þér a laugardegi, það er rigning og þú ert að lesa bók?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd



\* eras2: Hvernig líður þér þegar þú lest bók í frítíma í skólanum?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:

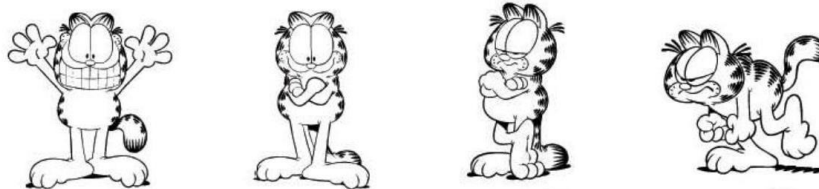


Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd

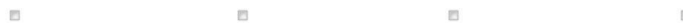


\* eras3: Hvernig finnst þér að lesa þér til skemmtunar heima hjá þér?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:

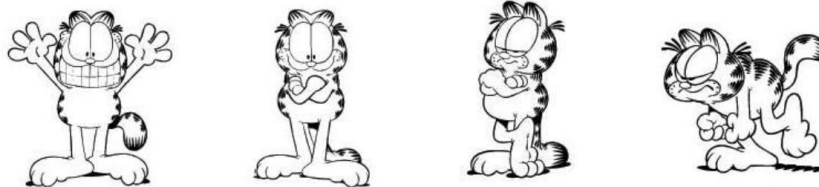


Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd



\* eras4: Hvernig líður þér þegar þú færð bók að gjöf, t.d. í afmælisgjöf?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:

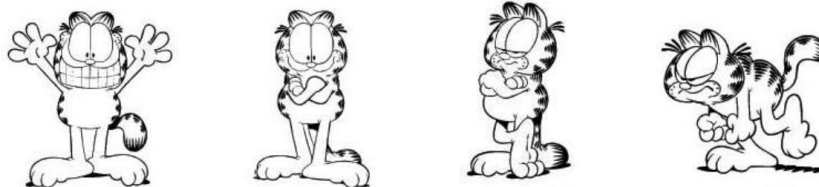


Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd



\* eras5: Hvað finnst þér um að eyða frítímanum í að lesa bók?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:

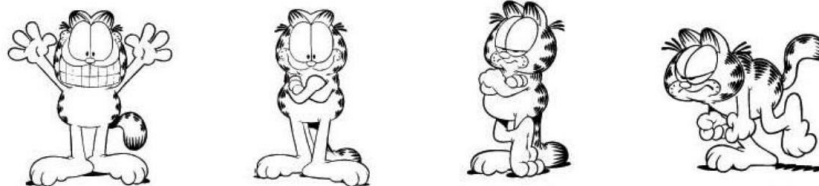


Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd



\* eras6: Hvernig líður þér þegar þú byrjar á nýrri bók?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd



\* eras7: Hvernig finnst þér að lesa bækur í sumarfríinu?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd





\* eras8: Hvernig finnst þér að lesa bók í stað þess að leika þér?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd





\* eras9:

Hvernig finnst þér að fara í bókabúð?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd





\* eras10:

Hvernig finnst þér að lesa mismunandi bækur?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd

\* eras11:

Hvernig líður þér þegar kennarinn spyr þig um það sem þú ert að lesa?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merkstu  
við  
eina  
mynd

\* eras12:

Hvernig finnst þér að lesa vinnubækur og vinnublöð?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merkstu  
við  
eina  
mynd

\* eras13:

Hvernig finnst þér að lesa í skólanum?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merkstu  
við  
eina  
mynd

\* eras14:

Hvernig finnst þér að lesa skólabækur?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:





Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd





\* eras15:

Hvernig finnst þér að læra upp úr bókum?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd





\* eras16:

Hvernig líður þér þegar það er tími til lesturs í tíma í skólanum?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina  
mynd





\* eras17:

Hvað finnst þér um sögurnar sem þú lest í lestrartímum?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merktu  
við  
eina



mynd

\* eras18:

Hvernig finnst þér að lesa upphátt í tíma?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merkstu  
við  
eina  
mynd

\* eras19:

Hvað finnst þér um að nota orðabók?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merkstu  
við  
eina  
mynd

\* eras20:

Hvað finnst þér um lestrarpróf?

Vinsamlega veldu viðeigandi svar fyrir hvert atriði:



Merkstu  
við  
eina  
mynd

Ljúka við könnunina

Þakka þér fyrir að ljúka þessa könnun.

## Vocabulary test – wordlist from yle listening and reading (Cambridge University Press, 2007)

<p>LimeSurvey <a href="http://limesurvey.ajscenr.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...">http://limesurvey.ajscenr.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">PDF Export</a></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>Orðaforðapróf</b></p> <p>Hversu vel þekkirðu orðin. Hér er verið að skoða almenna þekkingu á nokkrum orðum.</p> <p><b>VKS2009</b></p> <p>Vocabulary Knowledge Scale</p> <p>Hér á eftir koma nokkur orð. Við biðjum þig að merkja við það sem þér finnst vera rétt.</p> </div> <p><b>* ID: ID númer</b></p> <p><small>Merktu með númerinu sem þú fíkkst á hólum frá kennarastofu D.</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega skrifaðu svar þitt hér:</p> <hr/> <p><b>* kyn: Kyn?</b></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Stelpa</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strákur</p> <hr/> <p><b>* bekkur: Í hvaða bekk ertu?</b></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu aðeins eitt af eftirfarandi:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3.bekk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4.bekk</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5.bekk</p> <hr/> <p><b>* afraid: Afraid</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* because: Because</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p>	<p>LimeSurvey <a href="http://limesurvey.ajscenr.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...">http://limesurvey.ajscenr.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* down: Down</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* something: Something</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p>
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<p>LimeSurvey <a href="http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...">http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...</a></p> <p><b>* out: Out</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* Another: Another</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* country: Country</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p>	<p>LimeSurvey <a href="http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...">http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* home: Home</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* best: Best</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* look: Look</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p>
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<p>LimeSurvey <a href="http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...">http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* walk: Walk</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p><b>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* world: World</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p><b>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p>	<p>LimeSurvey <a href="http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...">http://limesurvey.ajscenter.net/admin/admin.php?action=showprintables...</a></p> <p><b>* round: Round</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p><b>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* bear: Bear</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p><b>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: _____ (skrifa setningu) (ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).</p> <hr/> <p><b>* first: First</b></p> <p><small>Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast</small></p> <p><b>Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði _____ (þýðing eða samheiti)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir _____ (samnefni eða þýðing).</p>
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V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu:

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega  
svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* glass: Glass**

Merku við  
það sem þér  
finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð  
þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en  
man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og  
held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_  
(þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir.  
Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða  
þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu:

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega  
svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* rock: Rock**

Merku við  
það sem þér  
finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð  
þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en  
man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og  
held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_  
(þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir.  
Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða  
þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu:

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega  
svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* station: Station**

Merku við  
það sem þér  
finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð  
þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en  
man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og  
held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_  
(þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir.  
Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða  
þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu:

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega  
svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* Village: Village**

Merku við  
það sem þér  
finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð  
þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en  
man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og  
held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_  
(þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir.  
Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða  
þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu:

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega  
svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* soup: Soup**

Merku við  
það sem þér  
finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð  
þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en  
man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og  
held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_  
(þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir.  
Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða  
þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu:

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega  
svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* coffee: Coffee**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

(samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)

(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* grass: Grass**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

(samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)

(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* parent: Parent**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

(samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)

(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* holiday: Holiday**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

(samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)

(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* towel: Towel**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_

(samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)

(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* blanket: Blanket**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* dolphin: Dolphin**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* lion: Lion**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* Toothbrush: Toothbrush**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**\* vegetable: Vegetable**

Merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast

Vinsamlega veldu allt sem við á og skrifaðu athugasemd.

I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður

II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir

III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði \_\_\_\_\_ (þýðing eða samheiti)

IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir \_\_\_\_\_ (samnefni eða þýðing).

V. Ég get sett orðið í setningu: \_\_\_\_\_

(skrifa setningu)  
(ef þú svara þessu þá vinsamlega svarið einnig númer VI).

**Ljúka við könnunina**

Þakka þér fyrir að ljúka þessa könnun.

## Phase 2 – test and survey

## Enska í 4.bekk

Við höfum áhuga á að fá að vita hvað þér finnst um ensku. Vinsamlegast svaraðu spurningunum með því að krossa við það sem þér finnst eiga best við. Þessi könnun er nafnlaus og er ekki próf.

## A. Spurningalisti til nemenda

## 1. Hversu mikilvægt finnst þér að kunna ensku?

- ( ) Mjög mikilvægt  
 ( ) Frekar mikilvægt  
 ( ) Ekki mjög mikilvægt  
 ( ) Óþarfi

## 2. Hvernig finnst þér þú kunna ensku?



- ( ) Mjög vel  
 ( ) Vel  
 ( ) Frekar vel  
 ( ) Sæmilega  
 ( ) Ekki nógu vel

## 3. Til hvers viltu geta notað ensku (til að skrifa/lesa/hlusta)? (merkту við það sem þér þykir réttast)



	Oft ☺	Stundum	Sjaldan	Aldrei ☹
d. Til að geta talað ensku í útlöndum				
e. Til að skilja texta í enskum lögum				
f. Til að skilja bíómyndir og/eða sjónvarpsþætti á ensku				
g. Til að tala við útlendinga á Íslandi				
h. Í skóla eða vinnu þegar ég verð eldri				
i. Til að nota Internetið (spjall, msn, myspace, facebook og þannig).				
j. Til að spila tölvuleiki á netinu (club penguin, farmtown, pet society, runescape eða þannig)				
k. Til að spila tölvuleiki í leikjatölvu playstation, wii, x-box eða þannig)				
l. Í skólanum				
m. Til að tala við fjölskylduna mína				
n. Til að tala við vini mína				





#### 4. Hvað er rétt á þessum lista? (merktu við dálkinn sem passar best við þig)

	Oft 	Stundum	Sjaldan	Aldrei 
a. Ég les bækur á ensku				
b. Ég horfi á sjónvarpsþætti og/eða bíómyndir á ensku				
c. Ég tala ensku við útlendinga á Íslandi				
d. Ég hef notað ensku á ferðalögum í útlöndum				
e. Ég tala við fjölskylduna á ensku				
f. Ég nota ensku á internetinu (spjall, msn, myspace, facebook og þannig)				
g. Ég nota ensku í tölvuleikjum á netinu (club penguin, farmtown, pet society, runescape eða þannig)				
h. Ég leik mér í tölvuleikjum á ensku (playstation, wii, x-box eða þannig)				
i. Ég hlusta á tónlist með enskum textum				
j. Ég les eða skoða tímarit (blöð og teiknimyndablöð) á ensku.				
k. Ég nota ensku í skólanum				
l. Ég tala við vini mína á ensku				
m. Ég spila tölvuleiki á ensku með vinum mínum				

#### 5. Hversu auðvelt/erfitt finnst þér ? (Merktu í dálkinn sem passar við þig)

	Mjög auðvelt 	Auðvelt	Erfitt	Mjög erfitt 
a. Að hlusta á ensku				
b. Að tala ensku				
c. Að lesa ensku				
d. Að skrifa á ensku				

**6. Hverju ertu sammála/ósammála? (merktu við það sem þér finnst réttast)**

	Mjög sammála 	Sammála	Frekar ósammála	Ósammála 	Veit ekki
a. Ég kann eitthvað í ensku					
b. Foreldrar mínir vilja að ég læri ensku					
c. Vinir mínir kunna ensku					
d. Foreldrar mínir kunna ensku					
e. Mér finnst ég ekki þurfa að læra ensku					
f. Foreldrar mínir hjálpa mér með að skilja ensku					

7. **Kyn:** Ert þú ( ) stelpa? ( ) strákur?

8. **Hvað ertu gamall/gömul?** \_\_\_\_\_ ára

9. **Ég hef átt heima í enskumælandi landi.**

( ) Já Hversu lengi \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Nei

10. **Er kennd enska í 4.bekk í þínum skóla**

( ) Já ( ) Nei

11. **Ef þú ert að læra ensku í skólanum núna, í hvaða bekk byrjaðir þú? (1.bekk, 2.bekk o.s.frv.)**

\_\_\_ bekk

12. **Er tölva heima hjá þér sem þú mátt nota?**

( ) Já ( ) Nei

Á næstu síðum eru listar með enskum orðum. Okkur langar að biðja þig að merkja við hvort þú hafir séð orðið áður eða ekki og ef þú getur þá máttu skrifa hvað það þýðir. Við gerum ekki ráð fyrir að þið þekkið öll orðin og þetta er ekki próf. Þið eruð að hjálpa okkur með því að taka þátt.

**Við þökkum kærlega fyrir hjálpina 😊**

## B. Þekkir þú orðin?

Dæmi:

	I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn
More				meira
Dining table	√			
snowball			snjóbolti	
File		√		

Hér fyrir neðan eru nokkur orð í ensku sem okkur langar að vita hvort íslenskir krakkar kunna. Merktu við það sem er réttast fyrir þig eins og sýnt er í dæminu fyrir ofan.

	I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn
sister				
hand				
cat				
dog				
school				
father				
mother				
policeman				
blue				
love				
boy				
girl				
house				
dance				
room				

	I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn
drink				
brother				
name				
snow				
foot				
sleep				
right				
write				
white				
eat				
kiss				
hate				
address				
green				
say				
car				
bus				
village				
shoot				
bike				
left				
holiday				
stand				
bad				
read				

Phase 3 – spring 2010

## B. Viðhorf og notkun ensku í 4.bekk

Við höfum áhuga á að fá að vita hvað þér finnst um ensku. Vinsamlegast svaraðu spurningunum með því að krossa við það sem þér finnst eiga best við. Könnunin er nafnlaus.

### 1. Hversu mikilvægt finnst þér að kunna ensku?



- Mjög mikilvægt  
 Frekar mikilvægt  
 Ekki mjög mikilvægt  
 Óþarfi

### 2. Hvernig finnst þér þú kunna ensku?

- Mjög vel  
 Vel  
 Frekar vel  
 Sæmilega  
 Ekki nógu vel

Næstu spurningar eru settar í dálka (box) sem við biðjum þig að merkja við það sem þér finnst passa best við þig.

### Hversu auðvelt/erfitt finnst þér ? (Merktu X í dálkinn sem passar við þig)

	Mjög auðvelt  4	Auðvelt 3	Erfitt 2	Mjög erfitt  1
3. Að hlusta á ensku				
4. Að tala ensku				
5. Að lesa ensku				
6. Að skrifa á ensku				



Til hvers viltu nota ensku (til að tala/skrifa/lesa/hlusta)? (merktu X við það sem þér þykir réttast)

	Oft ☺ 4	Stundum 3	Sjaldan 2	Aldrei ☹ 1
7. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að lesa enskar bækur.				
8. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að lesa blöð og tímarit (t.d. teiknimyndablöð) á ensku.				
9. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að geta talað ensku í útlöndum.				
10. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að skilja texta í enskum lögum.				
11. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að skilja bíómyndir og/eða sjónvarpsþætti á ensku.				
12. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við útlendinga á Íslandi.				
13. Ég vil geta notað ensku í skóla eða vinnu þegar ég verð eldri.				
14. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að nota Internetið (spjall, msn, myspace, facebook og þannig).				
15. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að spila tölvuleiki á netinu (club penguin, farmtown, pet society, runescape eða þannig).				
16. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að spila tölvuleiki í leikjatölvu playstation, wii, x-box eða þannig).				
17. Ég vil geta notað ensku í enskutímum í skólanum.				
18. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við foreldra mína.				
19. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við fjölskylduna mína (aðra en foreldra).				
20. Ég vil geta notað ensku til að tala við vini mína.				

**Hvenær notar þú ensku núna (til að tala/skrifa/lesa/hlusta)? (merktu X við dálkinn sem passar best við þig)**

	Oft ☺ 4	Stundum 3	Sjaldan 2	Aldrei ☹ 1
21. Ég les bækur á ensku.				
22. Ég horfi á sjónvarpsþætti og/eða bíómyndir á ensku.				
23. Ég tala ensku við útlendinga á Íslandi.				
24. Ég hef notað ensku á ferðalögum í útlöndum.				
25. Ég tala við foreldra mína á ensku.				
26. Ég spila tölvuleiki á ensku með vinum mínum.				
27. Ég nota ensku á internetinu (spjall, msn, myspace, facebook og þannig).				
28. Ég nota ensku í tölvuleikjum á netinu (club penguin, farmtown, pet society, runescape eða þannig)				
29. Ég leik mér í tölvuleikjum á ensku (playstation, wii, x-box eða þannig).				
30. Ég hlusta á tónlist með enskum textum.				
31. Ég les eða skoða tímarit (blöð og teiknimyndablöð) á ensku.				
32. Ég nota ensku í skólanum.				
33. Ég tala við vini mína á ensku.				
34. Ég tala við fjölskylduna mína á ensku (aðra en foreldra).				

Núna spyrjum við hverju ertu sammála eða ósammála? (merktu X við það sem þér finnst réttast)

	Mjög sammála  4	Sammála 3	Ósammál a 2	Mjög ósammála  1	Veit ekki ?
35. Ég kann eitthvað í ensku.					
36. Ég þarf að læra ensku af því að foreldrar mínir vilja að ég læri ensku.					
37. Ég þarf að læra ensku af því að vinir mínir kunna ensku.					
38. Ég held að foreldrar mínir kunni ensku.					
39. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að geta talað ensku í útlöndum.					
40. Mér finnst ég ekki þurfa að læra ensku.					
41. Foreldrar mínir hjálpa mér með að skilja ensku.					
42. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að fá góða einkunn/ná góðum árangri á prófi.					
43. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að skilja þætti í sjónvarpinu.					
44. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að geta notað tölvuna					
45. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að geta spilað tölvuleiki					
46. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að lesa bækur þegar ég verð stór/eldri					
47. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að tala við útlendinga á Íslandi					
48. Ég þarf að læra ensku til að nota í skóla eða vinnu þegar ég verð eldri/stór.					



49. **Kyn:** Ert þú  stelpa?  strákur?

50. **Hvað ertu gamall/gömul?** \_\_\_\_\_ ára

51. **Ég hef átt heima í enskumælandi landi.**

Já Hversu lengi \_\_\_\_\_  Nei

52. **Er kennd enska í 4.bekk í þínum skóla**

Já  Nei

53. **Ef þú ert að læra ensku í skólanum núna, í hvaða bekk byrjaðir þú? (1.bekk, 2.bekk o.s.frv.)**

\_\_\_ bekk

54. **Er tölva heima hjá þér sem þú mátt nota?**

Já - Ég nota tölvuna:  Oft  Stundum  Sjaldan

Nei

**Á næstu síðum koma orð sem við viljum vita hvort þið þekkið, kunnid eða hafið notað. Merkið bara við það sem þið eruð viss um.**

**Þekkir þú orðin?**

Hér fyrir neðan eru nokkur orð í ensku, sum eru alvöru ensk orð og **sum eru bullorð**. Merktu **bara** við þau orð sem **þú veist að þú hefur séð eða þekkir** eins og sýnt er í dæminu sem er á undan.

Dæmi: 

dog	X
-----	---

again		Black		scream		freeze		dragon	
brother		Bounce		hyslop		fight		window	
game		Alive		drive		girlfriend		summer	
money		Door		computer		alden		skeleton	
peanut		Follow		they		hungry		darrock	
invisible		Beginning		elevator		hospital		somebody	
candlin		Fishlock		spoon		big		hat	
bottom		Afraid		waygood		last		steal	
cartoon		Boot		invite		kiss		manomize	
children		Because		chase		kennard		warm	
gumm		Wrong		happy		pencil		seven	
lake		Use		jacket		hair		play	
mountain		Hot dog		horozone		present		cantileen	
house		Gillen		pretend		down		know	
dark		Hole		lucky		painting		pay	
pardoe		Walk		friend		TV		king	
dinner		Seek		apple		Saturday		whip	
her		Captain		middle		frequid		stop	
monster		treadaway		office		shoot		sumption	
farm		Chocolate		true		you		zoom	
litholect		Snowman		pound		woods		question	
word		Mom		gazard		outside		two	
should		Sport		witch		silver		exciting	
horobin		Open		help		hobrow		yellow	

**Kannt þú þessi orð?**

Nú koma 25 orð sem þú ert beðin að skoða og **merkja með X eða skrifa merkingu á feitletruðu** orðunum í dálkinn (það á **bara** að setja X eða skrifa einu sinni fyrir hvert orð).

<b>1. Brother</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifið í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifið í dálkinn		
<b>2. Apple</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifið í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifið í dálkinn		
<b>3. Drive</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifið í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifið í dálkinn		
<b>4. Children</b>		
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður		
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir		
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifið í dálkinn		
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifið í dálkinn		

<b>5. Chocolate</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>6. Friend</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>7. Hole</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>8. Happy</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>9. Farm</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>10. Computer</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>11. Play</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>12. Monster</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>13. Hospital</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>14. Painting</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>15. Exciting</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>16. TV</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>17. Window</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>18. Saturday</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>19. Snowman</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>20. Jacket</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>21. You</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>22. Witch</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
<b>23. Woods</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skrifðu í dálkinn	

<b>24. Whip</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skriðið í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skriðið í dálkinn	
<b>25. Question</b>	
I. Ég man ekki eftir að hafa séð þetta orð áður	
II. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður en man ekki hvað það þýðir	
III. Ég hef séð þetta orð áður og held að það þýði ... Skriðið í dálkinn	
IV. Ég veit hvað þetta orð þýðir. Það þýðir ... Skriðið í dálkinn	

**Skoðuðu nú allar síðurnar og athugaðu hvort þú hafir gleymt að svara einhverju.**

**Við þökkum kærlega fyrir hjálpina ☺**





## Appendix C. Letters of permission

Reykjavík 9. september 2010

Kæri skólastjórnandi,

Við Háskóla Íslands, er verið að vinna að rannsókn á stöðu enskukennslu, enskukunnáttu og enskunotkun á Íslandi. Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, doktorsnemi, er að vinna að rannsókn á umfangi og eðli enskukunnáttu barna við upphaf formlegrar kennslu eins og lagt er upp með í Aðalnámskrá grunnskóla 2007, nánar tiltekið í 4.bekk. Könnun þessi er doktorsverkefni Ásrúnar og styrkt af Rannís.

Markmið þessa hluta verkefnisins er að kanna viðhorf og orðaforðakunnáttu barna í 4. bekk og verður gagna aflað með spurningalistum og viðtölum við nemendur og kennara. Afar mikilvægt er að fá fram viðhorf nemendanna sjálfra til eigin kunnáttu í ensku og notagildi enskunnar í þeirra umhverfi.

Í þessu skyni verða nemendur í 4. bekk úr 20 íslenskum grunnskólum beðnir að svara spurningalista sem kallast: *Viðhorf og notkun ensku í 4.bekk*, auk einstaklingsviðtala við 5-10 nemendur í nokkrum skólana. Hver nemandi svarar könnuninni einu sinni og tekur það um 30-40 mínútur. Spurningalistinn skiptist í tvo hluta, annarsvegar spurningar um notkun ensku og hinsvegar orðaforðakönnun. Einnig verða kennarar spurðir um umgjörð enskunáms nemenda við skólana.

Nöfn þátttakenda og aðrar persónuupplýsingar koma hvergi fram við úrvinnslu gagna. Verkefnið verður lagt fyrir að undanfengnu samþykki allra þátttakenda ásamt samþykki foreldra/forráðamanna nemenda. Verkefnið hefur verið tilkynnt Persónuvernd.

Með þessu bréfi er óskað eftir heimild til að safna gögnum í þínum skóla. Nánari upplýsingar um verkefnið veitir Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir, [asrunjo@hi.is](mailto:asrunjo@hi.is).

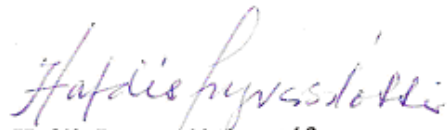
Með kveðju,



Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir,  
doktorsnemi og stundakennari við HÍ  
[asrunjo@hi.is](mailto:asrunjo@hi.is)



Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, prófessor  
[birnaarn@hi.is](mailto:birmaarn@hi.is)



Hafdis Ingvarsdóttir, **prófessor**  
[hei@hi.is](mailto:hei@hi.is)

Ágæta foreldri/forráðamaður.

Ég undirrituð, starfsmaður Háskóla Íslands og doktorsnemi, er að vinna að rannsókn á umfangi og eðli enskukunnáttu barna við upphaf formlegrar kennslu eins og lagt er upp með í Aðalnámskrá grunnskóla 2007, nánar tiltekið í 4.bekk. Könnunin er hluti af stærra verkefni um stöðu enskukennslu, enskukunnáttu og enskunotkun á Íslandi og er styrkt af Rannís.

Markmið þessa hluta verkefnisins er að kanna viðhorf og orðaforðakunnáttu barna í 4. bekk og verður gagna aflað með spurningalistum og viðtölum við nemendur og kennara.

Ég tel afar mikilvægt að fá fram viðhorf nemendanna sjálfra til eigin kunnáttu í ensku og notagildi enskunnar í þeirra umhverfi.

Markmið rannsóknarinnar í heild er að auka þekkingu og skilning á viðhorfi nemenda og kennara til enskunotkunar og enskukennslu á landsvísu sem síðan verður notað við stefnumótun, námskrárgerð og einnig við mótun grunn- og símenntunar enskukennara.

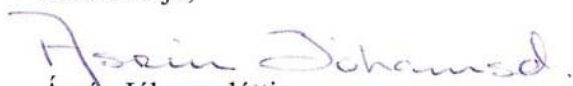
Í þessu skyni verða nemendur í 4. bekk úr 20 íslenskum grunnskólum beðnir að svara spurningalista sem kallast: *Viðhorf og notkun ensku í 4.bekk*, auk einstaklingsviðtala við 5-10 nemendur í nokkrum skólana. Hver nemandi svarar könnuninni einu sinni og tekur það um 30-40 mínútur. Spurningalistinn skiptist í tvo hluta, annarsvegar spurningar um notkun ensku og hinsvegar orðaforðakönnun. Nöfn þátttakenda og aðrar persónuupplýsingar koma hvergi fram við úrvinnslu úr neinum af þeim gögnum sem safnað verður.

Verkefnið hefur verið tilkynnt Persónuvernd og með þessu bréfi er óskað eftir samþykki foreldra/forráðamanna fyrir þátttöku barna þeirra í hugsanlegu viðtali.

Ég bið því vinsamlegast um leyfi fyrir að barnið þitt taki þátt í rannsókninni. Ef þú ert samþykkt/ur þátttöku þarftu ekkert frekar að gera. Ef þú vilt **ekki** að barn þitt taki þátt, vinsamlega hafðu samband við mig á netfang [asrunjo@hi.is](mailto:asrunjo@hi.is) eða ritaðu þá nafn þitt hér fyrir neðan og skilaðu bréfinu til kennara eða á skrifstofu skólans sem barnið stundar nám í fyrir 25. nóvember 2010.

Nánari upplýsingar um verkefnið veitir undirrituð.

Með kveðju,



Ásrún Jóhannsdóttir,  
doktorsnemi og stundakennari við HÍ  
[asrunjo@hi.is](mailto:asrunjo@hi.is)

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Ég vil **ekki** að barn mitt taki þátt í rannsókninni.

Skóli: \_\_\_\_\_

Nafn barns: \_\_\_\_\_

Undirskrift foreldris/forráðmanns: \_\_\_\_\_