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A spelling error analysis of Norwegian learners' L2 English with a focus on phonology: A master's thesis

The relationship between phonemes and graphemes in English is complex. What role does this relationship play in the spelling capacities of Norwegian learners of L2 English?

Learners often use phonetic strategies in their attempt to spell words they are unfamiliar with, for instance using other L2 graphemes for the same phoneme, L2 graphemes for a related phoneme, or L1 graphemes. This master's thesis in English linguistics investigates how different phonemes might trigger spelling errors in Norwegian learners' L2 English. Eight phonemes will be analysed through corpus data from CORYL and a dictation exercise with 30 pupils from two age groups (ages 12/13 and 15/16). These two methods enable analysis both of learners' spelling of their own words and of words handed to them.

I hope to find out if there is a system to how the phonology of the L1 and L2 affects or triggers different spelling errors. Hypotheses include that learners are more likely to misspell phonemes they mispronounce or phonemes not in their L1.

Keywords: graphemes, phonemes, spelling, error analysis, ESL