

Norwegian as a second language

Transkripsjon av intervju med ekspert

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Video interview transcript – Omar Chaaban (red) / Jon Bjerkan (black)

Hello

Hello mr Jon

How are you?

Im fine thank you. And how are you?

Fine, thank you

Good, good

So I have a few questions for you

Yes

Since you were my Norwegian teacher, I know you well.

First Question is how adult refugees experience learning Norwegian

Oh that's quite a deep question. I think there is a difference in this group of people

I think some of them will say that it is quite challenging. And that is those who have not learned a new language before

If Norwegian is the first new language that they learn, then they have no experience with learning a new language.

And this makes it difficult to have the methods to learn the new language.

For those who have experience and know several languages, they are used to several languages. Adding one more is not so big a problem for them, since they know already the methods and the systems of languages. They can use that experience when learning Norwegian

Did you find any different experience between the age groups in the learning process?

Yes, yes I do. Younger learners learn quicker and also many of the younger ones, it's easier than these to start using Norwegian. Some of the older students that I have had, have difficulties trying to use the new language.

And they sort of ... Feel a bit embarrassed, when they use their new language and they would rather use their mother tongue. They do easier switch to their mother tongue, and ask their class mates in their mother tongue.

What are the biggest issues for young adults while learning Norwegian?

What do you mean by issues?

So ... what are the biggest issues for young adults while learning Norwegian? Do you know any challenges, and what are the most common challenges or issues

The most common challenges... Well, people are different. And for some of them, I ask some of them in my class, and they have different answers.

For some of them it is speaking that is the easiest, and it was most difficult to write the language.

But for others it was quite easy for them to write, but they thought that (when) they listened to and understood Norwegians ... when they listen it was the most challenging part. Though it's different. I think it's different from person to person.

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So how does a knowledge of the English language influence learning Norwegian. Have you noticed anything special?

Yes I noticed that. For those who you know already know Norwegian it's English.

You mean English

For those who know English. And when they start learning Norwegian they can they can use what they already know, when it comes to vocabulary.

They will they will have lots of words that are very similar in English and in Norwegian. They can use their vocabulary in English to kind of point the Norwegian words. And remember the Norwegian words.

They also have experience in another language. So it this helps them to learn to add one more language to what they already know.

And what are your thoughts on the things that can be improved on the learning process.

Oh well I think I've heard of a program that is keeps 24 hours of language input. One of the main problems as I see of my students are only six hours lessons a day, and the rest of the day maybe they talk their mother language mother tongue with their friends.

So it leaves them with a short time actually with the Norwegian and it would be better if they if they could also live in Norwegian environment and spend their afternoons also having to use their Norwegian.

So you suggest for them to use more Norwegian in their time outside of school.

Yes yes I would that's what one of the things that I would suggest. Maybe to be to be in a family or to be in activities with Norwegians in the afternoon.

OK, so this leads me to the next question.

What impact does social interaction in Norwegian outside of the class have.

it has it has huge impact on the learning process.

You kind of answered this already.

Yes. I already told you that this was very important. So it's a good question.

OK. So the next question Do the students generally succeed?

I would say so that the students generally they succeed in.

In learning the language and especially, let's say if they if they get a job where they can use the language, and there they feel like the language helps them.

I mean it. And it's like an encouragement for them to learn more and then then they will learn more. I think most of them succeed in learning the language.

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OK. Nice to hear. And what about you. Are you happy with the level of fluency that most of the students reach during the course?

Wow. I would say I'm not disappointed. But for sure I would wish for them to reach a higher level than they actually do, that that is what I wish for.

But I am satisfied with what they do, because I know that many of them work hard to learn it
So you are satisfied, but not very happy.

Well I mean it depends on the student. If I see a student that really can reach far then I think that the student should do well in tests.

But for all my students I think when they do their best I am satisfied.

OK so have you heard of digital apps like Duolingo or other apps? How do you think they supplement?

Of course. I think that they are valuable. These apps for learning English and learning Norwegian are really good. It helps you to be active in learning the language and you can learn at the times when it suits. Though and also you can spend the time you need to do the exercises. Those who want to go faster can do them faster and reach higher levels and those who need to work more can do so. So it's good. These are good tools

Would you recommend more people use duolingo or similar app?

Yes I would. I would recommend that

OK, so any main reason why would you recommend it?

I think I think it's very important to be active in learning. And when you can use an app you can do it when you are available and you have time to use it.

And you can choose the pace that you that suits you. If you want to work faster you can do so. If you want to do more you can do so. So there are seldom limits to what you can do

OK. So do you have any other thoughts or comments.

I think your questions were were very interesting. And I like that you asked those questions, because it shows that you are thinking about the learning process, and I think being aware of how do you learn a language helps you to actually learn it, because you know the process.

Right. OK. Thank you very much for it.

I wish you all very good luck with this task and and with your in your studies.

Thank you very much.

OK. Bye

Have a nice day. Bye

Kilde:

Høgskolen I Østfold, Hiøf (2019, 26. September) *Learning Norwegian when coming to Norway as an adult refugee.* [Videoklipp] Hentet fra

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